

Seeing Harry

By: Madeline Infalvi

The day of a concert is a chaotic and exciting event. Every person has a different story of how they got there and how they spent their day. Each experience is unique, and I wanted to hear someone's story. Elise Strahan is one of the biggest Harry Styles fans I know. She has been to two of Styles' concerts, and plans on going to many more. Her first concert was last year in Cleveland, and this August she attended Styles' concert in Toronto. We will take a look into her entire experience at the Toronto show.

Elise had gotten her concert tickets back in May and had been waiting for the concert for over four months and did a lot of preparations, "We had to figure out what hotel we were staying in, who was driving, what day we were going and what day we were leaving, and then I had to buy an outfit, and find a way to get money." The morning of the concert was chaotic and exciting, "I basically had to pack that morning because I didn't pack anything, my mind just didn't believe I was actually seeing him. I was so excited but also in so much disbelief." Elise's family loaded all their stuff into their car and made their way to my house at around 7:15. Elise's brother, sister, mom, and she were all going, along with my mom and me. The trip was around five hours, "the trip felt very quick but it did take us an hour to cross the U.S border." Elise stopped about two hours into the trip at a rest stop in Buffalo, New York, "we only stopped once at this little rest stop, and we got some McDonalds while we were there." They then proceeded with the trip, not stopping until they got to Toronto. "I really just listened to music, slept, and talked to everyone the whole way there."

When Elise finally arrived in Toronto at around 12:30, they drove around looking at what the city had to offer, "we got there and drove around the city for a bit." The group decided they

wanted to walk around by Scotiabank arena (where the concert was taking place). They parked in the Scotiabank parking garage and began to walk around the city, “the city was so beautiful, it was actually the coolest thing.” After the group ate, they went to get merchandise at Scotiabank Arena. “They had a cute merch bus with all the merchandize in it, it was right outside the arena, and we waited like 30 minutes,” Elise said, “I got this black sweatshirt that has a picture of Harry on it with some flowers in the background. It’s really cute, and a pink key chain that says ‘LOT’ (which stands for “Love on Tour”).” At around 3 p.m, the group decided to go check into their hotel and get ready for the concert.

Elise stayed at a Hyatt hotel, right outside the city. “We got to the hotel, checked in, and then everyone took an hour nap.” Around 5:00 p.m, the group started to get ready, “I did my hair and then got dressed, I was so nervous but so excited, and we made a bunch of Tik Toks before too.” At around 6:30 p.m, the group was ready and drove to the concert, “I was so nervous at this point, I was shaking in my seat.” It took them around an hour to even get into the city, but finally Elise, her brother, sister and I were dropped off at Scotiabank arena.

“Scotiabank arena was so cool,” Elise said, “it was all decorated and there were Harry signs all over the place, it was such a cool place to take pictures.” After getting dropped off, the group took pictures outside and at around 7:30 p.m the group headed inside the arena. “I was really excited to see the inside. I’m a hockey fan too, and I have heard it was really cool and huge.” The group explored the inside of the arena and got some more merch, “I still could not comprehend the fact that I was seeing Harry, like it still didn’t occur to me.” Then the group made their way to their seats in section 208, row 2. The opener Madi Diaz opened at 8 p.m, “I really liked her set, I think we wanted to actually listen to the opener unlike last time and I’m really glad we did.” After her set, the lights came back on and the stage crew was setting up for

Harry's set, "Once the opener left the stage it started to get so real, and I can remember getting flashbacks from the last concert because it was so nerveracking." Then at around 9:00 p.m the lights dimmed, and the show was about to begin...

"The lights were flashing, the crowd was so loud, and I was losing my mind," Elise said, "I was so excited to see him again, my heart was pounding out of my chest." Harry's band came on stage and the opening to Harry's song "Daydreaming" was playing. "Harry didn't play 'Daydreaming' at any of his shows in Europe, so I was so surprised to hear him open with it," she said. Finally Harry was lifted up on a podium center stage, staring at the thousands of fans screaming and cheering for him. "I remember seeing his face light up when he saw all of us," Elise said. Harry sang 18 songs, 11 of those from his newest album, 4 from his second album *Fine line*, 2 from his first solo album *HSI*, and one song from his days in One Direction. "No one knew what the set list was so it was so exciting hearing the intro to every song because you had no idea what it was going to be." Elise could not believe she was seeing him again and was so happy to be able to. "I was just so genuinely happy the whole show, it was so fun" she said, "truly unbelievable."

After the show the group walked out of the arena to find a crowd singing "Sign of the Times" by Harry Styles. "It was so magical honestly, I was pretty upset but to see all these people in a crowd singing that song was beautiful." They stayed and sang other songs for around 30 minutes before they decided to leave. "We really needed food, I had barely eaten all day because I was so nervous, so I was absolutely starving." They decided to go to Tim Hortons, which is very popular in Canada, especially in Toronto, "We got like 80 donut holes, they were so good." After getting back to the hotel, the group went straight to bed, "I was so dead I fell right asleep."

Elise can not explain how special this trip was to her, and how grateful she is for this opportunity. Harry means the world to her and the fact that she got to see him in concert for the second time is beyond her. “I just feel so lucky, it was so much fun and I will always remember that trip.” Although she hopes to see him many more times, this trip has a special place in her heart.