



THE CANDY STORE OF MY LIFE

BOSTON CONCERT—MAY 15, 2014

A Barry Gibb concert is like the candy store of my life. Most of us experience more than our share of cod liver oil and oatmeal days, you know the kind of days I mean. On those days the car battery dies when you come out of work and it's raining, the dentist finds a cavity and the school nurse calls to say your child has sprained his ankle in gym class. Life can be pretty grim at times, and then comes the day that provides a memory to wipe out all of the frustrations of daily life, and bring a smile to the face that just won't go away for a long, long time. This memory developed as I watched Barry perform at TD Garden on Thursday night. I was in the best candy store in town.

We arrived at 6:30 to find fans streaming in, riding the escalators as they chatted with anticipation. The energy in the arena was palpable, a chill in the air from the previous night's hockey game. Fans arrived early and were noisy and upbeat, and I started taking photos of the crowd. A group of German fans held up a sign that read Bee Gees Forever. Some waved to me when they saw my camera. The fans are so much the jelly beans and Hershey kisses of the evening. I was up close and personal for this concert, but there isn't a bad seat in the arena, and we soon found out that the acoustics were incredibly good as the opening act, Jared and the Mill, took the stage at 7:30.

Now let's talk about Jared and the Mill for a minute. They were fantastic, kind of a bluegrass meets pop group that really worked hard to get the crowd into their scene, even offering a song that had the audience singing the refrain. Being an

opening act is often a thankless gig. When the audience isn't familiar with your music, you tap dance on all sorts of tables to get them involved. I loved their enthusiasm; the lead singer (Jared) had a superb voice, the musicians were stellar, and their harmonies terrific. Their 30- minute set went by in a flash; and even though the many thousands of fans were there to see the great and powerful Barry Gibb, I think Barry made a great choice with this band. They were unique, kind of the watermelon fruit slices of the night.

There was a break as the crew, (who are geniuses as far as I can figure for having mounted this set after a hockey game ended late last night) set up for Barry. These guys are the best of the best, and are my chocolate macaroons of the evening. My heart started pounding faster when the blue guitar was placed next to the microphone at center stage and the guitar picks were lined up and ready for the master. Goose bumps and tingling come to mind, and this is before Barry is anywhere in sight.

Then the moment arrived. Now, I knew when Barry walked out he would receive a wonderful ovation, but it was beyond my expectations, even for Boston. The applause lasted several minutes; and after Barry sang "Nights On Broadway", the response was deafening and went on so long that Barry was brought to tears. I'm sure there will be all sorts of video and photos of this going up all over social media, but no amount of video can explain the feeling of being there with Barry as his fans showed how much they love him. I thought of the emotional turmoil he has been through in the past few years, and I was so proud to be amongst the group of fans to welcome him to the stage as he performed on his first solo tour in the U.S.

I could write several pages about this concert, but I will limit it to highlights that were stellar. The song choices were wonderful with a great balance, and I was so happy to hear Barry sing a Bruce Springsteen song, "I'm On Fire". Barry commented about Bruce singing "Stayin' Alive" and how much he enjoyed it, and Barry returned the compliment and knocked this song out of the arena.

Beth Cohen!!!! If you took Martina McBride, Kelly Clarkson and Barbra Streisand and meshed them into one voice, that voice would be Beth Cohen. She complimented Barry's voice beautifully on duets and then commanded the stage when she sang on her own. I adore this woman. She is the white chocolate with almonds, classy and rich.

Stephen and Samantha Gibb, the tag team of family talent. There's nothing to say except that we appreciate their moments in the sun as they support the patriarch and add to the fun of the night. Definitely the Reeses Pieces for me.

Barry's signature songs, like "Spicks and Specks" and "Words" seem to get better every time he sings them. I am grateful that he still includes these and very happy that super tunes like "One" (incredible) "Ordinary Lives" (moving) and "Grease" (so cool) are part of the song set. When one stops to think of the hundreds of pieces of

music this man has written, deciding what to choose must be incredibly difficult, and Barry didn't disappoint with his choices. Every song was a peppermint patty melting in my mouth, refreshing and sweet.

For this writer, the best part of the evening wasn't so much tangible as it was an aura that permeated the stage. It was more about Barry's attitude and demeanor. He seemed really excited to be on that stage, grinning and commenting to the crowd in between songs and looking really relaxed and dare I say, HAPPY. I think that in Barry's case, life hasn't gotten easier; he's just gotten stronger. He's taken a number of hits, and he keeps moving forward and now I think he's reached a point where the fun is back. At least I hope the fun is back, because every one of the people in TD Garden was having a rollicking time and left singing and smiling.

Barry, your voice sounds better than ever (how is this possible?) and you are forever my 85% cocoa dark chocolate in the candy store of my life. Thank you.

Now it's on to Philly and the fans in the City of Brotherly Love will be hard pressed to match the adoration of the Boston fans. Let's see what happens on Monday, May 19th. Good luck, Philly fans. You have your work cut out for you.