

SHOW OPENER



We're in-studio at DEF HQ.

As per usual it's one half of the voices of DEFTv that greets us, the one and only Angus Skaaland. The bleach-blonde Motormouth of Malcontent leans casually against a huge black and red vinyl DEFIANCE banner hung against the studio wall. He "notices" the camera and give us a little wink before launching into this weeks introduction.

Angus Skaaland:

Well... how 'bout that DEFCON show, huh? Last time you guys saw me, Keebler and I were scrambling away from Dan Ryan like the people of Tokyo from GORRAM Godzilla... well, I mean *Darren* was anyway. Darren's a grade 'A' pussy, as you're all well aware. I was just giving ol' Danno a little room like a goddamn gentleman, you see...

ahem* ... *crickets

Angus Skaaland:

Yeah... anyway. *Right!* To hell with aaaaaaall that shit, we got a NEW FUCKIN' YEAR, FOLKS! And we're kickin' it off with last year's greatest DEF-ov... DEF-ino... DEF-ovation? Damn it... have we jumped the shark with that DEF-a-whatever naming gimmick? It's startin' to look like Adam West's Bat-cave around this joint, I can't lie. Next thing you know we're gunna' have the DEF-copter and the "DEF Shark Repellent Spray."

We "dramatically" switch from camera 1 to camera 2, slightly zoomed in. Angus is right there with the finger guns.

Angus Skaaland:

We got a steamin' hot pile of *UNCUT, BAYBAY!*

We catch him whispering to himself... He's so proud of himself it's almost gross.

Angus Skaaland:

Wham, producin' like a boss. Two camera shoot baby. Take that community college Radio-Television-Film professor... Yeah. Like I was sayin' we've got the inevitable follow-ups from DEFCON, sure. But this is a new year, baby! And this is DEFIANCE! When have you known this promotion to *NOT* flip the proverbial game-board over every now and again just for funsies, eh?! Enough of me, we gotta' release the kraken and get this sucker *STARTED!*

We cut back to camera 1, extreme zoom!

Angus Skaaland:

ROLL THAT BEAUTIFUL BEAN FOOTAGE! *Suck on that sick camerawork professor Schwartz...*

B-ROLL #2

We are backstage at **DEFCON** night two, Christie Zane is standing at a crossroads in the corridors. She's looking away from the camera shaking her head confused. The interviewer turns her head back towards the camera asking a question at the operator.

Zane:

Are you sure?

The shot begins to go up and down in a nod.

Cameraman:

I'm 67 percent sure that was Courtney Paz that just walked by!

Christie shakes her head. She isn't buying that the cameraman just saw the woman who has been assumed to be Perfection's agent. We see his hand begin to push Christie in the direction where he saw Paz cross.

Cameraman:

67 percent sure, yes.

Christie shakes her head. She isn't buying that the cameraman just saw the woman who has been assumed to be Perfection's agent in the Wrestle-Plex.

Zane:

No way. Are you sure?

We see his hand begin to guide Christie lightly in the direction where he saw Paz cross. Zane goes with the idea, taking a small lead in front of the camera. He's well behind her as Christie is about to round the corner. Before the cameraman can catch up Zane has darted down the adjacent corridor.

Zane:

Ms. Paz!

The camera man also hustles to round the corner and catches Christie being held back by a few men in black suits. The woman that Zane has tried to talk with covers her face and walks into a private room. The camera is still a bit behind and is trying to stay in focus while catching up.

Cameraman:

See! 67 percent!

Before the cameraman can even get close enough one of black suits breaks formation and rushes the cameraman. He's not DEFsec and doesn't care. He grabs the camera by the lense and pushes it back in a fluster of noise and fingers.

Security:

Get that shit outta here.

We cut to static.

DEFCON, NIGHT 1 - AFTER THE MAIN EVENT...

We're backstage in the gorilla position with none other than DEF internet guru and main proprietor of DEF's rumor mill Dave Felcher. He's looking off camera with a deeply concerned and obviously uncomfortable look on his pale face.

Dave Felcher:

I know I said I was happy to pick up some of these for Christie, but HIM, really?! ... but I'm NOT DEFspy, I've told you all this over and over and ... So this is what, *punishment?*! Oh, come on, I...

The terrified eyes of DEF's go-to IT guy suddenly whip around to the black curtain that separates out there from in here. We can tell immediately WHEN this is by the sound of the crowds distinctive "oooooooooh"... that and the sound of heavy stomping steps across the metal stage area just moments after. A sweaty, brutalized Bronson Box pushes through the entrance curtain mere MINUTES after his wild Night 1 main event against his nemesis Eugene Dewey. Felcher takes a deep breath, mutters something to the effect of "come on Davey" to himself before stepping forward, microphone hand extended. The Wargod stops, eyeballing Felcher up and down as the (what we're guessing is to end up being quite short) interview commences.

Dave Felcher:

Firstly Bronson, congratulations on your victory tonight. You seem to have allowed Eugene a moment out there with the fans after the two of you nearly KILLED one another tonight. Is this an indication of some level of mutual respect still exists between the two if you? Even after all that's happened?

The Wargod manages an exhausted little chuckle.

Bronson Box:

Young Eugene and I's "relationship" is as complex as a fine wine or aged cheese... it's neither this nor that. Good nor bad. We've shed far too much of each other's blood to be *friends* or partners... but we've also shed too much of each other's blood to be true *enemies* either. I know the lad is plannin' some sort of extended *hiatus*...

Dave Felcher:

I've heard.

Bronson Box:

Of course you have ye' snoopy little shite. I'll just say this... there's nobody I enjoy brutalizin' more than that fat titted bastard, so if'n he has the bollocks I know he's got he'll shake that idea right out of his brillo pad topped cranium. Go find yer' fookin' smile, boy. Or whatever the hell it is yer' doin'... *I'll be right here* provin' that Bronson Box is for a damn fact **THE Original DEFIANT**. End of fookin' argument.

