

SHOW OPEN

[🎵 "The Defiant" by Skillet 🎵](#)

Albuquerque, New Mexico welcomes DEFIANCE as The Pit is hyped for DEFtv 224!

Pyro explodes from the top of the rampway as the camera reveals there's a giant FIST logo to walk out from!

Signs and excitement, as always, are everywhere!

EYENSTEIN'S THEORY OF DUBABILITY STATES "M4NTRA = DUBS 🐸"

NATHAN EYE - PH.D. IN DUBANOMICS

DEC4L - QUANTAM RIZZICIST

RAWB - GREETINGS, PUNY MORTALS!

METAL GEAR SATO

URINAL CORTEZ FEARS BVP

GVP = MVP

GVP IS MORE OVER THAN THE ENTIRE ROSTER

SERIOUSLY SMART BUSINESS MOVE IS TO BRING HIM BACK

HOW ABOUT YOU SIGN GVP, GIVE HIM THE BELT, AND HE BEATS EVERYBODY

HIS CUSTOM BELT IS JUST A BIGGER EYEPATCH THAT GOES AROUND HIS WAIST

WHY DOES NO ONE HAVE TRASHCAN TIM OR AMERICAN PANDA SIGNS?!?

PUSH STOCKTON PYRE

IN THE LAND OF THE BLIND, THE ONE EYED MAN IS STILL DUMB

VACIO DOESN'T CARE IF I HAVE SIGN OR NOT

SEATTLES BEST BOUT: KERRY VS. SCOTT

CORVO ALPHA PAINTS WITH ALL THE COLORS OF THE RAGE

EMERALD CITY CIVIL WAR!

FLEX APPEAL GAVE ME BODY DYSMORPHIA

THE D IS MY FAVORITE LETTER

TRICKLEBUSH IS JUST ENGLISH FOR GASLIGHT

SERIOUSLY, WHEN DO WE GET THIS PANCAKE EXTRAVAGANZA?

REMEMBER 2020?

We go to ringside and the announce team, Darren Keebler and Lance Warner.

GAUNTLET MATCH: LEVI COLE vs. TA OWENS, TA ROOSEVELT, THE ACADEMIC AMARETTOS & TA ARSVINNAR

DDK:

And we're kicking off the action, folks, with a loaded match-up!

Lance:

For weeks, we've witnessed the drama unfold of Levi Cole's exodus from The Honor Society. Now, if he wants a chance at the one man he wants to get his hands on - Headmaster Black - he must go through his former allies in a Gauntlet Match!

DDK:

Black violently took control of the Honor Society from its former leader, Ned Reform, at ACTS of DEFIANCE. Cole has been grappling with his decision to help him ever since.

Lance:

Both Cole and Sweet Saunders have left the Honor Society, and I don't think it's hyperbole to say that this match could make or break his career! Like Black or not, he has been a fixture here in DEFIANCE for years, and Cole getting a one-on-one match up is nothing to sneeze at.

♪ "Born in the USA" By Bruce Springsteen ♪

DDK:

We haven't heard this theme in a while!

As Levi Cole comes out to his OG theme, he's also reverted to his OG ring attire - he's ditched the purple and white for a singlet featuring the stars and stripes! Cole looks focused, and by his side, dressed in a blue blazer and skirt, is Sweet Saunders. Cole doesn't play to the crowd - he marches to the ring with purpose. Still, he receives a fairly decent ovation.

Lance:

It's easy to forget how long Levi Cole's tenure has been here in DEFIANCE, and his time at Ned Reform's side as TA Cole really IS only a fraction of it - even if it's been memorable.

Darren Quimbey:

The following contest is a GAUNTLET MATCH! If Levi Cole survives, he faces HEADMASTER BLACK at DEFIANCE ROAD! Introducing first, from Omaha, Nebraska and being accompanied to the ring by Sweet Saunders... LEVI COOOOOOLE!!

In the ring, Cole throws his hands up. On the outside, Saunders applauds him.

♪ "Ode to Joy" ♪

The jeers blanket the arena as a GIANT mass of humanity marches through the curtain - it's Professor Owens. Owens cracks his knuckles and looks at Cole like he's a bloody carcass and Owens is the shark. And by Owens' side, smiling wide and arms open to embrace the love, is Headmaster Black.

DDK:

Speaking of DEFIANCE institutions... Roosevelt Owens has had a lengthy tenure here himself!

Lance:

Owens has never had the spotlight directly on him, but at nearly 500 pounds, he's always been a dangerous threat inside that ring.

DDK:

One of many wrestlers who existed in the margins until Ned Reform started collecting his misfit toys.

Owens walks slowly, growling to himself. Next to him, Black is jovial, speaking to the front row fans with a grin on his face. For their part, they throw several rather rude gestures in his direction.

Darren Quimbey:

Introducing first, representing the Honor Society and being accompanied to the ring by Headmaster Black... PROFESSOR OWENS!

Lance:

The deal is that both men are allowed one person at ringside for this match. Cole has Saunders, another former Honor Society member and seemingly his only ally. Owens, and I have to imagine the rest of the Honor Society, has Black.

Owens enters the ring - and before he can react, COLE ATTACKS! Owens tries to cover up as Cole unloads with big shots in a flurry of rapid right hands! Hector Navarro, caught just as off guard as Rosey, calls for the bell!

DING DING!

The monster of a man is backed into the corner by Cole's onslaught. Trying to press his advantage, Cole tries to irish whip Owens into the opposite corner, but the bigger man plants his feet. Cole tries again - no luck! In response, Professor Owens grabs the Omaha native by the scruff and roughly BIELS him across the ring!

DDK:

Levi Cole in many ways is a freak of nature when it comes to raw strength... but against a man like Owens, power is not enough.

Owens moves in, dropping several clubbing blows against Cole's back. He wraps his tree-trunk-like arms around Cole's waist and lifts him high into the air with a vicious bearhug!

Lance:

Cole doesn't want to be - oh! Excuse me!

A burst of static.

DDK:

It looks like we're being joined by a third, folks.

A quick cut to the commentary station reveals Headmaster Black putting on a headset.

Headmaster Black:

A what? A WHAT, Keebler?! Did you just call me a TU-TU-T-TTT... a Turr-tur-tututttt... grr, DID YOU JUST CALL ME A STARTS WITH A "TEE", RHYMES WITH NERD?!

DDK:

...no? I said, 'we're being joined by a THIRD.'

Headmaster Black:

Hmph... THIRD, Keebler?! I am the FIRST in EVERY class! And you call yourself a Dean...

In the ring, Owens syncs his hold tighter... but Cole responds with a big thumb to the eye! Rosey drops Cole as he holds his face in pain, and Cole quickly hits the ropes and goes for the knee with a big chop block! Rosey doesn't go down, so Cole tries another! Another! And on the fourth - Owens hits the mat! Cole starts to go for the knee, lifting it into the air and driving it into the mat!

DDK:

And as we alluded, Levi Cole has tons of experience in that ring, and he knows you need to take a big man's legs out from under him.

Cole hits the ropes, but Owens surprises him with a big back body drop! Owens drops the elbow and all five hundred pounds come down on Cole's chest. He covers!

ONE!

TWO!

No! Cole powers out!

Lance:

That's a mass of humanity come down on Cole's frame!

Owens brings Cole up and whips him into the ropes. Cole ducks the clothesline, and on the rebound he catches Owens telegraphing it with a neckbreaker! Owens is stunned and Cole climbs to the second rope, measuring the big man. When The Professor is able to get to a vertical base... Cole leaps from the turnbuckle and catches Owens with a bulldog!

DDK:

GPA! Or at least that's what he used to call it...

Headmaster Black:

The Honor Society OWNS that name! Oh, and also, WHAT?!

Cole covers.

ONE!

TWO!

THREE!

DDK:

He got 'em!

Headmaster Black:

SHUCKS! Well... okay, this is within my expectations. Levi can survive ONE, but he very well can't make it past FOUR! The ODDS are IN MY FAVOR, gentlemen!

Cole rolls off Owens and looks to the ramp in anticipation. Rosey's longtime partner, Professor Horrigan, sprints down the ramp and slides under the bottom rope and into the ring. He and Owens begin a wild flurry exchange of shots that get the crowd on their feet!

DDK:

Thee Faithful are BEHIND Levi Cole!

Lance:

That they are!

Horrigan seems like he might be about to get the better of that exchange, so Cole ducks low and sweeps the legs with a takedown. Maintaining position, Cole floats over and locks in a headlock. An angry Horrigan kicks at the mat, but he is unable to throw the former amateur wrestler off as Cole maintains control.

Lance:

Like an angry pitbull, Cole refuses to let go!

Hector Navarro moves in to check on Horrigan who has been effectively grounded. The recently-promoted Professor plants his fists and pushes up with pure power. Cole holds on to the headlock but Horrigan is able to bring both men back to their feet. Thinking quickly, Cole releases the headlock and floats behind with a hammerlock. Horrigan roars in frustration as Cole controls the arm.

Horrigan is able to force his way into the ropes, causing Navarro to command Cole to release the arm. Cole does so, backing up in good sportsmanship. Horrigan begins to complain to Navarro, and this distraction is enough for Rosey Owens (outside the ring) to reach under the bottom rope and trip Cole!

DDK:

Owens shouldn't even be out there!

Horrigan is on Levi in a flash, dropping a big leg drop across the back of his neck! The cover!

ONE!

TWO!

Cole kicks out!

Any hope for a Cole comeback is literally squashed when Horrigan takes him over with a belly to belly and drops his entire frame on the poor former TA! Again he covers.

ONE!

TWO!

No! Cole won't die!

Getting back to his feet, Horrigan hits the ropes and comes off with a BIG SPLASH! 350 pounds driven right into Cole! But he's not done... another! One more that causes Cole's legs to spasm slightly. Horrigan covers.

DDK:

You can't hold it against Cole here... no way he can take this amount of punishment and raw force.

ONE!

TWO!

THRE - NO!! Cole gets the shoulder up!

Headmaster Black:

GOSHDARNIT, HOW?! Professor Horrigan used his profound knowledge of physics to put even MORE than all of his weight into that!

Lance:

That's called heart!

The Albuquerque Faithful roar their support. Horrigan ignores them, grabbing Cole by the arms and dragging him across the ring and into the corner. With Cole right in front of the turnbuckle, Horrigan begins the climb!

Horrigan is up top. He flashes a big thumbs up to the commentation station before falling forward with a big splash that

will quite literally crush Cole's dreams...

...but Cole moves!! Horrigan CRASHES INTO THE RING. Cole is clearly hurt, but he is able to muster enough to drape an arm over Horrigan's chest.

ONE!

TWO!

THREE!

DDK:

Unbelievable! Horrigan caused some real damage there, but Levi Cole moves on in this Gauntlet Match!

Headmaster Black:

D'AAAWWW SHUCKS!! COLE is CONFOUNDING my CALCULATIONS!

Horrigan rolls out of the ring, but Cole is still hurting and doesn't get back to his feet. This allows Professor Carlo to hit the ring and begin to stomp the life out of the man from Nebraska!

One half of the Academic Amarettos continues his assault on Levi Cole. Cole tries to use the drops to get up, but Carlo is there to meet him with a neckbreaker that plants him right back down. He brings Cole to the center of the ring where he puts on the most devastating of all wrestling moves... THE CHINLOCK!!

Carlo grins as he demands Navarro check on Cole who is in massive amounts of chin-related pain. Cole, still smarting from the Horrigan assault, nevertheless waves his arms in defiance - he ain't giving up. This gutsy display rallies the Faithful, who begin a chant that hasn't been heard in DEFIANCE in a loooooong time...

LET'S GO LEVI! (clap, clap, clap clap clap)

LET'S GO LEVI! (clap, clap, clap clap clap)

LET'S GO LEVI! (clap, clap, clap clap clap)

Carlo's eyes go wide in shock as the chant appears to ENERGIZE the injured Cole! He tries to double down, but as Saunders begins to slap the canvas, the Faithful pick up the cue and begin to stomp in unison!

DDK:

Cole is up to a knee!

Lance:

To his feet!

Headmaster Black:

AND I'M UP TO MY EYES with TENSION here!

Carlo can't believe what's happening. He hits the ropes and attempts to rebound with... something we'll never know because Cole catches him with a HUGE explosive overhead belly-to-belly! The Amaretto hits the mat, and Cole gets back to his feet... although he's holding his ribs and still moving a little gingerly. Nonetheless, he stalks Carlo as the Professor gets back to his feet... and when he turns...

DDK:

RED, WHITE, AND BLUE THUNDER BOMB!!

Lance:

Cole covers!

ONE!

TWO!

THREE - NOO!! CARLO BARELY MANAGES TO KICK OUT!!

Headmaster Black:

D'OOHH JEEZ, this is TOO MUCH! You wait here, gentlemen... I need to give my faculty an... *EXTRA-curricular* assignment!

There's a slight bump over the audio as a headset comes down.

DDK:

Wait... what?! Where are you going!?

Headmaster Black is practically tripping over his white robes as he sneaks around to where Carlo's twin Gomez is watching the action from afar.

Headmaster Black:

CARLO!

Professor Gomez Amaretto:

I'm Gomez.

Headmaster Black:

Whatever... get DOWN THERE! Do that magic switcheroo thing you guys do!

Professor Gomez Amaretto:

But you told us no more--

Headmaster Black:

IT'S A SOCIAL EXPERIMENT! NOW GET DOWN THERE!

As if he can hear his mentor across great distances, Bobby Horrigan (who conveniently, along with Rosey Owens, never left ringside) jumps up on the apron. Hector Navarro turns to engage with him, and this allows Gomez to grab his brother by the legs and quickly slide him out of the ring!

DDK:

And if the Honor Society can't win by skill, they'll resort to trickery!

Gomez plays dead. Cole moves in, reaching down to pick Gomez up... when Gomez surprises him with a thumb to the eye!!

Lance:

Decidingly un-amazing.

Gomez turns the crowd, bowing in response to their boos. The showman-like smile on his face is only there for a second, however, as a temporarily blinded Cole STILL manages to roll him up from behind!! Navarro sees this and breaks from his argument with Horrigan, moving in to make the count!!

ONE!

TWO!

THREE!

DDK:

COLE PULLS ONE OVER ON THE AMARAETTOS!

Headmaster Black:

SHEEEYYUUCKS!!!

Lance:

The Amarettos' trickery did NOT pay off!!

The people are going APESHIT as a surprised Gomez tries to protest, but Navarro ain't having none of it! He ejects the Professor out of the ring before he turns and locks eyes on Carlo!! The fans rumble as they sense what's coming.

DDK:

Navarro thinks that that's Gomez!

Lance:

He can barely use the barricade for support!

Navarro barks at "Gomez" to get into the ring, but Cole doesn't leave it up to chance. He rolls under the bottom rope, grabs him by the scruff and violently rolls him into the ring!

Professor Carlo Amaretto:

WAIT... WAIT... you got the WRONG AMARETTO HERE!

DDK:

This place is going bananas, Lance! This is only our first match!

No time wasted - RED, WHITE, AND BLUE THUNDER BOMB!!

ONE!

TWO!

THREE!!

Headmaster Black:

SHA-HA-HA-HAAAAAA-HYUCKS!!

At ringside, Headmaster Black is coming apart at the seams in realtime. He slaps the canvas. He yanks on the apron. He kicks up floor mats. At some point during the tantrum, a kid reaches over the barricade and tags his back with a "KICK ME" sign.

DDK:

HE did it!! One more Honor Society member left!!

Headmaster Black:

OH SHUT UP, KEEBS!

With another bump over the audio, the Sacred Lamb rejoins the commentary team.

Headmaster Black:

This has NOT gone as it should have... but Levi's lucky streak is OVER now! Because I saved the BEST for LAST!

With the rest of the Honor Society stewing on the ringside floor and Sweet Saunders cheering her head off, the final member of this gauntlet match emerges. Unfortunately for Cole, however, it's also the largest. Professor Olivr

Arsvinnar, Viking Valedictorian, marches his way toward a battered and bruised Levi Cole.

Headmaster Black:

GET 'IM, OLVIR! I mean, um... PROFESSOR!

As Arsvinnar enters the ring, Cole attempts the same trick he tried with Owens, rushing him and laying in several shots before the big man can get his bearings! However, the match has taken its toll on the man from Omaha, and he isn't quite as quick... allowing the Viking to shrug off his attacks and PLANT him with a headbutt between the eyes.

DDK:

Gotta hand it to you, Black... as much as I might not approve.

Cole struggles to get back to his feet, but a big CHOP to the skull puts him back down. The crowd has gone silent: once filled with hope for the big upset, it appears Cole has become easy pickings for the powerhouse. With ease, he scraps Cole off the mat before DRILLING HIM through it with a powerbomb! Satisfied, Arsvinnar makes the cover.

ONE!

TWO!

THREE - NOOOO!!

RAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA!!

DDK:

Somehow, Levi Cole is still in this!!

Arsvinnar looks to Navarro with disgust, but the longtime DEFIANCE ref confirms it was a two count. Cole can barely stand, reaching up to Arsvinnar's own knees for support. Wrapping his meathooks around Cole's head, the Viking brings him back up... before drilling him with a SECOND powerbomb!!

The fans have become defeated.

Lance:

Cole's head just snapped back in a sickening way... stay down Levi, your career isn't worth it..

ONE!

TWO!

THREE!

Headmaster Black:

YES!!

....NO!!!?!

Headmaster Black:

Wait, WHAT?! I mean, NO!!!

DDK:

My God!! How in the world did he kick out of that!!

Now Arsvinnar is PIIIIIISSSED. He gets right in Navarro's face, and even though the DEFIANCE ref is no coward, he moves a few steps back in alarm.

Headmaster Black:

EAT HIS FACE, PROFESSOR!

DDK:

He's not going to... my God, A THIRD POWERBOMB!!

When Cole's spine meets the mat, he instinctively curls up into the air and cries out in pain. Arsvinnar kicks him in the gut to put him back down and keeps his foot on his chest, growing to Navarro to make the count.

ONE!!

TWO!!!

DDK:

Levi manages to kick his foot up and onto the bottom rope!!

Hector Navarro stops the count, pointing to the extended appendage. The Viking Valedictorian sees RED, shoving Navarro full force on his ass!

DDK:

Hold on a minute... Black, what're you doing!?

Lance:

Our broadcast partner is sprinting toward the ring... and he's got a paddle!

With the ref in the corner trying to shake off the cobwebs from the big shove, TA Black slliiiiides under the bottom rope. With his eyes wide and maniacal (looking strangely like a former marijuana-loving Defiant's eyes once did), Black STARES at Cole who tries in vain to get to his feet. Arsvinnar decides to help him, grabbing Cole by the arms and displaying him in front of the leader of the Honor Society.

With Cole's head exposed, Black winds up his paddle! In fact, he hits the ropes for a little extra mustard, and leaps into the air, looking to bring the wood down on Cole's cranium...

RAAAAAAAAAAAAAA!

DDK:

COLE MOVES!! BLACK HITS ARSVINNAR!!!

Black is STUNNED as he watches the powerhouse go down and the paddle SHATTER over his skull! He stands in shock a little too long, turning into a desperation Levi Cole clothesline!!!

Navarro is back up, and with effort, Cole is able to drag himself over to Arsvinnar and drape a single arm...

ONE!

TWO!

THREE!!!!

DING DING DING!!!

DDK:

I don't believe it!!!

Cole, dazed, rolls out of the ring just as the other members of the Honor Society storm it. With Sweet Saunders leading him by the arm, they quickly scoot up the ramp as the Academic Gang RAGES in the squared circle.

Lance:

Against all odds... Levi Cole survived!

DDK:

And you remember what this means: Cole is going to get Headmaster Black one-on-one at DEFIANCE Road!

Headmaster Black isn't taking the turn of events quite as explosively as earlier. He's frozen by a concoction of horror, disgust, and rage. Eye twitching, he slowly turns his head and finds the camera.

Headmaster Black:

...shucks.

HEALING THE WORLD ONE MATCH AT A TIME

Earlier This Afternoon

The Titanes Familia bus pulls up into the parking lot. Stepping off one at a time, the members exit.

Titaness and Siofra, chatting it up. Behind him, Kilgore and Killjoy aka Kill or Be Killed in matching black hoodies and jeans. Killjoy adjust his masks.

Mil Veltas:

TU HEROE ESTA AQUÍ!

DEFIANCE's Biggest Hero steps off the bus in a white mask, fur coat and suit with thin red pinstripes. Behind him, Brooklynn Rivera is jamming with white Beats by Dre on her head and behind her, DLJ walks off the bus in a tailored gold suit with black pinstripes.

DLJ:

Who's getting saved today, guys?

Finally stepping off the bus, Uriel Cortez pokes his head out and starts walking off to step onto the pavement, also dressed to the nines in a dark blue button-up shirt, red ojo bracelet, dark dress pants and shoes as he wheels his luggage behind him.

Uriel Cortez:

You guys when you take care of the fucking OSCAR BURNS problem.

DLJ:

Yes, Dad!

Cortez sighs, then shakes his head before he turns to Mil.

Uriel Cortez:

You need the Killers, Mil?

Mil Veltas:

Nah, I'll deal with BURNS myself if he show up. He try jumping me like coward again? He get CRUSHED by me and Los Niños Dorados.

Uriel Cortez:

All right, long as he gets dealt with.

Mil Veltas:

Oh, tonight, we will.

Uriel Cortez:

Great. Go hero the shit out of him and get him the hell out of here for good.

Mil Veltas bumps a fist with his bestie.

Mil Veltas:

Brooklynn! Danny! Let's go! We gotta go visit the skybox!

DLJ:

HELL, YES! FANCY SEATS! AND I'M A MAN NOW, SO I CAN SAY "HELL!"

Brooklynn sighs and then follows the two "heroes" reluctantly.

Titanness:

Our babies all grown up.

Uriel Cortez:

Yeah. All right, Killers...

He turns to Killjoy and Kilgore.

Uriel Cortez:

You and Siofra... scout this match tonight between the Punks and the LET kids. Either one of them could be your opponents. If M4NTRA try and dance their way into our business tonight, they're getting put down. Got it?

Kilgore:

Great. Prey.

Kilgore has a sadistic smirk. Killjoy nods next to him.

Siofra:

You still want me ringside?

Titanness:

Oh, yeah... we're gonna keep helping Brock and Pat. Those boys have issues that only Uriel and I can fix.

Uriel Cortez:

It's true... just think... just a couple months ago, they were at each other's throats competing for the Southern Heritage Title. We beat their ass when they laid their hands on us... now, tonight, they're on the same page. That's cause WE did that, love.

Titanness:

You were right, Uri. The place NEEDS parental figures running things. Not a bunch of smalls. Not a bunch of juvenile kids. It needs people like us. I'm gonna show Pat that he messed up insulting our Familia and ruining your life, Siofra.

Siofra looks giddy and claps her hands together as The Man of The House grins. She turns to acknowledge the camera on them.

