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# SEX &

**T**HE PLOTLINE was guarded more closely than the shop window at Tiffany's, with actors and production staff all sworn to secrecy. Even journalists who saw sneak uncut previews were forced to sign non-disclosure agreements. So, for the average Sex And The City fan, the past few months have been a hellishly long wait.

And I'm not just your ordinary devotee. Since day one, when Carrie first tottered through Manhattan in that ridiculous pink tutu and those vertiginous heels, I have been a total SATC obsessive.

I followed the lives of Ms Bradshaw, Samantha, Charlotte and Miranda so closely that I can tell you what size Jimmy Choos they wear, and how they like their Martinis. To me, Manhattan, their home, is quite simply the sexiest place on the planet.

I go there at least three times a year to re-live some of my favourite SATC moments — shopping in Chanel, cupcakes at the Magnolia bakery. In fact, I love it so much that this month, when I go to the New York premiere, I'm thinking of putting in an offer on a one-bed flat I've had my eye on in the city's financial district.

As an actress (I starred in Crossroads for four years as Carole Sands, the car mechanic at the hotel), I longed for a part in the series. But when the show ended in 2004, I thought my dreams had been dashed for ever.

Last October, though, I was in New York recording a programme for Radio 4 about 'consignment stores'. (Second-hand shops to you and me.) In Manhattan, they are often treasure troves of designer numbers, given away unworn by Bergdorf blondes and yummy mummies from the exclusive Upper East Side.

I arrived in Park Avenue — number one in any self-respecting fashionista's address book when it comes to vintage fashion — to interview a businesswoman called Barbara who takes bargain-seeking tourists on shopping sprees in New York.

And boy, were there bargains to be had! Dozens of Louis Vuitton and Balenciaga handbags, many still with the original price tags on them. Stacks of Manolo Blahniks and Christian Louboutins, and rails and rails of unworn Prada and Pucci. I was in my very own Carrie Bradshaw fantasy — particularly when Barbara mentioned that some of the items on the rail had been donated by SJP herself.

With me on this assignment was my boyfriend of two years, George. I'd recruited him to come along to operate the BBC's recording equipment: it was far too cumbersome for me to carry.

So as I nipped in and out of the changing room trying on design after design, George stood, like any bored partner on a shopping trip with his other half, looking totally non-plussed. Still, the radio programme would pay for our fares to New York, then we could wrap it up and have the rest of the week on holiday — courtesy of the BBC.

**A**S WE headed to the next store, we suddenly found our way blocked by a fleet of trucks and an army of burly security guards, all crowded around a luxury apartment block.

We were curious, but film units are ten a cent in the Big Apple. This, however, was different. This was one of the most extravagant production sets I'd ever seen. Crew members dressed in shorts and the obligatory baseball caps lined the streets. There was far too much of a hubbub for this to be any ordinary film.

Even the New York public — usually so wary of appearing anything but nonchalant — were craning their necks to see what was going on.

Hundreds of people, including scores of paparazzi, were crowding around a tape that sealed off an area in front of an apartment block. Park Avenue had ground to a halt, and men with megaphones were yelling at nosey spectators to keep clear.

George and I turned the corner to

by Jo Good

find another route, and it was then that the penny dropped. Kim Cattrall, resplendent in a scarlet designer gown, laughing and joking with a man-mountain of a security guard, was right in front of us. I was dumbstruck. We'd stumbled upon the filming of Sex And The City: The Movie.

'Jump next to her!' whispered George as she approached.

'What?' I said. 'Don't be ridiculous — there are men with guns.' But he had given me an idea. 'Follow me,' I said. We followed Kim around the corner, and when we got to the taped off areas, George and I flashed our BBC passes at the security guard.

I didn't even have time to worry that we might be rumbled: he let us straight through.

**D**ESPERATELY trying to suppress my excitement, I couldn't help but smile as we wandered onto the set.

It was clear from the number of limos and the sight of Stanford Blatch (Carrie's gay friend) in a tuxedo that they were filming Ms Bradshaw's wedding. And somehow we had become a part of it.

Now, much as I love the clothes in SATC, I can't say I could wear many of the designs that Carrie can get away with. But I do have a unique sense of fashion. On this particular day, I was wearing retro chic — an original Biba black chiffon dress over cerise leather boots — while George always looks cool, if a little dishevelled.

Clearly our outfits passed quality control as far as the wardrobe department was concerned, as before we knew it we were herded, with four other couples, into the foyer of the apartment block — where I almost blew our cover.

There, looking groomed to within an inch of their lives, were Charlotte in black couture, Miranda in lilac, and Samantha, who'd cast off the trainers she'd been wearing moments earlier and was now wearing a gorgeous pair of Jimmy Choos. I realised that I was gawping, and shut my mouth.

They were obviously bridesmaids, and right in the middle there she was — Sarah Jessica Parker in a Vivienne Westwood ivory shot-satin wedding dress, green ostrich-plume fascinator (sorry, hat) and diamanté Christian Louboutins. I was in the same room as Carrie Bradshaw!

As one of the film crew handed us boxes of confetti, I tried not to gasp — but I had to admit she was perfect. Perched on stilettos, she was tiny; her skin was clear, her hair looked glossy, and her eyes and teeth sparkled.

She looked 'airbrushed'. If I hadn't seen her in the flesh, I would not have believed that anyone could look so flawless. But, yes, that mole is just as prominent in real-life.

I was intrigued to know how tall she actually is, so I sidled up as near as I could to measure her against my 5ft 2in frame. She was a good couple of inches shorter than me.

Suddenly, she turned on me with a pinched gaze. I froze. I'd overstepped the mark, and dutifully took several

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