

BLOCKED

Written by

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Podcast Version

Digital Sky

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ANNA

Picture in your mind the Hollywood Walk of Fame, where the sidewalk is covered in stars that honor the greatest Hollywood artists and movie moguls from the last 130 years of the business of show. They could certainly make room for two more.

Digital Sky Presents: "BLOCKED"

CHARLIE KING is a 33 year-old-writer. Charlie knows he has the talent to be a successful artist and producer. He is disciplined enough to write every day, driven by the certainty that he is close to "making it big." Charlie is having lunch with 25-year-old actor and telephone marketing salesperson, Michelle Tinto. She is also crazy passionate about becoming a big star in "the biz". Michelle fully expects to be discovered and deliver a knock-out performance that will put her on the road to stardom. Two wannabees, brought together by their dreams. But in Hollywood, it's not what you know, it's who you know, that is the secret of success.

INT. DINER

SOUND: Diner sounds. Lunchtime. Charlie and Michelle type on their phones while sitting with each other.

CHARLIE

I just read that there's some new evidence about Edison and Tesla. It proves conclusively who really invented the light bulb. Great material for a movie, huh!?

(mockish)

And it turns out I know a writer who already has a great script about Edison and Tesla laying in the back of his closet.

MICHELLE

You were right Charlie. You saw the future.

(switch)

Wait, what happens if it turns out the one who really invented it, isn't the guy who invented it in your script?

CHARLIE

Doesn't matter. Interesting either way. Getting there is the story.

CHARLIE (CONT'D (CONT'D)
Ya know what? My friend Stevo represents
some movie stars who could get this picture
made with a text.

MICHELLE
Pffft. Are you kidding, me? This is on of those
movies where great stars can show they can
act. Win an Oscar.

CHARLIE
Even a nomination would be amazing.
(beat)
Michelle, it will be great for your career to act
alongside movie stars.

MICHELLE
You just better remember you swore to me;
you won't let anyone make this movie unless I
can play Katherine.

CHARLIE
Yup. You're my muse. Your role is
unconditional...

MICHELLE
When was the last time you guys spoke?

CHARLIE
I sent a congratulatory text when he got his
promotion.

MICHELLE
Did you hear back?

CHARLIE
Yeah. He was very sweet. Told me how
grateful he was to me for introducing him to
my agency.

MICHELLE
You were good to him.

CHARLIE
When he first landed in LA, I even let him stay
on my couch... for several weeks.

MICHELLE
I hope he appreciates what you did for him.

CHARLIE
I think he does.
(beat)
I'm really happy with his success.
(MORE)

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

He's worked really hard to get where he is.

(beat)

You, know what, I'm going to give him a call.

SOUND: Charlie presses the button and the phone rings.

DANIKA

Steven Mittleman's office.

CHARLIE

Hi. Is Stevo there please?

DANIKA

I'm sorry. He's with a client, can he call you back?

CHARLIE

Of course. Anytime today would be good.

DANIKA

I'll let him know. Who should I tell him called?

CHARLIE

Charlie King. Nice to meet you...

DANIKA

Danika.

CHARLIE

(friendly)

Nice to meet you, Danika. Where are you from?

DANIKA

New Jersey.

CHARLIE

Love Jersy! Great people, culture, and of course, home of "the Boss".

DANIKA

"The Boss"?

CHARLIE

Bruce Springsteen. The boss.

DANIKA

(doesn't know)

Of course, Bruce Springstring. The... Boss. I'll try to listen to him. - Nice to meet you to, Mr. Mittleman.

CHARLIE

Charlie.

DANIKA
(more personable)
Nice to meet you, Charlie.

SOUND: Charlie presses end call button.

CHARLIE
He's with a client.

MICHELLE
You think he'll call back?

CHARLIE
He better do it fast, before some other writer
figures out this idea and plucks it from the
zeitgeist...

MICHELLE
And some other actress gets to play Tesla's
scandalous girlfriend, Katherine Johnson.

CHARLIE
If I don't hear from him today, I'll try him again
tomorrow.

MICHELLE
This could be our big break. We need to make
this happen.

CHARLIE
Oh my god. After so many scripts, it would be
so amazing to see one of my movies get
made.

MICHELLE
At least you have actually sold a script. That's
more than most writers.

CHARLIE
It's something, but you don't get much money.
And it's not even so much about the money. I
work hard on my craft.

MICHELLE
Me too. Taking all those classes, doing all
those student films. It's all leading to this
moment that is happening right now.

