

By The Book

Written
by

Jamal Washington
Jessica MacKay

301 W. Broomfield
Apt. 307
Mt. Pleasant, MI 48858
(313) 720-4478
jamal.washington@cmich.edu

Fade In:

BLACK

Audio starts out during black.

ANCHOR (O.S.)

When we return, our very own
investigative reporter, Lee Mills
will join us to update you on the
pandhandling situation. And you
would not want to miss it.

INT. CONTROL ROOM - EVENING

Camera fades in to reveal a news control room with a crew
operating a live in-studio newscast.

ANCHOR (O.S.)

But before we go to break, here's
Steve Logan with a weather update.

The camera moves around the newsroom to reveal each
individual crew member. It stops as it reaches the director,
SEAN NASH, a hard nosed authoritative figure. Sean looks
around in frustration.

SEAN

Can someone PLEASE get Mills in
here? He's on in three...

Sean nods at the associate producer and points his finger
for him to leave and retrieve Lee.

INT. NEWSROOM - EVENING

Audio of the newscast is playing in the background of the
dark/dimly lit newsroom. Sounds of typing can be heard
off-screen as the camera pans around to reveal various
decorations and elements of an office. As the sound of
typing speeds up, the camera slowly pushes/pans and reveals
LEE MILLS, a 28 year old investigative reporter.

SUPERIMPOSE TITLE: "BY THE BOOK"

As Lee is typing, he shows signs of frustration. He sighs
heavily and places his hand over his face.

FLASHBACK (VARIOUS)

--MONTAGE--

-- Lee is standing in front of a green screen in his cap and gown with a degree/diploma in hand, posing for a photo (5 years ago).

RANDOM VOICE (O.S.)
Say cheese! And congratulations!

-- In the station manager's office, Lee's P.O.V., he extends his hand for a handshake with the station manager, and reaches for the contract (6 months later).

STATION MANAGER (O.S.)
You're going to make one fine
addition to the team. Just sign on
the dotted line.

-- At a dinner party, Lee is sitting at a table with some of his co-workers. Veteran anchor, CASSIDY MAXWELL leans over to him to make conversation (2 years later).

CASSIDY
You're good, I'll give you that.
But you're still green. If you
want to get ahead in this
business, you'll need to follow
our blueprint. If you know what I
mean...

-- Each flashback repeats faster and faster in a continuous loop. As each flashback plays, a random voice appears calling his last name.

--END MONTAGE--

INT. NEWSROOM - EVENING (PRESENT)

ASSOCIATE PRODUCER
Mills. Mills!

Lee jumps and removes his hand from his face. He is sweating.

ASSOCIATE PRODUCER (CONT'D)
Get yourself together, you're on
in a few minutes.

LEE
Uh...yeah. Right.

INT. CONTROL ROOM - EVENING

As the crew members in the control room are conversing amongst each other, Sean is getting impatient.

SEAN
If they don't get here...

Before he could finish, the associate producer quickly returns to the control room.

SEAN (CONT'D)
Uh...aren't you forgetting something? Or shall I say, someone?

ASSOCIATE PRODUCER
(Panic)
Uh...uh...he's in the bathroom freshening up.

SEAN
(Aggravated)
Keep an eye on him and do not return without him. Got it?

The associate producer nods his head and rushes out.

SEAN (CONT'D)
I need a drink.

INT. RESTROOM - EVENING

Lee pulls a flask out of his jacket pocket and stares into it. He waits a few seconds and takes a swig of his beverage. He puts it back in his jacket pocket. He splashes water over his face, dries it, and fixes his hair. He looks into the mirror.

LEE
Showtime.

INT. CONTROL ROOM - EVENING

The associate producer rushes back into the control room as Lee follows. As some of the crew members look on, Sean glances over at Lee and gives him a cold stare. Lee walks into the studio.

SEAN
(into headset)
Mic him...NOW.

INT. STUDIO - EVENING

As Lee makes his way into the studio, his fellow co-workers are giving him blank stares. He sits down next to Cassidy and her co-anchor. Cassidy leans over and whispers in his ear while he is being mic'd up by the floor director.

CASSIDY
(whispers)
Do it like we rehearsed. And it
better be good.

Lee looks at Cassidy nervously and nods his head in agreement.

INT. CONTROL ROOM - EVENING

Sean looks on at Cassidy and Lee's interaction and nods his head in approval.

