

Brief Encounters

There is no sight more ridiculous, aside from a guy clipping his nose hairs while trying to steer a car, than a man in a lingerie shop pretending he knows what he's doing. Just last week I witnessed such a scene and I can tell you that the poor schnook was shaking like a leaf just trying to decide between a silk teddie and a pair of black lace panties.

I was standing next to him inspecting a push-up bra when he surreptitiously turned to me, and in a meek and rather quivering voice, held up a pair of black bikini panties and said;

“Excuse me, but...er...if these were for you...uh...which ones.... I mean, do you think?...what I want to know is....”

“Play it safe,” I interrupted, “go with the teddie. She'll love it, especially in black.”

This fella' was so overcome with gratitude that he tossed a few more questions at me.

“What size...uh...would you...wear in a garment of this sort? I mean, if you even wore such a thing, which you might not.”

“How tall is she?” I asked.

“I'm not exactly sure, but she's definitely taller than you.”

“Most people are,” I said.

“How much do you weigh,” he asked.

“Are you serious?”

“Sorry, I just thought it might help me in my selection.”

“How much I weigh is not the issue. How much does she weigh is the question.”

“She fluctuates.”

“Trust me,” I said. “All women tell guys they're a size smaller than they are. “Go for the size small. It will do wonders for your relationship. If she's larger, she can always return it.”

“The sales girl said that intimate apparel is not returnable, which makes sense if you think about where that teddie might end up and on whom.”

“Maybe,” he said, “I’ll get her a pair of slippers instead. It’s a safer choice. What size do you wear?”

“Six and a half, but her feet aren’t mine.”

He then made me remove my shoes so he could examine my feet to see if they compared to his significant other’s. By the end of this consultation, this stranger knew all my dimensions.

What I’ve discovered about men who shop for women, is that they operate on two levels: 1) they consider the woman they’re buying for and then 2) they buy for the woman they want her to be.

Just recently, I sent my husband, Mark on a mission to pick up some underwear because I didn’t have time to get it myself. He returned home looking like a beaten dog. That’s because a man who shops for lingerie behaves as if he’s trespassed on foreign soil without a Visa and needs an interpreter to get him through the ordeal. Observing such a man as he surveys a row of bras is an astonishing sight. He truly has no idea what a contraption is all about. Certainly, he is an adrift when it comes to buying one. I know because I once watched a guy trying to make such a purchase.

My wife is looking for...you know...”he whispered to the sales girl and looking right and then left, he pointed to his chest.

“You mean a brasserie?” she asked.

“Shhh, not so, loud.”

“What size?”

“Somewhere between pomegranates and melons.”

“What kinds of melons?”

“Ripe ones.”

“I mean,” she said, “honeydews or watermelons?”

“Definitely not watermelons, more like cantaloupes.”

“I’ll call the manager,” she said. “Maybe she can assist you.”

“No!” he screamed, “no need for managers. Just give me one for casabas, you know: a B.”

“B what?” she asked.

“B flat,” he guffawed.

He chose a bra that could have supported an elephant with a severe glandular problem. Years back, I went shopping for my teenage daughter. “She likes Days-of-the-Week underpants,” I told the saleswoman. “She’s run out of Tuesday and Friday and asked me to pick them up.”

“Sorry,” she said, ‘but we don’t break up our “Days-of-the-Week panty packs.”

“What should I tell my daughter? She’ll be disappointed.”

“Tell her it’s going to be a short week,” she said.

Then, she tried pushing astrological panties on me.

“What’s your sign?” she asked.

“Aries.”

“Perfect. We have a lovely pair of pink Aries string bikinis with a ram on the rear.”

“That wasn’t exactly the look I had in mind.”

“Elvis panties are making a comeback.”

“How about Perry Como?”

“Sorry, but we might have a few Robert Goulets lying around.”

I ended up with movie stars from the 1940s and walked around for a while with William Powell and Claudette Colbert bikinis.

For my birthday, I told my husband I wanted something sexy. He slithered through the intimate apparel of Bloomies pretending he knew what he was doing.

“May I be of service?” the sales girl asked.

“Yes,” he said. “I’m here to find a little something for the woman in my life: tasteful, but not overdone. Practical, yet appealing. Something that won’t wear out quickly, will stand the test of time and does the job.”

“Try housewares,” she said.

He took her advice and bought me a leaf blower.”

It was a little hard getting it over my thighs, but, at least I knew it wouldn’t shrink when I threw it in the dryer.

