

AND THERE CAME A DAY, A DAY UNLIKE ANY OTHER. WHEN THREE FRIENDS ROSE FROM THEIR DOOM TO FIGHT ON, VOWING NEVER AGAIN TO GIVE IN TO THE FORCES OF EVIL. ON THAT DAY, E.G.G. WAS REBORN.

E.G.G

Experimental Government Gadgets

-EPISODE 24-

AND A SIDE OF RICE

Josh ran frantically back and forth in the Inner Shell with a vacuum cleaner, slowly tangling himself in the cord. Eileen and Acacia watched, laughing at him.

“You know you guys are free to help!” He shouted.

“Oh no, I’m fine right where I am.” Acacia said. “Besides, I seem to specifically remember you not helping me clean the Feeding Pen a few months back...”

“Yeah, from a mess you caused!” Josh defended. “I helped you in the end anyways!”

“You wiped off a table and said you were tired!”

“I still helped!”

“Just stop Josh.” Eileen said. “I mean seriously, we’re camped out in a bunch of dank, dark tunnels underground. You can only clean the place so much...”

“Eileen, this needs to be perfect!” Josh said. “These guys were the best of the best, okay. We were S.H.I.E.L.D.’s A-Team! We were the Wolfpack! Hu-ha!”

“Did you just say hu-ha?” Acacia asked. “Nobody... nobody says that...”

“We said it!” Josh said. “Man, those guys were the best! I remember the missions we went on together!”

“Josh, you went on one mission with them.” Eileen said. “And you were there by accident.”

“What exactly happened?” Acacia asked.

“Josh was supposed to be tech support on their plane,” Eileen explained. “But the plane crashed in the Canadian Rockies and Josh tagged along with the ‘Wolfpack’. They ended up fighting Omega Red, Maverick, and Wendigo.”

“Yeah!” Josh exclaimed. “I gave Maverick the old one-two! I held down one of Omega Red’s tentacles, and I’m pretty sure I got a kick in on Wendigo!”

“Right,” Acacia said. “So why are they coming here again?”

“Fury’s sending them for the monthly inspection.” Eileen answered. “By Josh’s request.”

“Yes,” Josh confirmed. “But they were itching to see me just as much as I wanna see them! Now I wouldn’t mind if you guys helped me make this place as spotless as possible!” Eileen and Acacia laughed and walked off. “Fine, but I’m cutting your pay!” Josh wrestled with the vacuum cleaner cord and freed himself.

“Josh,” Allyson said, approaching him.

“Allyson!” Josh complained. “I told you to wear a fresh new uniform...”

“I am!” She replied.

“That’s the same uniform you wore yesterday!”

“Or maybe all of our uniforms just look the same.”

“Oh yeah...”

“Okay, come here,” she said grabbing Josh and pulling him around the corner. “You need to relax.” She began to massage his shoulders.

“I know,” Josh said. “I just really wanna impress these guys...”

“You will.” She said, kissing his cheek. She walked her fingers across his shoulders.

“And maybe, when they leave...” Suddenly Josh heard the elevator ding.

“They’re here!” He shouted, rushing off and knocking Allyson to the ground. He rushed up to the elevator and brushed his shirt down. Eileen, Acacia and Harry gathered behind him. Then the elevator opened. Out came three guys in decorated S.H.I.E.L.D. uniforms, with customized Wolfpack logos on their shoulders. Josh bounced up and down with excitement.

“That’s them guys!” He exclaimed. “The Wolfpack!” He pointed to the guy on the left. “That’s Justin Milan, quickest sharpshooter in the west! He once took down ten moving targets in under 3 seconds!”

“That’s pretty cool.” Eileen said.

“I know! The one on the right is Tristan Trevino. He’s the smartest tactician survivalist you’ll ever meet! I heard that he survived in the forest for a whole month with nothing but a plastic spoon!”

“I’m sure that’s a rumor...” Acacia said.

“And then him, in the middle, ooh boy, that’s Kyle Rice!”

“What’s he do?” Eileen asked.

“Everything! If I had a nickel for every ounce of awesomeness he has in one bone of his body, I’d be richer than Osborn over here!”

