

ON THE SCENE

INT. EDEN SENTINEL NEWS STUDIO - NIGHT

The camera rolls. A sleek newsroom, dimly lit only to reveal a lone silhouette at the news desk. The lights rise, revealing SLOAN MALONE, 40s, wearing the practiced smile all too familiar to viewers across the city.

SLOAN

Good evening. I'm Sloan Malone, and this is Sentinel News at Nine.

SLOAN (CONT'D)

Tonight, authorities are responding swiftly to what they're calling a "minor civil disturbance" in several of Eden's districts.

Sloan reads from a page of notes, continues.

SLOAN (CONT'D)

Paragon officials are assuring citizens that the situation is "largely contained," and there is, I quote, "no need for concern."

Sloan looks back at the camera with a calm confidence.

SLOAN (CONT'D)

Joining us live from Aurora District is field correspondent Jordan Reed. Jordan, what's the atmosphere like on the ground?

EXT. AURORA DISTRICT INDUSTRIAL CENTER - NIGHT

JORDAN, 20s, stands in the middle of a chaotic scene unfolding in front of a burning industrial complex.

JORDAN

Well, Sloan, if by "minor disturbance" you mean coordinated break-ins at half a dozen factories, then sure... Let's call it that.

A nearby explosion pops off in the distance. Car alarms trigger. Jordan doesn't flinch.

JORDAN (CONT'D)

However, from where I stand tonight, the situation can only be described as an absolute breach of public security.

A damaged security drone flies overhead, leaving a trail of sparks before it crashes in a flash of light.

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Sloan leans forward, hands rested on the news desk.

SLOAN

Are you certain? These reports seem to conflict with those of Paragon officials.

JORDAN (O.S.)

Well, you can take the official reports at face value...

INT. AURORA DISTRICT INDUSTRIAL CENTER - NIGHT

Jordan takes a step to the side, revealing more of the chaos in the background.

JORDAN

Or you can look past the overturned sanitation truck behind me and observe the historic blaze that used to be the district's largest industrial complex.

SLOAN (O.S.)

I do see emergency lights in the distance. I take it emergency responders are on scene?

JORDAN

Yes, that is true. However, while their attention is focused on the blazing inferno, looters have begun emptying nearby supply depots.

SLOAN (O.S.)

Looters?! That's ludicrous! How could you possibly know-

JORDAN

Well that's easy, Sloan. I asked them.

The camera feed of Jordan widens slightly, revealing a taller MARVIN and shorter REGGIE, two scrappy-looking warehouse workers standing nearby. Marvin holds a large TV set, suddenly taking an interest in the camera man.

MARVIN
Are we on TV?

REGGIE
Marvin, I'll do the talking.

MARVIN
Hi, mom!

Marvin attempts to wave, losing control of the TV as it tumbles to the ground, crashing into pieces. Marvin scratches his head.

MARVIN (CONT'D)
Dang. It slipped.

Reggie steps up beside Jordan.

JORDAN
Tell me, Reggie. What compelled you
and your friend here to start
looting tonight?

Reggie steps in closer, taking the microphone perhaps a little too aggressively. Marvin shuffles in at his side.

REGGIE
It's quite simple, really. The
socio-economic underpinnings of
this so-called utopia have been
eroding for years. Tonight merely
represents the inevitable
correction of our time.

MARVIN
We found these TVs in that
warehouse.

Marvin points off to the distance, turning back to the camera with a serious look.

MARVIN (CONT'D)
It slipped though.

REGGIE
Marvin, please. We discussed this.
I'll handle optics.

Reggie returns his attention to the camera.

REGGIE (CONT'D)

What we are witnessing is the culmination of corporate and municipal mismanagement on every conceivable level.

REGGIE (CONT'D)

This is not looting. It's a mass redistribution. A symbolic reclaiming of what's been hoarded by the privileged few.

MARVIN

They had some really nice TVs.

REGGIE

Marvin, please.

Reggie clears his throat, continuing in a serious tone.

REGGIE (CONT'D)

History will remember this night, not as a moment of chaos, but as the moment we awoke from the nightmare of rampant greed and corruption.

Marvin leans in toward the microphone.

MARVIN

Also, if anyone has a truck, we're gonna need a ride home.

Jordan retakes control of the microphone.

JORDAN

Well there you have it, Sloan. An inevitable correction, a symbolic reclaiming, and the concluding nightmare of rampant greed and corruption. Back to you.

INT. EDEN SENTINEL NEWS STUDIO - NIGHT

An unamused Sloan sits quietly at the news desk. Sloan turns to a new camera, snapping into the practiced smile once more.

SLOAN

In other news tonight, the Council's Infrastructure Committee has unveiled a new initiative to modernize Eden's transit network.