

Day 1:

After user selects Martial Arts as a choice

Marishan (Unknown): Hey, you!

M:....

M:....

Marishan (Unknown): WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING AROUND FOR?!? YOU'RE IN THE WAY!!

M: Oh? Ah shi-. *I step a few paces backward*

M: "When did this fencing ring get here? Not like I ever check the schedule.."

Calm Fencer: Marishan, please, it's not his fault. We didn't put up our calendar this time.

Marishan: Yes, yes, I know that.

The fencer named Marishan takes off her headgear. Her long, black curls flow out of her helmet.

Mar: Look, sorry for yelling like that. It's just that I feel no one respects our time or space these days.

*****Frivolous choice***

1. M: No harm done.
 - a. Mar: Thank you (Smiles). *Her mood lightens up a little bit*
2. M: I mean, the schedule going missing didn't help.
 - a. Mar: You wouldn't want me to respond to that.

Mar: Your name is?

M: (Replies)

Mar: M, do you know about Fencing?

Mar: This is the most beautiful sport in the world. When we set this ring, nothing else matters.

Mar: Not class, not status, not race. Nothing.

Mar: All that matters is you, your sabre, and your masked opponent in front of you.

Mar: There, in this ring, two individuals ask themselves: Who trained the hardest? Who is the strongest?

Mar: I have been a fencer since I was a child. And I am leader of this club for a reason.

Mar: I must get back now. Here, I always keep a calendar in my pocket. We won't be around outside that.

Day 2:

Mar: Hello. Seems like you avoided the ring this time.

M: I also came on purpose this time. I must be doing well today.

Mar: Hm. Do you even know what's on the calendar?

1. Preparation for the tournament.
 - a. Mar: Wrong.
2. Team bonding day.
 - a. Mar: Pathetic.
3. A practice bout between Marishan and a team member.
 - a. Mar (+1): Yes, of course. I have just a bit more trust in you.

Mar: Today is a practice bout designed to teach the new ones some skills.

Mar: The mundane is the most important of any skill, but especially in fencing. I expect everyone to become stronger, smarter, faster.

She puts on her helmet and arms her saber.

Mar: Watch and be awed.

Mar: COME ON, NOW! WHO'S TURN IS IT? HURRY IT UP!

A fencer of medium-build steps up. He readies his guard.

Marishan steps up to her side of the ring. "Ready!", a referee cries. "Go!"

The two characters become a blur. A single clash is heard.

The first round was over before I realized what happened.

Mar: HAAAA!

I guess she obviously won.

The next 4 rounds occur nearly as quickly as the first. I can hardly visualize the movements of the poor soul on the losing end. Marishan looks to be on another plane of existence.

In a slither of time she can comprehend his slightest movement and react accordingly. Anyone on the end of her signature lunge-slash is in trouble.

Mar: What's wrong with you?? Has your will broken?

Emotion almost seeps from the mask that hides his face.

The mediative fencer from the other day appeared as if on command.

Calm Fencer: Marishan, please, it's just a practice round.

Mar: You cannot allow anything to weaken your resolve. This is a rule that everyone must know and follow.

Mar: There is nothing wrong with his skills. He just didn't believe in himself enough to use them.

Calm Fencer: But—

Mar: M, did you enjoy this bout?

M: Everything happened so fast, but I enjoyed it.

Mar: I have done this 6 years now, with training the body and mind.

6 years. I would've missed out on something with that much dedication to a single topic.

M: It really shows.

M: Is that guy from earlier, is he alright?

He sits crouched, downtrodden, against the wall. She gives a curt reply.

Mar: Yes, he's fine.

I —

1. Go over and console him.
 - a. I get up and walk over.
 - b. The act seems to be one of personal offense to Marishan, expressed through her face.
 - c. It doesn't take me much to get him feeling better again.
 - d. I'm surprised when Marishan walks over as well.
 - e. Mar: I'm sorry.
 - f. Wow.