Dave Felcher:

The burning question though, the proverbial elephant in the room... you used *Andy Murray's* finishing maneuver to put away Eugene tonight. I think I even spied a *wink* there before...

The Only DEFIANT holds up a hand, stopping Dave's investigative reporting right in its tracks. He lets a silence hang in the air before slowly reaching up and taking command of the microphone. Dave forced to awkwardly stand there as The Wargod talks right to his face with all the quiet intensity of a serial killer.

Bronson Box:

Lance Warner and Christie Zane refuse to interview me, little man... do you know why?

Dave just nods, uttering a quick "yes sir."

Bronson Box:

If you wanna' know why I did what I did yer' best bet is to shut yer' fookin' trap with yer' little questions, leave me alone, and watch the bloody show just like everyone else. DEFtv's right around the bloody corner. That or you could snoop around with yer' fookin' Googlin' and yer' blasted security cameras... that, of course, at yer' own risk. I'd advise

bein' patient. Believe me, it'll be worth the wait.

Boxer shoves the microphone into Felchers chest with enough force to stagger the poor man.

Bronson Box:

If'n ye' don't mind, lad. *I've got some old friends I've been dyin' to catch up with.*

Fade.

DRUNKBROS: ASSEMBLE

Less than 12 hours after DEFCON.

It's a beautiful morning in New Orleans. The sun's out, there's not a single cloud in the sky, the birds are singing, and it's still too early for that Louisiana mugginess to creep-in and smother everything.

Jason Natas trudges his way out of New Orleans East Hospital with a bag over his shoulder and a limp in his step. Squinting in the sunlight, Natas' face is relatively unblemished from his handling of Sean Jackson, but the crutch he's carrying (not using) in his left hand tells a different story.

Squinting in the sunlight, the casually-dressed Bronx Bully hobbles across the lawn and towards the parking lot. Andy Murray is already there, resting against his car's boot, enjoying the rays.

Jason Natas:

Mornin' you big bastard.

The King turns around.

Andy Murray:

Shouldn't you be in jail?

Andy pushes away from the car.

Andy Murray:

Y'know, for murdering Sean Jackson?

Dressed in a pair of grey jeans, one of Natas' "PUGILIST" tees and with a pair of mirrored Aviators to shield his eyes, Murray smiles.

Natas does not.

Jason Natas:

That was terrible.

Andy Murray:

Yes. Yes it was.

Seemingly proud of his awful Dad joke, Andy smiles, then points towards the crutch.

Andy Murray:

Not gonna use that thing?

Jason Natas:

Not until the painkillers wear off.

Andy Murray:

How bad is it?

Jason Natas:

Not as bad as his neck.

Laughing at his training partner's bluntness, Andy pops the trunk and lets The Anti-Superstar throw his bag in.

Jason Natas:

Nah, strained ligaments. Couple weeks off. Compression, elevation, ice, etc. Could've been a lot worse.

Andy Murray:

Wow.

He raises his brow.

Andy Murray:

Surprising, but good news. That was a pretty nasty assault from Jackson.

Jason Natas:

Guess they rebuilt the damn thing stronger than it was in the first place.

Natas shrugs.

Jason Natas:

When'd you get out?

Andy Murray:

About an hour ago. No idea why they kept me in overnight, really, but who am I to argue with the professionals?

Jason Natas:

Any damage?

The King puts a hand across his ribs. It's clear that there are at least a few layers of bandages beneath his tight tee.

Andy Murray:

Lots of bruising, not much else. Bobby's a heavy bastard, but I guess I'm fortunate that all his weight's spread-out over such a gigantic surface area.

Jason Natas:

Helluva belly, sure enough.

Andy Murray:

Okay, "Fatas."

Knowing he's probably the only person in the world who can get away with that particular rib without getting smacked in the jaw, Andy laughs. Natas almost laughs. Before either of them can continue the conversation, however, there's a slight clanking sound beyond Jason Natas. Andy looks around his friend.

Cayle Murray:

Oi...

The younger Murray is in significantly worse shape than his allies. There's a huge bandage tied around his forehead, his face is peppered with bruises and grazes, and the clanking sound comes from the two crutches he's using to carry himself towards the car.

Andy Murray:

Bloody hell.

Natas turns around to face the shambling Murray brother. He looks him up and down.

Jason Natas:

You look like shit.

Cayle Murray:

Thanks mate. Appreciate it.

Andy instinctively moves towards his sibling.

Andy Murray:

Need a hand?

Cayle Murray:

Nah, I've got it.

A quick shake of the head dismisses Big Murr, and Cayle eventually makes it towards the trunk. It takes a loud groan and a whole lot of effort for him to slide his bag down from his shoulders then into the vehicle, but he does it, then gently places his crutches on-top.

Andy Murray:

What's the damage?

Cayle Murray:

Do you want a list?

Cayle's voice is tired and croaky, breaking-up with every word.

Cayle Murray:

Do we have all day?

Andy just smiles. Jason Natas pulls an e-cigarette from his back pocket and slides it beneath his lips. All three stand in the sun for a few moments, none saying a word.

Andy Murray:

We won.

Jason Natas:

Yeah we fuckin' did.

The Bronx Bully draws some vapours into his system, then looks at the Murrays.

Jason Natas:

Beer?

Andy Murray:

Beer.

Cayle Murray:

It's not even 11am yet.

Jason Natas:

That's fine. I know a place.

The Bronx Bully waves Cayle's meek protestations away, then pulls a door open.

Cayle Murray:

You're an animal, Jason.

Jason Natas:

That I am.

Cut.

