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## 'Malcolm in the Middle' Revival Celebrates Daniel von Barga and Kenneth Mars

### Description

The revival of the sitcom *Malcolm in the Middle*, titled *Life's Still Unfair*, has stirred excitement among fans. However, one key character, Dewey, played by Erik Per Sullivan, is notably absent, leading to discussions about who else is missing from the show. While many familiar faces return, several characters, like Cynthia and Jessica, are not mentioned, raising concern among viewers.

In Episode 4, the celebration for Lois and Hal's 40th anniversary allows returning characters to reconnect, though some fan-favourite figures have died since the original series ended. One such character is Commandant Edwin Spangler, the villainous commandant from Francis' time at Marlin Academy. Although actor Daniel von Barga passed away in 2015, *Life's Still Unfair* pays tribute to him. At the anniversary party, Francis' military friends toast to Spangler and recall their rebellious past.

Another absence felt by fans is Kenneth Mars, who played Otto, Francis' boss. Mars died in 2011 but left a strong impression with his character, who significantly influenced Francis. Although Lois and Hal cannot thank Otto, his wife, Gretchen, appears at the party, sharing her new role as a cow doula and adding warmth to the reunion.

While it is bittersweet that Spangler and Otto are missing from the anniversary celebration, their impact on Francis remains evident, showing the lasting influence of these beloved characters.

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### Vocabulary List:

1. **revival** //rɪ'vaɪvəl// (noun): a new version or return of something
2. **absent** //æbsənt// (adjective): not present in a place or event
3. **tribute** //ˈtrɪbjʊ:t// (noun): something said or done to show respect
4. **rebellious** //rɪ'bɛliəs// (adjective): refusing to obey rules or authority
5. **doula** //ˈdu:lə// (noun): a person who helps women during childbirth
6. **bittersweet** //ˌbɪtər'swi:t// (adjective): having both happy and sad feelings

### Comprehension Questions



## Multiple Choice

1. What is the title of the revival of 'Malcolm in the Middle'?

- Option: Life's Unfair
- Option: Life's Still Unfair
- Option: Malcolm's Return
- Option: Middle of Life

2. Which character is notably absent from the revival?

- Option: Hal
- Option: Lois
- Option: Dewey
- Option: Francis

3. Who played the character Commandant Edwin Spangler?

- Option: Kenneth Mars
- Option: Erik Per Sullivan
- Option: Daniel von Bargen
- Option: Gretchen

4. What was the reason for the celebration in Episode 4?

- Option: Dewey's birthday
- Option: Lois and Hal's anniversary
- Option: Francis' promotion
- Option: A reunion party

5. Which character's wife appears at the anniversary party?

- Option: Cynthia
- Option: Gretchen
- Option: Lois
- Option: Jessica

6. Which character significantly influenced Francis and is missing from the celebration?

- Option: Dewey
- Option: Otto
- Option: Spangler
- Option: Hal



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### True-False

7. Dewey is present in the revival series 'Life's Still Unfair'.
8. Commandant Edwin Spangler appeared in the anniversary celebration.
9. Kenneth Mars, who played Otto, died in 2011.
10. The anniversary celebration is for Lois and Hal's 30th anniversary.
11. Gretchen is Otto's wife and appears at the reunion.
12. The revival show does not acknowledge the characters who have passed away.

### Gap-Fill

13. The revival of the sitcom \_\_\_\_\_ has stirred excitement among fans.
14. Dewey was played by \_\_\_\_\_.
15. Commandant Edwin Spangler is a character from \_\_\_\_\_ time at Marlin Academy.
16. Gretchen shares her new role as a \_\_\_\_\_ doula at the party.
17. Daniel von Bargen, who played Spangler, passed away in \_\_\_\_\_.
18. Lois and Hal are celebrating their \_\_\_\_\_ anniversary in Episode 4.