- g. The once melancholy fencer jolts up from the phrase.
 - h. Marishan just turns heel and leaves the arena.
 - i. The mediative fencer looks shocked as well.
 - j. Calm Fencer: I don't remember the last time she's said that to one of us...
 - k. After some small discussion, I also take my leave.
 - l. ..
 - m. I really couldn't take seeing someone that way. I could hardly describe the feeling. Did her anger consume her vision?
 - n. But still, I was relieved when she came by. I had the smallest amount of hope in her.
 - o. I was never one to believe in others. Not as a child, and more rarely now.
 - p. Maybe I'm more complex than I make myself out to be.
2. Believe Marishan.
- a. ..
 - b. Only a few seconds of silence pass before I start feeling uncomfortable.
 - c. I get up and walk over.
 - d. The act seems to be one of personal offense to Marishan, expressed through her face.
 - e. It doesn't take me much to get him feeling better again.
 - f. I'm surprised when Marishan walks over as well.
 - g. Mar: I'm sorry.
 - h. You're kidding.
 - i. The once melancholy fencer jolts up from the phrase.
 - j. Marishan just turns heel and leaves the arena.
 - k. The mediative fencer looks shocked as well.
 - l. Calm Fencer: I don't remember the last time she's said that to one of us...
 - m. After some small discussion, I also take my leave.
 - n. ..
 - o. I really couldn't take seeing someone that way. I could hardly describe the feeling. Did her anger consume her vision?
 - p. But still, I was relieved when she came by. I had the smallest amount of hope in her.
 - q. I was never one to believe in others. Not as a child, and more rarely now.
 - r. Maybe I'm more complex than I make myself out to be.

Day 3:

Mar: ATTENTION!

Her group of fencers stand at the ready. So still, they could almost be mannequins.

Mar: As you know, today will be our first of many training days. We have a tournament to win. I will not accept anything less than victory!

Mar: We are small and underfunded. It's true. But we have nothing to be afraid of but ourselves.

Mar: With this tournament, we have to prove to everyone that we deserve better. Which leads me to my first point, is it better to attack or defend first?

She points her sabre at the first in line.

Nervous Fencer: A-Attack!

Mar: And you two?

Calm Fencer: Defend.

Sensitive Fencer: Attack.

Mar: And all of you are wrong.

Mar: The most important thing isn't whether you attack or defend first. It's your flexibility between the two.

Calm Fencer: That's not a very fair question, Marishan.

Mar: Hah! Her face becomes a grin.

Mar: The true winner is able to gauge their opponent before the battle begins. Many have a style that seeps through their character.

Mar: Others...can be more secretive.

She takes off her helmet and whips out her cellphone.

Mar: Today, I'm going to show you how to gauge the opponent.

I can't see what's going on from the corner I was watching this affair from. This is when I decide to join.

Mar: Oh, you're here again. Maybe you should grab a sabre. She grins.

She's as confident as ever, yet I could almost detect a hint of nervousness.

She shows us an OoTube video of a college fencing bout.

The fencer on the right-hand side succeeds 3 rounds in a row. As I've heard, it only takes 7 rounds for a victory in these matches.

The loser gets more visibly agitated with each further loss.

Mar: Oh-ho, just look at her. Sighing. Stomping her feet. Think about what she'll do next.

Round 4 starts, and the left fencer nearly tackles their opponent to get the win.

From what I could make out it was a wildly reckless move.

The fencers beside me have faces from concerned to awed.

Mar: This is where it gets good.

The right-hand fencer looks unphased at the start of the next round.

The left fencer comes wildly again, but she's deflected from what I saw.

The right fencer's counter earns him the round.

The left fencer is only able to pull it off one more time before the right-fencer overwhelms.

The final count being 2-7 to the right fencer.

Mar: You can never let how you feel get the best of you. The opponent was able to gauge their expressions and act accordingly.

M: The winner seemed pretty in control the whole time. Maybe the fencer let themselves lose the round to win later on.

Sensitive Fencer: Training them to act a certain way. Amazing.

Calm Fencer: You really put thought into that.

Mar: Are you sure you don't want to grab a sabre?

