

The Rock

The Joe Rogan experience do some on the phone It's one of those old ass phones that are on the wall and I'm on the phone I see my dad over there in the chair My dad's just an old time grizzly wrestler We're living in his little apartment in Tampa My mom's over there on the couch and uh I tell the coach quietly Wally boy knows his name Great guy I said hey uh hey thank you for the opportunity I really appreciate it But I I'm gonna have to close this chapter in my life and he's like I I hear him kind of softly talk Ok Yeah And I said so thank you very much I appreciate it Hung up the phone My dad said who is that I said oh it was a coach from Calgary He said what do you want Oh he wanted to offer me another contract for next year By the way the contract was like I was making 300 bucks a week Canadian So there was no money up there At least not for me And uh he goes so when are you gonna go My old man said this I said I'm not He said what do you mean You're not I said II I think I'm done I'm done with football and the pursuit of it It's just not in my cards He said what are you gonna do I said I'm gonna get in the business He went what business I said the wrestling business dude we got in the biggest fucking fight Really The biggest And I didn't want you to do it He didn't want me to do it But my old man was a groundbreaker First black tag team champions in WWE he was jacked Pull up my dad if you can Rocky Johnson I want to show you like he I know Jack man he was he was part of that group in the early eighties right We were like bodybuilding and that's a genetic son That's it Rock genetics come that's it Oh God he was jacked So yeah and we bonded He used to get me up and take me to the gym when I was five sit in the corner and I just that's how I get to you know really bomb my dad He didn't want me to do it And I we got into the biggest fucking fight My mom's crying I'm crying and he said what do you think you have to offer I said I don't know maybe I'm gonna fucking suck but I gotta give this a shot and it ultimately it got to a place where I said either you're gonna help train me I'm asking you to help train me or I'll I'll go to somebody else And at that time Brett Hart and that whole family had his dungeon up in Calgary I said maybe I'll go to Calgary He agreed to train me but I realized he didn't want to see that happen because he was he felt like hey look around like II I and I was one of the successful ones in wrestling but I got a little fucking apartment that I gotta I can't even afford to pay 500 bucks a month I don't want this for you So we got into a huge fight He eventually trained me I call a guy after three months of training call a guy

named Pat Patterson who was Vince McMahon's right hand man Very brilliant mind in the world of pro wrestling First openly gay wrestler tough motherfucker I call him up because my parents knew him And I said hey Pat this is Dwayne Johnson who Dwayne Johnson uh Rocky Johnson's son Oh Yeah what do you want Hey I'm gonna uh I'm try I'm training to get in the business What fucking business It's it's a recurring theme Everybody What fucking business the wrestling business Why the fuck do you wanna do that You're just feeling like you're just getting bombed right right left and right by these ogs So I said I'd love for you to come down and just watch me train and if I got anything to offer just let me know And if I don't just let me know that that's all I want He agreed He came down watch me train He said to me as we're training he goes can you work as a heel Which is as you know bad guy in wrestling parlance I said sure I'd love to start the match I work as a heel more aggressive dirty cheating stuff right Um He goes OK done done And I had trained in a boxing ring and as you know boxing rings are fucking hard It's like this it's getting suplex on the fucking table So it really hurt That's how I came up in wrestling He's smoking a cigarette I said what do you think Do I have anything He goes Um Yeah you just keep working take care of yourself and leave And I was like did I just fuck cause cause this he had a lot of he was he had a lot of power He was like the vice president of WWE I said OK thank you so much for coming out And I said just just keep working He goes just keep working kind of blew me off kept smoking a cigarette and walked off and I was like man I think I really fucked things up or maybe I'll take his word for face value take it for gospel I'll just keep working little I knew he went home and he called Vince McMahon He said you gotta see this fucking kid And Vince said who Ro Rocky Johnson's son He goes all right let me see him bring him out this this Monday on raw and I'll throw him out in a match before the show starts Corpus Christi 15,000 people Whoa dude this is your first match match So Vince says to Pat OK great How long has he been working He goes he he hasn't worked He goes what do you mean He's never had a match He's like he's never had a fucking match I'm not bringing him out He's never had a match He's gonna stink up the ring Pat said just trust me So they fly me out Corpus Christi 14,000 people I got and I had my first match and I'm 24 years old I had my first match Uh because usually when you break in you you know you're wrestling at a farm or there's a barn 10 people 14,000 people I wrestled the Brooklyn Brawler This is famous in the world of wrestling And uh I get backstage everyone's hey great job great job Keep working I see Vince McMahon He

