

# Scene from "The Broadcasters"

*by Andrew LONGHOFER*

(SOPHIE and ENOCH at ENOCH's desk. They've just watched the ATN special report revealing CBC's wiretapping and email hacking.)

SOPHIE

So?

ENOCH

He's killed us with this. We're done. The news division. The network. You and me. Everything I've worked forty years for is gone.

SOPHIE

And what's that, exactly?

ENOCH

The viewers trust me! When their lives are miserable, they turn to us for comfort, for assurance! For distraction!

SOPHIE

We distract them. When their lives are miserable.

ENOCH

Exactly!

SOPHIE

Is that why we hacked celebrities' email accounts? Why we wiretapped foreign diplomats? So we could dig up dirt to *distract* them with?

ENOCH

I just read what *you* write. I don't care how you get the information. My job is to dress well, to smile kindly, and make *them* trust what *you've* written.

SOPHIE

What *I've* written? I write *news*. I pitch stories that hold people *accountable*. I don't play this tabloid game; I fight it.

ENOCH

Well then. Some of us don't have that luxury.

SOPHIE

Don't have that luxury? You're Enoch Franklin, goddammit! You used to be the most respected news man in America! When Cronkite retired, there *you* took the throne! But you've let your nightly newscast pander to voyeurism, let it push propaganda as fact, let it feign humanitarian action to pull on viewers' *heartstrings*, let it become Inside fucking Edition!

ENOCH

You think I had a choice? Let me tell you something. They own you. When you get this popular, they own you. Not the network. The

people. The network just makes their best guess what the *people* want and gives it to them. You want to know *why* we do it? They *want* gossip. They *want propaganda*. And they want a senile grandfather to give it to them. To make them feel better about wanting it. What they don't want is the *truth*. Why give it to them? Everything else gets ratings. Let me tell you something else. If you don't give viewers what they want, you don't get ratings. If you don't get ratings, you don't get accounts. Not ones that mean anything, at least. And if you don't get accounts, big ones, you don't get a paycheck. You go off the air. If you bother them with *reality*, ask them to *think*, you die.

SOPHIE

You die?! You die when you stop! Telling them the truth. And making them deal with it. Yeah, we have ratings. Second place ones. You want to know why he left? Why he went to NTA? Because they tell the *truth*. They cover *news*. They don't ignore it. They don't invent it. They don't *steal* it. All those people they interviewed? That's why *they* left, too. They were tired of the *slop* we feed people.

ENOCH

If I ever get my hands on one of them...

SOPHIE

You'll do what, exactly?

ENOCH

I'll kill the traitor.

SOPHIE

Traitor? *You're* the traitor. You've betrayed the *nation*. By letting them *lie* to themselves. By lying *to* them.

ENOCH

The network *pays* me to lie to them. Because *they* pay the network to lie to them.

SOPHIE

I've been curious. How much did your conscience cost them?

(ENOCH is taken aback.)

Because mine is intact. Enoch, I helped Nick do the research. I found him the interviews. I went *on the record* for him.

ENOCH

He interviewed *you?!?*

SOPHIE

Yes, he did. With permission from the Chairman of the Board. Oliver's likely going to be fired. You might be, too.

ENOCH

What are you talking about?

SOPHIE

The network's launched an internal investigation. They've gone to the police. This is conspiracy. Espionage. Invasion of privacy. People will go to *jail*, Enoch.

ENOCH

(stands and puts on his coat, clearly distressed.)

I'm done with you. I want a drink.

SOPHIE

What, it's not enough to tranquilize a nation, so you have to tranquilize yourself?

ENOCH

(turns to her, starts to speak; but thinks better)

Good night, Sophie.

SOPHIE

You forgot the "good luck," Mr. Murrow.

ENOCH

(on the way out the door:)

Go to hell.

