

If Dexter could name one thing he hated about social media above all else, he would probably say it was how easily it gave people the ability to act like complete assholes without fear of repercussion, especially those you had always believed to be the kind of people who were above acting like petty children.

After all, what is a troll on the internet without their precious anonymity?

Sure, maybe some people weren't exactly being anonymous, but that didn't mean you'd ever met them in real life. In some cases, perhaps they didn't think they needed to hide because they never once thought about the harm they could do. They were only trying to do something funny, chase that precious high of social media validation, not realizing or not caring about who's name and face was attached to their precious little 'meme' because it wasn't them, and therefore, wasn't their problem.

That was always the heart of the problem: someone had to be the butt of the joke, and no one online ever thought twice about the person in that position. If they did, they likely assumed no harm would come from something so simple because the person was in a position like his, appearing on TV each and every week and carrying himself like a true professional every time he did an interview or stepped into the ring. The thought of the human being behind what they saw competing week after week didn't matter, because surely someone could handle a little joke, right?

"These idiots truly don't realize how easily lives can be destroyed when they're not on the receiving end of such senseless bullying..." Dexter growled as he sat at the table in his RV, having busted out something he hadn't touched in what feels like forever: his old laptop.

He wasn't suddenly becoming a hypocrite, as the RV had no wifi for him to even feel tempted to set foot online in any capacity. However, if someone he trusted just so happened to send him videos and screenshots of stuff they found making the rounds on Twitter or X or whatever the hell that godforsaken digital hellscape was called these days, then he could use programs on his computer to piece it together like a whiteboard collage as a visual aid to figure out how to actually combat this problem. Sure, people would probably be ready to jump down his throat, claim his awareness of it all meant he had to be a hypocrite...but given how everyone just loved yapping away about the things they see online, did their claims really hold the water they think they do?

Especially when some of what he was looking at weren't 'memes' in any way, shape or form...they were part of a targeted campaign clearly meant to try and get him booted from SCW.

Now, Dexter knows exactly how his last match went. Back at Under Attack, he had beaten Polly Pingotti, fair and square, to not only retain the adrenaline title but also effectively guarantee he was advancing out of the round robin stage of the Shot of Adrenaline Tournament. Part of him wanted to be annoyed that he would have a few more matches in this thing no matter what at this point, but he knew it was a necessary sacrifice to beat this stupid gauntlet SCW had thrown at him in their desperate bid to 'save' the adrenaline title from his grasp. Regardless, he knows he'd been hit by Polly's little Polly Pop maneuver and she came a little too close for comfort to pulling off what everyone would've lost their minds over as an upset. At the last possible second, he had shifted his weight and pulled Polly into a small package and 'stolen' the win, to use the terminology the commentators love falling back on for those situations.

Now, the worst thing Dexter did in that moment was use a small handful of Polly's skirt to yank her with the necessary momentum into the pinning reversal he needed. Cheap? Perhaps, but those were semantics Dexter didn't care for so long as he got the win and moved one step closer in the personal war he was waging. After all, it was no different from Polly or anybody else yanking on his pants just to pull him into a pin or pull his leg off the mat in a cover when exhaustion began to set in.

Social media, apparently, had other ideas, and SCW's 'convenient' choice of camera angle on that pin painted the whole situation in a far worse light, one that he'd heard Polly was already having a nuclear meltdown over.

"These self-righteous social justice warriors..." Dexter huffed as he dropped another screenshot in place onto the Paint canvas. "They never think when they indulge in this twisted mentality of 'guilty until proven innocent' that these sites have cultivated. They only want to be heralded as heroes and patted on the back for bringing awareness to problematic people, even when they don't realize or care that they're harassing someone truly innocent while the real monsters continue to walk free among them."