BRAZEN TRIOS TOURNAMENT COMMERCIAL

"Endurance... "

The voice is familiar, in the sense we've all heard this particular deep booming voice over talent before. From the black void the vignette began in, ever so slowly, the big blue and black BRAZEN logo rolls across the screen. And again, blackness.

V/O:

... it's what separates the elite from the chaff. *The strong from the weak.*

A flame flickers out of the darkness, the dim light cast against a "throne" followers of BRAZEN Wrestling have seen before. The large, intricate wooden chair is occupied by none other than leader of the Viking War Cult and current 1/3 of the DEFIANCE Trios Tag Team champions the man known only... as Cul. Flanked on his right and left hand by his trios tag team title holding partners in crime the identical Holmström Brothers. As the flame flickers brighter, revealing the seven foot masked nightmare, Torvald the Destroyer, standing behind and towering above both the throne and his teammates. The flame dims enough, the Vikings vanish from sight...

V/O:

The strong from the weak.

As the flame brighten again, we're greeted with other teams from the field of 16...

A blood splattered basement, the three rough-hewn leather clad members of the Strong-Style Stranglers. The former WfWA World Tag Team holder Jacob David Hart is the only one to acknowledge us with a strange little wave and a cold unnerving smile. Right at the moment all three disturbing gentlemen all start to focus their beady hollow eyes the flame continues to dance, darker then brighter yet again.

V/O:

This August, BRAZEN offers 16 teams the chance of a lifetime.

A campfire, around which sits the Southern Bastards. The sound is muffled, but we can tell they're having a damn good time. MASSIVE Cowboy and Rebel Yell sitting in rapt attention as the DEFIANCE Onslaught champion Frank Dylan James regales them with one of his *animated* road stories. The foursome continue downing brewskies and swapping stories as the flames dance on.

V/O:

The chance to prove themselves.

Quicker and quicker the flames dance. We're greeted with more glimpses at the field of 16. High flying underdogs The Gulf Coast Connection. The ever entertaining Midcard Experiment of Walter, Fish Jr. and the mysterious CAGE! BRAZEN mainstays Osaka Hate Crime. The cobbled together team of former "BRAZEN 5" members MDM4, Butcher Victorious and their partner Sho Nakazawa. The tight knit father and sons trio, The Dunson Clan. Former Conclave trainer and original BRAZEN signee Reinhardt Hoffman and his partners the Gentlemen's Agreement.

V/O:

The Vikings title reign will be put to the test, as every match the champions compete in in this two day tournament ***THE TRIOS TITLES WILL BE ON THE LINE!***

DEF*MAX competitor Levi Cole and The Louisiana Bulldogs. The brand new to BRAZEN, UK imports the brutal Guns of Brixton. Always positive and ready to make a difference, Mr. Salazar and his Barrio Boys. Sgt. Safety and his Timeclock Cowboys, looking to show everyone they're more than just a gimmick. Mike Sloan Jr. and his Hotboys tag team partner former WfWA World Tag Team Champion Sean Peters, looking to make a REAL impact choosing BRAZEN standout Howlin' Joe Wolfe to be their third...

V/O:

Several new sets champions in one or two days? Perhaps... the competition will be STEEP...

The last team revealed being a bit of a shocker... the two members of BRUTAL ATTACK FORCE, Petey Garrett and Solomon Grendel, standing in the flickering with big wiiiide smiles on their faces. Each one holding up a black and white headshot of their FORMER trios partner and current DEF*MAX competitor and DEFIANCE superstar Curtis Penn. The two men continue to nod and smile as the flickering flame, our "guide" to the field of 16 finally goes out.

V/O:

The inaugural BRAZEN Trios Endurance Tournament... this August.

Only on DEFIANCEwrestling.com

MONSTERS!

The scene opens up the backstage area. Walking through a narrow hallway are the DEFIANCE Hollywood Heritage Champion, Mikey Unlikely, and the Future of DEFIANCE, Kendrix, the Hollywood Bruvs. The two wear their street clothes, Unlikely in a 'Saved by the Bell' retro t-shirt, and a pair of jeans. His championship hangs from his shoulder. JFK sports his signature bug eye shades, cream chinos and a dashing white t-shirt with the world's greatest artist, Drake's face printed on the middle of it.

The two look to be in good spirits.

Mikey Unlikely:

What did I tell you Bruv!? When I called to tell you about my guaranteed contract in DEFIANCE after UTAH shut down, and how I could get you one too, what did I tell you!?

Kendrix:

Lay it on me, bruv!

Mikey Unlikely:

I told you we would OWN this place in just a few shorts months! AND here we are! Five months after making my debut here, and we've formed the strongest single unit in DEFIANCE with the PCP! We've captured the Hollywood Heritage Title! We've captured the DEFIANCE Tag Team Championships! ANNNNNNNND we ran those BELLEND'S Andy Sharp and L.A.R. out of DEF for good!

The World's Greatest Sports Entertainer nods approvingly at himself.

Mikey Unlikely:

Yes sir... slowly but surely this place is becoming the vision I had for it, those many months ago! It's beautiful!

Unlikely sheds a fake tear.

Kendrix:

Bruv, Listen yeah?! JFK will be honest, he LOL'd big time when you told JFK that there was an actual promotion out there who focused their business on pure wrestling ability and beating the living hell out of each other! In fact, JFK even ROFL'd...when you told him that the same company didn't even know how to Sports Entertain.

Unlikely has a little chuckle of his own as he taps the side of his head with his index finger.

Mikey Unlikely:

I remember bruv. You thought I was kidding!

Jesse nods as he holds his hand flat across his chest.

