

# **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 515 (which corresponds to Litir 819). Ruairidh can be contacted at [rodny.maclean@bbc.co.uk](mailto:rodny.maclean@bbc.co.uk).*

*Hugh put a mark on the half-crown coin that his dog, Sandy, was taking to Dingwall. It was a scratch on the king's nose. One-eyed Paddy stole the money from the dog, as he would do every Friday.*

*When Sandy reached the shop, the money was not in the kerchief. The shopkeeper sent the dog home with tobacco and a message on a piece of paper – 'it was stolen again'.*

*A few days later, One-eyed Paddy came into the shop. He needed matches. He put a half-crown on the counter. The shopkeeper gave him change and Paddy left.*

*The shopkeeper took the half-crown coin to the window. In the light, he saw a new scratch on the king's nose. Paddy was the thief! He wrote a letter to Hugh.*

*When Hugh read the letter, he smiled. When Friday came, instead of a half-crown, Hugh put a small round stone into the kerchief. It was accompanied by a piece of paper. On the paper, the following was written: 'To Paddy, the thief. If*

Chuir Ùisdean comharra air a' bhonn leth-chrùn a bha an cù aige, Sandaidh, a' toirt a dh'Inbhir Pheofharain. 'S e sgrìob a bha ann, air sròn an rìgh. Ghoid Padaidh Cam an t-airgead bhon chù, mar a bhitheadh e a h-uile Dihaoine.

Nuair a ràinig Sandaidh a' bhùth, cha robh an t-airgead anns an nèapraigear. Chuir fear na bùtha an cù dhachaigh le tombaca agus teachdaireachd air pìos pàipeir – 'chaidh a ghoid a-rithist'.

Beagan làithean an dèidh sin, thàinig Padaidh Cam a-steach don bhùth. Bha e feumach air maidsichean. Chuir e leth-chrùn air a' chunntair. Thug fear na bùtha iomlaid dha agus dh'fhalbh Padaidh.

Thug fear na bùtha am bonn leth-chrùn chun na h-uinneig. Anns an t-solas, chunnaic e sgrìob ùr air sròn an rìgh. B' e Padaidh am mèirleach! Sgrìobh e litir gu Ùisdean.

Nuair a leugh Ùisdean an litir, rinn e gàire. Nuair a thàinig Dihaoine, an àite bonn leth-chrùn, chuir Ùisdean clach bheag chruinn don nèapraigear. Bha pìos pàipeir na cois. Sgrìobhte air a' phàipeir, bha seo: 'Gu Padaidh, am mèirleach. Ma thachras mèirle a-rithist,

*a robbery happens again, you'll suffer big-time!*

*Sandy left on Friday morning. One-eyed Paddy was waiting for him. 'Come here,' he said, 'I've got a biscuit for you.' Sandy went to Paddy. Paddy untied the kerchief. There was only a small round stone in it, and a piece of paper.*

*Now, One-eyed Paddy couldn't read. Thus, he didn't understand what was written. But he understood that there was a stone in place of a half-crown. Paddy was fearful that Hugh knew everything.*

*The following Friday, Hugh sent the dog to Dingwall. But he followed him this time. The dog stopped near Paddy's house. He was waiting for his biscuit. But Paddy was inside the house. The curtains were closed. Hugh now knew for sure who was responsible for the thieving.*

*For years, the dog would take tobacco home every Friday – Sandy and Sandy's son. Paddy never went near the dogs. That continued until Hugh died – at the age of forty, from lung cancer.*

bidh thu a' fulang gu mòr!

Dh'fhalbh Sandaidh madainn Dihaoine. Bha Padaidh Cam a' feitheamh ris. 'Trobad seo,' thuir e, 'tha briosgaid agam dhut.' Chaidh Sandaidh gu Padaidh. Dh'fhuasgail Padaidh an nèapraigear. Cha robh ach clach bheag chruinn ann, agus pìos pàipeir.

Nise, cha robh comas leughaidh aig Padaidh Cam. Mar sin, cha do thuig e na bha sgrìobhte. Ach thuig e gun robh clach ann an àite leth-chrùn. Bha an t-eagal air Padaidh gun robh fios aig Ùisdean air a h-uile càil.

Dihaoine às dèidh sin, chuir Ùisdean an cù a dh'Inbhir Pheofharain. Ach lean e air an turas seo. Stad an cù faisg air taigh Phadaidh. Bha e a' feitheamh ris a' bhriosgaid aige. Ach bha Padaidh am broinn an taighe. Bha na cùirtearan dùinte. Bha fios le cinnt aig Ùisdean a-nise cò a bu choireach ris a' mhèirle.

Airson bhliadhnaichean, bhiodh an cù a' toirt tombaca dhachaigh a h-uile Dihaoine – Sandaidh agus an uair sin mac Shandaidh. Cha deach Padaidh faisg air na coin. Lean sin gus an do chaochail Ùisdean – aig aois ceathrad, le aillse sgamhain.