

## Thursday, 4 November 2010

### Halloween Nakedness, Autodriveaway, Hoover Dam, Grand Canyon, Writer's Wisdom, Billy the Kid & Aliens in Roswell



Following my bumpy start getting into America for the second time this year, I spent time at Lynne and Ben's place in Sacramento and enjoyed "cat time" as well as an exceptional Halloween night too. Ben and I went dressed up as criminal chain-gang members and we were stopped lots of times so people could have their pictures taken with us.

But this wasn't the best part about Halloween. Oh no.

I've never seen so many stunning, scantily-clad, big-breasted wonders of the female race in one place on one night! It seems that, in America (in California, at least), Halloween signals an excuse for girls to dress up - or dress down, actually - in provocative suspenders and skimpy, sexy underwear. A curvy young lady wearing a cupcake bikini and, er, not a lot else sat on my lap.

It was an eye-[popping]-opener to see that much fine flesh on display in one night (he says in a slightly pervy tone whilst rubbing my hands up and down my legs and repeating "Oh God!" over and over). My eyes are still aching; you can see my halloween pictures [here](#).

Following this, I went briefly to Los Angeles for meetings. But, as my money pot is empty now, I'm inventing ways to save money and plumped for doing "Autodriveaway". If you've never heard of it, it's an excellent US-wide scheme of delivering cars to owners who have moved states but couldn't be bothered to drive there. You have to be flexible about where you go but, if you are, then all you have to do is pay \$200-400 deposit (which you get back on delivery) and pay for the gas (petrol...!) and that's it.



So I'm the temporary owner of a Toyota Rav 4 - which is a feeble, lady-boy's four-wheel drive with no power at all, but it has wheels and goes. I have six days to deliver it from San Francisco to Dallas, Texas - approximately 2200 miles. Gulp.

More importantly, my everso manly Rav 4 enabled me to drive south to LA to meet up with the lovely Shannon. She is an

ABC/Disney scriptwriter who has had fantastic success with Disney's writer's fellowship. We met because I - indeed, we - are hoping to become writing partners to come up with a new, original TV script we can write and produce together. We had lunch to make sure we "clicked" and could get along. I'm happy to report that Shannon is honest, hilarious, kooky and genuine and I can't wait to come up with something we can write together.

What was even more of a revelation was talking to Shannon about her writing pattern and how she gets on with it. Intriguingly, she has a day job in a tax office for a few days a week -

completely unrelated to the film industry - and it allows her a stability and grounding to be creative in the rest of her time. Exactly the kind of scenario I *used* to have before I broke up with my ex-girlfriend, and one that I know I need to find again for my own creative stability. I thought I had it in Wales, but it wasn't quite right.



Shannon made me realise it's actually *okay* to give myself what I want and need. It's something I struggle with a lot; something I skirt around and do **EVERY OTHER THING** rather than what I know is best for me.

So, after chatting to Shannon, I've realised I need to do the following things for *me* because I simply *cannot* keep running away from being settled for much longer. Even though I've enjoyed my Year of Travel 2010, and loved the US of A and

how it's changed me and made me a stronger person, how it's opened doors and helped me make wonderful new friends, I think my soul is tired. I need to:

- Find a place to live that is not in Wales and most probably not in Los Angeles as, in all reality, I'm not likely to find a company to sponsor my visa now
- Find a housemate, preferably a calm, creative woman who I can share a home with
- Get a cat to have in the house as they are calming but are also a mixture of dark and light magic
- Get a job that I can go to every day, either in the film industry or, alternatively, in a youth work role that provides me with some socialising in the day so I can write in the evening
- Earn money to pay off the massive credit card bill that this year has left me with
- Probably move to Bristol or Bath in the UK as these feel like the kinds of places that would suit me to settle in for awhile



But, before then, let's get back to my road trip. I drove across the 1931-built Hoover Dam, which was mildly impressive, but after that I went to the Grand Canyon...which was *unfathomably* impressive.

Ever since I was a little boy I've always dreamt of going to see the Grand Canyon, and now I've done it. If you've never been to see it (and you must!) it's incredibly hard to describe the way your breath gets caught in your throat the first time you walk to the canyon's edge. Looking out across the epic expanse of the six-billion year-old, multi-coloured, jutting rock edifices is just amazing. No pictures and no words will ever do it justice, simply because the depth-of-field and

perception of looking at an 18-mile wide and 277-mile long canyon - that the Colorado River has eroded away - can only truly be appreciated when you're standing in front of it.