CHARLIE
I keep imagining what it would feel like to be
sitting in that movie theater and hear people
laugh and cry from the story I imagined and
the words that I wrote.

INT. SMALL HOME OFFICE - NEXT DAY

ANNA

Charlie is in his bedroom, sitting at his desk, with a laptop in front of him. He checks his phone and dials it.

SOUND: Ringing. Danika's voice on the other side of the phone.

DANIKA

Steven Mittleman's office.

CHARLIE

Hi. Charlie King calling for Stevo.

DANIKA

Steven is out of the office right now. Is there something I can help you with?

CHARLIE

I appreciate it, but I really just want to speak with Stevo. Excuse me, Steven. We're such old friends, I'm still calling him Stevo. Not just Hollywood friends.

DANIKA

Okay, I'll tell him you called.

CHARLIE

Do you think he will be able to call me back today?

DANIKA

He has a really busy schedule over the next few days, but we'll try.

CHARLIE

Okay, thanks. Please let him know it's time sensitive.

DANIKA

I will. Thank you for calling, Mr. King.

CHARLIE

Charlie.

DANIKA

(laughs)

Thanks for calling Charlie.

INT. DINER

SOUND: Busy diner. Lunchtime. Michelle and Charlie are at the diner eating impossible burgers.

MICHELLE

That's weird. Why don't you try him on his cell?

CHARLIE

I don't know if I want to bother him at home.

MICHELLE

I'm sure he'll be fine. He probably has a crap assistant.

CHARLIE

No, Danika seems bright. Even if she doesn't know who Bruce Springsteen is.

MICHELLE

Is he the one that sings "Piano Man?"

CHARLIE

That's Billy Joel. It's a reasonable mistake.

(beat)

No reason to waste anymore time stressing than I have too. I'm trying his cell phone. I think he just got a new one.

SOUND: Charlie picks up the phone. It goes directly to voice mail.

VOICE MESSAGE

You have reached 310-728-

MICHELLE

Are you getting him.

CHARLIE

I got his voice mail.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

Hey man. It's Charlie King. I'm not sure if you got my messages, but if you could give me buzz I'd really appreciate it. I have an opportunity that would be really interesting for both of us. Thanks!

SOUND: Charlie presses a button to end the call.

MICHELLE

Text him.

CHARLIE

I'm beginning to feel like a needy boy friend.

MICHELLE

Based on the circumstances, I'm sure he'll understand.

CHARLIE

Yeah, imagine how mad at me he would get if someone else ends up producing another Edison/Tesla movie before us... and I didn't try my hardest to track him down before it was too late.

MICHELLE

I would be so pissed off if I were you!

CHARLIE

I'm not mad. I'm a little hurt. I know we're supposed to separate business from personal, but I fed that broke-ass guy for weeks when he first moved to LA.

MICHELLE

You should try texting him. My friends blow up each other's phones with texting when it's important to reach each other.

CHARLIE

Sure.

(texting)

Hey brother. Can you call me back? It's important.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

He's got to get back to me now.

PAUSE

MICHELLE

Has Stevo gotten back to you at all yet?

CHARLIE

No. But that's okay, I want to give him a few days.

MICHELLE

Have you tried DMing him on Instagram?

CHARLIE

Of course I have. I tried all the socials, even LinkedIn. Haven't heard back.

MICHELLE

That's fucked that he's not getting back to you right away. Ungrateful asshole.

CHARLIE

Or... He may legitimately be dealing with one of the big studio productions. His client could be an Avenger who needs Stevo to rescue him. I've got to stop taking it so personally.

MICHELLE

I'm sure he would find a way to call back Matt Damon or Leonardo.

CHARLIE

Yes. That's his job. I'm just an old friend who he hasn't seen in years.

MICHELLE

You were a mentor to Stevo, Charlie! Other than your immediate family, that's the one person your supposed to always be there for.

CHARLIE

And I'm not asking him for help. I'm offering an opportunity.

MICHELLE

Exactly. Now let's track down the muthuh fuckuh!

(beat)

Okay... Let's start with the obvious. Text me his number.

SOUND: Texting the number.

DANIKA

Steven Mittleman's office.

MICHELLE

Is Steven in please?

DANIKA

I believe he is with a client.

MICHELLE

(choose an accent)

Hello. I'm a producer from Czechoslovakia and my father is great director with exciting movie. I am traveling on business, and Steven told me to look him up. So hear I am. May I make an appointment?

DANIKA

What is your name, please?

