

## BROADCAST NEWS

Tom & Jane

INT. JANE'S ROOM - NIGHT

A small good room -- her working paraphernalia very much in evidence...the quality briefcase...the reams of well organized notes...the thick contact book -- Jane is sitting on the bed -- Tom, not far away in the room's only chair. One lamp is on and it serves to place Jane in the shadows and cast Tom in an enormously flattering light. MUSIC comes from her miniature portable STEREO system.

JANE

Come on...Even I'm not that hard on myself.

TOM

No, I really got this job on a fluke and wait till you hear where it ends up.

Jane smiles a calming smile.

JANE

I was doing sports at the station. The newspaper ran this untrue story that I was leaving and they got all these tons of protest mail. So they made me anchor.

JANE

So great -- right?

TOM

Except I'm no good at what I'm being a success at.

JANE

How are you at back rubs?

Jane shifts her position so that her back is to Tom... He is immobilized by the sudden turn. Jane waits, just a bit longer than it would take a man to run from the chair to her side before

experiencing the ghost-like clutch of rejection. She moves briskly past the moment -- grabbing a "good night" chocolate from the pillow and munching it as she return to his agenda.

JANE

It's sort of normal -- the way you feel. In graduate school everyone thought the only mistake the admission committee made was letting them in.

He moves to the bed.

TOM

Listen to me. You keep on thinking I'm somebody who lacks...confidence. That's not it. I know I can talk well enough and I'm not bad at making contact with people, but I don't like the feeling that I'm pretending to be a reporter.

(cont'd)

And half the time I don't really get the news I'm talking about. It isn't that I'm down on myself. Trust me, I stink.

JANE

(levelly)

I trust you.

TOM

I didn't even have the chance to get really good at sports. I wasn't bad. I thought I was starting to do interesting features but hockey is big at the station and...

JANE

(interrupting)

What about the obvious remedy? Reversing things. Maybe getting a job on a newspaper.

TOM

I don't write.

Jane laughs or, more accurately, scoffs as Tom continues.

TOM

But that didn't stop me from sending out audition tapes to bigger stations and the networks.

JANE

Well, come on -- it is your life. Nobody is tying you to the fast track. Did you go to college?

TOM

One year...almost one year.

JANE

So, you're not well educated and you have almost no experience and you can't write.

He nods agreement.

TOM

And I'm making a fortune.

Jane laughs very briefly -- then rubs her face vigorously with her hands... He's making her feel a little crazy. She gets off the bed.

JANE

It's hard for me to advise you since you personify something that I truly think is dangerous.

TOM

Uh-huh.

JANE

(holding it in)

I agree with you -- you're not qualified.

(letting it out)

So get qualified. You can insist on being better prepared. You don't have to just leave it as...

(mimicking him)

'I don't write. I'm not schooled. I don't understand the news I'm reading. But at least I'm upset about it, folks.'

A beat, then he mumbles softly to himself.

TOM

Whoa, this was a mistake.

JANE

Just what do you want from me, anyway? Permission to be a fake? Stop whining and do something about it.

He gets up to leave. She follows him.

JANE

Well, you don't have to start right now.

He turns to her.

TOM

I hated the way you talked to me just now...and it wasn't just because you were right.

He exits.