

Deja vu

IN... 5... 4... 3... 2... 1...



DEFIANCE UNCUT opens not with a montage of action packed highlights, but with a shot of El Trébol Jr standing alone in an open space where the catering and general mingling between staff and the competitors could occur. With the recent addition of one Bobby Dean to the DEFIANCE roster, though, there was no food to be found on the tables that were pushed against the back wall. Not that this was the luchador's reason for being here. No he paced, eyes wandering around the room, seemingly waiting for something to change about it.

That change would come with the arrival of a girl through the swinging double doors who was somewhat familiar to the DEFIANT family after the most recent episode of DEFtv; this woman had changed little physically, except for a maybe a more withdrawn aura about her, and the name tag she wore still read "Abigail."

El Trébol moved towards her as the woman looked up from her clipboard. She lacked the bubbly grin that viewers last saw her with, replaced with a certain wariness. The little guy doesn't seem to mind or care, though, as he drew up beside the woman, glancing past her at the doors.

El Trébol:

Did you get the things I asked for?

The girl nods.

Abigail:

I did, yes. I must admit, some of the things you requested were difficult to acquire, might I say, I was not quite comfortable for--

El Trébol cuts off off with a hand held up. His body language evokes a sense of doubt from the woman's claim to success.

El Trébol Jr:

You got my desk and office chair?

Abigail:

Check

Behind the duo, the doors swing open and a pair of nameless workers step through carrying a metal desk; behind them, another man followed behind with a black executive chair. Viewers quickly catch on how this exchange would continue.

El Trébol Jr:

My open sign?

Abigail:

Check

A kick-ass neon Open sign like you see in store windows appear next.

El Trébol Jr:

My strippers?

Abigail: [grimaces]

Yes

Not workers this time--well, at least in the sense we had seen up to this point-- but two scantily clad women step into the room. As they walk by the pair, they run their fingers lightly across El Trébol's shoulders before disappearing off-screen.

El Trébol Jr: [unfazed by the womanly advances]

My inflatable monkey?

Abigail:

All we could find this time was an ape.

El Trébol Jr: [shrugs]

Not like I can tell the difference.

In walks a third stripper carrying this inflatable doll. She hands it off to the little man and blows him a kiss this is unseen by the luchador who is already handing off the doll to the planner beside him.

El Trébol Jr:

And my special request?

Abigail:

Has been redesigned to show your own change with the new company

The final stripper walks through the doors clinging to a pole. And on that pole was the personal flag of El Trébol Jr, green and black in color with the shamrock placed boldly in the center of it. The little man practically hops with joy at the sight, snatching it away and tossing it over his shoulder like it was a civil war musket or one of those stick thingys hobos carried in the cartoons. He gives Abigail once last look.

El Trébol Jr:

You have performed a great service for myself and for DEFIANCE. May God be with you and the odds be ever in your favor and all of that shit.

And with that, El Trébol marches forward, leaving Abigail behind to disappear off-screen, as he returns to the center of the room where the desk and chair had been placed; the open sign was hanging on the front, dark, and the strippers mingled about close enough around the set to make it into the shot.

El Trébol plants the flag at the corner of the desk and moves around behind it, hopping into the desk. The chair was too low to clearly see the little man, so viewers wait for a few moments for the luchador to adjust the chair so he could see over it; oddly enough, the slow ascent of the chair on its spring system added a certain suspense to the scene as the theme from [2001: A Space Odyssey](#) can be heard in the background. Finally adjusted, El Trébol looks at the camera.

El Trébol Jr: [intertwining fingers atop desk]

The greatest travesty that came about because of the closure of Utah was the abrupt ending of its greatest programming, After Hours, where a man such as myself has risen to the top of its mountain as boss. I was distraught that I lost this glorious position, but it seems fate has smiled upon me.

He gestures with both hands held wide to the scene around him.

El Trébol Jr:

Defiance saw it fit to introduce such a production themselves at the very time I have arrived in the company. And what a better addition to it than me, El Trébol Jr, as its leader. Like the great Americans who planted their flag on the moon, I hereby claim ownership of Defiance Uncut. I promise you won't regret it. So without further ado.

El Trébol switches the Open sign on hanging on his desk.

El Trébol Jr:

Let the insanity begin.

Cut.

WELCOME TO THE SHOW

Following the rise to power of El Trebol Jr, the shot cuts to a hallway somewhere in the office wing of the DEFIANCE Wrestle-Plex. This hall in particular finds us looking straight at the front of a basic red door, and on that door it reads in bold white letters...

MISSION CONTROL Television Production

Soon the door swings open and we're greeted by the arrival of DEFIANCE's Executive Producer of Television and Pay Per View, Angus Skaaland. The Motormouth of Malcontent is all smiles as he exits the editing studio.

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Thumbs up and a cheesier grin ensue, breaking the fourth wall as he begins to walk and talk.

Angus Skaaland:

What's up, McFucko's? Welcome to the first ever edition of DEFIANCE UNCUT. You might be wondering, *Angus, what is DEFIANCE UNCUT?*

Angus pops his brow as if it were the proverbial light bulb above his head.

Angus Skaaland:

Well, kiddos, as your avatar, the voice of the Faithful, I'm here to tell you the score. See, we know you love our wrestling, can't get enough of it if there's any truth to these numbers...

He holds up a few sheets of paper.

Angus Skaaland:

You watch our show on Hulu religiously, and our internet paperviews? Buyrates like a motherfucker. Hell, even our new podcast, you love everything we've giving you. You just can't get enough of our brand of wrestling, and I'm not talking about the *wrestling* MUHBOITAI and the Boss Bitch do up in the Pleasure Dome.

He gags a little as he sets aside the stat sheets and continues on his way.

Angus Skaaland:

But not unlike Ty, we do love giving *it* to you, hah.

He snorts like a dork and immediately tries to play it off like it didn't happen.

Angus Skaaland:

Ahem, ANYWAY... I'm sure there's a market for *that*, but **not here**... but if you go searching your favorite underground porn site, I'm sure there is *loads* of [finger quotes] "stolen tapes" [/finger quotes] to service your curiosity.

He snickers to himself.

Angus Skaaland:

Okay, getting on track. You love our wrestling, everyone says it, DEFIANCE is the **best wrestling** in the world and we love giving you the best damn in ring action and we love providing it.

He pauses as he feels the *but* coming on.

Angus Skaaland:

Buuuut... We keep getting asked for **MOAR**, not for just the best damned

wrestling in the world, but **MOAR** everything. **MOAR** content, **MOAR** looks behind the scenes, **MOAR** instant reactions, **MOAR** everything and anything, because **MOAR CUZ MOAR AMIRITE?**

He lets that question hang a little.

Angus Skaaland:

You want **MOAR** of the crazy bastards that perform for this psycho zoo you have come to know and love as... **DEFIANCE**. Well, never say I've never given you what you want, because if you want **MOAR**, then you're gonna get **MOAR...**

The shot cuts to elsewhere.

The Cool Kids Club

The Doctor's Office.

More specifically, the office of Iris Davine, the respected Chief of DEFIANCE Medical (or DEFmed). On her table this evening is the recently savaged Lindsay Troy, fresh off of Bronson Box's retaliatory receipt from ASCENSION. Iris *tsks* while she examines Troy's blood-crusting scalp. The Queen's trying to steel her face from grimacing, but this is a failing effort.

She did just get her proverbial wig split, after all.

Iris Davine:

He did a number on you, child. That stunt with the spike worth this?

Troy grunts, grits her teeth, and doesn't otherwise answer this question.

Iris Davine: [pressing on]

You're lucky he didn't take chunks of scalp with him.

Lindsay Troy: [muttering]

Pays to have a thick head, I guess.

Speaking of thick heads (hiyo?), the door flies open and in walks a pair of gentlemen grapplers who the Good Doctor won't be very pleased to see. Both of them are in good spirits, despite one of them just competing and not coming out on the winning end of the contest. Regardless, Andy Sharp and Tyrone Walker are laughing and smiling as they reminisce about their near death incident at ASCENSION as they breeze into the medical wing.

Tyrone Walker:

And then next thing I know... black.

Andy Sharp:

...I remember getting audience member on me, then the ambulance. That's about it.

Tyrone Walker:

Hah, no doubt! And nooowww.....

Walker trails off as he and Sharp are met with the disapproving gaze of Iris Davine. Did we mention she recommended they not compete tonight? We didn't? Well, she did, but Walker and Sharp got "second opinions" that "overruled her." So you can imagine how good it looks when the two men who went above her head show up in her office, one (Ty) hearing about what happened to his homegirl and the other (Sharp) running into him on his way to see how she's doing.

Tyrone Walker:

...ooh, hey Doc...

Andy Sharp:

Who knew you'd be here... in your office.

Troy looks up at the two arrivals and gives them a weak smirk. Sharp looks at the ground and tries to divert attention anywhere but on them, while Walker shrugs and scratches the back of his neck nervously.

Iris Davine:

Well, how lovely to see the two of you here, *standing*, instead of here, *sitting*, even though you shouldn't be *here at all*.

Tyrone Walker:

C'mon, Doc, yanno you'd miss m--

Walker is shut down by a very stern look from Iris, whose gaze is set upon him like a highly disappointed mother.

Andy Sharp:

Um... uh... Hey, Lindsay...sorry, I didn't even see what happened out there with Box. Ty caught me up in the hallway.

Henry Keyes:

And what a rousing round of storytelling it was indeed!

Where, you might ask, did The Airship Pirate come from? How long has he been standing there? Did he really hear what Andy and TAI!! were talking about? How full or empty is the flask he's currently carrying? The answers to all four questions are unclear. As he takes a particularly long swig with his right hand, his braced left arm finds itself in the middle of a fourteen-second-long handshake with Ty Walker, complete with a Triple Palm Pizza Spreader, a Japanese Dice Rumbler, and a Half Hurley.

Henry Keyes:

How rude of me - would you like a pull?