LINE PRODUCER
10 seconds.

SEAN
(into headset)
Standby by. In 5...4...3...2...Fade
up mic, and cue talent.

INT. STUDIO - EVENING

The floor director cues the talent.

CASSIDY
Welcome back and now joining us is
our investigative reporter, Lee
Mills, who has been investigating
the pandhandling situation.

Lee looks on nervously and gives a half-hearted smile.

CASSIDY (CONT'D)
From what you've gathered, it
seems like all who are in need of
money, may not be so unfortunate
after all?

LEE
(nervous)
Uh-yeah. That's right, C-Cass.
I...have been looking into it and
all is not what it seems.

INT. CONTROL ROOM - EVENING

Sean looks on in frustration.

SEAN
Seriously? What the...?

INT. STUDIO - EVENING

Lee pauses as his fellow anchors and studio crew members look on.

INT. RANDOM LIVING ROOM - EVENING

A couple are watching their television as Lee sits frozen. They look on in confusion.

INT. STUDIO - EVENING

LEE

I'm sorry. I can't do this.

Lee unclips his microphone and rushes off the set. Everyone in the studio pauses for a few seconds.

CASSIDY

We apologize. Lee has been under the weather. He'll return later with the full story. We'll be back after this.

SEAN (O.S.)

(through headset)

GO TO COMMERCIAL!

INT. CONTROL ROOM - EVENING

As Lee rushes towards the door, Sean intersects him.

SEAN

(Anger)

Get back in th--

Before Sean finishes, Lee bumps past him and exits the control room. Sean then looks around as the other crew members stare in silence.

SEAN (CONT'D)

(Yells)

WHAT THE HELL WAS THAT? IF HE DOESN'T RETURN BY THE END OF THIS NEWSCAST, HE'S THROUGH!

INT. NEWSROOM - EVENING

Lee, breathing heavy, rushes back into the newsroom. He starts breathing faster as if he's having a panic attack.

LEE

(Breathing heavily)

What the-What have I done?

Lee hears footsteps coming down the hall.

INT. HALLWAY - EVENING

Camera dollies along with the feet rapidly walking down the hall. As it is dollying, the camera tilts up and it's Sean with a stack of papers in his hand, making his way towards the newsroom. The associate producer follows behind him. Sean's face continues to glare in anger the closer he gets to the room. As he makes his way to the door, Lee quickly runs up and slams it shut.

INT. NEWSROOM - EVENING

Lee quickly turns the lock on the door and returns to his desk.

INT. HALLWAY - EVENING

Sean stares at the door for a few seconds. He starts knocking hard and yelling hysterically.

SEAN

(Yelling)

BY THE MORNING, YOU'RE OUT OF
HERE! MAKING A FOOL OF ME. YOU
DON'T KNOW WHO YOU'RE DEALING
WITH.

As he is yelling, Sean tosses his stack of papers in the air and heads back towards the control room/studio.

INT. NEWSROOM - EVENING

In the newsroom, Lee sits motionless behind his desk staring at a picture frame. The camera reveals a photo of him on location for his first news package. As he continues to stare, the camera zooms/pushes closer to the picture.

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL - DAY (FIVE YEARS AGO)

A teacher strike is currently going on. From a distance, several teachers are circling around the entrance with picket signs. About 20 feet away, people are passing by and waving to the camera, Lee is standing with a microphone in front of his cameraman.

LEE

I'm ready.

CAMERAMAN

Wait, hold on. You! Yeah, you.
Can't you see we're in the middle
of something here?

The hecklers waves at Lee and the camera as a sign of dismissal.

LEE
Alright, I'm ready.

CAMERAMAN
Do you want me to call the cops?

LEE
Cops? For wha--

Lee turns around and the hecklers run off.

CAMERAMAN
Alright. Remember what Sean gave you.

LEE
What? Oh...yeah. Right.

The cameraman shakes his head in disgust.

CAMERAMAN
(under breath)
Rookie...

As Lee prepares himself, the cameraman holds up his fingers for a 5-count.

CAMERAMAN (CONT'D)
Ready in 5...4...3...2...

The cameraman cues Lee.

LEE
We tried contacting the school administration to see if they can explain their side of the story. Unfortunately, they declined to comment. I'm Lee Mi--

CAMERAMAN
(Interrupts)
Dude.

LEE
Wh-what?

CAMERAMAN
What was that?