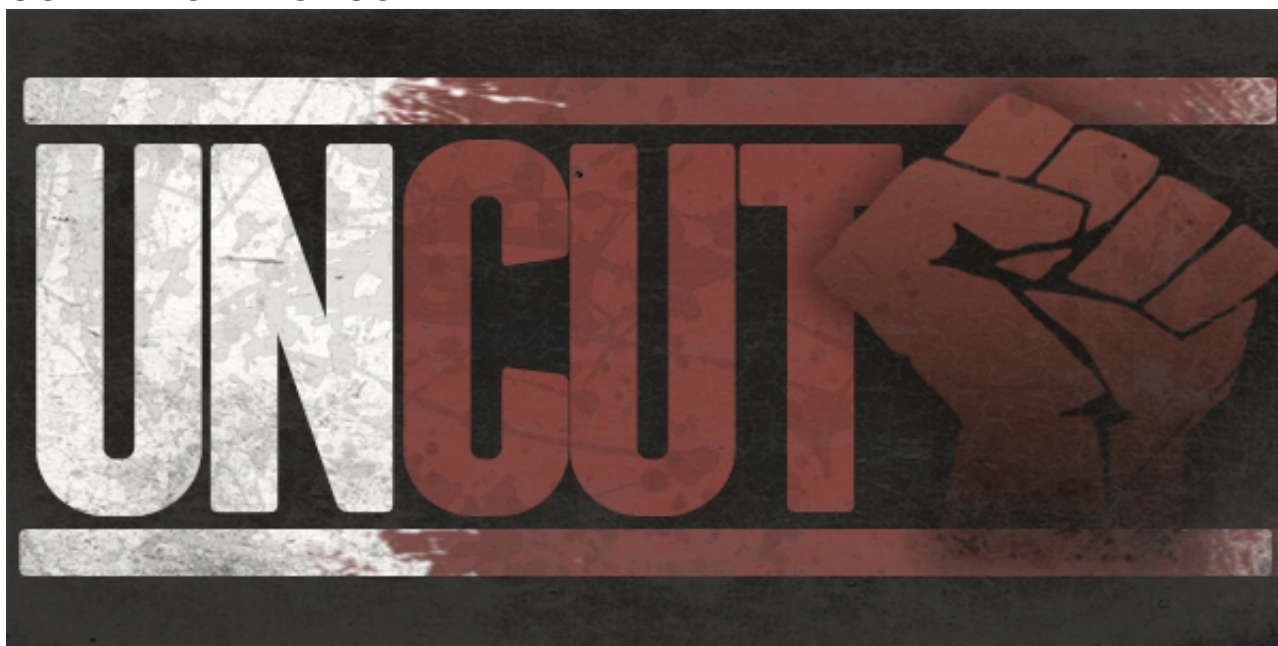
Titanness:

We're gonna heal this place one match at a time! Brock... Pat... may the best friends win tonight!

Uriel Cortez:

Indeed. Keep it clean, boys. And soon as I bring the Southern Heritage Title HOME... everyone's gonna be better for it. Even if they don't see it yet.

The rest of Titanes Familia head into The Pit as the scene moves on.

COMMERCIAL: UNCUT

Your bi-weekly source for all things DEFIANCE! Tune in, for the UNCUT, NO HOLDS BARRED DEFIANCE!

HENRY KEYES FIST SPECTAPALOOZA SPONSORED BY IHOP, THIS TIME FOR REAL

We return from commercial break to a very pink and very blue scene in The Pit.

Lance:

Well, dear viewers - there's no way around it, now. An event - a spectacle, you could say - from several weeks ago didn't quite go the way Henry Keyes planned. A planned reveal of his blue-leather FIST of DEFIANCE went awry, and as we later learned, Elise Ares and the Pop Culture Phenoms were behind the heist.

DDK:

Three "Spectapaloozas" in four episodes of DEFtv is a record that I sincerely hope never gets beaten, there's only so much of this a fella can take!

The camera pans to a view of the entrance ramp - once again lined by Plague Doctors, once again carrying cloches

Then, the official theme song of all Henry Keyes Spectapaloozas (sponsored by IHOP) blasts through the speakers to a chorus of boos.

♪ "God Is a DJ" by Pink ♪

BOOOOOOOOOOOOooooooooOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO!!

Lance:

I STILL can't get over the reactions, Keebs! Outside of San Francisco, it's every arena!

DDK:

Well, this time, I think Keyes may be leaning in - check out the DEFIatron!

On the enormous screen above the entrance ramp, we see a scene from the main event of DEFtv 224.

Is it Klein kicking out at one after a back to back sequence of some of Keyes's most potent trademark offense?

Is it the Faithful singing "Man In The Box" at the top of their lungs in a show of true, genuine rallying the likes of which Klein had never received before on a singles stage?

Is it Klein performing an absolutely bonkers Shooting Star Press that had everyone in the arena believing, if for a couple moments, that Elise Ares would be the new FIST?

No. Of course it's not.

It's Keyes, after the match was over, delivering Coin after Coin after Coin to Klein's boxed head.

On loop.

...

On goddamned loop.

Slow motion kicks in when the structural integrity of Klein's box finally gives way and it flies off his head in pieces, revealing the vague idea of a face that's been covered by blood, bruises, and shadow for a flash of a moment...

And then the loop restarts.

...

IF GOD IS A DJ, LIFE IS A DANCE FLOOR

LOVE IS THE RHYTHM, YOU ARE THE MUSIC

The Besties emerge.

BOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO~~~~

There's no gigantic golden cloche in the middle of an overdramatic table in the ring this time - though, there is a table, and there is a blue cloth covering a vaguely cubic object. Keyes may have finally learned his lesson, because Big Blue is strapped tightly around his waist. He's wearing a white tee with 2023 Flynn Cup branding across the chest, pink denim jeans, and black boots. Lindsay Troy wears a PRIME blue blazer with a bright pink jumpsuit and black heels. They look absolutely pleased as punch with themselves. Typical.

They begin to march their way down to the ramp. The Plague Doctors lining their path reveal more pancakes and more pancakes and more pancakes - chocolate chip ones and buttered ones and ones with walnuts and berries and the syrup - lord, the syrup.

Troy teases tossing these pancakes at the fans again, but remembers that some of them actually enjoyed this last time and instead brushes off the fans entirely. Keyes takes hearty whiffs as he passes each platter.

Did I mention the pinks and blues are everywhere? Because they are EVERYWHERE.

Lance:

As Henry Keyes is choosing to remind us before he says anything else, he successfully defended the FIST against Klein in our most recent main event. Klein really showed out that match, in my estimation, and I think he may have opened up a few eyes backstage.

DDK:

He was INCHES away from pinning the Kraken! "Star-making" gets thrown around a lot in wrestling, and I don't mean to hyperbolize, but the Klein we saw last show is a Klein that can go toe-to-toe with anyone on the roster. It wouldn't surprise me in the least if he becomes a singles champion on his own merit, and soon.

Lance:

We've been informed, unfortunately, that Klein is not here tonight due to the injuries he sustained at the hands of Henry Keyes following their match. We take concussion protocols very seriously in DEFIANCE, and our thoughts are with Klein and we hope for a speedy recovery.

DDK:

Absolutely disgusting actions by the champion, if you ask me.

Keyes and Troy enter the ring and the music cuts. He's got a microphone, which is occasionally a problem.

Henry Keyes:

COME AND BLOODY TAKE IIIIIIIT, DEFIANCE!!

BOOOOOOOOOOOOO!

Henry Keyes:

Now that the Pop Culture Phenoms have been buried in the dirt for good, now that that good-for-nothing Elise Ares is out of the picture, now that Big Blue is EXACTLY where she belongs - WELLLCOOOOOME! To the GREATEST! PARTY! YOU'RE EVERRRRRRRRR GOING TO SEEEOOOO!

The Besties cackle.

Lance:

We've heard this before.

DDK:

It was wrong last time, and it's already wrong this time. I've been to some GREAT parties.

Lance:

Oh yeah?

DDK:

Of course! I'm connected, Lance.

Henry Keyes:

The champ is CHAMP-AND-OHHHHH since returning to DEFIANCE, and it feels INCREDIBLE! Just like it was a couple years ago - when THIS magnificent bastard was your FIST-

He points to Troy.

Henry Keyes:

-and THIS magnificent bastard was your SOHER-

He points to himself.

Henry Keyes:

And together - we were recognized as the GREATEST TAG TEAM ON THE PLANET TODAY!

He points to the Milo Flynn branding on his tee.

Lance:

I've received this question from a number of fans, and yes - it did sound made up, but the Flynn Cup is a real tournament, and our own Rain City Ronin are the champions in 2025!

DDK:

I would say that must mean RCR is the "greatest tag team on the planet today", but we already knew that - the DEFIANCE tag team championships prove that!

As Keyes continues to get booed and booed, one of the Plague Doctors steps up to the ring and makes his way to the table with the cube-shaped object underneath the blue cloth.

Henry Keyes:

It feels like a time to really celebrate, and to honor the amazing feats that have brought you to this arena today - the continued dominance of Vae Victis, and the end of Elise Ares in DEFIANCE!

WE WANT A-RES! clap clap clapclapclap

WE WANT A-RES! clap clap clapclapclap

WE WANT A-RES! clap clap clapclapclap

WE WANT A-RES! clap clap clapclapclap

Keyes looks out.

Henry Keyes:

YOU WANT ELISE ARES??

*RAHHHHHHHHHHHHH!***Henry Keyes:**

Part of me wants her out here too, because SOMEBODY'S going to need to deliver a VERY SPECIAL GIFT to her buddy, the Box Man! You see, poor little Klein got himself a little boo-boo and so he chose not to be here tonight...at least, that's the STORY. I think the real reason he's ducking DEFtv tonight is that he's too scared to pay up on his end of the bargain!

*BOOOOOOOOOOOO!***Henry Keyes:**

THE BESTIES STRUCK A BARGAIN, AND WHEN A BARGAIN IS STRUCK, IT IS A SACRED OATH. We offered up a precious, rare, unbelievable opportunity at the greatest prize in professional wrestling on one small condition - when the Box Man fell, we'd get to set up him with a new one!

The Plague Doctor carrying the cloth-covered cube has made his way near the Besties. Troy gives the Doctor a little pat-pat on the beak.

Henry Keyes:

BEHOLD!

He lifts the cloth.

...

It's a box, alright.

Holy shit is this thing garish.

It actually looks remarkably like the outside of the Burn Book from Mean Girls (the original 2004 movie, not anything from the 2024 version, no disrespect to Tina Fey you go make that paper, but the Besties adhere to the Old Ways of Not Being Able To Sit With Them.)

If you're unfamiliar with the Burn Book, it's mostly pink, just like this box is. There are black and white cut out letters, almost like a ransom note, with phrases ranging from "UGGO", "SMALL D ENERGY", "I LET PCP DOWN" scattered around the outside, complete with a big cartoony blue lipstick kiss in the middle of extra large cut-out text reading "BURN BOX". There are big dumb holes for the eyes, too, though it's unlikely that they used correct measurements for this thing because they're not lined up well.

Henry Keyes:

BEHOLD THE BURN BOX! Isn't she a beaut?

Troy claps at the vague direction of the box. She catches a line of text on the box she must not have seen at first, points it out, whispers something to Keyes and they both look at it again and start really cackling. We get another camera angle - it reads "kLein" with the L about 5 times larger than the other letters, bolded, underlined, and in blue.

Henry Keyes:

But like I said, we're not going to get to deliver this in person to Klein, so instea-

SHHHHHHHHKKKKKKKKKKKT!

♪ "You Should See Me in a Crown (IIZI Remix)" by Billie Eilish ♪

The Faithful erupt as the scraping of the platinum shovel across concrete heralds the arrival of the Leading Lady of DEFIANCE. The Besties look towards the entrance in frustration as a single spotlight shines down. Instead of the throne rising from the floor, Ares walks into the spotlight from the shadows wearing a heavily modified cropped "PCP" T-shirt, a pair of the daisiest dukes you've ever seen, and her white crop top leather jacket. Her LED sunglasses read "FIST" "OR" "BUST" she looks down towards the ring at the FIST of DEFIANCE and Lindsay Troy. She goes to take a step forward... but she's not alone as The D steps into the light next to her wearing a black silk dress shirt and a pair of pinstriped black slacks.

DDK:

I have a hunch that the Pop Culture Phenoms weren't invited to this celebration.

Lance:

Well Keebs, they weren't invited to the last one either, but that didn't stop them.

The D walks past one of the plague doctors and knocks the cloche out of its hand and it drops its head disappointed. Elise turns around and acts like she's going to pick it back up, but instead she kicks it into the legs of another plague doctor.

Inside the ring Henry Keyes makes damn sure BIG BLUE™ is still there around his waist (it is) before trying his best to yell over the music, but it's drowned out by a combination Billie Eilish and the cheers of the Faithful as Elise and The D makes their way up the stairs, across the apron, and into the ring. The music cuts off as the Leading Lady of DEFIANCE steps up to the Kraken spinning her own microphone between her fingers. She pauses for just a moment to let Keyes feel the world against him before she speaks.

Elise Ares:

Hey BBY, how's my Big BLU? Does it miss mama?

Henry Keyes:

I don't know what you think you're doing out here, Ares - I have a guess based on...all *this*...

He vaguely gestures at Ares's outfit, particularly her LED sunglasses.

Henry Keyes:

...but GUESS WHAT, "babygurl"? YOU BLEW IT! You blew your shot at ever winning the FIST from me! You let the Box Man go out there and get absolutely DESTROYED AND BROKEN in your place! You even tried to CHEAT to get one over on me - and so guess what? Elise Ares can spend the rest of her pitiful little tenure in DEFIANCE at the BACK OF THE LINE for all I care. You're NOT the FIST, you will never BE the FIST, and you can take this little attitude you've got, march your little attention-seeking outfit somewhere else, and go be extra around someone who gives a damn about what you want! I'M THE FIST OF DEFIANCE, DO YOU UNDERSTAND?

Elise Ares:

Good for you, Hank... but, oh my God. Wow. Did you think I was done? This is so embarrassing for you because you were NEVER going to get off that easily, OBVS.

Ares smirks running her tongue across her top teeth before continuing.

Elise Ares:

You seem to be having trouble so let me make something per-fect-ly clear for you, BBY. My contract expires after ACTS of DEFIANCE... and not a minute before. So you're going to have to deal with my crazy ass every single minute of every single show until then if you don't give me what I deserve. As a matter of fact, I'd even be willing to sign an extension.

The Faithful roar at this news. Keyes is dumbstruck.

Elise Ares:

If that means I have to sign a new contract every single week to come down here and make your life miserable until I get my shot, so be it. I have nothing else going on. Mama's even got PRIME money now! I'll trot my fine ass down here for FREE if it means I get to make sure that you don't get to do ANYTHING... and BBY, do I mean ANYTHING. You're going to think I'm legally obligated to be a pain in your ass, I'm not, I'm just that petty. So what do you say, Hank? If you've got this figured out as much as you think you do, then just take care of business at ACTS of DEFIANCE and I'll be on my way but if you don't...

The Queen of Sports Entertainment Style shrugs.

Elise Ares:

I don't see any more celebrations in your future. D?

From behind his back, attached to his dress belt, The D pulls out a rolled up slash and lays out every tool he'll ever need to make sure no one will ever be able to celebrate again. A hammer. A boxcutter. A torch. A protractor. Rope. Hits mitts. The perfect instruments for conducting a symphony of deflating balloons, busting clothes, and burning signs. Ares holds the microphone up to his lips.

The D:

And I know where to find a fork and a knife too! I'll eat every single pancake you got! I don't even NEED syrup!

Keyes is absolutely livid at this. He stomps around muttering and yelling in every vague direction he can. After a bit of this, Lindsay Troy approaches Henry and puts an arm around his shoulder, perhaps the only person in this arena who has a shot at calming down the Kraken. They have a brief, secret discussion. Keyes's eyes then light up as he cups a hand to Troy's ear - Troy's eyes then light up too, and she sneers that patented Lindsay Troy sneer, and nods to Henry.

Henry Keyes:

Well...I can't say I would like that very much, now, would I? You may have stumbled upon my one truest weakness - not wanting to be bothered by idiots. My Bestie and I have talked it over, and I think we can be the bigger people here. We're willing to be magnanimous. NEVER LET IT BE SAID THAT HENRY KEYES IS A COWARD, after all, and the mission statement of Vae Victis has always been about raising the standard of what it takes to be the very best professional wrestlers in the world. That means, even a conniving little worm like you could still have a path to the top, if you fight hard enough for it.

Henry pauses and looks between Ares and The D, studying them. PCP are not sold on this notion of Vae Victis being about anything other than bullshit, in their eyes. Keyes's face turns stony.

Henry Keyes:

We'll give you that path. The greatest tag team in the world today, the Co-Consuls, the Besties, Henry Keyes and Lindsay Troy, will fight Elise Ares and The D, in a tag team match, TONIGHT. If you two prove you actually deserve a damned thing, and you find a way to beat us? Then fine. Elise Ares, you will get one, last, shot...for the FIST...at DEFIANCE ROAD.

RAHHHHHHHHHH!

Lance:

Whoa!

DDK:

Hang on, he doesn't look finished...

Henry Keyes:

BUT. WHEN the Besties do to the two of you what I did to your big boxy buddy, when Lindsay Troy's Kingdom Comes and Henry Keyes shells out two Coins for the ferryman, and the two of you fall once again, in classic PCP fashion, in

agonizing, crushing defeat? Not only will Elise Ares's contract be terminated at the end of the year. So will yours -

He points to The D.

Henry Keyes:

- so will Klein's, so will aaaaaanybody else who's ever called themselves a Pop Culture Phenom, past or present. None of this "contract extension" malarky, none of this "What is Arlise Eles doing in BRAZEN", no debut of Derek Edwards, nothing. All of you will be gone from DEFIANCE for good in one clean cut. Which, I guess, means allllll these people here tonight will just. Have. To watch. PRIME. If they want to see you ever again.

He holds out his right hand to Ares.

Henry Keyes:

What do you say? Are you willing to put it *all* on the line?

Ares twists her face unsure about the proposal Henry Keyes just made to her. It's one thing to stand by your convictions, it's another thing to doom your friends in the process. She glances over at The D, trying to find some sense of where he stands. She doesn't even get the chance to read his face before The D grabs the mic from her.

The D:

You, disrespect, Klein?!? You're on, bitch!.

The D slaps Keyes's forearm and grips it hard, almost like the Roman-style handshake Keyes would do over a decade ago. Elise is stunned, but something about The D's bravery and intensity brings her around on this whole thing. Lindsay Troy grabs the Burn Box and shoves it hard in The D's torso as the Besties exit the ring, smirking.

DDK:

Well, there you have it, folks! Tonight, it's going to be Henry Keyes and Lindsay Troy of Vae Victis in tag team action against Elise Ares and The D of the Pop Culture Phenoms! So much at stake, partner!

Lance:

You said it, Keebs! Elise Ares's hopes for the FIST are alive and kicking, but with the stipulation added by the Kraken, there's so much more on the line - it's several DEFIANCE careers as well!

DDK:

Stay tuned, we'll be back, but first - THIS!

MORE THAN ONE WAY TO SKIN A KUROYAMA

Cut to backstage.

"The Lost Cause" Victor Vacio storms into frame, his black coat whipping behind him. Scott Douglas lingers behind him by a step or two. His honor-bound black mask still covering his face. He remains silent but tense as Vacio spins around, obviously still hot over the events of last DEFtv.

Victor Vacio:

You dare? ¿Tú te atreves?! You speak without my command? You compete when I say... cuando yo mando, not when you choose!

[You dare? You dare speak without my command? You compete when I say... when I command, not when you choose!]

Douglas lowers his eyes, jaw tight beneath the mask. He doesn't speak. Vacio takes a step closer, finger jabbing into Douglas' chest.

Victor Vacio:

Do not mistake silence for freedom. No te confundas. Sigues aquí porque yo lo permito.

[Do not mistake silence for freedom. Don't fool yourself. You are still here because I allow it.]

As the tension continues to build, a slow clap echoes off-camera. Lord Nigel Tricklebush steps into view, his closed-umbrella clutched under his arm as he slow-claps ... his smile broad and mocking.

Lord Nigel Tricklebush:

Bravo, Victor. Bravo. Your fire ... tu fuego... it never disappoints. But perhaps... there is a more elegant way to address the issue at hand.

Vacio glares at him but doesn't interrupt. Nigel circles around Douglas like a vulture sizing up prey, then rests a hand lightly on his shoulder. Douglas' head stays still but his eye cut to Tricklebush's hand.

Lord Nigel Tricklebush:

Young Douglas here longs to test himself against Kuroyama, does he not? Why not give him his wish... at Acts of DEFIANCE.

Douglas' head rises ever so slightly. Vacio narrows his eyes, intrigued but suspicious. Nigel continues.

Lord Nigel Tricklebush:

And ... to ensure victory and to guarantee your desired rematch, Victor ... we simply... soften the Emerald Apex beforehand.

Nigel takes a beat.

Lord Nigel Tricklebush:

Masked Violator #1 is a weapon seeking direction. In the absence of more personal targets, why not Kuroyama? It will be good for my boy. He could use the... distraction.

Vacio's scowl fades momentarily.

Victor Vacio:

Very well ...

Nigel nods, satisfied. Douglas says nothing, his silence betraying the conflict behind the mask. As Nigel gently exits,

Vacio's look turns once again from agreeable to weary.

Cut to elsewhere.

PUNCH DRUNK PURCELL vs. ZACK DAYMON

DDK:

Coming up next, we have a special singles match between two of the four competitors involved when the Unified Tag Team Titles are on the line! Before the Rain City Ronin defend the titles against the super heavyweight tandem of The Lads, we will see one-half of the defending champions, Zack Daymon, take on Punch Drunk Purcell of The Lads!

Lance:

Things have been ultra-competitive between these two teams in the past few weeks, stemming from The Lads challenging for the titles back on DEFtv 223! Both teams were disqualified after things got heated, resulting in two different referees being knocked down! Last week, a sitdown interview was conducted by Christie Zane resulting in a rematch scheduled for Acts of DEFIANCE where both teams have agreed there must be a winner!

DDK:

But before we get there, it's one last chance for either team to obtain some momentum for their side! With that, let's get to the action!

The camera cuts to Darren Quimbey in the ring with introductions ready.

Darren Quimbey:

The following singles match is set for one fall! Introducing first...

DDK:

So much at stake! Tonight... without further adieu, let's get to tonight's title defense!

Four words appear on the DEFIatron that being a rabid Sacramento crowd to their feet...

**SHAKE
HANDS
BECOME
LADS!!!**

♪ "Why Can't We Be Friends?" by WAR ♪

One by one, the members of DEFIANCE's Friendtastic Four walk out from the stage. Janna Ray walking out, alongside BRAZEN's newest BRAZEN Star Cup champion, Butcher Victorious holding the Cup high! "The Biggest Boy" Dex Joy comes out and takes in a big response, following by Punch Drunk Purcell, wearing blue and yellow gear (blue MMA gloves and yellow boxing shorts). Janna points at Butcher and both get their hands out, as do Dex and Punchy...

BOOM!

And blue and yellow pyro goes off on stage!

