

DANNY DIGGS VS. DAVIS BLOOME

♪"Zerospace" - Kidneythieves♪



We fade in on the DEFIANCE studio, with 'Downtown' Darren Keebler and 'The Motormouth of Malcontent' Angus Skaaland sitting together at the desk. Keebler organizes some notes while Angus writes something quickly, and as we zoom in he holds up a piece of paper that reads **'I'M WITH STUPID'** and an arrow pointing at his broadcast partner. He holds it up long enough to make the joke, then tosses it aside.

DDK:

Welcome, fans, to our latest edition of UNCUT. I'm here with Angus Skaaland and we're about to see two young BRAZEN stars to head to head when Danny Diggs takes on Davis Bloome. What can you tell us about these two, Angus?

Angus:

"The Bad Seed" Davis Bloome is one-half of a team called BADASS, along with "Wise Ass" Trip Wise. Wise isn't here tonight, but Bloome can get it done as one of those American guys that love that gorramn strong-style stuff. He has good strikes and headdrops galore. And Diggs... well, you've seen him, Keeps. The Ultimate in Trolling Technology.

DDK:

Diggs got into it recently with newcomer "Twists and Turns" Oscar Burns on the last DEFtv. They're slated for one-on-one completion on the next show, so we can almost look at this match to see what Diggs can do.

Angus:

If Bloome gives Diggs even an inch, that slimy SOB is gonna take THREE miles, Keeps. That's how slippery this dude is. All right, Quimbey, earn your paycheck.

Darren Quimbey:

The following contest is an UNCUT exclusive singles match set for one fall!

♪ "Do You Really Want To Hurt Me" by Culture Club ♪

The gloriously inappropriate tune plays through the arena. Confusion spreads among the faithful, and it's only amplified as Danny Diggs glides out from the back. The portly grappler is clad in a pair of tie-dye tights and a black shirt with only the word "Meh." In one hand is a steel chair, and the other, a bottle of wine. He takes a sip before

walking down the ramp, still grinning.

Darren Quimbey:

Introducing first, from Cleveland, Ohio, weighing in at 250 pounds... **"MASTER THIEF" DANNY DIGGS!**

Diggs enjoys the negative response from the crowd and enters the ring before waiting for his opponent.

♪ "In One Ear" by Cage The Elephant ♪

The fans give a polite reponse to the young man known as "The Bad Seed" Davis Bloome. Deckerd out in arm, chest and back tattoos with a grimy beard, the young man ignores the crowd and heads toward the ring with intent to kick someone's ass.

Darren Quimbey:

And his opponent, from Tacoma Washington, weighing in at 230 pounds... **DAVIS BLOOME!**

Bloome enters the ring and throws off his black tank top before raising a fist to the crowd. Bloome waits for the bell to ring as Hector Navarro calls for the bell.

DING DING DING

DDK:

Who do you give this one to, Angus?

Angus:

Gonna depend on who gets the first punch. If Bloome gets his hands on Diggs, Bloome can dole out some damage with those sick elbows of his. But if Diggs finds an opening to cheat, he'll take it.

Bloome is ready to fight and gets ready to unload an elbow strike, but when he does, Danny backs right up into the ropes and flashes him a cheesy grin. The Bad Seed yells at him to get in and fight, but Diggs won't do anything of the sort and hides in between the middle and top rope. When Navarro gets in between the two, Davis pushes him aside, but that gives Bloome an opening to grab the belt of his jeans and **THROWS** him to the floor!

Angus:

There you go, Keebs. Dirtbag.

DDK:

Now Diggs isn't wasting any time trying to assault him on the floor!

Sure enough, Diggs takes off his shirt and starts strangling Bloome with it! He kicks frantically trying to escape, but when Diggs lets go, he throws him on the ground. He starts to tell some folks in the front row to move out of their seats because he's about ready to idiot toss The Bad Seed into the crowd. He picks him up as he's recovering from being choked and is about to throw him into the crowd... then spins him around and simply throws him back inside! The crowd boos Danny, but he laughs them off and gives them the old fangul.

DDK:

Good lord, does Danny Diggs live to annoy people?

Angus:

Short answer: Yes. Long answer: Also yes.

Diggs gets into the ring and lays the boots to Bloome in the corner before pressing his knee down across his throat. Hector Navarro gives him the old five-count to get out of the corner, but when he gets to four, Diggs stops. He holds his hands up and then goes back to putting a knee to the throat again! The match has been all Diggs so far. He throws Bloome out of the corner and goes for a cover.

ONE!

TWO!

DDK:

Bloome kicks out! But now Diggs is putting the fight to him!

Angus:

Bloome better get something going, man, Diggs is using him as a doormat right now.

The Master Thief starts to undo turnbuckle padding, but Navarro is quick to stop that shit and reprimands him again. As he goes to fix the buckle, Diggs undoes his wrist tape and starts to choke Bloome again! Davis falls to his knees and is about ready to pass out while Diggs continues to strangle him.

Angus:

I don't mind guys cutting corners, but dude... this guy...

DDK:

I agree. And Navarro doesn't see the tape underneath his arms. Diggs is making our official look goofy.

Diggs is about ready to finish the match now as he rolls Davis up into a tight Schoolboy following the choke.

ONE!

TWO!

DDK:

He almost stole one there, Angus! Davis has yet to get anything in against him.

Angus:

His fault for being suckered in like that!

Davis is on his hands and knees trying to get some air back. Diggs walks back a few steps and starts to back up like he's about to go for a punt kick to the ribs. He walks forward, but Diggs sees him coming so he suddenly SWEEPS THE LEG!

Angus:

A little Cobra Kai action. I dig it, Keebs!

Davis Bloome starts to get back up with the crowd firmly behind him, all it takes is a few good alternating left and right Elbow Strikes to light up Danny Diggs. He whips him off into the corner and follows him in with a jaw-crushing Running Back Elbow to the face! Bloome runs off one corner of the ring and POPS him with a good shot from the left hand side! The Master Thief gets stunned as Bloome now runs from the right side...

DDK:

I hear that Davis Bloome is proficient in these elbow strike sequences.

Angus:

I can SEE that he's proficient in them, Keebs. His striking game is on point, but sometimes has tunnel vision and gets distracted too easily like we saw earlier.

Davis knocks Diggs down and rubs the heel of his boot across the face. Danny then gets what's called The Chin Check - Davis Bloome's version of the Face Wash! He then gets pulled up...

DDK:

Michinoku Driver! That could be all!

ONE!

TWO!

NO!

The shoulder comes up before three and now Davis is ready to score a big win for himself.

Angus:

In Bloome inbound! This Spinning DVD is sick, Keeps, he tries to DRIVE them through the mat, I swear!

DDK:

Diggs has other plans! Look!

As Bloome rotates, Diggs slips out and lands behind him. He goes for a Backslide and obstructs Hector's vision when he kicks him in the balls! He throws his wrist tape at Hector and he doesn't see the SECOND low blow! Then Diggs rolls him up with a modified La Majjstral pin!

ONE!

TWO!

THREE!

Angus:

Well, the seeds of Davis Bloome are now going to be useless to any woman tonight thanks to Diggs.