Everyone laughs.

..

I didn't have many friends growing up. I had an array of acquaintances.

People that made me feel like I was doing less than I should have.

I can remember one is working at a top Biotech company right now. Another is working an internship at a law firm.

I just get to bide my time here.

I saw another side of Marishan today. Thoughtful and excited, almost like a teacher.

At this point, I've learned what I ever wanted to know about fencing.

I have no reason to keep coming back like this. But part of me wants to stay.

Day 4:

Mar: Oh hey, we're on break right now. Feel free to sit.

She's sipping on StarDollar's bottled mocha.

Mar: You didn't bring anything?

M: Unfortunately.

Mar: Hahahaha. It's noon, what did you expect? Actually, I have an idea.

M: What's that?

Mar: You can beg me for a sip of this mocha, hahaha.

M: Definitely not. *

Mar: If only. She takes another huge sip.

Mar: On another note, I know your mind is still on the other day.

She read my mind. Part of it at least.

Mar: I honestly thought you'd be gone after that.

M: You came through at the last seconds. I think I felt hopeful.

Mar: I would call it "tough love". People disagree, but who cares for them?

Mar: Someone said that my apologies were rare. That one is true.

M: What made that time different?

Mar: You would've thought I was a monster. Which I can be, but not at times like those.

Mar: I have to train them to be strong. Or else they won't be prepared for the world.

Mar: You know, I make sure every day that the uniforms are clean, the floors are wiped, and the sabres are sturdy. There are no spares, but no excuses either.

Mar: Other schools have much greater recognition from their campuses.

Mar: I know the real reason we're uncared for by ours is because of me.

M: Because of you?

Mar: I wasn't well liked when I was in high school. I'm sure it was my hair, my accent, my dress. Something about me. It went on for years.

Mar: They were smart about it, so administration couldn't act when I told them. Things like playing with their blond and brown hair while I was the only one with jet black hair.

Mar: Surrounding me and saying words they knew I couldn't say without an accent.

Mar: One day I couldn't take any more. I grabbed one by the shirt and broke his nose. I took out another girl's kneecap before she could jump back.

Mar: I was filled with such anger and excitement. Happiness.

Mar: The power they had over me was now mine to hold.

Mar: The bullying stopped too. But my reputation as a person went down the tank.

Mar: I was thankful the school fencing team still backed me. It made me more confident that I had made the right choice.

Mar: In this world, there are those who have power and those who do not. For the longest, I was powerless.

Mar: If I do not teach them to have power, where will they end up?

I'm not sure if I agreed with her, but I was overwhelmed.

Mar: Oh, I'm running late. See you later!

..

She's giving power to the powerless, but is being full of rage and insensitivity the best way to do so?

Wait, does that even matter? She's doing the right thing regardless.

I know however I finalize this – it will affect me as a person.

1. She makes sense.

- a. Yea, I learned this in my studies before.
- b. Machiavelli! "For although the act condemns the doer, the end may justify him..."
- c. If I knew of the bigger picture, I wouldn't have intervened that day.

- d. It doesn't matter if they feel hurt by her actions and words. By the end, they will have understood her lesson and become powerful people.
 - e. Marishan is a compelling leader and fencer. She has a proven, winning story for her beliefs. I shouldn't doubt her like I do others.
- 2. She doesn't make sense.
 - a. Every action has a reaction. She should know better than to think her actions stop with her. After all, every attack can be parried.
 - b. My problem isn't so much with the ends justifying the means, but that she can't predict all the ends. She can only see that they will become more firm and powerful.
 - c. But how would they react to Marishan's ill treatment of them?
 - d. And how would Marishan act in return?
 - e. This is a disaster waiting to happen. I have to tell her.

Day 5:

2 Continued:

I checked the calendar, two, three times. I managed to get here 10 minutes early.

As I thought, she'd be in earlier than everyone else.

Mar: M??

She was.

M: You taught me something yesterday.

Mar: What was that?

M: To think ahead for once. I don't think you can keep running the club this way.

Mar: And just what gives you the right to say that?

