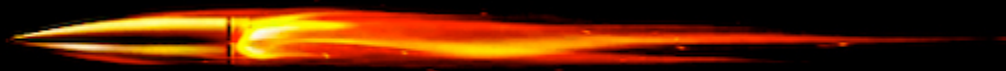




ATTENTION READERS

For context, Dane Preston suffers from D.I.D. (Dissociative Identity Disorder), where he has multiple personalities (Dane Prime, Boy Scout Dane, and Fix). In canon, Fix has assumed control and speaks in We and Us context as opposed to I and Me.

**I MET THE DEVIL
HE WANTED ME DEAD
BUT INSTEAD I PUT A
MOTHERFUCKIN BULLET IN HIS HEAD**



**THROUGH THE FIRE
AND FLAMES**

When we first got the call about who our first round opponent for the Cannabis Cup was, to say that we were seething would be the understatement of the century. This was not going to be an ordinary old match, no, not when it means getting our hands on Dickie Watson's scrawny ass neck for a third time.

We still feel conflicted when it comes to Dickie Watson, not knowing whether we want to thank him for allowing us to break free of the mental bonds keeping us locked in Dane's mind, or if we want to destroy him for what he did to our body in the first place.

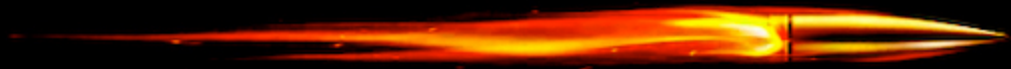
One thing we do know, is despite what we **may** have thought or felt about Dickie at one time or another, or how much we once respected him, that all went down the drain when he left us for dead inside that cage and the building began to collapse on top of us. Had the roles been reversed, we would have been one of the first people to run back and pull our peers out of harm's way.

Sadly, for us, Dickie is a selfish coward who had an ax to grind and a point to prove. Oddly enough, we never did find out how or why the building began to explode and collapse on us. And if we remember it right, didn't Dickie say that he would burn the entire building down if it meant keeping his title... He did, didn't he? The plot thickens.

Since we still live in downtown Manhattan, it's only a brief walk from our apartment building to what used to be FIGHT! NYC Tower. The last time we were there was a waste of some perfectly good hooch. But we were deep in our feelings, not at all sure what to make of what was going through our mind.

Almost dying and then spending weeks in a comatose state will do that to a guy. But before we face the Big Bad in this chapter of our lives, we need to face down the place that broke us, one last time. So off we go to Ye Olde Tower of FIGHT! It's high time that inanimate sumbitch learns why...

she calls me **FIX** **DANE PRESTON**
BURN WITH ME



TODAY

We came back here for the first time a few weeks back, chauffeured and two sheets to the wind. It was akin to ripping a bandage from a still healing wound. This time around though, we needed to be here sober, to experience it all. According to Dru, one of the requirements for mending our fractured psyche involves confronting what haunts us, facing down our fears and finding peace within. All this before she and her coven can perform their witchy woo-woo on us.

The way we see it, we're killing two birds with one stone; preparing ourselves for whatever comes next with Dru's ritual, and equally important, steeling our resolve before we step back into the ring with Dickie Watson one more time. Most importantly of all, we didn't come back to the tower alone. The sound of approaching footsteps brought us out of our philosophical daydream and before we knew it, he was standing next to us.

"I understand the need to find closure, but why me? Ninety percent of the time we're fighting with each other. Why not Allie or Bella?" my father in law asks, I turn to look at him, half expecting to see him in one of his expensive suits, surprised to see him in a tee shirt and shorts. Damon notices my surprise at his attire. "You drag me all the way out to Manhattan, to walk through a building you almost died in while your mental state is what it is, I'm expecting a fight before the day's out."

Normally, we'd agree with the old man, but we're just grateful that he came. "It's nothing like that Damon. We needed you here, because everything started with you. Discovering us, training us, fighting us over marrying your daughter, to you

being someone who we could confide in and being an amazing Papoo to the twins..."

"Ah. Mm-mm. Coming from your face, that word sounds weird. Let the ladies and the kids say it."

"What, Papoo?" we watched as Damon winced from us fucking with him. "Come on Old Man, you should know by now, if we know it bugs you, we're gonna use it against you."

"With family like you, who needs enemies?" he quipped as he stuffed his hands into the pockets of his cargo shorts.

"Aw, don't be like that. You know we give you shit, as much as everyone else does, and just like them, we'll be at the ready whenever shit hits the fan." He grunted in acknowledgement. "Seriously though, thanks for coming. It means a lot that you're here."

"Are you ready?"

What a loaded question that was. Are we ready to face the person that inflicted more damage on us than anyone else in our career - literally and metaphorically? Are we ready to be confronted by the venue that has plagued our every waking moment since New Year's Eve? Are we ready to prove to the world, beyond the shadow of a doubt, that we beat Dickie Watson the first time around because we **are** good enough? Are we ready to prove that **we can do it again**?

