

Don Rocca's next one.... Enjoy.

WHERE HAVE ALL THE GIFTS GONE?

Winter 1978

There it was, our first nineteen-inch colour television, from DID electrical North Frederick Street Dublin. We sat on our mock leather Roma suite, with dinner trays on our laps, waiting for the new TV to warm up. Our girls Bernice and Camille preferred sitting on the floor. We had RTE 1 and 2 plus BBC1 and 2. After a while the room lit up in glorious colour. I can't remember what we watched, but possibly Charlie's Angels, which the girls loved, as they were both members of the Claremont Charlie's Angels club. The club was formed by one of their friends, Adelaide Fox. She was the leader of the pack and played the part of Farrah Fawcett Major. Bernice and her friend Joan Keegan shared Jaclyn Smith's part and Camille and her friend Frances Keegan shared Kate Jackson's part.

I do remember one of the programs that night triggered a memory of a night out in Tokyo 1965.

Me, and some of my shipmates, were drinking in a downtown bar, when someone suggested it would be a good idea if we bought presents, as the ship was scheduled to sail the following day. So off we traipsed to one of the big Tokyo late night stores, needless to say, all in great form, courtesy of Mizuta Sake.

I wound up talking to two female assistants in the Kimono section of the store. Initially I wondered why they were giggling, till I realised they thought it amusing that a six-foot one-inch foreigner, would be looking at Kimonos. This and Mizuta Saki had the effect of me hamming it up a bit. They insisted I try on various Kimonos, and I'm not sure they understood I wanted one for a girl. In the end I bought one that I thought looked girlie enough, though I feared it might be a teeny bit too long. Unfortunately, at voyages end, fear turned to reality!

Anyway, back to Glasnevin 1978.

"Rita, I never see you wearing that lovely Kimono I bought you in Tokyo?"

"Donal you asked me that question in 1973 and the answer is still the same."

"Oh, did I?", I lied. "And Rita what was the answer?"

"It looked like a shroud for a man on stilts!"

"Oh, I'm sorry to hear that Rita"

There was silence for a while and being on a roll I said. "Rita, I never see you wear that lovely silk scarf I bought you in Amsterdam in 1961. I remember it had a lovely sailing ship on it."

"Oh, dear God, lovely silk scarf with sailing ship. Even the prostitutes walking the streets of Pigalle in Paris would have turned their noses up at it."

"Oh!! I said pretending to be hurt....." Sorry to hear that, Rita."

This had the effect of eyes being rolled to Heaven. More silence till I couldn't resist.

"Rita?"

"What?"

"What about that lovely lace Arab scarf I bought you in Tripoli in 1964? That was really nice. Don't you think it was really nice?"

"Oh, dear God.... really nice?"

"Donal do you think I was going to walk around Dublin looking like Sinbad the sailor's girlfriend in Baghdad city, a thousand years ago?"

"Oh, I'm sorry to hear that Rita" I lied again, trying not to laugh.

More silence as we watched our new DID colour TV.

"So where are they now Rita?"

"Oh, sweet J....us!"

“Well, the Kimono is now reposing deep inside the Dunsink Dump, and the girls wore the scarves when they went out TRICK OR TREATING last Halloween.”

Suddenly Camille and Bernice came to life.

“They were from Amsterdam and Tripoli? How cool is that?”

“There you are Rita, I knew I bought well” I said, as I grabbed her around the waist.