DDK:

You were right! He sneaks away with the victory and now Diggs celebrates on the ramp! Folks, thanks for joining us for this UNCUT Exclusive! Is Oscar Burns ready for the unorthodox... to put it mildly... offense of Danny Diggs? We'll find out on the next DEFtv!

The parting shots of this match are Danny Diggs holds his jaw from being busted up by Davis Bloome, but he's a winner tonight and looks more than up to the task of taking on Oscar Burns. Which brings us to...

WOW...

...The DEFIANCE studio where "Twists and Turns" Oscar Burns taking notes for his future opponent. He looks very much appalled at the fact that he had to resort to not one, but two low blows to win.

Oscar Burns:

Wow... [shifty eyes] That was unpleasant for that man's kit and kaboodles.

He visibly winces, almost having sympathy for Davis Bloome coming up short and having his testicles kicked almost up into his throat. Despite that, Burns continues jot down another note on a paper and pad. He talks to the monitor aloud as he writes things down.

Oscar Burns:

You're a stirrer, Diggs, but I'll be ready for ya.

Oscar goes back to rewinding the match so he can watch again to look for any weaknesses in his opponent's game as the scene goes elsewhere.

THE AFTERMATH OF 85

FLAAAAAAAAAAAAASH

Our cameras arrive into the locker room of Bruhh Nasty, who's clearly not in the best of moods after being attacked by the members of Brutal Attack Force earlier in the evening. A medical staff member informs him that the concussion-like symptoms have passed and there will be no need for further testing. Bruhh clearly still angry just nods as she scurries out of them room shutting the door behind her.

Bruhh Nasty:

YO... THIS IS SOME BULLSHIT! How the FUCK did I let THESE clowns, GET ME?

A TOILET FLUSHES.

Bruhh is now on edge as his gaze now turns toward the bathroom where the sound water running is now heard. Bruhh ponders who the fuck could this be, as a voice called out to him.

voice:

Heeey bro, I got something SKUNKY for the the pain, bro.

DEFIANCE'S favorite stoner, Johnny Tie Dye steps out of the room with a glazed look over his face as he walked to greet Bruhh Nasty.

Johnny:

Sup, bro? I'm Johnny... Johnny Tie Dye.

Bruhh:

What's good homie? The FUCK you doing in HERE? You one of them Brutal Attack Clowns!?!

Bruhh raised up but Johnny quickly pointed in the direction of Bruhh Nasty's t-shirt launcher sitting in the corner.

Johnny:

No way, bro. DDK asked me to bring your launcher back. That shit is tight by the way yo. What a way to make an entrance! DDK was a little weary about coming to see you, especially after what happened tonight.

Bruhh:

Word, good lookin' out! I'm going to get those clowns. These ninja's think they can just sneak me like that and it shits sweet?

Johnny:

You got to relax dude! I brought you something too, kind of a little welcome to Defiance gift.

Johnny reaches into his pocket and removes a medium sized saran wrapped brownie, Johnny smiles and extends his offering to Bruhh Nasty who smirks.

Bruhh:

What the fuck is this, b? I don't know you like that, son.

Johnny:

It's cool bro. This is from my super skunk collection, it's called... **WYLIN' on the ISLAND**. I heard you were coming, I made a fresh batch early this morning.

Bruhh eased back onto his chair with a grin instantly knowing JTD was just a fan. **WYLIN' on the ISLAND** is a catchphrase coined my BRUHH NASTY in his former profession. He took the brownie and placed it on a table next to him, leaning back in his chair he folded his arms across his chest.

Bruhh:

Word, you really are a fan and I appreciate that. BUT... I'm still going to FUCK those two NINJAS up when I see them! They straight played me tonight!

Johnny:

I bet you they are still in the building, bro. I could be like your back up or something, if you wanted?

Johnny asked sheepishly.

Bruhh Nasty:

You cool so you can roll if you want to, son. BONG BONG

ZOOOOOOOOOOM

ABOUT 15-20 MINUTES LATER.

The Brutal Attack Force now dressed in street clothes are still celebrating backstage as they shout and slap hands on their way to the parking lot. They've just fired the first shot in the war that saw BAF spoil the debut of Bruhh Nasty at DEF 85.

Garrett:

Fuckin' AYE!!!! That asshole sucker punched me with brass knuckles. He got what he deserved as far as I'm concerned.

Grendel:

He almost had you, mate. THAT IS... until *I* showed up in the nick of time and bashed Bruhh Nasty's bloody fuckin' face in!

Garrett:

You're so full of shit, Son!

Petey attempted to mock the way Bruhh Nasty spoke, but came off sounding like a cornball. Grendel laughed and pushed a door leading to the parking lot open. As it squeaked open, they stepped out into the parking lot. DEF staff and BRAZEN could be seen scurrying about the dimly lit lot, flyers were plastered on the windshield of every single vehicle in the lot.

MISSING: ????????

No face, no reward, or no other information was available on the flyer. Makes you wonder just who in the fuck was fucking with us like this for fucks sake!! The only thing on the flyer was a dark silhouette of a person's face.

BAF began walking towards their rental car gear bags in hand as Grendel ranted.

Grendel:

I'm tired of these ungrateful newcomers thinking they're going to make a name off of us. We're fuckin' Rock stars, mate. THE FRIGGIN' BUCK STOPS HERE!

Grendel scoffs.

Garrett:

YEAH IT DOES! HE'S THE BRAZEN! HE SHOULD BE KISSIN OUR ASS!!

Shouted Petey.

The parking lot door bursts open and Bruhh Nasty locks eyes with Petey Garrett and Solomon Grendel. Without hesitation, he bolts towards his earlier attackers with wreckless abandon leaping into the air and rock's Solomon Grendel with a SUPERMAN punch that renders him unconscious sending him crashing into the ground.

NOOOO HE WASN'T READY!

Now setting his sights on Petey Garret who throws his gym bag at Bruhh Nasty before taking off towards the door. The timing couldn't have been better as Johnny Tie Dye walks through the door and the two men collide sending Garrett barreling backwards right into the arms of Bruhh Nasty who applies a chokehold on Garrett who flails around helplessly as Bruhh Nasty tightens the hold.

BRUHH:

Thought you clowns would get off with no repercussions? I'm going 730 on you ninjas.

GARRETT:

It wasn't my idea! It was Solomon. I swear, I..I..I...

Bruhh squeezed tighter.

BRUHH:

Shut the FUCK UP! You listen to me, maggot. Next week, it's me and you. None of that funny stuff. My boy, JTD will be at ringside just to make sure you pussies don't try nothing crazy.

GARRETT:

PLEASE... I CAN'T BREAAAATHE... I'LL DO ANYTHING! YES... A MATCH, YOU HAVE IT.

Bruhh Nasty releases the chokehold and Petey falls to a knee clutching his neck and gasping for air. Bruhh seized the opportunity to pick up a nearby trashcan and dump it's contents over the head of Petey Garrett who screamed in disgust as he looks over at Grendel whom was still unconscious next o him laid another one of those MISSING flyers.

Bruhh proud of his actions turns to Johnny and smirks.

Bruhh:

You tryin' to kick it? Let's go get a drink or something. I still got that brownie.

Johnny:

I'm not much of a drinker. But, hey bro. Let's just say, we need to get somewhere safe before we eat these brownies.

