

**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 460 (which corresponds to Litir 764). Ruairidh can be contacted at [rodny.maclean@bbc.co.uk](mailto:rodny.maclean@bbc.co.uk).

*I like North Wales. The country is beautiful. And, like the people of the Gaidhealtachd, the people are very keen on stories. I'm going to tell you a story from Wales.*

*There is a village on the Llŷn Peninsula called Abersoch. There is a big house there called Castell March. That means [Horse's Castle]. It's not that a horse was living there. It was named for a man – March Amheirchion. March was living in the castle. He was one of King Arthur's knights. He got his name because his ears were like a horse's ears.*

*March hated his ears. He was keeping them hidden with his hair. His hair was long and red. From time to time he was getting a haircut. It was the youngest lad in the castle that was cutting his hair.*

*But the lads were disapp-earing afterwards. It wasn't known what happened to the lads, but there were rumours.*

*One day, the head cook, Derfel, spoke to the youngest lad. 'Islwyn, lad, come here,' he said.*

Is toigh leam ceann a tuath na Cuimrigh. Tha an dùthaich brèagha. Agus, coltach ri muinntir na Gàidhealtachd, tha na daoine gu math measail air sgeulachdan. Tha mi a' dol a dh'innse dhuibh sgeulachd às a' Chuimrigh.

Tha baile air Rubha Llŷn air a bheil Abersoch. Tha taigh mòr an sin air a bheil Castell March. Tha sin a' ciallachadh 'Caisteal Maire' no 'Caisteal Eich'. Chan e gun robh each a' fuireach ann. Chaidh ainmeachadh airson duine – March Amheirchion. Bha March a' fuireach anns a' chaisteal. 'S e fear de ridirean Rìgh Artair a bha ann. Fhuair e ainm oir bha a chluasan coltach ri cluasan eich.

Bha gràin aig March air na cluasan aige. Bha e gan cumail am falach le fhalt. Bha fhalt fada, ruadh. Bho àm gu àm bha e a' faighinn cliop. 'S e an gille a b' òige anns a' chaisteal a bha a' gearradh fhuilt.

Ach bha na gillean a' dol à fianais an dèidh làimhe. Cha robh fios dè thachair do na gillean, ach bha fathannan a' dol.

Latha a bha seo, bhruidhinn an t-àrd-chòcaire, Derfel, ris a' ghille a b' òige. 'Islwyn, a bhalaich, trobhad an seo,' thuirt e.

*'What can I do for you, Derfel?' asked the young lad.*

*'It's your turn next,' said Derfel to him.*

*'What do you mean?' said Islwyn.*

*'You are now the youngest lad. You'll be cutting March's hair next time,' the chief cook said.*

*'Here is my advice. Get out of here and get work somewhere else.'*

*'But I don't want to go anywhere else,' said the lad. 'I'm happy here. Perhaps sometime I'll get a senior position like you have yourself.'*

*'There's no hope whatsoever of that happening,' replied Derfel. 'Every young lad that cut March's hair, they disappeared afterwards. It's not known what happened to them. The same thing will happen to you. You must flee.'*

*Then the pair heard a footstep. Who walked into the kitchen but March. And the story will continue in the next Litir.*

*'Dè nì mi dhuibh, a Dherfel?' dh'fhaighnich an gille òg.*

*'S e do thuras fhèin an t-ath thuras,' thuirt Derfel ris.*

*'Dè tha sibh a' ciallachadh?' arsa Islwyn.*

*'Is tu an gille as òige a-nise. Bidh thusa a' gearradh falt Mharch an ath thuras,' thuirt an t-àrd-chòcaire.*

*'Seo mo chomhairle. Thalla às a seo agus faigh obair ann an àite eile.'*

*'Ach chan eil mi ag iarraidh falbh gu àite eile,' thuirt an gille. 'Tha mi sona an seo. 'S dòcha uaireigin gum faigh mi àrd dhreuchd mar a tha agaibh fhèin.'*

*'Chan eil dòchas sam bith ann gun tachair sin,' fhreagair Derfel. 'Gach gille òg a gheàrr falt Mharch, chaidh iad à fianais an dèidh làimhe. Chan eil fios dè thachair dhaibh. Tachraidh an aon rud riutsa. Feumaidh tu teicheadh.'*

*An uair sin, chuala an dithis ceum coise. Cò choisich a-steach don chidsin ach March. Agus leanaidh an sgeulachd anns an ath Litir.*