Darren Quimbey:

Representing The Lads, and being accompanied to the ring by Dex Joy, Butcher Victorious and Punch Drunk Purcell... from Atlanta, Georgia, weighing in at 351 pounds... **PUNCH! DRUNK! PURCELL!**

With his friends cheering him on down to the ring, Purcell looks as ready as ready can be. The former boxer and MMA fighter engages in one more handshake with each member of The Lads, then climbs up into the ring. Purcell holds a balled-up fist close to his face, then throws a big shadow punch in the air to fire himself up! The music cuts as they wait for their opponents to arrive.

♪ "Nobody Speak" by DJ Shadow feat. Run the Jewels ♪

With stage lights bump to the rhythm of the music, the Rain City Ronin step through the curtain. Zack Daymon is in his gear, dressed to compete. Leo Burnett is sporting a custom-fitted "Dojo Cascadia" tracksuit. Both men have the Unified Tag Team Titles worn around their waists as they come out, until they stop at the head of the ramp and hoist them overhead.

KA-BOOM!!

The pyro draws an energized pop from the crowd, and the tag champs descend the rampway.

Darren Quimbey:

And the opponent, representing the Rain City Ronin... accompanied to the ring by Leo Burnett, he hails from Seattle, Washington, and weighs in at two-hundred and twenty-four pounds... he is one half of the reigning UNIFIED TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS of DEFIANCE... please welcome, **ZACK! DAAAAYMOOOONNN!!**

The Ronin remain side by side as they walk the length of the aisle. Once they reach ringside, Daymon wordlessly tosses his half of the championship to Leo (who catches it without looking) and scales up the steps to enter the ring. His eyes stay honed in on Purcell as the official gives him a preliminary pat-down.

DDK:

No pomp or pageantry for the tag champ, Zack Daymon! Not surprisingly, he looks good and eager to get right to the action!

DING DING

Doing the sportsmanlike thing, Purcell tries to hold out his hand for a handshake while Zack Daymon goes for a dab. When that doesn't work, Daymon switches to a handshake as Purcell goes for a dab. Both men look confused.

DDK:

A malfunction at the junction there, it seems. Both men showed sportsmanship, but in their own ways.

Purcell takes his eyes off for just a second to look back at rest of The Lads at ringside, but when he turns back, Zack Daymon leaps up and applies a tight front chancery on Purcell while trying to secure a leg scissors!

Lance:

Whoa! The serious factor just went from zero to a hundred!

DDK:

While The Lads seem to still figure out how dabbing fits into their group code of "Shake Hands or Throw Hands" Zack Daymon's trying right away to put the big man to sleep!

With Leo Burnett watching on, Daymon tries to fully apply the guillotine choke on the big man, but the much thicker Purcell grabs him by the body and then **THROWS** him up and over into a simple toss! Daymon falls and holds his back in pain near the ropes. The Round Mound of Ground and Pound tries to go towards him but Daymon's proximity to the ropes buys him a few seconds. When the referee goes to check on Daymon, the man nicknamed Skyfire flies out and strikes Purcell on his jaw with a big running elbow smash, followed by applying a tight headlock!

DDK:

Daymon is going to have to use that combo of speed and technique to counter that deadly brawling style of Purcell! If he hits that Punch Drunk Love, this match is over!

Punchy responds to the headlock by **LAUNCHING** Daymon into the ropes! He tries for the right hand, but Daymon hangs onto the ropes tightly to prevent himself from flying right into the shot! Purcell holds up both hands to say he was **CLOSE** to dimming the lights of Daymon while Daymon waves a hand in retaliation, telling the former **BRAZEN** Onslaught Champ to bring it!

DDK:

That was CLOSE to being a quick punch-out by Purcell! Speaking of!

Purcell charges at Skyfire, only to eat a big kick to the side of the head that rocks the big man. When Daymon charges towards him again, Punchy is ready for him with a HUGE back body drop!

Lance:

Purcell beating him to the... well, first part of his name with that back body drop!

Daymon is near the ropes when Punchy goes to grab him and toss him through the ropes to the apron. He points to The Faithful and then holds Daymon by the neck! He points out to The Faithful as Daymon struggles... then eats the clubbing forearms to the chest! From his side of the ring, Dexy Baby, Janna and Butch Vic all count along with The Faithful!

ONE! TWO! THREE! FOUR! FIVE! SIX! SEVEN! EIGHT! NINE!

He pauses...

TEN!

DDK:

Purcell hits that Hitting The Bag combo!

Daymon falls to his knees and holds his chest in pain, but Purcell grabs him by the arm and holds him leading to a HUGE suplex from outside back into the ring! Daymon is hurt when Punchy rolls slowly over into the first cover of the match!

ONE!

TWO... NO!

Zack kicks out, but Purcell remains calm and tries to punish one-half of the Unified Tag Champs further.

Lance:

What a volley that Purcell has thrown so far!

He tries to pick Daymon up again, but Daymon suddenly drops down and catches the big man with a jawbreaker! Purcell holds his chin in pain as one-half of the champions tries to create some distance. When Purcell gets his bearings back, he tries to charge towards Daymon with a big back splash in the corner, only for Daymon to outmaneuver him by dipping through the ropes to the apron. Purcell hits the corner, but things get worse when Daymon grabs his neck and drops him over the top rope!

DDK:

Great action here by Daymon! Like we talked about earlier, speed and technique is going to be his best friend here!

Daymon leaps back into the ring. He runs right past an attempt at a big clothesline from Purcell, only come back and connect with a big dropkick aimed right at the knee of Punchy!

Lance:

What a move that was! Going low to land on the mark

Zack Daymon pops back up as Purcell is doubled over from the first dropkick. He runs off the ropes and connects with a second high-angle running dropkick to the side of Purcell's head! The big man is rocked when Daymon quickly kips up to his feet before hitting the corner. He climbs up to the top rope and then takes flight with a big front missile dropkick that finally knocks Purcell off his feet!

DDK:

Daymon finally gets the big man down! Great missile dropkick!

Daymon wastes no time trying to go for the win!

ONE!

TWO... NO!

Purcell kicks out! Leo Burnett flashes a grimace while on the other side, The Lads collectively cheer for Punchy's kickout. The smiles all quickly go away though when the second-generation Washingtonian grabs the same knee he dropkicked earlier and falls back with a modified DDT on the leg joint!

DDK:

Great work by Daymon going after that knee! Purcell's punching power won't mean much if he's flat on his back!

Daymon goes after the leg again with a pair of elbows to the joint! Purcell holds his leg in pain while Dex, Butcher and Janna all wear matching looks of concern on their faces.

Lance:

I'm shocked this match has gone this way, but it's working! How confident have we seen the champions since winning the titles, defending them and winning the Milo Flynn Cup! So many accomplishments amassed by this amazingly gifted tandem!

DDK:

And tremendous singles wrestlers to boot as Daymon works the knee!

He has a standing leg grapevine on the knee of Purcell! Punchy tries freeing himself, but when he gets close to grabbing the hands of Daymon, Skyfire cranks back further and Purcell falls backwards to the canvas, writhing in pain!

Lance:

There is no way around this! Purcell needs to find a way back up!

Daymon tries to transition by grabbing the other leg for a standing cloverleaf, but before he can fully get the hold locked in, Purcell KICKS him away with the other foot! Skyfire hits the canvas and Purcell rolls upwards to try and meet him! As Daymon gets closer, Purcell catches him with a quick left jab to the gut! The boxer then favors his knee before throwing Daymon at the ropes. He pushes him towards the ropes and then goes for the pop-up...

DDK:

PUNCH DRU... NO! DAYMON COUNTERS WITH A MID-AIR DROPKICK!

The blow catches Purcell and sends him stumbling into the ropes! As he comes back, Daymon hits the ropes behind him and leaps off, sending Purcell CRASHING into the canvas with a HUGE springboard tornado DDT off the middle rope!

DDK:

Daymon counters the Punch Drunk Love for the second time and follows with the springboard tornado DDT! This could do it!

Daymon goes right into the cover a second time!

ONE!

TWO!

KICKOUT!

Purcell kicks out again! Burnett continues to watch while Dex, Butcher and Janna cheer on the big man!

Lance:

Twice now, Purcell has tried to set up that Punch Drunk Love, but Daymon has just had an answer for it both times! It's clear to me the Rain City Ronin are doing their homework before Acts of DEFIANCE!

When the springboard tornado DDT doesn't get the job done, Daymon gears up and seems to be waiting to faceplant Purcell. He waits on the big man to crawl to his feet. With the bad knee slowing him down, Purcell has a tough time getting vertical. When he finally does, Daymon jumps for another springboard tornado DDT... ONLY TO GET CAUGHT!

DDK:

WHOA! OVERHEAD BELLY-TO-BELLY SUPLEX BY PUNCHY!

Dex Joy:

Sent that pally's ass flying! Keep it up, Punch-chacho.

Butcher Victorious:

...Punch-chacho?

Dex Joy:

You know me! Nicknames kind of guy, Victorious with the Sticktorious!

While The Lads debate nicknames ringside, Daymon is hurt while Purcell tries to get some feeling back into the leg. He slowly gets back to his feet and then waits on the second-gen Washingtonian to do the same before he throws a big jab to his chest in the corner! Purcell starts teeing off on Daymon with alternating left and right jabs to his midsection to wear him down and then as he comes out of the ring, he SMACKS Daymon upside the the head with a standing spinning back elbow that knocks him down to the canvas!

DDK:

That elbow just ROCKED Zack Daymon's jaw!

Daymon is blinking rapidly, looking up at the lights while Purcell ROARS to The Faithful and waits on Zack to stand! He pulls Daymon up before he hoists him up and over into a ring-shaking olympic slam!

DDK:

And Purcell follows up that elbow with The Sweet Science Slam! Could this do it?!

Purcell hooks the far leg and hopes for the big win over one-half of the Unified Tag Team Champions!

ONE!

TWO!

TH... NO!

Daymon kicks out and Purcell sits up, shocked that didn't get the job done! Burnett claps and encourages his tag team partner to fight back!

Lance:

No way did he kick out of that combination of moves! Daymon is showing is own toughness tonight!

DDK:

Both men want this win badly tonight!

Purcell grimaces and then pulls Daymon up again, but Zack fights back and catches the big knee with a thrust kick! Purcell grimaces in pain, but tries to fight through it to throw another big right-hand up close, only for Daymon to duck! With some bobbing and weaving of his own, Purcell tries a left jab, but Zack BARELY moves! He catches the arm and rocks Punchy with a big arm wrench hook kick to stun him! He hits the ropes and then CRACKS Purcell again with a jumping corkscrew roundhouse kick off the ropes that knocks the boxer down!

DDK:

OOOH! DAYMON WITH THAT SPINNING ROUNDHOUSE! THAT COULD HAVE KNOCKED HIM OUT!

Daymon into the cover!

ONE!

TWO!

TH... KICKOUT!

Lance:

HOW?! That knee has been such a great target for Zack Daymon to focus on, but Punch Drunk Purcell is showing he can take as much as he can dish out as well!

DDK:

What's Daymon got left?! He's got Purcell on the ropes and he knows it!

With determination in his eyes, Zack waits on Purcell knowing he's still out of it. He jumps up and goes for the leaping reverse STO he calls Sick Burn, Bro!

DDK:

NO! PURCELL SHAKES HIM OFF... OOOOOOHHHH! BALD BULL!

Daymon comes back, only to EAT a sick headbutt from Purcell directly into the chest! Daymon may be out on his feet, but Purcell uses the chance by pulling him by the arm into a short-arm pop-up...

OOOOOOOHHHHHHH!

DDK:

PURCELL DID IT! PUNCH DRUNK LOVE! THAT'S IT!

Burnett is in shock outside the ring as Zack Daymon collapses to the canvas following the pop-up right hand! Meanwhile, Purcell hobbles down to the canvas and hooks the leg as the rest of The Lads at ringside count with The Faithful!

ONE!

TWO!

THREE!

DING DING DING

♪ "Why Can't We Be Friends?" by WAR ♪

Darren Quimbey:

Here is your winner of the match... **PUNCH! DRUNK! PURCELL!**

Lance:

What a preview of things to come for Acts of DEFIANCE! Zack Daymon had that Punch Drunk Love move scouted so well!

DDK:

He really did! Three different times, he dodged the incoming right hand or countered entirely! He used his technical skill to offset Punchy's power! But Purcell found his opening and he got all of the right hand, leading to an all-important win!

One by one, The Lads storm the ring to celebrate the big singles win with their friend! Butcher and Janna both pat Punchy on the back to congratulate him as Dex Joy runs in and almost tackles the big man off his feet! Purcell and Joy quickly shake hands and then points down as Leo Burnett tries to help Daymon out of the ring. Dex Joy makes the "those belts are coming home with us" motion around his waist and Purcell does the same!

DDK:

The Rain City Ronin might have suffered a setback tonight in singles action, but no doubt they'll learn from this! This is a business that takes just three seconds to make history and if The Lads can do that, we might be looking at our next Unified Tag Team Champions!

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THE BIGGER MAN

The camera cuts to Darren Quimbey in the ring.

Darren Quimbey:

Ladies and gentlemen... for this next interview, I've been advised to read off this custom introduction. He is DEFIANCE! He is FAVOURED SAINTS! He is PROFESSIONAL WRESTLING ITSELF! And most importantly, he stands at the VERY CENTER of the GC UNIVERSE... He weighs in at 245 of the most important pounds that have ever been measured in the history of his company...

Dramatic pause.

And... CHEERS?!

Darren Quimbey:

OSCARRRRRRRRR.... BURRRRRRRNNNNNNNS!

Worlds flash all across the screen and all across the LED boards...

**TWO-TIME FIST OF DEFIANCE
FAVOURED SAINTS CHAMPION
HE IS DEFIANCE
HE IS FAVOURED SAINTS
HE IS PROFESSIONAL WRESTLING ITSELF
ALL GRAPS
ALL CAPS**

All of these words flash across the screen until they settle on just two...

OSCAR BURNS

♪ "Presto" by Epica ♪

The symphonic rock starts to play and alone on the aisle, rising up from a platform beneath the ring, a familiar form begins to rise up! Wearing a green cape draping behind his back, brand new green and white tights with green boots and white wrist tape... and holding the Golden Shovel in hand to a massive ovation!

DDK:

It's been YEARS since we've heard than noise, Lance... It's been far too long, but these people are actually RESPONDING to OSCAR BURNS in a positive light!

Lance:

It was Maximum DEFIANCE where OSCAR BURNS was defeated in a Lumberjack Match by "The Man of The House" Uriel Cortez, thanks to an assist by two men he THOUGHT were loyal to him. Mil Vultas and Dan Leo James. It was Mil Vultas who would strike OSCAR with that very Golden Shovel to cost him the match and rejoin Titanes Familia!

Sparing no expense for his entrance as usual, OSCAR BURNS receives a MASSIVE pyro pinwheel behind him as he basks in the lighting! Once the spectacular miniature fireworks show on stage ends, The All-Caps Grappler heads to the ring and appears to be dressed to compete.

DDK:

We don't have OSCAR BURNS in action on our docket tonight. We do know that at Acts of DEFIANCE, he will be going one-on-one with Mil Vultas and will try to get his pound of flesh from the luchador that turned his back and destroyed what was left of the GC Universe.

When OSCAR finally hits the ring, he nods to Darren Quimbey to open the ropes for him. Rolling his eyes, Quimbey does so and sits on the ropes, allowing OSCAR to climb inside. Receiving a huge positive response, OSCAR gets ready to greet the DEFIANCE/OSCAR BURNS Faithful. Once the music dies, OSCAR holds his hand out and wants to be presented the microphone from Quimbey as well. The DEFIANCE Hall of Famer gives the microphone to OSCAR begrudgingly and departs.

DDK:

OSCAR's general demeanor doesn't seem to have changed much, but Titanes Familia as a whole have been completely insufferable. They were more than ready to cheer OSCAR for nearly strangling Mil Vultas with that rear naked choke when he came back two weeks ago!

OSCAR stands in the ring. He goes to open his mouth...

OSCAR BURNS!

OSCAR BURNS!

OSCAR BURNS!

OSCAR BURNS!

He looks a little shocked by the response.

OSCAR BURNS:

Hello, OSCAR BURNS Faithful... aka... hello, GCs!

RRRRRRRAAAAAAHHHHHHHHH!

OSCAR BURNS:

Boo me... cheer me... you cannot DENY what I have done for DEFIANCE and you can't deny my impact. You all know my accolades. You all know my ability in this ring! And when you get to the heights I reach, it's only natural that you make a lot of bloody enemies.

OSCAR lingers for a moment.

OSCAR BURNS:

After I got ROBBED against that giant ponce, Uriel Cortez, I took some time off. I had to think about what just happened. See... GCs, you might not know this about me, but for the past four years, I've been a complete asshole.

Lance:

He said it, not us.

The murmurs continue as OSCAR presses on.

OSCAR BURNS:

I've been a monster obsessed with winning and keeping the spot I EARNED in this company through years of hard work. I made a lot of enemies and no matter whether I won or lost, I proudly boasted that I am still the greatest thing in DEFIANCE's ring. Whether it was with Vae Victis, or my own GC Universe... nobody did what Mil Vultas and Dan Leo James did to me. Not a single one of them turned their back on me until Acts of DEFIANCE.

BOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO!

OSCAR BURNS:

And that's where you two UNGRATEFUL, WHINY, PISSANTS! MADE THE BIGGEST MISTAKE OF YOUR BLOODY CAREERS! THINKING THAT YOU WERE JUST GOING TO GET AWAY WITH IT!

Fuming, OSCAR clearly looks ready to hurt someone.

OSCAR BURNS:

You and I had our issues when I was with Vae Victis, but I thought we put those to the side when your buddy, Dan Leo James cosigned you to join the GC Universe. We shook hands. I helped you get a shiny new contract like the one I got... and you repay me how? By STABBING me in the back?! You decide instead of hiding behind me in my Universe, you BETRAY me and run back to the very Familia that kicked your ass out onto the bloody street?!

Now, he looks down to the ring.

OSCAR BURNS:

To be honest... I don't care WHY you did it. I don't care what possessed you to commit career suicide... but the fact is that you DID IT and thought you were going to get away with it! I am well aware that we have a match at Acts of DEFIANCE, Mil... but quite frankly, I'm not WAITING until then to get my hands on you when I know you two traitors are here in MY building. So... as you can see, I'm in my gear. I hear the OSCAR BURNS Faithful in Albuquerque clamoring to see me in this ring...

RRRRRRRRRAAAAHHHHH!

OSCAR BURNS:

...And I will NOT this ring until someone gets in here and faces me... NOW.

Slamming the handle of the Golden Shovel into the canvas to reinforce his point, the Kiwi scowls towards the stage...

...and gets nothing.

OSCAR BURNS:

MIL VUELTAS! DAN LEO JAMES! THE LITTLE MASKED BACKSTABBING PONCE AND THE GIANT RED-HEADED IDIOT PONCE, TO BE CLEAR! EITHER YOU GET OUT HERE NOW OR YOU WILL FIND YOURSELVES NECK-DEEP IN THE DIRT VIA MY GOLDEN SHOVEL...

♪ "Hero" by Chad Kroeger feat. Josey Scott ♪

OSCAR gets ready and looks all around the arena, bracing for whatever is coming his way. The camera starts panning to the stage...

Lance:

Where is OSCAR... wait...

DDK:

Look!

A gold spotlight shines in one of the upper box seats with Mil Vueltras waving in a white fur coat and a matching white suit and mask with thin red pinstripes. Leaning back in a chair in the arena, he appears to be alone with a microphone in hand as he motions with a hand across the neck for the music to cut.

Mil Vueltras:

DESAFÍO... TU HÉROE ESTÁ AQUÍ!

BOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO!

Mil Vueltras:

And REAL heroes like ME deserve the box seating that you gave me a taste of when working with GC Universe, OSCAR.

OSCAR grits his teeth in the ring and climbs up the middle rope, calling on The GLOAT to get down to the ring.

Mil Vueltas:

OSCAR... cabron... you say you don't care why I did what I did... Well, I tell you anyway. BECAUSE YOU... ARE... MALVADO! EVIL! YOU ARE **CANCER!** TUMOR CANCEROSO! You ruin EVERYTHING you touch! And you had me doing YOUR bidding! You had Danny doing YOUR bidding!

DDK:

I'm not going to pretend OSCAR BURNS has been some kind of saint, but Mil Vueltas really thinks he's the hero in this situation?

Mil Vueltas:

GC Universe was supposed to be us taking over DEFIANCE... instead, you use me... Danny... FLEX... Aaron King... Sonny Silver. All of us were lackeys to YOU. I am NO ONE'S lackey, OSCAR. Danny is NO ONE'S lackey! I'm The Greatest Luchador of All Time! You call ME the OSCAR BURNS of lucha libre like that's a compliment?! And you try and make me feel small... make me feel... minute. I'm not minute, OSCAR. I'm HERO! I am HERO that YOU stopped being in this company years ago!

He sits up from the box seat and looks down further towards OSCAR in the ring.

Mil Vueltas:

There is no more GC Universe in DEFIANCE thanks to me! YOU are no longer needed in DEFIANCE! Me and Danny took out Aaron King! We took out FLEX! We thought you were gone... but I WILL fix that. I will REPLACE you as hero DEFIANCE needs!

The response to that?

A laughing fit from OSCAR!

Mil's blood starts to boil as OSCAR looks up. It takes him a second.

OSCAR BURNS:

I'll hand it to you, Mil... it's on ME that you pulled his off. I didn't know you had it in you to do what you did and you brought gold to the GC Universe with the Favoured Saints Title. You have a LOT of talent in this ring. You are a GREAT luchador. But... you do this cause I make you feel small? You think that YOU... can replace... ME?! My friend, you are MUNTED if you think that ANYONE can replace ME!

He climbs up.

OSCAR BURNS:

If by some chance, the stars aligned, and I LET YOU do anything to me... you think you can replace me? You can call yourself The GLOAT! You can call yourself DEFIANCE's Biggest Hero... but the way you are acting, you will always be... MINUTE.

Mil leans further over the box seating and is about to speak when a chant catches on...

MINUTE!

MINUTE!

MINUTE!

MINUTE!

DDK:

A few years ago, Minute was the name he went by in DEFIANCE before he renamed himself Mil Vueltas! He doesn't take kindly to this chant.

Mil Vueltas gets angered quickly.

Mil Vueltas:

SHUT UP! TU HÉROE! I DO THIS FOR YOU! HE... HE ASSHOLE! DON'T CHEER HIM! HE'S THE MONSTER!

OSCAR BURNS:

You can prove that you AREN'T minute, little man. You... can climb off that stack of books you have boosting you up in MY skybox... get down to MY ring... and show me and my DEFIANCE- SLASH-OSCAR BURNS Faithful if you're REALLY worthy of my spot!

Mil mulls over the offer and leans back in his seat. He takes a moment...

Mil Vueltas:

I... ohhhh, you almost had me, OSCAR. You good at the eh... how you say, politicking. Talking up like you have done nothing wrong for the past four years to these people. Well... how about this... I make the eh... counter-offer. I stay up here and you learn Spanish, Kiwi. Here's first lesson... Te hizo mirar!