Bruhh:

What the fuck, son? I'd be more worried if my weed brownies DIDN'T come with a disclaimer, homie.

CUT TO SOMEWHERE ELSE

PROPOSITIONS

Backstage at DEFtv 85.

Theo Baylor's buzzing, though you'd never tell from the mean look on his face. Having just squashed the absolute fuck out of Elijah Cross, the brutish Los Angeles powerhouse is sat in a locker-room, necking some kind of energy drink. He has already showered and changed, and now looks like he's getting ready to leave the arena.

There's a knock at the door. Baylor turns.

Theo Baylor:

What'chu want?

The door slowly creaks open. There, stood on the freshhold, is a man who only made his DEFIANCE just a few hours prior.

Brother Owens:

Mr. Baylor.

Realising that Owens is alone, Baylor loosens up a tad. The scowl remains.

Brother Owens:

Lucius Owens. A pleasure.

He extends a hand. Theo looks down at it, but doesn't shake.

Theo Baylor:

I know who the fuck you are.

That's not hostility - it's just the way good old Theodore speaks. Brother O doesn't taken it personally as he walks across the room.

Brother Owens:

Impressive performance tonight. You took care of that fool with ruthless efficiency.

Lucius stops.

Brother Owens:

You have a bright future in this organisation, if you don't mind me saying so.

Theo Baylor:

Hell you want, man?

Owens *smirks*. Because in DEFIANCE, we *SMIRK*, bay bay.

Brother Owens:

Strictly business. I like that.

His resting facial expression returns.

Brother Owens:

Mr. Baylor, I have a proposition...

Fade out.

DAYS GONE BY - PART 1

On that day, I sat across from the greatest manager in professional wrestling history, and listened to her tell me 'no.'

"No," said Ivy McGinnis, "Absolutely not."

Why, I asked. I'm here, I reminded her. I'm **here**. You spend a few days a month in New York and the rest of your time with Sean and Shannon in Orlando. Eli spends a few days a month here in the city and splits the rest of his time either home with MJ or on the road with Angel. You could absolutely use a third partner that lives around here.

Besides, I said. Rosie's here five nights a week, which means I'm here five nights a week.

Miss Ivy smiled at me; that million dollar smile that built her legend over the past twenty years. "Seriously, Knox - this ain't where you belong. You need to be on the road too - just like Angel - giving the people hope."

Hope, I asked, incredulous. Hope is for heroes.

"The fuck do you think you are," she asked me. I don't use profanity in my life and I typically censor the people who do when I tell these things, but I know better than to ever alter anything that Miss Ivy ever says.

I never claimed to be a hero, I reminded her, and the fact that I couldn't be one in the only company I ever wanted to work for, and the fact that the Empire shut down operations four days after I won their World Title would support that.

She didn't answer right away, but she did pick up the glass in front of her; it was originally filled with four fingers of Glenfiddich and now had less than two. "Bullshit," she said, "You do the right thing, kiddo. You always do the right thing. I let you buy into this bar, and someday when you actually realize this fact you'll be torn between your wrestling career and your responsibilities to TC's, and you'll let both go by the wayside."

I'm never wrestling again, I countered.

And she laughed again. "Sure," she said, "Keep on sayin' it."

Miss Ivy stood up and finished her drink. "Maybe in another ten years or so, you'll fuckin' believe it."

She left me alone in my booth; one of only three here at TC's. It was the only one that was under perpetual reserve - she liked to sit in the corner to do paperwork for the bar that she and Eli Flair co-owned, or for the diner farther uptown that she and her brother owned. But it was also where 'family' was allowed to hang out, and considering Rosie told me earlier that Valerian's Garden was advertising a minor show filled with demos and new pieces of music; they were planning on doing a series of shows with new material to work it out in advance of recording their new album. The 'family booth' would be a place where I could watch the performance without getting crushed by the potential crowd.

'Potential' crowd was a ridiculous sentiment. At this point, Garden had had two top ten albums and five number one singles, and all it took was the rumor of their appearance for the place to fill past capacity.

A sidenote: in the three years since this happened, Angel and at least one of the boys have played TC's a good forty to fifty times, and they never advertised. By the end of those nights they'd've drawn a decent crowd but it was never overwhelming.

I was just glad to have a night off, honestly. After six straight years of professional wrestling and spending most of my 'off' nights doing promo work for one company or another... Rosie and I enjoyed meeting the fans, but it was still work because we needed to be 'on,' so to speak.

"Excuse me, Impulse?"

Well, damn.

I looked up to see a young girl with dark hair and waif-like, *hungry* eyes. I don't answer to that name anymore, I told her, but please take a seat, and tell me what I can do for you.

"My name is Jessica," she said, "and I want to be a wrestler."

She paused.

"Like you," she finished.

I deadpanned. Totally unintentionally. Aight, I told her, but I've only worked in three territories in my entire life, and two of 'em are shut down for the duration. Good luck, but I don't know what to tell you.

Sure, it was harsh - and I regretted saying it almost immediately, but the one thing that Coop and Eli and Ivy did wrong when they trained me, was that they never prepared me for the backstabbing, the politics, and the way you can do everything right and still end up on the outs, just because of who's friends with whom. She looks like a good kid, and I don't want her to get stuck in the same rut that I was, where I hated going to work but felt too much loyalty to the fans to walk away.

Of course, she didn't heed my half - assed warning: she sat down.

Great.

A MEETING OF MINDS

Kelly Evans is enjoying a frozen Mocha-whatever from the most hip and happening coffee shop in the NOLA area. She's sitting in her office enjoying what SHE THOUGHT was going to be some peace and quiet when suddenly there's a knock on the door. She's annoyed. All she wanted some peace and quiet before looking over the oodles of paperwork that all these new hires have brought her.

Kelly Evans:
WHAT!?

The Matriarch of DEFIANCE fires off an annoyed response. There are no words to answer her question instead the door to her office is pushed open and in steps Jonathan Wildside, manager of the Bastard Sons of Wrestling. Kelly looks less than enthused to see him.

Kelly Evans:
I've got half a mind to tell you to get the hell out of my office.

Jonathan Wildside:
If only I had half a mind to listen. Mind if I take a seat?

Kelly looks at him, fire in her eyes. She eyes her Mocha-whatever, brings it close, gulps a sip and points to the empty chair in front of her desk. She puts down her drink.

Kelly Evans:
You've got maybe five minutes before I lose all patience on you. I've got a mountain of paperwork to do, it's Fourth of July weekend and the office is the last place I wanna be.

Jonathan Wildside:
Ah, I'm sure the social calendar is quite full for a woman of your....

Jon pauses trying to search for the word very carefully. He finds it. Kelly's eyebrows raise knowing full well that Jon could cross a line which would delight her, simply because she could toss him out on his ass.

Jonathan Wildside:
...stature.

Kelly is surprised. Jon chose decently. He must be up to something.

Kelly Evans:
Alright cut to the chase, Jon.

Jonathan Wildside:
Alright, here's the deal. Last week you awarded PCP their Rematch, and they got it. One on one in a single's match for WHATEVER reason.

Kelly goes to interject but Jon continues.

