

CAN YOUR SCENT GET *you* *laid?*

Perfume ads promise sexual magnetism, but what's their true pulling power? Fiona Embleton tried the world's sexiest fragrance. Here's what happened...

Five years ago, I found myself alone in a Parisian bar when a notably handsome Frenchman leant over and whispered in my ear. "I like your perfume..." he said in the sort of seedy Gallic drawl that makes everything sound at least 10 times more indecent than it should. "It reminds me of clean skin between crisp sheets..." The scent, for the record, was Byredo Gypsy Water EDP (£90 for 50ml) and though I abstained from any illicit assignments that evening, I did spend the next 12 months stockpiling Gypsy Water like it was gold bullion.

Now, 37 and single, I often think back to that moment. Sure, Byredo's Gypsy Water is a nice scent – a mix of lemon, vanilla and a sort of damp woodiness – but is it possible that a perfume can have such an effect on someone? Let's be honest, it's a giant leap of faith to think a scent could find you love.

As a beauty editor, I've sat through many perfume-campaign screenings where the implicit message was: one spritz of *this* scent will lead to marathon boning sessions. I mean seriously... Well no, actually, I do mean seriously. I've been single for four of the seven years I've lived in London and have tried every dating permutation you can think of. Even those with clever algorithms and 50-question forms presented nothing. Zip. ▶



Fiona's synthetic
pheromones
bring all the
boys to the yard