Dexter leaned his face into his folded hands as he stared at the disgusting display he'd pieced together on the laptop screen. Tweet after tweet claiming that he was a vile human being and needed to be arrested or cancelled or fired or something because how dare he violate Polly the way he did. And why would people think this? Because the angle everyone saw on their TV or computer screens on the broadcast painted a very different picture from reality. Instead of showing that he'd yanked on Polly's skirt, which was never in any danger of resulting in indecent exposure, to pull her into that final pin, the angle instead made it appear as though he'd reached under the skirt and grabbed something else entirely. What exactly he could've grabbed in that moment wasn't captured, but apparently it got the cancerous factories of these online spaces going full gear to pounce on this and deal out justice, making outrageous claims that he'd groped Polly inappropriately in some manner to get that pin and that's why she wasn't able to

kick out when it happened, why she attacked him after the match instead of doing so in anger that she'd lost yet another vital match and played into the ticking time bomb she was being portrayed as.

“The way half of these talk about Polly’s ass or her more private areas should be a disgusting red flag all its own,” *he shook his head in exasperation.* “Those should be the people being targeted by this obsession with cancel culture, not someone who was just doing his job and did nothing wrong.”

Unsurprisingly, no one in these social media spheres was stepping up to defend him, not even anyone who was in the front row on that night and would've had a better angle to exonerate him from these baseless claims. He wouldn't be surprised if those very people who could truly do the right thing were purposely holding out because this dumb little campaign meant no more Dexter Grant daring to threaten their precious brainwashing machine spreading a social sickness among the masses. He'd already seen hints of Polly going all-in on the accusations, hoping it could somehow be levied into working around the very tournament she was just as trapped in as he was to just be handed another shot, never mind the fact that she had been tied with him going into that match and would likely have enough points herself after one more win to potentially meet him again in the next round.

As pissed off as he was over all of this, as he had every right to be, there was a second concern on Dexter's plate that fell into this same category. Maybe it wasn't as bad as this targeted campaign to cancel someone who had already long since abandoned social media for his own sanity, but Dexter wasn't the heartless monster everyone really wanted to make him out to be.

He pulled up the video he'd been sent, wanting it on this laptop to scrutinize since he intentionally deprived himself of a phone capable of playing this garbage. He hadn't watched the show itself, refusing to give any attention to what Derek Adonis was peddling when it did not concern him or his crusade, but he'd asked his trusted source to send him clips from the show where Wendell had been on-camera, just to compare to this pathetic 'meme' someone clearly took pleasure in making of the poor guy. He truly commended Wendell for readily sticking up for Destiny when the mouthpiece of that one injured commentator didn't take the hint, and as he'd told his devoted follower, his reaction to seeing Destiny's more risqué attire was a perfectly natural one for any human being, as evidenced by all the cheers he'd heard the moment Destiny's backside was visible for the camera. The fact that someone had decided Wendell didn't need to be cut any slack for never really being in this position before because of the very cyberbullies who did stuff like this to embarrass and demean him just added to the pile started by the Polly accusations against him.

If looks could kill, the glare Dexter gave this video as he heard on very low volume the stupid sound effects that made this clip what it was for online enjoyment would've taken the entire internet offline.

Dexter was snapped out of the dark storm his thoughts were becoming by the sound of his phone vibrating against the table. A brief glance down at the time in the corner of the laptop revealed the current time to be 3 AM, at least as far as CST was concerned. Still, there were very few people Dexter would expect to try getting a hold of him at this late hour that actually had his number, and he was thankful that this was a call he actually wanted to take.

"Morning, Rina," he mumbled as he answered the phone.

"I had a feeling you'd still be awake at this hour," Sabrina playfully jabbed over the phone. "What time is it even for you right now?"

"3 AM," Dexter plainly stated. "I'm probably another few hours away from New Orleans at this point, but we pulled off into a rest stop for the night."

"Good thing your next show isn't for another two days still, or SCW might take it upon themselves to try and rebrand you as a wrestling zombie or something." Dexter could practically hear the amused smirk in Sabrina's voice.