LEE
What do you mean?

CAMERAMAN

You didn't stick to the script.

LEE

About that...

CAMERAMAN

Dude, do what you're told. That's the only way you'll get ahead here. And if you don't, not only is it your ass, but it's mine. And I need this.

Lee looks on in confusion.

CAMERAMAN (CONT'D)

Did I make it any clearer for you?

LEE

But, I'm only doing my job. I'm doing what--

The cameraman gives Lee a cold threatening stare. Lee closes his eyes and nods his head in shame.

CAMERAMAN

Alright. Now take it from the top?

Lee sighs as he swallows his pride.

CAMERAMAN (CONT'D)

Ready in 5...4...3...2...

The cameraman cues Lee as he begins to talk.

LEE

The keyword in all of this is protection. Each and everyday, these teachers put themselves on the line trying to teach these..."kids", who are out there doing who knows what in this "area". That remains a concern, and that is why many believe they are on strike...not for money, but for protection. If the administration can't protect them, then can you blame them? I'm Lee Mills, signing off.

CAMERAMAN

Hold...and cut. See? That wasn't so bad. Get ready for your--

Before the cameraman can finish, Lee ran off to the side to regurgitate (not shown).

LEE
(breathing heavily)
Seriously? You want me to
fabricate the truth?

CAMERAMAN
It puts food on the table.

LEE
But we're supposed to be
journalists!

CAMERAMAN
Your problem, not mine.

LEE
This is insane! These children are
just as much affected by this as
the teachers, they're--

CAMERAMAN
Dude, we're on our way to the top.
If you want to continue this "boy
scout" crusade, then do so
elsewhere. This is the way things
are here, deal with it.

Lee drops his arms in frustration.

INT. CONTROL ROOM - EVENING (PRESENT)

As the newscast continues, crew members inside the control room continue to murmur amongst each other. Sean is shaking his head in frustration.

SEAN
The nerve of that guy. We take him
in, groom him, and this is the
thanks we get? This is the thanks
I GET?

INT. STUDIO - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Flashback to five years earlier on Lee's first day, Sean is showing him around the studio and newsroom.

SEAN
So, this is where you'll make at
an appearance at least 2-3 days a
week. It depends on what we have
for you.

Sean and Lee make their way towards Cassidy, who is mic'ing herself up.

SEAN (CONT'D)
Hey Cass.

CASSIDY
Who is he?

SEAN
Fresh meat.

Sean and Cassidy laugh in unison as Lee looks on in discomfort.

SEAN (CONT'D)
Lee, Cass. Cass, Lee.

LEE
Nice to meet you, uh... Cass.

Lee extends his hand for a handshake, but Cassidy slightly waves her hand.

CASSIDY
Likewise.

Cassidy's co-anchor makes his way towards the desk.

SEAN
Oh, and this is...

CO-ANCHOR
I'm Kevin...

SEAN
Ah, it doesn't matter.

Cassidy and Sean giggle as the co-anchor looks upset.

CASSIDY
He'll make a fine cameraman
someday.

Sean and Cassidy continue to giggle as Lee looks uneasy.

SEAN
Anyway, after only two years, Cass
has risen through the ranks. I see
no better person for you to learn
under.

Cassidy looks on.

SEAN (CONT'D)
(jokingly)
Bend him and reshape him, but
don't break him.

LEE
Excuse me?

SEAN
Anyway, let's leave Cass and uh
him alone. They have to prepare.

INT. NEWSROOM - DAY (FLASHBACK CONT'D)

Sean and Lee continues their conversation as they enter the
newsroom.

SEAN
...as long as you cover the
stories we choose and as effective
as possible, you'll fit in
perfectly, kid.

LEE
Will there be room for me to grow?

Sean smiles half-heartedly.

SEAN
Maybe...depends on how well you
listen.

LEE
What do you mean?

SEAN
Look, If you do what I tell you,
maybe. If you can boost our
ratings, possibly. But let me tell
you, if by some chance you decide
to go "rogue", then you could also
be the next Sam Stevens.

LEE
Who's that?

SEAN
My point exactly.

Lee looks on in confusion.

SEAN (CONT'D)
I'd hate to break it to you, but
if you want to be top dog, you'll
have to prove to be better than
(MORE)

SEAN (CONT'D)

Cassidy. And honestly, I don't see that happening anytime soon.

LEE

But...

