

FADE IN:

Slow descent on Washington D.C. metro at night accompanied by the voice of a girl in her 20s: LIZZY, an experienced escort, your girlfriend, your weekend fling; playful and unexpected.

LIZZY (V.O.)
Never tell them your real name.
Even when, and especially when,
they ask. And they will ask...

Street-level. Small shops with apartments above. A town car pulls up and drops Congressman DAN TAYLOR (42).

LIZZY (V.O.)
Maybe not on the first date, but
eventually they'll realize you have
other clients, like the congressman
on the other side of the aisle, or
their daughter's high school
English teacher...

An apartment door swings open on a warm room, candles lit. Dan moves inside, loosening his tie. A girl, lithe, in cotton. Throws her onto the bed. Foreplay ensues...

LIZZY (V.O.)
And you know how men are,
competitive as all hell, looking
for any reason to think they're
special. And they are...for about
ninety minutes.
(beat)
Some are into some kinky shit...

A leather crop smacks the girl hard across the face.

LIZZY (V.O.)
But they'll pay extra...

Dan, showered, is driven off in his town car. Stops at a red light. Sees out his window a "Taylor for Senate" bench ad.

LIZZY (V.O.)
And they don't really want you to
be their girlfriend...

Congressman MICHAEL RICHARDS (52), resting alone in a dark office save a muted television, taps a business card against his desk. The card reads: "The Scarlet Collection"

LIZZY (V.O.)

They just want to take the fantasy home with them and have it replace whatever's there. Or not there... But what they don't realize is, if that moment comes, that's when the fantasy dies.

Michael opens a drawer, drops the card inside, shuts it.

LIZZY (V.O.)

It's about giving them exactly what they don't know they need. Validation...

Something on the TV screen catches Michael's attention.

LIZZY (V.O.)

That who they are and what they do are the most amazing and interesting things you've ever heard.

It's his own face, in a "Richards for Senate" campaign spot.

LIZZY (V.O.)

But whatever you do, be careful. This job will crush your spirit, if you let it. It'll wring out every last drop of real joy you have.
(beat)
Save something for yourself.

Michael shuts out a desk lamp. Darkness.

TITLE ON SCREEN: "One Week Earlier"

INT. RICHARDS HOME, ENTRYWAY - DAY

Moving down the entry hallway of a luxurious Arlington townhome. On the wall is a progression of photographs: MICHAEL RICHARDS, posing with wife MELISSA and daughter KATE, having just won election to various political offices.

Zero-in on Kate's age progression throughout:

Kate is 4; Michael is Mayor of Newport News.
Kate is 8; Michael is Mayor, again.
Kate is 12; Michael elected to Congress.
Kate is 14; Michael re-elected.
Kate is 16; Michael is 3rd Term Congressman.

Studying the photographs is a brisk REPORTER (early-30s) from the Daily Press, a local paper out of Newport News.

Michael enters the hallway and joins him.

MICHAEL
Sorry to keep you waiting.

The reporter keeps his eye on the most recent photograph.

REPORTER
That's alright, Congressman.
(taps Kate with a pen)
Grew up on the campaign trail, did she.

MICHAEL
What's that.
(seeing what he sees)
Oh, yes.

Michael offers a handshake.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
(double-checking)
Who's the story about.

The reporter smiles and takes Michael's hand.

REPORTER
You tell me.

SUDDENLY, the front door flies open and KATE RICHARDS (18), blonde, rude, attractive, shoots up the stairs. Just before she's out of earshot...

KATE (O.S.)
(calling out)
I got a C minus.

Michael, masking his displeasure with a smile--

MICHAEL
Would you excuse me a moment.

KATE'S BEDROOM

With MICHAEL in the doorway.

MICHAEL
They'll revoke your admission.

KATE is applying red lipstick in a mirror.