says you did a good job Uh but be prepared I'm gonna give you a little bit more tomorrow I went great OK I see Pat Patterson smoking a cigarette Come here for a second I said yeah he goes your punches I went yeah they fucking suck is riding me riding me r to me So that was my first match First experience man And then he he by the way he said if you're if you have a shred of opportunity to make it in this business you're gonna have to learn a lot of shit but learn how to throw a great punch What was wrong with the way you're throwing a punch it just didn't look real and the best of punches like you gotta be snug You lay them in a little bit you pull it back a little you pull it Well you can pull it back a little but I found the best punches is you follow through but learn how to just tap a little bit and then you know that's that's where you learn that kind of timing you know how some guys they hit a rope or a piece of string or something like that So yeah so I worked on the punches too as well That was crazy That was my first match What was the next match Uh next match was the following night Whoa So you were right into it right into What's the second match like versus the first you've already done it You've already been in front of 15,000 people I'm I'm feeling pretty good because as you know and like people out there know I if you prepare then All right I'm as prepared as I possibly can be So we'll just see how it goes So the second night I had a little bit of confidence but the guy they put me in there with was a guy named Chris Candido credible wrestler does a lot of acrobatic stuff flying stuff He had me he called the match had me flying all around and doing all this stuff So but it was it was a it was a great experience after that I met with Vince He said you're not ready for WWE you're not ready for the big time I'm gonna send you to down to Tennessee and that's where you're gonna learn how to work And it was just a smaller company minor leagues He said but you're gonna go down there you learn how to cut your teeth down there learn how to work learn the business and when you're ready if you're ready I'll bring you up I was like thank you very much I appreciate it And I went to work So dude as I'm leaving Vince mcmahon's office he says hey by the way I turn around and he goes don't go down there and cut your forehead up with razor blades I went OK got it because in wrestling there was a time where that's how you bled with razor blades And he and he he goes I want to protect this I'm good I do too All right then years later I'm B at doing this up at WWE But that had to be a good feeling though You had some real real hope in you That is my second match right there Look at that This is insane Wow Does it seem surreal This is so surreal man Look at this by the way you see people still coming in right

Empty seats Oh that was it man First Match Memories First match that's in and then to go from there to where you became how to be surreal It was the most surreal thing because finally when they called me up to WWE it was November Vince brings me in and I go to a big pay per view called Survivor series Now the wrestling fans I know know what this pay per view is It's December it's uh November 1996 Here it is dude Look at that fucking haircut Ray Charles cut my hair back that I was like wow So this is Madison Square Garden 22,000 people This is this there's Jerry the King Lawler the guy's a legend It's it's a little bit of watch this Here we go There's a double leapfrog here drop kick is coming up with a punch So even if you see that punch it was a little shitty punch anyway but this is so that was Madison Square Garden sold out Vince mcmahon tells me an hour before I go out You're going to win the whole thing tonight Whoa I mean what do you mean He goes you're gonna win the whole thing I'm throwing you right into the fire I'll never forget this He said you're either gonna fucking sink or you're gonna swim It's New York City It's up to you And I went OK great I talked to all the guys and by the way in order to make someone like that you need the other guys right To say because I always like to say you never beat anybody in wrestling truly beat you The guy allows you to beat them And so all those guys in that ring right there I'll forever be grateful for them because they allowed that to happen So I win the match Uh New star is born in the world of pro wrestling This rookie kid Rocky my via this is the 123 here that wrestlers gold dust comes from a very famous family That was amazing He was amazing man The whole gold dust thing was can you pause that for a second Go back to my hair So I didn't know look at this pause I didn't know that I I went to the hair person who was backstage I said can you give me something that's gonna make my hair like nice and like go down and she gave me like a thing that made it frizzy and then that's what you get by the way Just a fucked up haircut on your debut Like luckily the people of New York was like this we kind of like this kid his haircut is really fucked up the kid and play Look like the bigger version of kid and play Look at this look at that thing Fuck that's a solid foot above your head It's awful By this time the referee's like get the fuck out of the ring Come on we got a show so well So what Go ahead No no go ahead Well I was gonna say so we win this match and things are ascending The dream is coming true like this is it man I finally feel like this is what I was born to do and man it's feeling so fucking good guys in the locker room All everybody taking me under their wing there's some political bullshit that you always want to stay away from I've always

