

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 571 (which corresponds to Litir 875). Ruairidh can be contacted at rodny.maclean@bbc.co.uk.

I was telling you about the Rev. John Morrison, minister at Petty. He had the second sight. He was an amazing man. He was a poet and a fiddler. One day, some women from Fisherton near Petty were returning home. They had been selling fish in Inverness. On the way, they stopped at an inn. They were drunk.

At that time, the main road was going past the Petty manse. The minister saw the women. He went out to scold them. He had a fiddle in his hand. One of the women asked him to play a tune. He played a tune. The women danced on the road.

The elders were not pleased about it. One of them went to the manse to scold the minister.

'How could I refuse her?' said Mr Morrison. 'She won't see another week in this world.' As the minister said, within a few days, the woman was dead.

Water was obtained for the manse from a well. The path between the manse and the well went through the graveyard. It was

Bha mi ag innse dhuibh mun Urramach Iain Moireasdan, ministear Pheitidh. Bha an dà-shealladh aige. 'S e duine iongantach a bha ann. Bha e na bhàrd agus na fhìdhlear. Latha a bha seo, bha boireannaich à Baile nan Iasgairean faisg air Peitidh a' tilleadh dhachaigh. Bha iad air a bhith a' reic èisg ann an Inbhir Nis. Air an rathad, stad iad aig taigh-seinnse. Bha smùid orra.

Aig an àm sin, bha an rathad mòr a' dol seachad air mansa Pheitidh. Chunnaic am ministear na boireannaich. Chaidh e a-mach airson trod riutha. Bha fìdheall na làimh. Dh'iarr tè de na boireannaich air port a chluich. Chluich e port. Rinn na boireannaich dannsa air an rathad.

Cha robh na h-èildearan toilichte mu dheidhinn. Chaidh fear dhiubh don mhansa airson trod ris a' mhinistear.

'Ciamar a b' urrainn dhomh a diùltadh?' thuirt Mgr Moireasdan. 'Chan fhaic i seachdain eile anns an t-saoghal seo.' Mar a thuirt am ministear, taobh a-staigh beagan làithean, bha am boireannach marbh.

Bhathar a' faighinn uisge airson a' mhansa à tobar. Bha an rathad eadar am mansa agus an tobar a' dol tron chladh. Bha e na chleachdadh a bhith a' faighinn

the custom to get in a pitcher of water on Saturday night. Usually, the servants were not going to the well on the Sabbath.

One particular Saturday night, however, they forgot to fill the pitcher with water. And on Sunday afternoon, after sunset, the minister was thirsty. One of his servants went to the well, in the darkness, to get water. But she did not return as expected.

'Where is my glass of water?' asked the minister of the other servant.

'You'll get it in a moment, sir,' said the young woman.

'No I won't,' replied the minister. 'The pitcher is broken. The water is lost. Go to the graveyard and help your friend. She fell into a newly-dug grave in the darkness.'

The girl went to the graveyard. She found the other girl. She was trying to get out of the grave. Mr Morrison 'saw' the happening because he had the second-sight.

a-staigh crogan uisge oidhche Shathairne. Mar bu trice, cha robh na searbhantan a' dol don tobar air an t-Sàbaid.

Oidhche Shathairne a bha seo, ge-tà, dhìochuimhnich iad an crogan a lìonadh le uisge. Agus feasgar na Sàbaid, an dèidh dol-fodha na grèine, bha am pathadh air a' mhinistear. Chaidh tè de na searbhantan aige don tobar, anns an dorchadas, airson uisge fhaighinn. Ach cha do thill i mar a bha dùil.

'Càite a bheil mo ghlainne uisge?' dh'fhaighnich am ministear dhen t-searbhant eile.

'Gheibh sibh ann an tiotan i, a mhaighstir,' thuirt an tè òg.

'Chan fhaigh,' fhreagair am ministear. 'Tha an crogan briste. Tha an t-uisge air chall. Thalla don chladh agus cuidich do charaid. Thuit i a-steach a dh'uaigh ùr anns an dorchadas.'

Dh'fhalbh an nighean don chladh. Lorg i an tèile. Bha i a' feuchainn ri faighinn a-mach às an uaigh. 'Chunnaic' Mgr Moireasdan an tachartas oir bha an dà-shealladh aige.