

CONTINUED:

CLAIRE

Yes, I'll be there. I'm moderating.

SALLY

Did you see that new Wellstone commercial that attacks Coleman for once being a Democrat?

CLAIRE

Yes. The funny thing with that is Coleman has been attacking Paul for running for a third term. He says that's lying because of Paul's pledge to serve only two terms. But what do you call it when you espouse the principles of one party and then join another?

SALLY

Lying?

CLAIRE

If you use Coleman's definition, changing your mind or making decisions based on new information, is lying.

SALLY

I knew Coleman was a liar. And he's not even going to get one term.

CLAIRE

No he won't. Not against Wellstone.

CUT TO:

EXT. UMD CAMPUS IN DULUTH MINNESOTA - DAY

CLAIRE (V.O)

Last session, Lee made a comment about the midterm election.

CUT TO:

INT. CLASSROOM AT UMD - CONTINUOUS

The students are seated in their designated spots. Claire is sitting on the desk in front.

CLAIRE

He said, that Paul Wellstone was lucky to win a senate seat and won't be so lucky this time. Do you care to elaborate, Lee?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LEE

He faces a tougher opponent than he has in the past. The Republicans have been gaining strength nationally. And people are just plain tired of Wellstone and his ultra-liberal agenda.

CLAIRE

Anyone disagree with Lee?

Claire walks over to the left of the room.

CLAIRE (cont'd)

Anyone from this side of the room have a comment about the election?

ALEX

I disagree. I don't think people are tired of Wellstone. I think he has a good chance of winning a third term.

CLAIRE

Why?

ALEX

He's been an effective Senator and when you really get down to the issues, most people in this state support Wellstone's stands on issues.

CLAIRE

Let's examine that for a moment. What we have seen nationally and statewide is a polarization, a split basically down the middle ideologically.

Claire paces before the students as she speaks.

CLAIRE (cont'd)

Example, the 2000 Presidential election was one of the closest in history. The two major party candidates were separated by less than 500,000 votes. The Senate became a 50-50 split. It puts new meaning and importance to the checks and balances of government. It also makes this mid-term election a tense political struggle. Now more than ever, who has power is up for grabs. So, Alex, when you say "most people support Wellstone's stands on issues," I think you mean, a majority. Whoever wins the senate race, it will not be by much.

(MORE)

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CLAIRE (cont'd)

That much is certain. I would doubt that more than four percentage points will separate the two candidates.

LEE

So you think Coleman will get 52%?

Lee smiles. Claire moves towards the right side of the room.

CLAIRE

No, Lee, that's not what I think. What I think is that it will be close.

CUT TO:

INT. CLAIRE'S OFFICE AT THE UNIVERSITY - CONTINUOUS

Claire is reviewing the files for the professor position when her cell phone rings.

CLAIRE

Claire Matheson.

JOHN JACOBS

(through phone)

Ms. Matheson, this is John Jacobs from the Duluth News-Tribune.

CLAIRE

John, how many times do I have to tell you to call me Claire.

JOHN JACOBS

(through phone)

Sorry, Claire.

CLAIRE

What can I do for you?

JOHN JACOBS

(through phone)

I'm working on an upcoming story on the anniversary of the Kennedy assassination. I was told to talk to you.

CLAIRE

What do you need?

JOHN JACOBS

(through phone)

There's a new book out that refutes conspiracy theories.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)