

The Boytician

Gemma Burgess's husband didn't know what he was letting himself in for when he offered to apply her fake tan for her – now the poor chap is doing her nails, her blowdries, everything but her bikini line... Here, she waxes lyrical about the beauty of having one's very own Boytician

Fake tan is my nemesis. Always has been. After a few disastrous efforts this year, my husband, Fox, offered his unsolicited opinion: 'Be less slapdash next time, my mottled peanut. Your knees look like you've been offering party favours at Glastonbury. I could do a better job.'

I was about to come back with my favourite retort ('Yeah? Well... suck it') and resign myself to my natural shade of eau de pigeon when a tiny light bulb pinged on above my head, and I offered him a dazzling smile instead.

Twenty minutes later I posed, naked, as Fox applied Vichy Capital Soleil with the kind of dogged determination he normally reserves for fixing the Sky Box. Dignified? No. Attractive? Hell, no. But that's love. He

rubbed so vigorously that he tore a latex glove, muttering, 'Must get between toes, she never does that,' and 'Back of neck, always blotchy.'

The next day, I bounced around, whooping with joy. I was perfectly brown! I was Brigitte in the Sixties! I was Elle in the Eighties! Fox was all smug pride, and a second light bulb pinged – could he tend to all my grooming needs?

How can we not have thought of this before? It's so obvious. Men enjoy solving problems, they're detail-oriented and a lot of them are competitive show-offs. And, of course, they love saving money on so-called non-essentials (although I, for one, am so fed up with boring terms like 'recessionista' that I will stab the next offender with my Zara stiletto).

Ladies, I present: the Boytician.

Now, I've discovered three things in my quest to add 'beauty guru' to the list of

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my husband's otherwise resolutely manly attributes. Men need clear instructions – engineering-type diagrams, ideally (although after one

session they'll think they know better than you even though you've been doing it since you were 14). They will secretly enjoy it (in the same way that they secretly enjoy reading gossip magazines in the bath and getting a massage that has 'aromatherapy' instead of 'sports' in front of it), but that must remain a secret. And, lastly, results vary, so be careful.

Blowdrying: a home run. My brief was very specific ('Divide hair into six sections, pull each with a round brush, and angle the hairdryer down for maximum shine') and the results were excellent. No more wonky bits at the back.

Waxing: forget it. It descends into lewdness faster than you can say: 'Darling, that's not quite what I – oh.'

Nails: decision pending. The rough effectiveness of a footfile really fries his burger (there's a soupçon of the lumberjack about it, after all), but a rudimentary topcoat test revealed that big rugby hands are not built for Essie's dinky handle. He dropped it twice and glooped the polish on like house paint.

I tried to sound innocent and hopeful: 'Would you consider a mani-pedi training course?'

'Keep dreaming, sweetcheeks. I'm not your beauty bitch.'

It was worth a shot. □

RESEARCH PICTURE: BERT STERN

