



HER INDOORS BY MARY KILLEN

EVER SINCE I WATCHED the Royal Wedding, I have had a new spring in my step. I can't explain why. There was just something about it that made me feel that life in Britain has suddenly got a lot better. But I don't really want to let daylight in on magic by analysing why.

Of course, the weather has been wonderful, the bluebells are out and the lambs have been bleating outside the cottage, but another reason I have had a spring in my step is because I now have a slightly enhanced body image.

We live quite near – or, at least, within shared shopping distance of – the Middletons and, therefore, to Angela Knight Lingerie, a shop in Hungerford into which the Middleton females were seen disappearing for a full hour just before the Wedding, while detectives waited outside.

Tongues began to wag amongst the Hungerford shopkeepers and one of them wagged to me. What is the secret of Angela Knight, I wondered? There was, apparently, something transformational about her. I had been hearing about how women in Hungerford ask each other if they have been 'Knighted' yet, so I decided to look into it for myself and penetrated the silky, feathery boudoir last Thursday.

Suffice to say that Angela Knight herself is an extremely sexy woman – but not in a pervy way. She is just natural and open and wears no make-up and exudes femininity and does not fold her arms over herself, or cringe in the way a lot of us do. 'She can make any woman feel like a million dollars,' said one of those who had been 'Knighted'. 'Surely not every woman?' I challenged Angela: 'What about Vicky Pollard?'

'I could do something with her,' nodded Angela.

Angela, apparently, does not really care about lingerie. She uses it as a tool to help her to make women 'make contact with themselves' and to show them how to embrace their own femininity, as this will make their man able to

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embrace his own masculinity. Her letterhead includes a graphic of a hawk and a dove.

In any case, I walked out of the shop with my own shape adjusted for the better and feeling slightly evangelical – only slightly because I am too old now to feel zealous about anything. However, it is time that women (it is other women that make us feel inadequate, Angela explained, not men) pulled themselves together and stopped thinking that men are examining every square inch of our bodies and thinking 'that bit is too cellulitic and that bit too crêpey'. Other women are, but men aren't.

Angela made a convincing case for the theory that men just see the general shape and respond to the general warmth and they are not focusing on the details. They just want to hug us, if they like us, but we are constantly fighting them off saying 'No, I feel too ugly!'

It is good to make the best of yourself but, in a way, it is more restful not to be too attractive. It is fun, at first, for junior beauties, but then they begin to find the attention a bit exhausting.

And, in many ways, it is better if self-confidence and the realisation that men only care how you make them feel – rather than how you look – comes in later life because that means that all the years you felt unattractive, you could be working on your personality rather than developing an unhelpful dependence on your looks to get you anywhere.

It will soon be time to make the purchase of a new bathing costume and I may now be less inclined to buy a Nigella-type burkini.

HOROSCOPES

by Victor Olliver

♉ TAURUS
21 April to 21 May
Plans for major change are galvanised by a Pluto link to Mercury, Venus and Mars, around the 21st. You turn Miss Marple-ish in efforts to find a lost item of personal property.

♊ GEMINI
22 May to 21 June
The Sun enters your sign on the 22nd, heralding a mini-rebirth coupled with Pluto's determination to break with psychological baggage. Prepare to make progress by a set of new life rules.

♋ CANCER
22 June to 22 July
A Mars-Pluto link favours deep thoughts on how best to further ambitions, especially through group efforts that benefit others and not just you. For many, a passionate, dynamic week ahead.

♌ LEO
23 July to 23 August
Listen carefully to what people say – or don't say – to you, as Pluto deepens Mercury around the 21st. Insights help to further work or status as your charm teases out vital info.

♍ VIRGO
24 August to 23 September
Lucky you! Love and finances are rejuvenated around the 21st-22nd as Pluto touches Venus. Long-distance travel, the great outdoors or publishing are subject to energetic attention.

♎ LIBRA
24 September to 23 October
Re: loans, mortgages, legacies – new beneficial information may come to light around the 20th with a Mercury-Pluto link-up. This week you're thinking more strategically, more patiently.

♏ SCORPIO
24 October to 22 November
A meeting of minds proves a tonic to any kind of partnership, thanks to ruler Pluto's work in your communication house. Suddenly you feel even more a part of a team.

♐ SAGITTARIUS
23 November to 21 December
Any voluntary work benefits from a Mars-Venus tie-up: you have huge get-up-and-go to win people round. The Sun's move into Gemini on the 22nd boosts partnerships.

♑ CAPRICORN
22 December to 20 January
Sensuality pervades the week – from love to food to reading Keats. Creative work sparks under Mars while problems with children should lighten around the 22nd.

♒ AQUARIUS
21 January to 19 February
Maria von Trapp (also Aquarian) you may not be, yet something of her gift for home-making ensures happy times with loved ones under Venus. No need to sing *Edelweiss*, however.

♓ PISCES
20 February to 20 March
Neighbours can be sources of intrusive noise. But this week, yours should be less annoying, particularly if you have asked for their cooperation.

♈ ARIES
21 March to 20 April
A career-related cash improvement rewards your tenacity around the 21st-23rd. Take advantage of the Sun's move into Gemini on the 22nd to communicate ideas.
♦ <http://victorolliver.bi>