

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 894 (which corresponds to Litir 1,198). Ruairidh can be contacted at fios@learngaelic.scot.

The story 'The Ship that Went to America' is coming to a conclusion today. The ravens returned with five bottles of water. 'Release our two brothers,' they said.

'No,' said Iain. 'I want to be sure that you have the correct water.' He cast a drop of the water on the dead horse. The horse didn't move. The water hadn't come from 'the well of the virtues'.

Iain threatened the ravens that he would decapitate the two [birds] that he held in captivity. The ravens left. They returned with five bottles of water.

Iain threw a splash [of water] on the horse. This time, the horse revived. 'You did well, Iain,' said the horse. They went to the castle. Iain gave the King three of the bottles. He retained the other two.

The lady took the three bottles. She went to her room. She ordered a large cauldron of water to be brought to the boil. She cleaned herself with the water from the three bottles. Iain was watching her through the keyhole. She said she would only marry a man who would stand as long as her in the cauldron of water. The King heard this. He

Tha an sgeulachd *An Long a Chaidh a dh'Ameireagaidh* a' tighinn gu ceann an-diugh. Thill na fithich le còig botail de dh'uisge. 'Leig ar dithis bhràithrean mu sgaoil,' thuirt iad.

'Cha leig,' ars Iain. 'Tha mi airson a bhith cinnteach gur e an t-uisge ceart a tha agaibh.' Thilg e deur dhen uisge air an each mharbh. Cha do charaich an t-each. Cha b' ann à Tobar nam Buadh a bha an t-uisge.

Mhaoidh Iain air na fithich gun toireadh e na cinn far na dithis a bha aige ann am bruid. Dh'fhalbh na fithich. Thill iad le còig botail de dh'uisge.

Thilg Iain steall dheth air an each. An turas seo, thàinig an t-each beò. 'S math a rinn thu, Iain,' thuirt an t-each. Dh'fhalbh iad don chaisteal. Thug Iain trì de na botail seachad don Rìgh. Ghlèidh e na dhà eile.

Ghabh a' bhaintighearna na trì botail. Chaidh i don t-seòmar aice. Dh'òrdaich i coire mòr làn uisge a chur gu goil. Nigh i i fhèin leis an uisge o na trì botail. Bha Iain ga coimhead tron toll-iuchrach. Leum a' bhaintighearna don choire. Thuirt i nach pòsadh i ach fear a sheasadh cho fada rithe anns a' choire uisge. Chuala an Rìgh sin. Chaidh e don

went to her room. He jumped into the cauldron and was boiled alive.

The grey-haired old man came. 'Clean yourself,' he said, 'with the water from the other two bottles. Go to where the lady is. Say to her – if she marries you, you'll stand as long as she does in the cauldron.'

Iain washed himself with the water from 'the well of virtues'. He said to her, 'If you marry me, I'll jump into the cauldron with you.'

'I'll marry [you] for sure,' she said. He jumped into the cauldron. Everything was fine. 'You are my man,' she said. Shortly after that, they married. He became the king in place of the old king.

The old man farewelled Iain. 'I made you a lucky man,' he said. He spoke the truth.

t-seòmair aice. Leum e don choire agus chaidh a losgadh gu bàs.

Thàinig am bodach liath. 'Nigh thu fhèin,' thuirt e, 'leis an uisge bhon dà bhotal eile. Thalla far a bheil a' bhaintighearna. Can rithe – ma phòsas i thu, gun seas thu cho fada rithe anns a' choire.'

Nigh Iain e fhèin leis an uisge à Tobar nam Buadh. Chaidh e far an robh a' bhaintighearna. Thuirt e rithe, 'Ma phòsas tu mi, leumaidh mi don choire còmhla riut.'

'Pòsaidh, gu dearbh,' ars ise. Thug e leum a-steach don choire. Bha cùisean ceart gu leòr. 'S tus' an duine agamsa,' thuirt i. Goirid an dèidh sin, phòs iad. Fhuair esan a bhith na rìgh an àite an t-seann rìgh.

Dh'fhàg am bodach beannachd aig Iain. 'Rinn mi duine fortanach dhìot,' thuirt e. 'S e an fhirinn a bha aige.