

SHOW OPEN

[*♪ "DEFY" by Of Mice & Men ♪*](#)

Philadelphia welcomes DEFIANCE as the Michael J. Hagan Arena of Saint Joseph's University is hyped for DEFTv 178! Pyro explodes from the top of the rampway. There's a giant FIST logo to walk out from and the DEFlatron above the entrance.

Signs and excitement, as always, are everywhere!

DEX JOY RULZ
CORVO ALPHA IS MY DAD
I PAID TO SEE REZIN WTF
THE GHOST OF DEFIANCE IS HAUNTING def-chat
MORE BLOOD, MORE MACHETES & MORE HOT CHICKS
PLEASE TELL ME THE BYRD HASN'T FLOWN THE COOP ALREADY
TERI'S GOT ME MELTON' (FIRE EMOJI)
RED SOLO FIST
SPEAKING OF MELTING, RIP DEACON
REZIN > RAISIN
MALAK MAKES MAGIC

The scene switches to the announce team, Darren Keebler and Lance Warner.

ALVARO de VARGAS vs. CRESCENT CITY KID

DDK:

What a show we have for you tonight! We have one of the biggest battle royals in recent memory! The next challengers for the FIST and Southern Heritage Titles will be decided in our main event tonight! Corvo Alpha takes on Dex Joy -- against doctor's wishes -- in a rematch from that violent display we saw two weeks ago... but up first, making his in-ring return after attacking former FIST of DEFIANCE Deacon with a fireball: Alvaro de Vargas.

Lance:

After that upset loss to Masked Violator #1, Alvaro promised that he had a target in mind, but he kept quiet about who... until Deacon stormed the ring to challenger whoever was responsible for attacking Magdalena. Since that time, the assumption was that a member of Vae Victis was the perpetrator, at least until ADV made it known.

DDK:

We still don't know why, but what we do know is that ADV has some sort of grudge against the former FIST of DEFIANCE for reasons unknown. Tonight, he challenged Crescent City Kid to a rematch from DEFtv 176 where CCK won unexpectedly by countout! ADV wants to settle some debts and he'll do so in tonight's opener! Darren Quimbey with the intros now!

Darren Quimbey gestures at ringside.

Darren Quimbey:

The following contest is set for one fall! Introducing first, being accompanied by Theodore Cain... from New Orleans, representing The Gulf Coast Connection, weighing in at 183 pounds... **CRESCENT! CITY! KID!**

♪ "The Saints" by Andy Mineo ♪

Two of the three members of GCC make their way out! Titus was in action last night against Tyler Fuse for the Favoured Saints title, with CCK hoping to fare better. He and Cain make their way out from the back to a nice pop from the crowd, wearing his mask and with a collection of beads that he takes off and throws out to fans in the audience! CCK makes it into the ring with Cain close by on the outside. When he gets there...

Lights out.

A new theme starts to reverb through the arena, unfamiliar to The Faithful.

The lights show a burning yellow star in space. The flames continue to rise. The heat continues to burn brighter...

The colors then become blue... and white...

♪ "Empire of Ashes" by Like A Storm ♪

The thundering guitar riffs and intro lead to the towering menace storming through the curtains...

BOOOOOOOOOOOOOOM!

Bright blue-white pyro explodes from the stage as Alvaro de Vargas has traded his old attire for pristine white with light blue flames running up one leg. The arena is covered in alternating flashes of blue and white. Hiding his eyes behind a pair of now blue-tinted sunglasses, his walk is more deliberate than before. He takes his time as the jeers get loud. Tom Morrow is at his side, but unlike his standard fare with The Lucky Sevens or Aaron King, there are no flashy intros for the man formerly known as El Sol Dorado.

DDK:

Alvaro alluded to having to "burn brighter" in recent interviews on UNCUT and DEF Radio. He shed the El Sol Dorado moniker in favor of whatever this is, but he hasn't said anything yet.

Lance:

He hasn't revealed why he attacked Magdalena or why he's targeting Deacon, but this looks bad for Crescent City Kid.

Alvaro hits the ring and rolls inside. He leans up on the second rope and the big man stares out into the jeering audience. No smiles. No arrogance. None of his usual hotdogging. ADV stands across from CCK and dares him to take his best shot. CCK looks over at Theodore Cain and Knox calls for the bell.