She's pissed but I know this is for the best.

M: Listen please. You're doing the right thing by teaching them to stand up for themselves. But by teaching them to be like you you're teaching them to be...*like* you.

Mar: Good. If they were anyone else they couldn't possibly suffer what we face. They would be powerless.

M: Your members are not you. They're individuals all with a common goal in mind.

Parry.

Mar: Are you just saying that your biggest enemy isn't yourself? That I don't control my own destiny?

M: No, you can. Just not on your own.

Defend.

M: You were never alone when you changed your life. Don't you remember? The fencing club supported you. It's why you're the leader the now.

Counter-attack.

M: But you're teaching the club that they have to do everything on their own.

M: Their successes are their own. Their failures are their own.

M: They won't be there for each other when they need to the most.

M: There was someone crying that needed you, and you failed him.

M: Your team won't be there for you either.

Finish.

M: Winning a tournament is a team effort, right?

There was a great silence after that. I'm not sure if she took what I said into account. Perhaps no one ever spoke to her so directly before.

I didn't think I'd really go through with this until I stepped out the door. It's amazing who we become when it's time to act.

Mar: I will think about what you said. No promises..

Maybe trying is better than doing nothing at all. I wonder how my life would've changed had I been more confrontational like this.

Mar: They're coming in now. It's time to get ready.

Prepare:

Everyone lines up with helmets off and sabres armed. They have expressionless faces and stiff demeanors.

Mar: Today is a day unlike any other.

Mar: It is the first of many we will begin, rough, brutal training.

Mar: The tournament begins this month, and each week until then will be devoted to our skills.

Mar: (2 Conditional): And perhaps some team bonding...

(2 Conditional cont) Everyone perked with amusement at the phrase. It might as well have been a meaningless one at this point.

Mar: Now, ARE WE READY TO WIN?

Fencers: YEAA

From there, Marishan demonstrated an array of fencing techniques.

The *riposte* is so incredibly simple that even I can understand. Just a counter-hit on the head.

But I guess even simple moves can win the round.

Mar: And remember, no matter what, never let down your spirit!!!

Mar: It'll probably get pretty busy this week forward. There won't be much time to talk and for sure it'll be intense.

Mar: This doesn't mean you should stop coming by though...

M: Hahaha, I'll likely come by. Maybe check on everyone here and there.

Mar: Later.

M: Later!

Day 6:

I pass by today and she wasn't lying. All the fencers are paired and practicing moves they learned well before today.

They also switched between being on the attack and being on the defense.

After some time, Marishan stopped the practice and began a new one.

This time each person would choose whether to be more aggressive or defensive with their partner, then reconvene and explain their thoughts.

"You have to gauge your opponent" or something like that.

Today was even more intense than the last time.

There's not a single person here who doesn't look exhausted or have sweat dripping down their face.

I get that it's two weeks away. But wow, glad I'm not down there right now.

Day 7a:

(2 Conditional)

Marishan surprised me today. It's the final week before the tournament. Guess what they're doing?

Smiling, laughing, having a good time.

No one even looks concerned with the inevitable. I can't remember the last time everyone was so happy.

Did I play a part in this? A small warmth flows from my stomach to my head.

I had this power in me all along, and Marishan helped me to discover that.

Day 7b:

(No 2, Same Day)

Today made last week look like cake.

There wasn't a single moment of rest for the poor souls.

Training, running, video, strategy.

Marishan is super-determined to win, and I can't help but believe it's infectious.

I don't know why I ever doubted her. At this rate they won't just win, they'll dominate.

No one looks too happy right now. I can't help but notice. But surely, they'll be relieved once that championship is theirs.

Day 8:

The bleachers are filled. I never thought this place could receive so much attention.

I'm still counting my blessings the tournament was held here.

I don't have money to travel, I'm a college student!

I manage to grab a spot in the center row. A great visual of the whole ring.

Now if only I could remember what Marishan told me about the rules..

Oh yea! Two teams will face each other, Marishan's and the opponent's.

