

Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh

le Ruairidh MacIlleathain

Caor, Caoir is Caorain

A special programme, in the form of a “letter”, designed for Gaelic learners who already have some knowledge of the language. A short vocabulary and comments on points of grammar and figures of speech are included with the text. If you have comments, Ruairidh can be contacted at rodny.macleon@bbc.co.uk. This is Litir 951. Note that there is also a simplified version called An Litir Bheag which is likewise available on the BBC website. Litir Bheag 647 corresponds to Litir 951.

Tha mi a’ dol a thòiseachadh na Litreach seo le seanfhacal. **Cha tuit caoran à cliabh falamh.** *A small peat will not fall from an empty creel.* Gu gnàthasach, tha e a’ ciallachadh ‘don’t expect wise words from an empty head’. **Cha tig às a’ phoit ach an toit a bhios innte.** Cha tuit caoran à cliabh falamh.

Tha am facal *caoran* car inntinneach. Tha e a’ tighinn à *caor* no *caoir* a tha a’ ciallachadh rudeigin às an tig solas no teas, no an dà chuid – coltach ri èibhleag ann an teine. ’S e caoran pìos mòine a tha a’ deàlradh ann an teine. Ach tha am facal a’ seasamh cuideachd airson dearc dearg coltach ris an fheadhainn a chithear air craobh-chaorainn. Tuigidh sibh carson a tha sinn a’ gabhail ‘caorann’ air a’ chraoibh sin.

Tha tòrr fhaclan anns na faclair co-cheangailte ri caor no caoir, agus tha solas no deàlradh co-cheangailte riutha ann an dòigh air choreigin. Tha *caoir-bianag* a’ ciallachadh ‘phosphorescence in the sea’. Tha *caoir-sholas* a’ ciallachadh ‘gleaming light’. Tha *caoir-gheal* a’ ciallachadh ‘white crest of waves in a gale’; mar bhuaidhair, tha *caoir-gheal* cuideachd a’ ciallachadh ‘white hot’ no ‘incandescent’. *Caoir-gheal*. Agus tha *caoran-èisg* a’ ciallachadh ‘small shoal of fish’. Tha sin furasta a thuigsinn, nach eil? Bidh èisg a’ deàlradh ann an solas na grèine nuair a tha iad a’ gluasad ann an sgaoth.

Leis gun robh daoine a’ cleachdadh an fhacail *caor* no *caoran* ann an co-cheangail ri measan na craoibhe-caorainn, tha am facal a-nise a’ seasamh airson ‘dearc’ no *berry* ann am Beurla, eadhon ged nach bitheadh e dearg. Gu tric tha e a’ nochdadh san dreach *caora*. Mar eisimpleir *caora-dhromain* ‘elderberry’, *caora-staoin* ‘juniper berry’, *caora-caothaich* ‘tutsan’ agus *caora-feannaig* no *caora-fithich* ‘crowberry’. Agus chuala mi ann an Leòdhas agus àite no dhà eile *caora-mhitheig* no *caora-mhitheag* airson ‘blaeberry’.

Tha am facal *caorachan* ann an ainmean-àite Gàidhlig, mar eisimpleir ann an Sgùrr a’ Chaorachain air a’ Chomraich ann an Siorrachd Rois. Tha sin a’ ciallachadh ‘the peak of the gleaming torrent’. Nuair a tha uisge a’ sruthadh far beinn air latha dorch, tha na sruthan car coltach ri solais oir tha iad cho bàn. Solas – caor.

Gu tuath air a’ Chomraich tha Coire Chaorachain agus Gleann Chaorachain ann an sgìre an Locha Bhig. Tha mi an dùil gur e an aon chiall a th’ orra. Agus gu sear air a’ Chomraich anns na beanntan deas air Achadh nan Seileach, tha Toll a’ Chaorachain ‘the deep corrie of the gleaming torrent’. Toll a’ Chaorachain.

Mu dheireadh, seo agaibh abairt car inntinneach a lorg mi anns an Fhaclair Bheag air an eadar-lìon – agus goireas fìor-mhath a th' ann! **Ràinig e aois a' chaorain.** *He has reached the age of a little peat.* Ràinig e aois a' chaorain.

Dè fon ghrèin a tha sin a' ciallachadh?! Uill, tha e a' tighinn bho sheann chleachdadh aig a' Bhliadhna Ùir, nuair a chuireadh pàrant caoran a-steach a stocainn aig neach òg a bha faisg air tighinn gu ìre. Tha e a' ciallachadh '*he's grown up now, he's no longer a child*'. Ràinig e aois a' chaorain.

Tha mi an dòchas gun do chòrd ar turas timcheall *caor* is *caoran* ribh. Mar sin leibh an-dràsta.

* * * * *

Faclan na Litreach: èibhleag: *blazing coal, ember*; sgìre an Locha Bhig: *the area of Little Loch Broom (W. Ross)*; ciall: *meaning*.

Abairtean na Litreach: rudeigin às an tig solas no teas, no an dà chuid: *something from which light or heat, or both, comes*; pìos mòine a tha a' deàlradh ann an teine: *a piece of peat that shines in a fire*; a' seasamh cuideachd airson dearc dearg coltach ris an fheadhainn a chithear air craobh-chaorainn: *also stands for a red berry like those seen on a rowan tree*; co-cheangailte riutha ann an dòigh air choreigin: *linked to them in some way or another*; bidh èisg a' deàlradh ann an solas na grèine nuair a tha iad a' gluasad ann an sgaoth: *fish shine in sunlight when they are moving in a shoal*; eadhon ged nach bitheadh e dearg: *even if it isn't red*; nuair a tha uisge a' sruthadh far beinn air latha dorch: *when water is streaming off a mountain on a dark day*; tha na sruthan car coltach ri solais air a' bheinn: *the streams are quite like lights on the mountain*; gu sear air a' Chomraich anns na beanntan deas air Achadh nan Seileach: *east of Applecross in the mountains south of Achnashellach*; goireas fìor-mhath a th' ann: *[it's] an excellent resource*; bho sheann chleachdadh aig a' Bhliadhna Ùir: *from an old practice at New Year*; nuair a chuireadh pàrant caoran a-steach a stocainn aig neach òg a bha faisg air tighinn gu ìre: *when a parent would put a small peat in the stocking of a young person who was approaching maturity*; tha mi an dòchas gun do chòrd ar turas timcheall X: *I hope you enjoyed our journey around X*.

Puing-chànain na Litreach: **Ràinig e aois a' chaorain.** *He has reached the age of a little peat.* *This saying apparently comes from an old practice among the Gaels to put a peat in the New Year stocking of a teenager who has almost reached adulthood. If you have reached aois a' chaorain, you are nearly an adult.*

Seanfhaclan na Litreach: **Cha tuit caoran à cliabh falamh:** *a small peat will not fall from an empty creel.* **Cha tig às a' phoit ach an toit a bhios innte:** *nothing more will come from the pot other than the vapour that's in it.*

Tha "Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh" air a maoinachadh le MG ALBA