DING DING

The Philly Faithful are with The Kid as he charges right at ADV and then fires off a flying forearm on the button. The blow knocks ADV back a step or two, but his glasses haven't even come off when he tilts his head back and stares him down.

DDK:

Uh-oh...

Lance:

CCK beat Alvaro by countout last time these two fought, but I'd have to argue that was a case of MV1's presence at ringside and ADV's own nonchalance that helped do him in that night. Neither of those things are present.

Theodore Cain yells at CCK to fight back, so he does! He runs forward and hits a dropkick to the chest of Alvaro! Then a second one!

ADV staggers back to the ropes... but comes right back and KILLS Crescent City Kid with a vicious discus lariat off the ropes! CCK spins in mid-air and then crashes on the canvas!

DDK:

Oh, good Lord, what a shot! That lariat might have ended this match already!

Morrow gives the silent nod of approval to his client and then ADV grabs CCK by the neck with both hands. He holds them up by the throat and then SHOVES him back to a corner. ADV lifts him up by both hands and puts CCK on the top turnbuckle.... THEN THROWS HIM OFF WITH A DOUBLE CHOKE OVERHEAD THROW!

OOOOOOOH!

CCK crashes viciously into the canvas and Theodore Cain is in shock!

Lance:

Alvaro not playing around tonight! Not at all!

DDK:

And what is this?!

He sits up Crescent City Kid and then CRANKS in one direction with his neck and grabs his arm with the other in a stretch plum submission!

DDK:

Stretch Plum! He's got it locked in! And... HE TAPPED!

CCK frantically taps as ADV cranks back even tighter on the hold! Rex Knox calls for the bell and yells for Alvaro to let go!

DING DING DING

Darren Quimbey:

Here is your winner by submission... **ALVARO DE VARGAS!**

Despite hearing his name as the victor, the former El Sol Dorado does nothing for a few more seconds until Theodore Cain comes in! He catches ADV with some rights and the crowd cheers as he goes to help his friend!

DDK:

Theodore Cain coming to help his friend! He's got ADV backing off!

He continues to throw right hands with the quickness and backs Alvaro to the ropes, but ADV counters back quickly with a Scorcher thrust kick to the jaw!

Lance:

Scorcher! And Alvaro isn't done!

ADV looks to Morrow, who nods for him to continue. He grabs Cain by the hair...

...AND THROWS A FIREBALL IN HIS FACE!

The crowd gasps as Cain is left flailing about at ringside after the same blue fireball that debilitated Deacon two weeks ago has now just done the same to another individual. The gasps become loud jeering when DEFSec comes out from the back!

DDK:

No! Alvaro with another one of those newer fireballs! First, Deacon, now Theodore Cain!

ADV resumes pummeling CCK with left hand after left hand until DEFSec, headed by the massive Wyatt Bronson, try and pry him off! ADV jumps up and thrashes them away! One member of DEFSec tries to put his hands on Alvaro, only to catch a Scorcher kick of his own! The young DEFSec member gets knocked out of the ring, forcing other members to try and subdue him!

Lance:

NO! The wrestlers know some of these risks, but attacking staff or security? That's a fine, bare minimum at least!

DDK:

What has gotten into Alvaro?!

Lance:

I don't know, but DEFSec are forcing him from the ring!

CCK and Cain are down with medical staff now checking on both. ADV flees the ring and then heads to the back with Tom Morrow heading back up the ramp.

DDK:

I... I don't know. What is this? What has gotten into Alvaro? Why did he attack Deacon and Magdalena? We're still no closer to having answers to these questions...

ADV and Morrow storm through the curtain and head to the back... but this doesn't appear to be done.

THE WHY

The camera switches over to just outside the Guerilla Position into the backstage area where Alvaro de Vargas and Tom Morrow have stormed out. As they start to walk, Jamie Sawyers is there to try and catch a word with the departing duo.

Jamie Sawyers:

Excuse me... Tom? Alvaro? Can you explain what's the meaning of these attacks? First Deacon? Then out th...

ADV wastes no time. He SHOVES Sawyers on the ground and grabs his microphone.