"Like I'd let them," Dexter scoffed. "And even still, I can put Chris Lawler in his place even if I was operating on little to no sleep. Or need I remind you of some of our late night coding jams we used to do in college and we'd still ace whatever test or exam we'd have the next day without any sleep."

"Good times," Sabrina mused dreamily. "Seriously, though, what's got you still awake and alert this late into the night?"

"Sheer hatred for the blind idiocy of social media and trying to figure out how I beat it without stooping to its level," Dexter spat.

"You're still looking at all that junk you asked me to send you, aren't you?" Sabrina asked, her tone growing more concerned now.

"Can you blame me?" Dexter almost wanted to laugh. "I'm just waiting to see if SCW's going to actually cave to all these calls to 'cancel' me or if they're going to see some sick opportunity to market a story out of this to the mindless masses as a way to 'vindicate' Polly without actually following proper HR procedures if any of this bullshit was real. And Wendell...poor guy's

literally been locked in the bedroom of this RV ever since Breakdown ended because he's so mortified over this stupid little video."

"After everything you've told me about what he's endured before he met you, I can't blame the poor fellow," *Sabrina lamented*. "I doubt those two...friends? Are those guys friends of Destiny's? I doubt they even realized how embarrassed she looked at knowing that video exists, because it objectifies her just as badly as it paints Wendell in such a terrible light."

"I honestly don't know why Destiny hasn't told those two off yet," *Dexter grumbles*. "I don't even need to be who I am to know those Hollywood clowns are just leeches trying to feed off of her because they can't think of any way to actually make themselves relevant since they've had their asses handed to them in that ring time and time again. I doubt they know or care that she's just as much a victim so long as they can bully Wendell...I'll be honest Rina, the only reason I haven't just taken them out yet is because I don't want to do something that's going to ruin this effort Wendell's making at something normal he's been denied growing up by harassment like this. Now if I could get those idiots in the ring...well, sometimes things happen in that ring and people get hurt, but their only saving grace in that regard right now has been this damn tournament."

"Well, at least it's getting close to being over, right?" *Sabrina inquired*. "You beat Chris Lawler in New Orleans, then if I've been keeping up, you only have two matches left and then you can do the finals and be free."

"Easier said than done," *Dexter sighs, taking a moment to rub his eyes as drowsiness was slowly starting to take its hold*. "Chris Dumont shouldn't be an issue, assuming he's not about to eat an injury elimination like that other guy did. The problem's going to be Deanna Frost, the woman SCW is clearly banking on to try and stop me, and I don't doubt for a second I'm going to have to deal with her at least twice before this is all set and done. It's about as obvious as Martin Zachary's shady dealings he thinks he can hide from everyone."

"Speaking of Martin, that's actually why I called," *Dexter could tell by the shift in Sabrina's tone that he was not going to be any happier hearing whatever she was about to share with him*. "He decided to 'get in on the fun' by subtweeting you today, and I had the unfortunate privilege of being forced to take part."

Dexter nearly dropped the phone upon hearing that, but he did manage to stand up and step away from the laptop that was mocking him with the disgusting collage he'd put together to try and figure out how to combat this blatant campaign of misinformation against him and Wendell.

"What game did that son of a bitch decide to play now?" *he demanded*.

“I think you need to see it yourself to believe it,” Sabrina sighed, a tremble to her voice that was not lost on the Digital Detoxer.

After a minute, his phone pinged with a notification of a text message. Dexter pulled the phone away from his ear to check it, and the moment he saw the screenshot Sabrina had just texted him, he felt the burning temptation to just start up the RV now and say ‘screw Breakdown’ in favor of driving straight through Innovatech’s front doors and throttling his former employer.

