

## **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 502 (which corresponds to Litir 806). Ruairidh can be contacted at [rodny.maclean@bbc.co.uk](mailto:rodny.maclean@bbc.co.uk).

*There was at one time a fisherman. He and his wife were living in a thatched house next to the sea. They were very poor but they were happy enough.*

*One day, the old man went out to fish. He only got one small fish. But it was a strange fish. It was golden-coloured. The fish opened its mouth and it began to speak. And it spoke Gaelic!*

*'Nice man,' said the fish, 'don't kill me.' The fisherman was startled. No fish had ever spoken to him!*

*'Nice man,' said the fish again. 'Don't kill me. Throw me back into the sea. If you do that, you'll get a reward.'*

*'What reward?' the fisherman asked.*

*'Anything,' said the fish.*

*'Huh,' replied the fisherman, 'you're not worth much on the plate – you're too small. And I don't believe you have power like that.' He threw the fish back into the sea and he went home.*

*'Did you get a fish?' his wife said to him.*

*'Yes,' replied the fisherman.*

Bha uaireigin iasgair ann. Bha e fhèin agus a bhean a' fuireach ann an taigh-tughaidh an cois na mara. Bha iad gu math bochd ach bha iad sona gu leòr.

Latha a bha seo, chaidh am bodach a-mach a dh'iasgach. Cha d' fhuair e ach aon iasg beag. Agus 's e iasg neònach a bha ann. Bha dath an òir air. Dh'fhosgail an t-iasg a bheul agus thòisich e air bruidhinn. Agus bha Gàidhlig aige!

'A dhuine chòir,' thuirt an t-iasg, 'na marbh mi.' Chlisg an t-iasgair. Cha do bhruidhinn iasg ris riamh!

'A dhuine chòir,' thuirt an t-iasg a-rithist. 'Na marbh mi. Tilg mi air ais don mhuir. Ma nì thu sin, gheibh thu duais.'

'Dè an duais?' dh'fhaighnich an t-iasgair.

'Rud sam bith,' ars an t-iasg.

'Hut,' fhreagair an t-iasgair, 'chan fhiach thu mòran air an truinnsear – tha thu ro bheag. Agus chan eil mi a' creidsinn gu bheil cumhachd mar sin agad.' Thilg e an t-iasg air ais don mhuir, agus dh'fhalbh e dhachaigh.

'An d' fhuair thu iasg?' thuirt a bhean ris.

'Fhuair,' fhreagair an t-iasgair.

*'And where is it?' said his wife.*

*'Ach well,' said the fisherman, 'it was too small. And, to tell the truth, I didn't want to eat it anyway.'*

*'Why [is] that?' his wife asked. 'What was wrong with it?'*

*'Well, it was a golden fish,' said her husband. 'It appeared as if it were made of gold.'*

*'Of gold?' she said.*

*'Not only that,' continued her husband, 'but he was speaking to me – in Gaelic!'*

*His wife looked at him as if he had lost his senses. But the fisherman continued. 'It said to me – return me to the sea and you'll get a reward – any reward you wish.'*

*'And what did you ask for?'*

*'Nothing. It was only a wee fish.'*

*'Well,' said his wife, 'that's not good enough. There is no food in the house. Go back to the shore. Ask the fish to give us bread.'*

*The fisherman returned to the shore. And I'll tell you what happened next week.*

*'Agus càite a bheil e?' ars a bhean.*

*'Ach uill,' thuir an t-iasgair, 'bha e ro bheag. Agus, leis an fhìrinn innse, cha robh mi airson ithe co-dhiù.'*

*'Carson sin?' dh'fhaighnich a bhean. 'Dè bha ceàrr air?'*

*'Uill, 's e iasg òir a bh' ann,' thuir an duine aice. 'Bha coltas air gun robh e air a dhèanamh de dh'òr.'*

*'De dh'òr?' thuir i.*

*'Chan e sin a-mhàin,' lean an duine aice, 'ach bha e a' bruidhinn rium – ann an Gàidhlig!'*

*Choimhead a bhean air mar gun robh e às a rian. Ach chùm an t-iasgair a dol. 'Thuir e rium – cuir air ais don mhuir mi agus gheibh thu duais – duais sam bith a dh'iarras tu.'*

*'Agus dè dh'iarr thu?'*

*'Cha do dh'iarr dad. Cha robh ann ach iasg beag.'*

*'Uill,' thuir a bhean, 'chan eil sin math gu leòr. Chan eil biadh sam bith anns an taigh. Thalla air ais don chladach. Iarr air an iasg aran a thoirt dhuinn.'*

*Thill an t-iasgair don chladach. Agus innsidh mi dhuibh dè thachair an-ath-sheachdain.*