

## 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 219 (which corresponds to Litir 523). Ruairidh can be contacted at [rodny.maclean@bbc.co.uk](mailto:rodny.maclean@bbc.co.uk).

*Black-haired John of Lewis, the Sailor, was in the robbers' house. The robbers weren't there. There was a secret room in the house. John opened the door of the room. He saw a beautiful woman. She was hanging by her hair from the ceiling.*

*She appeared to be dead. But she wasn't. She awoke. She told John what had happened to her. She was the daughter of the King of Spàin. Two of the robbers were caught at the King's Castle. The King had them killed. The other robbers took revenge by capturing the King's daughter.*

*John and the daughter left. They reached a shieling bothy for the night. When they were in the bothy, they heard voices outside. John opened the door. There were three bodies standing there. Their heads were between their hands. "Gentle-men," said John, "what do you want?"*

*"We are," they replied, "a father and his two sons. We were killed in the bothy by robbers. They buried us behind the bothy. But they didn't put each head with its own body. So, we don't have peace." They asked John*

Bha Iain Dubh Leòdhasach, an Seòladair, ann an taigh nan robairean. Cha robh na robairean ann. Bha seòmar uaigneach anns an taigh. Dh'fhosgail Iain doras an t-seòmair. Chunnaic e boireannach bòidheach. Bha i crochte air a falt ris a' mhullach.

Bha coltas oirre gun robh i marbh. Ach cha robh. Dhùisg i. Dh'innis i do dh'Iain mar a thachair dhi. B' i nighean Rìgh na Spàinne. Chaidh dithis de na robairean a ghlacadh aig Caisteal an Rìgh. Chuir an Rìgh gu bàs iad. Rinn na robairean eile dìoghaltas le bhith a' glacadh nighean an Rìgh.

Theich Iain agus an nighean. Ràinig iad bothan-àirigh airson na h-oidhche. Nuair a bha iad anns a' bhothan, chuala iad guthan air an taobh a-muigh. Dh'fhosgail Iain an doras. Bha trì colainnean nan seasamh ann. Bha an cinn eadar an làmhan. "A dhaoine còire," ars Iain, "dè tha sibh ag iarraidh?"

"Is sinne," fhreagair iad, "athair agus a dhithis mhac. Chaidh ar marbhadh anns a' bhothan le robairean. Thiodhlaic iad sinn air cùl a' bhothain. Ach cha do chuir iad gach ceann le a cholainn fhèin. Mar sin,

*to put the heads in the correct place. John did that.*

*The next day, John and the King's daughter left the bothy. They reached a port-town. They stopped there and they married. They were happy and successful.*

*One day, a ship came. On board was the commander of the Spanish fleet. He was looking for the King's daughter. The King [had] promised the hand of his daughter to any man who would find her. That and half his kingdom.*

*The commander came to Black-haired John's house. He spoke to John and his wife. He recognised that she was the daughter of the King of Spain. But he said nothing. He gave John and his wife an invitation to go out the next day to see the ship.*

*What was going to happen to Black-haired John? I'll finish the story next week.*

chan eil fois againn.” Dh'iarr iad air Iain na cinn a chur anns an àite cheart. Rinn Iain sin.

An ath latha, dh'fhàg Iain agus nighean an Rìgh am bothan. Ràinig iad baile-puirt. Stad iad an sin agus phòs iad. Bha iad sona agus soirbheachail.

Latha a bha seo, thàinig long. Air bòrd bha ceannard cabhlach na Spàinne. Bha e a' sireadh nighean an Rìgh. Gheall an Rìgh a nighean mar bhean do dh'fhear sam bith a lorgadh i. Sin agus leth a rìoghachd.

Thàinig an ceannard gu taigh Iain Duibh. Bhruidhinn e ri Iain agus a bhean. Dh'aithnich e gum b' ise nighean Rìgh na Spàinne. Ach cha tuirt e guth. Thug e cuireadh do dh'Iain is a bhean a dhol a-mach an ath latha, agus an long fhaicinn.

Dè bha a' dol a thachairt do dh'Iain Dubh? Cuiridh mi crìoch air an stòiridh an ath-sheachdain.