Jonathan Wildside:
So I'm proposing that we attempt to settle the Tag Team Title situation one last time, by pitting one of my guys against Elise Ares. Reverse the roles, so to say.

Evans thinks about it for maybe half a second before unraveling her response.

Kelly Evans:

Jon, I saw what you did in that match. I watch the shows. Why in the hell would I give you this match when you stuck your nose in the last one?

Jonathan Wildside:

It's funny Ms. Evans, but none of your amazingly overqualified referees ruled that I stuck my nose in the match. As a matter of fact I've got an eyeball witness that says as much.

Kelly's eyebrows raise again.

Kelly Evans:

Eyeball witness? What are you a Baltimore murder police?

Jonathan Wildside:

We've binged watched a lot of TV in our off time but that's beside the point, Ms. Evans. If you will -

Jon snaps his fingers and in the now open office door walks Carla Ferrari. The gorgeous red haired, twenty nine year old referee who is almost a member of the Pop Culture Phenoms at this point, whether she wants to be or not.

Jonathan Wildside:

- allow me to introduce my witness - Miss Carla Ferrari.

Kelly looks to Carla.

Kelly Evans:

What in the world are you doing here? Did he put you up to this?

An accusatory finger is pointed at Wildside.

Carla Ferrari:

In a way - sure. But it's not like he dragged me here kicking and screaming. Said he wanted me to come down here and tell it straight - and well that's how I am. No nonsense, no funny business. That's why it's been eating me up that I didn't see it, cause I should've. I called the match the best way I could and it still fell short.

Kelly Evans:

Carla, honey - no one is blaming you.

Carla Ferrari:

Oh I know, it's how the business works. But I just wanted to tell you that I didn't see anything. Or I would've called it then and there, and tossed this one out on his nose.

Kelly Evans:

What a wonderful idea - Jon I think it's time you should be -

Jon stands up, interrupting Evans. Not a good idea.

Jonathan Wildside:

I've got a witness, your own official saying that she didn't see me interfere with the match. I've got a guy who went through HELL in a Ladder War having to defend his TEAM Title - ALONE - in a single's match. I've got a hook, clasp, WHATEVER that malfunctioned almost KILLING one of my guys. What more do we need to do to get this match? To get our fair share? I thought the deck would be stacked against us from the start, Kelly, but I didn't expect to see it this high.

Kelly Evans:

Yeah? And why would I stack the deck against you, huh? Why do you think your Bastards are soooo important. Please enlighten me, Jon.

Jonathan Wildside:

Will Haynes has history with not only Eric Dane, but also with Team Danger. And we all know where your allegiances lie. Grant us this match, and you put that all to bed. One of my guys, against Elise Ares.

Kelly Evans considers her position.

Kelly Evans:

You're gonna drag this out for as long as you gotta, aren't you - you little shit.

Jon smiles.

Jonathan Wildside:

Is that anyway to talk to an employee, Ms. Evans? I should really report you to HR.

A smirk, a good one dances across Wildside's face. He knows he's struck a chord. Evans is fired up.

Kelly Evans:

Listen, and listen good - I'm not in anyone's pockets. I didn't give a shit who did what to whom or where. I care about this business. You, you've ran business into the ground just for shits and giggles, you've burnt bridges, you've kicked people when they're down. I don't want you dragging me, Eric, Ty, or Greer through the God damned mud. AND you certainly aren't going to go around bad mouth this company. You understand me?

Wildside gives her eyes, unsure of if he's going to get what he wants or not. Carla is leaning against the wall ready to leave.

Kelly Evans:

I want to see this Tag Team Title shit settled, you understand me. Settled. You've got the match, but stay the hell out of it Jon, you understand me. Or there will be HELL to pay.

Jonathan Wildside:

I wouldn't dream of it my dear. Thanks for your time.

Kelly Evans:

Now get the hell out of my office. Carla?

Jon walks out. Carla hangs back.

Carla Ferrari:

Yeah boss?

Kelly Evans:

Sorry you had to deal with that shit head.

Carla Ferrari:

That's okay, boss. I've dealt with worse. We both have.

And with that it's back to work for Kelly Evans. Carla slips out to go about her day.

EXPERIENCE

EARLIER THIS WEEK:

Inside the office of DEFIANCE'S resident HBIC, said resident HBIC Kelly Evans does not look happy. Her Starbucks cup is cold once again and they spelt it with an I at the end instead of a Y. Because that's what Starbucks does... fuck up your name. The I is even dotted with a smiley face; an expression that is clearly the total opposite of her own face right now.

Kelly Evans:

You want to tell me what the fuck you're doing here? I thought you and the rest of your crew gave the double tall man to DEFIANCE last year.

???:

Because you know me, love! I'm God's Gift To Tag Team Wrestling! I've broken more records than some wanker going nuts in a vinyl store!

Kelly Evans:

A... vinyl store? You're gonna sway me with a bad joke?

The camera spins around...

None other than a man that DEFIANCE would rather soon forget.

Team HOSS's Aleczander The Great!

Aleczander The Great:

Love...

Kelly Evans:

[interrupting] I'm not your love. It's **Ms. Evans** to you, musclehead. And give me one goddamn reason I should hire you back. The last TWO times that you've been in these halls, you and Team HOSS have destroyed property, put wrestlers on the shelf, your manager paid off one of my medical staff to fake a drug test, made life hell for many of my main eventers... and all with a smile on your face.

Aleczander thinks back to all the events that Kelly recalls and indeed, he has a smile.

Aleczander The Great:

Indeed, love! Those were pretty HOSSome... sorry, awesome moments. Remember when we slapped around Eric Dane and Dusty Griffith and used them like our own personal chew toys...

The frown of Kelly Evans sinks lower on her face.

Kelly Evans:

You realize that you are doing the worst possible job of selling me on taking you back, right?

The Mancunian Muscle thinks on that quickly and tries to change his stance.

Aleczander The Great:

All right, all right, all right! I'll be honest, Kels... [her scowl grows] ... Ms. Evans! I need a job, kay? When my contract ran out on DEFIANCE last year, I went back to Britain. I got myself back on another reality show on SlySports, The Celebrity Chili Cookoff and I got voted dead last... two-alarm, my ass, you bloody wankers... it was FOUR tops!

Kelly Evans:

Oh, for fuck's sake, what's your point?

Alezander The Great:

I'm ready to get back to where I belong, lov... Ms. Evans. Tag team wrestling! I love it! I'm great at it! I've been in wrestling for ten years and I've won ten tag teams with a who's who of great men... carried by me, of course. I set records in ACW as a three-time and longest-reigning Tag Team Champion! In nbW, I was a Dynasty Tag Team Champ with one of them MMA wankers wrestling loves these days! In Britain, I set records there as a Tag Team champion! And hate us or love us, Team HOSS won the World Trios Titles and set a record there, too! Most title reigns! Most defenses! Love me or hate me, I'm good at what I do and there ain't a bloody person on this roster that can say otherwise!

He stands up from his desk.

Alezander The Great:

Love, I've have so many partners by now, I should probably go to a doctor to be checked. But I'd rather be here in DEFIANCE! I'm here to be the best damn tag team wrestler that you've ever seen and I want in on the division!