Kendrix:

Guilty! JFK couldn't believe his gorgeous eyes when he walked into DEFIANCE for the first time. Boring promo after boring promo. Boring match after boring match, ugh! It was only a matter of time before the Hollywood Bruvs made their statement...you know, cos' we're OBVS the best and stuff!

Mikey Unlikely:

TOTALLY OBVS!

The two bump their fists together before exploding them out. Kendrix then opens his hands flat out in front of his face and moves them slightly out to the sides.

Kendrix:

Innit though?! DEFIANCE is becoming the Sports Entertainment vision you promised! The S.E.G. are taking over!

Mikey Unlikely:

I'm so siked! Let's go get some oreo frappuccinos from Starbucks to celebrate!

JFK's face goes wide with excitement.

Mikey Unlikely:

You know they actually pay me to suggest that!? Awesome! Let's go!

Unknown Voice:

Signing that man to a contract will be the downfall of DEFIANCE. He has no place here and if I see him, he will be destroyed.

The voice comes from down the hallway and the camera moves to catch it. JFK and Mikey look in that direction and they see Code Name: Reaper, stepping out of Kelly Evans' office. Eyes glowing bright red, he turns to face the Bruvs, stares at them for a few seconds and turns to walk down the hallway in the opposite direction.

Mikey Unlikely:

Woahhhh... Who let the freak in? Kelly Evans better be ok in there, she has to sign our checks!

A loud banging noise is heard coming down from the hallway, which Reaper walked down towards. It grabs The Bruvs' attention as well as the camera, nothing is seen down the hallway out of the ordinary, but as the camera turns back to the Bruvs. Code Name: Reaper is standing behind both of them.

Reaper: [slow and methodical]

Reaper is watching...

Both men jump sky high and scream. Unlikely puts his hand on his heart, and the other on his knee as he doubles over, trying to stabilize himself. JFK catches his bearings first.

Kendrix:

What the actual hell Bruv! You scared the shit out of us, what are you doing!? You can't just sneak up on a bruv like that, innit?!

Reaper breathes heavily for a moment before speaking.

Reaper:

While I do have my target in mind, you two are slowly creeping up on my list of potential threats to this company. The ego, the grandstanding, there is no place for it at all. Not in this world or any other.

Mikey Unlikely:

Ego!? Us!?

The two exchange a confused look.

Mikey Unlikely:

Is it still a big ego if you back it up!?

The World's Greatest Sports Entertainer holds his title up for Reaper to see.

Kendrix:

Actually, I think it is Bruv... Hey wait.... Listen, Yeah... you're that Twitter weirdo? Creaper, innit!?

Reaper:

I do not use Twitter. There is no use for it, my only goal is to place my IMPACT on DEFIANCE. If it means running the likes of you out of this place, then well, I am all for it. I know the games you two and your friends try to play, but you have no idea what I am capable of doing. DO NOT make me show you.

Reaper stops for a moment and leans in closer to Mikey who is still holding up his "Hollywood" Heritage Championship in the air.

Reaper:

Yes, you are a champion. So far you have backed up your ego, however, you have cheated your way to the top. You are the vile that I seek to eliminate, you are everything I stand to defeat, you are a piece of fucking shit.

The last statement drops like a bomb on the Bruvs, so do their jaws as they look at each other and then back out at Reaper.

Reaper:

There is a reason you check under your bed at night, before going to sleep, monsters lurk there. Specifically me... and I am always watching.

Suddenly the lights in the area flicker for a second and go completely out, they are only out for two seconds and when they come back on Code Name: Reaper is gone. The Hollywood Bruvs look around to see where he went but find nothing.

Mikey Unlikely:

Hey, where did he go?!

Kendrix:

Who cares bruv?! Let's go get our frappes, innit?!

Mikey stares with his eyes wide at his bestest bruv in the whole world as he plants his hands on his head.

Mikey Unlikely:

Who cares?! Bruv! He said I have an ego?! ME...Mikey Unlikely?! The man who has his own currency, The World's Greatest Entertainer and Greatest Hollywood Heritage Champion of alllllllll tiiiiiiiiimmmmmeeee! Me?!

Kendrix takes a moment to run his hand through his beard in thought before shaking his index finger vertically by the side of his head.

Kendrix:

Oh yeah...AND he's been in JFK's bedroom!

Kendrix stands with hands on hips, shaking his head in annoyance.

Mikey Unlikely:

Huh?!

Kendrix:

How else would that freak know that JFK looks under his bed every night?

Unlikely looks taken aback as he scratches his head, a little confused.

Mikey Unlikely:

You...you look out for monsters? What are you, eight?! You know there's no such thing as monsters, right bruv?!

Kendrix:

Obvs, bruv! That's just where JFK keeps all of his Mikey Money!

Mikey Unlikely:

You keep you're Mikey Money under your bed?!

JFK rolls his eyes, nods slowly and holds his hands out flat by his side.

Kendrix:

Obvs! JFK likes to remind himself how rich he is before he goes to sleep, innit?!

Mikey's confused expression evaporates immediately, replaced by a knowing smile and nod.

Mikey Unlikely:

Totally Obvs! Let's go get our celebratory oreo frappes, bruv!

The Bruvs share a cheery high five before they walk out of shot.

Mikey Unlikely [out of shot]:

Speaking of Mikey Money, Evans needs to spend some of it on the lighting around here...did you see them flick off and on just now? Place is falling apart!

End

DRUNKBROS 2: BRO HARDER

Snake and Jake's Christmas Club Lounge: a building that resembles a Brazilian favela shanty more than a public house, but comfortably one of the best dive bars in New Orleans.

And a regular haunt of these guys.

Andy Murray:

You know what you need? A nickname.

Big Murr pointed at his younger brother. It was dark - almost *too* dark - and lit only by strings of red lanterns hanging from the walls, but not so dismal that it was impossible to get a feel for the place.