I hiked the 13-mile southern rim of the canyon where there are eerily twisted, dead trees and a blasted landscape that leads to the edge of the canyon. After looking at it all day, I still couldn't believe what I was seeing. And, in an attempt to try and give my pictures of the canyon some scale (and some childish fun), I got myself a little bear who I've called Ranger Ted. He's in lots of the pictures and many of my friends have already called on Ranger Ted to be in all my photos where ever I go in the world.

See my Grand Canyon pictures [here](#).

After this wonderful day I continued on my journey eastwards where I stopped at my hero Billy the Kid's resting place in Fort Sumner, New Mexico before driving across an endless, shimmering desert to Roswell.

As those who are geeks, like me, will know in July 1947 the US military allegedly covered up the occurrence of a crash-landed UFO saucer-shaped craft. Despite various TV dramas, movies, books, thousands of newspaper articles and documentaries the legend of this alien landing lives on strongly across the world. And, as someone who is intrigued by the possible existence of extraterrestrial lifeforms, I just had to visit Roswell.



Whilst there I went to the Roswell Convention Museum and Art Center which has, amongst its artifacts, the "inventor of propulsion" Robert Goddard's original rocket designs, the launch pad he used and much of his experimental engine equipment. Ranger Ted got to stand next to some real moon rock, sit on an alien's head and look at the beautiful craftsmanship of handmade Wild West guns too.

After the art center (centre!) I went to the town's main UFO museum. This was a glorious amalgamation of conspiracy theories, alien abduction stories, alien models, profiles and a timeline of the events surrounding the crash landing in 1947.

Having been in Roswell for the night by now, I had got the overriding feeling that this was a town on the edge of darkness. Or, perhaps, a better way to put it: a town full of people who had all, in one way or another, been abused, lied to, psychologically manipulated and become wrapped up in an aura of weirdness and true/untrue phenomena that has stuck around like a thick fog since 1947.

It's hard to understand exactly what I mean without going to Roswell. I chatted to the museum security guard who told me about his own UFO sightings a few years back when he'd seen

"cigar-shaped objects" light up the night sky. The conviction with which he told his story was unnerving. Not that it was a conviction that necessarily meant he was telling the truth (I kept a healthy level of sceptism), it was more like someone who had *persuaded themselves* of a truth and, no matter what, was sticking to it. Whether that truth *is* the truth is another matter.



I'm not saying I don't believe he saw something like a UFO. He probably did because something very strange happened in Roswell. But whether he saw an alien spacecraft or an experimental aircraft flown by US airforce personnel is hard to say.

The UFO museum was very interesting and I discovered lots of accounts I hadn't known before. Such as the existence of a not so well-known "second crash site" that was discovered at the same time as the rancher found debris in July 1947. A second site that had more debris, an "out-of-this-world" egg-shaped engine and allegedly between three and six dead bodies and one live survivor too.

I'd like to believe these were aliens from another planet, or another dimension, but they could just as easily have been monkeys used during the experimental flight (the monkey's bodies charred, hairless and bulbous-headed from the extreme temperature and G-force on impact). Personally, the monkey explanation feels made up to help spread untruth so I'm going to go with alien lifeforms and a cover-up by the military. A cover-up to make people *believe* it was experimental flights organised by them. Aliens are far more intriguing and, it seems, countless American presidents thought so too - many of whom, from Roosevelt to Reagan, wholeheartedly believing in the existence of aliens.

See my pictures of Roswell [here](#).



And now, after going slightly mad driving across the endless plains of Texas (deserts do definitely do strange things to you - hallucinations, thinking too much, panic, seeing vultures overhead, thinking too much...), I delivered my Rav 4 to Dallas before heading to stay with my lovely friend Charla in the [more] desert regions next to the Mexican border.

After this I'll head back to Los Angeles before Thanksgiving where I'll stay with a friendly couch surfer, Tasha. She is letting me stay with her for a little while whilst I get myself together. And she too has acknowledged that sometimes the hardest thing to do is to settle somewhere, "kuckle down" and work hard to follow your heart's desire. But, like me, she knows there is no other choice other than that is what you *must* do.

Stay well. Wink.