

SILENT RADIO BROADCASTING

"Her! - pilot"

written by

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FIRST DRAFT
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SILENT RADIO BROADCASTING

"Her!"

CAST

MARLEE MATLIN..... MARLEE MATLIN
TED WILLIAMS.....ACTOR
LARRY PAUL.....ACTOR
JONATHAN DEVRIES.....ACTOR
GEORGE MCMARTIN.....ACTOR
JOYACE ALLISON (ASIAN-AMERICAN) ACTOR
JESSICA CHARLES (WHEELCHAIR) ACTOR
SHAYLENE GOODMAN (AFRICAN AMERICAN) ACTOR
DALE (BLIND AUDIO ENGINEER) ACTOR
DAVID (ASL INTERPRETER FOR MARLEE) ACTOR

GUEST CAST

TBD..... ACTOR

SERIES TITLE

"Episode Title"

SETS

- | | |
|-----------|-----------------------------|
| Act One | - Bored Meeting |
| Act Two | - She-Nanigans |
| Act Three | - Her! |
| Act Four | - Silent Radio Broadcasting |

BORED MEETING

Equal Network Newscorp (ENN) is a new subsidiary of National Network Newscorp (NNN) - a white male dominated corporation - that, as a result of several EEOC lawsuits, has brought on 3 women to their 12 member Board of Directors, and created a whole new media subsidiary to be "operated by a handicapped woman" to create content just for "handicapped people".

The CEO/Founder of NNN confides to his 3 favorite board members that ENN will lose money and close within its first year of operation.

INT. NNN FOUNDER'S CORNER OFFICE, NYC - AFTERNOON

CEO/FOUNDER TED WILLIAMS SITS AT HIS DESK DRINKING COFFEE. HE POURS A SHOT OF VERY OLD SCOTCH INTO HIS COFFEE MUG AND OFFERS SCOTCH TO 3 OTHER MEN: BOARD MEMBERS LARRY PAUL, JONATHAN DEVRIES, AND GEORGE MCMARTIN. THEY DECLINE.

JONATHAN GETS UP, WALKS TO THE \$100,000 GOLD PLATED ESPRESSO MACHINE, LOOKS BACK AT LARRY AND GEORGE WHO SILENTLY NOD "YES". LARRY PROCEEDS TO MAKE ESPRESSO.

CEO TED SIGHS AND WAITS FOR THE NOISE TO ABATE. SENSING TED'S IRRITATION, JONATHAN PRESSES A BUTTON AND THE ESPRESSO COUNTER ROTATES INTO THE WALL TO HIDE THE MACHINE AND REVEALS THE OTHER SIDE WHICH IS A WALL OF PHOTOS OLD AND NEW NNN.

BEHIND THE WALL JONATHAN PUTS ON A HEADSET.

JONATHAN

Go ahead Ted, I'm listening.

THE HEADSET ALSO PICKS UP THE ESPRESSO MACHINE'S NOISE AND PIPES THAT THROUGH THE OFFICE'S SPEAKERS. TED SIGHS, LARRY AND GEORGE CHUCKLE.

TED

Who could I donate that to? Aren't
there quiet espresso machines?

THE WALL ROTATES AND BEFORE IT STOPS. JONATHAN STEPS OUT WITH 3 SMALL CUPS OF ESPRESSO AND FOAM AND HANDS 2 TO LARRY AND GEORGE.

JONATHAN

Sorry Ted.

TED

Fucking lawyers!

JONATHAN

I meant about the noise, but go on.

LARRY AND GEORGE CHUCKLE AGAIN.

TED

I've said my two words, my two cents,
my 2 million dollars or however much
those guys cost. What did you three
come up with?

LARRY LOOKS AT GEORGE WHO NODS BACK TO LARRY.

LARRY

Equal Network News.

HE WAITS FOR TED TO DIGEST IT.

TED

You're joking, right?

GEORGE

No, he's not. But I can't wait to see
the look on your face when he tells
you the rest of it.