Alvaro de Vargas:

No te debo nada.... Salir.

Sawyers looks up, worried.

Alvaro de Vargas:

LEAVE.

He fixes on the camera to address someone that he hopes is watching.

Alvaro de Vargas:

DEACON!

Morrow watches silently from behind the former El Sol Dorado speaks.

Alvaro de Vargas:

The Acts Tournament... the one that YOU asked for. That was your idea... but you left me out and didn't say anything when management wanted to keep me out. Then the little pendeja, Magdalena... UNCUT 126. She ran her mouth about people who didn't get into the tournament... people like me. So I closed her fucking mouth for her.

LOUD jeering is heard for the confession. Alvaro continues through it.

Alvaro de Vargas:

That blue fireball? Fuego azul? That was a demonstration, Hombre de Luz. Your holy light... that light that you hold so dear... is no match for the light that *I* BURN with now. This company has disrespected me for the LAST FUCKING TIME. El Sol Dorado should have been enough, but it wasn't. That golden light is gone. Replaced by a BRIGHTER flame! A HUNGRIER flame! A BURNING flame that wants only one thing...

Alvaro seethes.

Alvaro de Vargas:

... para quemar a TODOS a mi alrededor! To BURN everyone around me... starting with you. El Sol Dorado has been snuffed out, pendejos...

Creeping closer, ADV tilts his neck.

Alvaro de Vargas:

But Supernova Cubana? NO ONE will extinguish my flame. Ever. Again.

At that moment, DEFSec cuts through the curtain. Alvaro drops the microphone and turns his head to address the attackers. Morrow starts shouting at one of them, but ADV grabs another member of DEFSec by the shirt, then shitcans him in the direction of the camera...

Static.

Then commercials.

COMMERCIAL: THIS IS DEFIANCE!

CRUEL INTENTIONS

JJ Dixon is on the ground in a basement-type room, with an exposed brick wall, and some poor fluorescent lighting, rapidly doing pushups.

JJ Dixon:

98... 99... 100.

He then quickly gets up to his feet.

JJ Dixon:

MV1... I've got a few things I want to talk to you about. First thing's first - our match at the last DefTV was by far the best I have ever wrestled in my career. I left that match a better wrestler than when I entered. And I know you left a better wrestler than when you entered. I took the loss, and it's one that stings a lot. And man I want to run it back. I know you want to run it back. I know The Faithful want us to run it back. And I was about to set that in motion... until Teri Melton told me no. She told me to wait.

JJ rolls his shoulders.

JJ Dixon:

Now, what did you say after our match about her... you said that you were worried about me being twisted by Teri Melton's ill intent? Now, I won't lie. Teri indeed did twist me around and manipulate me when she was trying to recruit me. And her mystique and her beguiling nature and the talk about her mission... that's something that has taken me some time to wrap my brain around. But I'll tell you this. Teri, Zoltan and myself have broken down our match at least 50 times. Every move. And she's broken down all of your matches, and a bunch of matches of your opponents you've fought along the way. So those push-ups you just saw me do?

JJ slaps his chest.

JJ Dixon:

I've always been a gym guy. And anyone who has seen me in the gym knows, I can rack up a lot on the bar. But Teri told me no more of that. Instead, she has me doing hundreds of pushups a day. Some are the way they teach you in grade school. Others, I move my arms out wider. Some I do with one leg crossed over the other. And some I do with my hands in a triangle. The reason why is because you have some of the hardest and best chops in the business, brother. And after you chopped me up, I was having a hard time catching my breath, and you took advantage of that. Same in Tag Party IV, when Henry Keyes beat the f out of my chest. So now she has me doing pushups of all kinds because that's helping me develop the different parts of my chest muscles, the stabilizing muscles, the connectivity tissues. That's going to let me be able to absorb chops like yours or getting my chest rammed into the turnbuckle or the like a lot better than just me throwing up 350 on the bench press for 30 reps. And it's like that for my core, my legs, my back, my arm -- natural exercises, yoga, flexibility drills. This is just different, MV1.

JJ takes a swig of water from a water bottle.