OSCAR looks up to the skybox and is about to speak...

WHEN HE GETS A CHOP BLOK FROM BROOKLYNN RIVERA TO THE KNEE!

Mil Vueltas:

Te hizo mirar... how you say... MADE YOU LOOK!

OSCAR tries to get back to his feet again and favors his knee when he gets DROPPED by a Gold Rush crossbody, courtesy of DAN LEO JAMES!

BOOOOOOOOOOOOOO!

DDK:

SOME HERO MIL VUELTAS IS! YOU NEED A SET-UP LIKE THIS? YOU'RE NO BETTER THAN WHAT OSCAR BURNS HAS DONE!

With OSCAR BURNS down, Dan Leo James and Brooklynn Rivera both put the boots to the former two-time FIST of DEFIANCE in the ring as the Faithful jeer the hell out of the Golden Children!

Lance:

The Golden Children of Titanes Familia have struck! We should have smelled a set-up!

Up in the skybox, Mil can be heard cackling into the microphone.

Mil Vueltas:

You want match? No match tonight, but you WILL get fight! Make good example of OSCAR!

The beating continues as Dan Leo James forces OSCAR to get back to his feet and LAYS into him with an extra-stiff chop! The 275-pound James holds OSCAR up while Brooklynn has the chance to grab the Golden Shovel.

Lance:

Oh, no! OSCAR was caught off-guard by this two-on-one assault and now Brooklynn Rivera has the shovel!

She grabs the Golden Shovel and gets ready to strike OSCAR with it as Dan Leo James holds her up! She gets ready to swing...

OSCAR KICKS HER FIRST!

Lance:

NO! OSCAR'S FIGHTING BACK!

He ROCKS Dan Leo James with a headbutt to the jaw and knocks him backwards! Brooklynn jumps back up to her feet without the shovel and charges at OSCAR, only for him to sidestep the 5'11" Rivera and THROW her up and over with a release German suplex that sends her across the ring!

DDK:

There goes Brooklynn Rivera!

Mil's jaw drops from up in the skybox as Dan gets out of the corner! He comes back and doubles over OSCAR with knee lift to the chest!

DLJ:

This is what the Familia does to bad men like you!

He charges off the ropes and tries a running big boot... OSCAR moves! He grabs Danny... He tries to fight... but OSCAR HURLS the 275-pound DLJ with a HUGE release German suplex as well! The Faithful roar with approval as OSCAR is back to his feet and grabs the Golden Shovel!

DDK:

MIL VUELTAS THOUGHT HE HAD A PLAN, BUT OSCAR BURNS WAS ABLE TO FEND OFF THE GOLDEN CHILDREN!

Lance:

OSCAR BURNS IS ON THE WARPATH!

The All-Caps Grappler has the Golden Shovel and points right up at the skybox, then slashes a thumb across his throat! Mil panics as OSCAR dives out of the ring, bypasses James and Rivera, then leaps over the barricade! He starts heading up the ramp while Dan goes over to help Rivera and the two limp away to head towards the skybox from another direction. Mil can be heard on the mic!

Mil Vueltas:

JUST REMEMBERED... WE HEROES! WE GOTTA GO MAKE TERMINAL CHILDREN FEEL BETTER WITH HUGS AND GUEST APPEARANCES! I SEE YOU AT ACTS OF DEFIANCE, OSCAR!

Mil drops the microphone and then hightails it from the skybox as fast as he can while a riotous crowd watches OSCAR heads up into the nosebleeds with Golden Shovel in hand!

Lance:

This situation is out of control and OSCAR BURNS is on a mission after what Mil Vueltas and the Familia just tried to pull! We'll be right back!

ONE ON 1

DDK:

With all of the drama surrounding MV1 joining Nigel Trickelbush, Trickelbush unveiling a “new” - or is he - MV2, their continuing and evolving issue with Corvo Alpha... our very own Jamie Sawyers lined up an interview with the Masked Violators earlier today.

Lance:

Yes, but when it came time to record this interview, it was just Masked Violator #1, the former MP1, who appeared.

DDK:

Curious, indeed. While I’ve yet to see this footage, I’m told things got “testy” pretty much from the start.

Lance:

Let’s take a look.

Shifting to a mostly darkened soundstage with a raised red fist backdrop, there are three chairs arrayed opposite a seated Jamie Sawyers. Seated in the center chair is MV1, arms folded across his chest with disinterested indignation.

The camera rests on Sawyer's smiling face before cutting to a wider shot of them both, along with the two empty chairs flanking the masked man on either side.

Jamie Sawyers:

Masked Violator #1, thank you for joining me tonight. I appreciate you taking the time, however I was under the impression your tag team partner, MV2, would be joining us as well. And Lord Nigel

Bristling at the question, MV1 uncrosses his arms and grips the arms of his chair with purpose.

MV1:

MV2 doesn't say much these days. And Nigel is a busy man. You sound disappointed. You disappointed?

Jamie stumbles.

Jamie Sawyers:

Uh, no! Not at all, it's just that-

MV1:

What do you need to hear from him that I can't tell you?

Adjusting his weight in his chair, Sawyers regroups.

Jamie Sawyers:

Well... what have YOU heard from him?

MV1's eyes narrow accusingly.

MV1:

What are you getting at?

Jamie presses.

Jamie Sawyers:

This is a man who, in all honesty, we don't know who he is. Do YOU know who he is? IS he who Lord Nigel claims he is? IS he your original partner, the original MV2?

Sighing, as if relieving an inordinate amount of pressure, MV1's eyes look anywhere but towards the questioner. When

they return to Sawyers, they are hotter.

MV1:

Do you know who *I* am? Am *I* the “original MV1”? Huh?! What do you pretend to know, Sawyers? What do you want from me?

Jamie Sawyers:

I’m simply trying to get answers. These are questions that–

MV1:

It’s none of your damn business, is what it is.

Jamie Sawyers:

Have you SPOKEN to MV2?

MV1:

Speak to him... about what?

Jamie Sawyers:

How confident are you that Corvo Alpha is–

MV1 folds his arms once more, interrupting the interviewer.

MV1:

Corvo Alpha is done. It’s over. He isn’t even the past. Lord Nigel says he’s just a MISTAKE–

Jamie Sawyers:

Lord Nigel? Can I ask about him without you getting upset?

Snickering now, MV1 seems to reevaluate the energy he is putting out. More casual now. Less concerned.

MV1:

Go on.

Jamie Sawyers:

Trickelbush has been associated with Victor Vacio and Los Caidos of late. What exactly is the nature of that relationship?

MV1:

Maybe you should have asked HIM to be here.

Jamie Sawyers:

Well, I asked for MV2 also and he isn’t here, so even if I did–

MV1:

Aren’t you clever? Look; Nigel Trickelbush is his own man. I’ve found him to be a man of purpose. And Vacio is a fascinating individual with a message. If you think about it... it’s a wonder they hadn’t found each other earlier.

Jamie Sawyers:

Tonight, you’ll be facing Kerry Kuroyama one on one. Obviously, Kerry has been haunted by Vacio’s demands for a rematch. Two weeks ago, we learned that Scott Douglas will–

MV1:

Scott Douglas is in his own situation. He acts like he doesn’t have control of that situation. He acts like he is a pawn. The sooner he takes control of his own destiny, the sooner he LISTENS to people like Victor and even Lord Nigel, the

sooner he sees the opportunity presented to him AS an opportunity, like I did, the easier it all becomes. Yeah, I've got Kerry Kuroyama tonight.

MV1 stares at the camera for a long beat.

MV1:

And I feel sorry for him.

Jamie Sawyers:

Sorry for him?

Sad eyes now beneath the bright and vibrant red, yellows and blues.

MV1:

Sorry for him. Kerry Kuroyama is chasing a ghost and he doesn't even know it. His friend is gone. He's changed. The one he knew... He's dead. And yet Kuroyama's still hanging on. You wanna know why I feel bad for him? Because I've been there. Tonight, I'll put him out of his misery. And whatever is left... well...

A strange smile.

MV1:

To the Victor go the spoils.

Sawyers' eyes narrow back at the masked man.

Jamie Sawyers:

Wait a moment. Can we go back? What you just said; Gone? Dead? You're referring to your friend, MV2. So what are you saying? This MV2, the one Nigel brought to DEFIANCE, he isn't your MV2?

Angry again. 0 to 60.

MV1:

Of course he is! I'm done talking about it!

Jamie Sawyers:

Corvo Alpha-

MV1 bolts to his feet, fists balled and tense.

MV1:

NO MORE! NO MORE!

Jamie Sawyers:

OH! I'M- I'M SORRY!!!

MV1:

I'm tired of that name! I'm tired of him!

His eyes wheel to the camera, terrifying and blue.

MV1:

ACTS OF DEFIANCE, ALPHA! Meet us in the ring! I know I've said this before - but it's ALL OVER AT ACTS OF DEFIANCE! It's time we put you out of DEF once and for all!

Jamie Sawyers:

Calm down, I think--

MV1 levels a stern finger in Sawyers' face. The interviewer melts into his chair, hands up defensively & reflexively shielding his head.

MV1:

Don't you ever challenge me again, you hear me?!

Sawyers declines to speak or move in response. MV1 finds the camera once more, stalking towards it, off the set.

MV1:

ACTS, Alpha. See you there. Me. And my partner. Versus YOU.

As he leaves the stage, Sawyers visibly straightens, sighing in relief. We fade to black.

KERRY KUROYAMA vs. MV1

♪ *"Dark Matter" by Pearl Jam* ♪

The footage fades back to the live broadcast, where we find Masked Violator 1 has moved on from the interview to the ring. The eyes gazing impatiently through his mask are distant and distracted. His partner, MV2, paces restlessly down on the floor, with the ever-scheming Lord Nigel Tricklebush standing nearby, rubbing his palms together.

Darren Quimbey:

Ladies and gentlemen, the following contest is scheduled for one fall! Introducing first, accompanied to the ring by Lord Nigel Tricklebush... he hails from "Parts Undisclosed", and weighs in at two-hundred and thirty-three pounds... please welcome, MASKED VIOLATOR ONE!

DDK:

More singles action on the way as DEFtv continues, ladies and gentlemen! We just heard those statements from Masked Violator 1, and now we're about to see him compete one-on-one in what could be a momentum-builder as we head into Acts of DEFIANCE!

Lance:

Nigel's looking unusually chipper, considering Corvo Alpha facilitated his team's elimination from the ACE of DEFIANCE Tag Tournament.

♪ *"Blouses Blue" by Konrad OldMoney feat. Sleep Steady* ♪

The lightshow begins as the music hits. Ami Troy appears through the curtain first, playfully dangling a small black sack that appears to be holding something HEAVY. She promptly stands to the side and holds out her hands as Kerry Kuroyama comes out next. Kerry doesn't bother with the usual postering, anxiously checking his six and scanning out past the edges of the stage.

As if he's on the lookout for someone.

Darren Quimbey:

And the opponent, accompanied to the ring by "The Merry Mischief Maker" Ami Troy... hailing from Seattle, Washington and weighing in at two-hundred and forty-four pounds... he is "The EMERALD APEX"... KERRY KUROYAMA!!

DDK:

Kuroyama is noticeably vigilant tonight on his way to the ring, but I'd say it's for good reason. As we know, Victor Vacio and Los Caídos have been a nagging headache for him as of late, making their presence known and disrupting matches any time "the Emerald Apex" takes to the ring.

Lance:

Victor Vacio cares for nothing... with the exception of one thing: a rematch against Kerry Kuroyama.

DDK:

And yet, at the last DEFtv, Kuroyama countered the demand by requesting a face-to-face with his former partner, Scott Douglas, who's been under Vacio's influence since he fell to them at DEFCON. There's no telling how "the Lost Cause" will respond to the offer, but for tonight, Kuroyama doesn't look to be taking any chances.

Lance:

Good thing he's got Ami out there to back him up!

Kerry's head is practically on a swivel as he makes his way down the ring. Before sliding in, Ami grabs him by the scruff of his head and forces him to face her while she points to her eyes and sternly mouths "FOCUS" before flashing him a wink and sending him on his way. Kuroyama rolls in under the ropes and stands up in his corner, staring down MV1 standing across the ring.

With everything ready, official Benny Doyle cues for the bell.

DING DING

Both men go right into the lock-up. After a quick battle for leverage, MV1 sets Kerry into a side headlock. Kuroyama quickly slips out and goes behind, pulling the arm into a hammerlock. MV1 attempts to counter with a back elbow, but Kerry scouts it, ducks, and flips him over onto his back.

DDK:

Backdrop by Kuroyama, and he follows up with an elbow... No!

MV1 rolls to the side to avoid the elbow drop. Kerry clutches his smarting arm as he pushes his way up, but MV1 is up first, meeting him with a charging knee strike to the shoulder before wrangling him into the front chancery. Kuroyama pushes off the balls of his feet in an effort to bullrush him, only to find himself spun around and dropped on the back of his head and neck.

DDK:

Swinging neckbreaker by MV1! He floats over for the cover!

One!

Two!

Quicky kickout by Kuroyama!

MV1 takes Kerry by the head to pull him up, but instead gets a set of forearm shots to his midsection when the Emerald Apex unexpectedly fights back. Kuroyama quickly powers to his feet while parking his shoulder into MV1's midsection and lifting him off his feet.

Lance:

Huge impact on that spinebuster!

DDK:

And Kerry keeps hold of the legs... so he can wrap them up into the Tacoma Cloverleaf!

Kerry turns MV1 over, but the latter instinctively pulls himself to the ropes before the move can be settled in. Kuroyama quickly makes the break and gives his opponent some space. From the ringside floor, Lord Nigel appears to lean in and whisper something to MV1. The masked man considers it for a moment, nods, and climbs back to his feet.

DDK:

Rope break ends the submission attempt, but Kuroyama is beginning to look a bit more confident!

Lance:

Maybe he can actually wrestle this match to the end, instead of someone interfering?

DDK:

Wouldn't THAT be nice?

Both men go into another lock-up. MV1 presses the advantage with a knee lift into Kerry's diaphragm, then pushes him off the ropes to send him into motion. Kuroyama comes back and is sent onto his back after a stiff shoulder block from MV1. The masked man hits the alternate set of ropes, hopping over Kerry as he rolls over onto his front. As he rebounds, the Emerald Apex suddenly explodes to his feet.

DDK:

Kerry Kuroyama with the SQUALL LINE LARIAT--

NO!

MV1 ducks at the last second, throws his legs around Kerry's back, and curls him onto his shoulders with a textbook crucifix roll-up!

DDK:

Shoulders are down!

One!

Two

Kerry Kicks out!

Both men scramble to their feet. MV1 claps Kerry's chest with a stiff standing chop that leaves him reeling, but doesn't knock him down. Kuroyama rallies and cracks MV1 with a chop of his own that backs him up into the ropes. He comes roaring back with a big hook...

DDK:

Kerry BLOCKS! And a HIPTOSS to counter! The pace of this match has not slowed down from the opening bell!

Lance:

These two are really going at it! This is one of those match-ups that, on paper, I think many of us have been eager to see!

MV1 sits up off the mat, until Kerry dives in and seizes him into a waistlock. The Violator struggles against him, but Kuroyama determinedly hauls him up to his feet and German suplexes him on the back of his head and neck! Continuing to hold him around the waist, Kerry rolls over... and Germans him again!

DDK:

Kuroyama rolling with the suplexes! Here he goes for a third--NO!! Masked Violator 1 flips over onto his feet!

Lance:

Despite those impacts to his head, his lower body appears to be moving on muscle memory!

The masked man quivers briefly on his feet as Kuroyama turns around and pounces. Instinctively, MV1 falls to the side and takes him down with a drop toe hold, nearly garrotting Kerry's neck across the bottom rope. As he hangs there, MV1 promptly grabs the top rope and parks his feet onto the back of the Emerald Apex. Choked against the cable, Kerry's legs and arms thrash, and Benny Doyle finally coaxes MV1 to back off after a quick four count and a stern reprimanding.

Lance:

We may not see the face beneath the mask, but there is something definitely stirring in the head of Masked Violator 1.

DDK:

The same as Kerry is looking out for Vacio, you have to think that MV1 and Lord Nigel are on the lookout for Corvo!

Ignoring the warnings of the referee, MV1 moves in and pulls Kerry out of the ropes. Taking him by the hair and roughing him up with a few more forearms, the Violator proceeds to wrangle Kuroyama to his feet and take him by the arm for the Irish whip. But rather than sending Kerry into motion, the Emerald Apex unexpectedly pivots around, reels MV1 by the arm into a waiting shoulder-block aimed at the mid-section, and sends him up and over.

DDK:

Kuroyama with a quick reversal, and a NORTHERN LIGHTS BOMB to cap it off! He makes the cover!

One!

Two!

NO! Masked Violator 1 kicks out!

Lance:

But he looks shook!

MV1 rolls over to his side, still dazed by yet another impact to his head. Kuroyama assists him in getting back to his feet, sets him into a standing headscissor, and hooks the arms.

Lance:

Kerry could be looking for the Judgement Bolt Bomb here! A double-underhook backbreaker could certainly do the trick!

DDK:

But MV1 is fighting him! He gets an arm free!

Before Kerry can hook the arm again, MV1 suddenly rises up, and brings his opponent up with him.

DDK:

MV1 reverses into a fireman's carry--NO!! DEATH VALLEY DRIVER!!

Lance:

Good NIGHT!

The air is sucked out of The Pit. Kuroyama folds up over his head and shoulders and goes prone. Nigel smiles and nods in approval. Shaking out the cobwebs, MV1 crawls over, rolls Kerry onto his back, and hooks the leg.

DDK:

What a devastating desperation move, but it could pay off in a victory if Masked Violator 1 picks up this pin!

One!

Two!

NO!! KERRY KICKS OUT!!

"RRRAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAHHH!!!"

Kerry fights to sit himself up, only to be immediately set into a dragon sleeper. MV1 bends back to apply maximum pressure. Kerry's outstretched arm looks to be fading.

Lance:

MV1 might try to win this war by attrition. At this point, he can afford to wait.

Ami Troy begins slapping the canvas, getting the crowd to clap along and build up into a thunderous roar! Kuroyama slowly forces his way up, fighting the hold with everything he last left in the tank. Then, in a flash...

DDK:

Kerry TWISTS OUT!

A boot to the gut is CAUGHT my MV1, who quickly twirls Kerry around and grabs him around the waist. Kerry bites back with an elbow. MV1 backs up one way while Kerry runs into the other. They hit opposite sets of ropes and meet at the ring center for--

DDK:

OHHH MYYY!! KERRY with the YAKUZA KICK! MV1 with a SPINNING HEEL! We have a DOUBLE KNOCKOUT!

Both Kuroyama and MV1 collapse off the double impact and lie motionless on the mat. Albuquerque loudly cheers on the battle.

Lance:

And so it begins...

DDK:

Huh? Oh no...

"BOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO!!!"

The jeers intensify as the crowd becomes aware of a figure steadily making his way down the aisle—the camera zooms in, revealing Corey Nunez slowly and menacingly approaching the ring.

DDK:

I suppose it was only a matter of time before Los Caídos crept out of the shadows!

Lance:

But where are the others? Just Nunez alone?

Nunez's presence is eventually noticed by the Merry Mischief Maker. She angrily scowls, but doesn't look entirely surprised by this. Moving decisively, she picks up the sack and starts heading up the aisleway to shut that shit down.

Lance:

Looks like Ami isn't having any of Los Caídos' shenanigans tonight!

DDK:

She may be small, but the look in her eye is downright SCARY!

Nunez and Troy close the distance. Then Ami reaches into the sack... and draws a pop from the fans, when they see the ball pean hammer she pulls out!

Lance:

Oh wow! Didn't Victor Vacio use to wield a mallet like that?

DDK:

I think you may be right, Lance! Which would suggest that this is Ami Troy's way of giving Los Caídos a taste of their own medicine!

Nunez, wanting none of what Ami and her mallet are offering, halts his advance to the ring and slowly backs up. Practically smelling his fear, the Merry Mischief Maker launches herself at him with the mallet held high and precariously over her head.

In the blink of an eye, Corey turns and bolts back through the curtain from where he emerged. Troy disappears after him in hot pursuit.

DDK:

I suppose that takes care of that! Kerry's manager, Miss Ami Troy, is going to some extreme lengths to ensure nobody from Los Caídos mucks things up here tonight!

Through all these happenings, the two competitors in the ring have gradually recovered and returned to their feet. Kuroyama watches in confusion as his mallet-wielding girlfriend disappears through the curtain.

With the flip of a switch, confusion becomes agony after MV1 nails him in the small of the back with a forearm. Kuroyama collapses to the mat. The Violator kicks him in the ribs for good measure, and...

...exits the ring?

DDK:

Wait, where is HE going?!

Lance:

Forget about who's going, Keebs! Look at who's coming!

The camera zooms into the crowd, where a cloister of BLACK MASKS appears to be making their way through the mass of bodies.

DDK:

Los Caídos are HERE! I don't believe it... Corey Nunez was simply a decoy to get rid of Ami!

MV1 seems to have completely forgotten about the match taking place. He and his fellow Violator head back up the rampway while the official stares after him in confusion. Meanwhile, Vacio, leading the pack, is the first one over the barricade. He locks eyes with Lord Nigel, who smiles, winks, and tips his hat before following his team up the rampway while the remainder of Los Caídos swarm the ring.

DDK:

Come on, now! Kerry is completely defenseless!

Lance:

This was all a setup! Vacio arranged this match just so Masked Violator 1 could leave him vulnerable and at their mercy!

Kuroyama quickly gets back to his feet, but is put down almost immediately by a big boot from Villalobos. The official immediately calling for the bell.

DING DING DING -- DING DING DING

The time keeper does as asked and rings out the dings like a judge rapping his gavel in search of order. None will be found here.

DDK:

Oh my! Villalobos' nearly took Kerry's head off with that boot!

Hugo Gonzalez follows up, raining down heavy clubbing blows across Kerry's back as he attempts to get up. Across

the ring, Victor Vacio takes his time ascending the ring steps.

Lance:

For the love of ...

The pair haul Kerry upright, his arms wrenched tight in their grips. His legs kick weakly, as the Emerald Apex has already absorbed too much punishment to fight free. Vacio steps in close, smirking beneath the harsh lights, and rocks Kerry's jaw with a blistering right that sends spit flying into the air.

Kuroyama slumps, but the bigger two of the Los Caídos keep him propped up and open for more abuse. Vacio plants his feet, winds up, and smashes another right hand to Kerry's jaw. The Emerald Apex's head snaps back and then falls limp ...

DING DING DING -- DING DING DING

DDK:

Let's get DEFsec down here now... come on!

Vacio cocks back once again, waiting ... begging Kuroyama to raise his face once again.

Victor Vacio:

¡¡VAMOS!! ¡¡VAMOS!!

Vacio's eyes bulge with rage as he eagerly awaits the proper angle to swing again.