### Answer

**Multiple Choice:** 1. Life's Still Unfair 2. Dewey 3. Daniel von Bargen 4. Lois and Hal's anniversary 5. Gretchen 6. Otto

**True-False:** 7. False 8. False 9. True 10. False 11. True 12. False

**Gap-Fill:** 13. Malcolm in the Middle 14. Erik Per Sullivan 15. Francis' 16. cow 17. 2015 18. 40th

### Vocabulary quizzes



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**Multiple Choice ( Select the Correct answer for each question. )**

1. What term is used to describe the act of bringing something back to life or popularity?  
Option: Rebirth  
Option: Revival  
Option: Reformation  
Option: Restoration
2. Which word describes someone who is not present?  
Option: Absent  
Option: Attentive  
Option: Present  
Option: Engaged
3. What is a term for an act, statement, or gift intended to show gratitude, respect, or admiration?  
Option: Gift  
Option: Tribute  
Option: Award  
Option: Acknowledgment
4. Which word best describes a person who resists authority or control?  
Option: Obedient  
Option: Rebellious  
Option: Compliant  
Option: Submissive
5. What term is used for a person who assists a woman before, during, and after childbirth?  
Option: Nurse  
Option: Midwife  
Option: Doula  
Option: Gynecologist
6. Which word describes a mixture of both positive and negative feelings?  
Option: Joyful  
Option: Bittersweet  
Option: Pleasant  
Option: Mournful
7. What is the term for the annual celebration of a significant event?  
Option: Celebration  
Option: Commemoration  
Option: Anniversary



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Option: Remembrance

8. What term describes a strong adverse reaction to something?

- Option: Support
- Option: Approval
- Option: Backlash
- Option: Apathy

9. What is the term for individuals involved in the illegal trade of people, drugs, or goods?

- Option: Smugglers
- Option: Dealers
- Option: Traffickers
- Option: Transporters

10. What term is used for a structure established to remind people of a person or event?

- Option: Statue
- Option: Monument
- Option: Memorial
- Option: Commemoration

**Gap-Fill ( Fill in the blanks with the correct word from the vocabulary list. )**

11. The detective worked \_\_\_\_\_ to gather evidence without revealing his identity.
12. The final meeting provided the family with a sense of \_\_\_\_\_ after years of grief.
13. The company faced serious \_\_\_\_\_ regarding its business practices.
14. After a long trial, the jury \_\_\_\_\_ the defendant on all counts.
15. Police used \_\_\_\_\_ footage to identify the suspects in the robbery.
16. The \_\_\_\_\_ presented compelling evidence during the trial.
17. The \_\_\_\_\_ attorney argued that her client was innocent of all charges.
18. The artist aimed to \_\_\_\_\_ the struggles of everyday life through her paintings.
19. The organization launched a new \_\_\_\_\_ to raise awareness about climate change.
20. The movie kept the audience on the edge of their seats with its constant \_\_\_\_\_.



**Matching Sentences ( Match each definition to the correct word from the vocabulary list. )**

21. Rideshare services have revolutionized the way people commute in urban areas.
22. The emergency alarm was activated during the safety drill.
23. The city celebrated its inaugural arts festival with great enthusiasm.
24. The two authors are collaborating on a new novel that combines their distinct styles.
25. She was excited to read the sequel to her favorite book, which had been highly anticipated.
26. The artist is known for her unique framing of modern life in her photographs.
27. The synopsis of the film provided a glimpse into its complex storyline.
28. The film cleverly used flashbacks to reveal the protagonist's troubled past.
29. He inherits his mother's artistic talent, which is evident in his paintings.
30. The song's lyrics captured a bittersweet nostalgia for lost love.

**Answer**

**Multiple Choice:** 1. Revival 2. Absent 3. Tribute 4. Rebellious 5. Doula 6. Bittersweet 7. Anniversary 8. Backlash 9. Traffickers 10. Memorial

**Gap-Fill:** 11. undercover 12. closure 13. allegations 14. convicted 15. surveillance 16. prosecutors 17. defence 18. portray 19. campaign 20. suspense

**Matching sentence:** 1. rideshare 2. activated 3. inaugural 4. collaborating 5. sequel 6. framing 7. synopsis 8. flashbacks 9. inherits 10. bittersweet

**CATEGORY**

1. Entertainment - LEVEL4

**POST TAG**

1. B2
2. Daniel von Bargaen
3. ESL learning
4. esl news
5. Kenneth Mars
6. Level 4



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