

The Absolutely Unofficial and Secret Diary of Adrian Mole, aged 30 => week of 6-April-97 (published 20-April-97)

Sunday, 6-April-1997

The flight to Portugal was very problematic. I kept remembering of our holidays in Skegness; the only difference is that this time we did not run out of fuel! Pandora didn't look like she was experiencing any trouble at all, from the moment they started projecting the movie "A fish called Wanda", although she had already seen it over 200 times...

I spent the whole time with a vomit-bag in my left hand and a handkerchief on my right one. I am sick. May be I got the flu. I hope I don't have to be isolated from Pandora and the baby!

Despite all the briefing delays, the several sudden altitude drops and the tremendous noise that came from the plane's engines (which we traveled next to), there was no delay at arrival!

Lisbon looks no better than London, in what comes to car traffic. The confusing thing is people driving on their right side! They surely must be bad drivers! It's a well known fact that in a dexterous world, driving on the right side of the road implies greater risks, since it's the left eye collecting the most visual data.

Pandora was given an apartment at Saldanha, right in the middle of Lisbon. It's an old building, but Insurance Star describes it as «rustic». Pandora has a pregnant license for the next 6 months, at least. Then she is planning on going on with her insurance activity here in Portugal. She thinks it's very important for a child to speak 2 natural languages.

Monday, 7-April-1997

I spent the whole morning installing my personal computer. I need to complete my novel, as soon as I can. Pandora woke up early and then went to watch TV. She was very excited about the portuguese subtitling policy for television.

The apartment already was reasonably equipped. Only food was missing. We went to lunch with Dr. Carl Parmenter, the only superior to Pan, in Insurance Star.

By the end of the afternoon, we went to a supermarket, but it wasn't easy to find satisfactory articles. Butchers' shops sell lots of bovine cattle meat! Ice-creams are too fat!

Tuesday, 8-April-1997

I bought a city map. We found a gym with classes for pregnant women. We found several bookstores with english language books, but Pandora insists that we should only buy portuguese, in order to make the best of our crucial adaptation period.

The computer is ready! Tomorrow I will search for portuguese Internet Service Providers!

Wednesday, 9-April-1997

What a great day! We cooked our first home lunch and met some of the neighbors.

The boy who lives in "2°E", Manuel, knows a little about Computer Science and he will come here tomorrow and install me an Internet access solution for less than £20 / 2 months.

I felt sexually excited during the gymnastics class. Ahead of us, a pregnant woman was exercising with other girl, instead of with her husband, like all the others. Sometimes when the friend bent on her knees, I could see a nipple's aureola!

My sexual activity with Pandora is still very regular, but she says that from the 3 months pregnancy on, we will have to calendarize the intercourses. That leaves me with just 3 weeks of unrestricted joy. Well joy is really not what it once was. Pandora is now 29 years old and her big breasts are a tad flaccid... if she was black she would slightly remember those afro girls we see in documentaries, with huge – but so unattractive – bazookas.

Thursday, 10-April-1997

Manuel did it! While I am writing this diary, the computer is downloading binaries from newsgroups, that I could not access in England! These portuguese are much more liberal in what comes to information consumption! There seems to exist no demagogical protectionism or special attitude towards national intellectual output. For example, in what comes to books, imported authors sell cheaper!

The worst we found was the Cable-TV network, which dubs the programmes to portuguese, without making the original soundtrack available! Tomorrow we will cancel our "TV-Cabo" subscription! Pandora says that there should exist no tolerance towards enterprises who push people in the wrong direction!

Friday, 11-April-1997

I woke up late! I spent the whole night chatting via IRC (Internet Relay Chat) with some american guys who visited Portugal and that didn't like the public transportation, too small and too crowded. I've always traveled on foot or on "metro", the subway, without paying! It's unbelievable, but the subway entrance for the trains allows you to get in without payment.

Today we had our 2nd gymnastics class. Sofia and Sónia were there again, but the exercises were of the kind that I wasn't able to further investigate their bodies. Sofia is the pregnant girl. Sónia is the one with the oversized gym-suit.

After dinner, my mother called, saying she will be visiting us, but the end of the month!

Saturday, 12-April-1997

I was intercepted by the subway's inspectors. I payed a fine of more than 5000\$ for traveling without a valid ticket. I am very disturbed!