

HAPPY TO BE HERE



The shot fades in off the graphics and highlight reel as the camera swoops down upon DEF studios and our *loveable* host. The Motormouth of Malcontent, Angus Skaaland, decked out in his finest tuxedo shirt jostles a few papers as the music fades and the mic goes live.

Angus:

What it do, fuckboys and fuckettes?!

Glancing at the papers quickly and back to camera.

Angus:

We have one hell of a ... wait one *GORRAM* second.

He returns to his provided notes.

Angus:

Three? Three *GORRAM* clips!? You drug me all the way down here for the three clips?!

Angus seeths for a moment before giving in with a overly dramatic sigh.

Angus:

Alright, lights are rolling and camera are burning - let's do this.

Angus returns to the notes and stares directly at them rather than even attempt to address the camera.

Angus:

Ok, so ... Looks like Reaper is weird and him and his ever growing clown car of fuckboys do some weird shit. Uh, Impulse had a spat with his deep sea boyfriend ... uh and these Reaper weirdos...

He continues to read through the notes.

Angus:

Oh ... and Scott Douglas is still a whiny wannabe musician in jorts! That about wraps it up.

Angus stands up and starts pulling his lapel mic from his shirt. Holding the mic he leaves us with these parting words.

Angus:

Roll the *GORRAM* clips.

Black.

FALSE HERO

Backstage.

Terry 'The Idol' Anderson is in full scamper mode. Hunting through the hallways, like a lost old man looking for his TV dinner. Sweating bullets per the usual he yells out down the hallway.

Terry:

I'm tired of these games! I told all of you I don't want any more part of this. Everything has been escalated far too much. Going after Randall of all people? Even after that incident.

The lights above him flicker for just a brief moment before they fully go out. All that can be heard is heavy breathing from Terry. The camera's motion can be felt, but the darkness is only slight illuminated by open doors deep down the hallway.

Voice: *[Female]*

Terry... Terry. I told you to stay where you were at. Now you are out here running about screaming about things that you know far too much about. Questioning our direction against DEFIANCE's FALSE HERO!

Terry:

Look you have no business addressing me to stay in a locked cramp locker room! I have nothing to do with you since you've changed. Parading here in that mask copying her... This whole situation is getting...

A loud thud is heard, almost like a shot to Terry's chest or stomach. Emerald green eyes light up in the darkness. There is no more talking, only the green eyes. A few moments pass and Terry's lungs are heard gasping for air. As the Emerald green dies down, a new glow appears. Ruby red, even hotter than we have normally seen.

Reaper:

Terry, they are all following my direction. You know this, I have told you repeatedly but you don't listen you still are lost in the concept that I am here under your vision. Your desire, you are beyond wrong in that respect.

The lights come on and the newly crowned SOHER champion is standing face to back of head with Terry Anderson, who is still doubled over.

Reaper:

Do you see this title? This is only the beginning of what is going to become the end of DEFIANCE's FALSE HERO. I will take him apart piece by piece, bone by bone and I will make him regret ever thinking that he could simply exist without feeling OUR WRATH!!

Terry stands up and looks at the masked face of Codename: Reaper. Shaking his head he takes a few steps back, almost like waiving the white flag.

Terry:

What's the point of making me stay in all of this? If anything I'm a threat to what you want at this point. It's obvious you are not going to listen to me.

Reaper:

You need to witness it.... Just like the rest of my world....

Terry:

I wish you wouldn't talk like him, Randall already thinks you are your....

An "f" sound is made coming from Terry's lips but not before it's quickly snuffed out by a swiftly moving Codename: Reaper who grabs him by the throat.

Reaper:

ENOUGH!!

His eyes flare up a bright ruby red and the lights again flicker then go out. After only a few seconds they are back up and both Reaper and Terry are gone.

THE REAL ENEMY

Cally was right.

Of course, she's always right.

I took a look at the abortion of a match that Cayle and I had - more importantly, I listened to the commentary. I listened to what Cally said about how Cayle and I needed to stop fighting each other and *'remember who the real enemy is.'*

Three guesses what movies we marathoned the day before.

But she was right. Not that Cayle and I shouldn't wrestle - we're competitive people by nature, that's why we compete in this sport. And I have no doubt that if one of us should ever get the nod over Curtis Penn, the other will be looking for a title shot.

But the fact remains, there's no reason for us to step in the ring with anger in our brains. Competition, sure. I'm in this sport to be remembered as the greatest wrestler that's ever laced up a pair'a boots, and that means that someday, Cayle and I will need to wrestle a match that doesn't end in a draw or a no contest.

And I know how Cayle works. I've watched every match he's had in this sport.

Literally. Every match.

There is nothing about his style and his technique that I don't respect, and when we finally do this for real for the right reasons, if he gets the nod, I have no doubt I'll shake his hand and recognize him as the better athlete that night.

I certainly won't be pissed off about it.

But we do need to remember who the real enemy is. Enemies are.

This might be shocking, or maybe it's not shocking at all, but I don't have a lot of friends in the wrestling business. At Coop's gym, literally none of the other trainees and I ever had a conversation, except for Lou and Cally, and they were my friends outside'a the gym. Later on, I learned that they resented the way Coop, Eli, and Miss Ivy showed favoritism. I get it, but at the same time, I was there every day. I was listening, asking questions, improvising new attacks and defenses for those attacks. They saw my passion and they saw that I was single minded and didn't care about *"winning"* or *"meeting chicks"* or *"headlining"* or any of that. I cared about doing this better than anyone else, and they appreciated it.

