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SCRATCH

The Bra-Fitter Who Wants You to Dance in Her Shop

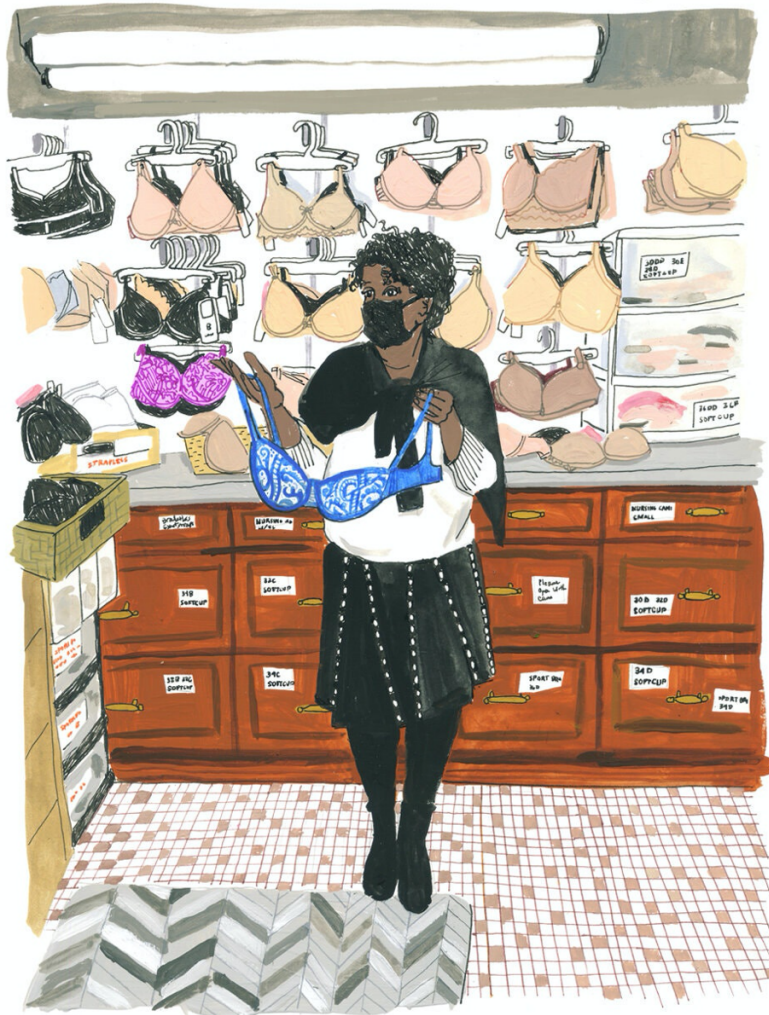
“I don’t care if you’re working from home, you can still walk around your house looking good.”

By Julia Rothman and Shaina Feinberg

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Iris Lingerie is a tiny bra shop underneath a dress store on Atlantic Avenue in Brooklyn. Its owner, Iris Clarke, 64, has been fitting bras for 47 years and considers it a dying art form.



"I've been doing it for years, so I can just look at someone through their clothes and fit them."

When people walk in, I
tell them the truth. I say,

oy gevalt, you got to
throw away that bra.

When people get the right bra
on, you can see the difference.
They start dancing in my shop.
You cannot walk around with a
bad bra on. It's like shoes. You
need good shoes and a good bra.
I don't care if you're working
from home, you can still walk
around your house looking good."

"I'm from Belize. I came here in 1971. When I moved here, I worked in Borough Park for a Hasidic lady. I took care of her baby and I learned her business; she's the best bra fitter in the world.

I knew I was good at bra fitting because one day I was at her corset shop — most of the customers there were Hasidic — and a customer came in and said 'I want Iris to fit me.'

Over the years, I worked at Bloomingdale's, Saks; I worked with buyers, I designed bras. Then I came back to where I started—fitting bras."



"A lot of people go on the internet and buy the wrong bras. They're wasting money."

You must get fitted for your bra.
A bra fitter knows that adjustments
are needed and sometimes alterations.
That's what you cannot get online."



"I come in every day for my
customers. There's a lot of
people who need me. There's
nursing moms. There's my K-cups,
my J-cups. Sure, a little,
smaller cup can get by with
a cami until they can see a
bra fitter. But not my big
cups. They need me."

"For my safety, for everybody's safety, I'm doing appointments only. So I'm doing less business now. I get a little sad about it. I used to see up to nine customers a day. I saw one customer today. Yesterday: none. I used to make \$3,000 to \$4,000 a day and have three employees. Not anymore.



But I think I like it this way, it's more personal. I get to remember people's faces and names. It's not all about money."

Julia Rothman is an illustrator. Shaina Feinberg is a writer and filmmaker. Both live in Brooklyn.