

SHORT WORK

By

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INT. ABANDONED WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

A large, cheering crowd is gathered, surrounding a large twenty by twenty chain link cage that stands just over twelve feet tall.

HOLLIS, a bald, forty year old mountain of a man makes his way through a section of the crowd, dressed only in a pair of athletic shorts and calf high black boots.

By his side is LYLE, a late fifties gentleman who is small in stature, but made even smaller by Hollis. He wears a cheap suit that hangs all over him, and a disheveled mess of hair sits atop his head.

They finish pushing their way through and stand in front of the entrance to the cage. Lyle raises his arms and the crowd goes silent, standing in wait.

Lyle slowly lowers his arms, and looks up to Hollis, who raises his arms above his head and lets out an authoritative roar. The crowd follows suit and the noise within the warehouse is absolutely deafening.

Hollis' scream subsides and he lowers his arms, placing his clenched fists against his hips and looking to the entryway he and Lyle just emerged from as two men make their way toward him.

The first man is O'FALLON, a late forties man with beady eyes and a scruffy two day beard, dressed in jeans and a ratty t-shirt, and walking with the assistance of a cane.

The other man is SULLIVAN, late thirties and dressed in head to toe black, including gloves and an executioner style mask over his head that hides his face.

They advance until they stand a few feet from Hollis and Lyle. Lyle nods toward Sullivan.

LYLE

What the fuck's his deal?

O'FALLON

What are you talking about?

LYLE

The mask? What's with the fucking mask?

O'FALLON

It's a focus thing. Helps him concentrate.

LYLE

Yeah, well he's gonna need about six of those things after Hollis here gets done scrambling his brains.

Sullivan emits a low growl.

O'FALLON

See? Now you're just pissing him off.

LYLE

Whatever. So, the usual? Ten G's?

O'FALLON

Right.

LYLE

Works for me.

Lyle turns and slaps Hollis on the shoulder.

LYLE

Go get him.

Hollis leans in, his face just inches from Sullivan's mask.

HOLLIS

I'm gonna rip you a new one shit for brains.

Hollis turns and enters the cage as Sullivan's head lunges slightly forward.

Hollis stands in the cage, walking around the perimeter and raising his arms.

O'Fallon guides Sullivan just inside the cage and stands next to him. Hollis continues to celebrate as the two men stand in silence. Lyle becomes agitated.

LYLE

Listen, are we gonna do this shit or what?

O'FALLON

Yeah.

Lyle claps his hands together in rapid succession.

LYLE

Well, c'mon already. We still got other fights to get through you know.

O'Fallon leans in, whispering something into Sullivan's ear that causes him to let out a loud scream.

LYLE

Listen here, O'Fallon, quit fucking around or your guy forfeits. My guys gonna make short work of yours anyway, or is that it and you're just prolonging the fact that Hollis is gonna kill him?

O'Fallon smiles and turns to Lyle.

O'FALLON

Oh Lyle, you silly bastard. How do you kill what's already dead?

O'Fallon quickly removes the black mask from Sullivan's head to reveal that he's a zombie, and quickly exits the cage, shutting the door behind him.

The crowd goes silent at the sight of him, but Hollis is still too busy celebrating with his back turned to him that he doesn't notice.

A quick look around and the realization that nobody else is making any noise causes him to turn around and finally spot Sullivan for himself.

HOLLIS

What the fuck?

Lyle grabs O'Fallon by the collar.

LYLE

Hey, what the fuck is this shit, O'Fallon? Where's Sullivan?

Sullivan slowly advances toward Hollis, who looks around the cage in urgency.

O'FALLON

That is Sullivan.

LYLE

Bullshit. That's some kind of fucking monster or something. I know Sullivan, and that ain't

LYLE
 him. What the hell are you trying
 to pull?

O'FALLON
 I'm telling you, that's Sullivan,
 just in a slightly altered state.

LYLE
 Altered? Altered? He looks like
 death warmed over.

O'Fallon cocks his head slightly to the side. Inside the
 cage, Hollis quickly moves around to avoid Sullivan's
 approach.

O'FALLON
 Well, that's cause he is. Turns
 out Sully had an aneurysm, and a
 few days ago it finally ruptured
 and killed him. Luckily for me I
 decided to take your advice.

Lyle looks on, confused.

LYLE
 What advice?

O'FALLON
 To make sure I had the best doctors
 that money could buy. Fucking
 amazing what they can do now days
 ain't it?

O'Fallon cracks a devious smile, as a look of pure worry
 crosses Lyle's face. He turns his attention to the cage.

LYLE
 Hollis! Get the fuck out of there
 now! He's not human!

Hollis keeps moving around the cage.

HOLLIS
 No shit, you fucking genius, you
 think I got rocks in my
 head? Christ, gimme credit for
 having some brains would you?

At the word brains, Sullivan's pace quickly picks up and he
 closes the gap between him and Hollis.

Lyle places a hand on the gate, but O'Fallon immediately whacks it away with his cane. Lyle grabs his injured hand and looks to O'Fallon, who shakes his head from side to side.

