NATIVE NEW YO

From Darvl K and Eileen Shields, who have both found international fashion success in the Big Apple, to Jane Wogan, Terry's niece, who married the restaurateur famous for popping out of Bianca Jagger's birthday cake at Studio 54 in a loincloth, the Trish take well to bohemian New York. Britt Collins meets some of our more colourful exports. Photography by

Tiziano Niero

here's more to New York than Manolos and cosmopolitans, Seduced by the creative vitality. urban edginess and mystique, seekers, strivers and dreamers from around the globe have flocked here for decades where so many movies have been made, so many lives transformed. This all-night, rock 'n' roll city that has inspired generations of artists also offers the vicarious thrill of living in close proximity to David Bowie, Lou Reed and its other grand achievers and exquisite ghosts, however humble a Manhattan dweller's existence. Crossing the ocean in search of this picture-perfect slice of Manhattan life is a well-trodden journey for young Dubliners.

JANE WOGAN

Jane Wogan's life resembles the glimmering, rarefied world of a bi-coastal Hollywood starlet. The Dublin native-turned-New Yorker lives like any well-heeled young urbanite who summers in the Hamptons, wears designer threads and whizzes off on exotic travels. Fresh off the plane from St Tropez, where she went to celebrate her wedding anniversary, she is breathless and

"I came here for love," says the 30-year-old journalist over dinner and espresso martinis at Nobu, her husband's ultra-fashionable downtown restaurant. But, she says, she had been infatuated with the romance of New York since she was a child. "Before I met Richie, I'd planned to move

here. I'm not a homebird by any means," she says.
 'Richie' is Richie Notar, the slick, perma-

tanned, 49-year-old legendary restaurateur and former player on the Studio 54 scene.

An entertainment reporter for CNN and TV Guide. Jane works the red carpet between New York and LA, with invitations to the hippest parties in town. Equally at home at the glitziest Hollywood dos and on the most desolate Indian beaches, she looks like a flower child, whimsical and dreamy, with long hair, shimmery make-up and a sheer, clinging minidress that shows off the taut curves of her skinny body.

Coming from a showbiz dynasty — Terry Wogan is her uncle - she is used to leading a nomadic existence. She left Dublin at 17 to study at Bristol University where she "had a blast for three years". Moving to London, she dabbled in modelling and worked as a television presenter. While her friends settled down, acquired houses, possessions and debts, she fled. "I've always had the wind beneath my feet."

Since arriving in Manhattan her career skyrocketed after a rough start. She was sent back to Ireland by Homeland Security and her husband enlisted his starry friend Hillary Clinton to sort out her visa.

"It was a nightmare," she says coyly, "I couldn't work for months so Richie got me two puppies, Elo and Lily. Before long we had five dogs in a small apartment. I spent my days wandering the streets with them and everyone thought I was a dogwalker.

"New York humbles you because you're the tiniest tadpole in a big river. It's true, if you make it here, you can make it anywhere. I quickly realised that there's always someone prettier, funnier and smarter than me. I used to be incredibly insecure but since living here. I've become more accepting of myself and my flaws."

Wogan is happiest when telling stories about her husband, whom she met in LA while working as a presenter.

'I quickly realised that there's always someone prettier, funnier and smarter than me'
Jane Wogan, Terry's niece,
on the reality of living in

"He pursued me. He was brash and cocky, those bastard qualities that women love. Our life together is like the city itself, chaotic and crazy, and it's wonderful. Not a day goes by when I'm unhappy with him," she says of Richie Notar.

Richie is notorious for many things, not least because he once popped out of Bianca Jagger's birthday cake in a loincloth at Studio 54. He partied with regulars such as Debbie Harry and Andy Warhol, took fistfuls

woman love,' she says of her partner. De Niro and the Clintons are in their intimate circle

happen again, because people were allowed to be free," she says of Notar's eventful past. "The decadence and stories of Warhol, Truman Capote and Halston are fabulous. Richie's like Jack Kerouac, he documents his life, his travels. Maybe one day he'll write a book for our daughter," she says.

Wogan says with her warm, wide smile that they are having a marvellous time. They were engaged in Venice, married on the Amalfi Coast and their two-vear-old and the Clintons among their intimate circle.

Despite her glam existence in the city that never sleeps, she has often thought about moving to Rome.

