

A COUPLE HUNDRED EMPLOYEES ARE BUZZING around a busy Los Angeles entertainment company on a weekday afternoon. Some are on the phone making promises; others are issuing threats. Some are clicking through Web sites as they dose themselves with caffeine. And still others are searching in vain for the company chairman, Richard (not his real name). "Where is he?" a VP asks Richard's assistant, who shrugs. He's the third person to ask in the past 10 minutes.

If they'd consulted Adam (not his real name), the head of business affairs, they would have learned that the chairman was in a stuffy, makeshift office at the end of a little-used exit hallway, enjoying the services of a tall, slender blonde hooker named Amber (not her real name). "I told him, 'Go into that office; I have your birthday present there,'" says Adam, who's now employed elsewhere. "He walked in, saw this beautiful girl, and just shut the door and told her what to do." The transaction didn't end there. "About a month later," says Adam, "I get a call from the [male] madam. 'The guy you sent Amber to is really scaring her,' he says." Apparently the chairman had left Amber a series of desperate messages. Adam wound up having to sit down with his boss "and tell him to stop stalking the hooker I gave him for his birthday. Now, that was an awkward conversation," he says.

Procuring for your superiors is one way to get ahead in Hollywood, where call girls are as common as sequels and hooking up with a professional is a rite of passage for studio titans in the making. But the business has evolved since Heidi Fleiss held court with her little black book. "It's like there was a union and now it's been dispersed," says the former assistant to a longtime prostitute patron, noting that the Fleiss fracas motivated her higher-profile clientele to seek out smaller-time madams. As a result, finding a happy Hollywood hooker in 2004 is easier than ever—provided you have the right connections.

At a time when technological advances allow icons of entertainment to roll calls from the Four Seasons in Maui and punch BlackBerries from ski lifts in Aspen, it seems fitting that even the hookers have gone digital. Potential clients need only glance at The Erotic Review, a Web site bookmarked by many Hollywood men, where specific "escorts" are reviewed by customers. A girl's looks can rate from 10 ("one in a million") to 1 ("I was really scared"). Though industry neophytes may start out on LA Exotics or City Vibe, both directories of adult-entertainment services, a more experienced player might turn his assistant on to one of the company-run sites like Platinum Connections, Adult Star Fantasy of Las Vegas, or Exotica-2000.

Exotica is one of the best regarded of the lot, with fees to match (the girls' hourly rates run between \$1,500 and \$2,000; to gain access to what's called Club Exotica, you must submit a \$5,000 application fee). Online brothels have allowed independent mini-madams to attract marquee names, many of whom are grateful for the anonymity. "Now you have these guys calling up and saying 'Hey, it's Dave,' when it's really a well-known actor," says a former site operator.

Online isn't the only way Hollywood hooking has gone upmarket: In plain terms, the girls today are simply much more attractive. "Heidi's girls were hot in that eighties kind of way, but they don't even compare to the girls now," says one man who has worked as an enforcer and debt collector for a number of madams over the past two decades. He describes the current crop as "right out of high school, with plastic surgery on whatever body parts aren't already perfect." Price tags have more than kept pace with these improvements; Fleiss tells me that she charged only \$2,000 a night, whereas girls can now pull in as much as \$100,000 a job (for, say, a

## SOME HOLLYWOOD GUYS WILL ASK THEIR HOOKERS FOR FAVORS THAT WOULD MAKE GIRLFRIENDS FLEE.

centerfold who doesn't normally do this sort of thing), although between \$3,000 and \$10,000 per high-end night is more common. "The newer girls are so hot and so cool, sometimes I'd take them out to dinner or to parties with me," says a producer. He notes that he sees working girls wherever he goes: "They're at every cool party—there were a bunch at [one of the annual post-Oscar parties]—and every cool club."

**P**ROSTITUTION HAS LONG BEEN BOTH A storyline and a pastime in Hollywood, a place populated by men with Gucci suits, personally trained physiques, and cash-filled wallets who can select from a sea of aspiring models, actresses, and civilians willing to bed them gratis. That the last people on earth who need to pay for sex do so anyway is perhaps rooted in their fear that so-called regular women really just want to have sex with their job titles; as the cynical see it, they always end up paying for sex somehow. (Regular Fleiss client Charlie Sheen is credited with coining

the aphorism "You don't pay them for the sex, you pay them to leave"—a mantra for any type-A guy who knows that a good night's sleep will help him get further ahead than spooning a date, and that next week he might score an actress who can raise his profile more than he can raise hers.)

Hollywood is also a hot zone for recovering addicts and other mentally unstable types who will always provide madams with a market. "I was seeing different hookers every night," says a famous L.A.-based British musician, remembering his first year of sobriety. "I just transferred addictions—it felt the same as getting the dealer to bring drugs to me." In Fleiss' day, signing on for a prostitute often meant settling in for a long evening of meaningless, cocaine-fueled chatter; the sex was practically an afterthought. Today, for many clients, partying is often not even on the menu (one pimp who caters to Hollywood clientele estimates that 90 percent of his clients don't do drugs).

In a town where anything goes once you've reached a certain status, men can ask prostitutes for favors that might make D-girls flee for the hills (or from them, as the case may be). "These girls will get with each other, stuff things up their asses, or put a dog collar on the guy and drag him around his house," says a pimp who caters to Hollywood. "Things that might freak regular girls out." (One evening, a certain power broker invited a group of male friends over for a party but went missing after a few hours. "Finally we found him in the corner of his front yard, naked, on all fours, with a collar around his neck and a hooker standing over him, lifting her leg and peeing on him," says one of the guests. "We were in shock." That wasn't the last time his affinity for humiliation-by-hooker was discovered; he reportedly spent another party in a bathroom, with a prostitute repeatedly shoving his head into a toilet and flushing it.)

Even if the task at hand involves little more than pressing flesh, Web sites give would-be clients the opportunity to avoid renting someone they might not be attracted to. And by most accounts, the most beautiful (and expensive) pros in the business are with Nici's Girls, a favorite of numerous high-profile industry-ites—including the head of a management company and a well-known producer of nearly 70 movies not known for their quality. The producer persuaded his former leading man, currently the star of a popular network show, to sign on for a movie by sending two Nici's Girls over for the weekend.

If anyone has taken Fleiss' place, it's Nici—otherwise known as Michelle Braun, a 27-year-old mother of two who until recently lived in Bakersfield, 100 miles outside of L.A. Braun claims that she left the