

Drama: "Metropolis Today" by Darius Adamson, Jr.

Synopsis

"Metropolis Today" is about the production of an episode of a morning news show titled, "Metropolis Today". Taking place in an unspecified future timeline of a dystopian city, this play provides commentary on the state of the media and what happens when it is intimidated by evil and corruption.

Cast of Characters

TONY BANKS: 30-50 years old, male anchor on Metropolis Today

MACEY JONES: 25-45 years old, female anchor on Metropolis Today

THE FLOOR MANAGER: 35-45 years old, can be played by any gender, the floor manager on Metropolis Today

MICHELLE: 20-30 years old, woman of color, outspoken young activist

Place

News Studio in a City Called "Metropolis"

Time

Tuesday, November 8th in an unspecified future timeline

Scene 1

(Black stage. Cheery and peppy theme music for a nationally syndicated morning news show--think TODAY or Good Morning America plays.)

VOICEOVER

*Good morning! Today is TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 8TH. This is Metropolis Today with your hosts
Tony Banks and Macey Jones*

(Lights up concentrated on a news desk. Surrounding this concentrated spotlight, whirling cameras and studio technology. Two anchors sit at a desk that goes all the way down to the floor. Their wrists and legs must not be seen unless the script specifies. One male one female--both well dressed, smiling).

TONY

Good morning, Metropolis! I'm Tony Banks

MACEY

And I'm Macey Jones. Isn't it just a beautiful day today, Tony?

TONY

It sure is, Macey! The birds are chirping, the sun is out, all is swell here in Metropolis!

MACEY

Like always!

TONY

Let's start with some news! There will be a town council meeting today at the center square library from 5:30 to 7:30. The topics of discussion include the upcoming parade on Main Street in celebration of the Great Supreme's Birthday, road repair, as well as the damaged water supply affecting some of our neighborhoods.

MACEY

There was a bank robbery on 45th Street. Thanks to our fast acting police force and the leadership of the Great Supreme, the criminal was caught and his hearing for when he will be facing his death sentence will be later this week

TONY

Wow! Another victory for metropolis! Coming up after this break we have a very special guest on our show

(Breakaway music plays.)

THE FLOOR MANAGER

(offstage)

--AND CUT!

(The spotlight on the anchor desk expands slightly to reveal more space on the stage. THE FLOOR MANAGER with a headset on, wearing a black short sleeve t shirt, black pants, and a black jacket comes on stage.)

THE FLOOR MANAGER

Great job, Tony and Macey! Um--well...maybe not. You see--there was an issue with the script...

MACEY

Oh?

THE FLOOR MANAGER

Afraid so...but that wasn't on you. You guys have been doing just fine--that error was on me.

(holds left arm and rubs)

We just have to remember that we are here to SUPPORT Metropolis as well as report the news.

TONY

What was wrong?

THE FLOOR MANAGER

The higher up wasn't too pleased with the mention of the damaged water supply.

MACEY

But--our next guest is coming on to talk about that! What are we gonna do?

THE FLOOR MANAGER

We have it taken care of--just keep doing a great job & we'll be doing just fine!

If not, well...

(Removes cardigan to reveal scars up and down arm)

You get the picture.

*(The roar of a ferocious beast is heard from offstage. *perhaps the shadow of this beast is cast on the stage*. The ANCHORS and the FLOOR MANAGER look out in fear)*

THE FLOOR MANAGER

We'll do better, your greatness! We promise.

(The floor manager receives a message over his/her headset.)

Ok 1 minute till we're back on the air.

(Another ferocious roar. The FLOOR MANAGER runs off stage right in fear)

TONY

He *really* doesn't seem happy today

MACEY

His greatness likes things done a certain way. All we can do is just follow orders.

(THE FLOOR MANAGER leads MICHELLE, a young woman in her 20s in dressy casual wear to a third chair at the desk.)

THE FLOOR MANAGER

Tony, Macey, meet Michelle. She's our special guest today and she'll be talking about this water situation.

TONY

(friendly) Hi, Michelle

MICHELLE

(Keeping to herself) Hey.

THE FLOOR MANAGER

Remember. We are here to *support* Metropolis. We may not be perfect...

