

An Litir Bheag

le Ruairidh MacIlleathain

An Litir Bheag is a shortened and simplified version of Ruairidh's Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh (also available on the BBC website), designed for those who are at an earlier stage of learning Gaelic. The topic each week is the same as Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh so that, once the Litir Bheag is mastered, a student of the language might wish to try the full Litir. This is Litir Bheag 686 (which corresponds to Litir 990). Ruairidh can be contacted at rodny.maclean@bbc.co.uk.

There was once a man who had a small farm on the side of a mountain. People called him Peter of the Mountain. He, his wife and their son were as happy as the day was long.

They had two cows. They decided to sell one of them. Peter went to the town with her but nobody wanted to buy her. Peter went slowly on the road, himself and the cow.

He hadn't gone far when he met a man who had a horse to sell. Peter thought he'd prefer to have a horse, rather than a cow. The two men did a swap. A short time after that, he met a man who had a large pig. They made an agreement and Peter left with the pig.

Then he met a man who had a goat. It wasn't long until he was making for home accompanied by a goat rather than a pig. A man with a sheep was walking past and Peter thought it would be good to have a sheep. But he hadn't had the sheep long when he met a man with a goose. The two men did a swap and Peter left with the goose.

He met a man with a cockerel. 'Oh,' said Peter to himself,

Bha fear ann uaireigin aig an robh tuathanas beag air cliathaich beinne. Chanadh daoine Pàdraig na Beinne ris. Bha e fhèin, a bhean agus an gille aca cho sona 's a bha an latha fada.

Bha dà bhò aca. Chuir iad romhpa tè dhiubh a reic. Dh'fhalbh Pàdraig don bhaile mhòr leatha ach cha robh duine ag iarraidh a ceannach. Ghabh Pàdraig air ais dhachaigh air a shocair, e fhèin agus a' bhò.

Cha robh e air a dhol fada nuair a thachair e ri fear aig an robh each ri reic. Shaoil Pàdraig gum b' fheàrr leis each a bhith aige, seach bò. Rinn an dithis suaip. Beagan ùine an dèidh sin, thachair e ri duine aig an robh muc mhòr. Rinn iad còrdadh, agus dh'fhalbh Pàdraig leis a' mhuic.

Thachair e an uair sin ri fear aig an robh gobhar. Cha b' fhada gus an robh e a' dèanamh air an taigh le gobhar na chois, an àite muc. Bha fear le caora a' coiseachd seachad agus shaoil Pàdraig gum biodh e math caora a bhith aige. Ach cha robh a' chaora aige fada nuair a thachair e ri fear le gèadh. Rinn an dithis aca suaip, agus dh'fhalbh Pàdraig leis a' ghèadh.

Thachair e ri fear le coileach. 'O,' thuirt Pàdraig ris fhèin, 'nach biodh

'wouldn't that be better than a goose?'

Peter hadn't eaten anything all day. He sold the cockerel. With the money he got, he bought food.

He continued on the road home. He reached a friend's house. 'How did you get on?' his friend said to him. Peter told him everything that [had] happened.

'Oh,' said his friend. 'You'll get what-for when your wife hears what happened.'

'My wife won't scold [me] at all,' said Peter.

'That's hard to believe,' replied his friend.

'I'll bet she won't scold me,' said Peter. 'I have a hundred pounds. If she scolds me, you'll get the money. Will you give me a hundred pounds if she doesn't complain?'

'Yes,' said his friend. And I'll tell you what happened next week.

sin na b' fheàrr na gèadh?'

Cha robh Pàdraig air càil ithe fad an latha. Reic e an coileach. Leis an airgead a fhuair e, cheannaich e biadh.

Lean e air an rathad dhachaigh. Ràinig e taigh caraid. 'Ciamar a chaidh dhut?' thuirt a charaid ris. Dh'inns Pàdraig dha a h-uile rud a thachair.

'O,' thuirt a charaid. 'Gheibh thu do chruaidh-fhortain nuair a chluinneas do bhean mar a thachair.'

'Cha dèan a' bhean agam trod sam bith,' arsa Pàdraig.

'Tha sin doirbh a chreidsinn,' fhreagair a charaid.

'Cuiridh mi geall nach dèan i trod rium,' thuirt Pàdraig. 'Tha ceud not agam. Ma throideas i rium, gheibh thus' an t-airgead. An toir thusa dhòmhsa ceud not mura dèan i gearan?'

'Bheir,' thuirt a charaid. Agus innsidh mi dhuibh dè thachair an-ath-sheachdain.