

# US

**SKIN FLICK**  
**A SNEAK PEEK AT COURTNEY LOVE AND WOODY HARRELSON'S NEW MOVIE**



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 CAREER TROUBLES  
 AND FAMILY TURMOIL

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Dolores O'Riordan tries to shed her rock-diva reputation and find salvation in her multi-platinum-selling band

CRANBERRIES SINGER DOLORES O'Riordan is wounded. She sits on her tour bus—her leg propped up so she can ice

the knee she injured while playing a show in Australia

—finishing up a cellular phone call to her mother in Ireland. "I'll ring tomorrow,

and we'll have a proper chat," O'Riordan says sweetly, an audible sadness in her voice.

"I haven't said 10 words to you in a week." Clad in an

# THE CRANBERRIES

oversize wool sweater and wearing no makeup on her pixieish face, she appears more like a 12-year-old tomboy than the 25-year-old rock star that she is. It is a moment that goes against almost everything we've been told about Dolores O'Riordan. The singer burst onto the scene three years ago with her Sinéad-like wail and impressionistic lyrics of teenage love—and quickly gained a reputation for being a rock diva. There are tales of O'Riordan's simply not showing up

CRANBERRIES ON A ROLL: (CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT) FERGAL LAWLER, MIKE HOGAN, NOEL HOGAN AND DOLORES O'RIORDAN

PHOTOGRAPH BY KATE GARNER



AND THE BRIDE WORE WHITE LEGGINGS:  
O'RIORDAN AND BURTON GETTING  
HITCHED IN THURLES, IRELAND, 1994

for scheduled interviews, or walking out midconversation in order to get a massage. She's been known to rule her band mates like a drill sergeant, snapping at them onstage, gesturing impatiently at drummer Fergal Lawler, 25, to pick up the pace. Cranberries guitarist Noel Hogan, 25, diplomatically describes O'Riordan as "strong-willed." She prefers the word *tough*.

In any case, O'Riordan likes things done her way, as became apparent earlier in the day. She and her husband, Don Burton, 33 (who also acts as the Cranberries' personal manager), were staying at a different hotel from the Cranboys'—more than an hour outside Calgary, Canada, where the band (rounded out by bassist Mike Hogan, 23) was playing a show that night in support of its *To the Faithful Departed* album. O'Riordan insisted that the interview take place on her bus ride to the venue. Meaning that the reporter would have to drive truly to the end of the earth to meet her, only to turn right around and drive back.

But after her interviewer boards the bus, O'Riordan is surprisingly gracious, actually thanking her for going out of her way, and offers up a gift: "I just bought two aromatherapy necklaces. You have one." Burton, a large blond man who towers over his tiny wife, hooks her up with a pack of Marlboros and a Coors Light, and as the bus pulls out of the hotel parking lot, O'Riordan begins talking openly. The rock diva, for now, is nowhere in sight.

THE CRANBERRIES WERE TOURING WITH DURAN DURAN, FOR WHOM Burton was stage manager, when O'Riordan met her husband-to-be. "My girlfriend, who was on the road with me, would say, 'He's cute. I wouldn't mind a half-hour with him,'" O'Riordan recalls. "And I'd had it with men at that time in my life. One night, we went into the bar, and she said to me, 'I think he likes you.' So then he was trying to buy me wine and stuff. Eventually, he stood up and said to our tour manager and my band: 'Well, good night, guys. See you tomorrow.' And then he walked over and he picked me up and *he threw me over his shoulder*. I was like, 'I changed my mind. I like men again!'"

Ten whole days of passion later, she gave him an ultimatum: "Look, I'm not really getting involved with another man right now. I've had too many bad experiences, and it's kind of like this: We either get married or forget it." He goes, "OK, let's get married." I was kind of saying, "Look, I'm trying to scare you off here, fruitcake." Nine months later, they were married, with the bride wearing white leggings and a lace tank top. It's been two years now, and still O'Riordan talks about Burton the way someone in the early throes of loopy love might. "I'm completely obsessed with him," she says. "He's the center of my world." She pulls the sweater up over her biceps, revealing a tattoo of

his name in a heart with a rose, her second-anniversary gift to him. "It's a sentimental thing with all the clichés," she says. "I had sworn that I would never get a tattoo because I didn't like them, but I knew he liked them."

The gesture is all the more meaningful because O'Riordan rarely does something she doesn't want to do. Just ask the photographer who'd planned to shoot her, naked and with a pair of Doc Martens hanging around her neck, for a story on women in rock. "I'm like, 'Really? Tell me all about it!'" she recalls. "Why should I have to peel off [my clothes] to be a strong woman in the '90s?"

O'Riordan, the youngest of seven brothers and sisters, has been willful since she was a child, skipping class at the strict Catholic school she attended while growing up 8 miles outside the city of Limerick, in southwest Ireland. "I was bad, bad, very bad," she says. Instead of studying, she wrote songs and drank hard cider with her best friend, who inspired the tune "The Rebels" (the same friend who encouraged her to meet Burton).

Her interest in being a performer had deep roots. "When you come from a big family, you have to fight for attention," she says. "I worked at my voice and Irish dancing. When I was a kid, everybody would say, 'God, she's got a great voice.' And I loved that feeling of people saying, 'Would you sing another song?' Because you made them happy."

