

A - ENSEMBLE

ONE What do you think?
TWO Does this go in or out?
THREE What is this length?
FOUR I can't even zip it up.
ONE The only reason I can't zip this up is I have my period.
TWO Omigod, I'm up a size.
THREE This will fit if I lose five pounds.
FOUR This will fit if I lose ten pounds.
ONE This will fit if I have lipo.
TWO This doesn't fit.
THREE Do you think this can be let out?
FOUR This doesn't fit now, but I always lose weight in May.
ONE I don't know who this is cut for.
TWO But I'm a 6. I've always been a 6.
THREE Does this comes in an 8?
FOUR Does this comes in a 12?
ONE Does this comes in a 14-slash-16?
TWO Does this make me look pregnant?
THREE I can't decide.
FOUR What color is this?
ONE I can't wear gray.
TWO Yellow makes me look sick.
THREE I look so pale in green.
FOUR It's so red.
ONE Blood red.
TWO Is this black or navy blue?
THREE I can't buy another black turtleneck sweater.
FOUR I can't buy another white T-shirt.
ONE I look like my mother.
TWO What am I supposed to wear with this?
THREE Does this match?

FOUR If you're not buying that could I try it on?
ONE Does this run small?
TWO Is there something wrong with the lighting in here?
THREE Is this mirror, like, distorted?
FOUR It doesn't fit.
ONE I can't wear anything without sleeves.
TWO I can't wear anything lowcut.
THREE My arms. What happened to my arms?
FOUR If my elbows faced forward, I would kill myself.
ONE My butt is falling.
TWO Is my butt falling?
THREE Omigod, my butt fell.
FOUR Does this make me look fat?
ONE Tell me the truth.
TWO I can't decide.
THREE I can't decide.
FOUR I can't decide.
ONE I can't decide.

B - ENSEMBLE

ONE Black.

TWO Black.

THREE Black.

FOUR Black.

ONE When did we start wearing black?

TWO I can't remember.

THREE I love black.

FOUR Sometimes I buy something that isn't black and I put it on and I am so sorry.

ONE I'll take three in black.

TWO I'll take five in black.

THREE Do you have this in black?

FOUR Is this black?

ONE Are you sure you don't have this in black?

TWO Could you see if the other store has it in black?

THREE What about the L.A. store? Do they have it in black?

FOUR Why do we only look good in black?

ONE I went to a store the other day and a saleswoman showed me a black sweater, and I said, "I can't buy another black sweater."

TWO You bought it, didn't you?

THREE I bought it.

FOUR I feel sorry for people who live in places like Phoenix and Dallas because people there wear things that are, like, pink.

ONE What about all those women senators?

TWO Duckworth?

THREE Warren?

FOUR Clinton?

ONE In their red suits?

TWO And royal blue suits?

THREE Turquoise.

FOUR Coral.

ONE Magenta.
TWO What's wrong with them?
THREE Don't they get it?
FOUR Can't we just stop pretending that anything is ever going to be the
new black?
ONE Black.
TWO Black.
THREE Black.
FOUR Black.
ONE Black.

C - HEATHER

I look gorgeous in high heels. Everyone looks gorgeous in high heels. But my feet hurt. My little toe was always crushed. I had a bunion. I was in so much pain, I couldn't think. I had to choose--heels or think. (Beat.) I chose think. (Beat.) So I bought some chic flat shoes. I made a lot of mistakes. Eventually, I realized that chic flat shoes are almost as uncomfortable as heels, and don't do that amazing thing for your legs. (Beat.) Fortunately, at just about that time, I met an unbelievably stylish woman who was wearing Birkenstocks. When I was in high school, I was a Doc Martens girl, and Birkenstocks symbolized everything I didn't want to be. They were incredibly uncool and the girls who wore them had big dirty toes that stuck out the ends. You absolutely could not be friends with a person who wore Birkenstocks. But this stylish woman wore her Birks with baggy cords and a Comme De Garçons sleeveless shirt. It was a revelation. The next day I went out and got a pedicure and a pair--dark brown, standard style. I realized that Birkenstocks were actually the coolest, punk-est shoes a girl could wear. They were a statement, "Look, these are my feet, we all have them. Okay?" My husband had a slightly different opinion. He hated my Birkenstocks. He said they made me look like a troll from Middle-Earth. And once, when the Red Sox were in the playoffs, he made me take them off before coming into the same room as the TV so I wouldn't hex the team. (Beat.) After we split up, you'd think I'd have stuck with my Birkenstocks, but no. I started wearing heels again. Oh the pain, I can't think. But I look gorgeous. I had to choose--heels or think. I chose heels.

