

Fact Meets Fiction in 'Blackstone' Cliffhanger

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The season finale for a popular APTN drama comes as the TV network uncovers a political scandal in Ottawa.

TORONTO -- Canadian indie producer **Ron E. Scott** always planned a killer cliffhanger for his controversial *Blackstone* drama about corruption on a First Nation reserve, but didn't foresee reality meeting fiction like this.

The news team at Aboriginal Peoples Television Network (APTN), which will air the season finale for *Blackstone* next week, on Friday revealed a true-life First Nation reserve scandal involving a former top advisor to prime minister **Stephen Harper** and a former Ottawa prostitute that threatens to topple the federal government.

APTN is set to air a March 25 news special that alleges **Bruce Carson**, the ex-Harper aide, used his insider connections to win a First Nation reserves contract from the federal government that would funnel 20% of gross revenues to his girlfriend, **Michelle McPherson**, who is also a former Ottawa prostitute.

Harper's prime ministerial office has called in the Royal Canadian Mounted Police to investigate Carson and possible wrongdoing over the federal contract to supply water filtration systems to First Nations reserves.

Blackstone creator and director Scott, who awoke Friday like most Canadians to newspaper and TV newscast headlines about the ex-Harper advisor and his former prostitute girlfriend, is not surprised the his series' storyline mirrors national headlines.

"It's fascinating how close the two worlds are related. It was always our goal to be as authentic as possible," Scott explained.

The Carson affair is also a possible political game-changer as it comes ahead of opposition parties in Ottawa threatening to topple the Harper government after it brings down Canada's next federal budget on March 22.

Photos of a scantily-clad McPherson filling Canadian newspapers and TV screens Friday also come as APTN has green lit development on a second season of *Blackstone*.

"The first season of *Blackstone* has been very well received by our audiences since its January premiere and has consistently shown to be one of our most watched shows each week," APTN CEO **Jean LaRose** said.

Blackstone, which also airs on the Showcase channel, portrays a new generation of First Nation leaders attempting to end the corruption and mismanagement of former band politicians.

The first season of *Blackstone* also featured a police investigation and prosecution of a case of child abuse.

Blackstone stars **Carmen Moore** (*Flash Gordon*), **Eric Schweig**, **Michelle Thrush** (*Moccasin Flats*), **Nathaniel Arcand**, **Gordon Tootoosis** and **Andrea Menard**.