

GIRLS CODE

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Paramount Television  
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ACT ONE

EXT. CALIFORNIA ORCHARD - AFTERNOON

ROWS OF PEACH TREES stretch into the distance. A SMALL CROWD and REPORTERS mill about. Nerdy excitement is in the air.

A SMALL STAGE is set up in a clearing. WENDY BRAND (late 20's, Anna Wintour of Robotics) reads over a speech. Her assistant, JOHANNA (22, nicest person in the world) hovers.

WENDY

(to Johanna, re: speech)

There's an extra sentence in here.  
Find it. Get rid of it.

Johanna dutifully edits as A CHEER erupts from the crowd.

EXT. ONSTAGE - SAME TIME - INTERCUT AS NECESSARY

ERIC APPELMAN (40's, weirdly ripped) addresses the crowd.

ERIC

Woo! *What's the deal with orchards?*

WENDY

Oh no, he's going off script.

ERIC

Why do people go fruitpicking for fun? It's work! If they called it fruitworking no one would do it!

(hold for laughter)

And now everybody give it up for my girl...Wendy "The Brain" Braaaaand!

The crowd cheers as Wendy crosses to the podium, adjusts mic.

WENDY

That's not my nickname.

(reading from a paper)

In 2010 I was in a robotics seminar at MIT in which we were assigned to write a sense-and-avoid program for a tiny robot. As I sat alone in the lab, staring at my robot, I felt like it was *staring* back. Like we were connecting... I wanted to help the robot sense and avoid obstacles--to make it feel less alone. The code flowed out of my brain fully formed. And a program was born.

(MORE)

WENDY (CONT'D)  
I named it, Lighthouse.  
(applause)  
Today, Lighthouse Industries is the fastest rising robotics company in the country. I won't say I couldn't have done it alone because I could have. But I'll thank people. The MIT professor who gave me that robotics assignment, and our chief advisor, Dr. John Hornback.

ANGLE ON: JOHN HORNBACK (60's) silver fox in a sweater vest.

WENDY (CONT'D)  
And our Chief Operating Officer, Edward Ping-Park. His wife gave birth to their *second* set of twins this morning. Thank you for being here with us instead, Edward.

ANGLE ON: EDWARD PING-PARK (30's, tired) smiling weakly.

WENDY (CONT'D)  
Our designers, engineers and coders.

Approximately TWENTY MEN and ONE WOMAN stand up and wave.

WENDY (CONT'D)  
What a bunch of nerds!

Big laugh. Employees sit down, unsure if they're offended.

WENDY (CONT'D)  
And of course the person without whom today would not be possible.

ANGLE ON: Johanna off to the side, beaming hopefully.

WENDY (CONT'D)  
Eric Appelman!

ERIC  
(un-mic'd and to no one)  
No fear! Never die!

WENDY  
As CEO of Hippolyta, Eric built the largest online retail website in the *world*. Forbes called it: "Amazon's cooler, wider sister." And then he decided he wanted to disrupt the delivery industry. With robots. Which is a risk. Robots freak people out.

(MORE)

WENDY (CONT'D)

But the truth is robots are like  
kids: they won't be dicks *unless we  
make them dicks!*

(applause)

The software we're unveiling today  
is so vital I named it *Heartbeat*.  
These drones can independently  
navigate anywhere. GPS not  
required. They can literally take  
your package to the moon and back!

(wild applause)

To prove it we are in this orchard,  
where the peaches are ripe and the  
signal is weak. The delivery drones  
will carry Hippolyta bestsellers to  
the house of that guy whose name I  
don't know over there.

Across the orchard: A SMALL HOUSE. A MAN ON THE PORCH waves.

WENDY (CONT'D)

And so, Ladies and Gentlemen, I  
give you... THE FUTURE OF DELIVERY!

MUSIC. APPLAUSE. Wendy raises her arms as A SWARM OF DRONES  
rises up CARRYING BOXES OF VARIOUS SIZES. Suddenly, the  
DRONES FREEZE, hanging in the air. Murmurs of concern. Then,  
one by one, THE DRONES PLUMMET TO THE GROUND.

SCREAMS. Mayhem. Eric Appelman SWAN-DIVES offstage. Reporters  
feverishly TAKE VIDEO and SNAP PICTURES.

ANGLE ON: The dachshund, struggling to escape. From his POV  
we see: A DRONE CARRYING A GIANT BOX, FALLING OVERHEAD. It  
falls, falls and then... we don't see it but we hear it.

ANGLE ON: Wendy at the podium watching, in horror. She speaks  
into the mic, attempting to calm everyone down.

WENDY (CONT'D)

We seem to be experiencing a minor  
glitch--OH SHIT!