He gestures his flask towards the doctorly-tabled Queen of the Ring. It takes a second or two for Troy to react, a combination of fatigue and awe over the intricate welcoming gesture between HERBOITAI!! and Keyes.

Lindsay Troy:

How do you guys do that?

Andy Sharp:

What... what? The shit? That was like some otherworldly shit we just saw here. Like... like Jesus spoketh unto us in handshake form. How did you do that?!

Walker and Keyes glance towards each other and shrug as if nothing that had just transpired was at all odd or awe-inspiring. They also don't even utter a word towards each other, though Keyes does offer his flask to Walker, who nods kindly and takes a swig of the Mystery Liquid within.

Tyrone Walker:

Goddamn, that's spicier than a mothafucka.

Keyes then gestures the flask to Andy Sharp expectantly. Sharp looks at the flask, looks at Ty's still-reeling facial expression, and then looks at Henry.

Andy Sharp:

I uh... I'm gonna pass, respectfully. Recoveri--

Andy is cut off when Ty reaches in and snatches the flask.

Tyrone Walker:

More for me then, **hick**

Forgetting his manners completely, Walker takes another pull from the flask, which causes his eyes to squint as he shakes his head quickly.

Tyrone Walker:

hick Goddamn, that's some tasty libations.

Henry, finished with his round of pleasantries, finally takes a look around the room, studying the walls and with an expression as if he was trying to put his finger on why this felt so familiar. His eyes then grow wide with alarm, finally putting the pieces together.

Henry Keyes:

Why, Miss Troy! You're hurt!

Tyrone Walker:

Right! [he suddenly remembers why he's here] What up, Queen Tee? [he takes a closer look at the damage and recoils, Chris Tucker style] Dag, Boxer done did fucked you up, huh? **hick**

Lindsay Troy: [smiles weakly]

I've had worse.

She motions for the flask. Ty pouts a little, not really wanting to share, but does hand it over. His girl got her clock cleaned...she could probably use a drink. Iris Davine looks pissed, but given her history with Keyes and his brace and his general weirdness, opts to leave in a huff rather than attempt to deal with more of these shenanigans. Troy takes a swig and, almost immediately after, shakes her head and winces.

Lindsay Troy:

That's....Jesus.....way bitter....

Henry Keyes:

It's the aerial roots you're tasting.

Troy and Ty each give a "the fuck you just say?" glance at Keyes, who seems unphased.

Henry Keyes:

The Boxer, eh? Good thing you have the parcel I delivered to you upon the conclusion of my last advent---

Keyes stops himself, scanning across the room. He clears his throat a little too loudly. His face flushes slightly.

Henry Keyes:

Er. Ahem.

Walker eyes Keyes and Troy, his intrigue stat maxing out as this is the first he's heard of this gift... or it could be that he's not remembering. He has absorbed many concussions in his career afterall. That Will Smith movie ain't no joke.

Tyrone Walker:

Hold up, hold up, *what* box?

Keyes and Troy lock eyes. Keyes does everything in his power to mind-meld with his friend and relay a message with his Crazy Ginger Eyes, though it's unclear to Troy and the rest of the viewing public what exactly that message is. Troy shrugs out of confusion.

Henry Keyes:

I've said...too much.

Walker's eyes linger on Keyes with a little more intensity until he shakes it off.

Tyrone Walker:

Pssh, a'ight whatever, but seriously, *what* is this goddamn Crackerjack Box prize you got from the Time Lord?

Lindsay Troy:

It's not...a...look, I don't know *what* it is but it's not *here*. It's...safe? I think?

She pauses and Walker gives her a very inquisitive look.

Lindsay Troy:

So long as Tyler stays away from it...

Tyrone Walker:

Maaaan, how you gonna hold out on ya boy like that? Somebody better tell me what in the HALE's goin' on around here!

Afflicted by a dangerous strain of Shiny Object Syndrome, Walker starts digging around in his pocket until he procures his phone.

Tyrone Walker:

I bet the IronBatMan of Wrestling will hook me up with the details.

Andy Sharp does a slight eye-blinking-double-take. Lindsay Troy grimaces, knowing HERBOITAI!! has a trump card in Tyler Rayne's phone number and isn't afraid to use it. Henry Keyes slo-o-o-owly starts backing toward the door, hoping to avoid detection.

Andy Sharp: [confusion growing]

Who are you talking about?

Lindsay Troy:

He's referring to my Ty. And don't call him...I'll tell you later. Alright?

Walker's eyes narrow for a moment before his head begins to bobble, as if rattling the offer around in his head. He puts his phone away and Troy sighs with relief.

Tyrone Walker:

Word... But you're gonna tell me, right? Not like, you're gonna wait for me to have a brain cramp and forget?

Lindsay Troy

Yep. Nope. Not at all. Later. Maybe. Right now, though. [peers around Ty and Andy] You forgetting something?

That was directed at Keyes, who had nearly escaped the room...without his flask. She waves it at him before tossing it his way. Henry nearly fumbles it, but retains control. Everyone else turns to look.

Henry Keyes:

You're a good egg, Miss Troy. I was just departing - there are some personal records of Colonial America that I need to begin investigating. It's good to see you in high spirits.

He shakes his flask at the word "spirits," chuckling to himself for a moment. A collective silent groan from the room. Keyes coughs awkwardly again before smiling widely.

Henry Keyes:

Until next time - GET WELL SOOOOOOoooooooooooo---

He trails off as he exits. Troy slides off the table, ready to get out of there, but Andy Sharp has one more parting question that, right now, seems to have no answer.

Andy Sharp:

Wait...Colonial America?

The Following Preview Is Rated R(for REALLY Awesome)

Wyatt Bronson:

We're about to start moving some more guys inside here, Stanley.

DEFsec Head Honcho and all-around badass Texan Wyatt Bronson says with his signature southern draw as he passes his fellow black shirt just outside the talent entrance. Flicking one last cinder to the ground, he tosses his cigarette down onto the pavement and crushes it under a black cowboy boot.

Wyatt Bronson:

Ain't nothin' goin' on out here anymore.

Jamie Stanley:

I kind of miss the excitement, sometimes.

Jamie Stanley smirks before turning his back to the lot, following his chief back into the arena. The march back to the arena was silent, an awkward need for conversation hung in the air for quite some time before Jamie felt the need to try and make small talk,

Jamie Stanley:

So you ever thought about giving it up?

Wyatt Bronson:

Kickin' ass?

Jamie Stanley:

No, no... Cigarettes. It's an expensive habit.

Wyatt Bronson:

Nah. Keeps me level. I enjoy a good smoke.

Jamie Stanley:

And the litter?

Wyatt Bronson:

Adds character to this mess of potholes and fading lines.

Bronson goes to grab The Door but Jamie quickly pull it open for him,

Wyatt Bronson:

But thanks for your concern, princess.

FEMALE VOICE:

HOLD THAT DOOR!

A high pitch scream echoes from several feet away, causing both men to stop in their tracks and turn back towards the lot. A flash of bright lights temporarily blinds them, leaving them to rub their eyes as a trio of figures approaches. Two of them are smaller in stature, a man and a woman. The man is dressed in what appears to be a custom made suit, presumably hand-made by slave labor in an Asian country, the woman wears what can only be described as 'The Little Black Dress'. Both wear sunglasses. Both seem to be in a hurry. The third? A box over its head and dressed as a commoner. The woman speaks once again,

FEMALE VOICE:

You have no idea the trouble I've been through! I can't believe the traffic you guys have down here in 'Deliverance' country.

MALE VOICE:

Not a single car pool lane for *miles*.

DEFsec just looks back at them dumbfounded,

MALE VOICE:

Doesn't the world know we're too important to sit in traffic?

FEMALE VOICE:

I think I even saw...

The woman pulls off her Prada sunglasses, revealing former PRIME superstar Elise Ares. She tosses them into a matching handbag, her expression is that of a trauma victim.

Elise Ares:

I saw... a homeless person. Just a few feet outside of the entrance. How do you people live with yourselves?

Wyatt Bronson:

I get by just fine, lady. And who the hell are you?

MALE VOICE:

You're joking, right?

The man follows suit and takes off his glasses, flashing a trademark smile that no one knows is trademarked. He is former LoC star, Derek "The D" Edwards.

The D:

Surely you recognize this beautiful face.

Wyatt Bronson:

Can't say I do. I do know that you're interrupting my work.

Elise Ares:

Haha, cut the crap Burt Reynolds. Maybe THIS will jog your memory!

Elise chuckles as she reaches down into her purse, Almost as if she lifted free tickets to the concert of your dreams, she shoves a black cased DVD so far into Bronson's face that it almost tickles his moustache. First he has to take a step back, and then the cover comes into focus.

Wyatt Bronson:

Lake Placid Six... Even Deeper? ... Is that really a movie?

The D:

It's Lake Placid Vi, the hottest internet sensation. Directed by Derek Edwards. Produced by Derek Edwards. Starring...

He dramatically pauses, and used his hands to Vanna White his own face,

The D:

... The D, Derek Edwards.

Elise Ares:

And Elise Ares as your damsel in distress, of course.

The woman ran her hand through her hair, trying to look sexy... and did a pretty damn good job of it,

Elise Ares:

Together we're the Pop Culture Phenoms, and we've come to grace DEFIANCE with our beautiful faces for the first time. I mean look at this! A photographer! A real one, from Hollywood! They're dying to document DEFIANCE's first day with real, honest-to-God stars in the building!

Wyatt Bronson:

And the guy with a box on his head?

Bronson asks, pointing to a man wearing a cardboard box that covers his entire head. Only two eye holes were cut out so he could see. The man blinks and says nothing.

The D:

He's our box man. For when we need boxes. NOT IMPORTANT! Shut up. What is important here SMOKEY, is that you kindly move out of our way and go cause some forest fires so that we can do what we do best.

Wyatt Bronson:

Annoy me?

