

FANCY NYC HOTEL LOBBY

Roy Vezina sits in an oversized leather chair, checking his gold watch repeatedly and looking increasingly agitated. He's wearing a designer suit that screams "I'm important" but whispers "I'm insecure." Harv Norris is sprawled across a nearby couch, boots up on the coffee table, flipping through a complimentary magazine.

Roy Vezina: This is exactly what I'm talking about, Harv! This city! No respect for professionalism! No sense of punctuality! In Canada, when someone says they'll be here at 3 PM, they're here at 2:55!

Harv Norris: Maybe he got lost, b'y. This city's bigger than all of Newfoundland put together. Easy to get turned around.

Roy Vezina: Lost? LOST?! We're paying this guy good money to protect us from these psychotic New York wrestling fans, and he can't even find a hotel lobby? What happens when we actually need protection?

Harv Norris: What d'ye need protection from anyway? Couple of overzealous fans? I've handled worse at a George House pub on New Year's Eve.

Roy Vezina: Harv, this isn't Corner Brook! This is New York City! These people are animals! They throw batteries at Santa Claus! They probably eat their young! We need professional security, and Hank Hercules has the experience. Six-time Galactic Champion! The face of World Prize Fight Wrestling!

Harv Norris: Aye, but that was years ago, b'y. He's been mostly doing autograph signings and that weird vitamin business lately.

Roy Vezina: So what? Once a champion, always a champion! The man knows how to handle himself! But apparently he doesn't know how to handle a simple meeting time!

Roy stands up and starts pacing, his agitation growing.

Roy Vezina: Do you know what this reminds me of? Vegas! Same unprofessional attitude! Same disrespect for excellence! I thought working with a legend like Hank would be different, but apparently even icons can't tell time!

Harv Norris: Roy, b'y, ye're gonna give yerself an ulcer. Maybe he's stuck in traffic. Or maybe he's dealing with some other client emergency.

Roy Vezina: Other clients? OTHER CLIENTS?! We're The Punch Line! We're the 2024 Tag Team of the Year! We should be his ONLY client! Plus, we have history with the guy from SHOOT!

The hotel's revolving door spins, and Rick Hull enters, moving with his usual deliberate, heavy steps. His expression is somehow even more grim than usual.

Roy Vezina: Rick! Finally! Please tell me you found Hank and gave him a piece of your mind about being forty-five minutes late!

Rick Hull approaches slowly, stops in front of them, and delivers his news with typical bluntness.

Rick Hull: He's dead.

Roy blinks. Harv looks up from his magazine.

Roy Vezina: What?

Rick Hull: Hank Hercules. Dead. Two days ago.

Roy Vezina: Dead? DEAD?! What do you mean dead? Six-time Galactic Champions don't just DIE when they're supposed to be protecting us!

Harv Norris: How'd he die, Hully?

Rick Hull: Heart attack. In his apartment above some closed tanning salon in Brooklyn.

Roy Vezina: A tanning salon? The face of World Prize Fight Wrestling died above a TANNING SALON? That's... that's actually kind of fitting, but still tragic!

Harv Norris: Poor fella. Remember when he was the biggest name in wrestling? Now he's living above tanning beds?

Rick Hull: Place was shut down. Hadn't been open in months.

Roy Vezina: Wait, wait, wait. How long has he been dead?

Rick Hull: two days.

Roy Vezina: TWO DAYS?! And nobody from SHOOT thought to tell us? We worked with this guy! He was practically family! Well, distant family that we occasionally saw in catering!

Harv Norris: To be fair, Roy, we only hired him a couple of days ago for security work.

Roy Vezina: That's not the point! The point is a legend just died in obscurity above a failed business, and we're sitting here complaining about punctuality!

He pauses, looking genuinely conflicted.

Roy Vezina: I mean... what was his finishing move again?

Rick Hull: What? When he would start herc'ing up?

Harv Norris: No, that was his comeback. His finisher was that leg drop he did. The Patriot Plop.

Roy Vezina: Right! Classic move! The man was an icon! And now he's... gone. Above a tanning salon. That somehow feels both tragic and perfectly appropriate for Hank.

Rick Hull: So... no security guard.

Roy Vezina: No security guard! The face of World Prize Fight Wrestling, reduced to our hired muscle, and he dies before he can even start the job! This city is cursed, I tell you! CURSED!

Harv Norris: Maybe we don't need security, b'y. I mean, we got Rick here. Who's gonna mess with Rick?

Roy looks at Rick, then back at Harv.

Roy Vezina: You know what? You're right. Why am I paying legends when I've got the most intimidating man in North America standing right here? Plus, Hank probably would've spent half his time talking about his glory days anyway.

Rick Hull: I'm not security. I'm talent.

Roy Vezina: You're whatever I need you to be, Rick! And right now, I need you to be our security! Consider it honoring Hank's memory!

Rick Hull: ...fine. But I'm not wearing a uniform.

Roy Vezina: Deal! See, Harv? Crisis averted! Who needs a six-time Galactic Champion when you've got Rick Hull? The man who makes grown wrestlers cry just by existing!

Harv Norris: Rest in peace, Hank Hercules. May ye find eternal tanning beds and vitamin supplements in the great wrestling ring in the sky.

Roy Vezina: Poor bastard. From main eventing in front of 90,000 people to dying alone above a closed business. That's the wrestling industry for you, brutal to the end.

Rick Hull: Life's tough.

Roy Vezina: Right! Well, let's go. New York City awaits The Punch Line, and now we've got the best security money can't buy! Plus, we're honoring a legend's memory by succeeding where he... well, where he died before he could try.

They head toward the exit, Roy's confidence restored but tinged with genuine melancholy, Harv shaking his head sadly, and Rick looking like he's already regretting his new job responsibilities while also perhaps feeling the weight of a fellow wrestler's lonely end.