Johanna charges at Wendy, knocking her down just as a DRONE  
WITH A NESPRESSO MACHINE strikes the spot where Wendy stood.

**END OF COLD OPEN. MAIN TITLES.**

INT. WENDY'S HOUSE - BATHROOM - LATER THAT NIGHT

ON IPAD SCREEN: A MALE REPORTER and FEMALE REPORTER.

MALE REPORTER

They're calling it *Dronemageddon*.

FEMALE REPORTER

In San Joaquin Valley a demo for Lighthouse Robotics went horribly awry. Drones attacked the crowd putting one billionaire CEO in the hospital. And one dog. In the grave.

FOOTAGE: DOG'S OWNER tells the camera:

DOG'S OWNER

A microwave fell on my friggin' dog.

FEMALE REPORTER

Even veteran reporters fled the scene, some quite afraid.

FOOTAGE: WOLF BLITZER (!?) runs through frame screaming.

WOLF BLITZER

WE'RE ALL GONNA DIE!

FEMALE REPORTER

Twitter is lighting up tonight with takedowns of Lighthouse CEO and robotics wunderkind, Wendy Brand.

ONSCREEN: We see the tweets flash by as reporter reads.

MALE REPORTER

Colleagues and strangers are calling her "reckless", "egomaniacal"--

FEMALE REPORTER

"Narcissistic", "fraud", and so on. Also trending is #dronemageddon--

MALE REPORTER

In a 2016 profile in The NY Times, Brand was asked, "How do you view failure?" Her response: "I don't. Only losers make mistakes."

The IPAD turns off. REVERSE TO REVEAL: Wendy sitting on the toilet, holding the ipad, staring ahead.

INT. WENDY'S HOUSE - BATHROOM - MIDNIGHT

Wendy is on the floor, on her laptop. ONSCREEN: ENDLESS LINES OF CODE as Wendy scrolls. Her eyes widen... holy shit.

INT. JOHN HORNBACK'S BEDROOM - SAME TIME - INTERCUT

John is woken up by the sound of his cell phone.

JOHN (INTO PHONE)

Wendy...?

WENDY (INTO PHONE)

It was a singularity error. Right in the middle, it divided by zero.

JOHN

(sitting up)

That can't be right. That's...

WENDY

A rookie mistake. I know. I'd suspect sabotage but I change the server password every day. Today's was "tomatopaste58\$Q." See, I can tell you that because I've already changed it because it's 12:02. Anyway, don't panic. I'm working on a plan. And I'm coming in tomorrow.

JOHN

Maybe you should stay home.

WENDY

If I don't come in how does that make me look? Weak. Scared.

JOHN

Sane.

WENDY

I didn't get where I am by being sane. I'm coming in. Someone has to rally the troops.

JOHN

Let Edward rally the troops.

WENDY

Edward has four kids. He's useless. I honestly think he might be breastfeeding. Should we fire him?

JOHN

Pretty sure that's illegal.

WENDY

So annoying. Let's got to the office right now. You and me. We'll get in the war room and bang out a plan.

JOHN

Go to sleep, Wendy. Turn off your tv, your tablet, your cell phone, your computer and your other computer. *Let this day end.*

WENDY

Okay. Yeah, no, you're right.

INT. WENDY'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - 1 A.M.

Wendy is in bed, surrounded by her devices. She stares at the white void under the words "The Plan"... A beat. Nothing.

INT. WENDY'S HOUSE - BASEMENT - 3 A.M.

Wendy descends a staircase into a basement which is 50% Bat Cave and 50% Robot Nerd HQ. Shelves of robots of various shapes and sizes. FRAMED PHOTOS of Wendy's family: Young Wendy, parents and a little sister. Wendy reverently approaches a COMMODORE 64 DESKTOP. She turns it on and opens up an old word processing program. She types furiously and hits "print." An OLD PRINTER coughs out a BANNER on perforated paper. It reads: "FUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUCK."

INT. WENDY'S HOUSE - BASEMENT - 5 A.M.

Wendy chugs a bottle of wine. She's exhausted and wearing the "FUUUUUUUUUUUUCK" banner like a beauty contestant. Her face touches the screen as she desperately asks the word document:

WENDY

What's the plaaaaaan???

She stands up and bangs her head on a shelf. A SMALL ROBOT falls onto the floor. She picks it up and looks on the side and sees a label that says "Lighthouse Prototype 2010 - Wendy Brand & Angela Watson." Gears turn. Wendy lights up. Yes!

WENDY (CONT'D)

Angela....that's it. Angela!!

INT. USC BUILDING - HALLWAY - FOLLOWING MORNING

A MAN stands in a hallway, pleading.

MAN

Angela, c'mon. We don't have to end this. Are you even listening to me?