The D:

Entertain.

Elise Ares:

Actually, I think he's the bandit.

Ed smiles.

Elise Ares:

You're the bandit, right?

Bronson no sells Elise's question and turns to Mr. Edwards.

Wyatt Bronson:

Now listen here, Derek.

The D:

Call me The D.

Derek Edwards smiles, triumphantly.

Wyatt Bronson:

No. I don't think we'll be doing that.

Wyatt bluntly retorts, The D is taken aback.

Wyatt Bronson:

I am the gatekeeper, and neither of you two are getting through my door without credentials.

The D:

We were just signed by Kelly Evans! We're stars! We're internet Meme famous! Hell, we're both former tag champs! Lindsay Troy KNOWS HER! [Ed points to Elise] Jack Harmen knows me! We don't need no stinkin' passes!

Elise Ares:

Yeah!

The D:

Listen, we're running so so very very late... We have an appearance for DEFtv 61 and I know we're causing quite the scene already but we really need to get inside this building so... I have a friend. His name is Alexand-ah...

The D reaches inside of his jacket pocket and pulls out a five dollar bill.

The D:

... Braham Lincoln.

Jamie snatches the five dollar bill from The D. He smiles.

Jamie Stanley:

DEFtv 61 ended an hour and a half ago...

Jamie Stanley looks at his new \$5 bill.

Jamie Stanley:

Nice.

The D:

Hey! Give that back! Or let us in!

The D shouts, only for Bronson to stand between The D and Jamie, arms crossed over his chest.

Jamie Stanley:

No. To both.

The D stomps his feet in annoyance. The man wearing the box walks up to his side and places his hand on The D's shoulder. Ed quickly shrugs him off and began to brush his suit jacket clean.

Wyatt Bronson:

Good night folks. See you never!

Wyatt nods and throws his cigarette away. He shakes his head before turning his back on The D, Elise, The Box Man, and a photographer.

Elise Ares:

WAIT!

Elise screams causing Wyatt Bronson to sigh in frustration. He answers without even turning around.

Wyatt Bronson:

Yes?

Elise Ares:

Dammit, I didn't think you'd answer. Elise looks back at her tag team partner who has already started walking back across the parking lot,

Elise Ares:

HEY! The D! WAIT UP!

Elise Ares scrambles back to catch up to her Pop Culture Phenom brethren, leaving the man with a box on his head and the photographer to follow suit. She reaches out and grabs D by the shoulder and exclaims,

Elise Ares:

I can't even right now!

The D:

I can't believe that idiot didn't recognize us! I bet he doesn't know what a computer is. [Grunts] I swear to God we're going to shove our accomplishments right into his sweet, immaculate, 1970s pornstar stache!

Elise Ares:

It is a good mustache.

The D:

Very good. I am hardly envious, but yet, [Shrug] here we are.

Photographer:

Excuse me...

Elise Ares:

You're not supposed to speak!

Photographer:

Does this mean I'm not getting paid?

The D:

Well lets see here Larry.

Photographer:

Bob.

The D:

Larry... [Condescending] Did we get inside the building?

Photographer:

No?

The D:

Then you don't get paid. We had an agreement. Come on Elise, let's continue being important somewhere else.

Elise Ares:

Hotel bar? Get a few free drinks? Then we can practice our poses for our Defiance photoshoot for the website tomorrow!

The scene fades to black as they wander off.

Charity Work

Cut to a large set of double swing-doors. The words "DEFTv 61: Exclusive Footage!" appear at the bottom of the screen, linger for a few moments, then dissipate. The doors eventually burst open, and through them come the Murray Brothers, Andy and Cayle, whose business for the night has long since concluded. We catch them mid-conversation.

Cayle Murray:

... he might not look particularly threatening, but Bobby's got a streak in him, chief. Especially when Eric gets inside his head.

Andy Murray:

He probably wouldn't be here if he didn't, right?

Both are casually dressed (Cayle's in a tee, Andy's got an unzipped track jacket) with big, black holdalls slung over their shoulders. They make their way into the dimly-lit parking garage and scan the still-unfamiliar surroundings once or twice.

Andy Murray:

Do you even remember where we parked? Because I certainly don't.

Cayle Murray:

Yeah, uhh...

The younger sibling turns his head to the right, immediately locating their rental car: a modest white Chrysler with minimal bells and whistles, picked-up from the airport. He points towards it, but something else catches his eye.

Cayle Murray:

Over there, right next to the...

Andy squints.

Andy Murray:

... ridiculous limousine?

Cayle Murray:

Yeah. That.

The stretch Hummer is idling in place. A chauffeur is busy loading an unnerving amount of bags into the vehicle. The lights inside are all lit up and music plays loudly, escaping through the opened door.

Andy Murray:

What kind of eff-boy rolls out of the DEFarena in a limo?

Cayle puts his hand to his brow and squints.

Cayle Murray:

I've got a decent idea...

Almost as if on cue, Mikey Unlikely, DEFIANCE's only Hollywood superstar saunters into view towards the limo. He is on a cell phone barking loudly back at whomever he is talking to. He sees the two men out of his peripherals and stops in his tracks. He smiles and hangs up without a word.

Mikey Unlikely:

MURRAYS!

Cayle Murray: (sighing):
Great.

Andy Murray:
Oh look, it's Johnny Drama.

The Scottish King of Cool cracks a smile.

Andy Murray:
How's the straight-to-DVD game treating you, lad?

Mike chuckles and turns at the waist pointing to his stretch limousine.

Mikey Unlikely:
How's it look... LAD!? Wonderful as always! Anyway I'm glad I bumped into you guys! It looks like Frankie here needs some help loading these bags into the car. Do you mind!? I know you guys might be having a hard time finding work these days, and Mikey is always one to help!

He pulls a large money clip from his front pocket. He pops it open and begins to peel off \$100 dollar bills before being interrupted by the pair.

Cayle Murray:
What are you doing, Mikey?

Mikey Unlikely:
Just doing my bit for charity...

He holds a couple of bills towards the brothers, then flicks his eyes towards their vehicle.

Mikey Unlikely:
Here, this'll help you pay for the upgrade next time.

Deeply unimpressed, Big Murr rolls his eyes.

Andy Murray:
You know this guy, right?

Cayle Murray:
Sadly, yes.

Andy Murray:
How do we make him go away?

Instead of answering his elder brother, Cayle turns his attention to Mikey and pushes his bill-toting hand away.

Cayle Murray:
You're hilarious, Mikey. Have a nice night.

The pair began to walk away from the certified megalomaniac, until an outstretched arm of his blocks Cayle's path. Murray stops and looks back up.

Mikey Unlikely:
Woah...woah...woah! Where are you going!? I'll give this one a pass...

Mikey points to the elder Murray.

Mikey Unlikely:

But Cayle you know better! You know how valuable my time is!

He is about to finish his thought but once again Cayle cuts him off.

Cayle Murray:

Your time? I know mine is too valuable to stand here and listen to your cheese all night. We already established over in that other place that we just don't get along. Let's leave it at that.

Unlikely frowns. He visibly looks agitated. He finally puts the money clip back, and readjusts his clothing. His eyes never leave those of Cayle.

Mikey Unlikely:

Well aren't you Mr. Friendly! Fine, if that's the way you want it Cayle, than so be it. Here I am trying to be the bigger man, and help out a couple of bros and this is your reaction!? I'll be seeing you around the locker rooms, since you cannot help but live in my shadow...

He looks up at the elder brother.

Mikey Unlikely:

But I guess you're used to that then, aren't you Cayle?

Thought he smirks, it's pretty evident that Andy Murray has had enough of Mikey Unlikely to last him a lifetime.

Andy Murray:

Here's the thing, Mick: my brother's already told me a thing or two about you, but I like to give people the benefit of the doubt until I meet 'em. But then I saw that Michael Bay-choreographed entrance of yours, then I saw you stuffing 400 bags into the back of that ridiculous car, and then you opened your mouth...

He leans forward.

Andy Murray:

You pissed him off in Utah, and you're dangerously close to pissing me off in DEFIANCE. But here's the difference between me and my brother: you get on his bad side, and he'll politely challenge you to a match in a week or so. Me? I'll pick you up, carry your arse down to the ring, and we'll solve our little problem there and then. Understand?

Unlikely stalls for a second. He takes a step back from the leaning Andy Murray. Clearly he has become uncomfortable. His eyes find his limo before he turns back to the pair.

Mikey Unlikely:

...Oh yea I understand, Just like you should understand that I am the star around here! Not you, and not your little tag-a-long brother. Mikey does everything big! Now If you'll excuse me I have to...

Andy takes a step towards Mikey, but The World's Greatest Entertainer turns quickly and darts towards his vehicle. He dives into the open door, not even realizing that the Murrays are not in fact chasing him. He orders his driver...

Mikey Unlikely:

Let's get the hell out of here!

The chauffeur looks confused.

Chauffeur:

But sir, I still have about half the bags...

Mikey Unlikely:

NOW! Screw It! I'll buy NEW shit!

Two Scottish faces twist with confusion as Mikey's driver runs around the vehicle to the driver's side door. He pushes the ignition and takes off with a squeal of the tires, the long heavy vehicle fails to move very quickly however.

Andy Murray:

Christ, I'd love to get my hands on that lad.

Cut.

Two Scotsmen Walk Into a Wrestling Arena

We cut to DEFIANCE newcomer Andy Murray striding down a corridor. Decked-out in a plain gray tee and some well-cut black jeans, the 21-year veteran is all-smiles tonight despite last week's heated altercation with Eric Dane.

Dorothy is nowhere to be found.

Andy Murray:

Pretty swish place, huh? All custom-built, especially for DEFIANCE. Touring's great and all, but it's nice to have a real home base.