“Doubtful, but whatever.” Harry said.

“He does it all! Guns, sword fighting, hand to hand, espionage, stealth ops, black ops, you name it he’s done it!” All three of them approached Josh.

“You Westbrook?” Rice asked.

“Yes, Director Westbrook of E.G.G. at your service!” Josh happily replied.

“Right, we’re here for the inspection.”

“Oh I know, I requested you! Who better to inspect than a fellow member of the Wolfpack! Hu-ha!”

“What are you talking about?” Trevino asked.

“Well, I went on a mission with you guys! Remember, the Wendigo op?”

“Oh yeah,” Milan said. “There was another agent with us.”

“Oh, now I remember,” Trevino said. “Wait, I thought he died?”

“Nope, I’m right here!” Josh said eagerly.

“Okay...” Rice said. “Can we get on with the inspection?”

“Sure thing!” Josh said. “Eileen, if you’d give our esteemed guests the grand tour!”

“Yes Director,” she responded. “Right this way please.” Eileen led as they began to walk. Trevino spotted Allyson standing in the corner.

“Hey sweet cheeks.” He said, winking at her. She blushed and turned away.

“Keep it in your pants Trevino.” Rice said.

“Easy for you to say!” Trevino defended. “You got a girl!”

“Sabrina right!” Rice turned to see Josh standing right in his face.

“Uh, yeah,” he said, putting his finger on Josh’s chest and pushing him back a few inches. “That’s right.”

“How is she?”

“Fine...”

“She still make apple pies? She makes good apple pies!”

“You’ve never had them...”

“No, but I heard about them!” Rice raised one eyebrow, then continued to follow Eileen.

“This is the Feeding Pen.” She said. Trevino sniffed the air.

“Artificial meat, juice from concentrate... and laser blaster fire.” He observed. Josh gulped.

“One of our more disobedient agents likes to test weapons in here...” He said.

“Firing lasers in the cafeteria?” Milan asked, shaking his head and jotting it down on a notepad. “Less than impressive.” Josh gulped. Then he spotted a can of peas and grabbed it.

“Think fast!” He shouted, chucking the can at Milan. Without a second thought, Milan spun out his gun and blasted the can, sending peas everywhere. “See, see! I told you, fastest sharpshooter in the we-” Josh was cut off by Milan abruptly grabbing his collar.

“Don’t... throw things... at me. Got it?” He demanded.

“Got it!” Josh choked. Milan threw him down and followed Eileen out of the room.

“You need to quit messing with these guys,” Acacia said.

“Are you kidding? They love me!” Josh said. He rushed into the Humpty Dumpty Hall.

“This is where we make everything.” Eileen said. “Weapons, gizmos, gadgets...”

“Hey, Agent Rice!” Josh interrupted. “I’ve been practicing my moves! Wanna see!” He punched at Rice, who caught his punch, twisted his arm behind his back, and slammed Josh against the wall. Josh laughed. “Haven’t lost your touch! Man, reminds me of when we fought Wendigo! I kicked him, remember?”

“Then he threw you off a cliff.” Rice said, letting him go.

“Well, yeah, I know, but I kicked him first! If it wasn’t for that kick, you guys might not have beat him!”

“I’m sure...”

“Yeah, I saw the whole fight from the bottom of the cliff. It was so cool! I also saw the transport come get you guys. I mean, I’m not saying you *had* to come down and get me, but, you know, it was five hours freezing in the snow before I got picked up...”

“Oh, that’s right! You fell of the cliff.” Trevino said. “No wonder I thought you died. Had us all asking: when’d ya go!” The guys laughed and fist bumped. Josh laughed and held up his fist. They all looked at him, and he slowly lowered his fist.

“Gentlemen.” Eileen said, exiting the room. She walked to the large metal door, the entrance to the Hall of E.G.G. She scanned her ID card. A keypad opened, and she typed in the

password. Today it was hu-ha. After that she scanned her eye, then her thumb, then pushed a sequence of colorful buttons in a certain order. After that, the door finally opened, where a camera scanned her with a holographic beam from head to toe.