JONATHAN LOOKS INTO HIS ESPRESSO CUP, CHUGS IT IN ONE GULPS
AND USES A NAPKIN TO WIPE THE FOAM FROM HIS LIPS.

JONATHAN

Those 3 new Board Members won't see
this coming.

TED

See what?

LARRY NODS TO GEORGE WHO PULLS A BEAUTIFUL FOLDER OUT OF HIS
MESSENGER STYLE BRIEFCASE.

GEORGE

This.

TED OPENS THE FOLDER, BEGINS READING, FLIPS THE PAGE AND
LOOKS PERPLEXED.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

The last page Ted, it bulletpoints the
plan.

TED FLIPS TO THE LAST PAGE. IT TAKES HIM 20 SECONDS TO READ
IT.

TED

Legal?

JONATHAN

Legal signed off yesterday, second to
last page.

TED FLIPS TO THAT PAGE.

TED

Who else has seen this?

LARRY

Just us, legal of course, but just us
and now you.

"Her!"

4.

GEORGE

Legal is sanitizing it right now to
make it palatable, easy to digest-

JONATHAN

-digestible.

GEORGE

-says the cook. That way we don't have
to tell them everything.

TED

Nice. Nice.... I really like this.

LARRY GIGGLES.

LARRY

Then you're going to love the details.

THE 3 MEN LAUGH AS TED SMILES, GETS UP FROM HIS CHAIR AND
CONGRATULATES THE 3 MEN.

END OF ACT A

SHE-NANIGANS

NNN was sued so many times, fined so many times that a judge finally threw the book at NNN, forcing them to hire 3 women to the Board of Directors - the first women ever - and fire 3 male Board Members, and create a news division to reflect the views of disabled and minorities.

The judge went so far as to name - the gall! - Equal Network Newscorp.

INT NNN BOARD ROOM NYC - 6 MONTHS LATER - MORNING

CAPTION: "6 MONTHS LATER"

Ted, 12 Board Members, and their assistants are socializing in the lobby outside of the Board meeting room. Ted makes it a point to be warm and welcoming to the 3 women. They are a little nervous and wary at first. Ted deadpans dislike for the male Board members. Larry, Jonathan, and George make it a point to not talk with Ted in the lobby nor have they been seen in public with him which has been fueling rumors that Ted has had a falling out with them.

SHAYLENE

...I am so grateful to be here to
contribute to the success of ENN!

TED

We are grateful for you joining the
Board. I am personally delighted, I
remember your fantastic anchor debut -
I can't believe it's been almost 20
years!

SHAYLENE

What!?! You saw my news debut!?!

TED

You've come a long ways - (looks at his watch) please excuse me, I've got to get this meeting started.

TED WALKS OVER TO THE BOARD ROOM DOOR AND RINGS A BELL PROMINENTLY ATTACHED TO THE WALL. EVERYONE TURNS TO LOOK AT TED.

TED (CONT'D)

We have a most excellent and exciting meeting that needs to start. So, shall we?

TED GREET'S EACH BOARD MEMBER WARMLY WITH BOTH HANDS, AND JUST ONE HAND FOR THEIR ASSISTANTS. LARRY IS PUZZLED BY TED'S NEWFOUND FRIENDLINESS BUT A DISCREET THUMBS UP FROM JONATHAN AND A WINK FROM GEORGE PUT HIM AT EASE.

TED IS THE LAST ONE INTO THE MEETING ROOM. HE QUICKLY WALKS TO THE HEAD OF THE TABLE.

TED (CONT'D)

The 3rd Quarter board meeting of National Network Newscorp has begun at... 9:15 anti-meridian. There are 3 new board members that I'm excited to introduce. You've met them already and some of you already already know them. Joyce Allison is a long time Producer at CBS here in New York.

JOYCE SMILES AROUND THE TABLES WITH A FEW QUIET "HELLOS".

TED (CONT'D)

Jessica Charles started as a runner in the movie industry in L.A.