His brother might not be there, but he doesn't walk alone. A strapping, burly sidekick walks beside him, scanning his eyes around the DEFarena's innards. Wearing a pair of blue jeans and a blue Polo Shirt, the man has a nervous smile on his face as he nods in agreement. His short black hair is left to roughly give off an unkempt feel as the growing layer of struggle frames his face, his eyes switching to look back at Murray.

Not Andy Murray:

Aye. To be honest mate, it's just great to have a home again. Thanks again for setting this up.

The other man's Scottish accent is far thicker than Andy's borderline-Americanised cadence, but his words are perfectly understandable. His attention is lost momentarily looking over at a poster for DEFIANCE Road, before being brought back by the words of his cohort.

Andy Murray:

Things are a little different around here compared to the last place you were at, lad. Not much sports entertainment pomp and circumstance to be found in this building, unless you're watching a Mikey Unlikely ring entrance.

Murray stops, prompting his companion to do the same. The large man does, evidently deeply entrenched in the words of the former multi-time champion, taking in advice like a sponge.

Andy Murray:

This is a wrestler's promotion above all else: just know that going into this thing.

The man nods, his shoulders relaxed as he responds thoughtfully.

Not Andy Murray:

Aye, I've been watching the shows for quite a while now Andy, and the level of competition here is simply another level. I always said I was coming into this industry to learn from the best and I see this as the ideal anvil on which to mould my steel. I have no doubt at all that it's going to be a challenge, but a challenge I'm ready for.

Andy Murray:

No doubt. I know you know how to throw down, big man. It's just a little something to keep in-mind.

The Scottish King of Cool glances over his compatriot's right shoulder. The door's got a shiny golden plaque on it, but it's not quite readable.

Andy Murray:

How are you feeling? Any nerves?

The tentative laugh betrays the mixed emotions of the man.

Not Andy Murray:

You could say that again! It's been over eight months since I've stepped into a competitive ring back in June where two years of training were ended in an instant. But those eight months have been invaluable. Yes, I'm nervous mate, but I know I can do it this time out.

Andy Murray:

Relax. Take a deep breath and remember that this is just another step on the road, brother. You've worked long and hard to get back to this point -- I know, I've watched you -- and as soon as you shake hands and sit yourself down, they're gonna know it too.

Not Andy Murray:

Aye. You're right. I'm just thrilled to get another shot.

Finally, the unnamed gent shakes away his trepidation. Andy flicks his eyes back towards the door.

Andy Murray:

Probably don't want to keep them waiting much longer though. Good luck.

The large Scot nods and extends his hand to Murray, who shakes it willingly.

Not Andy Murray:

Thanks again pal for setting this all up. You know I owe you a lot; not just for this but...for everything.

Andy smiles and motions towards the door, as the man turns and knocks courteously on the surface. After a glance back at the reassuring expression of Andy Murray, he twists the handle, creaking the door open and walks in.

Second Verse, Same As the First

A video feed plays showing two men dressed in black Red Dragon Fight Team t-shirts. One man, an Indian man, stands taller than the shorter, stubbier individual inside of, a ring more suited to the stylings of a boxing/kickboxing ring. This ring having 4 white ropes instead of the traditional 3 rope design.

The larger of the two begins speaking:

1st man:

Good evening, DEFIANCE! My name is Ravi Moon, senior trainer of the Red Dragon Fight Team. Welcome to our first installment of 'Critical Breakdown', where tonight my assistant Patrick and myself are going to breakdown the technique that turned the tide around for Sam in his match against Jake Donovan at Ascension: The Calf Slicer. You may also have heard it called the Calf Crusher, or Calf Killer.

Patrick:

Speed was a huge factor going in, and we knew that Jake would have a major speed advantage over Sam. During training, Ravi and Sam drilled this one hold probably more than anything else.

Ravi:

During the match, Sam would shoot in for the takedown, and Jake would get out of the way every time. That's because the key to this hold is isolating the leg.

Video plays of Jake stopping Sam's takedown attempts in the early part of the match.

Ravi:

Sam had to keep it together mentally and look for any openings that he could not create on his own. Then it finally came later in the match, when Donovan went for the spinning kick. Sam executed a drop toe hold, and sank in the submission. We are going to demonstrate it from the drop toe hold.

****WARNING: DO NOT TRY THIS AT HOME!****

Ravi takes Patrick down with a drop toe hold. A side by side shot plays of Sam from Ascension and Ravi applying the same hold.

Ravi:

This version of the Calf Slicer applies pressure to the shin, the calf and the knee all at once. Now, I'm not going to cinch in the hold fully, but what happens here is that the angle and the pressure of the hold first dramatically slows the blood flowing to everything below the knee.

The same shot plays again and then freezes for Ravi to illustrate the next point.

Ravi:

While this is happening, Sam squeezes against Jake's leg, sandwiching Jake's calf in between Sam's two-handed grip called the 'Gable Grip' and Jake's own shin. As if his mean streak weren't long enough, Sam adds extra torque by turn his own wrist on a 45 degree angle, putting additional pressure on Jake's calf.

With the footage playing in real time, Ravi finishes speaking.

Ravi:

Jake is tough, trying to fight his way out of the hold, but the loss of blood to the lower half of his leg, combined with the compressing of his calf is too much, and eventually has to have the hold broken, or risk serious damage to his calf muscle.

The footage stops playing, as Ravi and Patrick both stand to their feet.

Patrick:

This hold turned the tide of the fight, slowing down the noticeably faster Jake Donovan, and allowing Sam to open up with pinpoint, and devastating strikes which eventually led to Sam's win via Ground and Pound.

Ravi:

We hope you've enjoyed the first installment of 'Critical Breakdown'. Join us next time, as we provide more insight and analysis into the style and technique of Sam Horry.

Cut.

The Keyes to Research

Henry Keyes is at the DEFplex. He isn't on his Airship, the mysteries of what is inside the fabled time traveling machine remain hidden. Keyes is sitting in one of the upstairs conference room. Spread out before him is what looks to be a lot of work.

Keyes picks up a large manilla envelope. Thumbing through the contents he finds the piece of information he was looking for, takes it out of his rudimentary filing system and places it on the mahogany table. It's a letter, handwritten, on worn and aged parchment.

Keyes presses a button on the arm and a compartment opens up. He fetches the monicile. The same one he used to stare a hole through Van Carver on last week's DEFTV.

Henry Keyes:

Yes John, but what were you trying to say.

Keyes shakes his head. He's frustrated.

Henry Keyes:

This is getting me nowhere!

Keyes slides the letter away for a second. He looks at all the large files laid out on the conference table.

Henry Keyes:

This is most strange, most strange indeed. The blood of John Carver, THEE John Carver, here. And now. Most strange indeed.

Keyes looks at a print out. A picture of a man wearing Pilgrim garb. Well a picture of a picture of a man. The image is a portrait that John Carver had drawn for himself when first landing in Plymouth Rock.

Henry Keyes:

John, you always seemed to turn up at the most random of times. I'm just having a difficult time figuring out what you're saying.

Keyes says the words too the photo, as if it will answer him. He waits for a response for a moment but then he shakes it off. Instead he reaches around his neck and produces a vial. Inside the strand of Van Carver's hand that Keyes stole last week.

Henry Keyes:

And you my friend, what are you doing here?

The mystery continues as the scene fades.

A Look Back

A shaky camera starts to flicker to life as the words “During DEFtv #61” appear in the lower right corner of the screen. In the middle of the hall, the camera makes out the faces of a sweaty, but victorious Angel Trinidad and his manager, Thomas Keeling Sr. walking up to Thomas’ personal bodyguard, Team HOSS member Capital Punishment. Cappy approaches the duo and slaps hands with Angel in a sign of respect, even sporting a very rare grin.

Capital Punishment:

Way to show your shit out there, killer. James and Natas are no pushovers, but you worked through them both and made it look easy.

Angel Trinidad:

Natas can throw a punch... but I put that never-was in his place.

Thomas Keeling, Sr:

It’s a shame. I think with my tutelage, I could make that New York roughneck into something, but he’d rather slum it up by himself. Oh, well, not my concern. DEFIANCE has its diamond in the rough right here with Team HOSS and that’s all we need.

The manager for Team HOSS looks around the hallway.

Thomas Keeling, Sr:

Speaking of my charges... either of you seen Aleczaider anywhere? I want to have a word with him before his tag team match.

Angel silently shrugged.

Capital Punishment:

Nope. Last I’ve seen him, he was palling around with that idiot, Booya.

Thomas Keeling, Sr:

Hey, say what you want about him. His intelligence... well, that’s always in question. But in between those ropes, long as somebody is there to steer the ship like myself or Mr. Penn, he can carry himself quite well. I always keep an eye for talent.

As the three men continue to discuss business, another pair of men round the corner...

Loudly...

VERY LOUDLY!

“WHO’S GONNA WHUPPP DAT BOAH, DUSTEH, TONIGHT?”

“ME, MATE! THAT FUCKIN’ WANKER IS GONNA GET IT!”

Cappy buries his face in his palm as Angel and Keeling both watch the recently-minted Super Muscle Bros walk up. One can tell ASCENSION is still fresh on The Big Brit’s mind, coming off what many have called finest singles match to date in DEFIANCE, but still a defeat nonetheless.

Thomas Keeling, Sr:

[nodding to Jonny Booya] Mister... Booya.

Jonny Booya looks pretty confused as to how to respond to Keeling's old-school show of respect, so he tries to stick a hand out and engage in one of those convoluted handshakes.

Jonny Booya:

Gimme some skin, boah!!!

He tries to extend a fist out for Keeling to take, but Thomas will have no part of it and just looks at him blankly. Opting for a new strategy, Booya opts for an awkward bro-hug now and Keeling nearly has his spine squashed in two!

Thomas Keeling, Sr:

Um... [struggling to breathe] That will be enough.

Aleczaider tugs on Booya's shirt to get him to let go and the meathead finally does. Keeling coughs and then adjusts his suit to make sure it remains immaculate. Meanwhile, Angel turns to Aleczaider.

