

SHOW... OPEN?

We fade in on an empty desk under dimmed light in a deathly silent studio.

Typically, as UNCUT begins, Angus Skaaland sits here; pretending to read his provided show notes, only to then crack wise and insult the personalities featured. Yet, there is no Angus nor laughs to be had at someone else's expense.

Instead, the camera slowly pushes in on the desk and it's contents. Specifically, a handwritten note placed just so on the table top. It's written in an extremely sloppy hand but is, mostly, legible enough.

FAITHFUL,

I'm off getting drunk. McFuckass has returned, as the prophecy foretold. It's happy hour until the impending apocalypse. Enjoy a bunch of UNCUT shit, and kiss my ass.

ANGUS SKAALAND

So...

There's that, again.



SILENCE PROTOCOL

Date: August 24th, 2017

Location: Unknown

"DAMMNIT!!"

The violent outburst is followed by the camera catching a metal chair thrown against metal door, the loud clang rattles both the camera rig and the door in a similar fashion. Jessica is in camera view and is the source of both the violent scream and the chair being thrown. The location is unknown; a dimly lit room of small dimensions with stone lined walls and a large iron door. A second, currently unlaunched, metal chair sits in middle of the room.

Reaper Prime:

Scott Douglas will not simply go quietly into the night!

She paces.

Prime:

Not now ... not after his false beliefs and societal based bravado have taught him the HERO always wins.

She turns and paces back in the other direction.

Prime:

He... We are NOT done with him, do you understand!?

She directs the question to Codename: Reaper Red. Who stands silently as his ruby red eyes are ablaze with the fire of defeat and the anger.

Prime:

Neither; the False Hero or the Forgotten Son, have suffered enough to understand what I have been subjected too!

She ends her pacing directly across from Red.

Prime:

They will continue to pay. They will continue to bare the burden of their ignorant transgressions! Both of them MUST continue to suffer ... both of them MUST ...

A muffled knock reverberates in the small but barren room. The thick metal door lends a gong like pitch and clang to the colloquial casual blunt force.

Prime's attention is abruptly drawn to the cold iron door. She hesitates for a moment, confused, before she gives the subtle signal of a nod. Red responds in accordance and turns to open the door.

The thick door creaks as it is forced open by Red's incredible strength. Slowly, it reveals a man standing in a basic black suit. As the door swings to; he stands perfectly still, staring back at Prime with a devious smile spread across his face.

Man:

Good evening, Jessica. We have a message for you.

Red stands firmly between the man and Prime. Prime responds, form behind Red, with cautious but authoritative tone.

Prime:

Say your peace.

The man produces a tablet and holds it out toward Red. Red does nothing.

Man:

The message can be found within this device.

Prime clears her throat and Red holds his hand out and takes the tablet. The man walks away into the even more dimly lit hallways. Red holds firm for a moment before he is certain any possible threat is gone. He swings the large iron door shut with another thunderous clang before handing the tablet to Prime.

Prime turns away from the door and looks down at the device with a knowing dread. Without a press of a button or swipe of a finger; the tablet comes to life and a familiar voice emanates from its built-in speaker. The same voice that appeared on Cayle Murray's mysteriously delivered laptop a few months prior.

Voice:

Good Evening, Jessica. We would like to thank you for your continued service to our organization and its cause.

Reaper Red approaches closer and stands behind his leader, the pair stare down at the automated voice emanating from the tablet.

Voice:

While your goals were not achieved recently, we applaud your continued aggression and strangle hold on two of DEFIANCE's most cherished stars. We remain impressed.

Prime shifts a bit; this message is making her anxious and uneasy.

Voice:

This message will serve to formally advise on a change in direction to coincide with the agenda of our organization. All personal vendettas conflicting with the organization's agenda will cease immediately under penalty of explosion or further action.

The voice pauses for what seems like eternity.

Voice:

Until our organization decides what will be done with Codename: False Hero and Forgotten Son; the official order is to stand down. Your continued dedication is appreciated and has not gone unnoticed to our organization. For that we have tapped you and your team for new objective of utmost importance.

Pause.

