

Being with my family makes for a great day

Fiona Cassidy, from Galbally, Co Tyrone, has just had her debut novel *Anyone For Seconds* published. It's the story of lone parent, Frankie McCormick, who meets the man of her dreams, a single dad, and how they manage to merge their two families. Fiona lives with partner Philip and between them they have five children, Colm (14), Una (12), Catriona (12), Ciaran (11) and Aine (3)

Do weekends find you at the coalface or drawbridge up?

Most definitely at the coalface. There are always at least three children in the house and sometimes there are five if it happens to be Philip's weekend to have shared care of his kids. Of course, they all have their different wants and needs that have to be met.

Sometimes I threaten to go and buy a bright yellow New York taxi cab as all I seem to do is do drop offs and pick ups – between football, drama, dance classes and trips into town to go shopping or to the cinema, I never seem to stop. And that's before I clean the house, do my grocery shopping or get any writing done ...

If you can do you grab a lie-in?

What's a lie-in? Sorry, I'm not familiar with that term. I remember going shopping in either Dunganon or Portadown with

mammy and daddy on a Saturday and really looking forward to it as I would always get new books as a treat.

At that stage I was probably still going through my Famous Five/Malory Towers/Enid Blyton stage and could be found curled up in the back-seat of the car with my nose stuck in a book on the way home.

What do you remember most about weekends as a child?

Sundays were lovely days for visiting relatives or relaxing – and I always looked forward to Sunday dinner as my mother is a superb cook.

If you could do anything you wanted this weekend, what would it be?

Have a lie-in ... whatever that is!

If you could buy anything at all this weekend, what would it be?

As my book launch is coming up I would love to go shopping to buy a new dress and accessories – I adore belts, scarves, jewellery and shoes and think that they can make the difference as to whether an outfit works or not. Just leave me in an accessories shop for 12 hours and then collect me again.

At weekends, do you eat out or do you rustle up something

yourself?

I usually cook or sometimes Philip does it and we'll have dinner at home. Occasionally we'll either get a takeaway or eat out as a treat, although we quite rarely get out on our own and usually have 'the squad' with us.

A night at the flicks or a DVD?

Most definitely a night at the cinema. I love everything about going to the pictures, from the smell of the popcorn right down to the atmosphere and the anticipation of going to see a much-awaited new release. I haven't been in quite a while though.

The last film I saw was *Confessions of a Shopaholic* (left) which was adapted from a book by one of my favourite authors, Sophie Kinsella.

If you had time to read a book this weekend, what would it be?

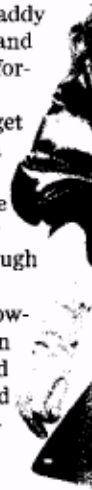
I would like to read either **Claire Allan's *Jumping in Puddles*** or **Marian Keyes's latest book *The Brightest Star in the Sky***. I usually have my reading planned well in advance as I'm rarely without a book.

Do you switch off your mobile and log out of your emails at weekends?

No way – I might miss something important, so both are kept on although admittedly my emails usually only consist of updates on Facebook or reminders about items (usually gorgeous and unusual accessories) that I'm watching on eBay.

Sunday morning – do you go to church?

I either go to Mass on a Saturday evening or sometimes on a Sunday morning. Both



... myself and my partner have a strong faith and believe it's an integral part of the week. We try to instil similar beliefs in our children although it's not always easy.

Your perfect Sunday?

I'm surrounded by my family and they're all happy. I also like it when we take the kids out for the day and do special things. Unless I'm writing I find being in the house quite monotonous and boring.

And when do you start to get depressed at the thought of the week ahead?

To be honest, I'm not the sort of person who starts dreading Monday morning the previous Thursday. I tend to embrace the week ahead as I never know what surprises or delights it may bring.

Anyone For Seconds? by **Fiona Cassidy**, Poolbeg Press, £6.99