Angel Trinidad:

Alec, Mister Keeling wants a word with you about tonight.

The Big Brit looks to the bossman of Team HOSS.

Aleczaider The Great:

Sure, bossman, what can I do for you.

Thomas Keeling, Sr:

Aleczaider... ASCENSION was what many called the finest performance of your singles career. Before I took you under my wing, people looked at you as some vapid airhead with a modicum of talent in that ring. At ASCENSION, critics said that you took Dusty Griffith - former DEFIANCE World Champion - to his very limit. Dusty is no slouch and you came incredibly close to defeating him.

Jonny Booya:

Right, you almost whupped that BOAH!

Aleczaider The Great:

That's right, I got people talking! Thanks for the vote of confidence, mate!

But the look on Keeling's face shifts almost instantly.

Thomas Keeling, Sr:

...No. That's what OTHER people are saying... not me, though. You LOST, Aleczaider. Mister Trinidad defeated the toughest man on DEFIANCE's roster and BEAT him until the point that he couldn't get up. Jonny Booya took Jason Natas - a skilled fighter in his own right - and beat him soundly. You LOST.

The look on Aleczaider's face suddenly goes sour as he realizes that Keeling is genuinely not happy. However, there is a ray of hope.

Thomas Keeling, Sr:

However... tonight, you and Mister Booya have a chance to rectify what happened at ASCENSION. Tonight, the Super Muscle Brothers... [shuddering at the name] ...you have the chance to fix that. Take the Worldbreakers and SHOW them that we run this place now.

Trinidad turns to the muscleheads.

Angel Trinidad:

DON'T. FUCK. THIS. UP.

Capital Punishment:

What he said.

Keeling nods.

Thomas Keeling, Sr:

You have your marching orders, gentlemen. Make Team HOSS proud.

Booya and Alezander nod.

Jonny Booya:

Thanks fer' takin' me inta this BROTHAHOOD OF BIG BOAHS, Mister Keeling! We're gonna FUCK THEM UP!!!
TEAM HOSS-MB!

Alezander The Great:

For Team HOSS-MB!!!!

The two muscleheads slam their arms together and then flex right in the middle of the hall before letting out a simultaneous roar to psych themselves up for their huge match before they both go wandering off down the hallway. Cappy, Trinidad, and Keeling all exchange confused and/or annoyed glances before Thomas turns to Angel Trinidad.

Thomas Keeling, Sr:

If things start going south out there, Angel, you know what to do.

Trinidad nods silently before the rest of the Team HOSS collective head down the opposite end of the hall as the scene fades out.

Old Habits

The aluminum doors raise with all of the noise of the gears grinding and motor engaging. The light from the outside begins to filter in through the small crack that is produced by the movement of the door lifting. Temporarily blind, it takes a moment for the eyes to adjust from the dim lighting of the corridor to the natural lighting that filters into the loading area underneath the Wrestle-Plex.

Normally one would inhale deeply, trying to gather whatever fresh air one could extract from the New Orleans area, but not this time. This time the breathing is shallower and through the mouth, because the air is foul. It makes the inside of the nose itch and burn, offensively musty, acrid, overpowering. It encompasses and dominates all other neighboring smells and it lingers on clothes, walls, in your car and olfactory. Cigarette smoke, the staining odor, that leaves the white cinder block walls yellow around the smoking post set 10 feet from the door.

Even after a lifetime of enjoying the burn of his lungs, the on going search for either the lighter or the cigarette, and sometimes only having the habit when it comes right down to it Eric Dane stands empty handed 10 feet or more from the cluster of die-hards.

The Only Star taps away at his Android, lost in thought, not breaking concentration even as a pair of New Balance come into view.

Eric Dane:

No, I do not have a smoke you can bum, so if you could politely back the fuck off that'll be great.

Eric releases the long sigh that says, " You're fucking crowding me," while he presses the send button on his Android.

The shoes do not back off as warned.

Eric Dane:

Aight fuck-o...

Eric slides the phone into his back pocket, then slowly looks up, preparing that cold stare that has sent people packing est. 1995.

Eric Dane:

Ah, fuck, it's just you.

The Only Star spits out a wad of mucus when he notices that the shoes belong to Curtis Penn.

Curtis Penn:

I've been looking for you for days.

Dane screws his eyebrow up.

Eric Dane:

I'm not that hard to find.

Curtis Penn:

Yeah, well, people around here don't exactly like to deal straight with me. I've been running around in circles since TV61.

Eric Dane:

Yeah, well, if you weren't such a flaming douche-wagon at all times...

He trails off, Penn shrugs.

Curtis Penn:

Is what it is, I guess.

The two stand there in awkward silence for a moment. The End Boss goes back to his phone and Penn does everything he can not to start twiddling his fingers.

Curtis Penn:

So, ah...

Eric Dane:

Spit it out, Curt. What do you want?

Curtis Penn:

Thought you quit?

Curtis gives a curious look at the phone in Eric's hands.

Curtis Penn:

Then again any amount of time dealing with Kels will make you pick the habit back up. Amiright?

The Only Star cocks his head, trying his hardest not to go full facepalm.

Eric Dane:

Do I look like I'm smoking?

Curtis looks around the loading ramp and then back at Dane.

Curtis Penn:

You're out here aren't ya?

Eric shrugs.

Eric Dane:

Old habits I guess. Now what's your problem with Kelly? She's done right by DEFIANCE for my little vacation in Utah, and she only gave you a ration of shit because you're remarkably impossible to deal with. How I haven't kicked you in the face yet is beyond me, and I don't even hate you.

Curtis gives an exaggerated huff.

Curtis Penn:

We're talking about the same curved nailed, snake haired, shrieking harpy that lives it up in the Skybox. The same gargoyle that watches for any opportunity to place Ty Walker in my way and makes it necessary for me to carry DEFIANCE while she plays snake charmer with Walker's blackaconda?! Is that the same Kelly Evans that you're talking about! But, I'm hard to deal with, while she allows Boxer and Troy to carve each other up. While she lets Dork Lord Dewey and Dan Ryan do whatever the hell they want to do. While all I do is promote DEFIANCE, but I'm hard to deal with!

Penn gives a little chuckle.

Curtis Penn:

You're little walkabout brought you back with a sense of humor. I wonder if it brought you back with any sort of balls?

The End Boss holds up a hand, stopping Penn in his tracks.

Eric Dane:

Curtis, use your brain for a minute. Is this really the route you wanna take with me? I brought Kels to DEFIANCE. I groomed her for the job personally, and I've endorsed her on every possible level. Do you really think talking shit about her is gonna help your fuckin' cause? Or do you think it's gonna raise my ire?

He cocks his brow again, expectantly.

Curtis Penn:

Eric, buddy, I'm not trying to piss you off. Really, I'm not, I just need for someone to understand that Kelly is only doing for Kelly. Ty, Kelly, and you go waaaaay back, I get it. But, didn't you groom someone else?

There is a long silence between the two. Exasperated, Dane sighs.

Eric Dane:

Look, kid, Kelly's the boss. It is what it is. If and when she does something wrong, and no matter how mad you are that you lost to a girl that wasn't Kelly's fault, then I'll step in. Until then, she's the boss, and what she says goes. You know, for the most part.

Curtis Penn:

Yeah, well, whatever. You just promise me you'll have my back once I bring you some proof that Tits McGhee is bad news for DEFIANCE, okay?

Dane contemplates this.

Eric Dane:

Fine. Just don't come at me with some bullshit. Otherwise I cave your head in and move on, capiche? I really don't have the time to be bothered with this unless it's serious.

"Heavy is the Head" blares from the tiny speaker in Eric's Android. He looks down at his phone and swipes up, answering the phone call and raising the "just a minute" finger right in Curtis Penn's face.

Eric Dane:

Angus? Yeah. I'm on my way up.

The End Boss vaguely notions toward Penn to get back to him later as he walks away, all of his concentration switched from Penn to the little black phone in his hand.

Curtis Penn:

Well ain't that about a bitch?

Meanwhile, at the La Quinta Inn (and Suites!)

It's a sickeningly gorgeous day in the deep South.

Let's call it Florida; that seems close enough, right?

Sunlight shimmers across the kinda/sorta not green but kinda/sorta not chlorinated swimming pool at one of the local La Quinta Inn (& Suites!) in Pensacola, it doesn't matter which one. The sun kisses the skin of one of Richard P. Gardulo in a way that makes the ladies blush and the men question their sexual identities.

But you don't know Li'l Richie P, no, he's something entirely else to you.

You know him as The Love Machine, Rich Mahogany.

"Spackle it on thick, Donny my boy, The Rich Man ain't leaving this pool without an escort of at least three, count 'em onetwothree of Florida's juiciest oranges! And by oranges, I mean chicks, ya dig?"

Don Hollywood... green speedos, matching green sunglasses and towel *sigh* ... squirts a handful of suntan lotion into his free hand, smearing it all over his exposed bits and pieces.

"I'm here to get a nice crispy exterior, my man. Nothing pulls the snizz like a Montalbán-like roasting. 'Sides, we gotta look good for the camera's next time DEFIANCE comes calling!"

Rich scoffs.

"Ooooooh yeah, gotta' stay lookin' ring ready, never know when Kels might call with a booking!"

The comment drips with sarcasm and Rich rolls his eyes so far back in his head that you'd think it was painful. After a moment of contemplation he goes rummaging around in the front of his mauve mankini bottoms and produces a handful of his ever-present hotel keycards.

"Do us a favor, Don-ho, go find some fishies and reel 'em in with these here bait cards. Richie-Rich ain't got the time to lose his steez waitin' on Jelly Evans to notice him. Besides I hear she prefers the dark meat iffnyaknowateyemean..."

The Ladies Man flips open a pair of gas station sunglasses and props them perfectly across the bridge of his nose before lounging back on the ugly yellow vinyl "beach" chairs provided by the motel. Don taps his green plastic flip flopped foot shaking his head in mock disgust.