(MORE)

TED (CONT'D)

where she's now Executive Producer at Rapid Eddys Studios. Shaylene Goodman anchored morning news at CNN Atlanta and is now Head Producer of their nightly news (scattered applause). On behalf of the Board I officially welcome you to the Board of Directors of National Network Newscorp!

A ROUND OF LIGHT, POLITE APPLAUSE AS TED SCANS THE ROOM.

TED (CONT'D)

Now to address the elephant in the room, N-cubed (looks at the 3 new board members) as I like to call it, has needed to change its corporate culture for some time now. These 3 women were brought on board to facilitate that change. For the last 4 months we've been working day and night with Joyce, Jessica, and Shaylene to create cultural and operating infrastructure for Equal Network Newscorp. With their tireless efforts I'm pleased to announce that ENN will begin production on January 1st! (Applause). Jessica will now give us an update on ENN before we proceed with the rest of the agenda.

JESSICA WALKS TO THE HEAD OF THE TABLE. AN ASSISTANT REPLACES TED'S CHAIR WITH A PODIUM.

JESSICA

Thank you Ted. It's an honor and truly exciting to create a new media company from scratch! Although it's a wholly owned subsidiary of NNN, Equal Network Newscorp will function as its own entity...

JESSICA'S VOICE FADES AS THE CAMERA QUICKLY BACKS OUT OF THE BOARD MEETING ROOM.

HER!

INT. NNN FOUNDER'S CORNER OFFICE, NYC - AFTERNOON

TED, JONATHAN, LARRY, AND GEORGE MEET IN TED'S OFFICE TO REVIEW THE CANDIDATES TO BE THE FIRST CEO OF ENN. THEY ARE REVIEWING SCORES OF DOSSIERS OF DISABLED WOMEN. EACH DOSSIER HAS A PHOTO ON THE OUTSIDE. NO NAME, NO INFO, JUST A HEADSHOT.

TED

Jesus! I've never seen more beautiful women in my life!

LARRY SCOFFS AT TED'S SARCASM. JONATHAN AND GEORGE KEEP PASSING DOSSIERS AROUND THE TABLE. AS THEY PASS SMALL STACKS, TED'S PERSONAL ASSISTANT COMES INTO THE OFFICE WITH 30 MORE.

MARIE (TED'S PA)

30 more, sir. This is the last stack from Legal.

TED

Thank you Marie.

MARIE WALKS OUT OF THE OFFICE. AS SOON AS THE DOOR CLOSES LARRY SPEAKS UP.

LARRY

This isn't what I'd hoped for. Very few have broadcast experience.

TED, JONATHAN, AND GEORGE START CHUCKLING.

GEORGE

Look first, read later.

LARRY LAUGHS, THEN SCOFFS.

LARRY

I don't know, it's-

TED

-you're forgetting the plan. Besides we can coach them.

JONATHAN AND GEORGE SNICKER AND THEN GEORGE DEADPANS.

GEORGE

What did I say - "pick one of those 3 Board ladies to run ENN" - that's what!

TED LOOKS UNCOMFORTABLE

TED

Seriously?

GEORGE

Seriously. Look at it this way. With the plan that Jonathan and legal devised, there's no way that Sil-

TED

-ssh! Don't say it!

GEORGE

-there's no way ENN will be
successful.

TED PONDERES THE POINT FOR A SECOND, SMILES AND THEN FLIPS
OVER SEVERAL DOSSIERS FROM THE NEW STACK.

TED

Whoa! Take a look at this!

THE 3 MEN GET UP FROM THEIR CHAIRS TO PEER OVER TED'S
SHOULDERS. TED OPENS THE FOLDER TO READ THE FIRST PAGE
"CAREER HIGHLIGHTS".

TED (CONT'D)

Actress for the past 30 years. Academy
Award for Best Actress, continues to
act in various TV series, deaf,
married, and (as he turns back to the
photo) she's drop dead gorgeous!

IN UNISON, ALL FOUR MEN AGREE.

TED, JONATHAN, LARRY, GEORGE

Her!

END OF ACT B

HER!