Maybe she is feeling generous. Maybe she just wants him to fucking leave. It's probably the latter honestly. But she nods.

Kelly Evans:

Okay, maybe I got shitboxed and forgot all about it, but... you're right. We're looking for new teams in the division and despite how I feel about you and Team HOSS personally... you guys were good for business and the tag scene was booming with you guys in it.

Alezander The Great:

Fuckin A, mate! I got it! Just wait until I tell Jonny that we're putting the Super Muscle Bros back toge...

Kelly Evans:

What? No, you're not. Booya hasn't been here in a while.

Alezander looks genuinely disappointed.

Alezander The Great:

What? NO! Me best hetero-lifemate?! No! Well... what am I supposed to do? He's the only partner I've ever had that I haven't stuck a knife in his back... I mean, the only partner I haven't had creative differences with! Angel Trinidad is MIA, Cappy's retired and the Keelings... well, I ain't crawling back to those wankers! Ten percent of my merch, my ass!

Evans lets out a deep sigh.

Kelly Evans:

Well... if you're serious and can play nice, I'll tell you what, meathead. If you do know how to do anything, it's tag team wrestling. I'm keeping your ass on a short leash and if you do ANYTHING to abuse my generosity here today, you'll be tag teaming with unemployment as your partner, you got me?

Alezander The Great:

Understood.

Kelly Evans:

I have a LOAD of talent on the BRAZEN roster that are chomping at the bit to find a partner to make an impact on the main roster. On the off chance you find a bridge you HAVEN'T burned down yet, you can start there. But let me make this crystal clear for you... if you do ANYTHING I don't like this go-round then like I said... that's it. Third strike and you're OUT, you got me?

The Mancunian Muscle nods.

Aleczander The Great:

Oh, love, I'm Aleczander The Great! I hold in my hands the Gift of Tag! I'm a Tag Team Legend! I'm Tag Team Jesus... no, Tag Team GOD! Wait, what's one higher than a God? Like... Godzilla?

Kelly Evans:

Leave.

He points at the door.

Aleczander The Great:

Don't worry, I'm on my way out! Gonna find some poor bugger with nothin' to do and I'm gonna add another notch on me belt with DEFIANCE's tag belts! The entire DEFIANCE roster will get to witness The Aleczander Experience! This gun... [flexing left arm] ...and this gun! [flexing right arm]

He walks out the door... yes, while still flexing. Kelly Evans is beside herself rubbing her temples and wishing that she would've Irished up her coffee a little more.

BACK TO THE BAR AGAIN

Hours after DEFTv 85.

The Holy Ground, an Irish Pub, dimly lit in a light orange hue. The normal Irish-eque decorations adorn the walls. The green bar top shines and glares with the exception of the worn spots coinciding with the wear of drunk and weary elbows; of those who've passed through this tried and true intoxicating location.

What's the location really matter though? It, certainly, doesn't to Terry 'The Idol' Anderson. Unless that location doesn't have booze. This one ... has it in spades. He's staring up from a bar stool, looking at a small television screen displaying some garbage news program, it's of no importance to Terry; other than supplying a distraction.

Wearing his usual hawaiian flowered collared shirt and khaki shorts, he is looking unusually down for the evening, his hair is disheveled and his face has the look of someone who hasn't slept in a few days. The barkeep approaches and motions to Terry's glass.

Barkeep:

Another?

Terry's eyes dart from the flickering television and fall on his empty glass. He looks up at the keeper of the bar.

Terry Anderson:

Got anything stronger?

The bartender dumps some fresh ice on top of what remains and begins to pour another.

Barkeep:

Strongest Well ... unless you want to step up to the big boy shelf?

Terry Anderson:

Well spirits ... a marketing term for horse swill.

The bartender pulls the full glass back, mostly ceremoniously, and gives Terry a questioning look. Terry stares at him for a moment before letting loose a sigh and motioning toward himself.

Terry Anderson:

Just give me the drink.

'The Idol,' as he has been called throughout the majority of his life, certainly doesn't feel up to the levels his moniker would suggest these days. He takes a deep breath before chugging the freshly poured liquor down his throat.

Behind him a loud **CLANK** is rings throughout the empty bar as the door to the entrance slams shut. Terry looks back, over his shoulder, and nods to the newest entrant.

Scott Douglas enters the scene and greets the bartender; nonverbally. He takes the stool next to Terry. No one speaks initially.

They both, clearly, understand where things are and more importantly ... how they got here. Certain concessions toward redemption have been made, of course, but if the Reaper saga has taught anyone anything; that doesn't necessarily mean it's all roses and rainbows now.

Scott Douglas:

So ...

Terry Anderson:

yeah .. I saw it ...

Scott Douglas:

I thought ... I **made it** pretty clear.

Terry is the first to break the stoic strangers at a bar gimmick and turn toward Douglas.

Terry Anderson:

Hey, look ... I tried to warn you. It was never about Derrick ... or Courtney, all that shit ... that was just a way to cut to the quick, son. She's obsessed and it doesn't end with you ... not by a long shot.

Terry shakes the melting ice in his empty glass.

Terry Anderson:

It doesn't help that you don't seem to remember her and who the hell her father is ...

Terry turns from away from Douglas, as if that's a comment he wish he hadn't made. The suggestion raises Scott ire and he turns toward Terry.

Scott Douglas:

Remember her!? From where!? When!?

Terry turns back, almost to Scott ... but stops midway and nods toward the bartender.

Terry Anderson: *[to the barkeep]*

Can I get another drink?

Seattle's Favorite Son, obviously frustrated slaps the bar top.

Scott Douglas:

I'm sick and fucking tired of all the cryptic bullshit, Terry. Cut this shit!

Scott pauses for a moment, fuming.

Scott Douglas:

You swore to me you would come clean about **all** of this! I'm sick of this shit, Terry. Obviously, you had enough as well. Why else would you stick your neck out to bring me back. Huh?

Scott gets quiet and leans into Terry, he speaks intensely and chooses his words very deliberately.

Scott Douglas:

This. Has. To. End.

Bartender makes his way over and fills Terry's glass again. He looks to Scott, who waves off.

Terry looks down at the glass and then to Scott.

He shakes his head as he pulls the glass to his lips.

He hesitates and lowers it again for a moment.

Whatever thought slowed him has passed as he raises it once again.

Taking the drink down quickly just before placing the glass back on the table.

Terry Anderson:

She's my granddaughter, Scott.

Black.

THE GOOD RING

On a normal day in a normal gym it might be a strange sight to see two men working out in lucha libre masks. But the sprawling rows of state of the art machines at DEFIANCE Wrestling's famous Wrestle-Plex isn't your normal run of the mill gym. The two men in question are both in regular work out attire, sporting less flashy versions of their normal in-ring head and face-wear.

Even so, they're pretty easily recognizable as BRAZEN competitors Sho Nakazawa and Mascara De Muerte IV. As we approach the two men are currently utilizing one of the many bench presses lining the gyms large center area.

Nakazawa:

There you go brotha. Good job.

Muerte:

Thanks man.

"Oi, lads."

As the stocky young Japanese grappler in the green and white helps his skull masked workout partner rack a bench press a VERY familiar voice from behind the two causes them to look back in unison.