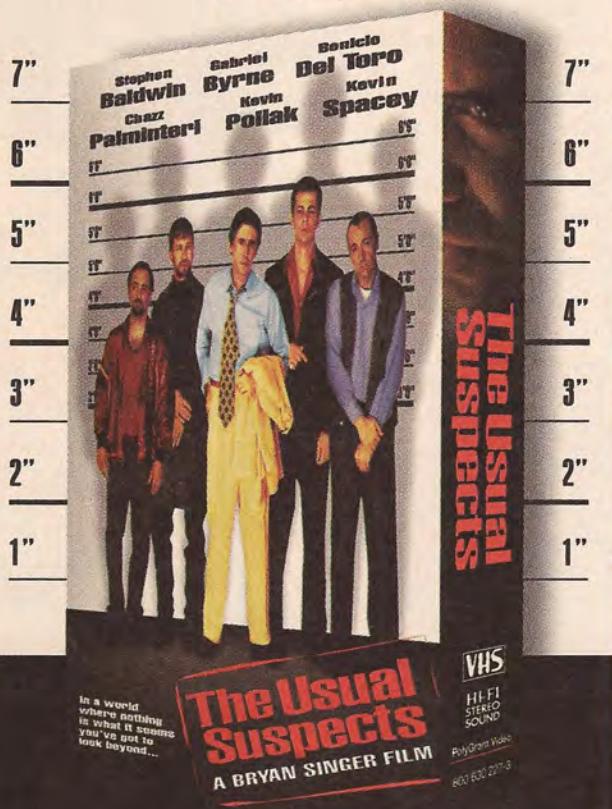
There was an even more Freudian motivation for her soon-to-be career. "When I was 5 years old, my mother was obsessed with Elvis," she says. "When it came to Elvis, it was the only time I ever saw my mum act like a little girl, the only time I saw the twinkle in her eyes. I had this thing: I should be a singer and be big like 'the King,' and my mother would be proud of me." O'Riordan quit her piano lessons, took up guitar and, at age 17, joined the Cranberries. "We sounded completely different before Dolores joined the band," says Noel Hogan, who occasionally shares songwriting duties with O'Riordan. "If she hadn't joined, probably nothing would have happened."

O'Riordan decided to devote herself to the Cranberries full time, so at age 18, she ran away to Limerick and moved in with the band's manager. Her mother, who supported the family because Dolores' father was disabled (he cracked his skull in a motorcycle accident before she was born), did not approve. "She was the bread-and-butter-winner," O'Riordan says, "and she had to look out for our hearts and minds, which made her overprotective to the point where when I wanted to become a woman, I had to run away. I felt really bad, but I couldn't stay home with Mum. She wanted me to become a missionary worker."

Indeed, O'Riordan's mother was so religious that she took the family to church five times a week and read from the Bible every night. "I hate the church sometimes, but it formed my personality," O'Riordan says. "And I love some of it—the metaphors to go by." Her mother also had her take a pledge at age 12 that she would never drink. "When you're 16, you're drinking on the q.t.," O'Riordan says. "But if your mom found out, she'd kill you."

O'Riordan's powerful vocals, combined with the Cranberries' ethereal songwriting, made them the first band from Limerick ever to be a worldwide critical and commercial success. With the release of the group's debut album, 1993's [Continued on page 114]

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## THE CRANBERRIES

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 78

*Everybody Else Is Doing It, So Why Can't We?*, which stayed on the *Billboard* chart for more than two years, O'Riordan came across as a naive Irish lass, all innocent demeanor and appealing baby fat. By the time 1994's *No Need to Argue* came out, she was considerably tougher, her hair shorn and bleached, and she was singing angrily about the violence in Northern Ireland. "On the road," she says, "my childhood and my teen-age years were taken away." Since then, O'Riordan has only become a leaner, meaner machine, her rock-hard abs now exposed by tyrannical, belly-baring tops — a look that, if her body can be taken as a metaphor for her soul, mirrors the psychological torment she has been through since the Cranberries' success.

"For six months of the *No Need to Argue* tour," O'Riordan says, "I was having flashbacks of a very negative side of my life that I don't want to go into because the person is around and I get myself into trouble when I talk about it. I was going through hell, so I was hitting the bottle. Every day, I would wake up with a sore head, and I wouldn't be right again until I had another drink. I did get close to an edge, and if I had gone over that edge, I might never have come back." Her struggles were the inspiration for "Salvation," a song that, she says, talks about drug abuse from the point of view of both the child and the parent.

"Joe," also on the new album, is a melancholy ballad about O'Riordan's grandfather, who died six years ago. "I used to go to his house every Friday to bring them their pension," she says. "Without fail, he'd take out 10 pence and give it to me. Then he'd put me on his lap, and it was the one day of the week that I got to sit on somebody's lap, because my dad was distant and not affectionate with the kids physically." She begins to cry, looking off to one side apologetically. "I just loved [my grandfather] so much. There was a slight aura around him. It was like there was a halo around him." She says her husband looks quite like her grandfather, with blond hair and blue eyes. "My grandmother really fancies my husband," she says. "She's 92, and she says, 'If I were 50 years younger, I wouldn't wink an eye.'"

ONSTAGE THAT NIGHT AT THE SADDLEDOME, IN CALGARY, O'RIORDAN sits at a white grand piano that has been perched on a giant Lazy Susan well above the drum riser. As part of their encore, the Cranberries perform an acoustic version of "War Child," which O'Riordan wrote for the same-named Bosnian relief organization as well as for the new album. An over-enthusiastic fan manages to get past the guards and dances elatedly about the stage. Noel Hogan, who has looked in desperate need of a serotonin-reuptake inhibitor for much of the show, actually perks up long enough to smirk. But O'Riordan is having none of it. She stops playing and singing. "So much for the children," she says curtly. "The moment's gone." The rest of the group, thinking the set is over, starts to leave the stage. With visible irritation, O'Riordan waves her band mates back. She introduces "Dreams," the last song, then offers a half-apology. "Sorry we couldn't go on," she says, "but I hate being distracted."

Then, with a quick smile, she sends the rock diva away. ■

Contributing editor Christina Kelly profiled Edward Burns in the September issue of "US."