CAPTION: "1 WEEK LATER"

EXT. STREET LEVEL OF NYC HIGH-RISE OFF OF TIME'S SQUARE
MORNING

FROM ACROSS THE STREET: A WOMAN STEPS OUT OF A LIMO FOLLOWED BY A MAN. THEY STEP UNDER THE AWNING LEADING TO THE FRONT DOORS. HER BACK IS TO THE CAMERA, THE MAN STOPS AND TURNS TO FACE HER. HE SIGNS TO HER.

DAVID (ASL)

Relax. Breathe. You've got this.

HER

ENN? Owned by NNN? Same room as T-E-D?

DAVID (ASL)

Complicated, but I have a good feeling
about this. Let's go inside.

THEY WALK UNDER THE AWNINGS AND A DOORMAN OPENS THE DOOR.

INT. ELEVATOR

FROM INSIDE THE BACK OF THE ELEVATOR, DAVID AND HER'S BACKS ARE TO THE CAMERA. THE ELEVATOR STOPS, THEY STEP FORWARD CLOSE TO THE DOOR. HER BREATHES A QUCIK BREATHE. DAVID LOOKS AT HER AND SMILES. THE ELEVATOR DOORS OPEN AND THEY ARE GREETED BY TED'S PA MARIE.

MARIE (ASL)

Hello! My name M-A-R-I-E!

HER

Hi! I'm (sign name). This is D-A-V-I-D,
D, my interpreter.

DAVID (ASL AND SPEECH)

Hello, nice to meet you Marie.

MARIE (ASL)

T-E-D is waiting for you.

MARIE WALKS TO THE DOUBLE WIDE DOORS OF TED'S OFFICE AND THROWS THEM OPEN. HER AND DAVID WALK THROUGH, THEIR BACKS STILL TO THE CAMERA.

TED, LARRY, JESSICA, JOYCE, SHAYLENE ALL GET UP AND WHOOP IT UP WITH ASL "APPLAUSE" (HANDS SHAKING OVERHEAD WITH GUSTO). CAMERA SWINGS DOWN AROUND TO JUST BEHIND TED, HIS DESK AND CHAIR TO REVEAL WHO "HER" IS:

MARLEE MATLIN! MARLEE SMILES WITH JUST A HINT OF DISCOMFORT, LOOKS AT DAVID WHO GIVES HER A REASSURING NOD.

END OF ACT C

SILENT RADIO BROADCASTING

The cinematography switches to a documentary style that has a FUTURE and PRESENT.

The FUTURE shows a mature broadcasting company, reflected by any interior and exterior shots, and a comfortable, relaxed Marlee Matlin reflected by her body language and wardrobe.

The PRESENT shows a spartan interior reflecting a start-up that is an afterthought. It's reflected in Marlee's body language - stressed but switches to thoughtful, creative, and determined - and her wardrobe style which evolves as she grows into the executive role as CEO of ENN.

The guiding principle of the PRESENT is to demonstrate that disabled people must creatively work through the challenges and institutionalized stereotypes. It's meant to offend and allow the "disabled" to empower themselves to imagine the impossible.

FUTURE: INT. MARLEE'S OFFICE - NOON

MARLEE IS SITTING IN HER CHAIR, HER DESK AND TROPHY CASE BEHIND HER. HER OSCAR IS OUTFLANKED BY DOZENS OF EMMYS. WITH THAT BACKDROP, SHE IS BEING INTERVIEWED BY SOMEONE OFF CAMERA.

MARLEE

When I was first hired by the NNN team
to run ENN I was nervous but excited.
But the changes came fast and were so
ridiculous that I played along,
thinking it was just an elaborate,
great-paying prank.

INTERCUT WITH AN RETIRED TED DRESSED IN EAST HAMPTONS CASUAL CLOTHES SITTING AT A TABLE WITH PALS JONATHAN AND GEORGE AT A GOLF CLUB.

TED

It was a great legal prank. We had no idea how great Marlee would turn out to be.