There will be three separate rounds. The competitor needs to reach a certain number of points for a victory.

The team that gets two victories of the three matches wins the tournament.

The first match needs...

Oh, the first match needs 3 of 5 points for a victory!

The second needs 6 of 10 points.

The third needs 7 of 15 points.

I can see Marishan now. Right next to her partners, Ms. Calm and Mr. Sensitive.

Maybe I should get their names sometime.

The tournament is finally about to begin. Mr. Sensitive looks like he'll be the first one up.

He's up against what seems to be a female fencer of a smaller build.

The two characters become a blur...to others. I can read them this time.

Sensitive starts on the attack with a thrust.

The woman was caught off guard by his aggressiveness.

But she parries and quickly counter-slashes – landing a surprising blow on Sensitive!

She wins the first round.

Sensitive moderates himself for the next round.

There is a noted pause at the start of the round against his already defensive opponent.

Sensitive attacks, and misses?!

His opponent takes the opportunity to draw closer.

But Sensitive falls back to counter-attack and win the round.

I think the stunning move is called a *feint*.

Sensitive is clearly feeling confident. But the woman appears unphased.

I see something Sensitive doesn't see now. He's changed strategies twice now. Clearly, he's only going to get more aggressive.

Which means...she has no reason to change her stance at all!

On the third round, she doesn't respond to any of Sensitive's movements. Just blocks.

Sensitive got more and more agitated. Eventually he draws close enough to enter his opponent's sabre length.

The round ends with her riposte.

The next round doesn't go any better for him. What a shame to be trapped by your own choices.

The first win goes to the other guys, 1-3 them. But that doesn't mean we're out yet.

Ms. Calm doesn't think so either. She remains calm.

Guess it's in the name.

She faces a male fencer of medium build.

The round starts off with Calm on the attack.

Did they learn this from Marishan?

Calm slashes forward. Sabre meets sabre as the attack is parried.

The man takes the opportunity to break the clash in retreat.

But Calm jumps with a forward-lunge, winning the round.

This is just the first round, but the man certainly didn't expect to get embarrassed so early on.

He looks pissed.

Not like I can see his face, but he looks pissed.

Both Calm and I know that he'll go on the attack next round.

Calm readies her guard as the man starts the round with a series of quick attacks.

Each one is repelled successfully. I could almost hear her heart beat as she waits for the time to strike.

That opportunity finally comes as she gets off a quick thrust of her own to win the round.

Surprisingly, he doesn't look pissed after that. He actually looks like he's calmed down.

But why?

His actions don't back his demeanor as he goes for a wild slash for Calm's head. I could see his opening from here.

Calm easily evades and goes in to close.

Somehow the man ducks forward, evades her head thrust, and counters with one of his own. He wins the round.

I can't believe what I saw. What a snake.

Not only did he move like one, but his first attack was intentionally deceitful!

As always, Calm looks like nothing happened at all.

Maybe she's thinking that he's going to pull another trick.

But while I was thinking she'd defend more against any surprises, she goes on the attack!

She launches a series of quick jabs of her own, with one landing to win her the round.

If he was going to pull off another aggressive tactic like that, she wasn't going to give him the chance.

Round 5 begins with Calm in the lead 3-1.

Calm switches it up again on the defensive.

The man seems to share her thoughts.

Calm and her opponent exchange defensive blows, with Calm taking more steps backward than forward.

All in all, Calm proves to be much better on the defense than her opponent.

Calm holds guard as the man begins to hesitate.

She lands another riposte to win the round. 4-1.

I get it now. After that dirty trick, the man was expecting Calm to go on the defensive.

Calm had to know what her opponent was thinking she'd do.

That's why she went on the attack instead!

Now she's in control of the match!

And with only minor errors, she maintains that control through the rest of the match.

I can see Marishan smiling proudly.

The final result ends up as 5-2 in favor of Calm.

Marishan rises to the ring. There are victories on both sides now.

The final result is up to her.

I want to speak to her so I make my way down the bleachers.

M: Marishan, it's time. How are you feeling?

She pauses before her reply.

