

Diary of a Wadfest Virgin – By Mrs Cake, age Fortything^{1/2}

1 August In a fit of exuberance, we have decided that if we can get that tent on e-bay for £10.50 (impossible!) we'll go to Wadfest.

Of course it won't matter if we don't get it: neither of us is as young as we were. Mr Cake has a poorly back and I thought my camping days were done. So no danger of being disappointed. It does sound fun though.

8 August Went to Stratford to see Dr Who (David Tennant, actually) in Hamlet. FAB!! Got home pretty late having gone straight from work after a drink with a mate.

Errr... there's a tent in the living room. Up. Quite large, actually. Must be the cider.

No, it's definitely there, smelling all tenty and exciting. Mr Cake assures me it only took a few minutes to erect. Not bad for £10.50. It even has pegs and lines to stop it taking off in a stiff breeze. Oh flip!

9 August Better join the Wadfest Forum then and see what's what.

Oh yes, and order the tickets.

Oh lord, there's a post on here that mentions bringing water. Have we really got to bring our own water? And there's a quiet field and a noisy one. So if we're in the quiet field cos we're old and need some sleep, does that mean we're can't get lousy drunk and trip over things all the way back to the tent swearing and going "SSHHHHHH!!!"?????

Tea. You can't have Cake without tea. Have I got to buy a gaz stove too? Gah! Panicking now.

11 August Oh my dear goodness. "The Genua branch of The Guild of Drag Artistes (and Gender Impersonators), will be presenting the almost traditional Friday night WELCOME COCKTAIL PARTY." I know what that means – and they don't know Mr Cake!

12 August Mr Cake called me at work today most put out that he is now a dress-size 20 (used to be a 14 apparently) (OK for some, I'm not called Cake for nothing). He's only been to Oxfam and had the ladies there helping him choose his frock...

He's also brought me an interesting selection of bow-ties, which he advises me I must wear with one of his shirts (and presumably trousers). I had sort of hoped to girl-up my outfit. Hey ho.

14 August Good old e-bay. We've procured a kettle that plugs into the cigarette lighter in the car. On reading the destructions, we find it may take "up to 45 minutes to boil". Hope to goodness we can pitch next to the car. Note to self: pitch next to capable and well-equipped early risers who may take pity on us and offer tea. With a large and under-occupied motor home that we can beg shelter in when the storms flood our flimsy £10.50 tent.

18 August The postie backed down the garden path grinning nervously this morning – having delivered an enveloped marked "Voodoo for Dummies".

I can see we made a grave misjudgement thinking anything could ever be the same again after this!

Better get on with the mask, the wings / horns, the lightbox and goodness knows what else then. In for a penny!

23/24 August Mr Cake's having a frock-crisis. The one he chose at Oxfam isn't really his colour (or shape). Still, there is potential in my wardrobe...

While everyone else (it seems) is at the DW Con, we're assembling our stuff. And what a lot there is! Let's see: Mr Cake now has a velvet skirt and sequined top; a pair of tiger-print crop pants; 3 Hawaiian shirts; a mad monk outfit; a pair of purple leopard-print flares and a nice white broderie-anglaise blouse. And a pair of German army boots with orange and blue hockey socks. And a multi-coloured velveteen tall hat. And a "Carrot-undercover" comedy glasses, nose and moustache mask.

Me, I've got a pair of plain black party trousers, a white shirt of Mr Cake's, a Dennis the Menace bow tie and a suitably

cakey mask and hat. Oh and my new Mrs Cake Tee-Shirt and badges. Woo-hoo.

And he's complaining about the amount of stuff we're taking!! We haven't even got near developing a light-box (someone has to watch the parade after all (don't they?)) – and the wings and horns went by the board too.

We tried out the kettle. The plug (in the cig-lighter) got marginally warmer than the water. Rubbish. Fingers crossed the urn mentioned on the website will be on all weekend!

Our camping stuff will be minimal – our new tent, a borrowed airbed and stuff for bedding, crisps and cereal bars (there's a burger van apparently) booze and loads of water. Wonder what we've forgotten?

28 August Packed the car this evening, with all the above and more.

28 August (later) Gaahh!! Airbed pump requires 3-pin plug socket!! Visions of both of us, empurpled and faint, being shipped off to hospital before the fun starts, having tried to inflate our airbed manually.

Frantic emergency posts to DW and Wadfest Forums.

29 August - am A few friendly replies to the foot-pump appeal – should be OK I think ?

Well off we go. Currently wondering:

- **Will anyone talk to us?**
- **How will I know who anyone is?**
- **Which is best – quiet field or noisy? And does anyone mind where you pitch?**
- **Will it be miles to the loo?**
- **And mostly, will my hat do???**

Mr Cake, of course, is completely relaxed and knows there's nothing a few glasses of wine won't sort out. He's probably right.

We plan to keep the tent for sleeping in, and use the car as a sort of wardrobe-cum-larder. We'll have a decent meal on the way there, and another when we get home – then subsist on

burgers, crisps and cereal bars in between. We've got wine (no fridge for beer) an interesting bottle for the cocktail party, and a couple of gallons of water. Ready for anything then. Lunchtime Well, we've arrived. Pulled up in a field (no idea which one yet) and found a likely looking gap. Friendly folk registered us and I already managed to bump in to one of my forum friends, who greeted us like old mates. Hoorah!