"Having a toddler, I realised New York's not a city made for kids. But, at the same time, I think it's great that she gets to grow up surrounded by so History Museum, MoMA and Central

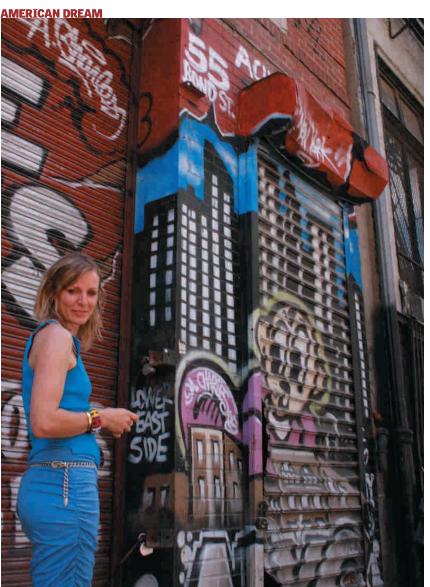
Park are down the road from me" she says But this occasional party girl finds New

York is not what it used to be. In the seven short years since she arrived, everything has become sanitised and samey. Not that she is bothered about going out as much as she used to, she laments, there's just no place to go. Now, she says, the clubs are tawdry and lonely, filled with poseurs and tourists. She would rather "stay in, with friends, chatting into the morning hours or being among interesting people who much colour and culture. The Natural don't care whether you're a billionaire or





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Tim one of those people who loved the grittiness of old New York. It's still so full of raw, real-life scenes that you never lose touch with reality Daryl Kerrigan on her new hometown

DARYL K

"I came to seek my fortune," says designer Daryl Kerrigan, professionally known as Daryl K and the reigning designer of downtown chic. "I love the romanticism of New York, and it's a music city, which inspires my clothes."

The street style and uncomplicated elegance of her tailored low-riders and sexy retro dresses and T-shirts quickly made Daryl K a paragon of hipness, an inspiration for legions of copycats seen on runways all over the world

She came to New York for the summer in 1983 while studying at the National College of Art and Design and waitressed.

"Nowhere famous," she says in her soft Irish lilt. "There wasn't a lot of opportunity in Dublin then, especially for anyone who wanted to be creative."

wanted to be creative.

Spurred on by the punk-filled glamour of Eighties Manhattan, she returned after college, imagining that she would hang out at CBGBs and hear the rock heirs to Blondie, the Ramones and the Velvet Underground. She settled in a sublet in Williamsburg, then a rundown blue-collar Brooklyn neighbourhood, and found work designing costumes for films such as My Coustn Vinny and Mustern Train.

She fell into the film industry through a boyfriend.

"My first movie was a film noir and I got paid \$100 a week. It was shot in February in the streets of Manhattan. It was freezing but I was happy," she recalls.

She travelled across the country and

worked on mostly indie films with great actors such as Harry Dean Stanton, Keanu Reeves, Crispin Glover, Tom Waits and Joe Strummer — with whom she became good friends. "He featured in our lives until he died," she says.

She soon realised her heart wasn't in it.

**exerting as it was making movies, it
was too restrictive. Maybe if I stuck at it, I
might've met a director who was right for me
— Quentin Tarantino or someone. The last
movie I worked on was My Cousin Vinny.
At that point, I got bored and wanted to go
off and do my won stuff."

Two decades ago, however, there was no place in New York's conservative climate for the flamboyance of mavericks such as Kerrigan.

"Fashion here at the time was pretty dismal," she recalls. "Those high-end designers like Calvin Klein and Ralph Lauren were all about career clothing."

So she made her own, or reworked vintage pieces. With \$40,000 in savings, she opened a little store in the East Village with Paul—she blushes and gestures towards her husband and business partner Paul Leonard, a handsome, sandy-haired man, sitting on the sofa opposite us in her breezy, white design studio. Although Leonard, who was once an assistant to art photographer William Wegman, is also from Dublin, the couple met here 22 years ago.

"I've always been thrifty. When one of my father's businesses failed, we had nothing left. We even lost our family home. It taught me a lesson. It's one of the 'We went all the way up and smoked joints and drank champagne in the head of the Statue of Liberty, looking out at the Manhattan skyline'

reasons my brothers and I emigrated."