Kuroyama, still held aloft by Los Caidos, stirs. Slowly, he raises his head, blood trickling from his lip ... The Faithful are abuzz. With his arms still pinned by Villalobos and Gonzalez, he thrusts his chin forward and roars DEFIANTly in Vacio's face.

DDK:

He's still standing tall in spirit! Look at the guts on Kuroyama!

Lance:

That's insane... he's begging Vacio to hit him again!

The Lost Cause answers the challenge with a thunderous right that rattles Kerry's head back.

The Faithful groan.

DING DING DING -- DING DING DING

But somehow ... The Emerald Apex once again lifts his head high enough to glare at his vindictive assailant, daring him for more. Vacio's anger finds a new high as he registers Kuroyama's defiant resilience. Snarling, with spit flying, Vacio cocks up a leg and puts a boot directly to Kerry's face.

DDK:

That wasn't hyperbole! We need DEFsec... now!

Kerry's head once again falls low, and Vacio isn't playing any more games. He barks out commands in Spanish, and his henchmen do as they are told, serving up Kuroyama's limp body for an inverted DDT.

Lance:

We nearly saw this with Chris Chickentenders ... several weeks ago, and Kerry Kuroyama came out for the save!

With his arms hooked, and his head dangling back... Victor steps in the middle of his two goons.

DDK:

If only there were someone to save Kerry...

Lance:

You can't mean Chris Chicken --

DDK:

NO! DEFIANCE Security! Black polos, big for no reason... look a lot like wrestlers but extremely young...

DING DING DING -- DING DING DING

With a violent snap, "The Lost Cause" spikes him into the canvas with a sickening inverted DDT that leaves the Emerald Apex sprawled out, motionless.

DDK:

Oh my God! That could have broken his neck! We need DEFsec AND DEFmed!

Lance:

This is the same execution we nearly saw weeks ago... only this time, nobody's stopping it!

The boo's from the Faithful are deafening as Vacio rises to his knees, staring down at what is left of Kerry Kurotama. Vacio wipes the spit from his lips and spreads his arms wide while his fallen stand at his flanks.

DDK:

This was never intended to be a match; this was an orchestrated hit!

DING DING DING -- DING DING DING**Lance:**

And Nigel Tricklebush is somewhere smiling about this, you can bet on it.

Vacio crouches low, seizing Kerry by the hair to snarl something in Spanish inches from his ear. He shoves Kuroyama's head back to the canvas, then slowly rises, his arms stretched wide as Villalobos and Gonzalez loom on either side. The black masks of Los Caídos fill the frame, towering over the motionless Emerald Apex.

DING DING DING -- DING DING DING

The final image is Kerry lying broken in the center of the ring, DEFsec finally rushing down the aisle as Los Caídos exit the ring on their own volition, leaving behind their statement of dominance.

Cut to commercial.

COMMERCIAL: SPOTLIGHT

A closer look at the professional careers of YOUR favorite DEFIANTS!

1 & 2 ON ONE

The colorful lights from the rigging below play hauntingly upon The Pit's massive latticed arena ceiling. Peering down at the ring and the raging fans, the vantage point is momentarily dizzying. Even the sound is muffled and augmented by the acoustics and distance so high up.

Legs dangling off the catwalk, Corvo Alpha's normally wide eyes are squinting and transfixed on the ring below. The warpaint on his face is a deliberately haphazard series of colorful shapes and hard cut angles in yellow, red and blue. Long knotted beard clumped in color, he pulls his fingers through it absently.

The humming low-roar of the Faithful below serve as a soft white-noise beneath his gruff, uneven timbre.

Corvo Alpha:

Lies. Mistakes. Regret. More lies. They've followed us down this long road.

He stares for a long moment down at a crumpled piece of torn photograph in his hand. Alpha's wisened eyes find the lens.

Corvo Alpha:

We both carry the weight, #1.

A gravelly whisper now.

Corvo Alpha:

Burdened by shadows. But it's time for the light. And at ACTS of DEFIANCE, I will remind you who I am... I will show the WORLD who I am...

He leans in.

Corvo Alpha:

...and who your MV2 is NOT.

Looking back to the ring, the lens follows his eyes down, down, down as we fade out.

TYLER FUSE vs. FELTON BIGSBY

Darren Quimbey:

This match is... FOR ONE FALL!

Yes! One fall! Not two or seven!

Darren Quimbey:

Introducing first... from Houston, Texas... weighing three-hundred-twenty pounds... one half of MONEY TALKS... Felton Bigsby!

Felton makes his entrance, slowly marching down the rampway.

Lance:

I have to say, partner, Felton looks to be in the best shape of his now eleven-year DEFIANCE career!

DDK:

I agree, and it makes sense that he would be. He's becoming a solid player these days, a lot more television time. More time to wrestle and shine. He's making the most of it!

Bigsby rolls under the bottom rope and waits for further instructions.

Darren Quimbey:

And his opponent... from Toronto, Ontario, Canada... weighing two-hundred-eight pounds... TYLER FUSE.

♪ "300 Violin Orchestra" by Jorge Quintero ♪

Tyler, as stoic as usual, walks out from behind the FIST logo. Sporting black trunks, boots and wrist tape, he performs his typical no frills entrance. In fact, he's almost at the end of the rampway.

DDK:

This is going to be a very interesting contest. Tyler has been struggling as of late, we certainly know that. I know you've said it before, Lance, that Fuse is pound-for-pound one of the toughest and strongest guys on our roster. He wrestles a lot bigger than his two-hundred-pound frame. But make no mistake, Felton Bigsby is a big, big man.

Lance:

Yeah when I saw this on the card backstage, I was definitely intrigued.

Fuse is in the ring, telling Mark Shields to call for the bell as his theme music ends.

DDK:

Once again, someone telling Mark to do his job.

Lance:

Can you blame Tyler?

DDK:

Not at all.

With Fuse in one corner and Bigsby in the other, Shields finally clues in and calls for the bell!

DING DING

For a brief moment, Tyler breaks his stoic code and rolls his eyes at the moronic Mark Shields, before lunging forward and locking into a grapple with Bigsby. Wrong move? Maybe. Felton is almost double the size of Tyler and works him into a headlock. Fuse can't escape. At least not yet, although he's certainly trying. Bigsby wrenches in the headlock

and then releases the hold himself, tossing Tyler into the ropes and landing a HARD shoulder block after.

Tyler rolls onto his chest, stops, then continues to roll out of the ring for a quick reset.

DDK:

And while I did say Tyler is pound-for-pound as tough as they come, this is also becoming his weaker point too, Lance. Fuse didn't need to grapple Felton, there was no way Tyler was going to win that one and yet, he continues to want to prove how strong he is. We know, but there are limitations.

Lance:

That's great insight, partner. Usually I provide the colour but hey, no issues here. [Mild amused laughter] It's definitely something I've noticed. He got himself into a bit of a bravado problem with Elise Ares, too. Although it wasn't so much a physical battle as it was simply a grudge match to survive... and a battle of wits.

Felton Bigsby's had enough of Tyler being on the outside, and since Mark Shields isn't going to count to TEN, Felton will exit the ring and collect Tyler himself. As Bigsby marches over, Tyler is ready and WHAPS him straight in the stomach. Fuse shoves Bigsby into the barricade and then takes aim at a running crescent kick to Felton's head.

WHAM!

It flips Bigsby up and over the guardrail, as Tyler peers into the ring and sees Mark Shields is doing fuck all, not even paying attention. Fuse smirks, hops the guardrail and the two start going blow-for-blow in the front row of fans.

DDK:

I'd be remiss to not mention anything about the status of Malak Garland. It's been a month since the Tyler Fuse attack on him and we still do not have word of Garland's well being. However, the rumour is... it isn't good.

The two continue brawling in the front row... slowly working their way down the aisle.

Lance:

You're providing great insight in the news department too, Keebs. Maybe I should really do that 'bad guy' thing the online fans keep clamoring for and scold you for taking my role away. I digress, however. You're right, we haven't heard a peep from the Garland camp. I haven't even seen one member of The Comments Section since the attack! We listened to Tyler address the crowd two weeks ago, proud he put the apparent final nail in the Malak Garland coffin and I have to say, this might just be the case!

Felton is finally working the elder Fuse over as he steers himself and his opponent back towards ringside.

But not before throwing Tyler into the barricade!

Fuse goes into the back side, or the front side of the bleachers, if you're staring in the fan's direction. Felton hoists Tyler in the air and then gorilla press slams Fuse over the guardrail and onto the floor below.

Bigsby steps onto the barricade. He comes leaping off with a double axe handle smash to the back of Fuse before lifting the former Favored Saints Champion up and shoving him into the ring.

Bigsby enters the ring himself, but not before a surprise second wind from Tyler Fuse! A SWIFT kick to the head, followed by a diving DDT!

Lance:

I have to say, that was a Resolution DDT! A page right out of Conor's book, one of 1080p variety!

DDK:

An ode to his brother?

Lance:

Maybe!

Tyler rolls onto all fours. It's clear he needs a breath of fresh air before he crawls over to the ropes and pulls himself up. He spins around but finds Felton Bigsby also gaining a second wind and SLAMS his knee as hard as possible into Tyler's chest.

Gut wrench powerbomb follows.

DDK:

PIN!

ONE!

TWO!

KICKOUT!

Felton wastes no time in latching onto Tyler's waist, hoisting him in the air again and coming down with a POP UP POWERBOMB.

DDK:

Another pin!

ONE!

TWO!

SHOULDER UP!

Felton pushes Tyler away from him, snaps to his feet as the big man tries to move quickly and then lunges towards Fuse-

SLAM!**DDK:**

What a powerslam by Tyler!

Lance:

It took everything out of Fuse, let me tell you! That's three-hundred-twenty pounds he had to flip through the air!

Breathing heavily and reeling, Tyler hits the ropes and drops a measured knee against Felton's head.

Commence the ANGRY STOMPS of DOOM.

They are fast and furious. Tyler went from methodical and measured to loose cannon in the blink of an eye. He uses the ropes for additional ANGRY STOMPING leverage as Mark Shields does fuck all, even though Felton has worked his way into a corner.

Tyler keeps stomping. Some of the crowd boos, but even though they don't like both men, the boos are for the spirit of the match and not exactly about who's being impacted.

Fuse finally marches away but it was his own call. He sees Felton's head is there for the taking. Tyler grins. He spits on the mat. He mumbles...

Tyler Fuse:

Weapon Get.

The OG Player charges in SUPER HARD, looking for a wild knee strike, an I Trigger, to the left temple of ½ of Money Talks.

SLAM-

WHAM!

DDK:

Felton rolls out of the way!

Lance:

It was clear the move was done recklessly. Bigsby is not a very fast man. If Tyler was in the right frame of mind, he would've been able to stop in time.

However, Fuse is definitely NOT in the right frame of mind. Not anymore. His knee almost caved in the second buckle and he's totally reeling. He limps towards the center of the ring...

Scoop slam by Felton.

HARD elbow to the head by Felton.

MASSIVE, RING SHAKING POWERBOMB by Felton.

ONE.

TWO.

BARELY A SHOULDER UP BUT ONE NONETHELESS!

Tyler rolls to the side while Felton smashes his hands together and looks for the kill. He measures Fuse and races in when the former Fuse Bro. completely drops out of the ring a millisecond before Felton gets there.

Bigsby puts on the breaks, but Fuse is there, popping up from the ground below and clubbing Bigsby in the mouth with a left hand.

DDK:

Looked like a closed fist to me!

Bigsby swaggers back as Tyler pulls himself onto the apron with use of the ring ropes. Fuse uses the ropes to sling into the ring but right into the waiting arms of Bigsby!

POWERSLAM!

ONE!

TWO!

KICKOUT!

Felton snatches Tyler's head and lifts Fuse into the air as he does. With The Faithful in 'awe' at the smoothness of the move, Bigsby connects with a sitdown full nelson slam!

Bigsby holds on and Tyler is reeling! Felton THROWS Fuse in the air with a full nelson suplex.

DDK:

WHAT THE!?

Tyler lands on his feet!

Lance:

Not known for his aerial abilities, wow! Tyler is NOWHERE near as agile as Conor!

Fuse gives his neck a crack, a pop that can be heard throughout the arena. He knows Felton doesn't know he landed on his feet...

And Tyler comes charging in.

WHAP!

I Trigger to the back of the head!

DDK:

Felton spun around just in time. He was leaning down, too. That's why Tyler hit the knee flush against his head!

Felton hasn't moved as Tyler rolls him over and hooks a leg.

ONE!

TWO!

LAST SECOND KICKOUT!

The crowd is shocked, but Tyler is having none of it. Game face on, Fuse motions for Mark Shields to get out of the way, before Tyler uses ALL of his strength to lift Felton Bigsby upright and tuck Bigsby's head underneath his left armpit.

Tyler runs towards a corner, runs up the buckle pads, pushes off the top with both feet and flips around and over Bigsby, driving the man's head into the canvas with the running bulldog, CQC.

Tyler, however, isn't done.

He props Felton Bigsby on his knees and then takes three measured steps back.

Tyler Fuse:

Weapon Get.

It is said with stoicism - Tyler's almost dead inside. Complete opposite of Conor.

Tyler charges.

Tyler nails it.

I TRIGGER.

ONE.

TWO.

THREE.

DING DING DING

Darren Quimbey:

Here is your winner... TYLER FUSE!

The crowd boos as Fuse slowly rolls off Felton, surprisingly giving Bigsby a pat on the chest as Tyler's theme music plays and Fuse tells Mark Shields to raise his hand.

THIS MIGHT SOUND CRAZY

With Tyler's hand still raised in the air by none other than Mark Shields, some music begins to play but it's not Tyler's theme song.

♪ "Savage" by Megan Thee Stallion ♪

All eyes turn towards the stage as Cyrus Bates marches out to the baddie beats.

DDK:

It's, it's Cyrus Bates! He's back! He's been missing ever since MAXDEF where he appeared to cheer Malak Garland onto victory!

Walking with a purpose, Bates rolls into the ring where he chests Tyler Fuse on purpose. They Keyboard Warrior locks eyes with Mark Shields who squeaks like the rodent he is before making a hasteful exit. With microphone in hand, Cyrus waits as the song subsides but the buzz in the arena remains palpable.

Cyrus Bates:

Tyler Fuse.

Insert obligatory crowd boos here.

Cyrus Bates:

I have something I need to get off my very large, very bountiful pectorals.

Insert obligatory, yet impressive pectoral bouncing spot here.

Cyrus Bates:

Listen. Impressive win. Wow, okay. You're truly a badass beating up on weaker talent.

Bates makes sure he gets his chin in nice and close to the shorter Fuse bro.

Cyrus Bates:

You're a badass, beating up on a former FIST too. Blindsiding him. Attacking him in the back, when his guard was down and he didn't see it coming. For those of you who might need a refresher, I am talking about MALAK GARLAND!

A mixed reaction at best.

Cyrus Bates:

Look, I saw everything and I mean everything you did. I was too late to stop it or I would have. You see, I've been staying in the shadows for as long as I can, as best I can. I didn't even want to show my face at MAXDEF in San Francisco but I had to. Malak had seemingly lost his mojo and all I wanted to do was remind him about who he really is. There's lots of narratives online about Malak as a person but I know him best and he's the best damn wrestler this company has ever signed.

He takes a breath. Tyler looks deadpan as usual.

Cyrus Bates:

So after Malak hit the Brinicle on Thurston Hunter and collected a monumental pinfall victory to put him back on the road of success, after suffering a stupid setback primarily orchestrated by YOUR BROTHER which cost him the FIST and his confidence, I returned to the shadows, watching Malak from afar because, quite honestly, he doesn't need me. He doesn't need The Comments Section. He doesn't need anybody in order to be successful. He just needs to realize that.

Bates rubs his chin.

Cyrus Bates:

However, that all changed when you literally almost killed him. After your brutal attack, I realized I needed to step out of the shadows and say something. To do something. To confront you. Warn you. You put me into this position and forced my hand to step in for my best friend to protect him because maybe I was wrong about one thing. Even if Malak is capable of being successful on his own, it can still be useful to have a friend around to look out for you and I might not be the MOST VOCAL person but now is more than a perfect time than any to change that.

Tyler begins seething, you know, because he's unhinged.

Cyrus Bates:

I'm here to issue a warning to you, Tyler. You mess with Malak and therefore, you mess with me.

Cyrus gets closer, if at all possible. The crowd woos at the threat before Bates backs off a little bit.

Cyrus Bates:

I'm also here to give these people a status update. It was touch and go there for a while. Malak lost a significant amount of blood but he should make a full recovery over time.

Are there--are there a few cheers? Maybe just a few.

Cyrus Bates:

Thank you. We appreciate that. I will inform him of your warm response the next time the gauze is removed from his ears. It's true that if he wasn't found when he was--well, it would be a very different story right now.

Fed up with the gauntlet of words slung his way, Tyler goes to leave the ring but Cyrus blocks his every move.

Cyrus Bates:

Where do you think you're going, son? I'm not done with you. You almost cut my best friend's life and dreams short and mark my words he will be back and one day he will reclaim a prize you will never touch. The FIST OF DEFIANCE--WAIT FOR IT--CHAMPIONSHIP!!!

Bates steps aside as if giving Tyler a lane but Fuse can only get one leg between the rope before Bates grabs him by the shoulder.

Cyrus Bates:

You better be at ACTS of DEFIANCE because I know someone who wants to wrestle you.

There's an awkward moment that lingers just a little too long between the wrestlers before Bates relinquishes his grip. Tyler seemingly laughs it all off as he exits the ring and heads to the back.

DDK:

Empty threats by Cyrus Bates or will Malak Garland show up at ACTS of DEFIANCE to fight Tyler Fuse? Or was he referring to himself, Lance?

Lance:

One has to wonder, Darren! There's no way it's going to be Malak! As Bates stated, Tyler nearly killed him! I would be astonished if Malak showed up!

Bates looks ominously outwards at the fans. Some cheer, some still boo and some are indifferent altogether. Either way, Cyrus just stood up for what he believed in.

DEFTv goes to break.

COMMERCIAL: BRAZEN

BRAZEN - Where the next generation CLASH!

ACE of TAG TEAMS TOURNAMENT: ATOMIC PUNKS vs. LES ENFANTS TERRIBLES

DDK:

The final match in the opening round of the Ace of Tag Teams is here! One last team will complete the final four when the ever-popular Atomic Punks take on the team who have been hunting for a big-match opportunity, Les Enfants Terribles!

Lance:

We have seen some tremendous action take place over the past number of weeks! DEFtv 222 would see former Unified Tag Team Champions, M4NTRA, defeat the powerful Money Talks! DEFtv 223 would see Titanes Familia's monsters, Kill or Be Killed, defeat Brock Newbludd and Corvo Alpha, aka The Party Animalz! And two weeks ago, the newly-renamed Triple 7s defeated The Masked Violators!

DDK:

And whoever comes out of this match WILL have The Triple 7s waiting for them on the other side! M4NTRA versus Kill or Be Killed will be the other semi-finals on Night One with the winners moving on to Night Two!

Lance:

Who wants it more tonight? Let's go to the intros for the next match with Darren Quimbey in the ring!

The camera cuts to the ring with Darren Quimbey ready to provide the introductions!

Darren Quimbey:

The following contest is the final opening round match in the Ace of Tag Teams tournament! Introducing first...

♪ "Good L_ck, Yo_'re F_cked" by Celldweller ♪

The hard-rock opening heralds the arrival of the hungry young multi-generational talents. Stepping out on stage, a tall man under a silver coat with gold trim! Basking in the jeers of the Albuquerque Faithful, arms wide open, he then starts a slow walk towards the ring with some shadowboxing thrown in. Next to him, High Flyer holds out his arms and his arms have a version of the old BRAZEN LET flag and a theatrical mask over his face!

Darren Quimbey:

At a combined weight of 467 pounds... "THE GREATEST" HIGH FLYER... "THE PRINCE OF PRICKS"... ARCHER! SILVER!... **LES! ENFANTS TERRIBLES!**

A sadistic smile can be seen from under the hood, but his eyes aren't visible to The Faithful. High Flyer walks alongside Archer and throws off the flag! Archer climbs up the steps and poses on the ring apron while Flyer poses on the middle buckle and taking in the jeers.

Lance:

Originally it was slated that Pop Culture Phenoms had this match, but due to an injury by Klein sustained in his match against Henry Keyes for the FIST of DEFIANCE, PCP were pulled and replaced by Les Enfants Terribles, who've had their own issues as of late with Heirs to the Throne!

DDK:

They turned down a match with the Heirs due to being selected as alternates in this tournament right before taking cheap shots on Kaz Troy and Cecilia Ryan! No doubt something the Heirs won't forget!

LET's music drops and makes way for the arrival of their opponents.

The lights grow dim and a hazy saffron spotlight illuminates the DEFstage, as that familiar, cheery voice pierces the hum of the Faithful...

“GREETINGS, PUNY MORTALS!!!”

LET shake their heads derisively as DEFIANCE's resident mad scientist saunters through the curtain. The Faithful, on the other hand?

“RAAAAAAHHHHH!”

They love it.

Dr. Ayumi Sato:

Please forgive our absence as of late; ever since the news of the Ace of Tag Teams was delivered, we at Sato Labs have been hard at work preparing for the long trek towards the tournament and all that would come to the victors. And so, we trained, and observed, and analyzed EVERY piece of data we could to prepare for this tournament, from first to last round.

Dr. Sato chuckles to herself, before looking back into the ring, her face rapidly taking on a nonplussed expression.

Dr. Ayumi Sato:

...then Henry Keyes had to go apeshit and murder the box man.

The boos from the Faithful seem to mirror the scientist's own displeasure as she shakes her head as if to say “I know, right?” to the crowd.

Dr. Ayumi Sato:

But whoever the opponent who stands in our way...

She turns her focus back to LET, and cracks a smirk.

Dr. Ayumi Sato:

...they will be but kindling for the fire, for the FINAL entrants in the Ace of Tag Team tournament...

♪ "Atomic Punk" by Van Halen ♪

The familiar riffs of the late, great Eddie Van Halen fill The Pit, as the stage is bathed in an also-familiar glow of yellow and orange, as two silhouettes emerge from the mist.

Dr. Ayumi Sato:

FISSION!

Almost as if on cue, the smaller, more skilled Punk steps into the light, his eyes fixed on the ring and the battle ahead.

Dr. Ayumi Sato:

GIGATON!

His larger, scarier brother now takes his turn, grinning like a shark smelling blood and letting out a loud, boisterous laugh.

Dr. Ayumi Sato:

Your future Ace of Tag Teams... your future DEFIANCE Unified Tag Team Champions... THE ATOMIC PUNKS!

The Punks storm the walkway, bee-lining it towards the ring. Fission is the first to make it, though Gigaton is no slouch as he takes post in their assigned corner. Dr. Sato, gleefully cackling along the way, seems to look at LET with... pity? She stops at ringside, leaning on the apron with the poise and delight of a model, as she calls words of encouragement to her Atomic Punks.

DING DING

The match starts off with High Flyer circling up with Fission. Fission tries to go low and pick the leg of The Fourth of His High Flyer name, but HF moves out of the way just barely. Fission goes for the leg again and ALMOST gets the larger Flyer off his feet, but ends up in the ropes telling Hector Navarro to back him off.