stayed away from that but for the most part everybody's supportive Um because even though it's a cut throat business backstage you you still need some guys you know who are gonna show you the way So I wound up becoming the youngest intercontinental champion uh beating triple H or you let me beat him Everything was doing this So at that time this interesting thing was happening in the world of pro wrestling where it was fans were cheering the heels and anti authority Fuck the boss Uh led by Stone Cold Steve Austin giving everybody the bird fuck Vince mcmahon fans were loving that gravitating towards this That guy drives a pickup truck drinks a beer tells everybody go fuck themselves Uh Now in wrestling world that's supposed to be a bad guy but now he's becoming a hero Then you have this kid who's 25 who's coming out Here we go you know the fucking old school and Vince and the company always told me hey you can't smile enough I was like what do you mean You go out you smile I want to make sure everybody knows you're grateful gratitude of attitude And I said no OK And it started not to feel good to me because I said well so you know these nights I'm getting beat Uh but I still want you to smile anyway So you have this thing happening over here the rise of the attitude era and then you have this kid who's just smiling away Everything is good even when he fucking loses And it didn't it never felt right to me here And then fans started to turn booing every night Got to a point Dude going into my first WrestleMania Chicago I'll never forget it every night They were chanting Rocky Socks and I and I had to smile through it The bosses were telling me now you gotta smile Don't keep smiling Ignore it Ignore it Just ignore it If you're paying your hard earned money as a fan even though this world is fiction and it's not real Um The best of the wrestlers always came from a real place So I was smiling away I get to WrestleMania Chicago sold out Stone Cold Steve Austin's on top in the main event I'm defending my title WrestleMania 20,000 people start chanting Rocky Socks So imagine that you're a kid 25 years old you got the belt on you pressure you're in there And the guy who I was wrestling um the sultan who was actually my cousin Rashi uh from my Samoan side he had me in a rear chin lock whole arena's chanting Rocky Socks He's whispering to me Don't listen to him don't listen to him Now I'm like fuck this is my life Now we get out of the match I go backstage Vince looks at me and Pat and just says I don't know what we did wrong but we have to make a change I know what that means Two days later I dropped the belt to somebody else Now I'm getting beat every night getting beat every night and then I get hurt I tear my PC L or a wrestling guy named Mick Foley Now by

this time it's May Vin says I take time off heal your knee I I don't know what we did wrong or where we went wrong but we got to really figure things out with you I don't know if this is gonna work out Yeah man And this is 1997 summer of 97 Now this you you'll appreciate this part in 97 during that time while I was still going out to L A and working out we were crossing all the M MA guys pride just opened up in Japan So I was I was seeing all these M MA guys going over to pride You remember that time Right I think you might have been with UFC at that time right Going And at that time I was making 100 and \$50,000 wrestling 235 days a year So do the math of that And how much you're making per match We start hearing hey these guys over in pride are making 2 53 5500 And I thought then well fuck I I don't think I'm gonna make it in WWE people are booing me out of the arenas I can't be myself They're telling me to fucking smile I don't want to fucking smile It's not who I am I start talking to Ken Shamrock at that time who was wrestling with us I run into Mark Kerr I start talking to him He told me a little bit about pride and I have this idea in my head Well maybe I should maybe I should train the M MA and go to pride and make money real money And then I don't have to smile I'm sure I'm gonna get fucked up over there and then knock one of my lungs loose But maybe I could do something like that find the right coach and train So I had this whole thing in my head I was talking to my wife at that time I said I think that's the way to go because those guys are paying real money and these fans are booing me over here for 100 and 50 grand I get a call from Vince and he says how's your knee I said it's healing up I don't tell him about this idea after I've talked to Shamrock and Kerr and all these guys Um He goes I wanna try and bring you back one time see how it works out I wanna turn you heel and we have a faction called the nation of Domination who DC loves By the way it was his famous is his favorite Daniel uh the black militant group He goes I wanna have you join them and we'll see how it works out I come in I said OK but I still get this m ma thought in my head again I just wanna make money and I wanna be myself When I get to the arena that night I'm gonna join the nation I went to Vince and at that time there was only just two hours of live show Monday night raw Now there's six hours of show on two different programs So I said to Vince hey tonight when I go out there could I just have two minutes on the microphone And he's like oh I don't know He goes it's live you know all our times accounted for all allocated I I said I just need two minutes He goes why I said I just wanna be real and just tell the fans how I feel Um And I feel like I I need to recalibrate things here He said fine a minute You got great

Get on the microphone Now now I'm walking out They're booing me Rocky sucks But now I'm a heel with this heel group I grab the microphone and I say something like listen I'm a lot of things but sucks isn't one of them and joining the nation isn't a white thing It's not a black thing It's it's a me kicking your ass thing and I'm gonna earn this respect one way or the other dude That was the most freeing thing for me in my career It was like you know how you have these defining moments even in that one little moment I was just fucking ripping all this open saying here I am now you can fucking boo me But now watch how I respond be real I have to smile anymore I fuck they're smiling I'll smile when I want to smile But now watch watch how I can respond Watch my words Now watch my actions dude the fans felt something that night within a month I became the hottest heel in WWE wow