Voice:

Project Chaos. Bring the stability of the promotion to an unwavering point. Demonstrate what is to come, make it understood; for the future is not what they think ...

Prime glances at Red, quickly, and back to the tablet.

Voice:

It's something entirely worse.

Again silence this time much longer, Reaper Red's heavy breathing is the only sound the camera catches. Finally the voice comes to life once more. This time in Russian.

Voice:

Инициировать протокол молчания

The camera focuses in on Jessica's eyes and face as a small smile is formed.

Static

BASTARDLY DEALINGS

Backstage at DEFCon Night Two. The Bastard Sons of Wrestling are celebrating with their titles. The Brethren are gathered passing a large magnum of champagne around, each having their fill of it as they change out of their wrestling attire and into something more casual.

Skidd Row:

Party is gonna be hopin' tonight. That's for sure. Can't believe we took the fight right to those pansies.

Row throws his shirt on over top of a black wifebeater, and begins to lace his boot. Stevenson following suit almot to the letter.

J Stevenson:

I've been in tougher fights, that's for damn sure. Barely broke a sweat out there.

The two active members of the Stable during tonight's Tag Team Title Match both scoff. It was hard work in the ring. PCP, the original formation, isn't a walk in the park.

Will Haynes:

Aiight, we best get goin' if we're tryin' t' make the end of the buffet, y'all.

Slaw pats his massive tummy.

Coleslaw Jenkins:

HEAAAAD DAT, yo. Let's roll.

They all grab their things. Row and Stevenson exit first. As Wildside goes to cross the threshold, Haynes extends an arm, blocking the way.

Will Haynes:

Sorry b, but we need to rap for a sec.

Jonathan Wildside:

Yeah? Everything good?

Haynes shakes his head.

Will Haynes:

Nah, far from it dog. Ya see when I told y'all I'd come down here, sign some papers, n' start doin' shows with y'all, YOU (jabs a finger at Jon) YOU told me that HE wasn't here. So imagine my surprise when I'm sittin' 'round drinkin' a cold one n' up pops his UNLIKEABLE ass face.

Wildside's hands go up, pleading ignorance.

Jonathan Wildside:

I had no idea that dude was coming back. They all kept it very hush hush, cloak and dagger.

Coleslaw Jenkins:

Still it presents us wit a problem, homie.

Jonathan Wildside:

Problem?

Will Haynes:

Yeah, a problem. But don't worry. It's on OUR end, and we've already got a work around in place. Just wanted t' let

you know that you messed up brother.

Haynes passes Jon, throws a pair of sunglasses on and follows after the other stable members. Not hinting anything is wrong. Wildside and Slaw are left to close it out.

Jonathan Wildside:

How big of a problem we talkin'?

Slaw shrugs.

Coleslaw Jenkins:

Think the THRILL is spooked is all.

And that closes us out.

NOT YET

We're still at a bar.

Flashback humor.

It's the same place that Rosie and I went to after I took the Southern Heritage title back from Reaper, and she started the practice of telling everyone 'You should see the other guy,' in response to the black eye Bronson Box gave her.

Now, it's a little different. I don't have a title but I have a measure of self - respect back again.

Jonesey is working again, but we're not sitting at the bar because this place is actually pretty busy tonight. I'm sitting in a booth off in the corner, out of sight, and I'm reflecting on the past twenty four hours.

Really, on the past six weeks.

I can hear Miss Ivy's voice in my brain as I'm sitting here, telling me she's proud'a me. She's asking me if I did the right thing as it relates to the Southern Heritage title.

Yeah, I'd say - I did. Scotty was the only one in that match who wasn't acting selfishly. I wanted a pound'a flesh from Bronson after what went down with Rosie- and Reaper was obvious.

The right athlete left DEFCON with the SoHER; that's a fact. And I can sleep at night knowing that.

"What about the other mess," she'd say. "Did the good guys win?"

I'd think back to Scotty getting his hand raised against Reaper Red, and to Bronson tapping out to the Message while I left him behind.

I'd think about Cayle defending his title, and then getting jumped by the UTA contingent. And I'd think about the loud, nearly physical argument I got into with Iris Davine over the fact that I needed to be out there trying to back up my boy, broken nose and sore shoulder be damned.

