

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 893 (which corresponds to Litir 1,196). Ruairidh can be contacted at fios@learngaelic.scot.

We left Iain and the old man, who was in the form of a horse, on the far side of a strait from a brazen castle. Iain got a rod. 'Hit me with a rod,' said the old man, 'and I'll become a ship. I'll take you to the castle. The lady will shout, "Where did you come from?" You'll reply that you came from the Indies.' And the old man explained how the rest of the conversation would go.

That's how it happened. Iain said that he came from the Indies. 'What load do you have on board?' asked the lady.

'Silk,' replied Iain.

'Bring a large armful of it in [to me],' said she.

'Won't you come to the ship to see it,' said Iain. The lady came out.

When she was aboard, the vessel moved gently. The lady was now a distance away from the castle. She was angry. She threw the keys of the castle into the loch. 'Nobody else will get entry,' she said.

They went to the King's palace. The lady said she would not marry the King until the brazen castle was at the end of the palace. The King said to Iain that he would have to do

Dh'fhàg sinn Iain agus am bodach, a bha ann an riochd eich, air taobh thall caolais bhon chaisteal phràise. Fhuair Iain slat. 'Buail an t-slat orm,' thuirt am bodach, 'agus bidh mi nam long. Bheir mi don chaisteal thu. Èighidh a' bhaintighearna, "Cò às a thàinig thu?" Freagraidh thusa gun tàinig thu às na h-Innsean.' Agus mhìnich am bodach mar a bhiodh an còrr dhen chòmhradh.

'S ann mar sin a thachair e. Thuirt Iain gun tàinig e às na h-Innsean. 'Dè an luchd a tha agad air bòrd?' dh'fhaighnich a' bhaintighearna.

'Tha sìoda,' fhreagair Iain.

'Thoir ultach dheth a-steach,' ars ise.

'Nach tig sibh a-mach don t-soitheach airson fhaicinn,' thuirt Iain. Thàinig a' bhaintighearna a-mach.

Nuair a bha i air bòrd, ghluais an soitheach gu socair. Bha a' bhaintighearna a-nise pìos air falbh bhon chaisteal. Bha i feargach. Thilg i iuchraichean a' chaisteil dhan loch. 'Cha tèid duine eile a-steach,' thuirt i.

Chaidh iad gu lùchairt an Rìgh. Thuirt a' bhaintighearna nach pòsadh i an Rìgh gus am biodh an caisteal pràise aig ceann na lùchairt. Thuirt an Rìgh ri Iain gu feumadh esan sin a dhèanamh.

that. Or he would be hanged. Iain and the old man went to the giants' cave. The giants lifted the brazen castle. They put it at the end of the palace.

But the lady was not satisfied. 'I won't marry you,' she said to the King, 'until I get my keys back.' Iain went to the beach where the fish was. The fish found the keys.

The lady was not satisfied, however. 'I won't marry you,' she said to the King, 'until I get three bottles of water from the well of the virtues.'

Iain and the old man left. 'Get a stone,' said the old man to him, 'and hit me at the base of the ear. I'll be dead. Slit my belly. Five ravens will come. Catch two of them. Tell the three others that you won't release their brothers until they give you five bottles of water from "the well of the virtues".' It happened just as the old man explained. And I'll conclude the story in the next Litir.

No bhiodh e air a chrochadh. Chaidh Iain agus am bodach gu uamh nam famhairean. Thog na famhairean an caisteal pràise. Chuir iad aig ceann na lùchairt e.

Ach cha robh a' bhaintighearna riarichte. 'Cha phòs mi thu,' thuir i ris an Rìgh, 'gus am faigh mi na h-iuchraichean agam air ais.' Chaidh Iain don tràigh far an robh an t-iasg. Lorg an t-iasg na h-iuchraichean.

Cha robh a' bhaintighearna sàsaichte, ge-tà. 'Cha phòs mi thu,' thuir i ris an Rìgh, 'gus am faigh mi trì botail de dh'uisge à Tobar nam Buadh.'

Dh'fhalbh Iain agus am bodach. 'Faigh clach,' thuir am bodach ris, 'agus buail mi am bun na cluaise. Bidh mi marbh. Sgolt mo bhrù. Thig còig fithich. Beir air dithis dhiubh. Can ris na trì eile nach leig thu am bràithrean mu sgaoil gus an toir iad dhut còig botail de dh'uisge à Tobar nam Buadh.' Thachair e dìreach mar a mhìnich am bodach. Agus bheir mi an sgeul gu crìch anns an ath Litir.