"Bromine... you know I'm usually down to clown around. You know this. I literally went to clown college back in the mid 90's. Fact. But... man I'm goddamn tired of being a jobber. They took our GODDAMN profiles off the website, did you see this?"

Rich looks up from his smartphone.

"What? Ugh.. come on man, when have we EVER cared about shit like that? Angus is our A-number one home dog for life slash best customer, we've got this gig for life if we want it. Don't sweat it."

Rich goes back to mindlessly flipping around his phone (see: looking at porn.)

Don finishes greasing himself up, lost in thought...

"You know what? No!"

Hollywood suddenly smacks the phone out of Rich's hands.

"DUDE!"

“Fuck, wow, sorry... I’m, I’m sort of excited, shut up. Listen.”

Rich begrudgingly stands up, scooping up his brand new smartphone with the huge crack in the screen.

Don-Ho hooks one lotion lathered gun around Rich’s shoulder.

“See here pal o’mine... “

Don whips off his sunglasses with a little flourish, pointing them out over the pool at nothing in particular.

“Yeah, we’re squeekin’ by right now. We’re road doggin’ it in a rental car my EX-WIFE paid for. Not pullin’ much tail in the baby-shit green Ford P.O.S. you can’t deny that shit Richie, lemme tell ya’. Before the other night’s drubbing against those two grinning Scottish Utah pricks, the last time you and I saw the inside of the Wrestle-Plex the fans were still rootin’ for Frank Holiday, are you pickin’ up what I’m layin’ down my sleezy friend? Man I’m 90% sure Kelly Evans thinks my name is, hand on the goddamn good book, RON HOLLOWAY... I shit you not, sir.”

Rich narrows his eyes and tilts his head slightly, confused.

“You’re awful at this.”

“Hush, stick with me here... yeah, we could shrug our well defined shoulders and go off and find a couple of... weeeeell, let’s say hefty lasses to warm our beds tonight. Spend the weekend pullin’ our puds in south Florida, or... or, Richie... or... we change our GODDAMN situation!”

Rich’s head snaps back a little, his eyes open a little wider. Don’s actually managed to grab Rich’s attention away from the drug addled gremlins that live between his ears.

“Tell me Rich Mahogany, aren’t you sick of not fuckin’ GETTIN’ a taste? Sittin’ here on the house show circuit with the BRAZEN brats watchin’ all these Utah FUCKS waltz in and kick us off OUR goddamn roster? Some sawed off midget grasshopper power ranger lookin’ SIDESHOW ACT just took your spot! How does that REALLY make you feel, big man? HOW DOES THAT MAKE YOU FEEEEEL SIIIIIR?!”

We can see the little cartoon gears chugging and turning in his noggin’... almost... there we go.

LEVEL UP! [Rich Mahogany: +1 Perception]

“Wait a tit, do you mean to say that we’ve been undervalued, overlooked, passed over, and put out to pasture, and that BRAZEN shows pay less than main roster shows, EVEN WITH MY IRON-CLAD CONTRACT in place?”

Don raises an eyebrow.

“Man, you signed your contract on the back of a Dorito bag. In mustard. OF COURSE we’ve been passed over! We’ve been hip-swiveling our way to mediocrity for MONTHS now!”

The bottom lip of The Ladies Man quivers, but not in a way he used to it quivering.

“AAAAAAAAAAW MAAAAAAN FUCK THAT SHIZ! Rich Mother Effin’ Mahogany don’t play second banana to no Utah Green Beans or anybody else! It’s high time that we remind those DEFIANCE types just exactly who dem Angel City boys are and what they’re all about!

(Ass, Money, and Cheap Footwear.)

Don-Ho grins a big satisfied chemically whitened grin, his partner finally on board. He doesn’t blame the poor lad, you see kids... Rich Mahogany has smoked a TREMENDOUS amount of marijuana both today and in life in-general. So...

cut the poor man some fuckin' slack, okay?

Rich and Don both look around, bewildered in dead silence.

"Rich... "

"Yeah Don?"

"Who the fuck was that talking just then?"

Rich shrugs.

"Wasn't me. But he's right, I do smoke a metric shit ton of dope. Pretty sure if I stopped cold turkey my system would reject the excess oxygen and probably just shut down completely. No lies."

Don-Ho narrows his eyes and crosses his arms, pouting a little bit... very unbecoming...

"Man, I told you we shouldn't have picked up that Onion from that plague doctor lookin' dude on that Airship that appeared out of the mist that night when the moon was full... what was his goddamn name? Kevin? Devin? Some millennial sounding bullshit like that. Couldn't hear a word he said behind that dildo mask or whatever the hell it was supposed to be. Like I always say my man, don't I always say? Never trust mysterious shit that appears out of nowhere man, ALWAYS goddamn trouble. Always."

You two really should watch your language.

"OKAY... did you just hear that... "

Rich shrugs and plops back down on the ugly yellow lawn furniture.

Don looks around confused as we fade up and out.

"Seriously though, who the fuck is that, what... goddamnit, fuck you Devin you little shit. Fuck you and the mysterious Airship you rode in on."

"I haven't been roofied this hard since Burning Man."

Job Interview

Inside the Pleasure Dome, the lights are low and the curtains to the large picture window are open looking out upon the Wrestle-Plex. Kelly Evans sits behind her desk, dressed casually for an “off day” (well, as casually as one who has used the moniker “Whore Next Door” for nearly twenty years can be without being obscene) and fiercely concentrating on the papers in her hands.

Kelly Evans:

Well, your work history is spotty at best. I mean, look at this right here, you’ve worked for one company in the last seven years and, quite frankly, I’m not impressed.

She shuffles through the papers, adjusts her reading glasses, and continues.

Kelly Evans:

Not to mention, look at these references...

“Hey!”

Tyrone Walker, the almighty Black Jesus of professional wrestling and the personal scratching post for the boss, excitedly chimes in.

Tyrone Walker:

Dag woman, that’s cold, you know damn well I’m the only reference on that sheet!

Kelly Evans:

That’s part of my point, sweetie. If we hired every one of your friends that you referred, the locker room would look like Black Friday at a Chinese Wal-Mart.

A voice interjects from off-screen.

“Look Kels, Ty called and said you needed help, I’m here.”

Seated next to Walker is the long-time partner in crime, “blood” brother, and co-founder of Team Danger, the big angry hamster, the “King of Pain” himself, Stephen Greer.

Stephen Greer:

I love this look on you, Kels, it’s great. Finally putting all these years to use and taking charge. It’s pretty hot, actually.

Tyrone Walker:

Whoa there, don’t make me summon my inner 2Pac.

Stephen Greer:

Chill. My point is that I’m here because you’re spread too thin and unlike every other situation in your life, being spread isn’t going to save you.

Walker can’t help himself but to throw up the open palm for a big high five. The fire in his old lady’s eyes, however, sends him sinking into his chair.

Stephen Greer:

All joking aside, I’m just here to help you out. We’re not trying to get the band back together or take over. I know you’re on edge because Eric just came back, too, but come on, you really think I want this kind of responsibility?

Thinking it over and realizing that her friend is an impossible flake, she smiles.

Kelly Evans:

You need to relax a little. I try and have a little fun and you lose your mind. This is why you could never get a normal job outside of the circus. You two could always dish it out, but never really take it.

Tyrone Walker:

So we're good to start causing a ruckus and stealing all da golds?

Kelly Evans:

Hold up. I have to talk to Eric and see if Stevie can even be in the building. He WAS fired, after all.

Stephen Greer:

Pssh, I'm not trying to wrestlefuck Jimmy Kort anymore, or fist Dan Ryan.

Tyrone Walker:

Yo, that's not what that means.

Kelly claps to reset her rolling eyes.

Kelly Evans:

And even if you CAN come back, I have enough idiots under the lights, I don't need that kind of help.

Stephen Greer:

We'll figure it out.

Everyone nods, silently agreeing to revisit this later. Seeing his opening, Ty interjects.

Tyrone Walker:

Now let's talk about that other business...

Greer's eyes spark with a new interest, while glancing at Walker and then back at Evans with a nod. Cocking her head slightly, Kelly's left brow rises as she prepares to hear what's next...

Annnnd Cut.

Earn my Spot

The camera switches to backstage where a large door with the large golden plaque opens, allowing a shadow to protrude onto the floor. From the inside, the figure of the large Scottish gentleman from earlier appears. He lets the door slowly close behind him and the large frame of his chest visibly rises and falls with a long sigh.

He looks to his left and then to his right before looking down at his arched wrist to check the watch hanging in place.

“Lamond...”

The voice from off screen captures the man’s attention who looks to his side and smiles at the buxom figure gracefully stepping into view, DEFIANCE Interviewer Christie Zane.

LAR:

Christie! Hi! I recognise you from television, this is a pleasure - how are you?

The large Scot, evidently new DEFIANCE singer Lamond Alexander Robertson immediately extends his hand to the oncoming blonde who shakes it with a bright smile on her face.

Christie Zane:

Hi Lamond, thanks! Let me be the first to welcome you to the Wrestle-Plex. Now we all just saw you coming out of management’s office; any insight into your status here with DEFIANCE Wrestling?

Robertson releases her hand and stretches back, the smile on his face grows wider, incapable of hiding his joy in the moment.

LAR:

Well, Christine, it’s been a long road. Eight months since I stepped into a ring, but as of right now I am delighted to announce that Lamond Robertson is officially a part of the DEFIANCE roster!

The delight on the Scot’s face is obvious, as Zane nods and raises her mic back to speak.

Christie Zane:

Congratulations! It’s great to see so much of a new talent influx into DEFIANCE, but with all the names recently joining the roster here are you worried you might get lost in the shuffle?

Lamond chuckles, looking down at the ground before back up at Zane.

LAR:

Aye, I’m delighted to be here but I wouldn’t worry about getting lost in the shuffle. Look, Christine, I know my spot around here and when you got guys like Eric Dane, Dusty Griffith and a man I respect more than any other Andy Murray on the roster I know I’m going to have to earn my spot.