MARLEE

The more I played along, the more creative ideas I got on how to amplify the ridiculousness of the stupid idea that NNN's lawyers insisted that I implement.

MARLEE POINTS POINTS TO THE SIGN OUT IN FRONT SEEN THROUGH HER OFFICE WINDOW. THE CAMERA SHOWS IT FOR A SPLIT SECOND:

**SILENT RADIO BROADCASTING
RADIO FOR THE DEAF/TV FOR THE BLIND**

INTERVIEWER

Did you find that offensive?

MARLEE

Of course! But only because people actually believed it. How can it be true? Reasonable? POSSIBLE!? I was offended for all of thirty seconds and then I thought "game on!"

SERIES OF STILL SHOTS OF ENN/SRB IN ITS BEGINNINGS.

NARRATOR

Changing the name from Equal Network Newscorp to Silent Radio Broadcasting set in motion a series of decisions that NNN in New York reluctantly approved.

DALE IS SRB'S BLIND AUDIO ENGINEER. HE'S SITTING IN HIS OLD STORAGE ROOM SURROUNDED BY DISCARDED AUDIO CABLES, A FEW OF WHICH LOOK BURNED.

DALE

Marlee's mantra is "the only thing that you definitely cannot do are the things you don't even try."

INTERVIEWER

Was that you who almost burned down the recording studio?

DALE

We're done here.

BEGIN FLASHBACK

AUDIO ENGINEER IS ON HANDS AND KNEES GROPING AMONG A SEA OF CABLES UNTIL HE FINDS A BRAILLED END CABLE AND ACCIDENTALLY JAMS IT INTO A LARGE ELECTRICAL EXTENSION BOX, SHOCKING HIMSELF ACROSS THE STAGE, KNOCKING OVER SEVERAL STAGE BACKLIGHT STANDS WHICH IN TURN BURNS UP SEVERAL PAPER DIVIDERS AND THE BACKSTAGE CURTAIN. THAT'S WHEN THE SPRINKLERS COME ON AND THE ELECTRICITY SHUTS DOWN.

VOICE OVER (DARK SCREEN)

I can't see!

DALE

You replaced me already!?

A GENERATOR TURNS ON, FIRING UP SECURITY LIGHTS.

STAGE MANAGER

Everybody follow the exit sign lights!

You too, Dale!

END FLASHBACK

INT. ENN OFFICE - MORNING

PRESENT: NNN BOARD MEMBER JESSICA CHARLES, MARLEE, A WELL-DRESSED FEMALE LAWYER AND A TEAM OF 14 NEATLY, CASUALLY DRESSED WRITERS AND THEIR IPADS/LAPTOPS SIT AROUND A LARGE TABLE FILLED WITH PASTRIES, COFFEE, TEA, FRUITS.

10 OF THE WRITERS ARE WEARING NOISE-CANCELLING HEADPHONES. 4 OF THE WRITERS ARE DEAF AND OPENLY MOCKING THE "HUMONGOUS HEARING AIDS". THEY'VE SIGNED TO DAVID NOT TO INTERPRET ANY OF THE 4 UNLESS THEY'RE SIGNING ABOUT THE SHOW.

DAVID STANDS NEAR MARLEE, READY TO INTERPRET FOR ANYONE WHO SPEAKS.

JESSICA IS READING THROUGH A THICK BINDER.

JESSICA

A concert? That's got to be awfully expensive to say nothing about "a concert for the deaf".

MARLEE SMILES. LOUD CONSTRUCTION NOISES ARE REVERBERATING THROUGH THE NEW SILENT RADIO BROADCASTING STUDIOS. JESSICA CRINGES.

MARLEE

Are you okay?

JESSICA

It's REALLY loud in here!

MARLEE (ASL/TERP)

We're building the set for Silent Radio Broadcasting - exciting!

JESSICA

So you ARE doing News?

MARLEE

Of course! But have you seen the "news" lately?

(MORE)

MARLEE (CONT'D)

So, even though we're stuck with this awful name we want to build an inclusive network with inclusive community. We want the Deaf to SEE the change! We want the Blind to hear and feel the change!"