“Confirmation: Eileen Wuthrich, Joshua Westbrook, Acacia Blanco.” The monitor said. “Identify number of guests, or they will be terminated. You have five seconds.” Josh looked at Harry. He sighed and backed out.

“Three.” Eileen said.

“Guest number confirmed. Welcome.” They all entered.

“And this is the Hall of E.G.G!” She said. “Where we keep everything we develop.”

“Excellent.” Rice said. He, Milan, Trevino pulled masks over their mouths. Josh looked back.

“Hey, what are you...” He began. Then Milan pulled the pin on a smoke canister. Josh’s eyes widened. “Down!” He shouted, but in vain. Milan threw it. Josh, Eileen and Acacia choked in the smoke, then fell to the ground.

“Grab what you can and let’s get out.” Rice said. Trevino and Milan raided the Hall of E.G.G., grabbing prototypes, weapons, all they could carry. Then they rushed out. Eileen sat up, holding her head. She gasped.

“Those... jerks!” She said, and took off. Josh and Acacia got up. Josh looked towards the door.

“They’re gonna run for it!” He shouted.

“Right behind you!” Acacia said, following him into the elevator. They took it up and ran through the library into the parking lot, where the Wolfpack was making a break for in a S.H.I.E.L.D. flying car.

“Acacia, alley-oop!” Josh called. She grabbed Josh’s arm, spun around twice, jumped up and threw Josh into the air! Josh soared across the sky and barely caught the edge of the trunk. Rice, who was in the back seat, looked back and smiled.

“So,” he said, standing up. “You got some guts after all.”

“Why?” Josh cried. “I respected you guys! Why did you do this!”

“Why else?” Kyle asked. “Money.”

“No!” Josh shouted. “You guys are the best S.H.I.E.L.D. has to offer!”

“Yeah,” Trevino said from the passenger seat. “Now we’re gonna be the best on their most wanted list!”

“You know that’s right!” Milan said, fist bumping him. “Wolfpack, hu-ha!”

“Face it kid,” Rice said, kicking one of Josh’s hands off. “You just got played.” He stepped on Josh’s other hand. “Now, who ordered the scrambled eggs?”

“Don’t you know?” Josh said. “That comes with a side of rice!” He swung his other hand up and grabbed Rice’s leg, then let go of the car.

“NNNNNOOOOOOOO!!!!” Rice screamed, as he and Josh fell to the ground. Milan looked back.

“Kyle!” He shouted.

“Forget him!” Trevino said. “We got the stuff, and now we only gotta split the pay two ways!” Suddenly car jerked to a stop.

“How about you guys split something else two ways.” They looked to see Lightstream, both hands dug into the hood of the car. “A jail cell.” Both of them reluctantly put their hands up.

* * *

S.H.I.E.L.D. transports had landed on the ground outside of the library and were arresting the Wolfpack.

“Thank you for that web net Acacia!” Josh said. “Me and Rice woulda been street pizza!”

“No prob.” Acacia said, putting away a Thwip Blaster.

“And Lightstream, perfect timing as always!”

“You know me!” She said. “Just glad I could help.” The three were approached by Commander Maria Hill.

“Nice job catching the Wolfpack.” She said to Josh. “We had no idea they’d gone rogue, but you can take comfort in the fact that they’ll be locked up for good.”

“Thank you Commander Hill.” Josh said.

“And you,” she said, pointing to Lightstream. “You need to register with S.H.I.E.L.D. as an untrained hero...”

“Will you look at the time!” Lightstream said quickly, taking off. Josh sighed.

“She’s so dreamy, isn’t she?”

“Commander!” An agent shouted. Hill turned around.

“What is it?” She demanded.

“Agent Rice, he escaped!”

“What!” She, Josh and Acacia rushed over to the transport to see Milan and Trevino sitting bitterly, still cuffed, and two downed S.H.I.E.L.D. agents. Hill slammed the transport with her fist. “Sweep the area!” She said.

“He’s gone Commander.” Josh said. “But don’t worry, if he shows his stupid face again, we’ll take care of him.”

The End