

ACT 1. MORNING. | SCENE 1. THIS IS AN OFFICE?

Wednesday. A late fall morning, about eight AM.

HER(E) SHE (said “Here She”), a new feminist co-working space for women, in midtown Manhattan, that soft-launched six weeks ago.

Tomorrow will be HER(E) SHE’s official Launch Day, with a speaker series of special guests -- women at the forefront of politics, media, arts, science, and technology.

On stage, there are two spaces: a conference room (called a “Collaboration Space” and/or “Co-Lab” in HER(E) SHE’s parlance) and the hallway which passes downstage, around it.

The Co-Lab is a glass room, containing a table and six chairs, plus a tech hub atop the table. It stands in for five different Co-Labs, differentiated by actor entrance and projected quotations on the upstage wall.

Off stage right is the freight elevator.

Off stage left is the Eleanor Roosevelt Great Space for events, and Reception.

At rise, MULTI-TRACK ACTOR F: DAUGHTER/FLORA (forward-thinking), waits on stage for a tour, delighted by what she sees.

MULTI-TRACK ACTOR H: MOM/HELEN (frank, folksy, confounded by the co-working concept) approaches from off stage left.

MOM/HELEN

This is an office?

DAUGHTER/FLORA

Co-working space, Mom.

HELEN
Like a... library?

FLORA
Sorta. There's coffee and snacks --

HELEN
So, like a... Starbucks!

FLORA
But quieter, and cleaner, and it's women-only --

HELEN
So it's a social club.

FLORA
It's an office, Mom. For women.

HELEN
Where are the desks?

FLORA
You bring your laptop, and pick a seat.

HELEN
Where would we hold our events?

FLORA
That big room.

ALISON (direct and Type A co-founder of HER(E) SHE) strides down the hallway from stage left, while GINA (warm, and “woo-woo” co-founder, six months pregnant), trails behind.

GINA is carrying two HER(E) SHE-branded folders, which she drops.

ALISON turns, impatient for GINA to catch up.

FLORA (CONT'D)
This is how we attract new women and stay relevant --

HELEN

Why we can't stay relevant from the Upper East Side is beyond me!

FLORA

You just answered your own question.

ALISON

Good morning!

GINA

Welcome to HER(E) SHE!

ALISON arrives first, shakes hands.

ALISON

Alison Lee Weber.

HELEN

Helen, and this is my daughter, Flora.

GINA

Hi, I'm Gina!

ALISON

(Prompts GINA to use her full name.)

LoCoco!

GINA

Gina LoCoco. Here -- *(hands out folders, makes her favorite joke.)* -- she!

FLORA gets the joke and laughs appreciatively;
HELEN, not so much.

HELEN

Where is... everybody?

FLORA

She means the other co-workers.

GINA

It's early yet! And, uh, we're still new --

ALISON

We soft-launched six weeks ago.

GINA

Our Collaborators come and go as they please --

HELEN

Like a waiting room!

FLORA

Mom!

ALISON

We've created a space for women to glean, grow, and go after their goals.

GINA

If you don't mind...

GINA leads everyone into the Co-Lab.

GINA (CONT'D)

We have a number of Collaboration Spaces for meetings, and pitches, and other collaborative...

HELEN

So, it's a conference room?

A tiny beat.

GINA

Yes. (*Can't help herself*)...But we think the term "Collaboration Space" is, uh, more inclusive.

As they enter on the downstage right side (DSR) of the Co-Lab, so does a projected quotation.

LX: Projected Quotation: "The days you work are the best days." -- Georgia O'Keeffe

GINA (CONT'D)

And now for our multi-media presentation!

GINA presses the tech hub, but it doesn't work.

GINA (CONT'D)

If you don't mind... uh, uh!

GINA keeps trying to turn it on, but no luck.

Shoot.

GINA (CONT'D)

FLORA

Could be good for smaller sessions?

ALISON

Let me.

HELEN

What kind of women work here?

GINA

-- She! (*Explains joke.*) HER(E)... SHE. (*No one laughs.*) Uh, all kinds of --

ALISON

Entrepreneurs, independent contractors, and creatives.

FLORA

Any other non-profits?

GINA

You would be our first!

HELEN

(*To GINA.*)

So, this is *your* space?

GINA

We run HER(E) SHE together --

ALISON

This should work.

It doesn't.

GINA

(*Trying to be cheerful.*)

I organize our membership and events, while Alison oversees the finance and operations.

ALISON looks around for someone to come fix this, but there's no one.

HELEN
(*To GINA, re: pregnancy.*)

Not a moment too soon for you.

ALISON steps down the hall.

Dede?
ALISON

No response, ALISON goes further out.

Dede!
ALISON (CONT'D)
(*Hissing.*)

I'm not due for a few months --
GINA

ALISON, aware she can be seen in the Co-Lab makes a face of fury, out, shakes it off, puts a forced smile on her face.

HELEN
And then, what? (*Re: ALISON.*) She'll take over everything?

ALISON returns to the Co-Lab.