JJ Dixon:

I also used to make sure I focused on cardio. I'd get on the treadmill and bingewatch Gilmore Girls or something on my tablet for a while. Now with Teri... I head down to the local high school football track. I start by doing 30 minutes of windsprints. Then I run a mile. Then I go and hop on some gym blocks we set up for 30 minutes. Another mile. Windsprints. Mile. Gym blocks. Repeat. Why's that? Because Teri describes pro wrestling as a sport of momentum. I'm not going to be in too many matches where I can just dominate start to finish. Wrestling's a back-and-forth sport. You get some windows of opportunity to take advantage. So I need to train my body to not just have the endurance for the long-haul, but to be able to tap into my explosive athletic ability even after I've been thrown around and stretched in a wrestling ring for 10, 15, 20 and 30 minutes.

JJ again stretches out his shoulders.

JJ Dixon:

Then she also broke down where I went wrong and what you did better. You've got a killer moveset, and you know how to connect them -- how to get from A to B to C. You came in with a strategy in finding a limb to work on early and to go back to that when you needed to throughout the match. You came in with counters to my finisher, and when you realized I was having a hard time getting my wind back, you went for the kill. Me? I managed to fly over the ropes with a backflip and crashed onto you on the floor. But then that ended up with you finding a way to get back into the ring first and nearly rolling me up for the pin. The past few months, I've managed to figure out how to turn my "one percent of one percent" level athleticism into some shit I never thought I'd do, and I've got Sunset Boulevard in my back pocket. But now it's me knowing how to use what I have at the right time, and it's about me learning WHY I should use certain moves at certain times. And we do a lot of this type of training after I get back from my cardio, because I'm going to need to figure out how to handle you cradling me up when I'm sucking up oxygen.

JJ finishes the water.

JJ Dixon:

So as far as Teri Melton's ill intentions go, well, that may be. But I know that before The Uncut Gems came into being that I would not have lasted more than five minutes in the ring with you, let alone be able to go toe-to-toe with you for about 20 in one of the best matches of the year. All of the trade secrets I just told you? They're hers. And why am I telling you my trade secrets, MV1? Because I want you to go out and do whatever it is you have to do to prepare for our rematch. Because when we run this back, I don't just want to beat you. I want everyone walking away realizing that I am who I say I am - the soon-to-be best wrestler on this planet and The Special Attraction!

From the left side of the screen, dressed in his dark suit, is Zoltan. And from the right wearing a pink pillbox hat with black netting over a black, form-fitting dress is Teri Melton, as always with her cigarette holder.

Teri Melton:

MV1, somebody has to pay a VERY severe price because you dared to question my intentions. I've explained our goals many times already. The Uncut Gems will be the greatest force DEFIANCE wrestling has ever seen, and that means Mr. Dixon will one day become its greatest champion. That is our DESTINY. I have a habit of moving pawns around the chessboard until they realize the queen is the most powerful entity in the game. I guarantee you will find this out soon, MV1. Because Teri Melton...

Teri steps forward to the camera as JJ and Zoltan step in behind her.

Teri Melton:

Is ready...

Teri bends down so her face is at camera level as JJ and Zoltan both do "DiamondHands" together.

Teri Melton:

For her closeup!

STRONG AF vs. THOMAS SLAINE vs. SHO NAKAZAWA

DDK:

Ladies and gentlemen, what we have next is a special play-in match for the FIST/SoHer Battle Royal later tonight. After Alvaro de Vargas unleashed a heinous assault on Crescent City Kid, Theodore Cain and a member of DEFSec, he was kicked out of the building and lost his spot in the Battle Royal!

Lance:

This is the second time in a few months that Alvaro de Vargas' violent behavior has cost him a potential shot at the FIST. He crippled his ex-partner, Jack Mace, to get barred from the ACTS Tournament won by Lindsay Troy... and now this.

DDK:

ADV places the blame for his recent misfortunes squarely on Deacon, but we'll have to delve into that story another time... cause when one door closes, another one opens. Strong AF, a recent graduate of BRAZEN, now finds his debut match as a play-in match where the winner will get ADV's spot! He takes on Sho Nakazawa, still nursing a fractured wrist after an assault from Tyler Fuse several weeks ago, but with a brace, along with Thomas Slaine in this upcoming triple threat match!

