
The Closet Thinker: Best Glasses

Glasses are as important an accessory as any other, but more visible.

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As I sit at my computer writing this I am wearing a pair of reading spectacles bought at Luton airport while waiting for a delayed easyJet flight. They pinch my nose and are deeply unflattering, but, like umbrellas, glasses tend to get lost, so right now the Luton specs are the only ones to hand. Losing my reading glasses is yet another symptom of my age; it seems to me that sight and memory seem to go at roughly the same time, on the other side of 40. But one of the few things that I do remember

Round, £205, by prism (prismlondon.com)



reading was the Dorothy Parker quotation, 'Men seldom make passes at girls who wear glasses.' And, really, when I look at myself in the Luton pair (which followed on from various others in an advanced state of decrepitude), I am inclined to think that Dorothy had a point.

Take no notice of me, however, because it turns out that spectacles are very fashionable this year. A number of my friends have rediscovered their lost lust for Colin Firth – operational when he was in a wet shirt as Mr Darcy, then somewhat submerged – since seeing him in glasses in the new Tom Ford movie, *A Single Man*. (What would Dorothy Parker make of that, I wonder. A straight actor playing a gay man and re-emerging as a heart-throb.) The fashion industry is also jolly excited about the latest range of glasses from a relatively new label, Prism, as seen on Julia Restoin-Roitfeld (très chic daughter of the editor of *French Vogue*). The frames are hand-crafted in Italy, and sold at only the most hallowed retail shrines: Dover Street Market in London, Colette in Paris and Barneys in New York. In the words of Anna Laub, the woman who launched Prism, 'Glasses are as important an accessory as any other, but even more immediately visible than a new pair of shoes or a bag.'

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As for the whole glasses/passes thing: well, Kylie Minogue and Natalie Imbruglia have both been spotted in their spectacles (not sunglasses, proper big-framed clear lenses), and neither of them is short of suitors. I'm also reminding myself of two of my favourite grown-up screen heroines: Diane Keaton in *Something's Gotta Give* (where her reading glasses play a pivotal part in the plot, along with Jack Nicholson's), and Allison Janney as C J Cregg in *The West Wing*. Both of them wear spectacles with panache, and neither has pinch marks on her nose; which reminds me, it's time to smarten up, whatever else I may forget...

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