We're partners.
ALISON

But who's in charge?
HELEN

We both -- (*GINA yields to ALISON.*)
ALISON & GINA

-- are in charge.
ALISON

HELEN shoots FLORA a look.

GINA
I would love to hear more about what you are looking for, in a co-working space.

FLORA hands packet to HELEN.

FLORA

(Delicately.)

After recent... changes, in our... board --

HELEN

Oh, Flora, we've been in the news... My daughter thinks now is the time to rethink... everything.

FLORA

Well, we have an opportunity to look at new ways to meet and attract new kinds of women to public service!

HELEN

Younger women, she means --

FLORA

Yeah, and that's why we're here --

GINA

-- She! There are definite synergies!

HELEN

What do your fees cover?

ALISON

Unlimited access to HER(E) SHE, Monday through Friday, eight to eight daily. Most of our Collaborators work in our big space, on your way in --

GINA

-- Our Eleanor Roosevelt Great Room!

FLORA

What about nights and weekends?

ALISON

We're still figuring out what our Collaborators need and want --

GINA

Everything's negotiable!

ALISON looks annoyed -- this is still being hammered out.

GINA (CONT'D)

Plus, Collaborators have access to all events, and, pay-as-you go use of these Co-Labs --

HELEN
About that big space --

GINA
-- Eleanor Roosevelt!

HELEN
-- what do you charge to buy it out?

FLORA
Per night -- we're planning a speaker series.

ALISON
I'll include some... pricing options in the proposal --

FLORA
Great!

HELEN
When can we expect that?

ALISON
Friday OK?

GINA
-- We're in pre-Launch Day mode today!

FLORA
Sure.

HELEN
What about the, the -- "Co-working"? Why would I need that?

GINA
It's fun!

ALISON
Studies show that co-working spaces are now one of the few communities where bright and qualified independent workers can meet, network, and collaborate in real life.

HELEN
What's your background?

ALISON
Employment law --

GINA

-- Fifteen years!

ALISON

I saw firsthand how a traditional office space can be hugely limiting to one's career growth. Especially for young women.

FLORA

How?

ALISON

Space dictates the power structure. Senior leadership -- mostly older men -- work behind closed doors, in corner offices, often on another floor. People below have no --

GINA

-- Transparency!

ALISON

Promising young women don't see many -- if any -- women working, and succeeding, above them. How can they possibly model themselves after people they don't --?

GINA

We need to see it to believe it!

HELEN

Are you a lawyer, too?

GINA

No! (*Laughs.*) Event planner! Ali and I had this idea years ago -- to make a co-working space exclusively for women. It feels so... necessary now.

FLORA

How'd you meet?

GINA

Ali's married to my brother, Andres!

HELEN

Convenient.

ALISON

Our Collaborators are well-educated, politically engaged, and hungry for mentorship.

FLORA

How many... Collaborators?

Right now? Uh...
GINA

GINA looks nervously to ALISON.

I'll include those in the proposal --
ALISON

We'd love to have you come to Launch Day, tomorrow -- we're expecting a hundred or more --
GINA

We're in Washington.
HELEN

Sorry.
FLORA

No need to apologize. We'll be live streaming on Facebook --
ALISON

-- And we're gonna offer yoga, in addition to our daily meditation, and other mindfulness... uh... programming!
GINA

Suddenly:

FX: (V.O., peppy female recording): "Welcome to HER(E) SHE, the first-ever female-identified co-working space in the heart of midtown Manhattan -- "

Is there supposed to be video?
HELEN

Yes, but -- ohhh.
GINA

HELEN and FLORA look at each other and ALISON and GINA try to turn it off.

The V.O. continues, annoyingly, “Launched in [current year] by co-founders Alison Lee Weber and Gina Lo Coco, HER(E) SHE is pleased to provide a variety of collaboration tools to meet your needs as a working --”

ALISON manages to disable the tech hub, finally.

GINA (CONT'D)

Finally! Let's get started!

HELEN checks her watch, looks to FLORA.

FLORA

Sorry, we have another tour across town.

GINA

If you don't mind my asking, where --

ALISON shoots GINA a look, it's over.

ALISON

Got it!

GINA

-- All good.

HELEN

You'll get the proposal to us.

ALISON

By Friday!

HELEN

With all your numbers, fees, etc.

ALISON

Yes.

FLORA

Thank you!

GINA leads HELEN and FLORA off left.

HELEN

(As she exits, grandly.)

I hope it works out for you gals.

GINA

If you don't mind, let's peek in on Eleanor Roosevelt on your way out...

SCENE 2. COULD THAT HAVE GONE ANY WORSE?

ALISON is now alone in the Georgia O’Keeffe Co-Lab.

A beat.

ALISON

(Mutters, peeved.)

“I sure do hope this works out for you gals.”

Again:

FX: (V.O. recording): “At HER(E) SHE, our mission is provide a space for women to glean, grow, and go after their goals -- ”

ALISON shuts it down, papers go flying.

ALISON (CONT’D)

Shut up shut up shut up! *(Mutters.)* “Does anyone even work here?” Nope, not presently, does that bother you? Doesn’t bother me!