High Flyer:

Get the little mutant off me, dude!

Fission backs up and laughs that he was this close to taking down the youngest-active Harmen in DEFIANCE, then tells him to square up in the ring. High Flyer looks over at Archer, who gives him the okay symbol.

DDK:

There goes Fission starting this match off quickly! He's a crafty technician, that's for sure!

Flyer goes behind and drops Fission with a mat return! He goes low to try and ground Fission, but the craftier member of the Punks gives him the slip and then ends up with a headlock applied to Harmen! He yells at Fission before backing him up and then going for a quick charge, but Fission beats him to the punch with a quick drop-toe hold! As soon as Flyer hits the canvas, Fission takes off like a bolt of lightning and NAILS Harmen in the side of the head with a sliding dropkick!

DDK:

Some fancy footwork by the fleet-footed Fission!

Lance:

Mighty fine alliteration, partner! Here's Fission with the cover!

ONE!

TW... NO!

The former Favoured Saints Champions backs up into the corner of Archer Silver while Fission continues to stand his ground via quick technical tactics. High Flyer wants a tag, but Archer whispers something in Flyer's ear and nods before patting his partner on the back.

Lance:

I wonder what that little powwow in the corner was about?

High Flyer tells Fission he'll meet him in the ring and squares up with him one more time, which Fission accepts. The two men circle up until Fission starts to have his back to the LET corner... then gets BELTED from behind by a stiff elbow from Archer Silver! Just as he gets the jump on Fission, High Flyer turns behind him and CRACKS Gigaton on the apron with a yakuza kick to the face, sending him off the apron! Dr. Sato starts scowling at the duo for their tactics as Silver and Flyer share a laugh!

BOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO!

DDK:

That's one way to try and gain the advantage!

Silver crawls to his corner and gets the tag from High Flyer before he runs out to the apron. He charges and swings off the post to nail Gigaton in the face with a modified tiger feint kick off the post!

Lance:

WHOA! High Flyer just took out Gigaton with that innovative move!

DDK:

And Silver has Fission right where he wants him!

As Fission tries to sit up, he gets SMACKED square in the chest from Archer Silver, courtesy of a penalty kick!

Lance:

LET are trying to steal this match!

Silver goes right into a lateral press!

ONE!

TWO!

NO!

Fission uses his legs to kick out! The Prince of Pricks screams at Fission to stay down! Meanwhile, backstage, the camera cuts to three interested individuals watching the match, as instructed earlier from Uriel Cortez:

Siofra, Killjoy and Kilgore! Siofra cackling while The Killers both watch, arms folded and ready to hurt whoever is unlucky enough to face them!

Lance:

There's Kill or Be Killed! They'll be facing M4NTRA in one of the two semi-final matches for Acts of DEFIANCE!

The action returns to the ring as Silver quickly picks up Fission and rocks him upside the back with another NASTY soccer kick square to the back!

DDK:

There's the second soccer kick! And here comes Flyer back to his corner! He makes the tag!

Archer leads Fission up by the head and arm before snapping him up and over with a quick release half-hatch suplex! Silver rolls out of the way and clears the path for High Flyer to come off the top rope with a big diving cannonball off the top!

DDK:

Les Enfants Terribles have just picked up the pace here! Are they going to punch their ticket to the semi-finals of the Ace of Tag Teams?!

Flyer makes the cover on Fission!

ONE!

TWO!

NO!

Lance:

How the heck did Fission kick out of that?!

DDK:

I don't know, but he's taken a lot of punishment in a short amount of time from Les Enfants Terribles! He better use that high ring IQ of his to think his way out of this two-on-one situation!

Flyer gets into an argument with Hector Navarro! Once again, the camera cuts to another portion of the arena.

M4NTRA are watching from what looks like a custom made streaming lounge! DEC4L is streaming live a ringcam with his phone placed in the center. Makayla Namaste has the Vibe Detectors ready and Nathan Eye is taking notes in his new book.

Nathan Eye:

Almost done, M4NTRA Rays! 500 Pages To Scout Opponents!

Lance:

And there's M4NTRA! Nathan Eye and Declan Alexander were the first team to make it to the semi-finals in this tournament by defeating Money Talks! They'll face an even LARGER pair of monsters in Kill or Be Killed!

Snap back to reality and whoop, there goes gravity as Silver gets the tag. He grabs onto Fission and slams him into the corner. He throws a number of forearms into his face while Gigaton is back on the apron, watching the action unfold with no chance for a tag at the present time. Silver grits his teeth and then leaps up in the corner before landing a slingshot double foot stomp in the corner on Fission! He remains on his chest in the corner!

Archer Silver:

Sorry you couldn't be here, Heirs! HAHAAAAHA!

DDK:

Standing on Business by Archer Silver there and a firm message delivered to the Heirs To The Throne, who the jumped two weeks ago after they turned down a challenge!

Lance:

LET have just cut this match off after Fission controlled the opening and they've shut Gigaton out completely from this match!

After cackling like a jackass and avoiding Hector Navarro's calls to be counted out in the corner, Silver once again makes a tag to High Flyer! They both pull Fission out from the corner.

Lance:

What are they gonna do with Fission now?

Both Flyer and Silver launch Fission across the ring into the ropes. Silver goes for a high kick... Fission is able to slip underneath! He pops up behind Silver and pushes The Prince of Pricks into The Prince of Flips! The two noggins collide before Fission takes a leg of Silver and DRAGS him down with a dragon screw!

DDK:

Fission might have a chance!

As he gets up, Flyer boots him in the chest before he tries to whip him to the corner, only for Fission to leap backwards and SMACKS Flyer with a torpedo headbutt off the middle rope! The Pit is on their feet and cheering for Fission as he holds onto his own skull and then points towards the corner!

Lance:

You said earlier Fission should use that big brain and he just did it!

Gigaton grits his teeth and holds a hand out as High Flyer tries to get back to his feet. Nursing a sore skull of his own, he cradles the top of his head and tries to grab Fission's leg, but he moves...

TAG TO GIGATON!

RRRRRRRAAAAAHHHHHHHHH!

Gigaton steps between the ropes and gently pushes his brother between them to let him rest on the apron. The

Implacable Irradiated Monster roars with laughter as he peels High Flyer off the mat, only to drop him back with a HARD scoop slam!

WHAM!

The big man follows up with a weighted elbowdrop to the chest, followed by the cover as Hector Navarro rushes in for the count.

ONE

TWO

High Flyer kicks out, and Gigaton simply sits up with a shrug, before getting back to his feet and going back on the offensive, laying in a few stomps as Flyer tries to get back up, only to be whipped into the corner and smashed in with an avalanche!

DDK:

Gigaton looks so unstoppable once he gets going like this!

Gigaton charges in and tries to catch High Flyer with a second splash in the corner, only to be cut off by a high boot to the face from Archer Silver! He screams in Gigaton's face and cocks back an elbow, but before he can connect, Gigaton ducks and he CHUCKS Silver across the ring with a huge release German suplex!

Lance:

Archer tried stopping him and he just got thrown right out of his kickpads!

DDK:

Gigaton is in that ring looking like a one-man army right now! How are LET going to stop him!?

Gigaton sits up and sees Flyer trying to take a cheap shot on him with a boot! He tries a whip on the atomic monster, but Big Gig' sends him flying off the rebound and catches Flyer up for a HUGE pop-up samoan drop!

DDK:

OOOOHH! High Flyer not used to flying like THAT!

The Faithful cheer on the big man as he hooks the leg of Flyer!

ONE!

TWO!

THR... SAVED BY SILVER WITH A SLIDING KICK!

Lance:

CLOSE ONE! He almost got him!

Archer grabs onto Flyer and then pulls his crushed body towards the corner. He climbs over the ropes and then reaches out to make the tag!

DDK:

There goes Silver!

Silver comes in and starts jumping all over Gigaton while he's still down with a volley of 12-6 elbows! As this happens and Silver has the referee's attention, he starts heading towards ringside.

Lance:

Where the heck is Flyer going?!

Silver has Hector Navarro's attention while Flyer -- still nursing sore ribs -- reaches over and tries to grab a chair from the timekeeper's section...

Ami Troy:

OH HAI!!!!

Flyer looks puzzled at Ami Troy being there behind the barricade when Kaz Troy jumps out from behind him and yanks the chair out of his hand!

DDK:

No! The Heirs to the Throne are here!

High Flyer wants the chair back, but Cecilia Ryan points behind him. Flyer turns around to get ROCKED by a flying dropkick from Fission against the barricade! Silver looks outside and finally notices what's happening and sees the Heirs trio each waving at him!

Lance:

Flyer is out! And Silver doesn't see Gigaton behind him!

The Prince of Pricks turns around and gets nearly SPEARED clear out of his boots! Gigaton is back to his feet and then readies himself with The Faithful (and Dr. Sato at ringside) cheering him on!

DDK:

OOOH! THAT SPEAR JUST WIPED OUT ARCHER SILVER! AND WE ALL KNOW WHAT COMES NEXT!

Like a fast-moving train, Gigaton bounces off one set of ropes, then the other then DRIVES all his weight into Archer's chest with...

DDK:

ATOMIC SPLASH!

Everyone in The Pit counts along!

ONE!

TWO!

THREE!

DING DING DING

Fission joins Gigaton and Doctor Sato in the ring!

Darren Quimbey:

Here are your winners of the match... **THE ATOMIC PUNKS!**

High Flyer goes over to help Archer Silver out of the ring. Kaz Troy stares down the duo while both Ami and CeCe wave one more time before they depart the ringside area.

Lance:

The Heirs to the Throne get some much-deserved payback for that sneak attack by LET two weeks ago! And more to the point... The Atomic Punks make the final four of the Ace of Tag Teams!

The tag team gets to celebrate ...

♪ "Gasoline" by I Prevail ♪

Everyone's eyes turn to the stage.

Tom Morrow walks out in a black and white jacket. He turns his back to the camera to show the words "Tom The [Bomb emoji]" on his back and then booing drowns out the arena!

DDK:

And here comes the Atomic Punks' opponents in the semis!

Mason, Mark and Max Luck all follow behind Tom Morrow. Dr. Sato and the Atomic Punks watch Tom Morrow lead the Seven Foot Savages to the ring!

Lance:

Oh no. What are we going to see here?!

Mason, Max and Mark Luck each climb into the ring with Tom Morrow standing in front of them.

Tom Morrow:

This ... is your future!

Despite having a three on two advantage Tom Morrow keeps the Triple 7s at bay. Fission and Gigaton get in the faces of the Triple 7s without any fear.

DDK:

We're getting a rematch from DEFCON! The Atomic Punks will take on the Triple 7s in the semis of the Ace of Tag Teams Tournament!

Tom Morrow and Dr. Sato each talk some smack. The Punks get ready to fight, but Morrow and the 7s decide to leave the ring and save the action for Acts of DEFIANCE!

Lance:

We have our four teams now locked in! Who will take home the big cash prize and a future Unified Tag Team title match?!

RUN IT BACK

♪ "Requiem" by The Back Horn ♪

As the mid-aughts J-rock anthem blares through The Pit, the familiar, hulking silhouette of Henry Yamazaki haunts the stage, before the man steps out, looking deadly serious, the bandages on his face doing very little to hide his smoldering anger.

DDK:

This man has been through hell, folks.

Lance:

Bronson Box has been one step ahead from jump street, Darren. Much as it pains me to say.

He wastes little time getting to the ring and grabbing a microphone.

Henry Yamazaki:

RYAN. BOX. OUT HERE. NOW.

It's not long before we get a response.

♪ "The Entertainer" by turn-of-the-century ragtime pianist Scott Joplin ♪

BOOOOOOOOOOOOO!

Bronson Box dressed in all black, a turtleneck, and slacks - Angus by his side, glaring down at Henry with a snide smile. They're up in one of the skyboxes, flanked by Felton and Adrian.

Bronson glares down at Henry, eyes narrowed.

Angus is leaned over, talking into Bronson's ear as he stares and gestures down at Ryan and Yamazaki.

Lance:

Well, thank God he's up there tonight. I support keeping these crazy people AWAY from one another as much as possible.

A few more moments, and the last piece of this puzzle wastes no time making his entrance.

♪ "Daddy's Home" by JT Music ♪

Dan Ryan saunters out from behind the curtain onto the stage.

He hazards a glance up at Bronson and company.

The legend just scoffs with a shake of his head and turns back towards Yamazaki.

The small gesture clearly wrangling The Wargod.

Dan Ryan:

Listen, Henry, I don't know why we need to have this little pow wow. I don't even have a clue where your head is right now. You wanna know why I walked away or something? Oh I don't know, Mr. Big Shot. I guess I had better things to do. Or maybe it just comes down to the fact that you just don't have it, HENRY.

Henry listens, his fist white knuckle tight around his own mic.

Angus Skaaland:

As much as it legitimately pains me, I agree with ol' Danny boy down there. Henry Yamazaki isn't with his or my client's time. There are bigger, more high-profile fish to dance with back there behind that curtain. Hell, you should feel honored we all humored you and came out here tonight. To tell you to your face... we're done with this, we're done with YOU.

A long pause. The Faithful rumbling.

Henry slowly raises the microphone to his lips.

Henry Yamazaki:

You're right.

A shocked murmur rolls through the crowd.

DDK:

What?

Henry reaches up and rips off the bandage on his forehead, revealing some gnarly stitches.

Henry Yamazaki:

All of you are absolutely right. Henry Yamazaki isn't... isn't there yet. MAXDEF showed that.

Dan Ryan:

Didn't we JUST say th...

Henry Yamazaki:

SHUT. UP.

Angus winces and makes an "oh shit" face.

Dan Ryan raises an annoyed eyebrow.

Henry Yamazaki:

Whether you realize it or not, Box played both of us for FOOLS. Tried stoking the flames and dividing us, making us easier to pick apart. And at MAXDEF, they all succeeded. And they STILL succeed, because you and I have been at each other's necks since!

Bronson, Angus and Money Talks all look pleased with themselves.

Boxer's silent, blood-shot brown eyes haven't left Henry.

Dan Ryan:

Oh, I'm a fool, Henry? I'm a fool? You know what? Fuck you, and fuck you too, Bronson. Trust me, if we could go back to MAXDEF and do it all over again, things would be very different.

Henry looks down at the mat, at his feet, and smirks. He then snaps back up and leans right into Dan Ryan's face.

Henry Yamazaki:

I like that idea. Doing it all over again. At Acts of DEFIANCE.

RAAAAAAAAAAAAAH!

Lance:

The Faithful clearly like that idea, Keebs!

The Faithful go nuts for the idea of another wild three-way dance.

Dan Ryan:

Not if Captain wrestle-suspenders up there is gonna invite all of his buddies along. I've got buddies too, you know.

Angus and Bronson talk off mic. Skaaland shrugs.

Angus Skaaland:

You two want a "fair" fight, a straight-up three-way dance? Big man here says fine, deal. Felton and Adrian will stay in the back... this thing on, then? Poor Henry Yams down there ain't gonna have much of a face left after Boxer's done, lemme tell...

Henry Yamazaki:

I'M NOT DONE.

Yamazaki's voice barrels over the rest of Angus' sentence, cutting him off.

Henry Yamazaki:

You're goddamn right things will be different this time.

A pause, punctuated by a shake of the head.

Henry Yamazaki:

I'm not as naive as I was at MAXDEF. I see things a lot clearer than before. And I have a better understanding of who I am and what I can do.

He then turns to Box.

Henry Yamazaki:

And I also know now... what it takes to stop you.

He reaches out, pointing a finger up towards Boxer and company up in the skybox.

Henry Yamazaki:

...and don't worry about my face. Because at Acts of DEFIANCE... you, and everyone in DEFIANCE... will see a face that NO ONE will want staring back at them.

He pauses.

Henry Yamazaki:

At ACTS... I'm going to give you what you want, Bronson.

He cracks a smile at the Wargod. Then, over at Ryan, before swinging through the ropes, climbs over the barricade and wanders out into the crowd, making his exit as "Requiem" plays once more. Ryan cracks his knuckles, looking a little frustrated as he turns and heads back through the curtain.

DDK:

Ryan clearly is not quite sure what to make of that statement, partner.

Lance:

And Box looks like the cat that ate the canary.

We cut back up to the skybox where Boxer is smiling from ear to ear.

DDK:

Well... you heard the man, at ACTS of DEFIANCE, Bronson gets what he's been asking for.

Lance:

Whatever that is? I think Bronson and Dan are in for a loooong night, Darren.

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MY WAY

Lance:

For the past two shows, the DEFIANCE Wrestling veteran Jack Harmen has been trying everything in his power to become Favoured Saints champion! We have seen two great matches between him and the current champion, Lonnie Luck that have both ended inconclusively!

DDK:

That we have! Lonnie Luck and Jack Harmen were both counted out during their first encounter four weeks ago on DEFtv 223. They had a rematch for the title two weeks ago that ended in a rare time limit draw!

Lance:

As much as Jack Harmen wants to become the champion, Lonnie Luck has been looking for that fourth and final successful title defense needed to secure a Southern Heritage shot! It's been a while since any previous champion has been able to make it to that goal, but Lonnie has said on the record that anything less than a successful definitive win for his last defense means he won't accept that SOHER shot without it.

DDK:

We heard earlier today that we would be hearing from the cha ...

♪ "Desperado" by Me First and the Gimme Gimmes ♪

The music cuts off Darren Keebler and right away, out comes the champion Lonnie Luck to big cheers from the DEFIANCE Wrestling Faithful! Lonnie wears white track pants and his new red and white themed "With A Li'l Luck" shirt!

Lonnie Luck:

Albuquerque ...

Pause for the hometown pop! The music goes quiet when he speaks.

Lonnie Luck:

I appreciate the love! I really do! But tonight, I'm out here to talk about simple business because I can't keep going like this.

He rolls over to the interview stage and gets right to business.

Lonnie Luck:

I'll keep this brief. First thing I need to say ... My cousins and Tom Morrow have been coming to me for weeks asking me to join whatever the hell they have going on. For weeks I have tried to wrestle with the decision and I've told them I need time, but they keep asking and they keep pushing. I've taken the last few weeks like you guys asked me to. You asked me to give it some thought. And now that I have, you deserve my answer ...

Lonnie gets himself ready to say the words.

Lonnie Luck:

Max, Mason ... if this is how you want to do this. If you want to go back to him and you want to take ... ugh ... MARK with you ... that's fine. You're the grownest-ass of grown-ass men in DEFIANCE seeing as you're a big, scary trio of giants and you can make your own decisions. You go your way ... but I'm going mine!

"RRRRRRRRRAHHHHHHH!!!

Lonnie Luck:

I am not where I am without you guys and I won't forget that. Your ways in this ring aren't the same as mine, but you are family and I hope you take home the Ace of Tag Teams to secure your legacy as DEFIANCE's greatest team. That's your thing. But this title ... this title is my thing!

Lonnie unhooks the title from his waist and holds it up.

Lonnie Luck:

When I won this ... I did it on my own! I became the Iron-Man of Multimans in DEFIANCE Wrestling on my own! I have defended this title successfully against names like Malak Garland, Declan Alexander, Archer Silver, High Flyer and even Jack Harmen on my own! I need to get to that finish line and I need to see this through on my own. I hope you both understand that. That brings me to the second reason that I'm out here.

Lonnie Luck:

Jack Harmen ... you and I have an issue that the two of us gotta sort out. If you'd do me the honor of your presence, I'd like to ask you something man to man, face to face on how we can sort that out.

Lonnie gives him a few moments.

DDK:

He came out here like a bat outta heck!

Lance:

Both men are competitive! Lonnie Luck is sitting on the edge, this close to a SOHER shot and I don't blame him for this!

It isn't long that the Son of Sin City waits!

♪ "Crazy Train" by Ozzy Osbourne ♪

Jack Harmen also makes his way out to a round of applause! Looking determined himself he walks to the ring and he also has a microphone. He takes some time to slap fan's extended hands as he does.

Lance:

And here comes Jack Harmen! These two are right down to business!

The Wild Card is on the interview stage with Lonnie Luck.

Lonnie Luck:

Thanks for humoring Li'l Lon, Jack ... I know, that sounded weird as soon as I said it. But I have to say something to you directly.

Lonnie points at Jack.

Lonnie Luck:

You and I have both been tearing it up since I won this title! I heard a statistic that surprised me when I watched our last match back, Jack. Since I won this title, you and I have been in this ring as opponents or as allies five different times now! I know how much it means to you to earn your first gold. You know how much it means to me to keep that gold and I'd like to think you respect that. I've told DEFIANCE Wrestling officials that unlike some past champions who have skirted the rules to make it to four defenses, I'm not going to take the easy way out on a last defense if I want to go on to challenge for the Southern Heritage title! If I'm going to earn a shot, I'm doing it without an asterisk or I'm not doing it at all!

Lonnie bumps the title up.

Lonnie Luck:

You had me beat last week if it wasn't for that time limit draw and I have to say I don't like that! I don't like knowing a clock saved me when I haven't needed a clock to do it every other time I've defended the title! So Jack ... I say one last match, best man wins! You. Me. Favoured Saints Title. Acts of DEFIANCE!!!

Harmen just smiles, and soaks in the Faithful's cheers. He waits for them to calm a bit before responding.

Jack Harmen:

Lonnie, I've said this since the day I met you. You're a talented individual and one heck of a wrestler. It would be an absolute honor to end your historic multi-man Favoured Saints title reign at Acts of DEFIANCE. And I will, because I know my time is coming to a close as an active competitor, and I just want one DEFIANCE title on my resume that wasn't created by Malak fucking Garland. I will not settle for anything less than walking out the FS champ.. At Acts Lonnie? You will lose your title. No matter what I have to do to make that happen. Be ready. I'm coming at you with everything I've got. Let's leave it all in the ring, and may the better wrestler, win.

Harmen reaches out and extends a hand to Lonnie.

The two shake on it!

Lance:

Two sporting men fighting for one big prize! Will Jack Harmen finally get the prize he seeks? Or are we looking at a rising star in real time with Lonnie Luck?!

The closing shot is Lonnie Luck holding the title in front of Jack Harmen and Harmen pointing right at the title he wants. Lonnie gives Harmen a respectful tilt of the head and leaves with Harmen's eyes still locked square on the FS title!

ONE MORE ROUND...

DDK:

Welcome back to DEFtv, everyone! Right now, we're going to send things backstage to Christie Zane, who's standing with Brock Newbludd and Pat Cassidy. The Saturday Night Specialists will be squaring off against the premier power couple in DEFIANCE, the leaders of La Familia, Titaness, and Uriel Cortez.

Lance:

It should be a great matchup and an even better preview of a couple of big matches on the card for ACTS of DEFIANCE. Take it away, Christie!

The scene shifts to the back, where Christie Zane stands at the ready, microphone in hand. She smiles at the camera as it slowly zooms out to reveal two figures flanking her. The Faithful let out a loud cheer in the background at the sight of the current reigning SOHER, "Milwaukee's Beast" Brock Newbludd and "Black Out" Pat Cassidy, aka The Saturday Night Specialists. Brock looks determined as ever, and although Cassidy's permanent bags under his eyes remain, he seems to have a renewed spark in him.