Snake & Jake's was half full, even at this early hour, and populated by the world-weary, broken down, and destitute. There was a crackly old blues track playing over murmured conversations, and the three DEFIANTS had taken-up residence in a far corner.

Cayle Murray:

I have a nickname.

Jason Natas:

"Squidboy?"

The Bronx Bully almost spat his drink out. He and Andy were sat on crude plastic chairs, while the half-dead younger Murray sat solo on a *godknowswhat*-stained couch.

Jason Natas:

You like that shit?

Cayle Murray:

Of course I don't.

Jason Natas:

The stop lettin' fuckers call you it.

Cayle Murray:

How?

Andy takes a sip of whisky.

Andy Murray:

Elbows usually work.

Stretched across the couch, his crutches laying on the floor, Cayle looks halfway to death. His right hand's all slinged and splinted-up after the number Eric Dane did on his fingers at DEFCON, but he's still using it to cradle a class of what looks like orange juice.

Andy Murray:

In fact, the next time I hear someone call you "Squidboy," I'm gonna elbow them in the face. I expect the same from you.

Cayle Murray:

Angus?

Andy Murray:

Elbow.

Cayle Murray:

Bobby?

Andy Murray:

Elbow.

Cayle Murray:

Lindsay?

Andy Murray:

... no.

Cayle Murray:

See what I me--

Jason Natas:

Starbreaker.

The Anti-Superstar slams his empty beer bottle down on the table. Both sets of Scottish eyes turn to him. There's a pause.

Jason Natas:

Well, you *broke* The Only *Star* didn't you?

Cayle Murray:

I guess...

Jason Natas:

I ain't hearin' you or *The King of Scotch Style* over here comin' up with anythin' better.

Cayle lets a few seconds pass before responding.

Cayle Murray:

"Starbreaker." It's kind of trolly, no?

Jason Natas:

Hell no.

He shakes his head.

Jason Natas:

You killed the man, now take his scalp.

Before Cayle can reply, three hands with two mugs in each - and a plate - return to the table.

Cally:

Big news, guys. Can I tell them, RK? Can I? Or do you want to?

Impulse smirks. He slides a glass filled with a nonalcoholic drink of some sort to Cayle, while he sips his own.

Impulse:

All yours, Cally. Cheers, Cayle... to sobriety, both chosen and headwound - inflicted.

Cally smiles. She pushes the plate to the middle of the table.

Cally:

So, the kitchen is closing soon so they can do their thing, but the barback recognized us and the bartender - the cute one, Cayle, looking all shy at you right now - she's a big fan, and they were both at DEFCON and they gave us this.

Everyone looks; it's a plate of fried circles of things.

Cally:

Double order of fried calamari, on the house. 'Our best squid for our favorite squidboy,' they said.

Natas chuckles into his drink. Cayle sits back, gestures to Cally, and looks at his brother.

Cayle Murray:

Well?

Andy Murray:

... no.

Cayle nods, then slowly reaches down to retrieve his crutches from the floor. He slowly, painfully rises to his feet: everyone apart from Natas makes a move to help the hurting grappler out, but he waves them away.

Cayle Murray:

Well now that Cool Aunt Cally and Peachy Uncle 'Pulse are here, I don't feel too guilty about going back and dying quietly in my hotel room.

Not Squidboy lets out a hefty groan as he props his weight down on the crutches, then looks to the newly-arrived couple.

Cayle Murray:

Guys, don't let Andy elbow anybody in the face, okay?

Cally:

... what?

Jason Natas:

Don't ask.

Cayle nods, then shuffles away from the table.

Cayle Murray:

Catch you gu--

The door swings open, and Cayle's cut-off mid sentence.

Frank Dylan James:

There ya are ya bunch of hippie baysturds!

Andy Murray: (rolling his eyes)

Well, I guess *this* isn't winding down any time soon...

Cut.

SCOTT DOUGLAS INTRODUCTION

Moments after DEFCON Night Two's conclusion.

The Lakefront Arena doors swing open as the Faithful pour out into the night air. Some heading for cars in the parking lot and directly to Franklin Ave. Each a buzz with the night's festivities as they split camera left and right celebrating or commiserating what they've just witnessed.

As the torrential exodus slows to a trickle, Scott Douglas makes his exit from the complex and slows his gate just outside of the venue's main entrance. It appears he has taken in the show from the Faithful's perspective. He digs into the pocket of his dingy shredded jeans and retrieves a cell phone.

Staring at the caller identification displayed on the screen; Scott adjust his faded black t-shirt with the opposite hand. His expression turns from one of curiosity to comprehension as he swipes his thumb across the face of the device.

Tossing his hair back and out of his face with his free hand; Scott raises the phone to ear.

Scott:
Hey Ma...

The opposite end of the call is vaguely audible yet entirely unintelligible.

Scott:
No, I'm fine... I'm fine. Ma, I told you I - Ma, I told you I was going to get out of town for a few days.

Returning to pockets of the worn and thinned denim, Scott produces a pack of cigarettes and an accompanying lighter. As the voice on the other end of the line drones on with concern and correspondence, he lights a cigarette and draws in the carcinogens.

Scott: [exhaling the thick smoke into the night air]
Ma, everything is fine. I'm, just ... I'm looking into some potential opportunities.

Scott draws again as he begins pacing up and down the Arena adjacent sidewalk.

Scott:
Uh huh... yeah. OK ... Yes, I'll be back in a few days and I'll come by for dinner, I promise. I just needed to put my eyes on some things down here to be able to weigh my options.

A car pulls up along side the curb. The window already down; the driver calls out.

Driver:
You call an Uber?

Scott throws his hand up to acknowledge positively as he heads toward the car; flicking his cigarette off into the darkness.

