

“Lose My Number”

In the chapter titled “Lose My Number,” the author reflects on the thrilling yet often overwhelming experience of hosting parties. The initial excitement can quickly turn into stress as logistical details such as shopping, cooking, and organizing take precedence. This realization inspired the author to write her second book, **Barefoot Contessa Parties!**, which she was excited about, despite a hectic schedule filled with book signings and media appearances following the success of her first book.

During a visit to Takashimaya, the author became aware that people might recognize her, leading to the decision to hire an assistant, Barbara Libath. Initially hesitant to ask for help, she soon realized Barbara’s support was invaluable. Barbara not only assisted with everyday tasks like grocery shopping but also organized photo shoots and managed customer communication, significantly easing the author's workload.

As the author worked on **Barefoot Contessa Parties!**, she sought Barbara's perspective on recipes, emphasizing the importance of clarity for novice cooks. Their partnership flourished, and Barbara eventually worked full-time, bringing positivity and an energetic dynamic to the kitchen.

Additionally, the author recounts her unexpected venture into television. After being approached by Martha Stewart’s production team to host a cooking show, she felt skeptical about cooking on camera. Yet, she agreed, thinking there was little to lose. However, the reality of filming proved challenging, with overwhelming sets, scripts that didn’t resonate with her style, and chaotic days that took a toll on her home life with her husband, Jeffrey.

Despite the pressure, the author persevered, asserting her vision for the show. However, after a particularly chaotic shoot where a sewage mishap occurred, she decided to end the filming altogether, convinced she wouldn't return to television. Yet, Eileen Opatut from Food Network continued to express interest, praising her authenticity on camera, which ultimately reignited the author’s consideration for a cooking show.

The chapter explores themes of creativity, collaboration, and the unpredictability of career paths, highlighting the author’s transition from a private culinary life to public acclaim, all while navigating personal and professional challenges along the way.