"Earth to Fix."

"Sorry, we got lost in our thoughts there for a minute. Yeah, let's go on inside."

Walking into the building, we were met with some resistance from Security, until Damon threatened to call Le'Andra and they verified that the number Damon had in his phone was the same number they had listed for her. He wouldn't have called, not

with Le'Andra being sole caretaker for baby Lex while Xavier's still in the hospital after having been shot some weeks back. But the man is the master negotiator, always able to get what he wants. In this case, it's more of a need than a want.

We took the stairs up to the floor that held FIGHT! NYC's COUNTDOWN event. Looking around, not much had changed, except that everything had been repaired, refinished, and if you didn't know this was the setting of a proverbial warzone, you wouldn't believe it had been.

Our heart began to race, our skin tingled hot and cold, we felt sweat begin to bead up all around our body, and our breaths became short and shallow. In our eyes, we see the cage, our body trapped beneath the rubble that had collapsed from the roof above. We hear Allison's screams and Xavier shouting orders to get the cage open.

We didn't realize it, but we had walked straight into Ground Zero. Almost exactly where the ring would have been that fateful night. We had dropped to our knees, tears streaming down our cheeks. And we brought one of the most cold-blooded warriors the sport of professional wrestling had ever known, as moral support to such an emotionally distressing trigger site.

We were about to curse ourselves out, when we felt arms wrap around us. Opening our eyes, we saw that Allison and Bella were holding us, Damon and Jenna were with the kids. DJ, JJ, Jason and Shane were flanking them. VooDoo and Ani, Michelle and Paul were tucked off in the shadows. JMont was there too, he just gave us a nod.

"You didn't think you were facing this shit alone did you?"

The voice was unmistakable, Brother Brandon. We rose to our feet, still holding Allie and Bella tight and turned to find Vincent & Vhodka Black, Kal X. Wolf, Murphy Doyle Maher, and Brandon Moore. Dysfunctional and unconventional as they may be, this was our family. Through thick and thin, Hell or High Water.

"What are you all doing here?"

"I called them all, babe. You almost died here. There's no way I was letting you face this alone." Allison said.

We looked like a blubbering fool, tears running down our cheeks, it was no way for a proper fighter to look. But there we were, surrounded by people that liked us, Hell some of 'em even loved us, even though they won't admit it. You don't always get to choose your family. But we were lucky enough to call this one ours.

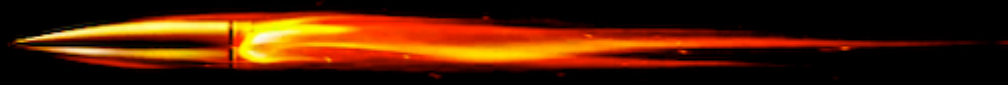
Looking around the room, seeing what was once a broken mess, rubble and debris strewn about, now whole once more, it made us feel less hopeless. There was strength in that. Seeing everyone come out to support us with such a terrifying experience was helpful in ways we cannot even begin to describe.

We made our way around the room to thank all who had come to show their support. We thanked them for all the kindness - in their own weird ways, in some cases - that they had shown us throughout the years. One by one, over the course of an hour or two of small talk and some pep talks thrown in, they all left until Allie, Bella and Damon were the last ones there with us.

"We've spent years in prison. We've spent weeks in a coma. This building is what almost killed us. Just being here, it's one of the hardest things that we've ever had to do. Our heart hasn't slowed since the moment we walked into the building..."

"Remember, babe. Dru said there was going to be more and it was going to hurt."

"We know, we remember." We took a deep, stuttered breath. We may be facing one of our biggest traumas head on, but that doesn't mean we have to like it. "We're done here. Let's go home."



YESTERDAY

We were at the Velvet Rabbit, doing an interview with Denzel Porter, when we were interrupted by a call from Druscilla White. She stopped by, we chatted more about what she and her coven were going to do to help us heal our fractured mind. After Dru left, Denzel popped out of the soundbooth.

"Damn it, did Dru already leave? I was hoping to catch her for a minute after my emails. Figured since she was here, I could get a few words about her potential return."

"Nah, you just missed her." We looked down at the floor and scratched our head. We were still pretty shaken up by what Dru had said about how painful the process would be for all our personalities. We're afraid of what to expect when all the witchy woo woo would go down, whether or not we would be the only personality left, or if it's one of the other two. "Sorry man."

"Ah, too little, too late. So, you gonna come back in here and shoot on Level Up some more, or do you wanna sink your teeth into what you really came to talk about?" We looked up at Denzel, he folded his arms over his chest. "C'mon man. You almost died. You were denied the richest prize in FIGHT! NYC. You can't tell me you don't feel some kinda way about all that."