Muerte: [with a wink and a nudge]

Well well well, look who's LATE for his workout again. What's your excuse this time superstar? Limo break down?

Nakazawa:

Naw naw naw bro, big main roster superstars, it's always something like a photoshoot or something, brotha needed new headshots or some shit.

Nakazawa playfully tosses a white gym towel into the smiling face of the victorious CAYLE MURRAY as the current reigning defending FIST of DEFIANCE walks up to the high flying duo dressed to join in on the mornings workout.

Muerte:

Don't tell me the CHAMP is too big a star to workout with the boys now...

He drops the playful-incredulousness and replace it with genuine concern for his friend.

Muerte:

How you feelin' man? You doin' okay? You went through hell at the pay per view.

Cayle smiles, chuckles and rubs the back of his neck.

Murray:

Ahhhh, you know me laddie. Can't keep a good squid down. Sorry, time got a bit away from me. Doc Davine kept me for ages, walked out with something resembling a clean bill of health. Guess that'll probably change again the next time I run into Big Bloody Mushi, but you know.

The stocky little Japanese super junior walks up and claps the champ on his shoulder.

Nakazawa:

Brotha that's good to hear. That performance was incredible, bro. That strap hasn't been around a waist this worthy in a looong time, much respect.

Mascara De Muerte IV smiles from beneath the scaled back version of his classic black and white death's head mask.

Muerte:

Guess that means we can put your lazy ass through the full meal deal then, huh? I think the good ring's free, what do you say CHAMP?

The FIST shares his friends smile and his enthusiasm.

Murray:

I say let's bloody do this, lads.

The trio start off in the direction of the facilities practice rings as we fade to black.

RING AUS EISEN

The two men slowly saunter in front of the vinyl DEFIANCE Wrestling banner from both sides of the screen. For anyone who bore witness to this last week's DEFtv the two men are immediately recognizable as the recently victorious German contingent of the DEFroster. First the long time Bronson Box acolyte Reinhardt Hoffman and the recently debuted barefoot fighting machine Gunther Adler. Both men are dressed in their ring gear. Hoffman sports a German national football team jersey, Adler stoically crosses his massive arms across his broad bare chest.

After a long awkward silence Reinhardt finally steps forward takes the lead. He starts with his eyes noticeably averted from the camera's lens.

Hoffman:

Truth be told I don't especially enjoy this part of the job. The *talking* bit. I've oft found myself sitting in awe of my dear friend Bronson's ability to hold people in rapt attention with just a few shouted words, a simple turn of phrase or turning the proverbial screw with a particularly sharp insult. All that being said here I am nonetheless, microphone and camera pointed at me like I'm facing a firing line...

His eyes eerily roll up and finally meet ours. He peers silently over the tops of his eyes for a few beats. When he starts talking again, it's sudden. Almost *robotic*.

Hoffman:

Myself and my friend Adler here, we were each victorious at DEFIANCE television this last week. Gunther debuting with a dominating victory over another poor pathetic *wretch* dredged up from my compatriot Boxer's dreary homeland...

The *ENORMOUS* German wrecking machine Gunther Adler, who hasn't moved a muscle since his partner started talking, finally cracks a little satisfied smile.

Hoffman:

This silly bastard Blackwood is apparently lobbying for a *rematch*... [looking back over his shoulder] these *Scots*, such an impulsive people, aren't they mein freund?

Eyes back to the front.

Hoffman:

As for me? Well... I also have something to look forward to. Don't I *Randall*?*

* The "shoot" first name of the reigning SOHER champ, Impulse.

Hoffman:

There's a reason my friend Bronson laid hands on your lady dear, Randall. He was tired, exhausted, brain rattled about his head so yes, indeed he wasn't thinking quite clearly. But that was secondary to the fact you and she are *awful* people, Randall. You're rotten, irritating people who don't seem to possess the faculties to take this job with the seriousness it deserves. You never have. You both sauntered onto this roster with an attitude bordering on *blasé*... just another hole in the road, another checkpoint to reaffirm the "Impulse brand" and show the *yokels* you've still... "got it."

The up til now quite placid look on his face *sours* a bit at that.

Hoffman:

At 86, several things will happen. My friend here is going to smear the same Scottish worm, Blackwood, across the canvas if that's what Ms. Evans sees fit to make a reality. Because why deny Mr. Blackwood the further embarrassment he obviously craves, *mmm*? And I... well, I plan on taking that Southern Heritage title away from you, *Randall*. Simple as that.

He takes a few short steps forward, straightening his posture and tightening his jaw.

He places his hands almost militarily behind his back.

Hoffman:

I am *NOT* Bronson Box. So I implore you to not approach me as such. I won't scream and yell. I will stretch you and take that title belt *AWAY* from you. And no fear. I won't brutalize you or your useless manager. I want you both conscious as I make my way back up that ramp with that which was yours knowing full and well who's feet I'm going to lay it before. I want you to experience that loss in all its exquisite painfulness. I want the both of you to go home and ponder just how ones such as yourselves, as *noteworthy* as yourselves could lose so completely...

Reinhardt's expression doesn't change.

Hoffman:

So *utterly*.

Hoff turns and hazards a look back at his friend and compatriot.

Der Bulle Aus Bremen stirs and finally looks directly at the camera and speaks.

Adler:

Du solltest alle angst haben, was als nächstes kommt.

Gunther chuckles under his breath as we fade to black.

SHOW ME YOUR HERO

Fade in on a poorly painted and shoddily cobbled together 2-dimensional set. Colors faded and uninteresting, it is nonetheless a picturesque city scene; an everyday urban bus stop on a bright, cheery day. Several black, featureless and lifeless silhouettes dot the bus stop bench, another 2-dimensional cut-out leans against a nearby lamp-post. The only thing moving is a silhouette himself... until the lights slowly come up. Dead grey eyes glinting under the warm spotlight, Lord Nigel Tricklebush glides to a rest at the bus stop, a thick manilla folder in one hand, ever-present umbrella in the other. Setting the folder down on the bench behind him, Lord Nigel politely doffs his cap to his neighbors.

LORD NIGEL TRICKELBUSH:

Lovely day, just a *lovely* day! I say, just take it IN!

He dramatically removes his cap and ingests a maddeningly deep breathe with an equally long exhalation immediately behind it.

LORD NIGEL TRICKELBUSH:

Such a lovely day... and yet look at the state of you?!? Sitting around... waiting for a bus that may yet never come...

He places the bowler cap back atop his head and grins that plastic grin. The camera slowly sweeps across the "faces" of the black silhouette cut-outs before returning to find Nigel hanging something up on the vestibule-wall of the bus stop. Our shot stays trained now on Lord Nigels tight, mannequin features.

LORD NIGEL TRICKELBUSH:

So many of the men and women of DEFIANCE are just waiting... Might as well be sharing that bench with the lot of you! Waiting for guidance... ignorant to their own needs, their deepest desires! Run down the roster, from the top to the bottom the heroes of DEFIANCE are rudderless, sputtering in the water, WAITING...

Placing a hand on the "shoulder" of a seated silhouette, Nigel seems to be speaking to "him".

LORD NIGEL TRICKELBUSH:

But I can't wait! No, there is much work to be done! My storm has passed and it's time for a new chapter to be written... time for a new "project"! A new CHALLENGE!

