

“Hot Pot IAN”

Mark Beirne tells this story as well as it is possible to tell.

I will try to relay it as best I can.

The central character is once again, Ian Beirne, one of Boyle Celtic’s finest.

We go back to when Ian was in his early twenties. He had started work and was away from home a fair bit. Everybody worked hard in the eighties (i’m told) and money was worth something. People in Boyle were proud of their homes and always wanted to do little improvements whenever they could. Doris and Mark decided that they wanted to do up their kitchen. The decision was made that they would get “lino”. Lino was expensive in those days and it was quite an investment for any family to undertake. For those younger than me who might not understand what lino is here’s the wikipedia link. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Linoleum>

All the measurements were taken. The favoured design was chosen from the extensive range in Taylors. Mark and Doris saved up for many weeks and finally the weekend came for the installation to take place. Work started early on the Saturday morning. Ian was away working but was expected back that night. It would a nice surprise for him to see the kitchen all done.

Everybody chipped in. All of the furniture had to be moved out first. The lino was rolled out, measured up, cut and fitted. The workers stood back and admired their work. Next they put everything back in its place. Doris prepared a stew and put the pot up on the range. The workers were looking forward to a nice dinner in the newly floored kitchen. Mark then invited all the family and helpers to join himself and Doris for a few drinks to celebrate their succesful new investment and reward them all for their help. In a couple of hours they would all return and tuck into a lovely plate of stew. As they pulled the door behind them, they took another look at the job and everything was good in the world.

Ian arrived into Boyle on the bus. He had 2 buses to get in order to get home. I believe the change was in Athlone. He was famished by the time he got to Termon. As he pushed the front door open the scent that hit his nostrils, excited him like a hound at the head of a hunt. He made a bee line for the kitchen, took the lid off the pot and his eyes lit up. He wanted to get a plate but his rumbling stomach demanded that he eat immediately. A large spoon was left beside the pot. He took a large mouthful and it was a gorgeous stew. The range was hot though and it was akward to reach across the pot. Whoever had left the strategically placed spoon had kindly left a tea-towel also. “I’ll lift it down on the floor”, thought Ian Aristotle, and down he took it. “Oh yes, that’s much better”, he thought as he fired mouthfuls of stew into him. He ate away happily for a good ten minutes. “I see Mam done the floor” he said to himself. “Very nice”, he noted.

Having filled his belly, Ian lifted the pot back up on the range and replaced the spoon and tea-towel where he had found them. He replaced the lid and you’d hardly know he’d been there at all. He turned to go to his room, but as he turned, his eyes fell on an apocalyptic total eclipse sitting in the middle of the kitchen floor. A perfect circle but as black as the hob of hell. His blood ran cold. The lovely stew now felt like he’d eaten a bucket of sawdust. The gravity of his situation dawned on him. It was best to flee. Doris would not be happy and he’d better not be in the locality when she got home.

Ian stayed out of Doris’ way for days!