

Sarah Weber

A Veritable Dumbbell

“Oh, shit!”

A scream echoed on the tiny island and over the vast ocean.

“This is just utter bullshit!”

Matty had just sat up from his sleep and realized that his dream was not actually a dream. He was combing his fingers through his hair and practically trying to rip it out. He was pacing on the sand, devoid of socks or shoes; his clothes had become tattered from the other night’s devastating storm.

He’d been on this island for at least a day, and there was no sign of any help coming. “This is just absolutely perfect! My fucking luck!” Practically growling, he was kicking at the sand in an attempt to make a dent, but it was all washed away with the tide.

He stopped and yelled at the top of his lungs, “How am I supposed to hit these gains on some dumbass island!?!?”

Matty had been training for the popular TV show, American Ninja Warrior. He wanted to prove to all of America that he was, in fact, an absolute unit. He could perform all the challenges with his hands tied behind his back and blindfolded to boot. He was not a bro to be messed with, but his current situation was not exactly conducive to say, survival. However, that was not his concern.

“I can’t be lookin’ like some god-damned chump! I’m no bingo-playing flabby flab-ball!”, he yelled to no one in particular. He continued to wax poetic about avoiding the potential future of being a “flabmaster dickwad”. He flexed in anger, purposefully causing his muscles to ripple for the riveted audience of a handful of crabs. “There’s gotta be some way to continue my workout regimen. I can’t afford to lose any definition here!”

Matty started searching the island for possible stand-ins for weights and dumbbells. He didn’t bother himself with looking for trivial items, such as food or water. The real issue here was the devastating loss of his workout. He spied some palm trees blessed with coconuts and took it upon himself to knock them down by shrewdly punching the base of the tree.

Matty picked them up with his bruised hands and looked them over. A sneer spread across his face as his annoyance became even more apparent. “Ugh!”, he groaned. “If I had a knife, I could totally make a barbell outta these coconuts! Damn it!”

Ever the diagnostician, he grumbled and kicked the clearly useless coconuts away. “Stupid-ass island... my lifting stats are gonna go to hell...” He sulked and walked around a little longer, searching for anything that could possibly help him with his body building goals.

“Something... anything... maybe...” He spotted some heavy rocks near the trees and went to pick them up. As he did, there was fresh water pooled underneath these rocks, but Matty had a much more important realization. “Yoo.... Matty’s got it made! I could use these like medicine balls! Lit!”

He picked up the rocks and brought them back to what can only be called his “camp”, also known as a pit in the sand made from his bulging body. He chunked them in the nearby sand and ran back to get more.

As he finished, he started actually thinking about his current, potentially dire, situation. “Man, my appointment for that show is coming up. Hope to God somebody finds me here...” The idea of building some sort of signal started to grow in his mind, but his gaze slowly wandered downwards.

“Ah!”, Matty exclaimed. “Can’t forget leg day!” He bent over, getting a better look at the absolute giant hams he called legs. “I can already see the muscles starting to sag. What am I, 2,000 years old?” He started pulling and prodding at his calves, frowning. “Jesus, that’s freakin’ unacceptable.”

He paced around, trying to use his limited brain power to come up with a plan for his lower limbs. A rare thought formed in his usually vacant mind. “I guess I could do a few laps around the island. The terrain’s not ideal, but it’s better than nothing.”

Matty spent the rest of the day coming up with ways to better work out. As the sun started to set, he shockingly realized that his night would be just as dark, sandy, and lonely as the night before. For a moment, he considered that he probably should have searched for some sort of light, food, or anything useful at all.

Matty laid down on the gritty sand, trying to ignore the irritation around his shoulders. He gazed up at the stars, finally thinking through his bleak situation. “Jesus, I’m hungry...” Matty’s eyes started getting bleary for just a moment as he sniffled, “I miss my protein powder.”

He wiped his face, scratched the back of his head, and frowning slightly. He slammed his hands into the sand. “Ugh, I can’t believe that tomorrow’s gonna be a whole ‘nother fucking day!” Even the ever-astute Matty recognized that yes, a new day would come.

Thankfully, his upsetting thoughts didn’t trouble him for long. He let out a big sigh and his eyes quickly focused on, not the landscape, but his stomach. “Woah, gotta get some crunches in!” He started to count them off as the moon slowly moved in the sky, night turning to day once again.