He leans to whisper in his "ear" and the camera cuts to a sickeningly tight shot. When he speaks, a string of saliva connects his thin pale lips.

LORD NIGEL TRICKELBUSH (whispering):

I *like* a challenge.

Back to a wider shot, he gently "pats" the 2-dimensional cut out on it's "head" before turning back to the vestibule wall, affixing another poster to it. He calls out over his shoulder.

LORD NIGEL TRICKELBUSH:

It wasn't enough to take the tag division and implode it. To take a tag team, in this case the Masked Violators, and orchestrate their ultimate *downfall* in DEFIANCE... no, I need something bigger... something better... a project with which I might cement my *legacy* here... a project that will alter DEFIANCE forever...

He turns now to the next seated silhouette on the bench and takes the empty spot next to it, looking upon it as if he were confiding in an old friend.

LORD NIGEL TRICKELBUSH:

You see... I want to take one of their faithful warriors... I want to take DEFIANCE's best and brightest... and **I want to**

break him.

Another tight shot on Lord Nigel's face. Eyes dead, expression forced with rage just simmering beneath.

LORD NIGEL TRICKELBUSH:

I want to take one of DEFIANCE's most cherished hero's... and make him see things a *different* way... I want to take their hero and make him a **killer**. I want to reshape their white knight into a demon from their children's darkest, deepest nightmares. And I want to do it **SLOWLY**.

A long pause, shot held on his motionless eyes. It hangs another moment, then he blinks and continues.

LORD NIGEL TRICKELBUSH:

But first... (sigh)... I have to *find* him, don't I?

Laboriously rising back to his feet with another sigh, Lord Nigel hangs a third poster on the bus stop as the shot pulls back. One says "MISSING", another "WANTED", and the third "HAVE YOU SEEN THIS MAN?" -- each poster features a black silhouette.

LORD NIGEL TRICKELBUSH:

Do keep an eye out, would you?

Another doff of the cap.

LORD NIGEL TRICKELBUSH:

Cheerio.

With a click of his heels and a tap of the umbrella-tip on the ground, he glides out of shot, leaving our mass travelers to continue their long wait. Fade to black.

GONE FOR THE HOLIDAYS

Date: December 22nd, 2003

Location: The Reeves Residence; Seattle, WA.

"Derrick ... put those back. You're going to get me in trouble."

The lense cap of a home video recorder jostles before coming completely off and brings light to the darkness. It's grainey visual reveals younger version of a vaguely familiar face. Late teens at most, wrinkled white t-shirt, ripped baggy jeans and dark greasy hair nearly meeting his shoulders. He has in his hands a pack of cigarettes and a shifty look on his face. He snitches two and places the lifted looseys in his nearby book bag before returning the pack where he found it.

Derrick:

Don't worry about what I'm doing.

He looks up realising he is on camera.

Derrick:

Where the hell you get that? [excited] Oh shit, we could film a skate tape, Court!

Derrick Allen is referencing to his younger sister Courtney, who currently controls the camera.

Derrick:

This will be sick! We gotta call, Scotty.

Courtney:

This isn't leaving this house. It's Riley's, she said I can use it when I'm watching Jess.

Derrick:

... that sounds sketchy.

Courtney:

Ewww ... perv! It's for Jason, for everything he misses. Like, I don't know ... memories and shit.

Derrick:

That kids weird. Probably not a bad idea to document it ... for the court case, ya' know?

Courtney sighs at Derrick's attempt at humor and turns away, videoing the living room. It's a somewhat disheveled mess of children's toys, clothes lying on floor; thrown about.

Courtney:

Whatever. You need to put those backs. If Jason catches you with them ...

Derrick:

That dude doesn't give a shit, he's given me a few before.

Courtney:

You're lying. I swear to god Derrick, if you get me fired ...

Courtney trails off; fuming.

Courtney:

I, actually, enjoy babysitting Jessica. They pay me pretty good and it gets me out of that house. No one asked you to tag along.

Derrick:

Whatever... I was just bored.

Courtney:

Surprisingly, they don't mind you but ...

Before she can finish her sentence, a loud slam is heard, like a door off in the distance being shut quickly and hard enough to keep the door from latching properly. Loud footsteps are heard going through the hallways but no one enters the living room, instead heated voices are heard in down the hallway.

Courtney walks with the camera to where the voices are coming from and approaches the door. She leans in to hear better and to her jolting surprise the door cracks open slightly. She jumps back with a hushed fear only to realize no one has noticed. The camera takes into focus what looks to be a unkept bedroom.

Riley Reeves, hands on her hips wearing the usual clean up day set up, sweat pants, baggy t-shirt and her hair is wrapped in a ponytail. She stares with anger in her eyes toward Jason. He stands on the opposite side of the bed with a duffle bag in front of him.

Riley: [obviously frustrated]

You just got here.

Jason:

I know... I'm sorry but I got a show booked for me down in Arizona. It's a pretty big payout.

Riley:

The money doesn't matter right now, J. You are going to miss Christmas morning. Again...

Jason:

What the hell do you mean again? I was here last year.

Riley:

Here? Is that what you call Jessica waking up at 4 am to find her father drunkenly passed out under the Christmas Tree; thinking you are Santa?

Jason rests his hands on the bed and stares at Riley, he looks at her contemplating what he wants to say to the woman he loves. He gives it a few moments then shakes his head and goes back to looking in his duffle bag.

Riley: [annoyed]

You have nothing to say? Just like always, right? You are either gone all the time or when you are here you are in too much pain to talk and move, too drunk to comprehend what book your daughter is asking you to read.

Jason: [Yelling]

I'M DOING MY BEST RILEY! WE HAVE A DECENT HOUSE... we are able to afford for someone to watch our child! While you work, go out, do whatever it is the hell you do when I'm not here.

Riley:

You think, I want Courtney watching her all the time? We don't have much of a choice, Jason. It... It's hard... you don't have to deal with her all the time - you don't know what it's like. She... she is...

Jason:

She's what Riley? Crazy? Insane ... ? I mean damn look at who her parents are. It's no wonder she has issues.

Riley:

SHUT UP!

The scream is startling to Courtney and the camera jostles. She starts to back away but instead gives it a second thought and keeps the camera focused on the interaction.

Jason:

Look maybe this idea Terry has; will work out. You know, opening up our own wrestling venue here in Seattle. I'll be able to spend more time here with you and Jessica. It could work.

Riley:

The last thing you ever need to do is invest money with him...

The two, obviously, have touched on this subject many times before which Jason has stood unmoved from his standing on it. He shakes his head zipping up his duffle bag. Courtney decides it's best to back away with the camera before the two adults notice her. When she turns, a little girl, obviously Jessica, is looking at her only a few feet away. She's wearing Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles PJ's and is carrying a stuffed bear. She looks up at Courtney with a sad expression on her face.

Jessica:

They were fighting again; weren't they?

Courtney moves closer to her and reaches down putting a hand on her shoulder and whispers to her.

Courtney:

No Jess... they were just having a loud talk. Remember I told you about those? It happens in my house ALOT. It's nothing to worry about. Why we don't we go in the living room and watch tv?

