

excerpt from 'Ghosts on Kirwan's Lane'

by Neil McCarthy

- **Invasion**

- A: What are ye having?
- B: I'll get these!
- C: You will not, this is my round!
- D: Go away out of that, it's my turn.
- A: Don't be daft, will ye sit down! I'm getting these.
- C: No, no, Nuala, no, it's my round.
- B: It is not. Sure didn't you get the last?
- A: Look, I'm standing here now! What are ye drinking?!
- D: Ah now, there's no need to do that. Here, lookit.
- A: Diet 7-Up please, Caroline. And a mango whatchmacallit.
- C: You're dress is absolutely fabulous!
- B: Vodka and splash for me so.
- D: Thank you very much! It's Debenham's.
- C: It's not!
- D: It is.
- C: It's absolutely fabulous.
- B: Fabulous, Clare.
- A: What are you drinking Shelley?
- C: I'll have... a glass of chardonnay. Isn't her dress fabulous?
- A: Glass of chardonnay too, Caroline. Oh my God, it's only gorgeous!
- C: It's Debenham's.
- A: Is it?
- D: It is. On sale too.
- A: Go away.

- D: No word of a lie. I got it for the Races last year but never went.
- A: Oh it's fabulous. How much is that Caroline?
- B: Here, take that.
- A: Will you put that away, I'm getting these.
- B: For God's sake, you're an awful one.

- **Ghosts**

I was having a pint in what used to be The Castle,
 having just had lunch in what used to be the Augustine Cafe.
 I then walked out to Salthill, past what used to be Mulligans,
 Apostasy, Le Graal, Taylors, The Oasis and CJ's nightclub.
 I left and ducked into what used to be the Promenade Hotel and
 put ten euro on what used to be a good Brazil team to win the
 World Cup.

Later, I took a taxi back to my friends house in Knocknacarra,
 down the Clydebaun Road, past what used to be nothing.

- **Taxi Driver**

While waiting, I thought about a chat I could have with the taxi
 driver,
 trying to avoid that 'have you been busy?' guff, or the 'bet you're
 glad of the rain?'

for the two-hundreth time this weekend.

When I sat in, he was listening to a podcast of a gospel church
 preacher

prophesising the planned mass murder of three billion people
 through

controlled diseases and controlled wars, to ensure survival of the
 fittest.

He probably wouldn't have given a flying fuck about the Races
 had I brought it up.

So I asked him instead where he was from. He glanced across and said

“I am from Liberia”, for probably the two-hundredth time this weekend.