JESSICA CLOSSES ONE BINDER AND OPENS THE "TECHNOLOGY" BINDER. SHE FLIPS THROUGH A FEW PAGES.

JESSICA

What's this "Braille Captioning" all about?

MARLEE

Empowerment!

MARLEE OPENS HER OWN TECHNOLOGY BINDER AND FLIPS TO THE PROTOTYPES PAGE AND SHOWS JESSICA.

MARLEE (CONT'D)

Captioning should be mobile for all!

SHOT: A MOBILE BRAILLE CAPTIONED RADIO PROFESSIONALLY ILLUSTRATED.

JESSICA IS DUMBFOUNDED

JESSICA

What!?

MARLEE

I know - me too! But then Dale, our Audio engineer - he's blind - said this would be very helpful to him, to get our Audio Systems upgraded before we offer it to the general public.

JESSICA

Are you kidding me!? Larry put you up
to this! (Laughing) Brilliant!

MARLEE

(Matter of factly) I'm glad you think
so.

JESSICA

Wait a minute - for real?

MARLEE

(Puzzled) Are YOU kidding me? You know
that Ted and George called us Equal
Network News - right?

JESSICA SIGNS "YES".

MARLEE (CONT'D)

Fuck that. We legally changed the name
to Empowered Network Newscorp but we
can't legally change our primary
broadcast name.

JESSICA IS CONFUSED. MARLEE ROLLS HER EYES, SCOFFS, SIGHS.

JESSICA

Broadcast name? Am I missing
something?

MARLEE

Ah, I see. They've been keeping you in
the dark, too!

MARLEE SWIRLS AROUND, LOOKS BACK AND SIGNS "FOLLOW ME!"
MARLEE STOPS DAVID THE INTERPRETER, SIGNING "I GOT THIS.
NOISE IS REALLY BAD FOR YOUR EARS, ONLY 1 PAIR OF
HEADPHONES!"

DAVID HANDS JESSICA THE NOISE-CANCELLING HEADPHONES THAT ARE BRANDED "EARGASMS" AS MARLEE OPENS THE STUDIO DOORS. EVERYONE WINCES UNTIL THE DOORS SHUT BEHIND MARLEE AND JESSICA.

MARLEE LEADS THE WAY. THEY ENCOUNTER DALE WHO IS WEARING NOISE CANCELLING HEADPHONES. HE SENSES SOMEONE, AND MARLEE KNOWS WHAT TO DO. SHE USES HER RIGHT HAND TO FORM THE FINGER SPELLED LETTER "M" AND TAPS DALES ARM TWICE.

DALE

(Sniffing the air) Brush your teeth
after coffee. (Lightly gagging)

MARLEE AND JESSICA WALK THROUGH THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE STUDIO. MARLEE SIGNS TO A CONSTRUCTION WORKER "SRB LIGHTS ON!" THE WORKER WALKS TO AN ELECTRICAL PANEL, OPENS IT, LOOKS FOR THE BREAKER SWITCH, TRIES A FEW IN ERROR AND THEN FINDS THE SWITCH FOR SRB.

LIGHTING UP THE MAIN STUDIO STAGE WERE THE WORDS

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RADIO FOR THE DEAF/TV FOR THE BLIND**

JESSICA

(Mortified) Oh my God! No way!

MARLEE

(Satisfied smirk) Yes way. Since we
can't legally change it we're just
going to roll with it.

MARLEE HUGS AN UPSET JESSICA WITH A BIG SMILE.

MARLEE (CONT'D)

See where I'm coming from now?

JESSICA SMILES AND DABS A FEW TEARS.

JESSICA

Bless you!

THEY WALK BACK THE WAY THEY CAME. MARLEE SMACKS DALE ON THE REAR END AS THEY PASS. DALES TAKES OFF HIS HEADPHONES, WINCES AT THE NOISE, FOCUSES ON THE SOUND OF THE TWO FOOTSTEPS, AND SMILES.