SEAN

That's just how it is around here. Your desk is over there. Need to get acquainted with it. You'll be spending a lot of time here.

Sean points at Lee's desk, and leaves.

A dejected Lee slowly sits down at his desk and stares off into the distance.

INT. NEWSROOM - EVENING (PRESENT)

Camera transitions to Lee sitting at his desk the same way and staring off into the distance. He is interrupted by a loud knock on the door.

SECURITY GUARD (O.S.)

Mills, open up now.

INT. HALLWAY - INTERCUT

Two security guards and the associate producer are standing outside of the door.

SECURITY GUARD

If you don't cooperate now, you'll force our hand. And trust me, you wouldn't want that.

INT. NEWSROOM - INTERCUT

Lee stays seated as the knocking continues.

SECURITY GUARD (O.S.)

Mills! We're not playing around. Open the door!

INT. HALLWAY - INTERCUT

The security guards and associate producer continue to wait outside of the door.

SECURITY GUARD

(to other security guard)
...was trying not to get them involved. Call the police.

INT. STUDIO - EVENING

Cassidy and her current co-anchor are still anchoring the news.

CASSIDY
...and we'll be back with sports
after this break.

The floor director gives the talent the "cut" cue.

CASSIDY (CONT'D)
I need a cigarette. Any word on
Mills, yet?

Everyone in the studio looks around dumbfounded.

CASSIDY (CONT'D)
Never mind.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Flashback three years ago. Cassidy and Lee are sitting at a table with some of their co-workers. Lee nervously looks around the area to see everyone conversing among each other. He began engaging in inner monologue.

LEE (V.O.)
Here I am, sitting with all of
these heavyweights and yet, my
mouth is glued.

Cassidy notices Lee's silence.

LEE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
My goal is to one day move up and
anchor my own show, but if I stoop
to their level to achieve it, what
would that make me? I want to do
things by the book. I want to--

Before Lee could finish, Cassidy interrupts.

CASSIDY
Nice atmosphere, huh?

LEE
Yeah...

They both look around in awkward silence.

CASSIDY
You're not one for conversation,
are you?

Lee slowly nods.

CASSIDY (CONT'D)

When I speak, you respond. Got it?

LEE

S-Sorry, I was just...I
didn't...but I wanted to...

CASSIDY

Being in company with such
successful people can make a
newbie speechless, eh?

LEE

Uh, n-n-newbie? I've been here for
two years.

CASSIDY

It still makes you a newbie.

LEE

Oh...

CASSIDY

You're good, I'll give you that.
But you're still green. If you
want to get ahead in this
business, you'll need to follow
our blueprint. If you know what I
mean...

LEE

But what about?

CASSIDY

(interrupts)

You see these guys here?

Lee nods nervously.

CASSIDY (CONT'D)

They're just happy to be here in
my presence. Some were in your
shoes not too long ago, and
thought maybe they could come for
my spot, but eventually learned
their place. Now they just fall in
line and collect whatever they
could get.

LEE

But, what changed?

CASSIDY

Excuse me?

LEE

Why did you change?

CASSIDY

Change? I didn't change. I did what I had to do, and now look at me, number one in this area code.

LEE

But, have you ever wished you did things differently?

CASSIDY

Like I said, I like you. So please let's keep it that way.

Cassidy excuses herself and leaves. Sean makes his way towards the table.

SEAN

Get with the program, kid. When you upset Cass, you upset me. When you upset me, you upset W-J-M-P.

LEE

But...

SEAN

Let's just say that you've been warned.

Sean leaves. Lee looks on with fear and concern.

INT. NEWSROOM - EVENING (PRESENT)

Lee paces around in the newsroom back and forth.

LEE

You know, I didn't sign up for this. I mean, I did, but I wanted to do things the right way.

VOICE (O.S.)

Whose to say which way is the right way?

Lee immediately stops pacing after hearing the voice. He looks around quickly.

LEE

Who's there? The door is locked.

Lee looks around in a paranoid manner. After searching several places in the room, he calms down.

LEE (CONT'D)
Must be hearing things.

Lee sits down.

VOICE (O.S.)
Funny.

LEE
Seriously, who's there? This is no time for games. I'm going to call the cops if you don't reveal yourself.

VOICE (O.S.)
The same people who could be escorting you out of here within the next 10 minutes? I doubt it.

LEE
Show yourself, you coward.

VOICE (O.S.)
Fine. Look to your right.