The chap next door has kindly lent us his electric pump (with cigarette lighter adapter), so that's sorted out.

All organised, and settle back to watch the others arriving. Some amazing sights in costume already... I'm feeling rapidly less self-conscious about what I look like and simultaneously more envious that I haven't got anything very amazing to wear!

Have just noticed on the Agenda – "Initiation of the Wadfest Virgins". Yikes.

Later It would appear we are in the noisy field – not from the level of noise, but from the layout of the site. Noise aside, there are kids and families all over the place, and adults of all shapes and sizes. It feels very safe – kiddies can run everywhere without fear, and seem quickly to make friends. I've been introduced already to our neighbour's little girl's 2 Beathties ? There's a clever idea of giving everyone Little Zombie tokens to hand out to helpful youngsters, making these already well-behaved sprogs willing gophers!

We just bumped into Lupine, dressed as a Monk and carrying a very large bucket. He's heading for the opening ceremony and looming initiation. Oh! Om!

Evening Now fully initiated and presumably no longer a virgin. Sworn to secrecy of course and unable to disclose any details – save that I had no need to worry. Waddy is very kind.

**Everyone's getting kitted out for the Ambassador's cocktail party, and there are some fine sights strutting their stuff. Great camera-fodder. Odd how the fellas submit willingly to the platoons of Little Zombies brandishing lipstick and rouge, nail-varnish and hairspray!!
Much later What a brill evening!**

Ended up squiffily wandering the campsite looking for someone with a recently boiled kettle (desperate for tea to dilute the wine). Found a really friendly gang of people about half my age who took me in and plied me with tea – invited us both for BBQ next night.

Am certainly no longer worried about whether anyone will talk to us (though still don't know how I'll ever work out who's who).

Saturday 6am Ugh. Gah. Ugh. Why are people awake?? Ugh.

7am Hmm. Must be something to do with daylight. Best get more tea.

And a pig in a bun. Yes.

Later All sorts happening. Lots of folks dressed up and being characters in the murder mystery, and some (like Mr Cake) dressed up anyway. A leisurely start to the day, once the hangover cleared. Glad we brought magazines as Saturday morning is necessarily quiet.

Decided to have a bash at Paint Your Own and chose a death-head in a top hat. Was quickly joined by 2 or 3 kids at the painting table and we all got along just fine, exchanging advice about colours on our respective models. Haven't done anything like this in years. Actually really enjoyed it – and am quite pleased with the result!

Afternoon Enjoyed watching the last of the Dodgeball followed by Penguin-walloping, an admirable sport, in which the participant's size appears inversely proportional to the likelihood of success. (In other words the cutest little kid always wins). Rob is the MC and really knows how to hold the crowd. BOO the Penguin, HISS the Penguin, BLOW RASPBERRIES at the Penguin!! Be ALARMED by Waddy dressed as a Penguin!!!

I retire to the tent for a snooze as the sun comes out. Awake an hour later feeling as if my brain has been cooked (which I suppose it has, lightly at least). Not the brightest idea on my part. Later we hear that others, too, got a bit much sun – very easy when you're having fun and not thinking.

Evening After the prize giving for the afternoons sport, and the grand murder-mystery reveal (with the inevitable twist in the tale), we once again don finery, this time masks and evening clothes, for the evening festivities.

People have gone to amazing trouble it seems to kit themselves out with the most gorgeous outfits and intricate masks – a joy to see. My 3 cakes mask seems to work OK – lots of people say “ooh, Mrs Cake!” which is rewarding.

AJ and Rob’s Marriage is blessed in the Church of Om, courtesy of Rev Ptim MacFeegle, and we all wish them well with dancing and festivities. Though we’ve not met many of these people before there is a strangely family feeling about it all that is completely relaxed and welcoming – a joy to be part of.

Mr C and I turn in early though – too much fun the night before and too little sleep in our too little tent to contend with.

Sunday 6:30am Well, managed a lie-in for an extra half-hour! It was a cold, clear night and the inside of the tent is coated in condensation. Everything is damp and outside is a clinging fog.

We get up pretty much straight away and get on with clearing up.

Luggage wars at 11, Auction at 12. Hmmm. 9:45 now. Ow. Achey. Arthriticky everything. Feel really rather middle-aged.

Falling victim to thoughts of hot baths and our own bed (the comfiest in the world) we succumb to temptation, bid farewells all round and head early for home.

AND THE MORAL IS???

Don’t worry about a thing – cos every little thing will be alright at Wadfest.

Do bring water but don’t go mad – there is a tap. The urn’s good too, but the best tea is when it just happens to have boiled recently...

Folks will help.

Folks will talk to you.

You definitely cannot wear anything, no matter how outrageous, that can possibly make you look dafter than some

of the regulars! The “rules” of all the various themes are flexible in the extreme.

Bring your camera.

If you have physical conditions that make you creaky and stiff, bring a caravan or camper.

Even the best bacon batches can get a bit much after 24 hours.

COME ALONG AND JOIN THE FUN!!!