ANGLE ON: ANGELA WATSON (late 20's, the Beyoncé of non-profit female tech entrepreneur incubators) is texting.

ANGELA

Sorry, babysitter emergency... Is this breakup not over yet?

LUIS (early 20's) appears with a walkie and stern expression.

LUIS

Do either of you drive the red Prius blocking the driveway behind this building in a tow-away zone?

ANGELA

Oh dammit, that's me!

Angela starts running away. Man calls back:

MAN

I'ma write a concerto about this!

INT. USC BUILDING - ANOTHER HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Angela walks quickly, followed by LUIS.

ANGELA

I don't want to hear it--I know, I know--

LUIS

Again? Where are you finding these jokers?

ANGELA

He's the first chair violinist for the LA Phil. I'm a sucker for a string player.

LUIS

You're lucky your "babysitter" is always around when you text him.

ANGELA

Yeah yeah, you're the best, Luis. Did Dean Hoffman call us back?

LUIS

Nope.

ANGELA

He can't stick us down here with the drama freaks forever.



LUIS holds the door for Angela and they enter...

INT. CLASSROOM - CONTINUOUS

The makeshift lab space of GIRLS CODE. Workstations are set up with computers and electronics equipment. And in the middle of the room is a PIANO. A stand-off is in progress between a GROUP OF WOMEN and a GROUP OF DRAMA KIDS. RO (early 20's, trans) looks at Angela, exasperated:

RO

There's a piano in our lab.

ANGELA

Yes, I see that. We have this room for the semester.

THEATER KID

We have it. We're rehearsing an all-male production of *Phantom Of The Opera*. Do you know how that is?

ADA (early 20's, Salma Hayek-esque robotics nerd) steps up.

ADA

Do you know who you're talking to? This is Dr. Angela Watson. She *owns* the algorithm game for spatial computing and 3D depth sensing.

THEATER KID

Beep-boop-borp. Whatever, nerd.

SHALA (early 20's, 90% deaf, 100% deadpan) signs.

SHALA

[You have the body of a Minion.]

JOAN (early 20's, free spirit) interprets.

JOAN

She said you're SOOO hot.

THEATER KID

I'm not blind, I know I'm a B. Now get out. And take grandma.

ANGLE ON: FRANCINE (late 60's) writing code on her computer, in the zone. (Maxine Waters is busy but she'd be perfect!).

FRANCINE

Phantom suuuuuuucks.

THEATER KID  
No, YOU suck!

ANGELA  
Okay, I'm sorting this out. Please  
back up that piano, back, back...

THEATER KIDS move the piano. Suddenly one screams.

THEATER KID   ANGELA (CONT'D)  
AAH!! It ran over my foot!                       Oh my god!

THEATER KID  
("suck it" gesture)  
Power of theater!

INT. USC - DEAN'S OFFICE - SAME TIME

A shocked Angela and Luis sit with DEAN HOFFMAN (real chill).

ANGELA  
What? How did we lose the grant?

DEAN HOFFMANN  
Marcus in Grants made a lot of errors  
after the Dodgers lost the series.

LUIS  
Did you fire him?

DEAN HOFFMANN  
No, but I *did* email him.

ANGELA  
This is unacceptable. I've been  
loyal. When half the engineering  
faculty left for cushy jobs with  
stock options, I stayed. Because  
you promised me I could start this  
incubator. The recent grads I  
selected for Girls Code are doing  
great things. We can't shut down.

DEAN HOFFMANN  
What about Doug Shillman's incubator?  
He's got more lab space than he knows  
what to do with and SO much funding.  
My boy can write a grant app like...  
Doug's awesome! Maybe you can merge?

ANGELA  
Girls Code's mission is to provide  
a space for female developers.

DEAN HOFFMANN

Right... Are you married to that?

INT. LIGHTHOUSE - JOHN'S OFFICE - SAME TIME

Wendy slams a folder down on John's desk and announces:

WENDY

I'm removing myself as CEO.  
(John stares in shock)  
*Temporarily*. Before the investors can do it. I don't have a controlling interest. I will not go on the defensive. I've come up with a plan. Here. Ignore the wine stains.

Wendy takes a stack of perforated paper out of her folder. She hands it over to John who begins to read. After a beat:

JOHN

What's the WBCFWIT?

WENDY

The Wendy Brand Center For Women In Technology. I'm giving back. *To Women*.

JOHN

But... you don't care about women.

WENDY

So? Remember Angela Watson? From MIT? She's got an all-female incubator. She came by a few months ago asking for support. So I figure I'll slap my name on the incubator. It's an image laundering slam dunk.

JOHN

(reading, impressed)  
You did all of this in one night...

WENDY

I've never failed before but I plan on being the best at it.

JOHN

(looking up, surprised)  
You're naming *me* as interim CEO?

