

JAMIE

CONTINUED:

21.

The volume will get turned up on the monitors that interest them, and there are a growing number, which will all start to play simultaneously.

MONITOR #1

In a scene reminiscent of Paddy Chayefsky's classic film, *Network*, Studio 7 Executive Producer Wes Mendell hijacked tonight's live broadcast and instructed his audience to--

MONITOR #2

In a stunning impression of Peter Finch's Oscar-winning performance in the 1977 film, *Network*, Wes Mendell, longtime Executive Producer of Studio 7--

MONITOR #3

He was mad as hell and he wasn't gonna take it anymore. The UBS flagship program, *Studio 7*, celebrating its 20th season on the air, had a message for its viewers tonight--

MONITOR #4

Disaster and embarrassment at UBS as tonight's broadcast of *Studio 7* got off to a start that would've made Paddy Chayefsky smile--

JACK

You believe this?

JAMIE

I'm pleasantly surprised these guys have heard of Paddy Chayefsky.

JACK

Everybody siddown.

People start to take seats and JAMIE sits, SHELLY, the head of publicity, confides in her--

SHELLY

(quietly)

That was a faux pas back there.

JAMIE

(quietly)

Where?

SHELLY

(quietly)

At the dinner party. You don't compliment the caterer in front of the hostess.

SCENE ONE

START →
SCENE

1/6

JAMIE

(quietly)

I don't want to start throwing my weight around, Shel, but that's probably not gonna be a high priority tonight.

JACK

Shelly, muzzles on the cast, mouths shut, nobody talks until I say so. Howard, what's legal thinking?

HOWARD

They're looking at the tape. There could be anything from the FCC to a class action suit.

JACK

What about the news division?

ALAN

They're not gonna like the crack about having theme music and a logo for the war.

JACK

Advertiser relations?

ZELDA

We're trying to get 'em on the phone, but it's not easy this late on a Friday.

MITCH

Same thing with the affiliates.

JACK

(beat)

The remark about worm eating and "Who wants to screw my sister"? He was talking about our shows?

MICHAEL

We don't know.

JAMIE's trying not to laugh--

JACK

Is there something funny about this, Jamie?

JAMIE

Oh God, Jack, there's like nine things funny about this. We're not sure which sister-pimping show he was talking about?

MICHAEL

I meant that--

2/6

JAMIE

The FCC doesn't have us on anything and a law suit wouldn't pass the laugh test.

HOWARD

They're worried a class-action suit--

JAMIE

--being brought by who? People with bad taste? They all got together and hired a lawyer to sue for defamation? Mitch, when the advertisers and affiliates see the east coast overnights and the fast nationals they're gonna be plenty happy and by the way, you can try, but you can't stop the cast from talking to the press. Certainly not the Big Three.

ALAN

The news division?

JAMIE

The news division can kiss me, report the damn news.

HOWARD

Who are the Big Three?

JACK

She's talking about Harriet Hayes, Tom Jeter and Stiles, they're the leaders in the group. Jamie, are you saying we're over-reacting to this hideous, humiliating and possibly actionable event that occurred on our air?

JAMIE

No, I'm saying you're dramatically under-reacting to it. Look, we caught one break. It happened on a Friday night and nobody ever learns anything new on a Saturday. But I'll bet my stock options against anyone's in this room that by Monday noon, Wes's rant will be the most searched for hit in the history of the Internet. I mean, it's gonna break records. And they'll say he was crazy and they'll say he lost his marbles but you know what else they're gonna say?

JACK

What?

JAMIE

That he was right.

(beat)

(MORE)

JAMIE (CONT'D)

They're gonna say he was right and courageous and hallelujah somebody said it. Every cable show's gonna have non-stop roundtables about how Hollywood's taking our national culture to hell on a speedboat and we just became the symbol of that. I don't know who the bookers are even gonna get who are gonna be on our side. People for the American Way isn't gonna show up to defend UBS's primetime schedule.

JACK

When the hell did there become two sides to this?

JAMIE

When you fired Wes. He's a martyr now.

JACK

Jamie, you can't be suggesting--this is what happened in the damn movie--you can't be suggesting we give him his show back.

JAMIE

Absolutely not. What he did was unforgivably irresponsible and he put me, to say nothing of his cast and crew, in a terrible position. He's done at this network.

JACK

Then what are you suggesting?

JAMIE

Let's talk in my office.

JAMIE gets up and exits. JACK, with not many choices, follows her out into--

INT. CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

--where JAMIE's standing there--

JAMIE

I don't know where my office is.

WES shakes his head and points and JAMIE follows him into--

INT. JAMIE'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

She hasn't moved into it yet, this being her first day. Unopened packing cartons are everywhere. She's got a hell of a view out her floor-to-ceiling windows, though.

JACK
What are you suggesting?

JAMIE
We need a new story and Studio 7 needs a new Executive Producer and head writer. I want to hire Matt Albie and Danny Moore.

JACK
No no no no no no no.

JAMIE
Yeah.

JACK
I have a history with those two guys.

JAMIE
No kidding.

JACK
I fired them.