Scott:
Ma, I gotta get going ... but I promise we'll talk soon. I just have to get some things in order.

The muffled voice on the other end of the call squawks in response as Scott enters the car. The driver double checks his phone nestled in the plastic grip mounted just above the air conditioner vent.

Scott:
I don't want to talk about that.

The car takes off down Franklin Ave as the phone call seemingly will not end.

Scott: [attempting to interject]

Well, yes but ... wait, no. Ma ... Ma ...

The driver inquisitively peaks toward the backseat via the rearview mirror as Scott raises his voice.

Scott:

Mom! I don't want to discuss that either. Seriously, let it go.

Scott calms himself and lowers his voice.

Scott:

I can't keep living in the past. I put my life on hold for long enough! It's time to move forward.

Scott's tone dips to levels broaching on melancholy briefly before returning to a natural cadence and collection.

Scott: [re-composed]

Like I said, I will talk to you soon and when I get back home ... I'll come by...

Scott pauses briefly.

Scott:

I love you, too. Alright, ok... alright, bye.

With a heavy sigh and heavy heart, Scott ends the call and returns the phone to his pants pocket with a slight twist in his seat to facilitate the action.

Scott: [trying to restore social norms]

Sorry about that. How are YOU doing, tonight?

The driver feigns surprise to hide the fact he was listening attentively to the bulk of the semi-private conversation.

Driver:

Huh? ... Oh, yeah I can't complain.

Scott, well aware of the awkwardness, doesn't respond; hoping the pleasantries were enough to meet his half of the social contract without having to have an actual conversation.

Driver:

Lakefront, eh? DEFCON!

The driver laughs nervously.

Driver:

How was it!?

Scott twists his neck to the left, appearing annoyed and then back to the right cracking his neck. The attempt at tension relief triggers a nearly involuntary shoulder roll to readjust.

Scott: [clearing his throat]

What? Oh, yeah ... It was great. A lot of talent under one roof.

Hoping he has struck a balance between short enough to discourage further conversation and not so short to come across as rude; Scott settles into his seat while putting his palm to his face and flipping his hair back over his head and out of his face.

Driver:

Big "rasslin" fan, eh?

Scott's social alchemy proves to be as much of a failure as the actual practice. Swiping his hand across his brow before drawing closed his thumb and index finger across his eyelids until they meet and focus on the bridge of his nose.

Scott: [head down, speaking through building frustration]

Yeah ... you could say that.

Driver: [oblivious]

Awesome! Well, this is you! The Holy Ground! Great bar. I think you'll dig it!

Scott:

I doubt they can disappoint. Thanks.

Scott pops the door latch and leans toward the hole it lends. Tossing a foot out and down to the pavement Scott pulls himself out of the vehicle.

Driver: [talking over his left shoulder]

Hey, five stars would be ...

Scott:

Yeah ...

Scott pushes the door shut and walks around the rear of the car. Stepping up on the sidewalk, he looks up to the bars signage. Shrugs, as if to say 'it'll do' and precedes inside. The open door lets loose a cacophony of clinking glass, belligerent voices and neon luminance, instantly blotted out by the slam of the swinging door.

DRUNKBROS 3: DRUNKBRO WITH A VENGEANCE

Back at the bar, and our little group have split-up somewhat since Cayle's departure. Andy Murray, Impulse, and Calico Rose are sat at the same table as before, but we catch-up with Frank Dylan James and Jason Natas first. The group's gruffest duo are sat at the bar, with a row of empty shot glasses lying before them.

Frank Dylan James:

So, you got your big boy britches on now, huh?

Jason Natas:

Huh?

The Bronx Bully swallows down whatever noxious black liquid he's just drained from the shot glass.

Frank Dylan James:

Getting your first win and all.

Jason Natas:

Huh.

He almost laughs.

Jason Natas:

I've had my "big boy britches" on for a while now, Frank. Since before DEFIANCE ROAD, actually.

Frank Dylan James:

You still weren't winning though.

Cally leans into the duo, clearly trying to defuse the mounting tension.

Cally:

Are big-boy britches like smarty pants? Or fancy pants?

Natas' brow tightens. Though he knows Frank probably doesn't mean any harm and the alcohol's clearly in his system now. The Anti-Superstar isn't best known for his sense of humour.

Jason Natas:

Where you goin' with this?

Frank laughs to himself.

Frank Dylan James:

Heh. You even lost to that Sports Entertainment hippie BAYSTURD...

Jason Natas:

Alright...

He sighs.

Jason Natas:

Enough, Frank.

Frank Dylan James:

Whadday--

Jason Natas:

Barkeep? Another round of shots.

Cut away from the bar, and back to the table. Cally's just arriving back after her failed interjection.

Andy Murray:

... and that, Knox, is why Krang is a racist.

The King hammers home his point by slapping the tabletop, almost knocking over half a dozen beer bottles in the process.

Andy Murray:

Bollocks.

Impulse listens intently, enjoying his nonalcoholic beverage, studying the King's words like the Zapruder film.

Impulse:

Funny. I never thought Bebop and Rocksteady would've been into that kinda kink.

Andy Murray:

You can't pigs and rhinos, man. Or...

He pauses for a moment, pondering.

Andy Murray:

... whatever the hell kind of creature Krang is.

Cally:

I hear he's a Jaceist. Listen, we may have a problem with the other bros, things are getting kind of heated.

Impulse and Andy look over at Natas and FDJ, to see the two having a rather animated disagreement on... something they can't really tell from here.

Andy Murray:

Och, leave 'em. Just a couple of big dumb alpha males having a big dumb alpha male conversation. No sweat.

Impulse:

What started it?

Cally looks at her glass, then Andy's glass, then back at her glass - which she finishes in one gulp.

Cally:

Alcohol. Alcohol started it.