WENDY

I know you spend your summers in that Italian fishing village.

JOHN  
 (dreamy, thick accent)  
*Acciaroli...*

WENDY  
 It's just for a year. I don't want  
 some douche-b running my company.  
 You're the only one I trust. Please?

JOHN  
 (beat, then)  
 Wendy, you're like the son I never  
 had. If you can sacrifice, so can  
 I...I'm proud of you, kid.

Wendy beams. His approval means a lot to her. There's a  
 KNOCK on the door as Edward Ping-Park enters looking haggard.

EDWARD  
 Sorry, I was--

WENDY  
 You missed the meeting,  
 sweetheart. And I think we  
 know why...

Wendy looks at John and mimes breastfeeding. They smirk.

EDWARD  
 What is that? Is that supposed to be  
 breastfeeding? It looks like this!

Edward does a very truthful breastfeeding pantomime.

WENDY  
 Haunting... Anyway, all that's left  
 is to give Angela the good news!

INT. USC - CLASSROOM - AFTERNOON

Angela stands in the doorway, angry and emphatic.

ANGELA  
 NO.

REVERSE to the Girls Code women gathered around a BAGEL  
 SPREAD. A BARISTA serves coffee. At the center of it all...

WENDY  
 There she is!

**END OF ACT ONE**

## ACT TWO

INT. USC - CLASSROOM - CONTINUOUS

Angela fumes as Wendy smiles and gestures around.

WENDY

I came to see Girly Code.

ANGELA

*Girls Code--*

RO

You're friends with Wendy Brand?

ANGELA

We are not friends.

WENDY

Have a cappuccino...

ANGELA (CONT'D)

(lying)  
I hate cappuccino.

Barista hands Angela a CAPPUCCHINO. She begrudgingly holds it.

WENDY

Just drink it.

ANGELA (CONT'D)

No.

WENDY

(to the group, knowingly)  
She'll drink it.

ANGELA

Stop talking to them!

WENDY (CONT'D)

(to the group)  
I told you she'd be angry.

ANGELA

You broke into my incubator!

WENDY

A grand gesture for an old friend!  
How long has it been? Seven years?

ANGELA

The meeting was five months ago and you know it.

(to the group)

I reached out to Wendy to see if she'd lend her name to Girl Code's board of advisors. She refused.

WENDY

*Refused* is such a strong word.

ANGELA

(reading off her phone)  
 "Angela, re: your *little* project...  
 Neither one of us got where we are  
 by being protected in some kind of  
 touchy-feely womb of false female  
 empowerment. Warmly, Wendy."

WENDY

I changed my mind. I want to help.

ANGELA

We don't need your help.

WENDY

Oh? I had a little chat with Dean  
 Hoffman on my way in. Mike's an old  
 golf buddy. I know about the grant.

RO

What's wrong with the grant?

JOAN

Is there a problem?

\*

ANGELA

We're having funding issues. But  
 there's an exciting opportunity I'll  
 tell you about once she's gone!

Ada enters with GRACE (a robot), apologizing.

ADA

Sorry, Grace had to charge.

WENDY

*She's* a coder? *She's* so symmetrical.

ANGELA

Please leave.

WENDY

I'll be an executive coach. I'll  
 provide access to legal assistance  
 and funders. And I'll give you  
 something *invaluable*: My name.

ANGELA

This is an obvious PR move to fix  
 your image after Dronepocalypse.

WENDY

Dronemageddon. And honestly, that's  
 100% it. Hundo P. But we have  
 history...

ANGELA

History? Like how you stole my algorithm and used it to build a company without giving me a penny?

The girls lean forward. Even Francine takes one earbud off.

WENDY

We don't have to do this here...

ANGELA

Claiming you developed the first Lighthouse program alone in an MIT lab... I was there. We were partners.

WENDY

The narrative isn't as strong if I wasn't alone. Besides, you're the one who jumped ship and disappeared right when things were heating up.

ANGELA

I had a baby!

WENDY

What 23 year-old keeps the baby?

ANGELA

Is that an *actual* question???

WENDY

(to the girls)

We had an offer from NASA. And *she* wanted to "think about it."

ANGELA

I wanted to be responsible and ethical. *She* wanted to take our tech out before it was ready just so we could be first to market.

WENDY

That's how you compete.

ANGELA

No, that's how you kill a dog.

The Girls silently snap approval. Angela takes a long, satisfied sip of her cappuccino.

ANGELA (CONT'D)

(realizing, annoyed)

No! Shit. Dammit.

WENDY

(clapping)

She drank it! I knew it!

NICOLE (O.S.)  
Heads up heads up!!

The women duck as a CAMERA DRONE flies in, followed by NICOLE (7 year-old whiz), pushing buttons on her glowing bracelet.

