

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 258 (which corresponds to Litir 562). Ruairidh can be contacted at roddy.maclean@bbc.co.uk.

I am going to conclude the story "The King and the Foal". The farmer's foal went to the castle with the king's gelding. The king wasn't willing to hand the foal back.

One day, the king was out. The farmer went to the castle. He spoke to the king's wife.

"Come in the morning," she said, "and bring with you a bucket of salt. Spread the salt in the field. The king will come out. Tell him you are spreading salt. He'll be asking you if you expect the salt to grow. Tell him that it is just as likely that the salt will grow as it is that a gelding will have a foal.

Next morning, the farmer appeared. He had a bucket of salt. He was spreading salt on the ground.

"What are you doing?" said the king.

"I am," he said, "spreading salt."

"Do you think the salt will grow?" the king said.

"It's just as likely that the salt will grow," said the man, "as it is that a gelding will have a foal."

Tha mi a' dol a chur crìoch air an stòiridh *An Rìgh agus an Searrach*. Chaidh an searrach aig an tuathanach don chaisteal le gearran an rìgh. Cha robh an rìgh deònach an searrach a thoirt air ais.

Latha a bha seo, bha an rìgh a-muigh. Chaidh an tuathanach don chaisteal. Bhruidhinn e ri bean an rìgh.

"Thig sa mhadainn," thuirt i, "agus thoir leat bucaid de shalann. Cuir an salann anns a' phàirc. Thig an rìgh a-mach. Can ris gu bheil thu a' crathadh salainn. Bidh e a' faighneachd dhìot a bheil thu an dùil gum fàs an salann. Can ris gu bheil e a cheart cho coltach gum fàs an salann 's a tha e gum bi searrach aig gearran."

An ath mhadainn nochd an tuathanach. Bha bucaid aige de shalann. Bha e a' crathadh salainn air an talamh.

"Dè tha thu a' dèanamh?" thuirt an rìgh.

"Tha mi," ars esan, "a' crathadh salainn."

"A bheil thu a' smaoineachadh gum fàs an salann?" thuirt an rìgh.

"Tha e cho coltach gum fàs an salann," ars an duine, "'s a tha e gum

The king was unhappy. He went indoors. "You gave the farmer advice," he said to his wife.

"Yes," she said.

"Do you remember," he said, "the conditions on our marriage?"

"Yes," said his wife.

"Well," he said, "you can leave the castle."

"You'll remember," she said, "the other condition. I'll be taking three loads with me."

"Okay," said the king. His wife filled a chest with gold and silver. She placed the chest outside the castle. She returned in. She picked up the cradle. Their son was in the cradle. That was the second load.

The king was unhappy. But his wife was not finished. She took hold of the king's hand. She took him out the door. That was her third load.

There was nobody in the castle. The king said, "You'll return inside. I'll also go in. I'll be bringing in the loads you took out.

And that's what happened to the crafty daughter. She and the king were happy enough. And I imagine the farmer got his foal back.

bi searrach aig gearran."

. Bha an rìgh mì-thoilichte. Chaidh e a-steach. "Thug thusa comhairle don tuathanach," thuirt e ri a bhean.

"Thug," thuirt i.

"A bheil cuimhne agad," ars esan, "air na cùmhnantan air ar pòsadh?"

"Tha," fhreagair a bhean.

"Uill," ars esan, "faodaidh tu an caisteal fhàgail."

"Bidh cuimhne agad fhèin," ars ise, "air a' chùmhnant eile. Bidh mi a' toirt trì eallaich leam."

"Ceart gu leòr," thuirt an rìgh. Lìon a bhean ciste le òr is airgead. Chuir i a' chiste taobh a-muigh a' chaisteil. Thill i a-steach. Thog i a' chreathall. Bha an gille aca anns a' chreathail. B' e sin an dàrna eallach.

Bha an rìgh mì-thoilichte. Ach cha robh a bhean deiseil. Rug i air làmh an rìgh fhèin. Thug i a-mach air an doras e. B' e sin an treas eallach aice.

Cha robh duine anns a' chaisteal. Thuirt an rìgh, "Tillidh thusa a-steach. Thèid mi fhìn a-steach cuideachd. Bidh mi a' toirt a-steach na h-eallaich a thug thu a-mach."

Agus sin mar a dh'èirich e don nighinn seòlta. Bha i fhèin agus an rìgh sona gu leòr. Agus tha mi an dùil gun d' fhuair an tuathanach a shearrach air ais.