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the A list

JONATHAN ROSS
On The Man Who Wasn't
There: "Possibly the best
film noir in the world"

Dolores O'Riordan

**The Cranberry
who got her
juice back**

TUTTI FRUITCAKE

After becoming 'a basket case' Dolores of The Cranberries is back, says
JAMES SCOTT

FIVE years ago The Cranberries were riding high with worldwide album sales topping 28 million.

The band had just embarked on a 117-date world tour – their second in eight months – which was expected to gross £60million. Everything was going well until singer Dolores O'Riordan had a nervous breakdown at the tender age of 24.

"I was a wreck," she admits. "Living out of suitcases and in a male environment was driving me mad. I missed my family and friends, but the problem was that when I was younger I signed way too many contracts. I'd look at these pieces of paper with six to eight months of tour dates and think, 'Yeah, man, I can do that', and sign it. I never realised the consequences.

"It turned out to be too much and, halfway through, the cheese slipped off my crackers," she laughs. "I just didn't realise it. I couldn't find my cheese. It had gone."

O'Riordan was, she freely admits, "a basket case". Her weight dropped to six-and-a-half stone and she was exhausted. She would spend hours curled up in a foetal position, desperate to go home.

"I was having nightmares," she says. "I'd wake up screaming and crying. I'd experienced violence in my life and I was having nightmares about it.

"I didn't want to sing because my voice had got me into this situation – that's how negative I was. I remember taking showers and I'd start singing, and I would clasp my hand over my mouth and say, 'Don't sing'. I was going nuts. I couldn't stop talking to myself and my head was a mess."

Dolores turned to psychotherapist to the stars Beechy Colclough, who has treated Elton John, Michael Jackson and Robbie Williams.

"When I went to see him I couldn't sit on chairs because my bones were sticking through my skin and it was too painful. Beechy told me to go somewhere where nobody knew me, where I could feel like a human being again."

Dolores and husband Don Burton headed for the Bahamas. "It took a while before I could stop my mind from racing," says Dolores.

"I kept thinking to myself, 'What will I do? I'll go for a walk. What will I do after that?' I'd been so used to living by schedules."

Motherhood has also been a salvation for the singer, who still lives near bandmates Fergal Lawler and brothers Noel and Mike Hogan in their home town of Limerick.

Earlier this year she gave birth to her second child, Molly. Her son Taylor is almost four.

"Being a mum has put all the fun back into life," she says. "It takes away your selfishness. Now I plan my career around my

☛ The tour was all too much and the cheese slipped off my crackers ☛

family, not the other way round.

The recent terrorist atrocities in America have led Dolores to reconsider plans to promote the new album, *Wake Up And Smell The Coffee*.

They have already scrapped a £250,000 video shot in London's Docklands because of its similarities to the attacks.

"I was in Sweden on September 11. My tour manager and my husband were watching CNN in the next room and came running in and put the TV on, and we saw the second plane hit the other tower.

"It was so shocking because no one thought someone would do this to America."

"Life is very precious to me now," she says. "I have to see the bigger picture. This is just a CD – it's just a bunch of songs. Life is more important. We were planning to go on tour next year, but if all hell breaks loose I'm staying at home with my family."

EVEN at home in Ireland, the 29-year-old star, who has an estimated fortune of £30million, is only too aware of the need for security.

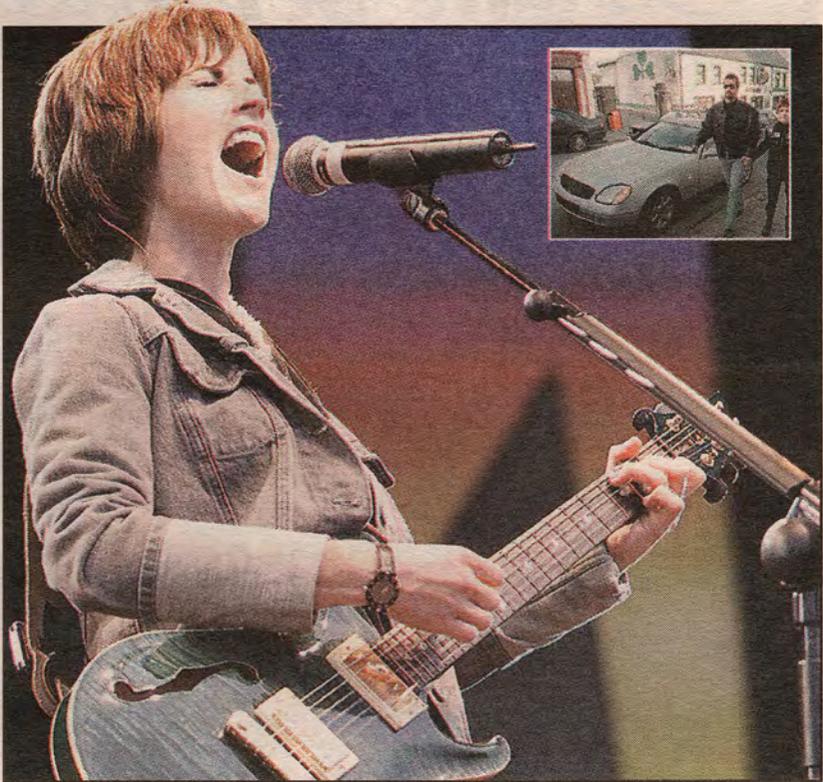
"I never thought I'd be as well off as I am now. But with fame and money comes difficult things," she says.

"The amount of security I have is ridiculous. It's the only way I can feel comfortable. People come to the house from God knows where. I've had men come to the house to ask me to marry them. I've had my stalking experiences, but I don't want to go into that now."

On a more positive note the band have just released their most upbeat album to date. "It has a relaxed vibe, which I have now in my life," says Dolores.

"It comes from the fact that I came out sane. I woke up and smelt the coffee. We've been together 11 years and we've now sold 33 million albums.

"I no longer put my head down. I no longer have shame and guilt about being wealthy. I've worked hard for it. Life is good for me now that I just want this to continue."



BACK ON TRACK: Dolores O'Riordan performing live and, inset, with her husband Don Burton

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