O'FALLON

Uh uh uh. To the death.

Sullivan is dangerously close to Hollis now, who turns and starts to back up as fast as he can to get away. He trips over his own feet and falls to the ground.

Sullivan now stands over Hollis, slowly bending down over him, with a mouth full of horrible, decayed teeth exposed.

Hollis quickly wraps his legs around Sullivan and takes him down with a scissor lock. He rolls over and gets up, making a mad dash for the gate.

O'Fallon reaches into his pocket and pulls a pad lock from it. He locks it on the gate and clamps it shut.

Lyle pushes O'Fallon out of the way and pulls on the gate as much as he can as Hollis whacks it from the other side. It doesn't budge.

Lyle looks beyond Hollis to see Sullivan slowly rising. He looks upward, then to Hollis as he thumbs toward the sky.

LYLE

Climb up!

Hollis looks up.

HOLLIS

I can't fucking climb that!

Lyle points beyond Hollis.

LYLE

Look out!

Hollis turns just in time to catch Sullivan attempting to bite him. He grabs tight hold of his arms and pushes him to the ground a few feet away.

Lyle points upward again.

LYLE

Go up!

Hollis nods in agreement and starts to climb up the side of the cage. O'Fallon makes his way back to Lyle and stands next to him, looking up at Hollis.

O'FALLON
He'll never make it.

LYLE
Shut the fuck up O'Fallon. When
this is through you're dead.

O'FALLON
He'll never make it.

Hollis gets to the top of the cage and throws a leg over the side, allowing him to sit on top of it. He lowers his head and breathes heavily.

LYLE
Ha! Shows what you know, you dumb
fuck.

O'Fallon motions to Hollis, who sits atop the cage wide-eyed and clutching his chest.

O'FALLON
Man, those hearties really stick it
and break it off, don't they?

Lyle frantically waves downward.

LYLE
Fall this way! Fall this way!

Hollis falls, but not the way Lyle had hoped. He lies on the floor of the cage, dead. O'Fallon unlocks the lock and removes it from the gate.

O'FALLON
Won't be needing that anymore.

Sullivan now kneels over Hollis, feeding on his neck and tearing the intestines and organs from his body with his hands.

Lyle looks on in disgust as Sullivan pulls the heart from Hollis' body and feasts on it. The crowd looks on in horrified silence.

LYLE
What have you done? What the fuck
have you done!

O'FALLON
Like you said, Lyle, to the
death. Now, about the ten grand.

Lyle shoots O'Fallon a look of disdain.

LYLE
Ten grand? Fuck you! I'm not
paying you shit!

The crowd goes silent.

O'FALLON
Excuse me? Did you say you're not
paying?

Lyle quickly shakes his head up and down.

LYLE
That's right. This wasn't the
bet. Nobody said nothing about my
guy fighting some fucking
zombie. Now get the fuck out of my
way.

Lyle attempts to push past O'Fallon, but he grabs him.

O'FALLON
Are you trying to stiff me, you
fucking rat?

LYLE
I said get off me!

Lyle breaks free, but is immediately met with a whack to the head from O'Fallon's cane, stunning him. O'Fallon grabs him by the shirt and pulls him in close.

O'FALLON
You fucking louse! I'll show you
what happens when you don't pay!

O'Fallon flings open the cage and pushes Lyle inside. Lyle quickly gets up, but O'Fallon replaces the lock and has trapped him inside.

Sullivan looks at Lyle and drops the remnants of Hollis' heart to the ground before getting up.

Lyle presses his face against the cage, a pleading look in his eyes as he looks to O'Fallon.

LYLE
Let me out! Please! I'll pay,
just let me out of here!

O'Fallon casually pats his pockets and chest.

O'FALLON
Well, I'll be damned. It looks
like I've lost the key.

Lyle spits at O'Fallon.

LYLE
You son of a bitch! I'll get you!

Lyle starts to climb the cage, but is grabbed by Sullivan
and pulled off of it.

Lyle struggles to get away, but his effort fails and soon
Sullivan is tearing him to pieces and devouring his flesh as
he screams in agony. O'Fallon looks on, completely calm and
smiling a little.

The crowd erupts into loud applause. A MAN on the other
side of the cage bangs against its wall.

MAN
I never liked that fucker anyway!

The crowd erupts into louder cheers.

CROWD
Sullivan! Sullivan! Sullivan!

Sullivan stops his feast and looks to the crowd around the
cage with a blank, confused stare. Suddenly, a bullet zips
straight through his forehead, killing him.

The crowd hushes once again, and looks to O'Fallon, who now
stands just inside the cage's now open doorway, holding a
nine millimeter pistol.

O'Fallon scans the cage, seeing nothing but blank, wondering
stares. He shrugs his shoulders.

O'FALLON
Hey, I had enough trouble
controlling him the first time. I
wasn't about to deal with that shit
again.

O'Fallon makes his way through the crowd to the exit. When
he gets there, he turns back.

O'FALLON
Besides...I never could get the
fucker to stop trying to bite
me. Now, who's got my money?