But why not Paris or London? "Well, as that Clash song goes, London is so goddamn cold. New York has so much more soul." There's a coldness to London and, back then if you were Irish, you really felt. It. New York was warm and welcoming. People loved your Irishness and the accent."

She confesses that she failed fashion in Ireland: "It crushed me."

Yet, here she is sitting in her elegant shop on the Bowery, arriving out of underground obscurity into the mainstream.

"This environment made me thrive," she says, attributing her success to her adopted hometown. "Americans really want you to succeed. They have tremendous goodwill."

However, she still misses Ireland: "The Guinness, the gentleness of the people and

the softness of the little island where you don't have to explain yourself.

"Thow the wild Irish countryside," she adds wistfully, a sadness passing her liquid-blue eyes. "It's not as big as America, but there's a sense of freedom. There are no rules, no guns, or trespassing signs, You can just open a gate and walk to the beach through a farmer's field."

But, of course, she does love the benefits of the 'big world' — "the amazing people and parties you can't experience under those small-siland circumstances"

The couple are now living their version of the American dream between a brownstone in Brooklyn and a countryside retreat in Pennsylvania. Her life has been a whirl of international catwalk shows, dazzling people and places. She recalls Tina Brown's glamorous Vanity Pair party in Ellis Island in 2000 when the cit was still wild.

She describes it like a scene from The Great Gatsby, "with Moroccan carpets and jewelled cushions on the lawns, the trees strung with candles and vintage champagne Everyone was there from Charlize Theron to Liam Neeson. They didn't realise the Statue of Liberty was open. We went all the way up and smoked joints and drank champagne in the head of the statue looking out at the Manhattan skyline Shortly after that, 9/11 happened and the city became a different place. I'm one of those people who loved the grittiness of old New York, It's still so full of raw, real-life scenes that you never lose touch with reality," she says.



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EILEEN SHIELDS

In fashionable circles, people talk about Elleen Shields as being incredibly cool. Her Fifties-exist women in showbix from Halle Berry to Natalie Portman. Eva Longeria appeared in *Desperate Housewires*, stripped down to her underwear, wearing Shields's racy-red, peep-toe stiletos. Yet she describes herself "as just a small Irish girl trying to make her way in the glamorous world of fashion".

Shields came to New York as a teenager "when the East Village was swarming with Irish people".

"I met about 10 people from my art college. People like Philip Treacy and others like Daryl K who were a few years ahead of us. So, we were all young and poor together. It was a turbulent time. The East Village riots happened that year and half of the NYPD resigned over corruption and violence."

But New York was never part of the grand plan. Paris and Italy were more obvious fashion destinations, but she didn't speak French or Italian. She intended to stay briefly and then move to London, where her brother Kevin, the frontman of the hugely influential Nineties band, My Bloody Valentine, already lived.

"They played five nights at the Roundhouse in London and the shows sold out in nine minutes," she tells me proudly. "They were offered a million quid to play the Hollywood Bowl."

Instead, she remained in the East Village, where she still lives with her artist husband Mark Orange and their two small boys. She spent a decade working for Donna Karan, launching the DKNY footwear line when it was exploding around the world.

"It was a high-powered job that absorbed my life. I was a slave to stability. In the end, no amount of money was worth it. But I think if I'd started my own collection then, when I was that young, wild Irish girl keeping all the bars open in New York, I couldn't have handled it."

The 9/11 terrorist attacks affected her deeply.

"Mark and I lived close to Ground Zero and knew many people who died. It was like Beirut - the army and the National Guard took over the streets. I didn't go to work for weeks. I had these firemen, who were digging out dead bodies every day, telling me, 'Go back to work and make beautifu shoes.' They felt all this frivolous stuff had some meaning. With terrorism, people learned quickly that they just have to live an ordinary life and the point of terrorism is to prevent that It made us change everything. I quit my job, got married, got pregnant and started my own label, opened my store in Scarlett Row in Dublin, all in one year."

Seven years on, her quirky, vintage-chic shoes have been featured everywhere from *Vogue* to *The New York Times*.

"My footwear comes from a desire to dress people up," she says, leaning against a vividly coloured boutique window.

"The new collection is inspired by Twenties lingerie."