There is no winning an argument with Ms. Davine - but it wouldn't be for lack of trying.

Did the good guys win, I'd repeat... Well... more or less.

"More," she'd ask, "or less?"

...

"Then your job ain't done," she'd say. "Whether I like it or not, DEFIANCE is your home, and you have to defend your home."

She's not exactly right on that: I've defended my home before, against Dan Ryan, of all people, before. And I defended it and defended it and defended it until I was told that it's not my home anymore and that I was now a visitor and could screw right off.

I don't have to defend DEFIANCE - I can literally just go home. This is the sort of BS that made me quit the business in the first place.

But I know I won't.

This is the moment that Angel talked about years ago, this is the moment that Eli and Miss Ivy talked about... this is the

decision.

Do I stay, and try to do the right thing, or do I leave, and try to live with myself?

There's not just me to consider.

There's Rosie.

There's Cayle.

There's Big Murr - whatever he's up to.

Even Jason Natas and Frank, wherever they are.

I don't so much feel like I owe it to the fans as I owe it to the DRUNKbros. The guys (and girl) who made me believe that this sport could be more than a Game of Thrones style elimination contest.

"A beer and a shot," said Rose, as she slid back into the booth opposite me, "To the victor goes the drinks?"

I grinned as we downed our shots and chased with the beer.

We're not the victors, I reminded her. Not yet, at least.

Not yet.

BACK TO THE BAR AGAIN, AGAIN

After DEFCON Night Two.

The Holy Ground; an Irish Pub in Uptown NOLA and an old haunt of Scott Douglas and Terry Anderson. The small bar is dimly lit in a light orange hue with stereotypical Irish decor adorning the walls and bar back. The green topped bar shines in spots but the majority of it's surface is worn with weary elbows. The TV in top corner of the room fills the space with a light rumble of background noise.

The bar is pretty empty this time of night but Terry "The Idol" Anderson is a normal fixture. Scott Douglas is maybe second place in that regard. The pair are bellyed up next to one another in the middle of the bar.

Terry Anderson:

You know I've been thinking about it ... I should be out there with you.

Scott Douglas:

... like a valet?

Terry interrupts the trajectory of his glass raising to his mouth.

Terry:

Like hell!

Scott:

Careful, Terry ... you know what kind of backlash that last slur got you on the internet.

Terry:

Inter -

Midword, Terry interrupts himself. The full breadth of Douglas' statement has hit his well lubricated brain and let his mouth know; they didn't like it ... or understand it.

Terry:

What in the hell you talking about?

Scott:

Nothing.

Terry:

As usual! Look ... all I'm saying is, you could use some back up out there! Someone ... hell I don't know ... with a wealth of experience ...

He give Douglas a cartoonishly knowing look.

Terry:

... to act as a manager.

Scott:

This new found interest wouldn't have anything to do with that belt, now would it?

Scott questions but knowingly playful. Also, drunk.

Terry:

Whaaa ... Title? Oh, you mean the Southern Heritage Championship? Ah. Scotty ... nah - nah - nah; of course not!

Terry motions to the bartender for another drink.

Terry:

... but, I mean ... you do know I spent a little time in South, back in the good ol' days? Hopping from territory to -

Scott:

I know, Terry ... I know.

Scott motions the same before setting his glass down on the bar.

Scott:

I've heard ad nauseum.

Terry:

Well, we're in the South now ...

The bartender makes her way back toward the pair and reaches for the glasses. While doing so she gives Terry an odd look, not for any other reason than he is simply an odd man. Yet, in his drunk brain he feels like she disagrees with him.

Terry:

We are, right?

Terry halts her as he asks, placing his hand on hers as she grips the glass. She turns to Scott.

Bartender:

What I say about him, Scott?

Scott inhales deeply and exhales an "ehhhh" that says "what can I say" in a frustrated sigh. The bartender doesn't wait for a real response. Instead she takes the glasses and leaves the pair.

Scott:

Terry, you're right. And -

Terry:

I knew it! This is the south!

Scott shakes his head in derision.