MICHELLE
(struggles just a little)
Maria Masterintinto.

DANIKA
And your father?

MICHELLE
(fishing)
Uh... Master Masterintinto.

DANIKA
Um... Maria. Let me take a message, and I
will let Steven know.

SOUND: Phone off.

CHARLIE
So...

MICHELLE
I'm not sure she bought it. I didn't do my voice
warm-ups and kinda choked when she asked
me my name.

CHARLIE
And then there's the problem of IMDB.
They're probably searching for you and your
imaginary father right now.

INT. STEVEN'S OFFICE

ANNA
Picture the office of successful Hollywood
agent Steven Mittleman, or Stevo, a nickname
he's worked hard to outgrow.

STEVO
Hey Danika, any messages?

DANIKA
A few. Your meeting at SONY has been
confirmed. Client emergency. Tom can't find
his car keys. We have the truck going out to
help him.

STEVO
You're so good. Anyone else?

DANIKA
Charlie King has not tried calling lately.

STEVO

It's been a few days now. That's good. That's a relief.

DANIKA

There was also someone else who got through to our line trying to get a meeting with you. But I'm pretty sure it was a hoax. Nothing in IMDB or anywhere else about her.

STEVO

With all the shit I have to deal with, I might as well have gone into politics.

SOUND: Back in diner

CHARLIE

Maybe I should shop the script to other studios.

MICHELLE

Yeah.. And end up giving away your idea.

CHARLIE

Edison and Tesla were real people. Anyone can write a story about them.

MICHELLE

Or even worse, steal the best parts from your script for themselves?

CHARLIE

If we can't get through to Stevo soon, I'm not going to have a choice.

MICHELLE

Did you check to see if he got back to you on any of the socials.

CHARLIE

Yeah, this morning.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

This is silly. I will try one last time, and if he doesn't get back to me today, I'll consider that road closed.

SOUND: Texting.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

What the fuck!?! They blocked my number at his office!

SOUND: Charlie goes to work on searching his phone.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

Holy shit! Stevo blocked me on Facebook...
and Instagram.

(beat)

And yup, he blocked my number on his cell.
Now I'm pissed. Let's go pick up a burner
phone. I need to look him in the eyes.

EXT/INT AGENCY -

ANNA

Michelle and Charlie pull into a building and
over to the valet parking attendant. Michelle
goes over to security while Charlie tries to be
unnoticed.

MICHELLE

(character)

Excuse me, security? I hope you can help me.
I know I have to show you ID, but I recently lost
my wallet...

SECURITY

Do you have some other form of ID?

MICHELLE

Well... I have credit cards.

SECURITY

Those won't work Mam.

MICHELLE

Oh wait. I also have my gap card, that has my
name on it. I had to apply for that.

SECURITY

I'm sorry., but..

MICHELLE

Please don't say "but"... I will be in such deep
shit, if I don't show up to my meeting.

SECURITY

Maybe we could call someone. What's the
company you are here to see?

MICHELLE

(crying)

Nooooahhh! I'm going to be in so much
trouble! Please, you can't call them!!

SOUND: Michelle continues the overreacting character.

SECURITY

Mam! You need to settle down, or we will have to bring you inside to be questioned.

MICHELLE

Whoooahhh. Okay, I'm leaving. But I'll be back someday when I'm a star - and you will not need to check my ID to know who I am!

INT. DANIKA'S CUBICLE - DAY

SOUND: Phone ringing and elevator dings.

DANIKA

Steven Mittleman's office.

(nervous pause)

Ummm...I'm sorry Mr. King, Mr. Mittleman is traveling.

CHARLIE

(voice over phone)

Can I speak with him or not?

DANIKA

Like I said...

CHARLIE

Yeah. I'll see him in a minute.

DANIKA

Ummm... can I take a message?

SOUND: Elevator door opening

ANNA

Suddenly, the elevator door in the lobby opens. Charlie strides out, determined

RECEPTIONIST

Excuse me sir, who are you here to see?

CHARLIE

An old friend.

ANNA

Charlie rushes by the receptionist and into the maze of cubicles. He stops at the first one, where an assistant looks up at him.

CHARLIE

(friendly)

Hey, do you know where Danika sits?

CUBICLE EMPLOYEE
That's her over there.

SOUND: Charlie charges over to Danika's cubicle.

CHARLIE
Hi Danika. It's Charlie. Nice to meet you in person.

DANIKA
(nervously)
Hi...Charlie.

