

## Talkin' Cavan

Tim O'Brien

A while ago I chanced to roam to the place my great grandad called home  
It wasn't that much I saw that day, but I learned I whole lot along the way  
I was goin' to Ireland retracing my family footsteps diggin' up roots  
You could call 'em tubers

The closer to the root of my family tree, the more people seemed to look like me  
Saw a sign said Mollie O'Brien's bar, I knew right then I couldn't be that far  
I went in there and asked for beer, he pours this black stuff, he says, 'cheers'  
'Guinness gives you strength', he said, I'll tell you friends it's like drinkin' bread  
There's a loaf in every pint I was feelin' strong felt like I wanted to sing

My whistle was wet and my tongue was loose  
When the barman asked how come I'd choose  
To travel such a long, long way on such a cold and rainy day  
I said, 'I'm goin' up to Kingscourt town. That's in County Cavan, to look around.  
My great grandaddy came from there.  
I want to see if the old home place is still there.'  
Well he shook his head up and down  
And then side to side and then he turned around and said  
'A Cavan man then you know, a lot of people wouldn't admit to that'

I figured I'd save a little hassle so I booked a room nearby in a fancy castle  
Had a hard time gettin' my dinner there  
It was full of these people with light blonde hair  
Danish tourists two big busloads of 'em  
Now the owner of the place, his hair was black  
When I talked to him, I didn't get much back  
His people are what you call 'west Brits'  
They're the ones that treated my people like dirt  
That's what lead to the Irish civil war, I didn't know I'd come back for a little bit more  
His nose was way up in the air but he took my money all the same

That night I dreamed I saw the ghost of the one I'd rather have as host  
It was Tom O'Brien walkin' round the cabin, there in Kingscourt town in County Cavan  
Then the very next day in the hardware store  
I found a cousin ten times removed or more  
But he was no apparition, he wasn't a haint he was sellin' nuts and bolts and paint  
I told him about our family connection, and he kinda stood there still, reflectin'

I could tell he wasn't that much impressed when he asked me with nary  
a trace of jest

He said, 'How exactly may I help you sir?'

I just bought some nails and got the hell out of there

Then later that day after some detection, I found the lane in the rural  
section

It matched the picture in my dad's scrap book

And my heart beat faster as I drove to look

The sun burst through the clouds just then as I gazed at the current  
residents

It was a little sheep dog and an old milk cow

Yeah the old home place is an old barn now

It's ashes to ashes dust to dust thatched roof to tin roof and tin roof  
to rust