Shields is fixated on "beautiful old-

9/11 made us change everything. I quit my job, got married, got pregnant and started my own label, opened my store in Dublin, all in one year. With terrorism, people learned they just had to live an ordinary life'

fashioned things". She seems in many ways a figure from another time, with her bouffant hair, slippery-red lips and spooky lightgreen eyes.

"Tlove the Fifties," she says. "That's what's great about this city, you see strains of that glossy Americana when everything was made to look perfect."

These are exciting times for Shields. Now on the cusp of major success with the Sex and the City exposure, which launched Manolo Blahniks and Jimmy Choos into the public consciousness, she hopes to open a New York shop.

Recently, she says, she went to the Sex and the City premiere.

"All these overdone women were dressed in trashy Patrica Fields-type outfits, colourful dresses and really high heels. It was awful. New Yorkers don't live like the characters of that show and they aren't fashion obsessed. Everyone is undressed-up, unkempt, undone. Even designers work too hard to make that effort."

Living in a melting-pot city has sharpened her sensibilities and made her much more worldly.

"I love that my kids are growing up in a multicultural environment," she enthuses. "Before I moved here, I wasn't exposed to much diversity."

Though she was born in Queens in 1970 and the youngest of five siblings, Shields's family traded "the sunshine and sophistication of New York", as she puts it, for "the wet greyness and simplicity of Ireland" when she was three.

"My parents emigrated because they wanted their kids to grow up Irish. I was this little American girl, so I quickly lost my accent because I got teased. I was always the outsider so I don't feel any strong roots to America or Ireland. But we do spend summers in Ireland. It gives me a chance to escape work and everyday life."

Does she plan to return?

"My mother says that New York is making me impatient and angry. But I'd be stressed on top of a mountain as I thrive on chaos. She wants me to come home, but I constantly have to remind her I am home."

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AMERICAN DREAM



ELMA CREMIN

Elma Cremin came to Manhattan to be an adventurous, bohemian woman, who took risks, cared deeply and discovered films and beautiful things

"I crossed the ocean out of curiosity as much as anything else," she says.

"I got a green card in the lottery and arrived straight out of college in 1995. intending to stay for a summer and, 13 years

Growing up in the wilds of the Irish countryside. Elma came from what she describes as a typical large Irish family.

"It was idyllic," she says. "Mum was a nurse who baked cakes and dad was a farmer. We lived on a farm just outside Cork with no neighbours for miles, trees

to climb, streams to swim in and forests to

A small-town girl, dazzled by the bright lights and big city, she saw New York as the dark and deprayed place in Taxi Driver

'You can't imagine how great it was then, how wild," she says, her face alight.

"When I first came I didn't know a single soul, so I walked the streets, trying to figure documentary that we're developing. out how things worked. I rented this damp, When we walked into his apartment, his crumbling, fifth-floor walk-up in the East assistant asked us to take off our shoes Village. The neighbourhood was certainly and left us standing in the corridor for colourful at the time, with all the elements of ages before she came back to tell us that street society that you'd expect. There were so-and-so wasn't ready yet. When she pimps, whores, crack dealers, mafia types and took us into his living room, which is about all manner of crazies roaming around. And 10 feet away, he acted surprised to see us the drug culture was more prevalent. I came and said: 'Oh my God, I didn't know you home one day to find paramedics in my were here."

doorway, trying to revive a guy who'd OD'd. They jabbed a needle in his heart and he died n front me. So that was my introduction to New York"

Now 35. Cremin works as a film producer and lives in a bijou West Village apartment across the courtyard from the editor of Interview magazine. She got her break in the movie industry through a woman she met in a bar who helped her land a job with Robert Redford's newly formed Sundance

"My first week was dramatic," she recalls, laughing.

"The roof of my apartment collapsed on top of me while I was having a shower and I went straight to work scratched and bruised with rubble in my hair. My landlord, who was one of the city's slimiest, tried to blame me for the fallen roof," she says.

She sees the city as a giant film set with a maze of human dramas

"One evening I found the police breaking down my door. There was an owl who'd escaped from the zoo on to my fire escape. These kids from the projects were trying to catch this fugitive bird and the cops were trying to stop them. He flew to the park across the road with both the kids and cops in pursuit. An hour later, my doorbell rang and it was one of the cops - he had come back to ask me out on a date."

