

# Lipstick and Knickers

by Rosen Trevithick

## SAMPLE EXTRACT

What is that on the floor between the painful source of light and the route to my toilet? If only the room would stop spinning long enough for me to focus. It looks like a... No, it is a thong!

Shit, this sort of thing doesn't happen to me! And, *wow*, this sort of thing doesn't happen to me. But mostly, *shit!*

Hang on... What sort of thing doesn't happen to me? How did that thong get there? What did I do?

"Hello?" I call hopefully into the bathroom.

It was the worst possible Saturday morning - the most terrible hangover of my *life*, coupled with the knowledge that once one feeling of death subsided, my girlfriend was going to dump me.

My predicament was even worse than your regular drunken one-night stand - my memory had been pulverised. I couldn't even remember getting home, let alone a memory of the act that I had clearly deemed worthy of ruining lives over. Yet the thong was proof that I had strayed.

Why, why, why, did I go to a party without Lizzie? It was just asking for trouble - or at least, it would have been, were I James Bond and not a smaller than average, slightly spotty twenty-three-year-old with ginger facial hair.

No, it was fair to say that nine hundred and ninety-nine times out of a thousand, Ross Turpin could be relied upon to get drunk without messing up anybody's life.

So what went wrong this time?

If only I knew!

I crept closer to the edge of the bed, moving slowly through fear of the vomit monster. I reached out an arm and tried to grab the thong. It was more slippery than I expected. Satin, hey?

But every burst of momentary excitement was followed by a bout of self-loathing. The more exotic the panties, the greater the betrayal.

Unable to face the overwhelming power of a bedside lamp, I used my phone to light the thong. It appeared to be of a greenish colour.

Luxury lingerie was a novelty for me. Lizzie's ladybits preferred to hang out in stretchy black shorts. She said they were seamless, which I'm told, is a good thing. Looking at these green knickers, I observed that a black lace trim was a good thing too. Agh! There it was again: self-loathing.

How was I ever going to tell Lizzie? How would the conversation even begin? It wasn't a scenario I'd envisaged needing to prepare for.

"Hey darling. I've got something to tell you. I probably cheated on you, but I'm not exactly sure."

And what if I confessed, then found out that I *hadn't* cheated on her? Then I'd put us both through a hellish ordeal for nothing.

No, I needed answers; answers first, confessions second.

My head felt as though an expanding chisel had been wedged inside its core. It was hardly a time

for sleuthing. Still, the task at hand couldn't be that difficult given the small number of thong-wearing suspects. I only really knew four women: my mum, my gran, Lizzie and Nina.

Dammit. If I was going to sleep with Nina, I would have liked a memory of the occasion. Nina and I had been friends for over sixteen years, which meant I'd imagined her naked at least one thousand times, from the innocent curiosities of boyhood, to the more shamefaced urges of blokehood.

I told myself not to jump to conclusions. The presence of a thong on my bedroom floor did not necessarily mean that Nina had been here. There were other possibilities. Perhaps it had been a flirtatious gift. Perhaps I found it on the way home. Perhaps one of my housemates put it there for a laugh.

Yes! That was it. Gerry must have seen me come in drunk and thought to himself, "I know what'll really get Ross going, I'll put a woman's thong on his bedroom floor."

Ah, good old Gerry, always the prankster. Well, it hadn't worked this time. *Nice try though*. I chuckled to myself.

It turned out that chuckling was more than my tender belly could handle. I leapt out of bed and sprinted toward the bathroom. I felt gunk rising in my throat. I wasn't going to make it! I lunged forward just arriving at the toilet on time.

A combination of red wine, Baileys and stomach acid splashed back into my face. I wiped something solid off my nose. Alas, the toilet lid was down.

However, it wasn't the vomit dripping from my chin that concerned me the most. Why was the lid of the toilet down? I *never* put the toilet lid down.

"Get a grip!" I told myself. "You don't remember getting home. Who knows what adjustments of habit you might have made."

My mouth tasted of puke, as mouths often do after you've been violently sick. The taste made me feel as though I might throw up again.

I was sweating, shivering and struggling to stay vertical, yet I was determined to make it to the sink. I needed that fresh supply of water.

With all the energy I could muster, I dragged myself to the washbasin.

As my handle grappled for the tap, I felt something plastic against my fingers. Without thinking, I flicked it out of the way and by chance, it landed on my lap.

When I saw what it was, I leapt with terror. As my eyes focussed, I felt a shiver down my spine. Its colour was like blood, and it's meaning more sinister still. I felt chilled to the core. How did a bright red lipstick find its way into my ensuite?