

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 448 (which corresponds to Litir 752). Ruairidh can be contacted at rodny.macleane@bbc.co.uk.

I was telling you about Norman Morrison, Tormod an t-Seòladair, 'the adder man'. Norman thought that people were unreasonable about adders. They're timid, he said. They'll only bite somebody when they are scared.

Norman was keeping adders in a cage in his bedroom. One night, one got out of the cage. Next morning, Norman searched throughout the room. There was no sign of the adder. Ten days passed before Norman found it. It was still in his room. He was not at all worried that an adder had been free [to move around] in his bedroom.

Norman would play tricks at times. He was working as a night sergeant. He put an adder in a drawer in his desk. About one o'clock in the morning, a constable came in. He was preparing to go out on the streets.

'Come in, Jimmy,' Norman said to him. 'Warm yourself at the fire.' The constable sat in front of the fire. Norman went to his desk. He put the adder on the floor behind the officer. He asked the officer to put coal on the fire. The

Bha mi ag innse dhuibh mu Thormod MacIlleMhoire, Tormod an t-Seòladair – 'fear nan nathraichean'. Bha Tormod dhen bheachd gun robh daoine mì-reusanta mu nathraichean. Tha iad meata, thuirt e. Cha bhìd iad duine ach amhàin nuair a tha an t-eagal orra.

Bha Tormod a' cumail nathraichean ann an cèidse na sheòmar-cadail. Oidhche a bha seo, fhuair tè amach às a' chèidse. An-ath-mhadainn, rannsaich Tormod air feadh an t-seòmair. Cha robh sgeul air an nathair. Chaidh deich latha seachad mus do lorg Tormod i. Bha i fhathast anns an t-seòmair aige. Cha robh dragh sam bith air gun robh nathair air a bhith saor anns an t-seòmair-chadail aige.

Bhiodh Tormod ri plòigh aig amannan. Bha e ag obair mar shàirdseant na h-oidhche. Chuir e nathair ann an drathair san deasg aige. Mu uair sa mhadainn, thàinig constabal a-steach. Bha e a' dèanamh deiseil airson a dhol amach air na sràidean.

'Thig a-steach, a Sheumais,' thuirt Tormod ris. 'Dèan do gharadh aig an teine.' Shuidh an constabal air beulaibh an teine. Chaidh Tormod don deasg aige. Chuir e an nathair air an ùrlar air cùlaibh an oifigeir. Dh'iarr e air an oifigeir gual a chur air an teine. Bha soitheach a'

coal scuttle was behind him.

The officer turned. He saw the adder. He jumped from the chair in fright and he shouted, 'In the name of goodness, get me away from that dangerous creature!' Norman laughed. He picked up the adder. He put it back in the drawer.

The adders were helpful to him in his work as a policeman. Word got around that Norman was keeping adders in his pocket. If the town's youth were badly behaved, Norman would walk in among them. The young folk would flee! They were bold but they were scared of snakes.

Norman got work as an education officer. He was scrutinizing truancy. One day, he was in a headteacher's office. There was an adder in his pocket. The pupils left their classes. I'll tell you what happened after that in the next Litir.

ghuail air a chùlaibh.

Thionndaidh an t-oifigear. Chunn-
aic e an nathair. Leum e far an t-sèitheir
le eagal agus dh'èigh e, 'An ainm an
Àigh, leig mi air falbh bhon chreutair
chunnartach sin!' Rinn Tormod gàire
mhòr. Thog e an nathair. Chuir e air ais
san drathair i.

Bha na nathraichean taiceil dha na
obair mar phoileas. Fhuair an naidheachd
timcheall gun robh Tormod a' cumail
nathraichean na phòcaid. Nam biodh
òigrìdh a' bhaile buaireasach, bhiodh
Tormod a' coiseachd nam measg.
Bhiodh an fheadhainn òga a' teicheadh!
Bha iad dàna ach bha eagal orra ro
nathraichean.

Fhuair Tormod obair mar oifigear
foghlaim. Bha e a' toirt sùil air clann a
bha a' seachnadh na sgoile. Latha a bha
seo, bha e ann an oifis aig ceannard
sgoile. Bha nathair na phòcaid. Dh'fhàg
na sgoilearan na clasaichean aca. Innsidh
mi dhuibh dè thachair an uair sin anns an
ath Litir.