Christie Zane:

Brock, Pat, thank you for joining me. Tonight, The Saturday Night Specialists reunite to take on the husband and wife duo of Uriel Cortez and Titaness. As we get closer to ACTS of DEFIANCE, things with La Familia have turned personal over the course of these last couple of months and it's clear that their goal is to drive a wedge between you two.

Brock Newbludd:

Let me tell you something you should already know, Zane. The Saturday Night Specialists are as united as ever, and La Familia ain't gonna be the ones to change that. Everyone from Tom Morrow to Ned Reform to Malak Garland has tried the old "divide and conquer" tactic on us, and they all failed miserably. This thing that me and Cass got going has never been stronger, I promise you that. But, you know what they say, actions speak louder than words, so your boys here are gonna put their money where their mouth is by burying La Familia in the bottom of The Pit in front of all of our friends here tonight!

The fired-up SOHER hears the crowd's cheering, and he slaps the front plate of the SOHER to emphasize his point while Zane turns to Cassidy.

Christie Zane:

Pat, things turned especially ugly between you and Titaness when your sister, Siofra, became involved on the last DEFtv. It was a heated confrontation to say the least. How have you been handling things these last couple of weeks?

Normally, Cassidy would turn on the charm in the presence of Christie Zane. But the times, they are a' changin'.

Pat Cassidy

Oh, just fuckin' swell, Christie. I'm living the dream over here. Look into my eyes, Zane. Go on. Look.

Reluctantly, she does.

Pat Cassidy:

Do I look like a man who gives a shit? And do you know the most dangerous people? Those who don't give a shit. Brock is right - I've said it a million times, ain't nothing coming between SNS. Do I still want my shot at the SOHER? Damn right. And I'll get it when this bullshit is ovah. But first, we gotta kick some ass.

He turns to look into the camera with slightly bloodshot eyes.

Pat Cassidy:

Titaness, I've walked through the shadow of the valley of infants. I ain't scared of you. Tonight, The Saturday Night Specialists show this "family" that life ain't no half hour-ah sitcom. Oh, and Siobhan? I say this with the love only a big brotha can...

A smirk. A tiny flash of the old Cassidy.

Pat Cassidy:

Go fuck yahself.

A fist bump solidifies the bond, and SNS are out of frame.

THE BEST REFEREE

Mark Shields sits outside the arena, having just ignited a dart. He sticks it in his mouth as he looks up, seeing his brother Kyle passing by.

Kyle Shields:

Hey man.

Mark Shields:

Hey man.

Mark takes a quick drag of his cigarette before raising an eyebrow.

Mark Shields:

I thought you told me you were wrestling soon.

Kyle slowly nods along with his brother's comments.

Kyle Shields:

I am, you should watch out for me in a couple of weeks. I was just at a video meeting with the Favored Saints, I told them my plans. Big things coming.

Mark takes another hard inhale.

Mark Shields:

Wish I could call your matches [pointing up to heaven] mom would probably like that. But apparently it's a "conflict of interest" or whatever bullshit they were telling me.

Kyle pats his brother on the back.

Kyle Shields:

Maybe we can change that. You have the ironclad contract, after all.

Mark Shields:

I do, I do.

Kyle Shields:

You do, you do.

Kyle grins.

Kyle Shields:

And after I tell them my idea - that is going to get everyone much more rich, by the way - I think you'll be allowed to do anything you want.

Mark nods along, similar to his brother from a moment ago, while sucking back nicotine.

Kyle Shields:

I'll see you out there.

As soon as Kyle moves away, he's strangely replaced by another shadowy figure standing in front of Mark. However, the referee is too infatuated with his cigarette. It takes Shields a good twenty seconds before he looks up, frightening himself a little in the process since he thought he was all alone.

Tyler Fuse walks into the frame and takes a seat beside the referee. Tyler places his arm around Mark's shoulders.

Tyler Fuse:

You can always call my matches, okay?

Mark doesn't seem to understand what's going on but he shakes his head yes.

Mark Shields:

Yeah man, sure. Fuck whatever you want.

A sadistic grin crosses Fuse's face as he pats Shields on the back a couple of times, stands up and walks away.

Tyler Fuse:

Good. I'll be in touch.

Mark takes a moment to sit there and ponder, before shrugging and taking another drag as DEFtv goes elsewhere.

SNS vs. URIEL CORTEZ & TITANESS

DDK:

What a match that we have coming up! One last chance to gain momentum before some big matches we have at Acts of DEFIANCE! Before "Black Out" Pat Cassidy takes on Titaness... before Brock Newbludd puts the Southern Heritage Title on the line against "The Man of The House" Uriel Cortez... all four will be in tag team action next when the Saturday Night Specials take on Titanes Familia!

Lance:

We've heard Uriel Cortez and Titaness constantly profess the years-long friendship they've built with SNS, then turn around and attack them either physically like they did back on DEFtv 222, or verbally as Titaness and Siofra did for DEFtv 224! Brock Newbludd would score a measure of revenge last week by successfully defending the Southern Heritage Title against Dan Leo James, but the issues aren't done at all!

DDK:

We've heard from SNS earlier tonight and now, talk is over! Action... is NOW!

The camera pans to DEFIANCE Hall of Famer Darren Quimbey in the ring to start the introductions for this massive tag team match!

Darren Quimbey:

The following tag team match is set for one fall! Introducing first...

♪ "Drink" by Alestorm ♪

DDK:

Here they come!

Lance:

The longest reigning tag team champions in DEFIANCE history have arrived and The Pit has come alive!

A roar erupts from the crowd as a fired-up "Black Out" Pat Cassidy appears on the stage with a purpose in his step. As Cassidy raises a single fist to the crowd, the Southern Heritage Champion, "Milwaukee's Beast" Brock Newbludd, joins him on the stage with the SOHER raised above his head. The star of Born Over works the crowd up and belts out a "Ballyhoo!" in appreciation of the good people of Albuquerque before joining the focused Cassidy's side.

Lance:

It's been quite the year for these two men.

DDK:

You can say that again. Plenty of highs with Newbludd winning the SOHER and Pat welcoming his first child, but those two achievements didn't come easily, Lance.

Lance:

No, they didn't, partner. Whether it's winning a championship or bringing a new life into the world, the real work starts after it's been achieved. It can be stressful but judging from The Faithful's ovation here, I'm going to go out on a limb and say that SNS has a great support system from their friends.

The co-owners of Ballyhoo Brew bump fists and hit the ramp. Cassidy leads the way, marching down the ramp with an angry look in his eyes. The amped up Newbludd follows close behind him, zig-zagging down the ramp to slap hands with fans on both sides of the railing.

Darren Quimbey:

Introducing first! Weighing in at a combined weight of five hundred and three pounds! "Black Out" Pat Cassidy! The Southern Heritage Champion, "Milwaukee's Beast" Brock Newbludd! THEY ARE THE... SATURDAY... NIGHT... SPECIALS!!!

RAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA!

Climbing up opposite corners, The Specials' soak in the cheers from The Ballyhooligans for a few more moments before Alestorm fades from the arena's speakers. Both men drop down to the mat, and Slater directs them to their corner. SNS looks to the stage in anticipation of La Familia.

DDK:

SNS looks primed and ready to put on a show for these people tonight! La Familia better bring their A game tonight.

Darren Quimbey:

And their opponents...

Father, father, unforgivable, This is my house, you made it personal
It's always trouble when they go too far! Nobody mess with my familia

♪ "Familia" by Anuel AA and Nicky Minaj feat. Bantu ♪

Three gold spotlights shine on stage, left to right. On the left stands Titaness. Gold-tinted sunglasses, black top and pants with the "Familia" logo written down the leg and while wearing an SNS baseball cap (the very same she has been playing "Crash Out" Pat Cassidy with). In the right spotlight, the form of "The Fury of The Familia" Siofra, donning a black and and gold dress. And in the center, the tallest figure with gold-tinted sunglasses, black vest, pants and gloves. And an arrogant sneer.

Darren Quimbey:

And their opponents, accompanied by "The Fury of the Familia" Siofra at a combined weight of 539 pounds... They are the team of The Mother of Suplexes... Breaker of Backs... Baroness of Big Boots... Bringer of Bombs... She is **"THE PRETTY POWERFUL" ... TITANESS!** And **"THE MAN OF THE HOUSE" URIEL CORTEZ ... TITANES FAMILIA!**

Siofra cackles into the camera following the trio ringside while Titaness holds her arms out to loud jeers. Behind her, Papa Tez himself simply pops the bones in his neck and gets ready for a fight. Once they reach the ring, Siofra is elevated onto the ring apron by Cortez himself. Uriel, Titaness and Siofra pose to jeers for The Faithful while Brock Newbludd and Pat Cassidy watch them make their appearance.

DDK:

You can just feel the disdain from the Saturday Night Specials.

The gaze of the SOHER and his best friend does not leave the Familia. Uriel and Titaness look across the way and wave.

Uriel Cortez:

Let's keep this friendly and civil, guys.

Titaness:

Yeah! A good clean contest between friends! Let's get a good example for little sis, okay?

Newbludd barks out a laugh and sticks a thumb in Siofra's direction.

Brock Newbludd:

I know for a FACT that she likes things dirty, lady! Us tradin' headlocks in front of her ain't changing shit! That old dog ain't learnin' any new tricks today!

Siofra's eyes bug out of her head and she unleashes a string of obscenities at her grinning ex-boyfriend. The sound of his sister's screeching causes Pat to sneer in disgust and he takes an angry step forward but Brock holds him back, barely. Titaness offers some soothing words to Siofra before offering to start for her team as Newbludd steps through the ropes.

Lance:

Looks like it will be Cassidy and Titaness starting things out. There's plenty of bad blood between these two to make things interesting, that's for sure.

Uriel squats down to exchange some quick words while Brian Slater calls for the bell...

DING DING

Titaness walks forward and offers Pat a handshake. She slaps one hand with the other and puts her other hand behind her back to show no dirty tricks are at play. Pat snarls at The Pretty Powerful matriarch of the Familia. He gives a glance back to Brock, then he holds a hand out towards her in return.

Lance:

Whoa, really? After all that the Familia have put them through?

Titaness reaches for the handshake...

RRRRRRAAAAAAHHHHH!

...but instead gets the double tall man right to the face from Pat!

Lance:

Couldn't have happened to a nicer not-mother!

Titaness tries to play it off, then tries to go for a cheap shot on Pat with a kick, only for The Scrapper From Southie to catch the leg! Titaness hobbles around on one leg before Pat tries to pull her into a clothesline! Titaness ducks the shot and then SMACKS Pat across the chest with a nasty chop! She starts talking some trash to Pat about getting his life together, then charges off the ropes, only to be met with big kitchen sink knee! Titaness tumbles over when Pat flies off the ropes to land a hard kick to the small of her back! The Mother of Suplexes goes down and Pat goes for a cover!

ONE!

TW... NO!

DDK:

No! Titaness gets a shoulder up! Pat still has hold of her... no! Jawbreaker!

Titaness catches Cassidy with a jawbreaker and then makes the tag to her husband and the Titanes Familia's Padre, Uriel Cortez. Papa Tez climbs over the ropes to loud jeers from The Faithful as Pat stares up at him. He looks behind him and sees a determined Brock wanting the tag as Siofra goes outside to try and calm Titaness down. After Titaness takes a moment, she returns to the apron.

Lance:

Future Acts of DEFIANCE opponents locking up! Uriel Cortez wants the Southern Heritage Championship and says he's doing it for the friendship of the Saturday Night Specials, but Brock doesn't see it that way at all.

The Man of The House decides to follow his wife's lead and holds out his arms for a test of strength. Brock looks back at Pat and nods at his partner before he decides he's going to take him up on the challenge!

DDK:

Titanes Familia trying to play the straight and narrow tonight, it seems, but I'm not buying any of this.

Uriel taunts Brock by holding his hand way up high. Brock then jumps up to take the hand! Then they interlock hands and start trying their test of strength! Uriel Cortez has the advantage off size alone and forces The DieHard DEFIANT

backwards, trying to keep him at bay.

Lance:

An actual test of strength! Who'd have thunk it in 2025, the Year of Our Lord?

DDK:

No! Brock is fighting back!

The Albuquerque Faithful are roaring for Brock fighting back against the big man! He keeps the pressure on, and Uriel starts showing genuine alarm when Newbludd fights back and starts fighting his way up... until Siofra jumps on the apron and winks at Brock. All it takes is one second for her to catch Brock's attention and him telling her to move when Uriel PULLS him into a knee lift! Brock is stunned before Uriel SNAPS him to the canvas with a big mat slam!

DDK:

Brock wanted nothing to do with Siofra, but if ANY of your attention is taken away from Uriel Cortez, that would be fatal!

Cortez grabs Newbludd off the mat and then whips him into the corner before he charges and SMASHES into Brock with a running back elbow in the corner! Uriel holds out a hand for Titaness to get the tag, then she climbs into the ring. Titaness charges in and SMACKS Brock with a running corner uppercut, then hits the adjacent ropes across the ring and comes back with a jumping knee in the corner!

Lance:

Great teamwork by husband and wife! They're also former Unified Tag Team Champions together once upon a time!

With Brock stunned, she goes to pull him out of the corner and then attempts a gutwrench suplex on the Southern Heritage Champion! Impressively, she gets Brock off (phrasing) the mat! But he kicks his legs and turns around...

DDK:

NO! Counter by Brock Newbludd with a gutwrench of his own!

Brock sits up and still nurses a sore jaw from the litany of strikes thrown at him by the Familia before he turns up and points to Pat Cassidy! Pat gets the tag!

DDK:

SNS are now about to show what made them the longest-reigning Unified Tag Team Champions in DEFIANCE history!

They both take Titaness into the ropes and land the double spinebuster!

DDK:

Boilermaker! That one's a classic!

But they aren't done as they both scan the rowdy Albuquerque crowd. Then both men have the same idea...

Pat/Brock:

BALLY...

HOOOOOOOOOO!

...and drop the double elbow drop right into the midsection! Brock leaves the ring as Pat makes the cover!

ONE!

TWO!

NO!

Lance:

Pat Cassidy with a two-count! SNS are a well-oiled machine tonight in that ring and haven't lost a step in spite of their recent singles ventures!

Pat Cassidy picks Titaness up and lights up the Breaker of Backs with body shots to the midsection, then follow up with another loud "Ballyhoo!" Pat hits across the ring and comes back with the Splash of Jameson, staggering Titaness in the process! As she moves away, he fires off a big clothesline that knocks her over the ropes and out to the floor!

DDK:

Splash of Jameson and Titaness now out on the floor! But Cassidy isn't letting her catch her breath!

He gets cheers from the crowd as he goes out to the ring apron and waits for Titaness to get back to her feet! He sees Siofra lurking at ringside, trying to grab his leg when Pat stomps his foot and almost crushes her fingers in the process!

DDK:

No! Siofra tried to distract yet again, but Cassidy wasn't buying it!

Lance:

Siofra has ruined their lives every chance she's had ever since she cost SNS the Unified Tag Titles to The Lucky Sevens years ago!

Siofra and Pat get into a shouting match when Brock tries to warn Pat to look out! It's too late when Titaness grabs his legs when he's on the apron to catch him in an electric chair! Pat tries to get free, only to get DUMPED face-first on the edge of the apron!

DDK:

WHAT POWER BY TITANESS! SHE JUST FACEPLANTED PAT ON THAT APRON!

The booing is thunderous for Titaness as she holds onto her back and tries to catch her breath. She goes over and pats Siofra on the side for a job well done, then goes to grab Pat to throw him back into the ring! Brock yells at Brian Slater about Siofra's involvement, but as this goes on, Titaness pulls Pat to the corner and makes the tag to Papa Tez!

Lance:

And Cortez is back in! And this is not a good situation for Pat to be in!

Cortez picks Pat up, but The Scrapper From Southie does what any self-respecting Bostonian does when danger's around and starts trying to punch his way out of it! He lands a few shots to the 340-pound giant's midsection. Uriel's retort?

THWACK!

...ONE big-ass chop is all it takes to knock Pat clear off his feet to the shock of all!

Lance:

OH, GOD! JUST ONE CHOP!

Cortez waves his hand in pain, even surprising himself with the force! He bullies Pat back to his feet by his neck and shoves him back to the Familia corner. He holds a hand back... **THWACK!** Then throws another chop that sends the former two-time Unified Tag Team Champ crashing to the canvas!

DDK:

Uriel is just taking control of this match! And now's got all that weight down on Pat!

Uriel stands with not one, but BOTH feet on Pat's chest! Titaness makes the tag in and then jumps onto her husband's back for added weight! All the while, Siofra, gets in on the photo-op at ringside and starts cackling right in his ear! Brian Slater warns the husband and wife to clear the ring.

Uriel Cortez:

We have a five-count, you fucking bozo.

The Man of The House returns to the corner as Titaness apologizes for her husband.

Titaness:

What my husband means is "we're sorry."

She goes back to show off her strength by picking Pat up off the canvas neck first before hoisting him across her shoulders! The Faithful are shocked as she runs, DROPPING him with an Air Raid Crash!

DDK:

Clash of the Titaness! That could be all here as she hooks the leg!

ONE!

TWO!

NO!

DDK:

Another kickout by Cassidy! But that leads to another quick tag to Cortez!

The extra-large husband and wife tag in and Papa Tez makes it back into the ring. Titaness goes to pick Pat up, but he lands another jab to try and fight his way free from the giants! He swings and catches Uriel with another right, but when he turns to catch Titaness again, he gets a stiff double-handed chop from The Mother of Suplexes! Pat goes reeling right into the clutches of Cortez, who grabs him in an inverted headlock before SMACKING him across the chest with another big shot!

DDK:

Big Business by Cortez! Can they pick up this win close to Acts of DEFIANCE?!

ONE!

TWO!

TH... NO!

Lance:

Where is Pat getting this! These giants have battered him for the past few minutes!

Cortez realizes this as well, so he drags Pat up by DEADLIFTING him right off the mat and up over his shoulders into a Canadian backbreaker submission mid-ring!

DDK:

How much does Pat Cassidy even have left! He's not been able to sustain offense for too long since these giants took over!

Pat tries to fight his way free of the submission hold!

Uriel Cortez:

Don't wanna do this, Pat! Nothing personal!

Pat Cassidy:

F(censored) yo motha... ahhh!

Cortez hears that and continues trying to break Cassidy in half!

Uriel Cortez:

NEVER speak ill of mothers! Either my wife or my own mother!

BALLY! HOO!

BALLY! HOO!

BALLY! HOO!

Alternating sides of the arena start the chant to fire Pat up! Brock yells at Pat from the apron and the Southern Heritage Champion wills the people to chant louder while Cassidy is in dire straits! He finally starts punching his way out of the hold, rocking Uriel in the side of the head multiple times!

Lance:

Pat's doing it! He's almost out of the hold!

DEFIANCE's Landlord tries to hold onto the brutal submission, but Pat FRANTICALLY fires rights in droves until Cortez is stunned enough for him to slip out! Cassidy tries to get to the corner as quickly as he can when Uriel turns around, holding his head. He charges at the corner... but comes up empty when he runs shoulder-first into the corner!

DDK:

OOOH! Pat's free!

Cortez stumbles over to his corner and makes the tag to Titaness, who gets in! She tries to stop The Scrapper From Southie from making it to the corner, but when she turns him around, she gets greeted with a snap headbutt! The Mother of Suplexes goes cross-eyed as Pat himself stumbles back...

TAG TO NEWBLUDD!

Lance:

Cassidy's toughness paid off, and here comes the SOHER!

Moving like he was shot out of a cannon, Newbludd charges at Titaness, and she tries to take his head off with a mean lariat, only to hit nothing but air as The DieHard Defiant ducks underneath. Brock suddenly veers towards La Familia's corner. The still woozy Uriel can't react quickly enough to the incoming Newbludd, and he eats a forearm to the face! The blow sends Cortez flying off the apron and down to the floor!

With Cortez lying at her feet, Siofra snaps her gaze up to the ring just in time for Newbludd to blow her a kiss. The roaring Faithful drowns out her scream of rage.

RAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA!

DDK:

Newbludd just gave Cortez a taste of his own medicine, but here comes Titaness from behind!

Furious about what 2024's highest-grossing actor in the DVD market just did to her hubby, Titaness grabs Brock from behind with a waistlock. She begins to pop her hips for a suplex, but things go sideways for her as Brock grabs both of

her hands and breaks the waistlock. Keeping a grip on one of her arms, Milwaukee's Beast performs a quick go behind. Titaness uses her free arm to fire an elbow back towards her opponent, only to have Newbludd hook that one as well.

Lance:

Brock avoided getting dumped on his head with the reversal, and now he's got both of Titaness's arms hooked!

Letting out a roar, Brock pops his hips and sends Titaness for the ride...

DDK:

TIGER SUPLEX! He's got the bridge!

Slater hits the mat for the cover!

ONE!

Lance:

This might do it!

TWO!!

Siofra suddenly appears in the picture and reaches under the bottom rope. With the two grapplers blocking his view, Slater raises his hand again just as Siofra latches onto Brock's boot with both hands. Without a second to spare, she yanks on Newbludd's calf with both hands to break the bridge!

BOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO!

DDK:

OH COME ON!

Now it's Siofra with the smirk as she quickly runs away from the scene of the crime while Newbludd slams a fist into the mat in frustration. Bringing the woozy Titaness back up to her feet, Brock angrily grabs both sides of her head and delivers a knee shaking headbutt. Stuffing her head under one of his arms, Brock powers Titaness up into the vertical suplex position.

Lance:

Mother of Suplexes, meet the NewDad of Suplexes.

Maintaining his grip on Titaness, Brock spins to face Cortez and gives him a quick middle finger before falling backwards to plant his wife in the middle of the ring.

DDK:

A second perfectly executed suplex by Newbludd has him in the driver's seat but it looks like Cassidy wants another piece of Titaness!

Eyes wide in anticipation, the recovered Cassidy stomps on the mat, and Newbludd looks towards his corner to see Pat asking for the tag. Looking out to the crowd, Brock points at Cassidy, and the Faithful respond with a cheer. Cracking a grin, Brock hoists Titaness back up and immediately fires her into SNS's corner. Following right behind her, Newbludd smashes Titaness into the turnbuckles before tagging in Cassidy.

Lance:

And more of that tandem tag offense! It's like these guys never stopped teaming!

Brock holds out Titaness arm as Cassidy comes off the second rope with an axehandle. Cassidy again breaks out the double bird, this time in Cortez's direction. As the Man of the House seethes, Cassidy puts Titaness down with an

Alabama Slam!

DDK:

And Cassidy tags Brock back in... WOAH! Out of nowhere he charges and catches Uriel off guard! Cortez falls off the apron!

Lance:

That's right, Darren!

With his future challenger for the SOHER momentarily indisposed, Brock LEAPS OFF THE TOP with a PICTURE PERFECT Elbow to Titaness' chest! With Pat keeping a lookout, Brock hooks the leg!

ONE!

