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### Story by Emma Hurt

SILVER SPRING, MD—As the District of Columbia’s first nationally famous rapper, Wale has a special kind of relationship with crowds in our Nation’s Capital.

On the first stop of the Simply Nothing tour anticipating the release of *The Album About Nothing*, the artist focused on his Washingtonian roots last night (January 1).

He explained how he is “trying to keep the tradition of D.C. alive,” of course, clarifying that “when I say D.C. I mean the D.M.V.,” (referring to the District/Maryland/Virginia regional triad). While also promoting his recent mixtape, *Festivus*, the artist’s emotional narrative about the city with his fans almost stole the show away from his music. (He did, however, make known his personal goal of 200,000 sales within the first week of his album’s release.)

### **Wale Announces March Release Date For Next LP, Drops 'Festivus' Mixtape**

Although Wale was forced to take off his large Redskins chain about



two songs in to make way for his dancing, the hometown hero made clear: "This ain't no show, this a m-----g pep rally."

The crowd seemed to agree, putting extra emphasis on lyrics referencing D.C. Between songs he exclaimed, "Look how far we've come, D.C.," and spoke freely about growing up with a father driving D.C. cabs and learning English as a second language. "Whether you like me or not," he declared, "I put this s—t on the map."

He urged the crowd to follow his lead: "If I can come out of starting on Peabody Street...to finessing the English language...there ain't no reason we can't all do something special with our lives. Everybody got something they can bring to the table." More than urging he claimed that through his past successes, he has "injected ambition into the mindset of young Americans" and asked the crowd to take to Instagram and other social media to help him find entrepreneurs like "the next Steve Jobs" or "the next Jay Z."

While the packed Fillmore went especially wild for "Chain Music" and "Clappers," it was not as wild as they went when the artist twice walked himself deep into the crowd. After commenting, "I've never been to the back of the Fillmore," he began performing "Rack City (Remix)" from the new territory.

Toward the end of his show he explained, "I will never in my life be above y'all" and jumped right back over the gate, but this time bringing Fat Trel with him, despite Trel's apparently broken leg. They performed *Festivus'* "Loyalty" a second time from inside the crowd,

because, as Wale revealed, "this is about you, D.C."

In his "bonus section," the rapper went about half an hour over his set, citing his love for the city and the fact that the crowd looked like they hadn't been to a "real turnt up show" in too long. But again, it was the former that stood out: "forever my life, D.C.; forever my love, D.C.; It's never enough, D.C."

As one concertgoer put it, thanks to the artist's "real emotion...it wasn't just a set: he put on a *show*."

And while he assured his audience, "I ain't gonna cry, D.C.," Wale's voice did seem to get shaky in those final moments on his hometown stage.

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