JAMIE
I know the history, Jack, people in Kansas know the history. That's why it's a good story. It's a big story and we get to control it. We're gonna hire two people who hate your guts and we're gonna do it 'cause we're committed to quality. It's a tacit admission of guilt and a silent act of contrition and that's what's required here.

JACK
What the hell am I guilty of?

JAMIE
Jack--

JACK
What am I guilty of?

JAMIE
We don't have that kind of time.

JACK
You talk to your bosses at NBC like this?

JAMIE
Everyday. That's how I became president of a network.

JACK
I'll look completely de-balled.

5/6

JAMIE

You don't need all the fingers on one hand to count the number of people who care about your balls tonight.

JACK

I got news for you, sister, as long as I'm one of 'em, so are you.

JAMIE

Wes basically gave 'em the show when they were there. They were his boys.

JACK

Yeah, Wes didn't seem to kick up much of a fuss when I fired his boys, which, by the way, doesn't seem to have hurt their careers any.

JAMIE

Well that's between them.

JACK

I'm not the bad man here.

JAMIE

We don't need to debate four years ago. They're exceptionally qualified, it's a splashy choice. They're classy, and we need that right now.

JACK

My thought was that we'd promote Ronald Oswald and Richard Beck. They've been co-execs for three years, they know what they're doing, they know the current cast and staff, it'll bring stability and they're--what's the word I'm looking for--

JAMIE

Hacks. Ron Oswald and Ricky Beck are hacks and stability isn't what we're looking for, we're looking for surprise.

JACK

The most expensive thing in television are executive producers you can't control.

JAMIE

The most expensive thing in television is a show that doesn't work.

JACK

You're never gonna get these guys.

JAMIE

46.

ACT THREE

INT. HOTEL SUITE - NIGHT

DANNY is standing in front of the TV, holding a remote and watching--for the tenth time--playback on WES's rant. His agent, BLAIR, sits on the couch talking into the room phone while holding her cellphone.

WES (FROM TV)

...and it's not even good pornography. They're just this side of snuff films, and friends, that's what's next 'cause that's all that's left.

There's a KNOCK on the door and BLAIR gets up and answers. It's JAMIE, who gives BLAIR a friendly pat on the arm and an inaudible 'hello' and slips into the room unnoticed by DANNY.

WES (FROM TV) (CONT'D)

And the two things that make them scared gutless are the FCC and every psycho-religious cult that gets positively horny at the very mention of a boycott.

START →
SCENE

JAMIE

Well there are gonna be some horny psycho-religious cults tonight.

DANNY turns around...

JAMIE (CONT'D)

Danny, I'm Jamie McDeere.

DANNY

(pause)

I'm sorry are we in your room? The hotel just let us in to use--

(to BLAIR)

--are we in somebody's room?

BLAIR

Jamie's come to see you.

DANNY

(pause)

Isn't today your first day?

JAMIE

As a matter of fact my contract doesn't start till Monday. Technically, I suppose, I could blow all this off and go to Cabo for the weekend. You wanna come?

DANNY

I have a date waiting downstairs in the lobby.

SCENE TWO

1/5

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JAMIE

Your date's gonna win a Pulitzer Prize within three years, you heard it here first.

DANNY

I've actually heard it before but I'll pass along the compliment.

JAMIE

Well since you won't go to Cabo, what about this? You and Matt Albie run Studio 7?

DANNY

(pause)
You want Matt and me to run the show?

JAMIE

Yeah. Right now as a matter of fact. Your cast and crew and staff are gathering at the--

DANNY

We're making a movie right now, I'm gearing up to start production on a new screenplay of his.

BLAIR

Danny--

JAMIE

I don't think you are.

DANNY

Look, I'm not even comfortable having this conversation without--you fired Wes?

JAMIE

Yeah.

DANNY

Well I'd like to do for him what he never did for us and ask--

JAMIE

--for his blessing. You have it.

DANNY

I'm sorry?

JAMIE

You have his blessing. You can call him if you want.

2/5

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

DANNY
You've already talked to him?

JAMIE
Yeah.

DANNY
What did you say to him?

JAMIE
I said I want your blessing and I want your endorsement. In gratitude I'll pay the full term of his contract. If he'd said no, I'd have sued for damages and won and while the case was pending for seven years I'd have successfully sought an injunction against his working at any other network.

DANNY
You threatened his life.

JAMIE
In so many words.

DANNY
You bought his blessing.

JAMIE
Yeah.

DANNY
That's okay with you.

JAMIE
Well it's not me he's blessing.

BLAIR
Jamie, I think we ought to talk about what we're talking about.

DANNY
What did you mean when you said--I said we're making a movie and you said I don't think so.

BLAIR
Jamie knows about the test.

DANNY
I'm sorry?

JAMIE
I have an ex-boyfriend who's an executive at Great Western Mutual and he tells me things he's not supposed to tell me.

3/5

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

DANNY

'Cause he doesn't want to be your ex-boyfriend anymore.

JAMIE

I know you failed your physical.

(beat)

And I'm sorry to bring it up like this, it's certainly none of my business. You'll be able to get bonded again in 18 months and I need you for two years so it just about works out.