The tweet contained an image of Martin posed side-by-side with Sabrina herself, giving the viewer a cheesy grin and overly enthusiastic thumbs up as an arm was draped over Sabrina’s shoulders. To her credit, Sabrina was giving whoever took the picture a convincing enough smile to maintain a professional appearance, but Dexter knew his old friend well enough to tell when she looked uncomfortable, and that was the kind of forced smile that screamed she’d rather be anywhere else but right there.

It was the actual tweet itself, however, that was the cause of Dexter’s blood boiling.

“‘Unlike some who’ve made their reasons clear for wanting social media to die, Innovatech is devoted to female empowerment and providing a safe space for women to prove they’re just as brilliant as the boys,’” he read, his voice trembling with barely restrained hatred. “He can’t be serious with this shit. Martin is the biggest wannabe playboy I’ve ever had the displeasure of meeting! As revolting as he is, I can at least give Derek Adonis credit for knowing the importance of consent if anything. I can’t even give this slimeball that! The guy shamelessly tries to collect women like any normal person would collect stamps or coins or baseball cards!”

“Yeah...” Sabrina could be heard shuddering on the other end of the call. “I’m sorry Dexter. He made me pose for that stupid picture with him, and I didn’t want to refuse and risk giving him any reason to suspect I’m trying to undermine him.”

“Let me guess: he told you it was because you were the first female employee he saw?” Dexter asked, earning a hum of confirmation from Sabrina. “Yeah, that’s bullshit. He sought you out specifically to try and stick it to me, especially with that verbal garbage in tweet form. He thinks he’s being clever trying to dogpile on these stupid claims people are making against me and the jokes trying to tear Wendell down because if it does me in, he thinks he wins.”

“As soon as that picture was taken and he didn’t need me anymore, his hand ‘accidentally’ caressed my backside,” Sabrina revealed, a tone of disgust lacing her words that even briefly caught Dexter off guard because it sounded as vitriolic as his own. “He tried to play it off like he was smooth, but I tried to go to HR about it anyway because it’s inappropriate regardless of my

secret stance against him. You know what they did? They just brushed it off because ‘Martin would never dare to do such a thing, it must’ve been an accident’ and claimed I was blowing things out of proportion thinking I could milk the company for a raise or a lawsuit or something. Safe space, my ass!”

Dexter could only growl at hearing that, his rage starting to reach a point where the ability to properly speak was starting to fail him. Trying to play these petty games and act like “the villain his crusade needs to actually matter” with him was one thing. Jumping onto some stupid trend born of misinformation and a desperate desire to help SCW get rid of him and Wendell frustrated him just because Wendell didn’t deserve any of this. But direct sexual harassment, no matter how seemingly minor, against probably the only person in this world he could still call a friend beyond Wendell and maybe his family now that they’ve come around to his cause?

“There’s going to be hell to pay,” *Dexter finally said once he found his voice, his tone low and dangerous.* “Just because he’s the collateral damage being put in my way, I’m going to turn New Orleans into the burial site for Chris Lawler, no matter how much he thinks he has a hope in hell of stopping me after trying to hold that Trios nonsense over my head for weeks. If I get the chance, I’m going to bury those Hollywood clowns right alongside him. I hope Martin watches what I’m going to do on the next Breakdown, because that? That’s going to **pale** in comparison to how horrifically he’s going to crash and burn once I’m done with him. If you have anything about what happened today for this stupid tweet, Rina, hang onto it...we’re going to need it.”

*Sabrina acknowledged this and the call ended shortly after, a combination of drowsiness from the late hour and feeling too angry to properly continue the conversation making it clear that this was the necessary stopping point for tonight. But Dexter wasn’t quite tired anymore...no, now he was wide awake, and the gears were turning for how he could resolve all of his problems in a fashion that would make it painfully clear to everybody that Dexter Grant was not a man you wanted to be on the bad side of, **especially** if you could be turned into an example of why his fight was necessary and he wasn’t going to stop until he’d succeeded in Disconnecting everyone for their own sakes...no matter how much they refused to believe the truth.*