

Part One

The Rangers End

An extract from 'Chapter One - Another Planet'

[Imagine the scene, Kevin and his mates are entering Ibrox stadium and the atmosphere's building...]

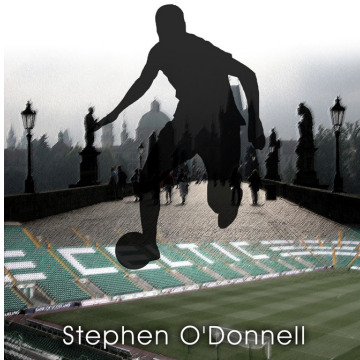
Up the stair, and as you emerge into the upper tier, you're hit by a wall of sound. The Rangers fans are right in your face, and they're making some fuckin racket, I'll gie them that. We're special guests and we know it because on any other day this place has aw the atmosphere of a lending library. Michael and I move along to our seats and he unwraps his tricolour. I take an end and immediately we're shouting away like a pair ay maddies: IRA! All the way! Fuck the Queen and the UDA! IRA! All the way! Fuck the Queen and the UDA! What can I say, this is no place for a sensible, sit-down discussion on cross-community relations in the North of Ireland. It's another world we've entered here, a cultural black hole, a place where the laws of human society break down and are flung into reverse. And it's time to revel in the madness and the badness of it all. IRA! All the way! Fuck the Queen and the UDA! My eyes pick out two other idiots on the opposite side, waving a Union Jack and giein us dogs' abuse, and I imagine them shouting the exact same thing, only the other way about: UDA! All the way! Fuck the Pope and the IRA! UDA! All the way! Fuck the Pope and the IRA! I admit, it's no exactly the proudest moment ay my life.

The noise around us is unfuckinbelievable and we're still shouting and singing at the top ay our voices and pointing, as the players finish their warm-up and jog off. Everywhere people are shouting and bawling. The Huns are piping up with: Hello hello, we are the Billy Boys. But coming down from the top of the stand, and all around us, they're totally drowned out by:

FOR IT'S A GRAND OLD TEAM TO PLAY FOR
Hello Hello You'll know us by our noise
AND IT'S A GRAND OLD TEAM TO SEE
We're up to our knees in Fenian blood
AND IF! YOU KNOW! THE HISTORY!
Surrender or you'll die
IT'S ENOUGH TO MAKE YOUR HEART GO-O-O-O!!!

So much for the half-hearted attempts to clamp down on the bigoted songs...

PARADISE ROAD



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