



Dictionaries of the Scots Language
<https://dsl.ac.uk>

30 November 2021

Ashet

Liz Lochhead

On yon Zoom
the ither day a wee bit friendly argie-bargie stertit up
about whit exactly *wis*
an ashet
when it wis at hame? Some wid huv it
it wis a muckle-great delft platter for servin,
say, a hail gigot o mutton roastit wi aw the trimmins
an ithers insistit, naw it wis nuthin but a
humble enamel pie-dish
sich as ye'd mibbe mak a shepherd's pie in, or yaise
for reheatin (o aye, in a gey hoat oven!)
yesterday's left-ower stovies or day-afore-peyday pan-haggis
(never ever cryin that *skirlie*, nut ata,
no here in Glesca, no in the West.)

There's folk wouldnae gie houseroom
to this shabby aul chrome-platit slottit-spoon
wi hardly a scrap o rid or black pent left on its widden haunle, but –
it was ma mither's – I haud it in ma haun wi ma
heid fu o mince an reminiscence, thinkin
how *a clock* could be a clock or a black beetle
how *a sair heid* is a sair heid but *a sair haun* is a piece
an jam -- oh as long's the slice o white-breid's a big thick slab
an the jam rid as strawberry or rasp (*the blood, the bandage*) --
an I'm wonderin
-- since the press in ma kitchen contains *baith*
a chippt bog-standard wee white pie-dish, an
thon oval antique art-nouveau *losol-ware tulip* mackintosh-y servan-dish
I got for a shillin in the kirk jumble-sale in the sixties --
pie-dish or *platter*? Which is the classic *ashet*?

Och, *settle an argument with a friend*, wee bit o
elementary detective work in a dictionar an here, it

turns oot it's *no* either/or but baith/and
-- which is even better (for *mair* is ayeweys mair than *less*
in ma book, eh no?)

An I'll tell ye wan thing for shair:
see ma brand-new winterdykes
I ordered online an that arrived the day fae Amazon
an might no be made o wid but raither
o clean plastic an lightweight metal
an huv an awfy well-designed an nifty wey
o foldin doon tae nuthin to store gey neatly in the loaby press
or o openin oot lik wings
and takin a loat mair claes than ma pulley ever could?
Well, I tell ye, it'll aye be ma
winterdykes.

Commissioned by Dictionaries of the Scots Language in celebration of Scots and its extensive history
as a lasting tribute to *A Dictionary of the Older Scottish Tongue* and all those involved in its making.
For further background, see <https://dsl.ac.uk/aitken100/>.