CHARLIE
I'm here to see Stevo Mittleman, please.
(beat)
Or is he out?

DANIKA
He uh... just got back. If you wouldn't mind just waiting for...

CHARLIE
Yeah, I mind!

ANNA
Charlie doesn't hesitate. He turns and goes right into Stevo's office. Shocked, Stevo reaches for his phone.

STEVO
What are you doing here Charlie?

CHARLIE
I missed you.

STEVO
Look man. You can't just charge in here and-!

SOUND: Locking door from the inside.

CHARLIE
Why not? I let you charge into my apartment 8 years ago...

STEVO
Come on, Charlie... unlock the door.

CHARLIE
After you hear me out, Stevo!

STEVO
Charlie. Please don't make me call security.

SOUND: Knocking on door.

SECURITY GUARD
Mr. Mittleman sir. May we come in?

STEVO
What should I tell them?

CHARLIE
(sighing)
I'll unlock the door.

SOUND: Door Unlocks from the inside.

STEVO
We're fine, guys. Just two old college friends
still pranking each other.
(beat)
Okay....talk.

CHARLIE
Edison and Tesla. They're in the news, and
producers are already sniffing around the
topic. But while they are chasing there tails, I
already have the script!

SOUND: Charlie drops a large script on Stevo's desk.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
Read it tonight. Call me tomorrow. If you don't
like something or if you want me to craft one
of the roles to match one of your clients, it's
fine.

STEVO
I can't read your script, Charlie. I can't, and I
don't want to.

CHARLIE
Really? You love my writing.

STEVO
No I don't.

CHARLIE
You used to.

STEVO
No...I didn't.

CHARLIE
Is that why you didn't call me back? Because
you didn't have the courage to personally
reject me?

STEVO

I think it's time for you to go, Charlie. I wish you luck with your project, but I'm not interested.

CHARLIE

That's the kind of rejection I get from you? Just do us both a favor and read it. Maybe you would like it. Maybe someone else here will like it. Let Danika read it.

STEVO

Charlie! Enough!

CHARLIE

At least now you're blocking me in person!

STEVO

Get the fuck out of my office before I have you removed!

SOUND: Security guards come into the room urgently.

ANNA

Two large security guards enter the office. One of them stands in front of Charlie blocking him from lunging at Stevo. The other is behind Charlie, blocking the door.

STEVO

It's okay, guys. We just have some personal issues we're working out.

(beat)

Sorry....I got a little heated.

SECURITY GUARD

Mr. Mittleman. This gentleman snuck in without a pass.

STEVO

No. I told him to come up. We got our signals crossed and... must have crossed signals or some...

WOULD YOU GUYS just give us a few minutes?

SECURITY GUARD

We'll be right outside the door.

SOUND: Security guards exit office.

STEVO

Charlie, I've just done you a favor!

CHARLIE
I'm trying to do you a favor.

STEVO
Maybe you forgot that I have a restraining order against you!?

CHARLIE
Pffft. That ran out years ago!

STEVO
Do you remember WHY I have a restraining order against you?

CHARLIE
You had sex with my girlfriend in my apartment.

STEVO
First of all, you went out with her twice over as many years. Then, there's the fact that... you beat the living shit out of me!!

CHARLIE
What does making a movie have to do with an unfortunate love triangle from when we were kids?

STEVO
I was in the hospital for seven days... and my nose is still crooked.

CHARLIE
(earnest)
And I am sincerely sorry for that. But Stevo, we need to get past this, bro. This script is ready, and the time is now.

STEVO
No. The time has past. Charlie.
(beat)
Listen carefully please. If you try and contact me again in any way, either online or in person, I will press charges.
(beat)
Are we clear?

SOUND: Charlie gets up.

CHARLIE
Wow. Just wow.
(beat)
Your loss old friend.

STEVO

That's just the way it goes sometimes.

ANNA

Charlie leaves the office. He walks toward the elevator, carefully followed from behind by the two security guards.

DANIKA

Mr. King!

Danika rushes over.

DANIKA (CONT'D)

Thanks for introducing me to Bruce Springsteen.

CHARLES

The Boss.

DANIKA

"You can't start a fire without a spark."

CHARLES

Even if we're just dancing in the dark. Thanks, Danika.

DANIKA

I wish you well, Charlie.

ANNA

In Hollywood, if you want to get a movie made, the most important thing, more than talent, more than drive... is relationships.

(beat)

Unless of course it is a movie of the mind.

(beat)

On the set of the Digital Sky.