Lance:

A last-minute opportunity for one lucky DEFIANCE star! Let's go to ringside for the next match!

To Darren Quimbey we go.

Darren Quimbey:

The following match is a triple threat Battle Royal Play-in match set for one fall! The winner of this match will be awarded entry into the FIST and Southern Heritage Battle Royal! Introducing first, from Tateyama, Japan, weighing in at 185 pounds... **SHO NAKAZAWA!**

♪ "Pyrotechnics" by Cliff Lin ♪

Sho Nakazawa, the masked man from the land of the rising sun, walks through the curtain to a subdued but audible round of cheers from the DEFIANCE Faithful who, despite his less than win/loss record, still knows what he can do in the squared circle. Nakazawa pauses to give the fans a quick bow of respect before sprinting toward the ring with a brace on the hand that Tyler Fuse damaged several weeks back. Once he's inside, he waits.

Darren Quimbey:

Next up, from Nachitoches, Louisiana, weighing in at 221 pounds... **THOMAS SLAINE!**

♪ "I Feel Love (Every Million Miles)" by The Dead Weather ♪

The music hits and Thomas Slaine steps out from the back, ready to fight. The brawler then starts running to the ring and when he gets there, he points an imaginary gun up in the air, blows imaginary smoke from pulling the imaginary trigger, then steps inside the ring. He steps into a corner. Last...

Darren Quimbey:

And their opponent... from Seattle, Washington, weighing in at 267 pounds... he is Allen Fosters... **STRONG AF!**

♪ "Watch Me" The Phantoms ♪

The lights start to go dark and in moments, they give way to green lights flashing in tune with the drum beats of the music. Wearing a dark green towel over his broad shoulders, green thigh-length trunks with a white AF logo on the front, he marches with a golden plate on a pedestal at the entrance. He smirks, and then rubs his hands in the bowl full of weightlifting chalk before THROWING it up in the air in a cloud!

DDK:

Strong AF has been successful in his last several UNCUT outings, but tonight, he fights for the opportunity of his career. What better way to make a debut than to earn a shot at either the Southern Heritage Title or even... the FIST of DEFIANCE!

Strong AF marches towards the ring. He sheds his green towel as he gets jeers from The Faithful. Once the strongman gets in, the match begins.

DING DING

The bell rings with Nakazawa going right for Strong AF with a running dropkick to the chest! The big man doesn't go off his feet, but gets knocked into a corner. Thomas Slaine joins the attack and runs right at the former powerlifter with a barrage of right hands in the corner. He rains down the punches, but The Seattle Strongman shoves him back!

DDK:

Both Nakazawa and Slaine are starting to gang up the largest man in the match! Smart strategy to get him out of this match as quick as possible!

Strong AF is still not knocked off his feet, but Li'l Nak shoots back up and charges at him with a running high kick in the corner. Nak nods at Slaine and both men each grab an arm and try to whip him across the ring... but instead, he pulls THEM back into his grip. He has each on a shoulder and DROPS them with a huge double back body drop instead! Strong AF takes a knee and beats on his chest, laughing like an asshole after the impressive feat of strength.

Lance:

You're right! That was a great idea in practice by Li'l Nak and Thomas Slaine, but Strong AF shows exactly what's bringing him to the dance!

DDK:

And now he's going after Nakazawa!

He picks up Nakazawa and pitches him to the corner for a huge corner clothesline! He sees Thoams Slaine getting up in the opposite corner and then heads in that direction to clobber him with a big shot! Slaine is stunned when Strong AF pops the bones in his neck and then presses Slaine with no issues. He holds him up and then throws him forward.

Strong AF:

STRONG! A! F!

DDK:

Don't just sit there and say your name! Win the match, kid!

Strong AF goes to look for Li'l Nak next and sees him still hunched over into the corner. He charges again at Li'l Nak, but this time, he catches a jumping spin kick from the cruiserweight! He stumbles back to the ropes then Nakazawa goes for kicks to the legs to try and get him down. He tries a whip, but Strong AF grabs him by the arm and throws him through the ropes... but Sho lands on the apron.

DDK:

Sho saves himself! Strong AF charges!

He charges, but Sho leaps up and hits a kick from the apron. He gets stumbled, allowing Thomas Slaine to come back and charge at Strong AF with a shotgun dropkick that knocks him through the ropes and out to the floor!