Christine nods and steadies herself for the inevitably difficult question.

Christie Zane:

Now, it’s well documented that you suffered a horrific injury at the hands of Alex Beckman. How do you think that will affect your chances here in DEFIANCE and how has your recovery been?

Lamond raises his right arm, looking down at it as he twists it deliberately back and forth.

LAR:

You know Christine I won’t lie, it’s been a difficult journey coming back from that night in June. To have finally found something you love, something your family can be proud of...and to have it ripped away from you after just six months? That’s devastating, you know? But I fought through the pain, got back into the gym and made sure one little road block

wouldn't stop me!

He lowers his arm and looks back at Zane.

LAR:

And it's taught me Christine; it's taught me a lot. When I started in this business I was a young man with a dream, but now I've tasted that dream. I've seen what is truly possible and what I can achieve.

Lamond turns to look at the camera, pointing momentarily into it.

LAR:

And this goes for every one of you watching at home, every one of you who had a dream, an ambition but thought "I can't do that, I'm too small" or "I'm too old" or "I'll get to it one day". Today is that day, today is the only day. Take your opportunity, seize it, make yourself and your loved ones proud and by God live your lives!

Christine looks up at Lamond and clears her throat as he looks back down at her.

Christie Zane:

Powerful words there Lamond. From me at least, I wish you good luck in DEFIANCE and I'm sure we all look forward to seeing more of you on DEFtv.

Before Christie and Lamond can part ways, however, the sound of slow clapping reverberates along the corridor. A grinning Andy Murray walks into shot, extending a hand to his countryman.

Andy Murray:

Well done big lad! Told you you'd knock 'em dead.

The handshake turns into a quick bro-hug. Christie Zane backs-off momentarily, but moves right back in before Lamond can even think about responding.

Christie Zane:

Andy! Andy!

The Scottish King of Cool turns to the interviewer.

Christie Zane:

Earlier tonight our cameras caught you bringing Mr. Robertson through the building and dropping him off for the meeting. What is your role in bringing LAR to DEFIANCE?

Andy Murray:

I played no role in bringing Lamond Alexander Robertson to DEFIANCE: he brought himself to DEFIANCE.

LAR puts a hand up.

LAR:

Now hold on, chief, that's not strictly true.

Andy Murray:

Aye it is, L.

He nods, then turns back to Christie.

Andy Murray:

I've been training with this man for the past couple of months. The same grit, fire and determination that helped him overcome a nasty army injury is why LAR is our newest DEFIANT. This man was out of the public eye for quite some

time and could easily have faded into obscurity, but he stands here today because he chose not to.

The King's tone is clear and authoritative.

Andy Murray:

This man is here because he didn't run and hide when fate dealt him a bad hand: he stood and fought. He's too modest to say it himself, but lemme tell ya: I watch this guy in the gym every single day, and heads are gonna turn as soon as he steps inside that ring.

Christie smiles.

Christie Zane:

Gentlemen, thanks for your time.

Cut.

Harm-O-Knee

The DEFplex is an absolute hive of activity between shows with wrestlers coming and going, working out and training to be the best they absolutely can, and today that is where we find our new SOHER Champion Harmony. With her curls piled up on top of her head and dressed up in her workout leggings and vest, she finishes her run on the treadmill and takes a huge drink of water before heading back over to the bench where her bag sits, pulling out a towel to wipe the sweat from her face. She turns to head back over to the weights area, but the sound of her iPhone ringing stops her and she bends over, riffling through her bag to try and locate her phone.

Harmony:

Come on, where are you?

Unbeknownst to the Heiress of Southern Heritage, a burly beast of a man had been walking past at that exact time. Apparently Frank Dylan James gets a kick out of flipping that giant tractor tire over and over again, as he currently holds any and all records attached to the exercise. The Mastadon of the Mountain stops dead in his tracks as his bloodshot eyes come to focus on the Champ in her search for iPhone.

FDJ: [muttering]

Jayzus F. Christ on a Gawl-Dang cracker!

After a few moments of frantic searching, she finally reaches the bottom of her bag and finds her iPhone, pulling it out in triumph only for it to stop ringing as soon as her fingertip touches the screen.

Harmony:

Motherfucker.

With a sigh, she puts her iPhone back into her bag and spins round on her toes to go continue her work out, stopping in her tracks as she finds Frank Dylan James in the midst of a ogling session, obviously on planet fantasy land. With a smirk, she clears her throat loudly.

Harmony:

You stare any longer and I'm going to have to start charging.

Frank comes out of la-la-land with a start, he shakes his beard and immediately averts his eyes, going so far as to cover them with one giant ham-hock of a hand.

FDJ:

Oh... shit! Gosh! Ah'm shore sorry Miss Harm-o-knee! Ah didn't mean ta stare, Ah PRAWMISE! Ah was jes' flippin that ol' tractor tire an' Ah got thirsty so Ah was headin' over ta get some water an'... well... What Ah mean ta say...

She chuckles at his reaction as she drapes her towel around her neck and takes a stroll across the gym towards him.

Harmony:

Don't worry about it. I'm used to people staring at it by now. I keep getting told it is a rather fine arse.

FDJ:

Well... Ah mean... That is ta say...

Frank's awkwardness made her chuckle and she puts her a hand on his huge shoulder once she reaches him.

Harmony:

Honestly, it's fine. Don't be flustered. I'm ogled by thousands of men when I'm on TV, so it's part of daily life.

Frank, eyes still averted, does his best to not look like a jackass.

FDJ:

Still'n all, mah mammy taught me better'n ta be objectifyin' no woman, Ah certainly didn't mean no disrespect' Miss Harm-o-knee! An ah'd like it iff'n ya'd let me make it up t'ya some which-a-ways er another.

Harmony:

I didn't feel disrespected in the slightest, so you can banish that thought from your head. And if you really want to make it up to me, I've got a business call to make, so I'll be over in the juice bar when you're finished working out. Certainly don't want to interrupt your work out.

FDJ:

Hell, Ah done flipped that daggum tire as many times as it's gon' get flipped today. Reckon Ah could go see about this here hippy juice bar with ya. You reckon they got any beer?

Harmony stifles a chuckle.

Harmony:

Considering it's meant to be all about a healthy lifestyle, I'm guessing not.

Frank scrunches his face together, all the way confused at a bar that doesn't serve beer. Then again, it's not as if he's at all acquainted with a "healthy lifestyle" either, is it? As he tries to make heads or tails of this nonsense Harmony stuffs her things into her gym bag and she prances off in the direction of said juicing facility. Coyly she tosses a wink in Frank's direction and reminds him to come find her. Mentally he makes a note to do just that...

As soon as his knees stop trembling.

Bodybags

We pass through one of several sets of swinging double doors along the far wall of the Wrestle-Plex's state of the art gymnasium. Once through the doorway the room beyond is so huge it's almost the size of a small warehouse. The walls are filled with old match cards, pay per view banners, framed photos, and a litany of other old bits and pieces of wrestling memorabilia from not only DEFIANCE but the wrestlers who's made DEFIANCE the wrestling promotion it is today.

WHAM

In the center of the large room sits several wrestling rings, the most modern of the collection is currently host to several grapplers. The one that just absorbed an irish whip into a turnbuckle with the force of a goddamn car crash would be DEFIANCE color commentator (and former professional wrestler, people tend to forget that) Angus Skaaland. The somewhat out of ring-shape Skaaland drops to his knees laugh-coughing, clutching his back with one hand and begging off the huge man standing over him.

Angus Skaaland:

Okay kid, okay, Jesus H. Christ... wow.

Once Skaaland gets to his feet he leans back against the turnbuckle and eyeballs the physical specimen standing in front of him shaking his head, clearly impressed.

Angus Skaaland:

Van Carver... yeah, I'd say Sloan and the boys got you ready to rumble, godDAMN.

Skaaland pops his back, a pleased look on his face as he bounces back towards the center of the ring doing a little shadowboxing.

Van Carver:

Yeah? You think? This place is pretty awesome. Can't wait to Murder Bomb some of these jokers you have running around backstage.

Angus Skaaland:

You certainly got enough firepower [rubbing his neck] but firepower 'aint everything, kid. Remember that. Especially here in DEF.

Angus continues to rub his neck, still feeling the effects of his grappling with Carver. Word on the street is that Carver is set to make his DEF debut almost any day now. As Carver continues his shadowboxing, Skaaland signals to one of the gym's towel monkeys to toss him his bottle of water. The side of the bottle reading "DANGER, AIDS, do not touch."

Van Carver:

I can't wait to mix it up with all these guys. I mean there's a legit MOVIE STAR on the roster. This place is the tits.

Skaaland just absentmindedly nods his head in agreement, currently distracted gulping down some much needed H2O... this is more physical exertion than Angus is used to. His normal days involved lots of week and video games. In the background the big double doors swing open. Carver with his back to the entry way doesn't see a thing. Our view is obscured, but what we do see of the individual has a few alarm bells going off for Mr. Van Carver to be on his toes and to watch his mouth...

Van Carver:

But having watched this product for a while now, I hope I get a chance to square off against that Bronson Box one of these days, man. Seems like he's king high shit around here title or no title. Would be nothing better than to stake my claim around here by stuffing his chewed up ass into a bodyba...

Carver turns and he's suddenly, like he's the goddamn Candyman or something, face to face with the Original DEFIANT himself, being the individual who came in the room only seconds before. Upon hearing his name Bronson immediately slid into the ring and bowed up to the much taller rookie.

Bronson Box

I swear to Christ I can't pass between two rooms lately without hearin' my fookin' name comin' outta' some gapin' mouth, me havin' now bloody idea who the hole's fookin' attached to. Now...

Boxer's gnarled face, the large healing wound down and across his right eye still stapled and red weeping is now mere inches from Van Carver's face.

