

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 288 (which corresponds to Litir 592). Ruairidh can be contacted at roddy.maclean@bbc.co.uk.

I'm continuing with the story Billy. Billy was learning thieving. He went home with a hundred pounds from the publican. The gentleman came.

"Are you trained now, Billy?" he asked.

"Yes," replied Billy.

"I don't think so," said the gentleman. And he set a test for Billy. He was sending carts and carters away. He asked Billy to steal one of their horses.

The carters left. And Billy left. He went behind a hill beside the road. The carters were going to return on that road. There was a rabbit hole there. Billy caught a rabbit. He broke one of the rabbit's legs. The carters came. They saw the rabbit. They went after it.

There was nobody at the carts. Billy came. He untied one of the horses. He left with it.

"You're a good thief," said the gentleman. "But I'll set you another test. There will be a horse in a stable. Five people will be protecting it. You must steal the horse."

"That's a difficult thing," said Billy.

Billy went to the pub. He took

Tha mi a' leantainn leis an sgeulachd Bilidh. Bha Bilidh ag ionnsachadh mèirle. Chaidh e dhachaigh le ceud nota bho fhear an taigh-sheinnse. Thàinig an duine uasal.

"A bheil thu ionnsaichte a-nis, a Bhilidh?" dh'fhaighnich e.

"Tha," fhreagair Bilidh.

"Cha chreid mi gu bheil," thuirt an duine uasal. Agus chuir e deuchainn air Bilidh. Bha e a' cur chairtean is chairtearan air falbh. Dh'iarr e air Bilidh fear de na h-eich aca a ghoid.

Dh'fhalbh na cairtearan. Agus dh'fhalbh Bilidh. Chaidh e air cùl cnuic ri taobh an rathaid. Bha na cairtearan a' dol a thilleadh air an rathad sin. Bha toll choineanach ann. Rug Bilidh air coineanach. Bhris e cas aig a' choineanach. Thàinig na cairtearan. Chunnaic iad an coineanach. Chaidh iad às a dhèidh.

Cha robh duine aig na cairtean. Thàinig Bilidh. Dh'fhuasgail e fear de na h-eich. Agus dh'fhalbh e leis.

"Is mèirleach math thu," thuirt an duine uasal. "Ach cuiridh mi deuchainn eile ort. Bidh each ann an stàball. Bidh còignear ga dhìon. Feumaidh tu an t-each a ghoid."

"S e sin rud doirbh," arsa Bilidh.

out four bottles of whisky. There was a herd of pigs nearby. Billy went among the pigs, with the bottles in his pockets. He lay there as if he were dead.

Those at the stable noticed that something was happening. They went down. They found a “dead” man among the pigs. They took the dead man back. They saw the bottles of whisky. They drank the whisky. They were drunk.

And they were indifferent about the horse. They went to the pub. The “dead” man – Billy – arose and he took the horse with him..

“You stole the horse,” said the gentleman.

“Yes,” said Billy.

“I’ll set you another test,” said the gentleman – your most difficult test.”

And we’ll see what it was next week.

Chaidh Bilidh don taigh-sheinnse. Thug e a-mach ceithir botail uisge-bheatha. Bha treud mhuc faisg air làimh. Chaidh Bilidh am measg nam muc, agus na botail na phòcaid. Laigh e an sin mar gun robh e marbh.

Mhathaich an fheadhainn aig an stàball gun robh rudeigin a’ dol. Chaidh iad sìos. Lorg iad fear “marbh” am measg nam muc. Thug iad an duine marbh air ais. Chunnaic iad na botail uisge-bheatha. Dh’òl iad an t-uisge-beatha. Bha an deoch orra.

Agus bha iad coma mun each. Dh’fhalbh iad don taigh-sheinnse. Dh’èirich an duine “marbh” – Bilidh – agus thug e leis an t-each.

“Ghoid thu an t-each,” thuirt an duine uasal.

“Ghoid,” arsa Bilidh.

“Cuiridh mi deuchainn eile ort,” thuirt an duine uasal – an deuchainn as dorra agad.”

Agus chì sinn dè bha ann an-ath-sheachdain.