

Behind the Mask: IDENTITY CRISIS

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IDENTITY CRISIS

People don't keep journals for themselves anymore. Everyone thinks they're so fucking important that everyone under the sun will want to read what they write. There's no exception to this rule: everyone writes with the idea that someone else will read it and tell them they're a genius.

Well, there's one exception. My mom has a pen and paper journal that she keeps in the studio; far as I know nobody but her has ever read it.

But, with that in mind, when Michael Lorenzo told me he was getting a lot of requests for some kind of interview, photoshoot, profile, etc - from the wrestling media and IWC, and even a very small handful of mainstream press, I thought about it. You're over, he said, and the fans want to know about you.

So I said sure, I'll do some media stuff, but - channeling my parents - it'll be on my terms.

Welcome to Behind the Mask, a new regular (if I'm asked to do another) feature on the UTA Website. Everything posted here will be my words and my words alone, my opinions and thoughts, without being censored, edited for content, or otherwise managed.

I won't bash people needlessly, but I also won't handle anyone with kid gloves. Like the great Lester Bangs said, you need to make your reputation on being honest and unmerciful.

Why am I here?

My parents were both road warriors. My entire life has been spent on the peripheral of the entertainment industry. Neither of them ever shoved me or pressured me to do anything public; truth be told, they'd probably both be happier if I never stepped foot in front of a camera of any kind. But they also took me on the road with them so we could be a family, which pretty much killed any chance I had of a normal life from the get-go.

While other toddlers held pretend tea parties with their stuffed animals, I was pouring imaginary tea into pink plastic cups held aloft by members of Motörhead.

While other kids would swear they hated their best friend over a disagreement over an action figure, I was blowing raspberries at the chick from Evanescence and they had to acknowledge me and their security couldn't remove me because I had the protection of the All Access Pass.

Other kids watched wrestling with their parents. I threw up on a play by play announcer during a live broadcast.

Behind the Mask: IDENTITY CRISIS

And I dare say I was the only child, age five or under, who was ever in a room with Joe Campbell.

For those of you who know - yes. *that* Joe Campbell.

So, take all this mess of life experience, cram it inside an adolescent brain, then drop her in public school to give her as much of a normal life as you can, how do you think she'll adjust? She can't relate to anything that a typical kid her age can relate to, because she was never that typical kid.

It wasn't all bad, though. My life to that point had made me pretty comfortable in pretty much any situation and I was naturally outgoing because of it: I made a ton of friends very quickly. But at the same time, listening to them talk about typical kid stuff made me feel like I was a different species.

I would hang out with everyone in my school at school and after school and weekends and vacations and summer and stuff, but I was never fully relaxed.

You can imagine what a confusing mess of confusion dating has been.

Because of that, I gravitated toward creative pursuits that I could do myself: art and music.

And exercise.

If I can para-quote a biography I read once, my family **is** the wrestling business. Because of that, it was instilled in me from a very young age, the importance of fitness and nutrition and eating well and eating right and all that stuff, which progressed for me to being the youngest person in my Crossfit group and one of the youngest (when I started) in my BJJ class.

Why did I move toward professional wrestling? Because it's in my blood.

Because I can do this anonymously.

Why anonymously?

Because **my family is the wrestling business.**

I could've branched out into art or music, but my name would always be attached to everything I did. Whether I was amazingly amazing or sucked horribly, my name would always be attached to everything I did. I could be Buckethead and Tony Iommi and Jimmy Page and Eddie Van Halen all in one on the guitar and critics would claim I was only getting attention and work because of who my parents are. I could be a worse artist than George W Bush and his fingerpainting, but some money grubbing promoter would put me in a show because my name would make the works valuable.

Wrestling is weird, though. I can put on a mask and con this company into giving me a job under a false name and remain, for all intents and purposes, completely anonymous, and they don't care as long as I pull a

Behind the Mask: IDENTITY CRISIS

reaction and draw money.

In the ring, I'm able to be judged solely by my ability, and that's appealing to me.

That's why I take such offense at Spectre questioning my convictions.

That's why I take such offense at Dynasty's attitude that they're the straws that stir the drinks.

This is a team effort, and I've seen it firsthand and heard all the stories, this business is always at its peak when we all work together.

Dynasty's attitude of "Us first, us second, us third, you last" is cancerous. Spectre's attitude of "My way is the only way, you need to follow me and prove you're worthy to follow me," is just as cancerous.

There needs to be a better way. There is a better way. I just don't know the specifics of what it is yet.

If you enjoyed this and want to see more, please let the UTA offices know. If you have any questions you want answered or topics you'd like me to touch on, please let me know. Questions about my family will be ignored but everything else is fair game, and can be directed to mjflc@yahoo.com along with topic suggestions and whether you want to see more of these or if you hated it so much that even this piece should be printed out and burned, then deleted.

I'm good either way.

I am The Second Coming.