

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 257 (which corresponds to Litir 561). Ruairidh can be contacted at roddy.maclean@bbc.co.uk.

I am continuing with the story "The King and the Foal". The king said to the man, "Come here tomorrow. If you don't tell me what is swiftest in the world, you'll lose your head."

The man went home. "Tell the king," his daughter said, "that there's nothing as swift as thinking. You can be here and your thoughts can go in an instant to the other side of the world. There is no creature as swift as that."

The man was satisfied. The next morning he went to the castle.

"And what is the swiftest thing in the world?" said the king.

"There is nothing in the world as swift as thinking."

My horse is swifter than that," said the king.

"No," said the man. "Your thoughts can be at the other side of the kingdom in a moment. There is no horse as swift as that."

"Ah," said the king, "I'm satisfied with that. But I'm going to ask you a question. Who lives with you?"

"My daughter," the man

Tha mi a' leantainn leis an stòiridh An Rìgh agus an Searrach. Thuir an rìgh ris an duine, "Thig an seo a-màireach. Mura h-inns thu dhomh gu dè as luaithe air an t-saoghal, caillidh thu do cheann."

Chaidh an duine dhachaigh. "Can ris an rìgh," thuir a nighean, "nach eil sìon ann a tha cho luath ris an smaoineachadh. Faodaidh sibh a bhith an seo agus faodaidh ur smuaintean a dhol sa mhionaid gu taobh thall an t-saoghail. Chan eil creutair sam bith cho luath ri sin."

Bha an duine riarichte. An ath mhadainn chaidh e don chaisteal.

"Agus dè an rud as luaithe air an t-saoghal?" thuir an rìgh.

"Chan eil nì air an t-saoghal cho luath ri smaoineachadh."

"Tha an t-each agam nas luaithe na sin," thuir an rìgh.

"Chan eil," ars an duine. "Faodaidh ur smuaintean a bhith air taobh thall na rìoghachd ann an tiotan. Chan eil each sam bith cho luath ri sin."

"A," ars an rìgh, "tha mi riarichte le sin. Ach tha mi a' dol a chur ceist eile ort. Cò tha a' fuireach còmhla riut?"

answered.

“Okay,” said the king. “I want to marry your daughter.” But the king put a condition on the marriage. “Here is the condition,” he said. “If anything comes between us, you will have to leave the castle.”

“That’s good enough,” she said. “But I also have a condition. If anything comes between us, I’ll leave the castle. But I’ll be taking three loads out of the castle.”

“That’s good enough,” said the king. They married. In time, a baby boy was born to them.

There was a farmer nearby. He had a mare. The mare had a foal. One day, the mare went to the mountain. The king had horses on the mountain. He also had a gelding. The foal went back to the castle with the gelding.

The king said the foal was his. The farmer couldn’t get the foal back. What was going to happen? I’ll bring the story to a conclusion next week.

“Tha mo nighean,” fhreagair an duine.

“Seadh,” ars an rìgh. “Tha mi ag iarraidh do nighean a phòsadh.” Ach chuir an rìgh cùmhnant air a’ phòsadh. “Seo an cùmhnant,” thuirt e. “Ma thig sìon eadarainn, feumaidh tu an caisteal fhàgail.”

“Tha sin math gu leòr,” ars ise. “Ach tha cùmhnant agamsa cuid-eachd. Ma thig sìon eadarainn, fàgaidh mi an caisteal. Ach bidh mi a’ toirt trì eallaich a-mach às a’ chaisteal.”

“Tha sin math gu leòr,” ars an rìgh. Phòs iad. An ceann greis rugadh leanabh gille dhaibh.

Bha tuathanach faisg air làimh. Bha làir aige. Bha searrach aig an làir. Latha a bha seo, chaidh an làir agus an searrach don bheinn. Bha eich aig an rìgh air a’ bheinn. Bha, agus gearran. Chaidh an searrach air ais don chaisteal leis a’ ghearran.

Thuirt an rìgh gur ann leis-san a bha an searrach. Cha b’ urrainn don tuathanach an searrach fhaighinn air ais. Dè bha a’ dol a thachairt? Cuiridh mi crìoch air an sgeulachd an ath-sheachdain.