

GOTCHA!

LADYKILLER IN WEIRD

PLAYBOY George Clooney is caught in a bizarre romantic tangle. The hunky actor has fallen for the best friend of his former galpal. The women are startling look-alikes and his new relationship is nearly a mirror image of the previous one!

Even stranger, his new love, 28-year-old actress Jennifer Siebel, has been getting together with his ex-girlfriend Celine Balitran. Talk in intimate detail about her relationship with him, says a source.

Strange? Yes! But sources tell GLOBE that the love triangle may be the 41-year-old star's way of getting back at Celine, who's now married to screenwriter David Rosenthal. "It could be his way of taking revenge," explains top New York psychologist Dr. Judith Kuriansky.

Ironically, a source close to both women tells GLOBE that Clooney used the same tactics to win over Celine that he's using on her dead-ringer pal Jennifer, including:

Thrilling her with sexy, exciting motorcycle rides through Hollywood and Beverly Hills.

Flying her to his movie sets, where she catches him film scenes.

Making her laugh by introducing her to his pig Max as if the critter were human.

Taking her to A-list Hollywood parties and introducing her to celebs as "my girl."

Celine's affair with Clooney ended in 1999. After three years of togetherness at his Hollywood Hills house, the former star of *ER* got her a car and moved her into a place of her own.

But, according to Celine's pal, she got closer to the movie romeo than any other girl since his short-lived 1991 marriage to actor Martin Balsam's daughter, Talia, which ended in divorce after just eight months.

"She is the only one since he was married who truly won his heart," says her pal. "He'd never been that intimate with anyone after his divorce. Celine shared his home and bed longer than any other woman—including his wife."

But the now-married French gal was stunned two months ago when her best friend Jennifer called and revealed that she'd met Clooney at a party and spent the next day at his house.

Then the actor took her on a wild motorcycle ride—and that was it, she was hooked over heels in love, the insider says.

"At first, Celine was shocked and angry," says the source. "It was weird to her. Of all the women George could date, why choose the one of her friends? She just thought that it was strange that Jennifer would call her and ask about dating a man she was once very much in love with. And she thought it was pretty tacky of George to date her friend."

Now, the superstud and Jennifer are practically inseparable. He even flew her to Las Vegas to be with him while he finished filming his upcoming movie *Intolerable Cruelty*, co-starring Catherine Zeta-Jones.

"Jennifer would get dolled-up for George and wear sexy short skirts and 3-inch stiletto heels," reveals an insider on the set.

"Between takes, he'd go straight to her side and stay there until he was called back for filming. They'd sit and hold hands and every few minutes they'd kiss. They were like teenagers in love."

The whirlwind romance with Jennifer is amazingly similar to what happened with Celine. Clooney met the French law student at the Paris bar where she was working in 1996. Instantly smitten, he pursued her constantly until she finally agreed to join him in Los Angeles. They then lived together in his home for three years.

Now, two years later, she's married to another man—but finds Clooney has re-entered her life, dating her friend, and the source says she wonders why.

Dr. Kuriansky, who has not treated Clooney, believes he's still smarting from his breakup with Celine.

"By dating Celine's look-alike friend, he may be trying to get back at her for marrying someone else," she says.

"It's also an obsessive way of staying in her life. Many former spouses do the same thing—showing up at family reunions and insinuating themselves back into the ex-partner's life.

"I suspect he was crushed when they broke up and now he not only has to get back at Celine, but he also has to get back into her life."

— ROBIN MIZRAHI

George's ex-lover, Celine Balitran (in red) walks in the park with her good friend Jennifer Siebel, the star's current girlfriend. Below, at the height of their romance, George and Celine at the 1997 premiere of his *Batman* film