Andy Murray:

I have witnessed both of those men consume a small island nation's GDP worth of beer on more than one occasion. It'll be fine, guys. Trust Uncle Murr.

He pauses.

Andy Murray:

Wait. You're the uncle.

Andy points at 'Pulse.

Andy Murray:

What the hell am I?

Impulse and Cally look at each other.

Cally (whispering):

Grandpa?

Impulse (also whispering):

He can hear you.

Andy Murray:

Goddamnit, I'm not THAT old.

A second thought hits him.

Andy Murray:

Wait. Knox, how old are you?

Impulse:

Wel--

THWACK!

Before Impulse can utter a single word, Frank Dylan James catches Jason Natas with a wide right hook across the jaw. The Anti Superstar falls to the floor behind Calico Rose, but immediately pops to his feet, his face full of thunder.

Andy Murray:

What the--

Natas leaps forward and slams his own fist into FDJ's face, and soon he's pushing The Mastodon back against the bar, fists flying in both directions.

Andy downs his drink.

Andy Murray:

Alright. I've got this...

Like a thoroughly disappointed grandparent, Grandpa Murray rises from his chair and heads towards the melee just as FDJ pushes Natas over a barstool.

Cut.

AFTERMATH AIN'T JUST AN ALBUM

A day or two removed from DEFCON: Night Two...

The door opens slowly, and the beeping of... some kind... of monitor is the only sound punctuating anything.

For now, at least. The quiet footsteps of the Marathon Man enter three paces and look at the bed.

Impulse:

It's this one, Cally.

Behind his bandaged head, Calico Rose steps into the room and quietly closes the door behind her. She has a box in her hands that she carries very carefully.

Cally:

Finally. I thought it'd be easy to find her after Miss Evans told us her usual alias, but who knew there were three legitimate Justine Varitek's at this hospital alone?

They were looking at a woman who had done her best to hide: Lindsay Troy. She's spent a career projecting strength and honor; she would never want anyone to see her incapacitated and confined to a hospital room.

And for good reason: she didn't look great. Her face was nicked up and visible bruising colored her jawline and around her eye. A soft neckbrace and an arm sling complimented the look, probably more for precaution than anything.

Cally:

Still, she shouldn't have company right now, I'mma just leave these and we'll get out.

As quietly as she can, Cally places the box on the rolling table and turns around... unfortunately she knocks the small pitcher of water that every hospital room has, and it crashes to the floor with an artificial clang. Lindsay Troy wakes up with a start, and immediately winces in pain. Her eyes shoot open, though - and they move evenly between Impulse and Cally.

Cally:

...Cupcakes?

She smiles a desperate smile and puts both thumbs up. Lindz looks momentarily confused, but she laughs when she sees the box.

Lindsay Troy: [softly]

I hope I can still pass a drug test if I eat one. Not that I'd be in any position to compete right now anyway.

Impulse:

Please. I heard a rumor about an exploding cage and no time off. You've got this.

Cally:

But yes, they're not special cupcakes. Well, they are - I try to make everything I bake special. I mean, you really can't give someone a cupcake and say 'it's not special' because that's like saying 'you're not special' and that just mean, and that actually my second rule of life is that mean people suck. Which is funny because my first rule is 'Always be nice to Cally' so they kind of go hand in hand and --

She stops talking, only when Impulse puts a hand over her mouth.

Impulse:

There's no dubiously intoxicating ingredients.

Lindsay Troy: [to Cally]

This is a change from the last time we chatted. Less handstands. More words.

She motions to the box with her un-slinged arm.

Lindsay Troy:

Wouldn't mind one right now, if you could lend a hand.

Excitedly, Cally flips the top of the box.

Cally:

Absolutely! You want chocolate, vanilla, or burnt cinnamon surprise?

Troy lifts her eyebrows, purses her lips, and nods, impressed.

Lindsay Troy:

Cinnamon Surprise might be fun.

Impulse leans against the wall, highly amused, while Cally snaps both her fingers and retrieves a cupcake from the box.

Cally:

So, I was making these cinnamon cupcakes and sort of got into a staring contest with one of the cats - I won, by the way - but I sort of overcooked them. The surprise is the fact that they're actually really good. When are you gonna come back and beat up Mr. Ryan?

Troy pauses, thrown a little by the sudden shift in direction that Cally took just then.

Lindsay Troy:

I...don't know.

She takes the treat and slowly unwraps the paper from the cupcake's base. If Impulse and Cally think she's stalling, they don't let on.

Lindsay Troy:

Nobody's ready to commit to a timetable for me to get out of here. Could be a week. Maybe longer.

Impulse:

Aight, well, you get back when you get back. Us and the rest'a the peanut gallery, the Murray boys, Natas, Frank, and the rest... we'll keep the place goin'. At least, we'll keep things running as they need to until you can get back to the front lines, okay?

Cally:

Right. We've totes got this! And if you need either of us to bust some heads... I can bust some heads.

Lindsay Troy: [smiling slightly]

Cally, I think you should stick to fistbumps.

She takes a bite of the cupcake, chews best she can, and after a moment, gives a thumbs-up.

Lindsay Troy: [while eating, fuck manners]

And cupcakes. This is fabulous.

Cally, being Cally, holds up her fist. Impulse bumps it.

Impulse:

We'll let you get some rest, Lindsay, honestly just wanted to make sure you were okay and didn't need anything. Call us if you do.

Fist bumps all around, though they bump Lindsay's as gently as possible so as to not rattle anything that may have come loose.

Impulse:

I'll be out in a second, Cally.

Cally nods, and leaves through the door.

Cally: [Fading out]

Stick to cupcakes? I can kick pretty hard...

The door closes gently, and Impulse turns back towards Lindsay Troy, absent-mindedly feeling the bandage on the back of his own head.