ANGELA  
Nicole! No indoor flight testing!

WENDY  
AND you're helping urban youth??  
This is a PR jackpot-- Hey! Ow!

Angela has taken Wendy's arm and is pulling her out.

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

WENDY  
Okay, okay, I'll go but I just--I don't know what I'm going to do... The past twenty-four hours have been like, really painful.  
(trying so hard to cry)  
I feel like everyone is so excited to see me fail. And it feels really *gendered*, you know? Elon Musk blows up a rocket every six months and we just keep letting him. But I make one mistake and it's game over?

Wendy closes her eyes tight. Then opens them a little.

WENDY (CONT'D)  
Are you texting?

ANGELA  
Babysitter emergency. Besides, I know what you're doing. You're making it seem like you're trying to *stop* crying but actually you're trying to *start*. You did this in college when we tried to go backstage at that Usher concert.

WENDY  
Did it work?

Luis appears, as earlier, holding a walkie, looking official.

LUIS  
We're about to tow the red Prius parked in the driveway outside!



ANGELA  
Oh crap! Gotta go!

WENDY  
Hey, we're not done!

Angela runs away. Wendy tries to run, but immediately feels the effects of no sleep + alcohol. She leans on the wall.

WENDY (CONT'D)  
Yeah, that's not gonna happen.

INT. LIGHTHOUSE OFFICES - BULLPEN - LATER

Wendy breezes in with confidence and addresses EMPLOYEES.

WENDY  
I just want to let you all know that Lighthouse is going to be fine. As Truman Capote once said, "Failure is the condiment that gives success its flavor." Okay.

INT. WENDY'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Wendy is at her desk, poring over code on the screen when Johanna enters with an GIANT EDIBLE ARRANGEMENT FRUIT BOUQUET.

JOHANNA  
I enjoyed that quote. I make my own ketchup so it really resonated... Your parents sent a bouquet of star-shaped pineapples dipped in chocolate. The vase says, "One Of A Kind." There's a card. It's long.

WENDY  
(eyes on her computer)  
They're so needy. Just give it to Edward. Tell him it's a baby gift.

JOHANNA  
Okay. Speaking of gifts... I bought you these Himalayan bath salts. I know this is a really tough time.

Johanna puts the gift down. Wendy is buried in her computer.

WENDY  
Baths stress me out. I don't do them right.

JOHANNA  
There's no wrong way to take a bath.

WENDY

I guarantee you there is.  
 (beat, then)  
 Did Andrew call yet?

JOHANNA

Your fiancée? No. But an Andrew  
 from the ASPCA called about the dog  
 that got crushed by the microwave.  
 He sounded upset.

Wendy types a little harder. Johanna stares. She debates something internally then decides to take a swing.

JOHANNA (CONT'D)

I just want to say that I think  
 you're a trailblazer. You made it  
 so girls like me can see ourselves  
 belonging in robotics. And I know  
 it made you "hard" or whatever. But  
 I appreciate the sacrifice. I only  
 get to be the way I am because  
 you're the way you are...

WENDY

(moved, but covering)  
 What the hell was that. Was that a  
 eulogy? My career isn't over.

JOHANNA

Right, no... Sorry.

A pineapple falls and Johanna bends down to get it but more pineapples fall. Eventually she's crawling on the floor.

WENDY

Leave it. Please. This is so  
 hard to watch.

JOHANNA (CONT'D)

I got it, wait no, I got it,  
 wait, no--

INT. USC SCHOOL OF ENGINEERING - LAB - SAME TIME

Angela, Luis and the gang are being shown around their new lab by DOUG SHILLMAN (a human 24-hour energy drink).

ANGELA

Thanks again for helping, Doug.

DOUG

Course! Happy to absorb you! Guys,  
 say hello to our lady coders!

REVEAL several 20-SOMETHING DUDES buried in their work.

ANGELA  
You can just call us coders.

DOUG  
Alrighty, here's your nook!

ANGLE ON: A corner with two cubicles and a bean bag chair.

ANGELA  
Can we speak in private?

DOUG  
For sure! Step into my office.

Doug gestures to an indoor TEEPEE with floor pillows inside.

INT. TEEPEE - MOMENTS LATER

Incense is burning. Doug laughs. Angela does not.

DOUG  
ONE?? You applied for ONE grant?

ANGELA  
Most of them require three years of history. We're brand new. How many did you apply for?

DOUG  
All of them! And we got like half! Even longshots. Like, we're funded by the Bureau of Indian Affairs for literally no reason. Ignoring the rules is part of the hustle, dude.

Angela shakes her head, at a loss. Doug inches toward her.

DOUG (CONT'D)  
You look so bummed. And beautiful.

Angela shoves him down. His face hits the incense holder.