Scott:

Yes, this is south and I know - you know what? Maybe you're on to something.

Terry:

I knew it! Wait, what?

Scott:

Don't even worry about it.

The bartender returns with their drinks and sets them down in front of the pair.

Fade.

UNDER REVIEW

The scene cuts to Gage Blackwood backstage, in a private video room. He is sitting in front of a computer and watching clips from his DEFCON match.

*

DDK:

Blackwood comes alive with a kick to the stomach!

Angus:

His legs are free!

DDK:

Another kick! That one almost winded Hightower!

The crowd keeps stomping... louder and louder, while Sawyers tries to scream over them. Finally, a third kick and Hightower lets go of Gage. Blackwood takes a deep breath and runs into the ropes, but he's met with another shoulder block and falls back down!

DDK:

Gage is down again!

*

Blackwood sighs and starts scribbling down thoughts on the notepad in front of him.

Blackwood:

I should have seen that coming. How many times do I blindly run into the ropes? Stupid.

Blackwood takes the computer mouse and speeds through more film until he gets to exactly what he's looking for. He flips past a lot of written notebook pages, showing he's already been there for some time.

*

Hightower steps down and allows Gage to stumble out of the corner once more, something he's getting used to. Hightower telegraphs it, but is able to pick up Blackwood for a big vertical suplex. Both men slam into the mat hard as the ring shakes. Hightower slowly rolls through the move and hooks the leg of Blackwood. Shields is still scanning the crowd for other cute girls but Sawyers get's his head into the game.

Sawyers:

SHIELDS! PIN!

One...

Two...

Kickout!

DDK:

Another close one there, if Blackwood doesn't change up his strategy soon, he's going to lose this one in a big way!

*

Blackwood:

If I just moved my left hand, I would have been able to slip out of the suplex. Fight out of it, don't give into it. Stupid, stupid, stupid.

Blackwood scurries through more film. Back and forth he goes.

*

Blackwood punches Hightower a few times. He follows this up and gives him some very stiff forearms to the side of the head. Then, Gage follows through with his plan.

Angus:

Umm...

DDK:

He's putting the monitors back in the announce table.

Angus:

I don't get it?

The crowd isn't sure either, but they remain talkative among themselves. Then, Blackwood goes back to climbing the lighting tower.

DDK:

What... the...

Angus:

This is crazy! Why would he do that!?

Blackwood goes all the way up. All twenty (or approximate) feet. He takes a deep breath.

Blackwood:

Fuck it.

Gage jumps off. He drives his entire body right through David Hightower, whose entire body is driven right through the announce table. Blackwood's own head bounces off one of the monitors he put back in the table, instantly opening up the scar in the upper part of his forehead. A crimson mask follows in seconds.

And the entire crowd has turned the arena into a bedlam.

DDK:

I don't even know how to describe what just happened...

Angus:

Are you kidding me!? That was amazing!!

Both men don't move but both men don't have to. The crowd breaks out a typical "holy shit" chant while Sawyers just sits in the middle of the ring, in shock, running his mouth.

*

A grin crosses Gage's face. He watches the dive a second time.

Blackwood:

I still should have tucked my arms in. I'm lucky I didn't break my arm.

Gage rubs his head, moving his fingers over the new stitches where he was busted open.

Blackwood:

But I don't regret that.

Continuing to go through film, he fills out the last page of his notebook.

Blackwood:

Okay, moving on.

Gage begins to roll through film from the rest of DEFCON night 1 and 2, quickly skipping over much of it (although it looks like he's flagged and watched everyone else's match, too).

The footage quickly goes past Oscar Burns vs. Danny Diggs, Scott Douglas becoming the new SOHER Champion, Bronson Box running his mouth, etc, etc, until Cayle Murray is seen defending the FIST successfully.

Blackwood halts the fast forward button. He sits there with an intense look on his face.

*

Angus:

Wait a minute! What the hell is this!

Behind the FIST of DEFIANCE, Kendrix re-enters the ring. There's a commotion at the guard rail as well as a few people begin to climb over.

DDK:

Can we get a camer.....That's David Hightower and Jamie Sawyers!