Lee turns his head and looks to his right, reveals a mirror image of himself, dressed in another suit. He immediately jumps in a panic.

LEE
What the - How?

LEE TWO
It doesn't matter how. You're in a bind, and I'm here.

Lee picks up a bottle of water from his desk, pours a little in his hand and splashes it across his face.

LEE TWO (CONT'D)
This is not a dream, if that's what you're thinking. Actually that is what you're thinking. Just accept the fact that I'm here and I need you to listen. So sit, relax.

Lee sits down in disbelief.

LEE TWO (CONT'D)
I'm you.

LEE

Obviously.

LEE TWO

Smart ass. Anyway, I'm you, but sort of a future version of you.

LEE

But you look like me, today.

LEE TWO

Whose to say I'm not you a month from now? Two months maybe?

LEE

Okay, my brain has officially been fried.

LEE TWO

Look, I'm here because I want you to know that whatever decision you make tonight will change your life. Nothing will be the same.

LEE

Well, yeah. I just ruined my career already.

LEE TWO

Are you certain?

LEE

What do you mean?

LEE TWO

Are you sure that your - I mean, our career has ended tonight?

LEE

Where are you going with this?

LEE TWO

I'm saying that tonight, whatever decision you make will determine which direction your career is headed towards. You will be faced with a dilemma. Either go with your principles, or fall in line and do things their way.

LEE

But, how do I know which way is the right way?

LEE TWO

That's up to you to decide.
Whatever you choose to do, I'll be
alright. You see me now.

LEE

Yeah, but I can't - Oh God, this
is not happening.

Lee covers his face with his hands.

LEE TWO (O.S.)

All I'm saying that you'll have to
decide what's best for you. Take
the shortcut, fall in line and end
up like Cass, or stick with your
morals and forge your own path.
Again, either way, I'll be fine.
Just make sure that whatever you
choose is what's best for you.

Lee uncovers his face, looks up and see that his hollow self
is no longer in the room. He sit and ponder until he is
interrupted by a thunderous knock on the door.

INT. HALLWAY - INTERCUT

Sean and the security guards are standing outside the door.

SEAN

Mills, for the last time, either
do your job or suffer the
consequences. You know me, I don't
play. I can make your life
miserable.

INT. NEWSROOM - INTERCUT

Lee takes a deep sigh.

LEE

Here goes nothing.

INT. HALLWAY - EVENING

Sean continues to knock on the door.

SEAN

You know what? We're going in. I'm
done with this bullsh--

The door opens and out comes a dejected Lee.

LEE

I've done some thinking, and
whether I agree with you or not, I
still have a job to do.

SEAN

Good, but know that this settles
nothing. You still have a lot of
explaining to do.

LEE

I will...in due time. But I'm here
to do what I was paid to do.

Lee walks towards the door. Sean looks at the others and
smile.

SEAN

Good to know.

INT. CONTROL ROOM - EVENING

Lee walks by the control room. Everyone in the room stop
what they were doing and stare in silence. Sean follows and
pats him on the shoulder.

SEAN

You're on in 3. So, mic up and
make it good.

As Lee heads towards the studio, Sean returns to his
position in the control room.

SEAN (CONT'D)

Everything's under control,
finally.

INT. STUDIO - EVENING

As Lee makes his way towards the desk, everyone in the
studio stares at him. Some are whispering among themselves.

FLOOR DIRECTOR

(to Cameraman 1)

The nerve of this guy...

Cass intersects Lee as he makes his way to the desk.

CASSIDY

You...

LEE

I know. I've come to my senses,
and I'm just ready to do my job
and put this behind me.

CASSIDY

Good. So we're on the same page.

LEE

Yes, we're on the same page.

Cassidy looks towards Sean's direction and gives him a thumbs up.

INT. CONTROL ROOM - INTERCUT

Sean reacts to Cass's thumbs up with one of his own.

SEAN

Okay, we're ready to go in 5, 4,
3, 2...fade up mic and cue talent.

INT. STUDIO - INTERCUT

The floor director cues Cassidy.

CASSIDY

Welcome back. We are once again
joined by our investigative
reporter, Lee Mills, who was
feeling a little under the
weather.

Lee nods at Cassidy.

CASSIDY (CONT'D)

He's here to present us the latest
on the notorious panhandling
situation. Lee?

LEE

Thanks Cassidy.

Lee turns towards a camera.

