

Last Woman

Genre: Drama with grounded sci-fi and thriller elements

Format: Feature, but could expand into 7 more episodes over 3 seasons.

Nutshell: Everything, Everywhere, All at Once with the 2020 version of The Invisible Man

LOGLINE: A brilliant female scientist brutally attacked in college develops an electromagnetic device that transports her to a safe parallel universe.

OVERVIEW - What do you think when someone was mugged in the park at two AM? What were they doing there? My script is about a woman raped and hung by her college professor. She later starts a biotech security firm and designs the ultimate personal security device. Click it once, and a strong electromagnetic pulse makes you disappear. Click it again, and you're back. What could go wrong? I recently sold my software company, and we had a saying - "unexpected results." My protagonist is desperate to get this faze device to market -- she starts testing it herself, and she loves being in the empty "between" world. She goes into Starbucks and makes her own latte. But it is a false victory when she returns; she discovers an annoying side effect - she forgets little details about meetings or even the name of her daughter's hamster. Like Elizabeth Moss's character in The Invisible Man, she suffers from an overwhelming fear of the man who attacked her in college, and she sees him everywhere - or is that all just in her head? No, it is not. Like Everything, Everywhere, All at Once, events have changed enough for the multi-universe to split. Eventually, she pulses so far away that she's no longer married, and her daughter doesn't exist. But when she's in the nothing world, if she presses the device slightly, it affects the computers first. She can search for info about her next universe. She discovers the next world is closer to her original reality, but her former college professor has kidnapped her. The choices are - to click - and get her husband and daughter that she loves back or stay in the nothing world, safe and alone - as the Last Woman.

CHARACTERS

Danielle – Brilliant scientist who changed from being a theater major to biotech - to get far away from the memories of what happened in college.

Carson – Piece of shit college professor who brutally raped and hung her and now stalks her through the parallel worlds. Arrogant asshole.

Bryan – Danielle's loving husband, devoted to his family, but overworked at his job and trying to cope with Danielle's PTSD.

Chandra – Danielle's darling 8-year-old daughter who worries about her mom but wishes Danielle could be like other parents and not be afraid to go out alone at night.

Laura - Danielle's best friend and therapist who helps Danielle deal with her panic attacks - PTSD.

Justin – Danielle's fellow scientist who develops Danielle's designs and ideas. Sort of a mad scientist, easily distracted by formulas on the whiteboard. Like his partners, Maya and Danielle, he doesn't want to develop weapons - just protection devices.

Sadie – the chimp who presses the device, but could be a dog by putting peanut butter on the device to keep the budget down.

Maya – One of the three scientists that founded BioTech, a Native American that quotes old Cherokee proverbs.

Robert – The financial guy of their partnership - is in it for the money and controls the future of their inventions. Has close ties to the military. He's in direct conflict with Danielle's wants.

Summary

The story opens when DANIELLE is in college and performing in a play. Her arrogant professor, CARSON, insists she says the lines the way he wants and violently attacks her. Years pass, and Danielle wakes up with Carson staring at her, and she frantically screams for her caring husband, BRYAN, who checks for "the monster in the closet" and gives her an "all clear." At breakfast, her darling daughter, CHANDRA, reminds her

mother that she needs a new cage for her hamster, Mr. Ping. Bryan urges Danielle to get some help - her PTSD is getting worse. She dismisses his concerns, especially after her latest design wins a multi-million-dollar contract. But then she discovers that Carson is out of jail - on parole. She convinces herself that she can handle this, he's thousands of miles away, but everyone wants to celebrate the new contract. Danielle won't go out alone at night. Her partner, MAYA tosses her a solution - their other partner, JUSTIN, finally finished two of Danielle's designs - a small Tiny Taser, the size of a lipstick tube with an added bonus. But Justin gets called away, a chimp presses the device, and Danielle is popped into the "between" world. She's all alone. The lab is empty; everyone in the building - gone. Terrified, she runs to her daughter's school - nobody there. Then she figured it out - they didn't disappear - she did. She returns to the lab, and the chimp presses the button again - they are back. Angry at what happened, she refuses to test it - she was terrified of being alone. That night her disappointed daughter complains about not having a normal mother, Danielle decides to venture and get the cage for her daughter's hamster, but she accidentally tases the pet shop owner during a panic attack. Her husband and therapist think she needs help to deal with her increasing PTSD, but she thinks the problem is that she used the taser mode instead of the fazer.

Her second act journey begins as she agrees to start testing the fazer portion - and she becomes delighted with the "between" world; for the first time, she doesn't mind being alone - she is safe. In the meantime, their other partner, ROBERT, the "business" part of the firm, plans to sell the device to the military - which goes against the three scientists' mission to only create personal safety devices. But Robert insists they need to do this after losing the huge contract. Danielle didn't know that - and way too many things have changed. Again, she switches from being terrified and emotional and researches the possibility of parallel universes.

She continues to suffer from memory problems, and things get worse when she encounters Carson in the "between" world toward the climax of the second act. Everyone has been dismissing her concerns because they are not the people she left when she pressed the button. They are in a new world that she "jumps" to - that is sort of like a web. But the darkest point comes when she finds herself in a world far from where she started. She was never married, and her daughter doesn't exist. She is dating Carson, and the rape never happened. She cannot live in that world and pulses again, desperate to find Bryan and Chandra again.

It gets worse, and she realizes all is lost when Carson shows up in her office -- and knows everything about the device - after following her and reading the computer logs. He has a few devices, and he plans on kidnapping her, torturing her until he tires, and then he'll go back and find her daughter. But Danielle knows something he doesn't - the military contract has come through, and they have taken possession of all the devices - except for a few, including half-spent devices. These devices have two pulses - one there and one back, but during their earlier testing, they ended up with partially spent devices. She leaves the safe between worlds, pulses again and looks up on the computer, and yes, Carson has kidnapped her - but she has the half device in her pocket with a rubber band. She pulses into her worse nightmare - Carson has hung her again, but this time - she knows to swing toward him. She wraps the rubber band around the device and tosses it to him. He catches it and pulses one way into the between world - with no way out. It has a Hollywood ending with a twist - Carson is the last man - alone forever.

In the final act, Danielle is delighted to be with a version of Bryan and Chandra that are close enough. She sells her stock in the biotech company and now works in community theater with Chandra. In the final scene, Justin shows up at Chandra's play and tells Danielle that he has created a navigational system to pulse into specific universes. Danielle could find every Carson and send him into the empty world - but Danielle decides that she is happy with where she has landed and she'll never risk being alone again. She has everything she needs. But this could be a series if Danielle decides to chase Carson down in every universe.

About Sandi Jerome: I am a non-WGA graduate of the UCLA Advanced Screenwriting program with an animated Sci-Fi script being produced by BlackOrb Studios. I have kick-ass female-driven scripts on Coverfly, two were finalists in Nicholls, and four were finalists at The Austin Film Festival and other contests. Just search on Coverfly Sandi Jerome or visit my website. Last Woman will be my pitch at The Austin Film Festival in October 2023.