Blackwood:

That wanker is lucky he can even stand...

Angus:

And that's not all!

Once Hightower crosses the guardrail, he is quickly followed by Theo Baylor, Crimson Lord, and Jack Harmen.

Angus:

Wait a hot damn minute! Wait just a minute...

There are now six men in the ring behind Cayle, who is completely oblivious as Mikey climbs the ring steps. Shirt now unbuttoned all the way down. He rips it off.

Angus:

TURN AROUND SQUID! GET OUTTA THERE!

Then it begins....

All six men jump Cayle from behind, the fists and forearms are everywhere. It doesn't take long for Cayle to fall, then the boots come fast and furious. Mikey enters the ring now with a wide smile on his face. Cayle doesn't stand a chance against all these men at once.

DDK:

This is malicious! Mikey Unlikely has orchestrated some type of attack on Cayle Murray!

*

Gage shakes his head at the video. He rewinds it again to watch all six men enter the ring and jump Cayle. Normally, he wouldn't show concern about such a thing. But the way this was done... the way these men came into the arena... it didn't just seem like they were making a statement.

Blackwood:

They're trying to take over...

Blackwood resumes the video.

*

DDK:

Dan Ryan is single-handedly holding off this group of... whatever they are.... Trying take shots at the champion....

Cayle Murray starts to rise behind Dan Ryan.

Mikey Unlikely nods.

DDK:

Wait, WHAT?!?!

Ryan spins around and boots Cayle Murray in the midsection. Cayle starts to flop to the ground, having nothing left after the attack earlier, but Ryan grabs his by the head on his way down and snaps him into a standing headscissors, then brings him up and DOWN HARD with a Humility Bomb, bouncing the back of the FIST of DEFIANCE's head off the mat with a sickening THUD.

Angus:

My God, did you see that!! I told you Dan Ryan couldn't be trusted!!

DDK:

Are you kidding me?! You're the one who just said --

Angus:

Don't bother me with details.

The camera goes back to Mikey Unlikely, who now has a grin on his face a mile wide. He and the rest climb back inside and approach. Dan Ryan stands over Murray, the boos getting louder and louder, looking down without expression. Ryan turns his head as Mikey approaches, and shakes the hand of a THRILLED former Southern Heritage champion.

*

He pauses the video once more. This time, however, he sits in a very prolonged silence.

The intense look on his face turns to one of concern.

Blackwood:

What are we going to do about this?

Fade.

BY GONE DAYS

Date: Around 3 years ago.

Location: Outside TC's Pub.

Directly after meeting with Impulse.

"That piece of shit. I knew this was going to be a waste of time, I don't know why I let Rocko talk me into this."

Jessica Reeves finds herself outside TC's Pub, disheveled and distraught. The night is gloomy and the city sidewalks are soaked with the rain of a storm recently passed. Her backpack straps narrowly grip to edge of her shoulders, the pack itself held aloft only by the tension of her depressed posture.

She stomps down the street casting up water from light puddles pooling in the uneven sidewalk.

Jessica:

He's so out of it, that's not the Impulse I know! That's not the hero I know!

She grumbles to herself before coming to an abrupt stop.

Dropping a strap and swinging her backpack around in front of her; she unzips and digs down into the bag. She produces what appears to be a journal, briefly, before stuffing it back down in the damp bag.

Her eyes, already puffy and red, well up as she screams into the rain soaked night.

Jessica:

Stop talking to ME!

She wipes away the tears with an aggressive and defiant swipe.

Jessica:

I KNOW!

Her voice quakes with this exclamation before returning to a normal tone.

Jessica:

I know I'm better off without 'em... but I'd, damn sure, be better...

She explodes again.

Jessica:

... WITHOUT YOU!

Furiously she begins digging in her backpack again, this time while walking down the street, she nearly collides with a fellow pedestrian.

Pedestrian:

Watch it, bitch!

She barely registers the comment as she remains intently focused on retrieving whatever she is looking for. Her would be collision course holds for a moment holding his arms up in a questioning gesture.

Jessica:

Where is it?

He quickly gives up and continues the other direction shaking his head. He soon disappears out of sight as Jessica

continues on, oblivious.