"You just want some more of that #BreakingNews, don't you?"

"That's what I live for, now get back in here and quit messing around."

We headed back into the soundbooth, and the only thing going through our mind was facing our fears head on. Denzel picked up right where we left off.

"Alright Dane, you have talked about Ricky Rodriguez, you've talked about Sebastian Everett Bryce III, and you've touched on Dickie Watson. With the Cannabis Cup right around the corner, why don't you tell the world how you're feeling going into such a huge rematch with the reigning FIGHT! NYC Empire Champion, Dickie Watson?"

"Thank you Denzel, this message is for Dickie himself, but the world is more than welcome to listen in. In life, we're tested by events and situations that are meant to reveal who truly are. Looking back to our last match with Dickie Watson, we realized it is one of those events. After all that we went through, we realized that we could finally stop being afraid of the boogeyman, because the truth of it is, we were our own boogeyman all along. Words cannot begin to express how cathartic it feels to be here, Denzel. Talking to you, talking to Dickie. After everything that happened, everything that endured, we can say proudly..."

**"WE'RE STILL HERE,
MOTHERFUCKER!"**

"You beat us in your little Deathmatch in a Cage, we're man enough to admit that. You walked away with your Empire Championship reign still intact, Dickie. But after everything we've been through, we can truly say that we walked away with something far more valuable than the trinket of a now dead promotion. We may not have won, but we survived **YOU**. We survived your Deathmatch. We survived the collapse of a fucking building falling on top of us. Which, might I add, we have reason to suspect you or someone you know may have been responsible for. But we digress, that's all in the past, right? You'd better hope that it stays there. After all, it'd be a damned shame if someone started looking for skeletons in your closet, wouldn't it, Dmitri?"

"Like any good student of the game, we have to go back and watch tapes, looking for enemy weaknesses to exploit, and our own weaknesses to fortify. In preparing for the Cannabis Cup, and especially this fight with you, we were forced to go back and watch our matches with you, reliving the trauma of COUNTDOWN over and over and over again. We watched the promos, both yours and ours. This time around you'll find that things are very, very different. There's no NSQ, no House of M or some other ragtag group of FIGHT! NYC misfits to go to war with. It's just the two of us. There are no distractions. No one's trying to break our family up or steal our wife from us. In a situation like this, there's really no one for us to be jealous of either. Since that's what you think we're all about."

"We have literally everything we could ever need or want in life. Are there trinkets and baubles like your Empire Championship that we would like to add to our collection? Absolutely. If anyone ever told us that they were not in this business to make money or win titles, we'd slap the taste outta their mouth and tell them they don't belong here. But in terms of jealousy and coveting that which others have, why did you think **WE** felt that way, back in FIGHT! NYC? We are no one else, or for sake of argument, we are not you either. Nor would we wish to be. We don't want anything from you, but to see you laying on the flat of your back, staring up at the lights after we put you down with another **BULLSHIT SUPERKICK TO YOUR FACE**, and we have our hand raised in victory, as we advance to the next round." We pause to take a breath and regain our composure.

"We have our own goals and objectives Dickie, we have no need for anyone else's. In the here and now, you are no more than a stepping stone along our path to greatness, defeating you is no longer our *ultimate objective*. Now, please, don't think that we're attempting to reduce what you mean to this business. We mean, how could we? Look at you. You are Dickie F'n Watson. The Calamity. The Molotov. The guy that waltzes into new companies and wins championships wherever he goes." We roll our eyes as we continue. "But you're also the same guy that tucked tail and ran for the hills whenever you lost said titles, right? We just didn't get a chance to reveal the **REAL DICKIE WATSON** in FIGHT! NYC, did we? But we blame ourself for that. However,

whether you win or lose in this tournament changes absolutely nothing for you, am I right? But should **WE** beat you **AGAIN**, in the first round no less, heh, well that would be a damn fine feather in our cap. To be the man that eliminated **YOU** from the Cannabis Cup, denying you further success, breaking our tie, and gaining some small measure of retribution for what you did to us at COUNTDOWN, yeah man, that would be oh soooooooo, so sweet."

"Truth be told, one of our objectives is to make you eat your words, Dickie. What was it that you said, how that one win against you would be the only thing you would ever allow us to lord over you? **CHALLENGE ACCEPTED**. Just imagine what it would be like for me to lord eliminating you on such a grand scale over your head. I want you to chew on this, some food for thought if you will; that one win, in any other company, would have made us the #1 Contender. That means we would have been the next person in line to take you on for the Empire Championship. With that kind of momentum going into a title shot against you, we very well could have negated your entire title reign before it had a chance to begin. Luckily for you, we were embroiled in a personal battle, that I daresay outshined your entire title reign. Hell, our war with Joe Montuori had more social media coverage in one week than NSQ's reign of terror had in it's tenure in the company. Shit. We had more social media coverage in a single DAY than the non-existent buildup to your so-called 'dream match' with Shawn Warstein. While you may have been the Empire Champion Dickie, you were not the face of that fucking company. That honor belongs to us and we'd much prefer going down in history with the notoriety associated with that lover's quarrel than to be remembered for the most boring and forgettable title run in the history of this business. Hats off to you for that one, Dickie, you did that all on your own."