Before setting up her own company, Elma worked for Paramount, which opened a thrilling new world of premieres and parties. "It was a glimpse of the dark, lonely side

of the city," she says, recalling an opening night in SoHo, which was crawling with celebrities and the world's media.

"It was a surreal, very Faustian evening. We were taken to the basement to see 'this amazing artist'. We were led into this empty 2.000-foot space and we ask: 'Where's this artist?' And we were told: 'Behind that door.' So we open this Alice-in-Wonderland cupboard and there's this semi-naked guy painting in a four-by-four cell. He was about to open a major art show the following week but, meanwhile, he's locked up in a closet, you know, painting. He was like some captive Chinese domestic slave, kidnapped and shut away in some

"Afterwards, we were offered drugs and people tried to show us these weird Sixties porno films. The last I heard, the artist had disappeared and no one heard from

"Somebody probably had him killed, fed him to the crocodiles somewhere in Africa." she says wickedly.

"New York exposes you to so many different people, beliefs, thoughts and teaches you humility and that there are no rules. Being a producer. I meet lots of mad, eccentric people. Last week we met with this Oscar-nominated director for a

'There were pimps, whores, crack dealers. I came home one day to find paramedics in my doorway, trying to revive a guy who'd OD'd. They jabbed a needle in his heart and he died in front of me. That was my introduction to the city

Cremin now runs her own production company with her Parisian partner Nadja Romaine, producing features and art documentaries. They are currently developing a film called Cop Fight with the founder of Vice magazine and an interviewstyle TV series based on Warhol's 15 Minutes called Provocateur.

"There are so many brilliantly creative people here. The beauty of New York is that vou can escape into your apartment for

months and work. It's very liberating. She admits that sometimes she finds living in Manhattan difficult.

"There's this song called New York, I Love You But You're Bringing Me Down," she says, rifling through her record collection and putting it on - "that's how I feel sometimes. There are moments when you see so much injustice, so much wealth, such wrenching poverty. You see people who are scraping by on minimum wage or homeless guys with missing limbs begging It's incredibly sad and brutal But it's also part of the life, that high/low culture that attracts you to New York in the first place."

Her life has been an epic adventure. During her first year, she took a road trip across America.

"I really loved the Deep South, Savannah and New Orleans before it sunk. I met a girl on the train to Memphis who invited me to a party, where I bumped into people I'd met in New York a month earlier. I ended up staying in a shot-gun house like the one Elvis grew up in

"We hung out with this New York director and his transvestite friends and they showed us the underbelly of Memphis. You can have amazing experiences like that in America.'

New York, she says, is a city that rarely disappoints.

"It takes a few years to get into its rhythm, but then you wake up one day and you're living, breathing New York. Ideally, I'd love to live between here and Paris, but I can't imagine ever abandoning New York. It gets into your blood."

AMERICAN DREAM REBECCA AND RORY GUTNNESS

Rebecca Guinness is the archetypal New Yorker: she lives the 24/7 work-hard, playhard culture; she has the loft, the coffee habit and the weekly manicure. She fell in love with the city's hectic charm when she came over for Thanksgiving with her American mother as a teenager and had the wildest days of her life. After college, at 21, she scraped together some money from summer iobs and emigrated

"New York is not like any place I've ever been," she raves. "The energy is so infectious. Unlike London, which is so cliquey, closed and claustrophobic, people are kinder and more open. They take you at face value if you're nice to them. It's a lot like Ireland in

She made the rounds at America's elite glossies and got an internship as the go-togirl and researcher at Vanity Fair before becoming a fashion assistant at Harper's Bazaar. But the city for her, she says over drinks at an East Village cafe, has been a trial by fire. Not yet 30. Guinness lives in a tiny. mid-town apartment without a TV and a revolving collection of hanger-ons and now works as a fashion assistant for style magazine Lucky.

"It's not as highbrow as Harpers or W, but it's more enjoyable. Everyone is more chilledout and happier," she says.

Sometimes she finds the media obsession with celebrity vacuous.

"I do love the fun and frivolity of fashion, but there are times I feel disheartened," she explains, referring to the elitism and egos that cloud the industry.

"You just have to roll your eyes. It's just fashion, nobody's dying. With the big glossies, you can do some great work but they can really take over your life."

She considers the competitive nature of the city hard.

"I definitely think it harms you. People who do well here are generally pushy and ruthless. It's probably why I'm not as successful as I'd hoped to be. It's not worth trading your soul for or losing your sanity."