GINA re-enters by the downstage right (DSR) side, cheerful.

ALISON (CONT’D)

Could that have gone any worse?

GINA

It wasn’t terrible!

ALISON

We were late to meet them --

GINA

I had to pee!

ALISON

We couldn’t get the media to work... And you kept interrupting!

GINA goes to speak, but then stops herself.

GINA

I did?

ALISON nods, peeved.

ALISON

It's not...

Searches for what she's trying to say.

GINA

...Good?

ALISON

That's not what I was trying to say, no.

A beat.

GINA

(Trying to appease.)

Maybe, though, we are exactly what they need right now?

ALISON

No, Gina, they're exactly what *we* need.

GINA

Same difference! Don't you love their mission?

ALISON

They want our numbers... / If we don't meet projections this month, we're --

GINA

Have faith! We're / gonna be amazing!

ALISON

We're / over-extended! If enrollment doesn't pick up with Launch Day --

GINA

You said, but --

ALISON

That fiasco with the plumbing, and the damage to the floor below --

GINA

You fixed it!

ALISON

I threw money at it!

GINA

And that fixed it!

ALISON

I borrowed from the twins' college fund to cover it!

ALISON did not mean to reveal this.

ALISON (CONT'D)

Andres doesn't know about that.

GINA

He doesn't?!

ALISON

You cannot tell him, G!

ALISON paces.

ALISON (CONT'D)

He'll lose his -- we're just both tapped out, on opposite schedules -- God only knows how long he's in London.

ALISON tidies the room.

ALISON (CONT'D)

The last time we talked, I made the case for us to hire a nanny or even a housekeeper, someone to help, but even talking about that freaked him out --

GINA

Shhhh -- calm down. I'm not gonna tell him!

ALISON

Promise me.

GINA

I promise! It's all good. (*Reassuringly.*) He told me things were crazy.

ALISON

How'd you mean?

GINA

I just meant, you both need to take it down a notch. Seriously! You're gonna have a stroke!

ALISON stops tidying.

ALISON

When did you speak to him last?

GINA

We FaceTimed earlier. I like the beard. (*This is news to ALISON. Helpfully.*) ...Deep breath in!

ALISON

I can't do your airy-fairy breathing right now!

GINA

Fine, then, don't breathe! (*Laughs.*) We just had a perfectly... productive... tour, we have that big interview later today, and we're nearly at capacity for Launch Day!

ALISON

Launch Day is free! Our conversion numbers are pitiful --

GINA

Enough money talk!

GINA gets ALISON to stop pacing.

GINA (CONT'D)

Look, Ali... I truly believe, no, I know, that we never get more than we can handle. (*Re: pregnancy.*) I wanted *this* more than anything. It wasn't easy, but... (*Gets emotional.*) And you wanted (*gestures around her, to HER(E) SHE*) *this* more than anything. And you work so hard! I know how much you care!

A beat.

ALISON

(*Small voice.*)

What if they were right about me?

GINA

...Not making partner?

ALISON nods.

GINA (CONT'D)

Just look what we've -- what you've -- accomplished in, what --

ALISON

Six months.

GINA

Six months! Think about six months from now... where we'll be, all we'll have accomplished.

ALISON

What if we're destitute?

GINA

Destitute? What? No. We do not make room to fail.

ALISON

Ah, to have the confidence of a mediocre white guy.

GINA

Be positive with your words.

ALISON

Ugh.

GINA

You're a boss now! We are gonna glean, grow, and go after our goals!

ALISON

I don't even know what that means.

GINA

We are changing the way women work!

ALISON

...Yeah.

GINA

When I say, "HER(E)," you say...?

ALISON

Gina...

GINA

When I say, "HER(E)," you say...?

ALISON

...She.

HER(E) -- GINA

She. ALISON

Louder. HER(E) -- GINA

She! ALISON

-- Like you believe it! HER(E) -- GINA

SHE! ALISON

HER(E)! SHE! GROWS! GINA & ALISON

We got this! GINA

O-K... ALISON

It's a mindset! GINA

No! ...It's hard work! ALISON

FX: GINA's phone rings.

Yeah, well, they're not mutually exclusive! (*Re: phone.*) Sorry -- GINA

Take it! ALISON

All good. (*Answers the phone.*) Gina. (*For ALISON's benefit.*) LoCoco. This is -- (*making her ongoing joke.*) HER(E)... SHE. GINA

GINA exits back towards Reception, off stage left.

GINA (CONT'D)

Hey, Jenny! I saw your name on our press list for Launch Day! (*Listens.*) Uh huh... Well, wait till you see our SWAG bags... they're beau-ti-ful!

GINA is now off.

ALISON dials her cell phone.

ALISON

Hey. It's me. (*Pause.*) Big day tomorrow. (*Pause.*) Gina told me you grew a beard? I miss you. Call me. Bye.

As ALISON exits the Co-Lab via the downstage right (DSR) side, then exits the hallway off stage right.

As she exits, so does the quotation.