Mar: That woman over there. The one with the brown hair. Her name is Cynthia.

Mar: She was one of my bullies from high school.

Mar: I talked to her and she doesn't even recognize me. It pisses me off.

M: You're kidding? At a place like this?

Mar: I'm not sure when she started. But they sent her up last, like me. She must be the best of them.

M: I believe in you. I'm sure we all do.

Mar: Hm...

With that, she grabs her sabre and enters the ring.

I make my way to the bleachers again.

Without a pause the first round begins.

Marishan looks confident and strides forward.

Marishan's sabre clashes with Cynthia's twice before they break off.

Cynthia rushes ahead but is finally countered by a quick jab from Marishan, who wins the round.

Marishan continues to the next round, but only more defensively.

After a block and a parry, Marishan connects with counter-slash after what seemed to be forever.

By the start of the third round, I could feel something was wrong.

Cynthia was unleashing a string of furious blows leaving Marishan on full guard.

On more than one occasion she failed to counter-attack, which Cynthia took full advantage of to win the next two rounds.

Cynthia's attacks almost seemed like they were designed to miss Marishan.

A single round would go on far longer than I've ever seen.

Cynthia would aim for only Marishan's sabre as if there were a real duel at hand.

Is she trying to embarrass Marishan?

Even so, Marishan never looked like the type to take embarrassment face down.

Marishan is looking to do anything to take the lead of the 2-2 tie.

Cynthia's aggressive swipes make Marishan's wrists twist faster than I've ever seen before.

And still, she's able to connect a parry on Cynthia's small hand. Taking the lead!

By the start of the sixth round, the clashes sound like real swords.

The crowd sounds like an army waiting to crown their new leader.

Pure passion fills the arena as Cynthia once again ties the match.

3-3.

The winner needs 7.

I wonder what the others are thinking.

I look across. I see –

(If She Makes Sense chosen)

Nothing...

Her teammates' faces are blank, expressionless.

It's as if they weren't teammates at all. As if they were removed from the match altogether.

Right now, all I can think about is shouting words of encouragement for Marishan.

That's what a friend would do anyway.

But I guess Marishan is no regular friend.

I have to believe in her. In her words. Her story.

I can't be there to guide her. Neither can they.

It's funny. If someone had said some weeks ago that I wouldn't be there to support one of the few friends I have – I probably would've thought they were crazy.

Now I can't tell if I'm a coward or good person.

I'll find out soon enough.

Added Difficulty – Button Mash fight scene to the final round

If Win:

She did it! They're the champions!

The crowd is just roaring after such a tense bout and amazing finish.

The mascot is taking us to new era of euphoria.

Marishan and her team go off to congratulate the losing side in the midst of celebration.

And just as these winners are about to hold the prize for the classic photo, I feel a certain emptiness.

Marishan motions for them each to take a photo with the trophy, separately.

This isn't a team.

Marishan goes first, Calm second, Sensitive last. Each of their faces strain a smile for the photo and go back to neutral.

There's something wrong here.

The trio shy away from taking pictures together. Instead each of them go to meet the crowd, individually.

I take the opportunity to follow Marishan and pull her away for an aside.

M: Marishan, what's going on?

Mar:..

M: Shouldn't they be happy?

Mar:..

M: You all worked so hard for this!! Why?

Mar:..

Mar: Both Aria and Ray told me they were quitting. Right in my face. Right after the victory.

M: Wha-

Mar: They couldn't take the pressure anymore.

M: No one's fault but their own, right?

Mar: No. It was my fault.

Mar: I was too hurt to admit that I was wrong.

Mar: At the height of the match, I felt more alone than any other time in my life.

Mar: I know they must have felt that way too. I should have seen that.

I can't believe this. I couldn't think of one flaw in her plan?

No, I trusted her and this was the result.

But this isn't my problem is it? I guess it never really was. I guess I didn't care enough to begin with.

Yea, this is fine. I never get involved in people's lives anyway. I know this is the person I am now.

M: Thanks, Marishan. I know you'll make it. With or without me.

