

Burning Bra

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Task was to write a one-scene screenplay that included a portrait artist, set of car keys, and the phrase "I think it's burning."

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FADE IN

INT. PHOTOGRAPHER'S STUDIO - DAY

NIGEL watches SYLVIE enter the door of his photography studio. He stands to greet her and pulls out a chair, indicating that she should sit.

SYLVIE sits in the chair and rests a tote bag on the floor. She holds a set of car keys in her hand.

NIGEL

It's nice to meet you, Sylvie. I understand that you'd like to have some photos taken. What are you thinking?

SYLVIE

(smiles nervously)
Well, it's my husband's fortieth birthday next month, and I thought that I'd do something special for him.

NIGEL

Ah. Special, as in...special-special?

SYLVIE

(giggles and glances at the tote bag on the floor)
Yes, special-special.

NIGEL

Look, there's no reason to be shy or embarrassed. I do this all the time. Lots of women do this for their boyfriends or husbands. And sometimes both.

SYLVIE

(laughs while toying with her car keys)
I saw the boudoir photos on your website and thought they were very beautiful. Tasteful. Classy.

NIGEL

It has become a very popular genre the past several years. I reckon about forty percent of my business is boudoir.

SYLVIE

Wow! That's a lot. I guess I'm kinda surprised by that.

NIGEL

It's fun for me to see women let go of their inhibitions and embrace their sexuality.

SYLVIE

(looks around at the photographs hanging on the studio walls)
I could see that.

NIGEL

I want to be clear that you call the shots here. I'm not going to tell you what to wear, or not wear, or anything like that.

SYLVIE

Well, I was thinking of wearing lingerie and heels. I don't want to go totally nude. (beat) Not after having three kids.

NIGEL

Like I said, it's totally your call.

SYLVIE

I brought a couple sets of new lingerie and some heels that I haven't worn in a decade. They had been shoved in the back of the wardrobe and were coated in dust, so I had to polish them.

NIGEL

Great! (beat) Oh, I offer clients champagne to sip on while they get ready. Would you like some?

SYLVIE

That would be so lovely! I haven't had champagne in years.

NIGEL

(pours a glass of champagne and
hands it to Sylvie)

There's a lounge area behind that door
where you can change, do your hair and
makeup...whatever. Take your time. I
still have to test the lights and
fans.

SYLVIE

(takes a sip of champagne, picks
up the tote bag, and walks
towards the lounge)

Ok, cheers.

[Several minutes go by.]

NIGEL

(calls in a loud voice)

You doing ok in there, Sylvie? I'm
just about ready for you.

SYLVIE

(shouts from off camera)

Yeah, just about. Be there in a tick.

[Sylvie enters the studio through the lounge door. Nigel
looks up from his camera.]

NIGEL

Oh, wow! You look incredible! You sure
you gave birth to three kids?

SYLVIE

(sighs) Yes, I'm absolutely positive.

NIGEL

I don't have kids. I'm gay. Not that
being gay means I automatically don't,
or shouldn't, have kids. What I mean
by that is I'm not the domestic type.
I'm more of the 'let's go clubbing all
night while high on molly and pickup
the guy who most resembles Freddie
Mercury' type.

SYLVIE

Cheeky! Freddie was beyond fabulous,
wasn't he? Well, I envy you. Being a
parent is really hard.

NIGEL

(points to his desk)

There's more champagne, love. It looks like you need a top-up.

SYLVIE

(pours herself more champagne)

Finally, a man who can read my mind.

NIGEL

(fiddles with a piece of photography equipment)

Ok, Bella Hadid, you ready?

SYLVIE

Haha. Ready as I'll ever be.

NIGEL

I want you to take a couple more sips of champagne. You'll thank me later.

SYLVIE

(drains the champagne glass in two large gulps and places the glass on the desk)

Liquid courage.

NIGEL

The best kind. Ok, Sylvie...I'm going to take some test shots first, but I want you to start practicing some sexy poses. Whatever you're comfortable with.

SYLVIE

(poses awkwardly)

I don't think I'm very good at this.

NIGEL

Try not to be self-critical. Here, let me turn on some music. (turns on a portable speaker)

So Sylvie, I want you to think back to when you and your husband first started dating and were shagging all the time. Use that as your inspiration.

SYLVIE

Ok, I'll try.

NIGEL

(snaps a quick succession of photos)

Great, Sylvie, you're doing great!
Really tap into your inner goddess.
(beat) That's it. Gorgeous!

SYLVIE

The champagne was a good call, Nigel!
I haven't eaten today, but oh well!

[Sylvie flings off her bra, which lands on a floor lamp.]

NIGEL

Bold! I love it! Gimme a little pout.
That's it. Now turn around and look at
me over your shoulder. Sexy mama! You
got it!

SYLVIE

(stops moving abruptly and bursts
into tears)

I...I...can't do this. I'm not a sex
goddess. I'm a worn down mother of
three whose tits are so saggy now that
they could be mistaken for testicles.
See? (points to her naked breasts)

NIGEL

(puts down the camera and
approaches Sylvie)

Oh, honey. You're ab fab! I see that
very clearly. Tits and all. But you
need to believe it, too.

SYLVIE

(wipes tears from her face)

I don't know who I am anymore. I'm
just a chauffeur, cook, laundry
attendant, and bank. No one
appreciates me.

NIGEL

(sits on the chaise longue and
pats the empty space next to him)

Come sit down, gorgeous. Let's take a
breather.

SYLVIE

(sniffles) My husband hasn't touched me since his thirty-eighth birthday. Two years! Can you imagine not being made love to for two whole years?!

NIGEL

Uh, no, I can't. I can't even imagine going two days, but I'm a shameful slag who will shag just about anything.

SYLVIE

(giggles) You're so adorable. Why can't my husband be like you?

NIGEL

Well, for starters, he's not gay. Which means that he's severely deficient in many, many ways.

SYLVIE

Yeah, I shoul'da married a gay man instead of Jack.

NIGEL

(looks around the studio)
Do you smell something?

SYLVIE

No, but I'm pretty hammered.

NIGEL

Oh my god! Your bra! It landed on the floor lamp. I think it's burning!

SYLVIE

(giggles) It's about time I burned my bra. (beat) May I have some more bubbles, please?

FADE OUT