Lance:

Nice unintentional double-team by Nakazawa and Slaine! The big man is out of the ring!

The brawler from Louisiana gets up and starts patting himself on the shoulder, but before he can capitalize, Sho comes out of nowhere with a big springboard moonsault!

DDK:

Li'l Nak with the cover!

*ONE...**TWO... NO!*

Slaine kicks out, but Nakazawa goes wild with kicks to the chest. He peppers him with a few shots and then hits the ropes, but when he comes back, Slaine counters back with a big flying elbow to the face!

Lance:

And now Slaine with a cover of his own! Can he win the Play-In?

*ONE...**TWO... NO!*

The Faithful cheer for the underdog in Li'l Nak for kicking out while Slaine continues to rain down right hands on the masked wrestler.

DDK:

He's keeping the pressure on! This opportunity for these men is massive!

Slaine continues to attack Nakazawa and then picks him up. He clubs him over the back with a pair of elbows, but when he tries to come back off the ropes with a lariat, Nakazawa surprises him with a jumping thrust kick! It sends him through the ropes and Nakazawa has a chance to attack. He goes to one side of the ring and and dives through the ropes so he can hit a suicide dive through the rope to nail Slaine against the barricade!

Lance:

Look at Sho Nakazawa go!

Li'l Nak gets back into the ring. He charges off the other side of the ring when he sees Strong AF waiting. He dives through the ropes on him...

Caught...

BELLY TO BELLY SUPLEX ON THE FLOOR!**DDK:**

Oooh! Strong AF takes care of Nakazawa on the floor!

The Seattle Strongman stands over Li'l Nak now and then laughs before he sees Thomas Slaine starting to stand over the ropes. He decides to slowly head that way and circles the ringside area. When he gets halfway there, he kisses his bicep and charges...

THEN TAKES SLAINE'S HEAD OFF WITH A RUNNING CLOTHESLINE!**DDK:**

What a shot! Strong AF just wiped him out with that big clothesline!

Lance:

That power of his really is a game-changer! He's living up to his name right now.

The crowd jeers when he picks up Slaine and then throws him back into the ring. He climbs back inside with the fans jeering. He starts to climb back inside and then follows Slaine. He pulls Slaine to his feet and then whips him off the

ropes before hitting him with a big pop-up powerslam!

DDK:

That's gotta be it right there!

Strong AF goes for a cover...

ONE...

TWO... BROKEN BY NAKAZAWA!

DDK:

Li'l Nak makes the save just in time, but how much does he have left after that suplex on the floor?

He doesn't appear to have much as Strong AF picks him up quickly with a big elbow to the face. He hooks both arms around a leg of Li'l Nak and the HOISTS him up right into a big modified chokeslam!

DDK:

He calls that move Deadly AF! And that might do it!

He hooks both legs of Sho Nakazawa, though he may not need to. He eyes Slaine, but he's still down.

ONE...

TWO...

THREE!

DING DING DING

♪ "Watch Me" The Phantoms ♪

After getting the pinfall, he stands up and shakes his arm for the referee to raise his arm. When he does so, Strong AF pulls it away just so he can flex.

Darren Quimbey:

Here is your winner and advancing to the FIST and SoHer Battle Royale...**STRONG! AF!**

When the big jock is done entertaining himself after his win, he motions for a microphone. He sees Darren Quimbey at ringside and decides to help himself to his!

DDK:

Not really endearing himself at all, I see.

Strong AF:

Cut the music! Now!

The music quickly fades out as The Faithful don't seem to keen on listening.

Strong AF:

This result wasn't a shock. You see these muscles? These helped me win. I knew had this match in the bag and you tankasses and turkeynecks can boo all you want. Swoles don't worry about the opinions of sweatdogs.

Lance:

...What?

More booing, but Strong AF continues as he faces the entrance.

Strong AF:

You'll get to see these boulder-like shoulders again when I win that Battle Royal later tonight. But right now, there's someone back there that has my attention, and I'm talking to you... Dan Leo James.

DDK:

We saw Strong AF get into a verbal altercation with James two weeks ago, but what does he want with him?

Strong AF continues.