DOUG (CONT'D)  
My eye!! There's a burning stick in my eye, you bitch!!

Angela crawls out of the Teepee and tells the girls.

ANGELA  
Evacuate the nook.

**END OF ACT TWO**

**ACT THREE**

EXT. USC SCHOOL OF ENGINEERING - STEPS - NIGHT

The Girls Code women (minus Angela) and Grace The Robot sit on the steps holding boxes of their stuff. The mood is bleak.

GRACE (ROBOT VOICE)

I notice you have not moved in fifteen minutes. Calling 911 in ten seconds unless you say "I'm okay."

ADA

(glum)

I'm okay.... nice to know that function works.

SHALA

[So that's it? This is just over?]

JOAN

Guess so.

RO

I'm worried about Angela.

FRANCINE

I didn't know she smoked.

ANGLE ON: Angela sitting under a nearby tree, smoking.

NICOLE

She quit when she got pregnant. But when she's really upset, she mimes.

EXT. USC CAMPUS - UNDER THE TREE - A FEW MINUTES LATER

Nicole approaches. We see Angela is indeed mime-smoking.

NICOLE

(sitting down)

Hey mom, I'm sorry you're caught up in all this bureaucratic bullshit.

ANGELA

Don't say shit.

NICOLE

The girls asked me to convince you to let Wendy help.

(MORE)

NICOLE (CONT'D)

They're hoping I'll reference how you left dad because you knew it was the best decision for all of us. You knew his dream is to be a park ranger in every national park. And that would mean always moving.

ANGELA

Don't forget that I'm scared of big trees. They fall on people.

NICOLE

Sure, mom... It was risky to leave him. But you did. Because when it comes to people you love, you're willing to take risks. Anyway, I told them I wouldn't say any of that because it's too manipulative.

Angela takes a long drag off her invisible cigarette...

INT. WENDY'S HOUSE - BATHROOM - NIGHT

Wendy lies in a tub, stressed. She pours the HIMALAYAN SALT on top of her. She makes a call on speakerphone.

WENDY (INTO PHONE)

Just calling to say goodnight. I know you're buried in work out there. Just wanted to say goodnight. I already said that. I guess I just... need you? I killed a dog and I feel bad. But also dogs die all the time. I bet at least a hundred have died since I began this message. Okay, I'm done. Goodnight.

She hangs up. Beat. She sets up an IPAD on the side of the tub with a picture of C3PO from *Star Wars*. She takes out a WATERPROOF VIBRATOR. She's just starting to use it when her PHONE RINGS. She looks over and grabs it.

EXT. USC QUAD - NIGHT - INTERCUT AS NECESSARY

ANGELA

We need to talk. In person.

WENDY

I'm in a meeting but I can squeeze you in after that.

Wendy leans back and turns on the faucet. WATER GUSHES.

WENDY (CONT'D)  
That's a fountain in the lobby of  
the building where my meeting is!

INT. KELVIN'S - A DIVE BAR - AN HOUR LATER

Angela and Wendy drink. Wendy gestures around the bar.

WENDY  
This is where the Lighthouse gang  
goes after work. Kinda our hang out.

A FEW LIGHTHOUSE EMPLOYEES enter and Wendy waves.

WENDY (CONT'D)  
Hey goofballs!

They quickly wave and go as far away from her as possible.

ANGELA  
You've never been here before.

WENDY  
No. My staff comes here to talk  
shit about me and I respect that.

ANGELA  
(fondly)  
You were always so comfortable with  
being disliked.

WENDY  
It's one of my greatest strengths.

ANGELA  
(drinks, then)  
You know you screwed me. Waiting a  
few months to give NASA an answer  
wouldn't have made a difference.

WENDY  
You don't know. In a few months  
someone else could have come out  
with the same sense and avoid tech  
we were developing. You had your  
baby and I had mine... You didn't  
call me for seven years.

ANGELA  
You didn't call me either.

WENDY  
I was busy.

ANGELA

So was I.

WENDY

How is the little one? Walking?

ANGELA

She's seven.

WENDY

Oh. So yes, then.

(drinking)

A singularity error. That's what caused Dronemageddon...

ANGELA

No! That's so embarrassing...

WENDY

Yes. Well. I guess maybe it pays to take a little more time. Not as long you take, but, y'know...

A beat. This is barely an apology but it means a lot to Angela coming from Wendy. She decides to take a leap.

ANGELA

(beat, then)

I teach my students to question default settings. Why do all assistant apps have female voices? Why do so many websites send female subscribers a list of things "he'll love" this Valentine's Day? You control the code, you control the norms. I created Girls Code because I want to empower the people who fall outside the default to rewrite the code. I wanted to give a workplace to the recent grads who aren't getting jobs in tech because they didn't "fit the existing culture." Call it a touchy feely womb if you want. I believe in bringing these people together and giving them strength in numbers.