LEE (CONT'D)

Before I go any further, I would
like to apologize for my actions
earlier. As Cassidy mentioned, I
was a little under the weather and
as a professional, I should have
continued on with the report.

INT. CONTROL ROOM - INTERCUT

While Lee is talking, Sean is in the control room nodding his head in approval.

INT. STUDIO - INTERCUT

Lee pauses for a couple of seconds to collect himself.

LEE

But, when I got myself together, I took these past 30 minutes to think about this thing called "professionalism."

Cassidy looks at the teleprompter and notices Lee's speech is not the same.

LEE (CONT'D)

And one thing I noticed in my 5 years here, is that professionalism and WJMP doesn't match.

INT. CONTROL ROOM - INTERCUT

Sean looks on with his hands over his head, while everyone around him looks on nervously.

SEAN

What the -- What is he doing?

INT. STUDIO - INTERCUT

LEE

When I first got into this business, I wanted to make a difference. I had this crazy idea that I could become the next Walter Cronkite. Funny, right? No one can become the next Walter Cronkite. But I can dream.

INT. RANDOM LIVING ROOM - INTERCUT

A family is watching with surprised looks on their faces.

LEE (O.S.)

Unfortunately, that dream has become a dark reality the day I was hired.

INT. CONTROL ROOM - INTERCUT

Sean continues to look on in stunned fashion. Outside of

what he is hearing over the monitors, there is total silence from everyone in the control room.

LEE (O.S.)

When I entered this industry, it was my understanding that reporters were expected to be as accurate as possible in gathering and passing on information to their audience. Unfortunately, that's not the case with this station.

Sean starts fuming.

SEAN

(in anger)

That's it! Cut the cable!

Sean's phone rings. He looks at it and gulps nervously. Security guards make their way to the control room.

INT. STUDIO - INTERCUT

As Lee continues to talk, Cassidy attempts to stop him.

CASSIDY

That's enough.

LEE

Oh, I'm sorry! Camera man, can you pan a little so that the number one anchor can receive some attention here? I mean, she did design the blueprint for journalistic excellence here.

Cassidy looks on in embarrassment.

LEE (CONT'D)

Look at me and look at her. All of those awards, the big salary, and all at the cost of ruining the lives of the little people. You, the viewers. But she's number one.

INT. CONTROL ROOM - INTERCUT

Sean slowly hangs up his phone.

ASSOCIATE PRODUCER

Sir, sir.

Sean doesn't respond to his producer.

ASSOCIATE PRODUCER (CONT'D)
Do you still want me to cancel
cable?

Sean slowly walks towards the door to the studio.

ASSOCIATE PRODUCER (CONT'D)
Sir?

INT. STUDIO - INTERCUT

Sean makes his way to the studio as Lee is finishing his speech.

LEE
I didn't plan this, but I can't do
this anymore. I may have ruined my
career and maybe my life by coming
out with this, but I hope to God
that I saved some of you who have
aspirations of following our
footsteps.

Sean continues to make his way towards Lee. Others in the studio look on, anticipating a conflict.

LEE (CONT'D)
We journalists are supposed to
carry ourselves with a certain
level of integrity. We're supposed
to follow an ethical code that
carries a level of trust.

INT. APARTMENT - INTERCUT

Another family are watching in their home as Lee is finishing his speech.

LEE (O.S.)
"Trust" is something we should
earn, and if by some chance you
ever see me again, I hope to
regain it.

INT. STUDIO - EVENING

Lee gets a little choked up.

LEE
Anyway, that is all. Thank you.
Good night and God speed.

Lee takes off his microphone and walks up to a dejected Sean. Cassidy is yelling hysterically.

SEAN
You realized what you've done?

LEE
Yes, I told the truth.

SEAN
Why?

LEE
Because I'm a journalist. Good
lucky, buddy.

Lee pats Sean on the back and heads towards the door. Other crew members looks on as he is leaving.

INT. HALLWAY - EVENING

A montage of several events taking place throughout the evening.

LEE (V.O.)
After tonight, two things may
occur in my future. Either I
destroyed my chances of ever
working in media again, or I may
have create an opportunity
elsewhere. All I know is that it
felt good getting that off of my
chest. I must admit, I was this
close to following Cass and Sean's
footsteps, and maybe I would be
better off if I did. But, at what
cost? If you can't trust a
journalist, who can you trust?

FADE OUT.