



Eating Green

by Teresa Bateman



Art by Sheila Bailey

MORNA THE PINE MARTEN crept silently on four soft paws, following something moving through the tall green grass of the Irish countryside.

Was it a mouse? A bird?

POUNCE!

“*Faith and begorrah!*” the creature shouted.

Wait. This prey had neither fur nor feathers. It was a wee little man dressed all in green.

Morna gave a toothy grin. “Hello, lunch,” she said.

“My name is Davin, not lunch,” the leprechaun grumbled, brushing off his coat.

“You’re ‘lunch’ to me,” Morna replied, slinking her long furry body around him. “I’ll use your shoelaces to floss my teeth afterwards.”

The little man gazed up with a pleading look in his eyes.

Table for two, quick, nephew! Me and me wee friend are starvin’.

Well, if it isn’t Uncle Tavish!



“Please don’t eat me. Today is Saint Patrick’s Day, and my brothers and I have been preparing a feast. If you’re hungry, join us. It would be a great pity to miss it.”

“Brothers?” asked Morna, eyes gleaming. “There are more of you?”

“Indeed, I come from a large clan,” Davin replied, “and each of us has been preparing a special dish for our holiday meal.”

Ah, thought Morna. I can eat their

feast, then have the leprechauns for dessert!

“What might you be preparing?” she asked.

“Something green, of course,” Davin replied.

“Salads and such?” Morna sometimes ate vegetables, although she preferred meat.

“Nothing so obvious,” Davin assured her. “Michael has been working on a green pork dish. We’ve



Wee friend!



Aye, Hamish is small for a pine marten—a weasel-like animal from Ireland or Scotland. But still, we dinna wanna see him hangry!



Miro, I’m pleading with you—begging you—make your food fast!



Non! Chef Miro never makes zee fast food!



been using the meat as a doormat for the past month. It's now a fine furry green, with an aroma that cannot be described."

"Urp," said Morna, her lips curling at the thought.

"Sean has been dunking loaves of soda bread in water, then leaving them out on the windowsill, spritzing them with spit every hour or so. They're as green as emeralds now. I think I saw one move!"

"Ewww," said Morna, swallowing painfully.

"And the eggs! We buried them in the ground a year ago. It's time to

dig them up. They should be fine and moldy green by now."

"Gaaaah," Morna groaned, covering her muzzle with her paws.

"Dougal milked a cow four months ago, then put the milk out in the sun. First it curdled, then it stank, but now it's a pure sweet green, with something wiggling around inside it."

"AAAAGH." Morna could feel a squirming in her own stomach to match the one Davin was describing.

"Everything is nearly ready," Davin continued, "I even had a taste

Exactly which country 'er ye from, Hamish, Ireland or Scotland?



Dunno. I'm jest a weasel.



Right this way to our biggest table.



RUN! ScoopBot is spritzing—spraying—hot fudge again!

this morning while my brothers weren't looking. Aye, it's a grand feast indeed. I can feel the food moving around inside me like a giant worm settling in for a happy stay. Come home with me and you can try it, too."

At that Morna dashed off, her face as green as everything Davin had described.

The leprechaun grinned and

settled his hat back on his head as he hurried home, thinking of the feast that was to come. There would be no green pork nor any of the horrible food of which he'd spoken. Still, cabbage was a lovely shade of green, and they'd have plenty of that with their corned beef.

And the best part of the meal, of course, would be eating it, not being it. 🐜



Aye! Take 'em dun, Hamish!



Alors! Ziss solves my robot problem.