WENDY

(nodding, into it)

Wow. Okay... Plus more numbers ups your odds of striking it rich. Not every one of those horses is a show pony, right? Some of 'em are glue.

ANGELA

Oh my god you're making this so hard. If we work together, we need to work on resetting *your* defaults.

WENDY

Wait, is that a yes??

ANGELA

You need to line up investors for Demo Day. May 15th. Write that down.

WENDY

It's a yes!

ANGELA

We need money. And we need space. And we need an angel investor.

She slides a PAPER across to Wendy. Wendy looks it over.

WENDY

Is this necessary? Weekly stipends?

ANGELA

So they can focus on their tech. Not everyone has a trust fund.

WENDY

I didn't have a trust fund, just supportive parents who ruin my mystique every chance they get.

ANGELA

I retain control of the incubator. No decisions are made without my approval. You get 1% equity. Yes, that's very low but I know you need us. I'm prepared to go up to 1.25 but that's it. Yes or no.

WENDY

(beat, raising a glass)  
You've got yourself an angel.

WENDY (CONT'D)

To The Wendy Brand Center For Women In Technology.

ANGELA

To Girls Code.

ANGELA (CONT'D)

*The what?*

WENDY

Not set in stone. Working title.



INT. LIGHTHOUSE OFFICES - CONFERENCE ROOM - A WEEK LATER

Wendy addresses BOARD MEMBERS, as confident as ever.

WENDY

I would like to introduce our  
interim CEO: Dr. John Hornback!

(applause)

As you know, I will be spending the  
next year reinventing myself as the  
patron saint of women in STEM. I'm  
personally funding a tech incubator  
for female entrepreneurs. Not only  
will this help the company's image,  
it will also give Lighthouse a  
direct pipeline to cutting edge  
tech developed by women. And not  
just any women. Women of color.  
Handicapped women. One of them's  
old AND black. One of them's  
Hispanic AND hot. It's a diversity  
wet dream. My assistant will  
document for social media purposes.

Wendy looks over and sees Johanna video-ing this speech.

WENDY (CONT'D)

But don't document this. Seriously.  
Stop taping. Delete immediately.

(regaining composure)

I've commandeered the 10th floor  
for office space and relocated the  
randos who were there.

EDWARD

It was sales and marketing.

WENDY

Whoever, they moved. And so begins  
the metamorphosis! I'll make you  
all proud. And then I'll get back  
to making you all absurdly, deeply,  
upsettingly rich.

INT. ELEVATOR/10TH FLOOR - TEN MINUTES LATER

Wendy and Johanna stand inside of the elevator. Wendy has her  
finger tightly pressed on the "doors close" button.

WENDY

Tell me when it's 9 exactly.

JOHANNA

Oh. It's 9:07.

WENDY

Dammit.

Doors open. The Girls Code women stand there, expectantly.

WENDY (CONT'D)

Welcome! On behalf of everyone at Lighthouse I'd like to say how thrilled we are to have you one floor below us. There will be a photoshoot next Thursday. If you want to tell social media how dope I am, please do. #WendyRules Now let's go! Make stuff! Demo Day is coming! May the best woman win!

Applause. Angela interrupts it, upbeat:

ANGELA

She's kidding! Take your time!  
There is no winner!

Applause starts again and Wendy interrupts, also upbeat.

WENDY

But also there might be a winner!

ANGELA

No there won't!

The women stop clapping, a little lost. Wendy starts to go.

ANGELA (CONT'D)

Wendy, I know you're eager to hear about the work we're doing.

WENDY

Nahm good.

But Ro is already in front of her, excitedly explaining:

RO

I'm making a geographic mixed reality simulator that'll allow us to track the rate of glacial melting. Also, checking it's cool if I use the women's room? I mostly saw white dudes in the lot so it seemed like you might have some retro binary gender rules.

(MORE)

RO (CONT'D)  
 (off Wendy's confusion)  
 I'm trans.

WENDY  
 Oh!  
 (to Ro, low voice)  
 You're totally passing.

RO  
 Wait, what?

Joan jumps in to save the moment.

JOAN  
 Shala and I are building an app  
 that'll allow deaf people to listen  
 to music through phone vibrations.

SHALA  
 [*It's rad as hell.*]

JOAN  
 I'll also be leading a daily  
 stretch circle.

WENDY  
 Group stretching is my jam. Perf! And  
 I see Francine's already working.  
 Love it. Let's not bother her.

ANGLE ON: Francine at her computer, not looking up.

ANGELA  
 Francine's my neighbor. She  
 discovered her talent for coding a  
 year ago after her husband died.