Later on, everywhere that I wrestled, the other athletes seemed to assume that my Rules of Engagement meant I wouldn't be worth their time.

Maybe they were right. Not for me to say.

The point is, Cayle, Andy, and Natas were the first wrestlers since the Supa-Fly Express that I considered friends; that I actually wanted to hang out with. And with Andy constantly on scouting trips and Natas in and out, it's pretty much just down to me and Cayle on a consistent basis.

He's been warring with Bronson Box for more than six months now, and I've been dealing with Codename: Reaper for...

...Well, let's call it what it is. For four years. He was just an annoyance until we were locked in that cage and he suckered me into losing my Intercontinental Championship.

I've got Cayle's back, but only if he asks for it - and I hope he'll do the same for me. Because when push comes to

shove, and his 'partnership' with Eric Dane notwithstanding, I think we can only count on being able to count on each other.

Speaking of which, I need to bite the bullet and apologize to Cayle at DEFtv 83. I don't regret coming out to help him at Ascension, but if he had a problem with it, that's his call to make. Not mine.

They say that the way out is through.

I'm almost through.

And I love you, Cally.

MEANWHILE ...

DEFIANCE Wrestle-Plex.

Backstage.

Scott Douglas navigates the halls of the backstage area, all the while, searching his numerous pockets; likely for cigarettes. He checks the the chest pockets with a quick pat and quickly moves to the torso. Nothing doing.

A muffled yet resonant voice can be heard ringing through the halls. Some of it more intelligible than others.

Voice:

... Everything has been escalated, far too much. Going after Randall of all people? Even after that incident."

Douglas originally ignores what sounds like it has to be Terry Anderson. His search continues as he stops for a moment and digs into his homemade jort pockets.

A second voice chimes in but it is still distant and reverberating off the walls and slick floors; causing it intelligibility to slip in and and out.

Voice:

... Questioning the direction against DEFIANCE's FALSE HERO!

Scott continues his slow pace forward; careful not to alert anyone to his presence. The lights in the hallway flicker for just a brief moment. Scott peers up at the fluorescent lights mounted in the ceiling, assuming Reaper tricks, but after several seconds of undamped light; he chalks it up to a dying bulb. He continues and his narrowing distance confirms the origin of one the voices.

Terry:

... I have nothing to do with you since you've changed. Parading here in that mask copying her...

THUD

The hallway lights lower and phases as if the electrical circuit has become capacitive.

Scott stops dead in his tracks.

The nearest closed door emanates a faint glowing green light, all too familiar. Scott resumes his paced trajectory as the obviously manipulated voice of Reaper can be heard.

Reaper:

Terry, they are all following my direction. You know this, I have told you repeatedly but you don't listen you still are lost in the concept that I am here under your vision. Your desire, you are beyond wrong in that respect.

The hallway lights continue to phase and while on the upswing a readily identifiable figure appears behind Douglas.

Midorikawa:

It's not polite to eavesdrop, Scott.

Scott spins around at the sound ready to defend himself. The lights dip low momentarily and as they return to somewhere around half power Douglas finds himself staring down and empty hallway.

The camera struggles to keep up as well. Swinging around, Midorikawa is now behind Scott. The lights continue to surge as the lucha masked menace speaks again.

Midorikawa:

As they bicker over missions and direction ...

Scott makes an about face once again. This time, the lights dip but he is met face to face with MDK.

Midorikawa:

I find my soul purpose for being ... casually strolling the halls.

Scott takes a defensive step backward.

Scott Douglas:

You want this?! **YOU WANT A FIGHT!?** Enough with the games! Let's go, motherfucker!!

Midorikawa:

Not so fast, Nathaniel. Our war will come... soon. For the moment, I think you were looking for something...

Scott Douglas:

What the hell are you ...

Another dip in the lights leaves Scott standing alone. Before he can even begin to piece together, yet another, strange interaction with Midorikawa; that voice.

Voice:

Scotty ...

Scott Douglas:

Court'!?

Scott turns back to where he was originally coming from and after a moment or two, attempting to locate where the voice originated ... he takes off in that direction.

The lights come back to their full brilliance and remain steady.

Scott Douglas:

Court'!?

He rounds the corner and nearly plows through Iris Davine. After an awkward steadying of themselves, Iris extends a pack of cigarettes.

Scott Douglas:

I'm so sorry, Iris. I just - I ...

Iris Davine:

... dropped something?

Scott Douglas:

Wha ... oh, yeah ... uh, thank you.

Scott's response is to Iris but his eyes dart all around his surroundings. Extremely paranoid. Iris' facial expression can't hide her questioning gaze.

Iris Davine:

You really should consider quitting, Scott. If you insist on continually getting your skull bashed in on TV; the least you could do is stop poisoning your lungs.

Scott Douglas:

uh ... oh yeah, yeah.

Scott snaps out of it for a moment and turns his full attention toward Iris. He realizes the awkward social interaction for what it is and attempts to correct course.

Scott Douglas:

Yeah, your right. I really should lay off. Seriously, thank you!

Iris Davine:

Ok, well ... I'll see you later.

Scott Douglas: *[feigning laughter]*

Let's hope not!

Iris shoots Douglas a odd look as she maneuvers around him and exits.