Strong AF:

Two years ago when I got to BRAZEN, I could feel the jealousy when I walked in the door. This body and these muscles had everyone SHOOK, but because I didn't start out as some fifteen-year-old flippy kid, nobody gave me an opportunity. I made my own. But there was another guy down there, Dan Leo James. Three-sport athlete, great physical gifts... but two left feet. He got taken in by Titanes Familia and they coached him. Someone from this roster got picked up... and it was THAT giant dork? And not me?

Lance:

I'm sensing a little bitterness there? Those two were no strangers to one another in BRAZEN and they didn't like each other.

Strong AF:

I busted my ass to get here, but what happens when I finally do? I just had to EARN my way into this Battle Royal, while THAT tool just gets handed a spot to be in it? Just like he got handed a spot in Titanes Familia? I'll tell you what... if it was ME picked to be part of Titanes Familia instead of you, Danny? Uriel Cortez and Titaness would still be the Unified Tag Team Champions.

BOOOOOOOOO!

He strikes a nerve with the crowd, but keeps on going.

Strong AF:

We had to sit here and watch your stupid ass figure out how to do a chokeslam for MONTHS. I just did one in this match to prove anything you can do, I can do better, Danny. You better watch your ass in that Battle Royal cause... HEY!

The crowd starts cheering when Dan Leo James rips through the curtain and charges the ring! The big Utah native runs down the ramp, throws off his trackjacket and throws it down while Strong AF grins at him and drops the microphone!

Lance:

Uh-oh! James has heard When Strong AF sees him coming, he meets him at the ring!

Strong AF tries to grab Dan, but he pulls him out of the ring by his leg and out to the floor! Danny starts trading shots with The Seattle Strongman with fans wanting to see the two hosses go at it!

DDK:

Dan Leo James is probably one of the nicest kids we have in DEFIANCE, but Strong AF knew where it hurt. Titanes Familia are still pissed after what happened to The Lucky Sevens and Ned Reform costing them the titles when they had one chance to fight back.

DEFSec rushes the ring, keen on not having another repeat of what happened with Alvaro de Vargas going too far with his assaults! The two men continue to fight with James being pulled back and Strong AF laughing about getting under his skin!

Lance:

The two aren't being allowed to fight, but they'll both be a part of that big Battle Royal as well along with many others hoping to earn a shot at either the Southern Heritage Championship or even the FIST of DEFIANCE!

DEFSec continue to keep the hosses separate as they scream at one another through the wall of humanity keeping them apart.

Strong AF:

Get off me, I'm kicking his ass!

Dan Leo James:

Keep running that mouth and I'm gonna shut it!

COMMERCIAL: BRAZEN



MOROCCO

The backstage area is abuzz with a flurry of technicians and production assistants. Our view lingers on a non-descript older man dressed in a coal black suit. He absently smooths his tousled white hair into place, nervously surveying the arena's receiving area. He is waiting for someone. And not just anyone.

Placing the bowler cap atop his head, Lord Nigel Trickelbush finds a delighted smile, eyes going wide at something that caught his gaze across the way. His angular face tries to soften as he sweeps out of shot towards his quarry.

The camera spins and when it finally comes to a rest, we are in stark black & white and it is pouring rain. Nigel steps into shot, pulling the tip of his fedora over his eyes before taking one last, longing drag from a thin-rolled cigarette and dropping it underfoot. He pulls his trenchcoat around himself as a lonely saxophone wails somewhere in the distance. Taking another step forward, we see her. Suddenly, they are alone.

The figure is a woman, wearing an all-black cloche hat shaped like a bell, swirled with an array of daisies. The woman pauses and stands, her hand clenched on her hip as she wears a shapely sheath black dress with black gloves up to her elbows. The woman herself pulls out a long cigarette holder and takes a long drag before looking upwards and exhaling a large puff of smoke in the air.

The woman's head returns to eye level and it is a now recognizable figure as the camera gives Teri Melton her close-up.

Sweeping an umbrella open over his head, Nigel steps into her path. She looks up, first at the umbrella, then at him, the pair's faces framed in perfect, milky light. Teri's smokey eyes are as hard to read as ever and twice as alluring, she is aloof. Nigel plays it cool but the ruse is whisper thin. The saxophone takes a breath before sobbing anew.