Impulse:

When I signed my contract, I told Evans I didn't want to get involved in this kinda bullcrap, but Curtis Penn and the Bruvs pretty much Godfather Three'd me. So, I'm back in, whether I like it or not, and I just wanted to make sure you knew - as it relates to Ryan, the FIST, and the rest of DEFIANCE - you need something, we've got your back.

Troy puts her free hand, and the cupcake, in her lap.

Lindsay Troy:

I appreciate that, Knox, thanks. I've heard the tales of when you go all-in, and I think those who haven't stood up and taken notice yet, will.

She motions, gingerly, to the back of Pulse's head.

Lindsay Troy:

That'll stick with you, but you got the last word in. I watched that fight...maybe Cally could've kicked Penn into orbit - he would've deserved it...but if anything were to actually happen to her out there because of a shit move by someone else, I think there'd be some kind of reckoning.

Impulse:

You have no idea.

He gestures to the box.

Impulse:

But you do need to rest up. Enjoy the cupcakes... and remember, Rose was right when she said it: we've got this.

Lindsay Troy:

I have no doubt.

STAR BROKEN

DEFCON.

Minutes into Dan Ryan vs. Lindsay Troy, and Andy Murray stands backstage with Iris Davine.

Andy Murray:

This is RIDICULOUS.

The King of Scotch Style clearly hasn't had time to clean-up after his match with Bobby Dean. His hair's a disheveled mess, his face is tired, and he's still dressed in his ring attire (plus a black DEFIANCE tee).

Andy Murray: (exasperated)

LOOK at him.

He points.

Andy Murray:

He's in no condition for this. Kid needs a doctor. Now.

Iris Davine:

Andy...

The silver-haired DEF Doc raises her hands to try and pacify the massive Scot.

Iris Davine:

Please, calm down. I completely agree with you, but there's nothing we can do until they're finished.

Realising that he'd been a tad short with somebody who didn't deserve it, Murray sighed.

Andy Murray:

What a stupid contract clause, honestly. Media obligations. Pah...

Iris Davine:

He's not in any immediate danger, you know. We fastened a nice tight bandage around the head wound, but he does need a scan...

The focus shifts away from Andy and Iris, and towards the source of Big Murr's frustrations. Cayle Murray sits almost splayed-out across a media table. There's a microphone before him, and a crushed water bottle beside him.

Cayle Murray:

Just pure adrenaline... nothing else... had nothing left.

A reporter asks him a question, but it barely registers with the exhausted Scot. With the post-match endorphin rush well and truly gone, his eyes are glazed, and his voice is muted and croaky.

He tries to make sense of the question, but is only able to pick-out the words "head," "neck," and "Dane."

Cayle Murray:

I jussst had to...

Back to Big Murr.

Andy Murray:

Fuck this. I've seen enough.

The King takes a couple of long, purposeful strides towards the interview table, but something stops him in his tracks.

"I know yer back here kid..."

There was a growing commotion somewhere off to the side.

"FUCK OFF'A ME 'FORE I FIRE YOUR SORRY ASS~!"

The King, along with everyone else in the room, gasps in disgust at the congealed bloody mess of a face that belongs to the mouth behind all of that racket. That is to say, Eric Dane has not yet seen Ms. Davine. For her part she tries to intervene before this goes from bad to worse in a hurry.

Iris Davine:

Now Mr. Dane, why don't you come on back to my-

The Only Star is wobbly at best and defiant as ever.

Eric Dane:

Don't need no band-aids, Iris... need a transfusion. It can wait though... gonna see that kid one more time before I pass out...

Using the momentary distraction of conversation Dane pushes away from the small band of DEFsec that Kelly had put on him the first time he refused medical help a few moments ago. The crowd of reporters and bloggers part like the Red Sea in front of him and he catches sight of his quarry sitting dazedly at the table in the front of the room.

Eric Dane:

There you are...

He makes a line for the younger Murray, only to run into the wall that is the elder. Andy's face initially recoils at the grisly sight that is the blood-soaked, neckbrace-clad Only Star, but he soon puts his game-face on.

Andy Murray:

What the hell are--

Eric Dane:

Fuck out the way.

Though only minutes removed from the most physically-trying match of his career, Dane has enough balance to put two hands to Andy's chest and shove him backwards. Murray hits the wall, but he doesn't fight back: he's too busy wondering just how the hell Eric Dane is even upright, let alone capable of something resembling walking.

The commotion catches Cayle's attention. He looks up, horrified as Zombie Dane shambles towards him.

His face battered, bruised, and coated in claret, Eric Dane's body gives-up on him. He falls to his knees just short of the table, and the entire room gasps. Cayle tries to move backwards, but standing up isn't worth the energy.

Cayle Murray:

Eric...

The Only Star slumps forward on the table, drenching the press documents in a noxious layer of blood and sweat. His eyebrow wound gaping, Eric Dane looks up at Cayle Murray, meeting eyes with the young Scot one more time.

Tension hangs.

Seconds pass like hours.

And Eric Dane slowly extends his hand.

As taken aback as anybody, Cayle looks down at Dane's imbrued paw. Hesitates. Slowly reaches out.

They shake.

The Only Star tightens his grip. Pulls Cayle Murray closer with all he's got left. Tightens his brow even further, then croaks his words out through gritted teeth.

Eric Dane:

Dont. Fuck. This. Up.

The "up" fades before it really leaves Eric Dane's mouth. The Only Star's grip withers, and his faces falls forward onto the table. As DEFIANCE's owner passes all the way out and falls limply to the floor, the gathered press rush out of the room as quickly as Iris Davine and her team swarm in.

All Cayle Murray can do is look at his elder brother, who nods.

The Only Star has fallen.

Goodnight.