WENDY  
 My grandmother collected spoons.

FRANCINE  
 I'm building nanobots to target and  
 deliver drugs to defective cells.

WENDY  
 Wait, what? How are you--?

Francine already has her headphones in again.

WENDY (CONT'D)  
 (to Ada)  
 What about you, Cindy Crawford?

ADA

Who is that? Is she in robotics?

WENDY

No... she's in magazines.

ADA

I'm designing an affordable,  
companion robot for the elderly.

(Grace walks into a wall)

Still working out the kinks.

Wendy sees Nicole and puts on her "kids voice."

WENDY

And what are you working on?!

(sotto, to Johanna)

Get a pics.

NICOLE

I'm making a drone that you throw  
up in the air and it follows you  
and takes pictures. I want to chat  
about monocular SLAM supported  
object recognition. You don't share  
code on Github. It's bullshit.

(to Angela)

Sorry, mom.

ANGELA

This is my daughter, Nicole. She  
comes her after school.

WENDY

Nicole, I'm Aunt Wendy! You've  
probably heard a lot about me!

(no reaction, then)

Working moms having it all! Love  
that. Get it, mama. Anyone else  
have a kid to bring in? Preferably  
Thursday for the photo shoot.

Luis comes out of one of the offices, making notes on a  
clipboard. Wendy unabashedly stares, what a dreamboat...

ANGELA

My assistant, Luis. He's been with  
me since I started at USC.

WENDY

(dead serious)

You're not a woman, leave.

A beat. Everyone stops and stares. Luis is stunned.

LUIS  
Are you... firing me?

WENDY  
(abruptly changing course)  
Kidding! Grrl humor! Alright, I'll  
be upstairs if you need anything.  
But go through Johanna.

JOHANNA  
I'm Johanna!

INT. ELEVATOR - MOMENTS LATER

JOHANNA  
This is so exciting. I love them!

WENDY  
We're never setting foot down there  
again. I have real work to do.

INT. WENDY'S OFFICE - A MINUTE LATER

Wendy rushes inside, relieved to be alone. Then she looks up  
and freezes, stunned. REVEAL: Sitting at her desk is...

JOHN  
I'm sure this feels strange. Seeing  
me here. But technically it's my  
office now. *Temporarily.*

WENDY  
I guess I didn't realize--

JOHN  
Better to rip off the bandaid.

WENDY  
Right. Right. Definitely.

JOHN  
This was *your* plan...

WENDY  
I know, I just thought I'd keep my  
office. But of course. It's yours.  
I just, don't have anywhere to go.

JOHN  
Oh, you have somewhere to go...

John looks to the floor below. Wendy reacts. Right...

INT. ELEVATOR - MOMENTS LATER

Excruciating silence. Wendy looks pale and shell-shocked.

JOHANNA

Are you okay, Wendy? You've got...  
 (searching for the polite  
 way to say this)  
 ...pit stains. You want my shirt?

WENDY

(in a daze)  
 A week ago I was CEO, we were about  
 to go public two years ahead of  
 schedule, and then, just--

She makes exploding motions with her hands.

WENDY (CONT'D)

You saved me from getting hit by a  
 flying Nespresso, didn't you.  
 (Johanna nods)  
 Thank you.

A beat. This is perhaps the proudest Johanna has ever been.

INT. 10TH FLOOR - MOMENTS LATER

Angela looks up from her desk, surprised.

ANGELA

Wendy?

WENDY

So. I work here. Temporarily.

JOHANNA

(secretly thrilled)  
 Me too I guess.

Wendy is breathing heavy, starting to break down.

WENDY

I just need an office to collect my  
 thoughts and my face is so hot...

LUIS

I got this. Follow me.

Luis leads Wendy past the women. She calls to them:

WENDY

My STEM warriors! The future is  
 female! Be the change! Steinem!

Luis lands at a long desk in the middle of the room.

WENDY (CONT'D)

This... is a table.

ANGELA

We don't do offices here. Communal space allows for spontaneous moments of cross-pollination.

WENDY

But, they can see each other's computers. And hear everything.

ANGELA

Yes. That's the point.

WENDY

(forcing a smile)

What a lovely idea. Johanna!

Girls POV: Wendy whispers to Johanna who then stands directly in front of Wendy and spreads her arms out, shielding her.

FRANCINE

What are these white girls doing?

ADA

Her assistant is being her wall.

JOAN

It's kind of outstanding.

SHALA

[Her arms are gonna get tired.]

RO

Is someone taping this please?

NICOLE

(holding up phone)

On it.

Everyone starts setting up their workstations. As computers and gadgets start coming to life around her, Angela surveys her new domain. It's big and exciting and yeah it comes with a few strings but she can't help but see the potential...

**END OF EPISODE**