



# HAIRSPRAY: FUN & FROLICS

by Alana Wadkin

On Thursday 26th February I became 'one of the nicest kids in town' as I returned to see *Hairspray*. Mum and Dad went with me; we were supposed to be going in January but due to the snow and train uncertainties we rebooked. Travelling down was great, I was quite happy listening to Michael on my MP4 player. Once we arrived at Euston we headed straight to the theatre and to the stage door thinking we had missed Michael; there was only a few people at the door. I was very pleased to discover that Michael hadn't arrived yet. It was nice to see Joan there and a few other fans (sorry I don't know your names).

After a short wait Ben came down the street, he seems very nice and I had a photo taken with him. Some of the cast started to arrive including Adrian, Verity and Nigel who were

really pleasant. Dad spotted Michael strolling down the road by the theatre. When Michael turned the corner and saw me, he said "Oh it's my girl, hello gorgeous!" and hugged and kissed me. This made me feel like a million dollars, I was over the moon... Michael looked gorgeous (very smart and tanned); he had been to Billy Cotton's memorial. We had a chat - Michael told me that I looked well. That day I felt great and had a surprise for Michael; a specially designed t-shirt. I created a funny t-shirt because I knew that Michael has a good sense of humour and he always comments on my own t-shirt designs. The front of the t-shirt had a heart-shaped devil with "I'M HOT STUFF! - I attract thousands of women..." printed. The back had a cartoon of a little devil with the caption "Coz, I'm a TALENTED LITTLE DEVIL..."

I asked Michael if he would look at it; I wanted to see his reaction and whether he got the joke. At first, he only saw the front and said "How fabulous!" Mum told Michael to turn the t-shirt around, when he saw the back - he got the joke; his face was a picture! The reaction was what I hoped for, plus Michael gave me another kiss.

"Thank you darling, that's really kind of you sweetheart." I was delighted... Michael had to move out of the way from a passing car; he sort of stumbled and nearly went on my lap; I wouldn't have minded Michael sitting on my knee - hee hee! Then Michael asked if I had my tour tickets and whether we were going to Liverpool. We said yes and that we are going to Blackpool and Manchester as well (I can't wait for the tour, as much as I love Edna, it will be lovely



to see Michael perform as himself). Michael seemed really pleased that I am going to three concerts. Then we said our goodbyes.

The show was brilliant, even though there were a few understudies. The atmosphere was electric and the audience were really enjoying the show. I absolutely loved every minute; I danced and laughed throughout the performance. We have seen *Hairspray* several times; it gets funnier each time and I always notice something new or different in each show. The songs are brilliant and catchy; I know them off by heart. The characters of Tracy, Edna and Wilbur are very lovable - I can relate to and identify with them - they are close to home. Michael is fantastic as Edna, the expressions are priceless and I love Edna's bum wiggle! Although Charlotte was very good, I love Leanne as Tracy - the role was made for her. Nigel brings a different perspective to Wilbur but I liked Ian Talbot playing this part. We thought Verity was really good as Penny - very funny. I was hysterical during 'Timeless To Me', it is my favourite part of the show - everybody was in fits of laughter including Michael and Nigel.

Another highlight was the finale and 'You Can't Stop The Beat'; the entire audience were up dancing! I had a ball and was trying to do all the dance moves... The cast got a well-deserved standing ovation. I have seen several other musicals but I have never enjoyed a show as much as *Hairspray*.

After the show, we went around to the stage door to see who we could see. I happened to glance up and saw Andrew at the window. Within



seconds, the stage door burst open and all you could hear was Michael saying "where is she?" Michael came straight over and gave me a hug and another kiss. The first thing Michael said was "Boy, I could hear you and see you jazzing from the stage!" I didn't realise that I had been so loud!

We had a quick chat with Michael and then Andrew, which was really lovely. There was an old lady and gentleman; he asked Michael if he would come and wish his wife a happy birthday. Michael ran over and gave her a lovely hug and wished her a happy birthday. You could see by the lady's face that this had made her day.

The next thing I knew was Michael shouted "Ta-rah Alana!" across the street. A woman stopped us when we were trying to hail a taxi and said that she couldn't believe her eyes and were we "personal friends with Michael?" Mum explained about the fan club and that Michael is like this with all his fans. I think Michael will have another new fan now!

I can't wait to go back again... Thank you Michael for making the day extra special!!