(Ferocious roar offstage)

THE FLOOR MANAGER (cont.)

(fearful) Stay positive. Be supportive. Good news. Remember that. Metropolis is good. Good news. *(THE FLOOR MANAGER gives a menacing look to Michelle and receives a message over his/her headset)* Alright, we're on in 20 seconds. *(Goes to her position off the set, near the cameras)*

MACEY

(To Michelle) You seem pretty nervous.

MICHELLE

I--

TONY

We were too the first time. We've gotten used to how things work around here, though. You'll get used to it, too.

MACEY

Besides, you're only on for this one segment, then it's all over!

TONY

Exactly.

THE FLOOR MANAGER

(shouting) We're on in 10, 9, 8, 7, 6 *(motions the rest of the countdown with hands and quiet mouthing)*

(End of the countdown. On live.)

TONY

Tonight's town council meeting will be partially centered around a *minor* situation in some of our neighborhoods. Here with us today, we have Michelle Owens, an active member of our community, giving her thoughts and experiences on the issue. How are you, Michelle?

MICHELLE

I'm--fine.

MACEY

The wonderful metropolis city council has made wonderful advances into repairing this issue, haven't they?

MICHELLE

Well, actually--

THE FLOOR MANAGER

(clears throat and gives a glare towards Michelle)

MICHELLE

Yes. They have. People are still without water, but I guess you could say that.

TONY

(to the viewers) See? There's absolutely nothing to worry about

MICHELLE

I think there is. People in this city have been without water for months.

MACEY

Well, I wouldn't say--"months"

MICHELLE

Yes, Macey. Months.

(The beast roars)

TONY

Are you sure, Michelle? It hasn't been long. And "without" water is a bit of a stretch. Surely, everyone can find water if they really need it

MICHELLE

But--they can't. That's what the problem is.

MACEY

Is it really a problem anymore, Michelle? Everyone seems to be pretty content!

MICHELLE

Content? Is that what you're putting out there? That people are content having to go without

water? Having to pay \$20 for a case of water because everyone's hiking up the prices in areas where people are going through an actual crisis?

(The beast roars)

TONY

Well, I--

MICHELLE

Well, you what?

THE FLOOR MANAGER

(whisper-shouting to MICHELLE) What are you doing?!

MICHELLE

(Directing her message to at-home viewers) You know what? This is ridiculous! People in our community are suffering and everyone at this news station is too afraid to report the truth! The city council hasn't done a thing. The "Great Supreme" hasn't done anything and isn't going to do anything!

(The beast roars)

THE FLOOR MANAGER

(whisper-shouting to TONY and MACEY) She's gonna get us in trouble! Get her to stop!

TONY

Michelle, it was so nice to have you on our show, but as we are going a little overtime--

MICHELLE

Overtime? This segment *just* started , what do you mean "overtime"?!

THE FLOOR MANAGER

Cut the broadcast!

MICHELLE

WAIT--

(Sound effect of broadcast being cut as the lights go off. The lights come back on, but this time they are eerie blood red. TONY, MACEY, and THE FLOOR MANAGER have looks of fear in their eyes. TONY and MACEY stand up slowly, their wrists finally being shown from behind the desk--they have been chained/cuffed/tied to the desk the entire time. MICHELLE stands from her desk freely as she stares in shock.)

THE FLOOR MANAGER

I hope you're happy, Michelle!

MACEY

Thanks to you it's all over now.

TONY

Got what you wanted, huh?

MICHELLE

What are you guys talking about? What's going on?

THE FLOOR MANAGER

(Growing increasingly hysterical) All you had to do was listen to me! (Throws clipboard at, MICHELLE, aiming to hit her, but misses.) We are here to support Metropolis!

(The beast growls and TONY, MACEY, and THE FLOOR MANAGER flinch in fear)

TONY

He's not happy, Michelle.

MACEY

Do you know what happens when he's not happy?

MICHELLE

Who are you talking about??

(The growling of the beast slowly gets louder and louder and its footsteps are heard, progressively getting louder, as the cast looks off at the monster in fear, slowly inching towards one another, center stage. As the growling gets louder, it turns into a carnivorous roar, as the beast gets ready to feast on its prey. The cast reacts in horror to their impending death).

BLACKOUT