"But let's hear all the rehashed insults now Dickie. Go on and tell the world about how we're insecure, how we're unstable, or how we lost to James Raven and came unglued. Heh, we admit that one chapped our ass a bit, Dickie. So, we've gotta ask, do you really think that anyone else in our position -at that point in time- wouldn't have had the same reaction, given the amount of emotional stress we were under? You don't think someone the caliber of James Raven stooping to cheap, sophomoric,

delinquent behavior and insults, considering everything that had just gone down with our family, would make anyone else in our position lose their fucking mind? What was it you said Dickie, **LOSE YOUR HEAD WITH ME AND YOU LOSE EVERYTHING**, right? It's kind of funny, in a way, because we almost died. We quite literally almost lost everything. But that's not how shit's going down this time. Instead, you're the one who's going to lose your head, after we send your ass packing back home. So let's hear it Dickie, tell us about how Allison is gonna run off and fuck someone else."

"Let's hear you brag about how you nearly eviscerated us inside that cage at COUNTDOWN, when all it really took was a fucking building crumbling down around us, and a cage pinning us down to stop us from getting up and continuing to bring the fight to you. Pretend you didn't tuck your tail and run up that ramp like the little bitch you are, while that place was falling down around us. Pretend it was you that put me into that coma...and not an act of the fucking Gods. Go ahead, Dickie. Pretend. After all, you were pretty damn good at pretending to be the Champion. Tell the world how our mind broke while we were in that coma and now we have multiple personalities fighting for control on an almost daily basis. Tell everyone about how we geeeeeloriously fucked Sahara -those were **her** words, not ours- while our wife was dominating Joe Montuori's bitch ass in the Amazon position. Which, need we remind you, yet again, was a scandal that overshadowed your measly, little title reign. So, go on now Dickie, tell these people something that they don't already know about us. Hell, spin your little narrative and make something up if it'll help you."

"But, before you try to flex, and pretend that just because you beat us last, that makes you better than us. Let us remind you that we are, in fact, 1 and 1. You are our equal Dickie, but you are not superior to us and we're going to prove it to the entire fucking world when we mow you down with extreme prejudice. Because once again it's you standing between us and one of our objectives. Before, it was the Empire Championship, and now it's the Cannabis Cup. You see, this is a far bigger deal to us than that trinket in FIGHT! NYC, because this is where we get to showcase our skills in front of our peers from

so many different companies, not just the one. We have to wonder how many people watching the Cannabis Cup will be rooting for us to humble the almighty Dickie Watson. After all, a competitor on your level has to have made a great deal of enemies along the way. There's bound to be a whole community out there that wants to see The Molotov's fuel go stale and watch as The Calamity trips and falls onto our waiting sword. In case you're not getting the message, allow us to make it perfectly fucking clear for you, **WE REFUSE TO LOSE TO YOU AGAIN**, Dickie. And we most certainly are not losing to you on a stage as big and grand as the inaugural Cannabis Cup at the Venue inside the Velvet Rabbit."

"Now, we're not going to **PRETEND** that we were someone else in that Deathmatch, that you didn't beat us. It was us, it was all of our personalities that you beat. You were simply the lucky one that night. But you see, Lady Luck won't be on your side this time around. Because this time, she sees that we are more focused and driven than ever to remove you from the equation, and Lady Luck wants to be on the winning side. At COUNTDOWN it was you who was the one with the ax to grind and the point to prove, but this time around, that's us. So you go right on ahead, walk around with your teen emo angst energy, pretending not to have a care in the world about anything but you and yours. Keep running your mouth as though your words are the only ones that mean a damn thing, because like we said, we're going to make you eat every last one of them. The universe is going to stop spinning around you, Dickie Watson. And when it does, you'll realize that it stopped when we blasted you in the face with our **BULLSHIT SUPERKICK**, pinned your shoulders to the mat for the 1-2-3...and make things in our world right again. Whether we win or lose the Cannabis Cup, taking you out will be victory enough."

"Well Goddamn man, why don't you tell us how you really feel?"

We chuckled for a bit and shook hands before we left Denzel to do his thing. After that emotional diatribe, it was high time we knocked back some adult beverages. Checking our watch we noticed that both Allie and Bella had already started their

shifts, so we may as well blow off some steam and check in on our loves while we're here.

