

# The Cranberries – 'In The End' review

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Credit: Getty

**Score** ★★★★★

**This posthumous album, partly recorded before the tragic death of Dolores O'Riordan, and described as a "gift" from her, sees the band's career go full-circle**

So many posthumous releases feel as grubby as Pete Doherty's breakfast – some vocals recorded in the shower and shelved for being chronically tuneless get cobbled together into something approaching an album by a bunch of accountants with an estate of exorbitant debts to clear, and a legend gets muddied against their (last) will. So it's a relief to find that 'In The End' – a farewell to Celtic waft-rockers [The Cranberries](#) – was well underway before the tragic death of singer Dolores O'Riordan last January.

The demo vocals she'd already recorded are pretty much album-ready, their slightly unpolished edge even helping throw back to the band's 1992 debut album 'Everybody Else Is Doing It, So Why Can't We?', home to the immaculate-if-overplayed 'Linger'. It's rare indeed that a farewell brings a career so neatly full-circle.

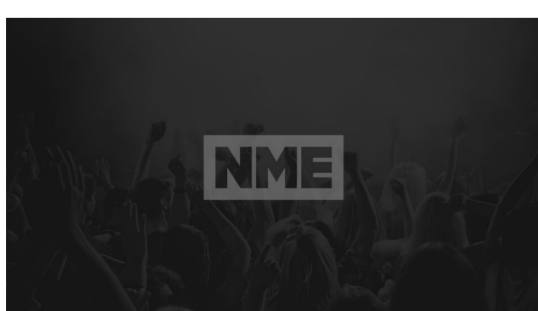
**READ MORE:** [The Cranberries on their final album: "It's like a little gift Dolores left behind"](#)

Sentiment aside, your response to The Cranberries has, traditionally, reflected your views on O'Riordan's idiosyncratic style. It's always the character and core of The Cranberries, and when she here deploys her trademark their-bombs-and-their-guns trembles, trills and end-of-line throat-spasms – see the glacial paean 'Lost' or the Exorcist-funk 'Catch Me If You Can' – it's almost a nostalgic recall of the golden age when Jarv was clean shaven, Ant was still cuddly, Biebs was mercifully unborn and bands sold millions by coming on like a Celtic folk Soundgarden. Largely, though, she reigns it in, with far more affecting results.

Often, as her lustrous vocals melt into Cure atmospherics and Smiths-y strumbles, the closest cousin to this more restrained O'Riordan is the late, lamented and silver-voiced Kirsty MacColl. Gossamer ballads like 'A Place I Know' and 'Illusion' and soft-pop moments such as 'Got It' and 'Summer Song' (featuring a crafty dab of New Order) are as Kirsty as they come, and O'Riordan even manages to inject a sordid tale of domestic violence with a touch of MacColl-like magic.

Devout Delorites, of course, will turn to the fittingly downbeat yet determined title track for clues to O'Riordan's final frame of mind. *"Ain't it strange when everything you wanted was nothing that you wanted in the end?"* she sings, but thankfully concludes, *"you can't take the spirit"*. Amen.

## Details

**Release date:** April 26**Record label:** BMG

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