TWO!

THREE!!

DING DING DING!!

DDK:

And The Saturday Night Specials prove they still got it! A big win over their PPV opponents just weeks away from DEFIANCE Road!

Cassidy looks happier than he has in months as the SNS theme begins to play. He watches Brock start to get up when...

DDK:

CORTEZ FROM BEHIND! He nearly took his head off with that lariat!

Ballyhoo Music Stops! Cassidy turns around, then gets LEVELED by a Chop of Ages to the chest!

Lance:

The Man of The House is LIVID!

For the first time since this issue between the four began, Cortez stands over both members of SNS and looks down at them with disdain as he goes to help Titaness to her feet. Siofra then slides into the ring with the Southern Heritage Championship as Cortez drags Newbludd to his feet...

DDK:

NO! 218 BY URIEL CORTEZ! SOME FRIEND HE IS!

Cortez then grabs Pat by the hair and DRAGS the Scrapper to his feet...

DDK:

ANOTHER 218! THAT BRUTAL POWERBOMB!

But he's not done! He grabs the leg of Pat and then gets him back to his feet, right for Titaness to nearly CUT him in half with the Pretty Striking spear! Still clutching her own midsection off the Big Elbowski from Newbludd, she leans back, but glares down at Pat Cassidy.

Lance:

SNS have won the match, but Titanes Familia have the last laugh tonight!

Cortez holds the Southern Heritage up high with a boot on Brock's chest as he's down!

BOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO!

Uriel Cortez:

I've solved both of your problems! At Acts of DEFIANCE, I'm going to solve Mi Familia's by making this MINE!

He drops the title on the chest of the unconscious Brock and then he and Titaness leave. Siofra walks over her brother and wipes her feet behind her before following the giants out of the ring to thunderous jeering!

DDK:

It's going to be a different story at Acts of DEFIANCE if Brock Newbludd and Pat Cassidy have their way! Titaness takes on Pat Cassidy one-on-one! Uriel Cortez will challenge Brock Newbludd for the Southern Heritage Title!

Lance:

We have to take it to commercial, but when we come back... it's one last chance for momentum for Elise Ares or FIST of DEFIANCE Henry Keyes! It's PCP's Elise Ares and The D against Vae Victis members Keyes and Lindsay Troy in our main event!

COMMERCIAL: ACTS OF DEFIANCE 2025

Live on PPV October 1 and 2nd from the Toyota Center in Houston, TX!

THE BESTIES vs. POP CULTURE PHENOMS

DDK:

It's time for our main event, Lance. Elise Ares has everything to lose and only one thing to win. If Elise wins she gets her one-on-one shot at the FIST of DEFIANCE. If she loses? Not only does she have to keep her word and walk... she has to take Klein and The D with her.

Lance:

Keep in mind, Keebs. It's not the FIST. It's a SHOT at the FIST. She's not even getting anything tangible from this. If she somehow manages to pull this off and then loses against Keyes, she still has to walk anyway.

DDK:

I'd like to hope we're not witnessing the Pop Culture Phenoms' last match in DEFIANCE, but there is a chance that might be exactly what we're going to see tonight. So sit back. Relax. Enjoy what might be the last ride for arguably the greatest tag team in DEFIANCE history.

♪ "Live For The Night" by Krewella ♪

The New Mexico Faithful rise to the feet as the vice city lights of hot pink and cyan shower The Pit. Elise Ares leads the way, wearing the same orange, white, and chrome ring gear she faced Lindsay Troy in at DEFCON with a white crop top leather jacket. Her LED sunglasses say "FIST" "OR" "BUST." However, this time beside her is The D wearing matching orange, white, and chrome tights with a big chrome D on the crotch. He gives her a pat on the back, they pose for the Faithful under the spotlight, and begin their simultaneous swagger down towards the ring.

Darren Quimbey:

The following match is our MAIN EVENT. Coming out first from Hollywood, California. Weighing in at a combined weight of 311 pounds. They are Elise Ares and The D... the POP. CULTURE. PHEEEEEEEEEEEEEENOMS!

DDK:

Coming to the ring for possibly the last time... without Klein, thanks to quite the performance from Henry Keyes on DEFtv 224.

Lance:

It was a match that Klein had already won, Keebs... or at least we all thought he did until Mark Shields reversed his own decision due to seeing the foot of the Kraken on the ropes. After that happened, it was all over.

DDK:

Just to add insult to injury, Lindsay Troy made sure to deliver that box to The D earlier tonight that Keyes promised if he were to win. I wonder what he did with it.

Lance:

It's probably in the dumpster where it belongs.

Inside the ring, Elise Ares and The D are on opposite corners of the ring and Ares launches her LED sunglasses into the crowd with a smirk on her face. On the other side, The D is waving his arms in the air with the crowd. They don't even get the opportunity to get off the ropes when...

An old, familiar favorite.

Did we say favorite? It is for "some", maybe, but not for the Faithful.

It's doom piano chords.

♪ "Stranger Fruit" by Zeal & Ardor ♪

STRANGER FRUIT, HOW IT GROWS AND GROWS

WE ALL SAW THE SHOOT, BUT WE TEND TO THE ROSE

The boos are all-encompassing, and it's amazing how the lights can shift from what is ostensibly one version of pink and blue (PCP's hot pink and cyan Vice vibe) to another (Bestie Pink and PRIME blue), and the vibe in the arena can completely change.

Let it be absolutely clear - this is a one-sided crowd tonight. Everyone yelling full-throat, on their feet, middle fingers abound, all fans unified in hoping these two egomaniacs get their asses kicked tonight.

The entire stage lights up, and the Besties stand shoulder to shoulder, hands on the backs of their hips, each posing dramatically (some might say iconically) as the boos continue raining down.

Keyes and Troy match, of course - pinks and blues and golds, with tiger stripes and gears included on Keyes's pants and crowns adorning Troy's gear.

Darren Quimbey:

And their opponents! Representing Vaeeeeeeee Victis! Hailing from San Francisco, California and Tampa, Florida, weighing at a combined 444 pounds...they are the Besties In The Worrrrrrld! LINDSAYYYYYYY TROYYYYYYY, and the FIST of DEFIANCE, HENRYYYYYYYY KEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEYES!

BOOOOOOOOOO!

DDK:

Three years ago, these two set out on a mission not only to make it to the top of DEFIANCE, but to completely uproot the very foundations of professional wrestling. If you've watched any major wrestling show at all in recent years, there is no doubt that Vae Victis's influence can be felt. Say what you will about their attitudes or their egos - and we have, and we will some more - they are undeniably two of the greatest professional wrestlers in the world.

Lance:

The Besties are one of those teams where you always know where they stand, even if "where they stand" is usually somewhere very petty and very hostile. They would love nothing more than to come out on top once again, maybe even re-establishing themselves as top contenders for the tag team championships.

DDK:

But tonight, it's not about the tag titles - it's about the FIST of DEFIANCE. Will Elise Ares get her shot at ACTS of DEFIANCE? Or is this the end of the Pop Culture Phenoms in DEFIANCE?

DING DING

Elise Ares starts in the ring and immediately calls out the Kraken. Keyes obliges waves off Lindsay Troy who steps out onto the apron. The Faithful roar as Ares takes a step forward and Henry Keyes immediately turns around and tags in Lindsay Troy.

BOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO!

DDK:

It looks like the FIST has decided that we're NOT going to get a preview of what a one-on-one match would look like.

Lance:

Instead it looks like we're getting a rematch from DEFCON. Ares is even wearing the same gear, you have to think that isn't a coincidence.

Elise takes a minute to jaw with LT about wanting a shot at the Kraken, but Troy makes it very clear that she wants a piece of Ares before she gets exactly what she asks for with an elbow to the jaw. The Queen of the Ring staggers but immediately fires back with a searing chop. As the impact echoes around The Pit, Elise's momentum is immediately

stopped as she's hit with another, and another, and another until she has no choice but to back into the corner. Ducking between the ropes, Ares goes for a rope break that is ignored by Lindsay as she drags Ares back into the ring against the calls of Carla Ferrari.

However, Elise uses the ropes to lunge towards LT, grabs her head, and lands with a beautiful tornado DDT to the delight of the Faithful. Troy is immediately back up and falls back down to an arm drag. LT pops back up and returns an arm drag of her own. Ares pops back up and lands an enziguri that staggers Troy, who then answers with an enziguri of her own. Instead of going for a return move, the tag veteran Ares simply lowers her shoulder and rams LT into The D's corner where he tags himself in on Elise's back. Troy shoves Ares away but The D grabs her from behind and lands a bulldog on her right in the middle of the ring as Elise glares at the champ on her way out.

DDK:

Veteran tag team move from Ares, she wasn't getting the best of that exchange so used whatever she could to get back to her own corner and make the tag to bring in The D.

Lance:

The D is working the headlock and grounding Troy after that bulldog. A good way to neutralize the superior striking and reach advantage of the former FIST of DEFIANCE.

The Queen of the Ring doesn't expect the neutralizing attempt so has no choice but stay in the headlock while she formulates a plan. She uses her height to get The D up (haha) from a sitting position to a kneel and then to a stand before shooting him into the ropes. She goes for a leap over The D but he baseball slides under and pops up. Before she can even turn around he plants her into the mat with his reverse legsweep faceplant he calls Contractual Obligation. He immediately goes for a cover.

ONE!

T-

Henry Keyes doesn't even get between the ropes before LT unsurprisingly kicks out, but much to her dismay, ends up right back in a seated headlock that's starting to really annoy the Queen of the Ring.

DDK:

Not getting a ton of rapid offense like one would expect, but instead The D is neutralizing Lindsay Troy's offense in what may be an attempt to rattle her.

Lance:

If the gameplan is to get a reaction out of Troy it's certainly working, and also the moves he has been able to land have been impactful. The D's mat game is typically overlooked because of the rapid, high flying style of the Pop Culture Phenoms, but he can play that game if need be, Keebs.

Troy attempts to escape the same way but The D is on to her game and instead sits halfway through her stand to ground her once again. To add insult to injury, he begins pelvic thrusting into the air to big cheers from the Faithful! His showmanship ends up being his downfall as Troy immediately lifts him right up and drops him on his head with a back suplex. The D is rattled, grabbing the back of his head before Troy runs up and soccer kicks him while he's trying to cover up in frustration. She begins raining down precision stomps to the skull around The D's guard before Carla tells her to take it to the mat or bring him to his feet. LT gladly accepts and pulls D up to his feet and hits him with a hard chop for good measure before whipping him into the corner where Henry Keyes waits. Troy casually walks over and tags in the FIST.

Keyes steps into the ring and drives a hard knee into the midsection of The D causing him to double over. Taking advantage, Henry Keyes lifts The D up and buckle bombs him back into the corner before getting on his hands and knees where LT runs and launches off Keyes' back with a flying bomaye knee strike to The D's skull. Lindsay follows through and lands standing on the apron as The D stumbles towards Henry Keyes right into an air toss landing on a European uppercut! The Faithful gasp as Henry Keyes goes for the cover.

ONE!

TWO!

T-

The D kicks out before Elise can make it across the ring. However, Keyes makes a large commotion about Ares trying to break up the pin and Carla immediately is on it trying to remove her from the ring leaving Lindsay Troy to drag The D back into the corner again behind her back.

DDK:

The D showing some resilience with that kickout after taking a brutal exchange in the corner, Lance.

Lance:

I see The Besties are trying to beat the Pop Culture Phenoms at their own game, using a little misdirection to their advantage to keep Elise from doing the same. These two teams know each other very well.

So well, in fact that Henry Keyes has started stomping on The D in the corner, then tags in LT who does the same, then tags in Keyes who continues doing their own version of PCP's famed "The Blacklist." The Faithful jeer as Keyes waves them off before hurling The D into the middle of the ring with a massive biel throw. The former Favoured Saints Champion hits and sits up, arching his back before falling over to his side. Keyes follows non-chalant, obviously content with the way this tag team match is going before walking up and slapping The D on the back of the head. He does this a few times until D reaches his feet and eats a massive propeller edge chop across his chest. Then another. Then another. Then... he misses?

The D ducks the chop, obviously still in a world of hurt grabbing his chest. Keyes turns around just in time to get hit with a flying crescent kick right across the dome. The blow fells the FIST of DEFIANCE and both men lay on the mat to a thunderous ovation from the Faithful. The D begins to crawl across the ring to his corner towards a game Elise Ares, reaching out to get the hot tag. She stomps on the apron and gets the Faithful to clap along with her as The D lunges forward, but his foot is grabbed by Keyes and he falls just short!

BOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO!

The D tries to wiggle his way free but the strength of the Kraken is just too much. The FIST of DEFIANCE yanks on the leg of the D at the same time he unexpectedly rolls forward and Keyes is sent head first into the middle turnbuckle to the roar of the Faithful. Then, he jumps forward and makes the tag.

RAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAH!

DDK:

He got it!

Lance:

And here comes Ares!

The Leading Lady of DEFIANCE explodes from her corner, going flying past both Keyes and The D to land a flying elbow to the face of Lindsay Troy knocking her off the apron into the steel barricade outside of the ring. Elise spins around and sprints towards Henry Keyes and hits him with a bullet of a front dropkick shooting him back first into the corner. Then she begins to stomp away on the champion. She goes to tag The D in for The Blacklist but he's still laying on the apron recovering, so she just slaps her own hand and continues to stomp on the champion to the roars of the crowd. She then puts an exclamation point on it by jumping up to the top rope and dropping both boots directly onto the Kraken's chest.

Henry Keyes goes crawling out of the corner towards the center of the ring, Ares follows and tries to land an Extreme Makeover but Keyes is ready and moves out of the way. Frustrated, Elise instead soccer kicks the champion in the

face and makes him collapse onto the mat. She then looks into the audience, places her boot on his back, and screams into the audience who yells it with her:

"QUE TAL ESO?!"

She steps over Keyes and puts her hands behind her head gyrating with a smile before landing a beautiful standing moonsault on the champ's lower back. Keyes howls out in pain at this, almost reflexively rolling off his stomach and to his side. Ares "helps" him out by rolling him all the way over to his back, and she hooks the far leg!

ONE!

TWO!

TH-NO! Keyes gets a shoulder up!

Troy is back on her feet outside and has a sense of urgency about getting back to her corner upon hearing the crowd count the near-fall. As Keyes starts to stir, Ares measures him out and runs to the ropes. She rebounds off, building momentum, and flies at the Kraken - Henry's on his feet, and he catches Ares! He goes for the tilt-a-whirl, sending her up, around, behind, preparing for his patented backbreaker - but Ares hangs on! She's got an arm wrapped around the Kraken's neck!

DDK:

Rear naked choke!

Lance:

What a counter by Ares!

Keyes's eyes bug out at this unexpected turn of events! She squeezes as hard as she can! Keyes's brute strength keeps him upright and he's pawing at Ares, trying to get her off his back, but he just can't get the angle right, and he's stumbling. Seeing that he doesn't have another out, he tilts his body and uses the momentum of their body weight to get towards the VV corner, when -

SMACK!

DDK:

Lindsay Troy just walloped Ares in the back with an overhand chop! And another! Another!

Lance:

She's getting blistered, but she's still hanging on!

Ares's back starts to grow beet red at these intensely flush overhand palm strikes. Keyes's face, for its part, is also growing beet red, and he reaches out to his corner. Troy tags herself in and gets back to business blistering Ares with palm strikes and chops and slaps. Ares finally releases the hold and Keyes drops to the mat, rolling under the bottom rope to his corner and catching a breather (aka gasping for air).

Troy goes for one more chop for good measure - ARES INTERRUPTS WITH A SUPERKICK! Either Ares slapped the shit out of her leg or she caught Troy as square as square gets with the volume of the kick - as Troy's skull whips back and she falls to the mat, we're sure it's the latter. Ares takes a moment to locate The D - he's still on the apron, but he's at least up to his knees. She nods to him, and The D nods back - and instead of rising all the way to his feet, The D drops to the floor and begins looking under the ring apron.

Lance:

What do you think this is about, Keeps?

DDK:

The King and Queen of Sports Entertainment Style always have a few tricks up their sleeves, partner.

After a moment, fans in the PCP corner can see that The D has pulled out two steel chairs, though he's doing his best to shield them from view of the referee or either Bestie.

In the ring, Ares contemplates her next attack. She sees Troy get to a knee and decides to rebound off the ropes one again. As Ares speeds back towards Troy, Troy instinctively braces in her bent position in anticipation of a Back Body Drop that would send the much smaller Ares about 10 feet in the air - Ares leaps over top! She hooks her legs around Troy and flips!

Rodeo Destroyer!!

Troy looks out of it! Ares sits on Troy's chest and grabs both legs!

ONE!

TWO!

TH-HENRY KEYES BREAKS UP THE PIN WITH A SHOULDER TACKLE!

The Kraken is fed up at these counters and starts raining down heavy strikes onto Ares. Carla Ferrari admonishes Keyes for this and tries to pry him off - Troy gets in Carla's face about this and tells her to "get out of my Bestie's face and stop being a lil bimch". Ferrari and Troy are now animated in their yelling and arguing, and Keyes sees a window, something that maybe he wasn't supposed to have seen...

The D has set up one of the steel chairs in between the bottom two turnbuckles in a neutral corner.

Henry picks up Elise by the head and goes to whip her into that very chair - but Ares reverses!

THONK

DDK:

The Kraken just ate steel!

The D quickly pulls the chair out from where it's wedged, and Lindsay Troy is now absolutely irate, because she saw what just happened and the referee did not. Troy brusquely shoulders past Ferrari and charges across the ring, smacking The D in the face with a Yakuza kick and sending him stumbling to the floor. She then goes to check on Keyes, who is clutching at his forehead that's got a trickle of blood going down. He's clearly dazed, but tells Troy he's OK and starts to make his way back to the VV corner. Troy turns around...

Lance:

Amethystation!!

The Superman Punch connects flush, but it doesn't send Troy down...if anything, it pisses her off. She springs forward, grabs Ares, lifts, and twists - and SPIKES her down with a spinning fisherman's suplex! She immediately follows up by

flying across the ring - QUEEN'S GAMBIT! The double knee strike connects!

DDK:

Lindsay Troy is on a roll now! She tags in Keyes!

Indeed, it looks like she wants to set up for The Besties's team finisher - "You Can't Sit With Us", the high/low simultaneous roundhouse kick + leg sweep. Upon the tag, Troy faces Ares and begins measuring her out, waiting for Keyes to get in position on the opposite side.

...

Only, Henry's not getting to the other side.

Before Keyes got a chance to enter the ring, The D had found his way to slip around the outside, and he yanks Keyes down to the floor by his feet! Keyes hits the apron face first, and The D starts throwing haymakers at the big man! Keyes covers up for a moment, then starts throwing haymakers of his own! It's a hockey fight!

Carla yells at Troy to leave the ring because she's no longer the legal competitor - and she obliges by using the ropes to springboard off - QUEEN'S GAMBIT TO THE D!! Troy tells Keyes "she's got this asshole from here" and points to the ring. Keyes nods and rolls beneath the bottom ropes.

Lindsay Troy continues throwing heavy offense at The D - kicks and stomps and knees. For his part, The D is fighting back with everything he's got, even shoulder tackling her into a ringside barricade. The D goes to pick up the steel chair that has a Keyes-shaped dent in the seat in it, which is just too much for Ferrari to tolerate. There's so much commotion occurs that it splits Ferrari's attention, and her body is between the ropes to the outside as she tries to get the two on the outside to break it up.

In all the commotion, the cameraman either missed (or carefully avoided revealing) a minor detail.

The second steel chair is in the ring, in the PCP corner. The D must have placed it there before pulling Keyes down from his corner.

Ares spots it, and upon seeing an enraged Kraken stalking her way, the lightbulb moment happens. She goes for the chair...

WHAM

...and she SPIKES it into the mat! She then tosses the chair to Keyes and falls flat to the mat! The fans are on their feet, begging Ferrari to turn around!

The gears in Keyes's brain turn entirely too quickly - he feels like he's seen something like this before and he instinctively knows he doesn't have time to waste.

WHAM

Keyes spikes the chair into the mat, too! He tosses the chair to the mat in between himself and Ares with the legs pointed towards Ares, and he falls to the mat, too! He even rubs his knuckles into the cut on his forehead, causing more blood to flow!

DDK:

Both wrestlers trying to sneak one past our referee!

Lance:

You're right, but - HANG ON!

WHAM

The D swings his chair at LT, who ducks - this WHAM is from steel meeting ring post. Carla continues yelling out at the two on the outside. The D continues to chase LT around, swinging the chair - if anything, buying as much time as possible for his partner to get creative.

Keyes and Ares, shoulders to the mat, lock eyes with each other, confused that no DQ has been called yet. Ares sees Ferrari's back and realizes that the chair shot in the ring didn't distract her - maybe because there's just as many attempted chair shots happening OUTSIDE as there are INSIDE.

She springs into action, and goes for the chair - Keyes sees this and tries to get up too, but he's not as nimble as Ares, and so he loses the race -

WHAM

The D swings steel that connects with the ring steps!

WHAM

Ares hits Keyes squarely in the spine!

WHAM

The D swings down like a hammer and misses Troy again, this time hitting the floor!

WHAM WHAM

Elise spikes Henry two more times with the chair for good measure!

Lindsay Troy is BEGGING Ferrari to turn around and see what's happening to her Bestie! Ares ditches her chair, and The D quickly follows suit - soon, both Troy and The D are pointing at the middle of the ring!

Ares has the near leg hooked! LT tries to bring Carla's attention back outside to no avail!

ONE! Troy tries to dart in!

TWO! The D grabs her ankles and stops her!

...

THREE!!!

DING DING DING

RAHHHHHHHHHHHH!!!!

DDK:

I can't believe it! The Pop Culture Phenoms have pulled it off!

Darren Quimbey:

HEEEEEERE ARE YOUR WINNERS! THE DEEEEEEEE, AND ELIIIIISE AREEEEEES! THE POP! CULTURE!
PHEEEEEENOOOOOOOOOMS!!

LT is absolutely LIVID as Keyes writhes on the mat in pain from the chair shots. Ares quickly darts out of the ring and she and The D have a big jumping hug fest as billie eilish blasts throughout the arena.

Lance:

Two incredible pieces of news for the Faithful! Not only are the Pop Culture Phenoms here to stay, but Elise Ares finally gets her one-on-one shot for the FIST of DEFIANCE!

DDK:

PCP just has VV's number! That's all there is to it! Elise Ares becomes the first person to pin Henry Keyes since his return at DEFCON, what an accomplishment!

Lance:

If she can pull it off just one more time at DEFIANCE ROAD, we'll finally get something that the Faithful have wanted for a long, long time - Elise Ares, Queen of Sports Entertainment Style, and FIST of DEFIANCE!

DDK:

If that doesn't make you want to tune in live on October 1st and 2nd to catch all the action from Houston, Texas - you just don't like wrestling, plain and simple! This one's going to be an absolute banger! We'll see you next time, from DEFIANCE ROAD!

Keyes and Troy snarl up the ramp as Ares and The D continue to celebrate.

THIS.

IS.

DEFIANCE.