Bronson Box

Just who in the blue hell do you think you are, fresh meat? Aye? Speak, boy'o.

To his credit Angus Skaaland seemed to hesitate slightly before bailing to the gymnasium floor. Van Carver stays silent eyeballing the Scottish Strongman up and down, a hint of revulsion evident when the young man really gets an eyefull of the mess that's become of Bronson's mustachioed mug.

Van Carver [to himself]

Jesus, she really did a number on you didn't she...

Angus Skaaland

Kid, I REALLY wouldn't.

It takes only a second for Boxer to force the several inches taller and thirty plus pounds heavier Van Carver back into the most available turnbuckle. Not shouting... yet... Boxer just leans in real close like he's want to do now and again, teeth gnashed together so tight it looks like he could easily crack a molar.

Bronson Box

Aye, sunshine. That she did... and it wasn't even my worst DAY, lad. Now what was that you were about to say? Ye' want to stuff my chewed up arse into what now? A bodybag was it?

Carver shoves Bronson away, by the weak little smile on The Wargod's face we can tell he probably allowed this to happen... but we can tell he's also a little chuffed by the young man's gumption. For all the good it'll do him.

Van Carver

Get the fuck off me... if you want to lay hands on me again I better be getting paid, superstar. Van Carver don't fight for free.

A voice from across the room gets everyone's attention. The Head Bitch In Charge, the shot caller, the woman holding the book Kelly Evans stands clad not in her usual business attire but a pair of yoga pants and a hot pink tank top with a matching towel bedazzled with the letters "H.B.I.C." across one end draped around her shoulders looking WAY annoyed.

Kelly Evans

That can be arranged, you know.

The face of Kelly's phone is still lit up, we see the following text sent from someone labeled "Asshat" that reads, "\$\$\$, right now in practice room, come ASAP!" At the same time we notice Angus Skaaland smiling a satisfied smile and stuffing his cell phone back in his back pocket.

Bronson Box

Kelly dear, you're lookin' simply smashin' in that lovely outfit. Truly shows off the jagged bony way your body seems to jut out violently in every direction.

The loud snort followed by painfully muffled laughter coming from Angus' side of the room causes Kelly's eyes to narrow in such a way that allows the announcer to find the willpower to shut the fuck up whilst he still has gainful employment.

Kelly Evans

Pause the misogynistic body shaming schtick for one second there, cheap heat.

Carver chuckles approvingly at the well placed cheat shot from the woman who hired him.

Kelly Evans

Yeah, I gather you're not blameless in this little dust-up either, Van. So... [claps and rubs her hands together] how about we take your solid advice and let you to work these aggressive feelings out and make a little money while we're at it, shall we? Mr. Carver... don't let your mouth write checks that might cost you your ass, son. Because you've got your wish, you'll be facing the Bombastic Bronson Box in your debut at DEFtv 62. You can, umm... bring your own bodybag there Punisher, we don't keep those in stock backstage on the regular.

A huge smile crawls across The Wargod's face as he quickly drops down to his back and rolls out to ringside... giving a little faint towards Angus, garnering an embarrassingly high pitched scream from the Motormouth of Malcontent that starts Boxer to maniacally laughing that deep guttural laugh of his on his way towards the door.

Bronson Box

Come to think of it, I'm good on cardio today... won't exactly be exertin' myself this comin' weeks, now will I?

The Wargod shoots Van Carver a knowing sideways glance before pushing through the double doors, marching out into the main part of the building's gymnasium. Before leaving Kelly furiously types something, then shooting a nasty look across the room to Angus, still perched outside the ring. His phone vibrates to the sound of the theme from Halloween, as soon as he flicks it open he looks back at Kelly who's already followed suit and pushed back through to the machines and treadmills of the gym proper.

Angus Skaaland [yelling after her]

Awww, hey, that's just fuckin' mean Kells. Sorry Bronson Box actually managed to say something legitimately funny this millennium. Goddamn... fuckin'... BIRD! [stuffing his phone back in his pocket yet again] Moody ass female.

As Angus grumbles to himself under his breath Carver chuckles under his, bouncing off the ropes pretending not to have overheard the whole exchange.

Angus Skaaland

Laugh it up laughing boy, the war golem that she just followed out of here... who, mind you, has enough clout around here to say some wild shit to Kelly like he did and live to tell about it with his sack in tact... has his sights set right on your pasty unblemished bottom there, Tiger. You want a mug to match his? Keep stickin those big size thirteens in your mouth like that and see where it gets ya'... now get to runnin', you need all the training sessions you can get between now and 62...

The smile fades from Carver's lips as the security cameras feed fizzles to black.

Prohibition

Outside of Iris Davine's office. Henry Keyes, with a certain pep in his step, walks boisterously down the hallway, flask in hand, a definite strut in his haunched gait. Henry's good mood at seeing his boon companions radiates off of him; or maybe part of the good mood stems from ducking out of explaining the contents of his gift to Lindsay Troy. He nods courteously to a few crew members as he walks past and slaps a gentleman carrying a clipboard in a hard-yet-friendly manner on the shoulder before continuing on his way. He takes a hearty swig from the flask, and his eye catches a figure off-camera. He stops in his tracks, evaluating the figure before him. A grin slowly spreads across his face, growing a bit more wild with each passing moment, before he extends the flask.

Henry Keyes:

Care for a belated victory toast?

Tension. Stepping into view, FIST slung over his shoulder, is The Ego Buster. Jaw clenched, Dan Ryan fixes his steely gaze upon The Airship Pirate, evaluating him silently. Before long, he's burning a hole through Keyes's too-warm grin until it fades from Keyes's face.

Dan Ryan:

You offering me a drink?

Henry Keyes: [looking down at the flask, then back at Ryan]

I was thinking about it.

Dan Ryan: [taking the flask from Keyes and looking down at it]

Whatcha got in this flask here, Keyes?

Henry Keyes: [momentarily regaining his smile]

You wouldn't believe it if I told you.

Dan Ryan smiles, but it's not very convincing. Indeed, it disappears almost immediately, replaced by a mock thoughtful expression.

Dan Ryan:

You know I've been here a pretty good amount of time, but you and I still haven't had much interaction.

Henry Keyes: [eyes lighting up -- he's made a connection! -- he thinks]

No time like the present!

Ryan stares at him, that insincere smile returning. Then, Dan Ryan tosses the flask over his shoulder. It hits the wall behind him and clangs to the floor. Henry Keyes lets out a mild yelp, like someone just kicks his dog. By the time his gaze goes from the flask back up to Dan Ryan, the FIST is drilling a hole through his head with his eyes, all pretense of friendliness long gone. This only lasts a moment, however, and the smirk returns.

Dan Ryan:

Tell me, Henry. How do you feel about Eugene Dewey?

Henry Keyes:

...you just threw my flask across the room. Wars have been started for less.

Dan Ryan:

Stay on topic, Keyes. Eugene Dewey. What do you think of him?

Henry Keyes:[trying not to seeth too much at the insult]

I don't.

Dan Ryan: [thoughtfully]

I don't think that much of him myself. He had the FIST for nearly two years. Isn't that something?

Ryan's eyes narrow a bit, clearly leading Keyes down a path, but Keyes is losing patience.

Henry Keyes:

Two years, you say? Strange. How a person's perception of time affects their perception of a man. Does two years mean something special?

Dan Ryan:

Not necessarily. But then, what seems special to me may not seem special to you or anyone else. What holds a deep meaning to me may mean very little to you. For example, when you offered me that flask, you most likely had no idea that a drunk was responsible for the deaths of my parents and first born child...

Keyes stiffens up.

Dan Ryan:

..and why would you have? They probably didn't have wrestling programming on the airship. Then again, out of pain comes great opportunity. I learned how to turn incredible personal tragedy into triumph. I was just thinking, in his two years as champion Eugene ran from pretty much every challenge that was thrown at him. It was, you know, hold on to his precious at any cost. He almost never gave anyone an opportunity. I was just thinking... maybe I can give you one.

Ryan stares vacantly almost through Keyes. Keyes seems to be running some mental gymnastics in his head, furrowing his brow as he looks down the hallway at his discarded flask, then back at the hollow eyes of the behemoth standing before him.

Henry Keyes:

How very generous of you, to "give" me something. Give me whatever the bloody hell you want. On one condition.

Dan Ryan arches a single eyebrow.

Henry Keyes:

Never. Spit in my face like that. Again.

Dan Ryan:

That's your only condition?

Henry Keyes:

I can handle the rest on my own.

Dan Ryan: [Ryan gets distracted by something behind Keyes]

Do you see that...

Ryan points to a spot on the wall behind Keyes' head. Keyes turns briefly, but says nothing.

Dan Ryan:

All of a sudden for no reason whatsoever... I was just wondering what your head would look like if I smashed it into that cinder block about ten or so times. Has that ever happened to you, Keyes? Has anyone ever smashed your head into a cinder block about ten or so times?

Henry Keyes pats his braced left arm.

Henry Keyes:

Close enough.

Dan Ryan:

Ok then. Here's my answer to your condition. I unconditionally reject your condition. I'll be completely honest with you, as I am with everyone who says things like this to me. I will do whatever I want to do, whenever I want to do it, up to and including breaking your *fucking* neck, at such a time as it suits me, unless you can stop me from doing it.

Ryan makes an almost mocking, just short of patting Keyes on the head expression complete with condescending tone of voice. Keyes is visibly furious, but doing a decent job of reining it in, for him.

Dan Ryan:

Now then, are we through playing the posturing "mine is bigger than yours" game now? Would you like to hear my actual proposal?

Keyes gives a huff and walks past Ryan, bumping shoulders (though it appears Keyes takes the brunt of the punishment). He picks his flask up off the ground, dusts it off, and gives one final disdainful look at Ryan before leaving completely.

Ryan turns his head over his shoulder and smirks again, watching Keyes walk away.

Dan Ryan:

I kinda like him.