Jessica:

I know it's ...

Jessica, finally, recovers the item from the depths of her bag. She pulls a scribbled piece of paper out and up to her face.

Jessica:

Sean Stevens ... Can't make out the rest...

Woman's Voice: *[interrupting]*

You aren't going to want to see him.

Jessica holds deathly still at the sound of the voice but her eyes dart from side to side. She's honestly not positive that wasn't just in her head.

Women's Voice:

Not just yet, anyways.

Definitely not. Jessica spins around, confused by origin of the unsolicited advice. She finds no one on the sidewalk with her or even in the vicinity. Only a single car. She hadn't paid it any mind before now and certainly hadn't noticed the low hum of a idling engine. The rear window glides down as the beaded rain sheers from the glass.

Jessica: *[confused]*

Are... are you talking to me?

Woman:

Is there anyone else on the street?

Jessica looks around in earnest, trying to find another person but, still, no one is in sight.

Jessica:

I don't know what you think this is, lady ...

Woman:

We simply want to talk with you Jessica. *We* are very interested in your future.

Jessica:

We... what futur - How do you know my name!?

Woman:

How, *We* know the things we know, is not important. *We* feel you have a very important role to play in the future of professional wrestling; as *We* know it.

Jessica, already on edge, is taken aback even further at this cryptic dialogue. Alarm bells ring in her head as caution leads way to paranoia. The thoughts become overwhelming as she suddenly registers the interaction with the man on the street moments prior. Has she followed? Was that simply a disgruntled pedestrian or was he simply a point man to verify her location?

The questions and possibilities swirl in her already cloudy brain and she can feel herself slipping deeper into a manic episode. She hurriedly swings her backpack around and takes off causing the contents to spill out on the street.

The hard thud of the notebook, she pulled out previously, stops her dead in her tracks and she turns around and drops to one knee. Swinging her bag back to her front, she quickly attempts to collect the spilled contents but fumbles in her

panicked state.

The car door opens, but rather than exiting the vehicle, the woman continues to speak.

Woman:

Jessica Reeves, daughter of Jason Reeves and Riley Anderson. Granddaughter of former independent circuit champion Terry 'The Idol' Anderson.

Jessica halts all movement and slowly looks up toward the car.

Woman:

Trained by her father's bitter rival, Rocko Daymon, as well as his protege Kerry Kuroyama. Diagnosed by several physicians with chronic bipolar disorder requiring medication and psychological counseling; to which has been either partly or completely ignored at every instance.

Jessica, with the journal in hand, stands slowly and cautiously. Leaving the sidewalk littered with other papers and, now moist, debris deemed nonessential.

Women:

However, in our estimation ... Jessica Reeves has proven to be a promising young athlete exhibiting a rare and enviable ability in the ring ... and the only thing truly holding her back is a unresolved reluctance to follow in her father and grandfather's footsteps based on her petulant and vocal hatred of the sport before ultimately coming to terms with an undying passion for the sport. To which - has caused her to waste valuable time seeking outward approval from false idols and would be hero's.

Jessica:

I'm sorry. This ... this is just too much.

Jessica turns to walk away; confused and dazed.

Woman:

We pay well.

Jessica stops and stares off into the night, wide eyed.

Woman:

... very well, Miss Reeves. All we ask of you is a portion of your time.

Jessica turns slowly, once again, back to the open door.

Jessica:

You pay well ... just to meet with me?

Woman:

Correct. Come with me now, meet with us and afterward you are free to do as you please. *We* will provide you with travel to go anywhere you please. No strings, Miss Reeves.

Still gripping the notebook, she reaches with her free hand and digs down into her front pocket. She pulls out her cellphone and punches away for moment before walking towards the car.

Jessica:

I have the cops on speed dial.

Woman:

If *We* wanted to kidnap you, Miss Reeves ... *We* would have already ...

This doesn't reassure Jessica as she cautiously approaches the car and the cellphone is tightly gripped in her right hand. She enters the car and closes the door behind her. As the car drives forward the camera focuses in on the license plate that reads 'THE KBL'.

Static