



Nylon bodysuit, POA,
by **Dolce & Gabbana**;
stainless steel 'Spring'
cuff, \$69, by **Amber
Sceats**; sterling
silver diamond/ruby
necklace, \$610, by **Lucy
Folk**; rings, Bell's own.
(Cuff and necklace both
worn throughout.)

Lake Bell

PHOTOGRAPHY MAURIZIO BAVUTTI

STYLING WAYNE GROSS

WORDS TIFFANY BAKKER

HONEST, FUNNY, WHIP-SMART
AND QUITE THE PETROL HEAD,
THIS ACTOR/DIRECTOR IS OUR
TYPE OF GIRL.

A different Lake Bell

LANDED IN HOLLYWOOD A LITTLE OVER A DECADE AGO. "I WOULD GO TO AUDITIONS IN A BLACK TURTLENECK, LEGGINGS, HAIR TIED BACK WITH NO MAKE-UP,"

recalls Bell, today dressed in a striped dress and green cardigan. Nestled in the back of a cafe, she orders an egg-white omelette with spinach, tomatoes and smoked apple sausage. A herbal tea arrives and she continues. "Then my agent said, 'You need to wear mascara, have a haircut and get your boobs out.'"

Ah yes, those boobs.

"I used to get on every red carpet and be like, 'Look, I have boobs!'" she says, with a grimace. "But I got to the point where I thought, 'I'm over it and everyone else needs to get over them. I don't need to get them out for every event, or use them as props for a part.'"

True, though Bell's celluloid *oeuvre* shows little aversion to on-screen nudity. Then there's her *New York Magazine* cover wearing *nada*, bar a well-placed tittle (we said tittle) and rose (drawn by tattoo-artist husband Scott Campbell) scrawled across her body.

"That cover was some cool shit. Though it has to make sense. If it's gratuitous, I'm like, 'Fuck you.' But if you're depicting the lives of real people, you get naked sometimes. I've watched sex scenes where the girl is wearing a negligee and I'm thinking, 'I don't own a negligee. Who wears a negligee?'"

At 35, Bell's career has been something of a waiting game, TV parts (*Boston Legal*, *How to Make It in America* and medical satire *Childrens Hospital*) segueing into some scene-stealing supporting roles in film – she's the sole reason to sit through *What Happens in Vegas*, *It's Complicated* and *No Strings Attached*.

Last year's *In a World*, however, cast Bell as a genuine talent given she wrote, directed and starred in the likeable comedy about the Hollywood voice-over industry.

"I made a short film called *Worst Enemy*, which went to Sundance and was well received. So, instead of being a first-time director with nothing, I at least had this visual calling card. Making movies is rewarding, but there are tremendous obstacles – it's hard to get funding and get your movie off the ground. Look, I'm not making films for \$100m, that's not where I am right now," at this she breaks off laughing. "Maybe for my next one, but I have no interest in making movies I'm not jazzed about seeing."

Bell has always been comfortable with her own opinion. "I was a precocious kid and from about two knew

I wanted to be an actor – even if I didn't know what it meant." Still, much of her youth was spent at auto shows and trackside, her property developer father also an amateur race driver who owned race tracks. It prompted more than a passing interest in motoring.

"I wrote a car column [in *The Hollywood Reporter*] for nearly two years. It was fun, anecdotal and spoke to the experience of cars rather than technicalities. I can't look under your hood and fix anything, but I can talk about the power of the car, what it means culturally or socially, and how it makes you feel."

So what does she have stashed in the garage?

"I have a car on each coast. A 1988 Toyota LandCruiser in LA – it has this beautiful boxy shape. I've always wanted that car so it feels good. Here [in New York] we have a 2004 Land Rover Discovery parked out on the street. In this city you need a car that runs well but looks shit so no one steals it, and if it dings up a bit, it doesn't matter. Get a fucking tiny Honda, Subaru, Mitsubishi or a used VW. Just don't get a new car because it will get jacked in seven minutes."

Driving Bell to greater recognition is new sports flick *Million Dollar Arm*, opposite "good friend" Jon Hamm.

"It's a kind movie and I like seeing kindness on screen," she says of the film, a biographical piece tracing a US sports agent's quest to find talented Indian cricketers who could make it as Major League Baseball players.

She's also writing a feature script that explores the vagaries of marriage – an institution she wasn't bothered about until meeting Campbell on *How to Make It in America*.

"Things changed because Scott is delightfully traditionalist in some ways, even though he's riddled with tattoos. He's romantic and from the South, and he really wanted to sling me over his shoulder and say, 'We're doing this!'"

The couple currently lives in a Brooklyn brownstone with their two dogs (a mutt named Texas and Margaret, a blue-nosed Staffordshire Bull Terrier), though the family is set to swell with Bell expecting their first child.

"I've always felt confident in my body, but after my baby, who knows. Maybe I'll need that negligee."

We doubt it. ■

Million Dollar Arm is in cinemas September 4



Nylon blend
'Genevieve' bikini,
\$395, by **Lisa
Marie Fernandez.**



Nylon bra, POA,
and matching
briefs, POA,
both by **Dolce
& Gabbana**.



Polyamide/viscose
'Medieval' bra, \$375, by
Eres at **Sylvia Rhodes**;
polyamide/elastane
stockings, \$26.95, by
Collette Dinnigan.

Make-up: Julie Harris
at The Wall Group.
Hair: Rheanne White
at See Management.
Prop Styling: Kate Stein
at CLM. Manicurist:
Marysol Inzerillo
at Ray Brown Pro.