M: We must all believe in ourselves alone.

I can't bear to see her face.

I'm not even sure if I believe what I said just now.

But I do know, that without me, she will become a better person.

M: Goodbye...

IF Loss:

Marishan...was overwhelmed.

A phoenix had turned to ash before my eyes. Yet I would never see it rise again.

My mind is in a thousand places. Yet more and more it's fueled by anger.

As if on my command her teammates leave the ring without a second glance at her.

Who could blame them?

Day after day, yelling, stress, intolerance. And for what? Nothing.

My eyes turn from them to myself.

I knew this could happen. But I said nothing.
I trusted someone for the first time. And that was a mistake.
I watched people suffer pain for a greater good that never came.
What a coward I am.
I could hardly look at anyone or anything right now.
But before I leave, I take a long last look at the arena.
I'll never be able to come here again.

(If She Doesn't Make Sense chosen)

Nervousness.

Emotion like this was rare during trainings. Save one special day of course.

But I've never seen anything like this.

Calm look immobile except for her right leg. It's bouncing up and down so fast you could believe she was a drummer.

Sensitive is pacing up and down the length of the ring.

I could almost laugh. Marishan is so tough. She believes she could lift it all on her two shoulders.

But they care for her. And I care enough to go the extra step.

M: I BELIEVE IN YOU, MARISHAN! YOU CAN DO THIS!

Though she can't turn to face me. Her back straightens at the sound of my voice.

Both Calm and Sensitive glance my way. As if on cue, they shout at the same time.

Aria: You're a great leader! We're going to win!!

Ray: Bring it home, Marishan!!

I could sense exactly how Marishan feels right now.

She's glowing right now. Radiating a beautiful smile. Not even the outfit and mask could hide that from me.

We'll be there to help lift her pain. That's what friends are for.
Friends aren't just people who agree with everything you do.
They're people who tell you the truth. They're open. They're involved.
All the things I never was.
But that changes today. I believe in you, Marishan.

Relaxed Button Mash fight scene to the final round

IF WIN:

She did it! They're the champions!
The crowd is just roaring after such a tense bout and amazing finish.
The mascot is taking us to new era of euphoria.
Marishan and her team go off to congratulate the losing side in the midst of celebration.
The trio finally get together for the classic trophy photo. Big smiles all around.
They almost look like a family.
I run down to meet Marishan as soon as the photo is taken.

M: Yea?

Mar: Yea!

M: YEA?

Mar: YEAAAA

M: YEAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA

M and Mar: Hahahahahahahahahahaha

I embrace everyone as we all jump for joy.

Mar: So Ray, got a little angry there huh? She touches him playfully.

Ray: Anger in the name of the team is all, haha.

I can't remember the last time I was this happy for other people. Was it in me all along?

Mar: And you, Aria, your opponent was like a toy in your hands! I am amazed!

Aria just blushes.

I could've stopped coming any time along the way. Not like I haven't done that before.

But we're here now. It feels great.

Mar: Hey

I can count on them. I can believe in them.

In Marishan.

Mar: Hey!

In myself.

I can challenge my surroundings. And I'm not afraid to –

Mar: HEY!

M: Oh?

Mar: I know you're not zoning out before our dinner are you? *She smiles.*

Loss:

Marishan...was overwhelmed.

But her spirit never wavered.

She took off her helmet and bowed. Winning back the love of the crowd.

Her teammates rush on stage so not to leave her alone.

The trio's simple act moved the crowd to joy.

I make my way down to see Marishan.

M: I'm so sorry. You were so close.

Mar: No, we did everything we could.

Mar: That lady may have won me in the fencing ring, but she'll never best me in these! *She practically pulls the other two to her side.*

Everyone bursts into laughter.

Maybe she won something better than a trophy.

Love.

The fencing team was there for her before.

It's still there for her now. Plus one more, of course.

For the first time in a while, I gave a thought about other people.

Something was must have been in me all along to speak out when I saw a wrong.

And though we're not the victors, we share something even more special.

I can't have regrets about that.