



# Whoa—still a bombshell!

Carole Radziwill talks to Ellen Barkin, star of *Ocean's Thirteen*, about infiltrating an all-boys' club, dealing with divorce and being idolized by bloggers.

**CAROLE RADZIWILL:** OK, you've just logged some serious hours with the cast of *Ocean's Thirteen*. So who's hotter up close—Clooney, Pitt or Damon?

**ELLEN BARKIN:** Matt.

**CR:** Really, not Brad?

**EB:** Well, yeah, Brad is really hot; so is George, Don Cheadle, every one of those guys.

**CR:** Do you have a sex scene with Matt?

**EB:** There's a sexual encounter.

**CR:** Like you went to second base?

**EB:** [Laughs.] I can't say.

**CR:** It must have been really difficult to be the only woman on the set.

**EB:** No, it was fabulous! But I'm really a girl's girl.

**CR:** And that was very much a boys' club?

**EB:** Yeah, there was no one to be girly and gossipy with in the trailer. So sometimes it got a little lonely.

**CR:** Of all your movies, who was the best kisser?

**EB:** Dennis Quaid in *The Big Easy*. Jack [Nicholson] was a great kisser too.

**CR:** Cool job. You really are a sex symbol.

**The New York Times** critic Frank Rich once said, "If it were really possible to give the kiss of life to a corpse, the actress Ellen Barkin would be the one to do it."

**EB:** Sex appeal is just an attitude. I never thought I was pretty. I just have a strong sense of myself.

**CR:** Well, here's what the bloggers are saying about you: "Yummy!"; "Ellen is hotter than hot all over!" For a nice Jewish girl, you're pretty damn hot!

**EB:** That's the other appeal. There are very few Jewish sex symbols. [Laughs.]

**CR:** After your divorce [from billionaire businessman Ron Perelman], you auctioned off the jewelry your ex-husband gave you. Why?

**EB:** There were memories attached to the jewelry and they weren't good, so I didn't want to be surrounded by them. It was a dark time in my life—it was a bad marriage—and I have enough reminders of it. I didn't need more.

**CR:** Why was it such a dark time?

**EB:** I wouldn't have been able to make *Ocean's Thirteen*, for example, but I would have longed to. That's when marriage is dangerous—when it keeps you from doing the things you love, and you find you are looking for air.

**CR:** Do you trust people too easily?

**EB:** I probably do. But one bad apple doesn't mean the whole bunch is rotten. You just have to know there are evil people out there and recognize it sooner rather than later.

**CR:** Do you like being single again?

**EB:** Yes. But what I really love is being *myself* again. I don't know if I would feel so excited about my life at 53 had I not gone through a black period of just losing myself.

**CR:** Would you get married again?

**EB:** Absolutely. I love being married. I find it very fulfilling.

**CR:** So you take a relationship very seriously.

**EB:** I do. If you're not willing to be faithful and nurturing, don't get married.

**CR:** Will you make more movies?

**EB:** I hope so. I have a production company and five movies in development. My brother, George, adapted a Richard Yates novel called *The Easter Parade*, and Richard Loncraine [director of 2004's *Wimbledon*] is attached to direct. I'm also working on a novel.

**CR:** Based on...

**EB:** I can't say right now, but it's always best to write about what you know, isn't it?

*Carole Radziwill is the author of What Remains, published by Scribner. It will be out in paperback this month.*

## LUNCH DATA

**WHERE:** Cafe Cluny, New York City

**WHAT THEY ATE:** Frisée and baby beet salads; carrot soup; chocolate pudding