D - GINGY

Pink satin princess-style dress I bought in Filene's Basement in Boston for my marriage to Harry M. Johnson. I was twenty and Harry was thirty-seven. Harry was my sociology professor at Simmons. We were married at his best friend's house in Dobbs Ferry. There was no food, only champagne and wedding cake. My grandfather wouldn't come because he thought Harry was too old for me and, besides, he was Catholic. Here are the words my mother uttered on this occasion: "You're killing me." (Beat.)

Iridescent-brocade Chinese-style dinner dress I bought in Cambridge for a New Year's Eve party. Harry convinced me to buy this dress even though it was expensive. He said it showed off my arms. He thought my arms were pretty. The party was at the home of Harry's friends Penny and Ecky. They were married. I idolized Penny. She carried a diaphragm in her purse, which was very cool but strange. I wondered about it at the time, because isn't the whole point of getting married that you don't have to carry your diaphragm in your purse? Anyway, at midnight, I got very upset because I couldn't find Harry. Then I saw him. He was kissing Penny. "Harry!" I said. And you know what he said? Of course you know what he said. He said, "It's not what you think." But it was exactly what I thought. So that was that. I was twenty-one years old and I was going to be the youngest divorced person in America, except for Elizabeth Taylor.

E - HOLLY

If I could draw, I would draw you the dress my mother gave me when I was five years old. It was my favorite dress ever. It had long sleeves, and it was charcoal gray wool with a big lace pilgrim collar and a black satin bow in the center and lace cuffs. A few months after my mother gave it to me, my father, who was a doctor, sent my mother away to a mental hospital, moved his nurse into our house, divorced my mother, and married the nurse. We had a cleaning lady who came in once a week who had a daughter a little younger than me, and my stepmother used to give her my hand-me-downs. One day I couldn't find my beautiful dress. I asked my stepmother if she'd seen it. "It will turn up," she said. A week later, I went to school, and during recess I found my dress...on the cleaning lady's daughter. I could not believe it. I ran up to her and grabbed her by the collar screaming, "That's MY dress, MY dress, MY dress" again and again until the recess monitor pulled us apart. The little girl stood there, shaking and crying. And I stood there shaking and crying, holding my satin bow in my fist. I wasn't punished because the school "understood." But I remember wishing that they had punished me. Shame on me. And my stepmother too.

F - GINGY /GINGY'S MOTHER

MOTHER **Gingy, what is that smell?**

GINGY *(As a 12-year-old)* **What smell?**

MOTHER **You know perfectly well what smell.**

GINGY *(As an adult)* **It was perfume. It was Tabu. I smelled like--**

MOTHER **You smell like a bordello. You are too young to wear perfume.**

GINGY *(As a 12-year-old)* **Tootsie wears perfume.**

MOTHER **Tootsie is seventeen. You are only twelve years old, you're still a baby--**

GINGY *(As a 12-year-old)* **I am not a baby--**

MOTHER **And you smell so sweet without it. When you were a little girl. I used to just bury my head in your neck and inhale--**