DANNY

It does?

JAMIE

Yeah.

DANNY

You're blackmailing me.

JAMIE

I absolutely am not. The information I have interests me only inasmuch as it means you're available to do a job that you're great at and that you love. And the money's not bad either. Blair and I'll settle in on something but you'll be the highest paid showrunners in the business. It'll be roughly three times what you'd make directing a feature which you're not gonna be able to do for another year and a half anyway. What I'd like you to do is to come over to the studio and talk with Jack.

DANNY

(pause)

Am I on the Jamie Kennedy Experiment?

BLAIR

Danny--

Grabbing his coat--

DANNY

I have to talk to Matt.

JAMIE

Matt's not down there anymore.

DANNY

Where is he?

(CONTINUED)

4/5

CONTINUED: (4)

JAMIE

He's meeting you at the stage, he's being taken in a separate car.

DANNY

Why?

JAMIE

'Cause the press is about 8 minutes behind all of us tonight.

DANNY

I'm going over there now, but I'm not going over to talk to your boss, I'm going over to tell Matt before you do.

JAMIE

Danny, I have no intention of telling Matt or anyone else.

DANNY

That's nice, but I have no reason to trust you and every reason not to.

JAMIE

Why?

DANNY

You work in television.
(handing BLAIR a ticket)
Would you call down for my car please.

DANNY bolts out of there as we

CUT TO:

INT. BEVERLY HILTON LOBBY - NIGHT

As the elevator doors open and DANNY flies off. He looks around quickly and sees who he was looking for--MARTHA--and runs over and grabs her hand.

DANNY

Marty. I'm sorry. I have to go right now and I can't take you home and I can't take you with me.

MARTHA

That's okay. You're going to the stage?

DANNY's led MARTHA outside to--

EXT. BEVERLY HILTON - CONTINUOUS

--where hundreds of people are waiting to get their cars from the VALETS.

(CONTINUED)

5/5

JAMIE

68.

CONTINUED:

MATT

Why didn't you tell me? When I screw up you know about it.

DANNY

When you screw up I read about it.

MATT

No, I tell you, you're the first one I tell. Now we're back in the NFL and only one of us can screw up at a time and I think we both know that most of the time it's gonna be me. You're the big shoulders.

DANNY

I hear you.

MATT

Good, 'cause I'm pretty stoned and I can't really remember what I said.

DANNY

(smiles)
Don't worry, I do.

During the above scene, a few cast and crew members have begun trickling onto to the stage and taking up positions in front of the bleachers. Their conversations are hushed and they keep their distance from MATT and DANNY.

JAMIE appears coming out of a vomitorium with a few rolled up sheets of paper--

JAMIE

Boys? Let's not have another meeting like that again, okay? It just makes my job harder.

DANNY

Why do I care about your job being harder?

JAMIE

Because you don't know it yet but I'm gonna be your dream come true.

DANNY

I appreciate the sentiment but I'll believe it when I see it.

JAMIE

Yeah, I get that a lot. You know what happened the morning after it was announced I was the new president of UBS?

SCENE THREE

START
SCENE
HERE



1/3

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

DANNY

What?

JAMIE

AMG stock dropped three-eighths of a point. I actually caused a dip in the NASDAQ index just by showing up to work in the morning. I don't think a lot of people are bettin' on me.

DANNY

How much latitude do we have with personnel?

JAMIE

Some. Some you're gonna have to keep though. Ricky and Ron have two more years on their contract.

MATT

I don't want Ricky and Ron.

JAMIE

They're getting 30 thousand an episode, we're not gonna eat that.

MATT

You're paying Beavis and Hackboy 30 thousand an episode?

JAMIE

I'm not the one who made the deal but it's there so they're your co-execs.

More people have been filtering in and taking places down in front of the bleachers.

JAMIE (CONT'D)

(re: the rolled up papers)

Hey, you know what this is? It's the sketch that got cut. I just read it, I thought it was inspired, but I'm not an expert--Matt, read it and tell me what you think.

MATT

Nah, I'm not gonna read it.

JAMIE

Just read it and tell me if it should've gone on the air.

MATT

I don't need to read it.

2/3

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

JAMIE
Matt--

DANNY
He doesn't need to read it.

JAMIE
Why?

MATT
Because I wrote it. Four years ago.
Shortly before I apparently quit.

JAMIE
I know.
(pause)
Alright, so want me to prove it? Here's
my first try.
(handing the sketch to DANNY)
Open with it next week.

STOP SCENE

JAMIE walks off and disappears...And now we HEAR the low-pulsing intro to a familiar DAVID BOWIE song.

A horseshoe of about 80 people--cast, crew, writers--are standing excitedly and waiting to be addressed. The buzz is growing.

MATT and DANNY are looking off after JAMIE...DANNY turns back to MATT--

DANNY
You gotta give her style points.

MATT
Yeah.

DANNY
And you gotta ask yourself.

MATT
What.

DANNY
What if she's for real?

MATT
Yeah.

The DAVID BOWIE pulsing is building as DANNY sees CAL and waves him over--

DANNY
Cal.

CAL comes over...

3/3

(CONTINUED)