Jessica: [perking up]

Okay! Is Derrick here?

Courtney: [sighing]

Yes... he's here.

Jessica:

Awesome! He's so cool! You think he'll watch TV with us?

Courtney:

Let's ask him.

Jessica leads the way in front of Courtney who utters something under her breath as she cuts the camera off.

"I hope not."

Static.

DEF MINI-DOC: I CAN'T MAKE MISTAKES

Fade in.

DDK:

Unbelievable! Cayle Murray, one of the most celebrated prospects in wrestling, has just fallen to Jake Donovan!

After his first DEFIANCE singles match, a defeated, humbled Cayle crawls towards a corner. He sits himself upright against the bottom two turnbuckles, watching on in disbelief as Donovan celebrates on the other side of the ring.

Cut to the present day

Cayle Murray:

Losing never feels good, particularly in a company like DEFIANCE, where we pride ourselves on building something meaningful around the value of a win or a loss.

He's sat on a ring apron inside the official DEFIANCE gym. While the room's not quite empty, it's clearly filling out. There are a few people milling around, but Cayle is the clear focus of the shot as he dabs his sweating brow down with a white towel.

Cayle Murray:

My approach to professional clearly doesn't work every time. No approach does.

Cut back to the good old days. Backstage, a fuming Eric Dane accosts Cayle and his brother. A few weeks later, The Only Star leaves him bloodied, beaten, and broken backstage.

Cayle Murray: [OSV]

I'd get some kind of worthwhile victory...

The Murray Brothers destroy Bobby Dean with a Shutthefuckuppercut at DEFIANCE Road 2016, defeating him and Dane in their big tag bout.

Cayle Murray: [OSV]

... then, I'd throw it away.

A few weeks later, Cayle falls to Mushigihara on an episode of DEFtv. On the next show, he's pinned by Eric Dane during a tag bout also involving Dan Ryan and Lindsay Troy.

Cayle Murray: [OSV]

Though I always seemed to rebound.

At DEFCON 2016, Cayle scores the biggest win of his career, overcoming Eric Dane with a brutal barrage of finishing moves. The shot focuses on his impassioned celebration, as he collapses into the crowd following 70 minutes of straight action.

Back to the present day, and Cayle is still sat on the apron, unravelling his sweaty handwraps. A voice speaks out from behind the camera lens - it's that of Dave Felcher, DEF's rarely seen media mogul.

Dave Felcher:

Would you say beating Dane was the turning point?

Cayle Murray:

Every match - win or loss - is a turning point. It's all about evolution.

Exhausted, he nods to the camera.

*The 2016 DEF*MAX tournament. Rounds one and two see him overcome Levi Cole and Mikey Unlikely on consecutive shows. Then, at DEFtv 72, him and Impulse go to a 20-minute time limit draw, though it's enough to send Murray into the finals.*

Cayle Murray: [OSV]

Losing to Penn was a real wake up call, though.

DDK:

*Curtis Penn has done it! He is the 2016 DEF*MAX Champion, and Cayle can't believe it!*

Having lost to a feet-on-the-ropes fall, Murray remonstrates with the referee for a few moments, but soon realises there's nothing that can be done. Exasperated, he shakes his head, then moves towards a corner, kicking-out at the bottom turnbuckle in frustration.

Back to real-time.

Cayle Murray:

At that point, I knew I had to switch things up to compete at this level. I knew I had to work smarter, harder, and more efficiently than anyone else in DEFIANCE. If I wanted to make it to the top, that is.

The Scot pulls away his second set of handwraps, then pulls one of his feet up onto the apron. He starts untying his laces as Felcher addresses him.

Dave Felcher:

So what'd you do?

Cayle Murray:

I rebuilt my training program. I still do all the usual wrestling stuff - I just do *more* on top. Mondays and Fridays, I take a Brazilian jiu-jitsu class. Wednesdays, kickboxing. I have three weekly training sessions dedicated to movement and movement alone. Saturdays, I run a half-marathon every single week, then get home and study footage, five or six hours at a time.

He slides the boot off, then replaces it with a knitted Adidas sneaker.

Dave Felcher:

That's a *lot*. Aren't you worried about burnout?

Still sweating, Murray looks to the camera for the first time.

Cayle Murray:

I can't be worried about anything anymore, mate.

Cut back to the archived footage. We get some highlights from the Bronson Box feud. First, Cayle saves his brother DEFCON 2016, then falls to the Wargod on two consecutive pay-per-views.

Cayle Murray: [OSV]

I'd say the changes are working, though.

The footage picks up, and focuses on Cayle's big night at DEFIANCE Road 2017. In the first match of the evening, he finally scores a victory over Box, putting him away with the GITB. Then in the night's main event, Cayle chokes Kendrix out while hanging from the FIST of DEFIANCE.

Dave Felcher:

Would you attribute your DEF Road success to this brutal training regiment?

Back in the gym, Cayle is focused solely on the camera.

Cayle Murray:

Yes.

He nods.

Cayle Murray:

I'll never be 'The Marathon Man' - nobody will - but without that extra stamina, I wouldn't have made it through the night. I mean, I barely landed a move in that main event anyway...

Dave Felcher:

How did you power through after the Box match? Most men suffer a huge adrenaline dump after such a fight, and it can be hard to start the engine back up after that.

Cayle Murray:

That's why I kept the engine running. My heart was still pounding when Eric told me the plan, so the first thing I did after getting out of Doc Davine's office was head for the treadmill. If I stopped, I'd have been screwed, so I stood on that damn thing for well over an hour, walking at a steady pass, keeping the blood flowing.

A voice calls across the gym.

Sho Nakazawa:

Later, brother.

The FIST of DEFIANCE looks over his shoulder. The masked BRAZEN youngster raises a thumb in the air, as does his buddy, Mascara De Muerte IV. Murray saves his breath by responding with a quick salute as the duo leave the gym entirely.

Dave Felcher:

I hear you've been spending a lot of time around the BRAZEN guys lately. Why is that?

Cayle Murray:

Unlike my peers on the main roster, they don't want to kick my head in.

He pulls the FIST belt from the apron and drapes it over his shoulder.

Cayle Murray:

Well, most of them.

Cayle motions over his shoulder. Behind him, a furious Felton Bigsby is pounding away at a heavy bag.

Cayle Murray:

I have to be careful now that I have this on my shoulder. Jason's gone, Andy isn't always here: it helps to be around people I know I can trust.

Dave Felcher:

What about Impulse?

Cayle Murray:

I love Impulse.

He pauses.

Cayle Murray:

But if I hold onto this thing for any length of time - and I plan on doing so - there's a good chance we're going to have to fight again. He's one of the best in the company, so it's inevitable. He knows my general schedule just like everybody else, but I can't let guys like him, Kendrix, and Mushigihara see *exactly* what I'm doing. I refuse to give up a fair advantage.

Again, Cayle pauses. This time he takes a few moments to ponder.

Cayle Murray:

I've made a lot of mistakes, Dave. Lost a lot of matches, blown a lot of opportunities. Now? I can't make a mistake. If I do, this thing goes away...

He taps the belt.

Cayle Murray:

... and after 16 years of struggle, I won't let that happen. I *CAN'T* let that happen.

Fade out.