GINGY *(As an adult)* --She used to just bury her head in my neck and inhis doesn't fit. *(Beat.)* The spring after my mother died, my father took me to B. Altman's department store on Fifth Avenue to buy a dress for my thirteenth birthday. We were both so sad, but when we got to the teen department my father said, "This is my daughter Gingy. She needs something to wear for her thirteenth birthday, and we need help." Everyone rushed to help us because he was so handsome. He was six feet tall. I picked two navy blue dresses and couldn't decide between them. I was in agony, so he said, "You don't have to decide, because you know what? I'm buying them both." He made them gift wrap them. This was a long time ago, when you didn't have to pay extra to have things gift-wrapped. Each dress was very expensive, about forty-four dollars. I wore this one to my thirteenth birthday party. *(Beat.)* One day my grandmother came and got my sister and me. She'd decided we were going to live with her and Grandpa and my Aunt Babbie. I never saw my father again.

G - STEPHANIE

My junior prom dress was powder blue and white. It was ribbed, with tiny ribs and a white waistband and a white band around the bottom--kind of like Cinderella--with a big powder blue bow. The problem was my date. He rang the bell, and I opened the door, and there he was, in a powder blue tuxedo with a white frilly shirt and a powder blue bow tie. We matched. It was totally mortifying. I didn't really like him but I was sort of the last to be asked to the prom--not the very last but one of the last, so I didn't really have a choice in the date or in what he wore. And I had a really horrible time at the prom, and afterwards we went into a field and tipped cows. (Beat.) My senior prom was completely different. My prom dress was black and short. It was in that sort of Madonna 1980s style, her "Like a Virgin" phase, tight on top and then it went out in a black net pouf and black lace gloves. My date was also short, but dark and handsome, and we ended up drinking champagne and making out in his car, and it was great. But here's the thing--I've never really known for sure which of those two people I am: the girl who almost doesn't get asked to the prom at all or the girl who gets to go with a really cute guy. Every time I thought I knew which one I was, I turned out to be the other. Which is one reason why I think I got married--to, like, end the confusion.

H - ENSEMBLE

- ONE** That is such a painful subject.
- TWO** My first bra.
- THREE** I can't even talk about my first bra.
- FOUR** May Company.
- ONE** Macy's.
- TWO** Nordstrom's.
- THREE** Bloomingdale's at a bra sale and I was almost trampled to death.
- FOUR** My father took me. I still can't talk about it.
- ONE** Bras, breasts, the whole works, this is a very painful subject.
- TWO** I was always trying on bras.
- THREE** My aunt had this really big one and I used to wear it on my head.
- FOUR** My first bra was like two triangles. I got it at Jordan Marsh. It was awful, because there was some really cute guy there shopping with his girlfriend and my mom kept saying, "Julia, why are you in that section? The training bras are over here."
- ONE** My mother said, "If you don't wear a bra you will get pendulum breasts."
- TWO** It was a 28AA bra. Tiny, but not enough. I put it on and there were like empty little puffs on my chest. The saleswoman said, "Lean over." So I leaned over, hoping that breasts would magically tumble out of my body and into the bra. But they didn't.
- THREE** I bought a blow-up bra. It had plastic balloon inserts and came with a plastic straw that you inserted into the balloons and blew up to the size you wanted. One day I was talking to this guy I had a crush on, and one side collapsed right before his eyes.
- FOUR** It was something about your dad.
- ONE** You couldn't run around the house naked any more.
- TWO** You couldn't sit on your daddy's lap.
- THREE** The breasts, the bra, the divide.
- FOUR** My mom's friend recommended the Minimizer, a spandex bra that flattens your boobs about a cup size. I was totally excited about it

because I was so self-conscious about my breasts. The bra flattened me but kind of gave me a monoboob look. I wore it to the veterinary hospital where I was working as a technician. There was this crazy substitute vet there. He said, "Please don't take this personally. This is only for your own good, but I have to say there is something wrong with your boob." I said, "I don't know you and I don't appreciate your comments about my boobs. There are none of your business." First time I ever stood up for my boobs.