After vanishing outside for a cigarette with the photographer, her 27-year-old musician brother Rory reappears. He joined Rebecca in New York six years ago, when, he says, he "started a band, wrote some good songs, wrote some bad ones and had a hell's amount of girlfriends."

He says he doesn't suffer from homesickness but pines for the animals on the family farm in England.

"Being in New York, you can quickly get over not being with your pets, family or friends but I really miss the horses They're so graceful and gentle, you get so attached

When asked about their upbringing in rural Ireland with their stepfather, the grand literary writer JP Donleavy, they are both suddenly skittish and silent, saving only that they spent their early childhood in a big, gloomy, old house in Mullingar.

Rebecca breaks the silence, "When we moved to England, we became totally different people. We changed our names, changed everything. Our parents are farmers, you know, humble beginnings,

They breed event horses in Wiltshire.

Her brother, the gangly pretty boy who claimed to be shy at the photoshoot earlier vet posed like a pro, unloads his recent troubles. His band, I-Lash, broke up, and he lost his mad Vietnamese girl and his flat in one week. Now he's slumming "on Rebecca's sofa, but life is good".

They lived together before when he first arrived — "in a shabby East Village wreck with a 24-hour atmosphere of all-night delis, shops and bars. We used to have epic parties," he remembers fondly

"One night," he adds, "we had nearly 200 people and the floor collapsed. Finally, it got out of control to the point where the neighbourhood drug dealers came and just stole stuff, so we stopped having them."

"It turned into these communal living situations," Rebecca adds. "People came to our parties and stayed for days. People took advantage Some more than others"

"Nothing's changed," says Rory. "Rebecca's very meek and a notorious pushover. Generous beyond her means."

"I think I just have a mothering instinct, taking on waifs and strays," she says, "I am tired of all the freeloaders living in my flat. But I don't have anyone at the moment."

"Aside from me. I'm a terrible freeloader." he says, promising to get himself a place once he returns from London, where he's going to record and visit his parents and pets.

Rebecca concedes that she has a fear of living alone, "I got a one-bedroom flat recently rather than sharing with others because I thought I've grown-up now. But eventually I have people living on my sofa, in my bed. I get terribly bored and lonely if I'm by myself

"That's probably why you end up with these losers who are unstable," Rory tells her. "It's true. Rory told me the other day that.

I have the worst possible taste in men. I've only just realised that my type is crazy. Real bastards. One of my boyfriends was psychotic and had a drug problem. But the great thing about New York is that it's so small. You can go to 17 different parties in one night."

"Sometimes it's too small, especially if there are people you want to avoid," he

"One of my ex-girlfriends was friends with the owner of this naff, ultra-trendy bar. The day I broke up with her. I went there with some mates. The moment I walked in. the owner saw me and sent over her heavies. They literally threw me out into the street. American women can be scary and aggressive. Sex and the City didn't come out of nowhere. This is a terrible city for women to have relationships. If you're a vaguely good-looking guy here, you have easy nickings and can treat women however vou like

When Rory came to New York, before he became "a failed musician, he was a failed actor" doing short films, voice-overs and extra work.

"Taking acting class was one of the best things that I've done. I was painfully shy, emotionally crippled. It's helped me break out of my shell, which I seem to be drifting back into," he says half-jokingly.

Recently, he's been scraping a living as a runner on films and writing press releases for The Strokes.

"Sex and the City' just didn't come out of nowhere. This is a terrible city for women to have relationships. If you are a vaquely good-looking guy you can treat women however you like'

"I've realised the nine-to-five isn't my thing. As an artist, it's much easier to work as a waiter or bartender. You can earn \$1,000 a night. My girlfriend didn't let me bartend because she wanted me home at night," he says, before launching into a story about his first gig where his girlfriend was arrested by undercover police for smoking weed

energy is so in

"I had to go on stage minutes later so I told the audience, 'My girl's been taken to prison', and then played the show.

"I've had an amazing time in New York." Rory adds, "but I don't have any illusions about where I belong. I know I'll go back to

"I'm pretty content wherever I am. Rebecca says, "You can dump me in the wilderness and I'll adapt. But I don't like how the city can trap you. New York can drive you crazy, but it's exhilarating. There's nowhere