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Lorraine Keane on life and
love in the limelight

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What would you wear on the cover of a magazine? The feathered dress *Irish Tatler* had chosen for Lorraine Keane was sitting in the window of a pretty furniture shop in Blackrock village. The only dress in the shop, it was draped across a chaise longue, included purely for the purposes of an eye-catching display. We thought we'd found the perfect dress. The day before the shoot, however, it was gone. Someone else had borrowed it.

The day of the shoot, our cover star arrived to the studio in jeans and a t-shirt with a familiar feathered dress tucked neatly under one arm. We should have been surprised at the uncanny coincidence, but we weren't. This is Lorraine Keane, after all, someone who knows what's right for her and makes it happen.

The bird-like brunette realised a long term ambition this year when she took the lead of TV3's entertainment show, *Xposé*. Taking on a daily show has been challenging, she says, but ultimately rewarding. "It hasn't happened overnight, believe me," she laughs. "I was eight years with TV3 as entertainment correspondent before this show happened."

She has never made a secret of the fact that she pushed for *Xposé* to become a reality. "The way I saw it," she says, "was that Ireland is a country brimming over with creative talent. Be it theatre, music or film, we are particularly creative nation and we have so much to shout about. Some of the world's biggest stars are Irish, so why not show them off on home soil? It was a no-brainer, really."

Keane's journey to the small screen has been a circuitous one. She originally studied Public Administration and Current Affairs with a view to tackling the harder side of news. She soon found a love for the personal, however, on completing a course in Broadcasting and Journalism at Dublin's Ballyfermot College. Then came her famous role as the voice of AA Roadwatch. What was remarkable about this phase of Keane's life is simply explained – she made talking about traffic a talking point.

The face behind the voice came to public recognition in her work at TV3's *Ireland AM* morning show, and as the station's entertainment correspondent. Again, she made the role her own, sourcing the most exclusive interviews, lifting the lid on celebrity and getting behind the velvet ropes others were afraid to approach. She made the transition look easy, chatting comfortably with the world's most famous people and, in doing so, building up a considerable profile of her own. Did she want to be famous? "No!" she says, "I wanted to do something I loved – an enjoyable hobby I get paid for!"