

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 348 (which corresponds to Litir 652). Ruairidh can be contacted at rodny.maclean@bbc.co.uk.

Here is a story for you from Barra. It's called 'Luran'. It's a bit different from the story 'Luran' from South Uist that we had last week.

There was at one time a crofter. He and his wife lived in a remote place by themselves. They had plenty of land, and cattle. They wanted for nothing.

Every year, at Halloween, the crofter was losing a cow/steer. He didn't know what was happening. One year, at Halloween, the crofter was watching over his livestock. He saw two fairies coming. They came into the fold. They got hold of the best cow/steer. They left with it.

Out in pursuit of them went the crofter. But he wasn't fast enough. After a while, he was exhausted. He stopped on a hillock. The fairies had stopped on the same hillock. They were speaking to each other.

"Luran ran quickly," one said.

"His bread is hard," said the other. "If he would take porridge, rather than bread, he would be quicker."

Luran, the crofter, heard this. He returned home. His wife asked

Seo agaibh stòiridh à Barraigh. 'S e an t-ainm a tha air 'Luran'. Tha e rud beag eadar-dhealaichte bhon stòiridh mu 'Luran' à Uibhist a Deas a bha againn an t-seachdain sa chaidh.

Bha uaireigin croitear ann. Bha e fhèin 's a' bhean aige a' fuireach ann an àite iomallach leotha fhèin. Bha fearann gu leòr aca, agus crodh. Cha robh dad a dh'ith orra.

Gach bliadhna, air Oidhche Shamhna, bha an croitear a' call mart. Cha robh fios aige dè bha a' tachairt. Bliadhna a bha seo, air Oidhche Shamhna, bha an croitear a' cumail faire air a chuid sprèidh. Chunnaic e dithis shìthichean a' tighinn. Thàinig iad a-steach don bhuaile. Chuir iad grèim air a' mhart a b' fheàrr. Dh'fhalbh iad leis.

A-mach air an tòir a chaidh an croitear. Ach cha robh e luath gu leòr. An dèidh greis, bha e claidhte. Stad e air toman. Bha na sìthichean air stad air an dearbh thoman. Bha iad a' bruidhinn ri chèile.

"Ruith Luran gu luath," thuirt fear.

"Tha a chuid arain cruaidh," thuirt am fear eile. "Nam biodh e a' gabhail brochan, seach aran, bhiodh e na bu luaithe."

Chuala an croitear, Luran, seo. Thill e dhachaigh. Dh'fhaighnich a bhean

him how he [had] got on. He told her everything.

“Didn’t you get the beast back?” she asked.

“No,” he replied, “but I learned something useful.”

“What?” said the wife.

“Well,” he replied, “you must give me porridge and milk every day for a year.”

“Good enough,” she said. And throughout the year she gave him porridge and milk every day.

When Halloween came again, he said to her, “I’m going to keep watch on the livestock.” He went out to the fold. The fairies came. They took with them the best cow.

The crofter ran after them. This time he was fast. He got hold of the cow. He took it home. The fairies didn’t bother him again.

And the moral of the tale? If a lad wants to be quick on his feet, he should take porridge and milk every day!

mar a chaidh dha. Dh’innis e dhi a h-uile nì.

“Nach d’ fhuair thu am beathach air ais?” dh’fhaighnich i.

“Cha d’ fhuair,” ars esan, “ach dh’ionnsaich mi rudeigin feumail.”

“Dè?” thuirt a’ bhean.

“Uill,” fhreagair e, “feumaidh tu brochan is bainne a thoirt dhomh gach latha airson bliadhna.”

“Math gu leòr,” ars ise. Agus fad na bliadhna thug i brochan is bainne dha gach latha.

Nuair a thàinig Oidhche Shamhna a-rithist, thuirt e rithe, “Tha mi a’ dol a chumail faire air an sprèidh.” Chaidh e amach don bhuaile. Thàinig na sìthichean. Thug iad leotha am mart a b’ fheàrr.

Ruith an croitear às an dèidh. An turas seo, bha e luath. Fhuair e grèim air a’ mhart. Thug e dhachaigh e. Cha do chuir na sìthichean dragh air tuilleadh.

Agus brìgh an sgeòil? Ma tha gille ag iarraidh a bhith luath air a chasan, bu chòir dha brochan is bainne a ghabhail gach latha!