

Clare's Diary

12 January 2011

Wednesday

After a lovely long ten hour sleep I am almost back to my old self today. A good breakfast (thanks Mum!) and a short run see me right as rain which is perfect timing given that I am on Rose Duty this afternoon. I have been looking forward to visiting Clover Lodge nursing home for a while as it is based in Athy and as such I know a few of the residents there. I am warmly greeted by an abundance of welcome signs and all the staff and patients who present me some gorgeous flowers. I meet all the residents, have a spin around the dance floor to the 'Rose of Tralee' followed by tea and chocolate biscuits! Mum and I visit my primary school Priomhoide, Mrs. English, this evening just to say thanks for the beautiful photo album she compiled for me.

Thursday

Mum and I have lunch in Naas today before I drive to Dublin where I am lucky enough to be attending the opening night of 'The Field' courtesy of my good friend Senator Mark Daly. I am very excited to meet the hugely talented Brian Dennehy who is starring in the play as the Bull McCabe. He is charming and warm, the exact opposite of his threatening and angry character and I am grateful to get his signature on my programme, definitely one for the scrapbook!

Friday

I pop into the RDS today where I must admit I feel quite out of place being one of very few people above the age of 18! I haven't been to the Young Scientist's Exhibition in years and I am incredibly impressed by the calibre of the submissions this year. I am there minus the tiara and sash in an unofficial capacity until I let it slip that I am actually the Rose of Tralee. This soon sees me stepping in and out of various photos and doing some interviews. The projects really are inspiring and range in theme from building a power source out of rubbish to evaluating the attitudes of teenagers towards Irish politics. Given my background in Psychology I spend a long time in the Social and Behavioural section. I am thrilled to see three entries from my secondary school in Athy, Ard Scoil Na Trionoide.

Saturday

This weekend is James' 30th birthday celebration. Despite the fact it is his birthday he treats me to a wonderful few hours in the Ritz-Carlton Powerscourt day spa. After a few hours in the sauna, steam rooms and jacuzzi it is impossible not to feel relaxed. Tonight, James and I and a heap of his closest pals have dinner in Dublin followed by a night on the town, I am delighted when Roisin Hunt, the San Fran Rose and a good friend of mine now, pops in and joins us. Brendan Galvin of Rose TV also joins us and we three have a great natter.

Sunday

A very lazy morning. James' wonderful Mum, Alice, has breakfast on the table for us. As a surprise for James' present I have organised to fly back to London with him this evening. I have also emailed his boss to arrange for him to have a day off work tomorrow; he is thrilled when he finds out.

Monday

Birthday celebrations continue today and I have booked a swanky lunch in the Oxo Tower in London. This is one of London's iconic buildings situated right on the river Thames with amazing views from the 8th floor restaurant. The food is delicious and we treat ourselves to some sumptuous red wine. Fortunately James decides against the bottle which is priced at £3990! We wander lazily across the river to the city centre where we are seeing Blood Brothers tonight. This production is in its 21st year in the West End and I can see why. It is hilarious and heartbreaking at the same time and the cast fully deserve the standing ovation they receive.

Tuesday

I have deliberately booked an evening flight back as I have so many friends I want to catch up with. I meet Heather, my neighbour and wonderful friend for morning coffee before meeting Dominic O'Ryan, my last supervisor at work. After that I just have time for a catch up with Libby who is still enjoying her first couple of months of married life and Elinor who has just announced her engagement. Love is definitely in the air!