

Espresso-OWW!



Me and Joshua

Ready to see her favourite singer, Sharlie had everything planned – until she took a sudden turn...

Carpenter, the screen read as it confirmed my purchase. I picked up my phone and rang Megan-Marie. 'I got them!' I screamed as soon as she picked up the phone. 'I got us tickets!'

'Oh my god!' she shouted back. 'We need to start planning outfits!'

We'd seen concert videos of Sabrina and were in awe of her glam costume

changes between songs.

So, we planned to wear matching baby-pink dresses, cowboy boots, and have Sixties-style hairdos.

'What do you think of this one?' I smiled, showing her potential outfits.

'I love it!' she replied excitedly.

The show was all we could talk about for weeks – I don't know how my husband Joshua tolerated it.

'I can't wait to hear all about it when you get back,' he smiled. 'It can't come quick enough!' I grinned back.

In total, Megan-Marie and I had spent £1055 to see our idol, which covered our tickets, flights and accommodation.

Finally, our big trip was just a few days away.

Only something didn't feel right...

'My lower back hurts,'

I frowned to Joshua one night.

'Oh no, what's up?' he asked. 'Have you done something to it?'

'I'm not sure,' I replied.

After years of being a Sabrina fan, I wasn't going to let a nagging pain stop me from seeing her live.

I texted Megan-Marie about my back and she replied, *We could get you a wheelchair – I'll wheel you anywhere you need to go.*

'I'm sure I'll be fine,' I replied, playing it down so as not to worry her.

But the morning I was due to fly, my back pain was worse than ever.

Determined to make my flight, I packed my cowboy boots and my pink, sparkly mini dress.

But it felt like a vice grip around my lower back.

I took a couple of painkillers before Joshua dropped me off at departures and we hugged.

I'd arranged to meet up with

Megan at our stopover, so I needed to tackle this first leg of the journey alone.

'Once you're with your sister, it'll all be OK,' he soothed.

I made my way towards departures but as I wheeled my suitcase behind me, each step filled me with agony.

A sharp shooting pain raced down my spine.

'Please calm down, please calm down,' I repeated to myself, while going through the terminal.

I willed the painkillers to kick in. *I don't feel great*, I anxiously texted Joshua.

Suddenly, I started to feel the pain getting worse, until



We loved Sabrina

I collapsed on to a bench.

Everything had gone black. When I opened my eyes again, I saw Joshua crouched down beside me, looking terrified.

'What happened?' I asked, feeling confused. 'I'm going to take you home,' he said urgently. 'I came back after your text.'

We drove all the way back to ours and I couldn't hide the agony any more. I called Megan-Marie on the way, who hadn't yet arrived at the airport.

'I'm with Joshua, on my way home,' I cried. 'Please tell me you're still going.'

The last thing I wanted was for us both to miss out. I desperately hoped she'd go without me. 'Absolutely not,' she replied. 'I'm taking the next flight to you.'

I gasped. She was just as

excited as me to see Sabrina, I couldn't believe she was putting it on hold for me.

When we arrived home, Joshua called me an ambulance and I was rushed to hospital.

'She's got excruciating back pain,' he explained.

When I arrived on the ward, I was given a blue hospital gown to change into – instead of the sparkly mini-dress I was supposed to be donning!

Absolutely gutted to be missing the show, I knew I had to find out what was causing

my pain.

My care team sent me for an MRI and the results showed I had suffered a herniated disc.

It was caused by a previous injury they said, and I remember how I'd slept on my back in a weird way not too long ago.

'You'll need to

undergo lower back surgery to repair it,' the doctor explained.

I held on to a glimmer of hope that I could rebook a ticket to Sabrina and see her at a later date in the summer.

The medic quickly burst my bubble.

'To avoid any further injury, we will need to keep you in

hospital for the next three or four weeks before the operation,' he added.

The whole situation was starting to get me down. But the following day, Megan-Marie arrived at my bedside to cheer me up.

I quickly filled her in on what had happened to me and broke the big news.

'We won't be able to

book any of Sabrina's European dates for summer,' I said sadly. 'So, we'll have a concert here...' she beamed.

To my delight, she was armed with bags filled with pink party supplies. 'What's all this?' I asked. 'Just a little something short and sweet,' she winked



Me in my outfit



Megan-Marie and me in hospital

'Something short and sweet'

as she started to pull out balloons, feather boas, pink cowboy hats and streamers from the bag.

She even brought her concert outfit – plus an extra pink dress for me to wear over my hospital gown!

My sister, husband, and mum Faye completely transformed my drab hospital ward into a sparkly, pink paradise that Miss Carpenter would've been proud of.

We even had balloons to spell out her initials.

Lying in my hospital bed, surrounded by pink balloons, it was certainly the *Espresso* I needed!

I couldn't stop laughing as Joshua performed my favourite Sabrina songs.

'Thank you,' I smiled.

It was a bittersweet feeling. As much as I enjoyed it, this wasn't how I'd hoped to spend my evening.

But my family were amazing at keeping my spirits up while I was in hospital.

Megan-Marie, Joshua and my mum did everything they could to look after me.

Despite not getting to see Sabrina, I felt so loved.

I've since had a microdiscectomy – a surgical procedure which removed a portion of herniated disc in my spine that was compressing a nerve.

It took six weeks to recover from, and they said if all goes well, then I won't need any more surgery.

Now me and my sister's new plan is to see the Short n' Sweet show when Sabrina brings it to our city this autumn.

I just need the doctors to *Please, Please, Please* let me go!

Sharlie Clyde, 30



Me and my sis