Lord Nigel Trickelbush:

How long has it been?

Teri Melton:

Not long enough to miss you.

Lord Nigel Trickelbush:

You never called.

Teri Melton:

Would you have answered had I?

Lord Nigel Trickelbush:

I can forgive, you know.

Teri Melton:

You assume I care to be forgiven.

Teri looks away, hurt.

Lord Nigel Trickelbush:

You left me in Morocco, all those years ago... and yet, here we are again. Is this that thing they call fate, I wonder?

Teri Melton:

Mortals believe in fate. I believe in destiny.

Teri looks away from Lord Nigel even as they stand together under the umbrella.

Lord Nigel Trickelbush:

You and this... JJ. Are you... serious?

Teri bats her eyes.

Teri Melton:

You know me well enough to know that I'm always serious.

Teri moves to turn away, a sly grin on her lips. Nigel throws the umbrella to the ground and pulls Teri close to him, the rain falling down hardest now. Neither of them feel it, streaming down. The sax sings to them.

Lord Nigel Trickelbush:

Why must you wound me? Always a handful. Why can't it be like the old days?

Teri pushes him away, turning her back to him. Eyes searching the sky for a moment, she spins on a heel back at him.

Teri Melton:

The old days? I know what that means... Everything, a transaction.

Nigel grins as he adjusts his fedora.

Lord Nigel Trickelbush:

Well... there's always time for business.

Her eyes narrow through the rain.

Teri Melton:

I don't come cheap.

Nigel mocks shock.

Lord Nigel Trickelbush:

I'd never assume so! Besides... it's the services of your "serious" client I might wish to employ.

Picking his umbrella off the ground, Teri covers herself.

Teri Melton:

His services might cost you more. Speak plainly, Nigel. What do you want?

His odd smile stretches, then turns sour.

Lord Nigel Trickelbush:

The masked man. The Violator. He is a hindrance to everything I am trying to accomplish with Corvo Alpha. His mere presence is a distraction, a blight on my efforts. Your man should... continue to occupy him.

Nigel steps out of the rain and back under the umbrella, bringing himself close to her again.

Lord Nigel Trickelbush:

Your man should... remove him.

Her lips nearly brush against his.

Teri Melton:

And in return?

Lord Nigel Trickelbush:

Name your price. Anything.

Closer.

Teri Melton:

Anything?

Closer still.

And Teri pulls away, spinning, leaving Nigel awkwardly catching the umbrella. She calls over her slender shoulder to him.

Teri Melton:

\$100,000 cash, up-front, and you have yourself a deal and, if you play your cards right... you'll have your hands full once more.

Nigel flashes a devilish smile as we catch Teri disappearing down what appears to be an alley, the last of the raindrops falling with her footsteps.

Lord Nigel Trickelbush:

Deal, indeed.

Camera turning again, we find Lord Nigel Trickelbush - back in full, vibrant color and quite dry, the saxophone silent and forgotten - anxiously closing his umbrella. Adjusting the black bowler cap atop his head and taking a moment to smooth a lone damp lock of hair behind an ear as he does so, there are suddenly production staff and medical techs milling about him once more. A dumbstruck grin on his face, Nigel steps back and disappears into the throng of workers as we fade to black.

MEMBERS ONLY

Backstage, the camera pans on several individuals.

Vae Victis hopeful, Butcher Victorious, carrying two sets of bags.

Vae Victis' official advocate, spokesperson and overall wrestling legend, Sonny Silver.

And the man in front...

BOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO!

DEFIANCE Himself... Oscar Burns.

Burns is looking a tad annoyed being here tonight, considering how his last DEFtv show ended with one of the biggest upsets of the year in BRAZEN Champion Declan Alexander defeating him. As he walks, Sonny inches close by.

Sonny Silver:

Look, Oscar... I know what happened with that Declan kid was a fluke, but you gotta put that out of your mind right now. Let me deal with it and you worry about other business tonight. That gonna be a problem?

Burns eyes Sonny.

Oscar Burns:

You know who I am, GC. I don't "worry" like normal people do. Pressure makes diamonds, and I'm the brightest this company has ever produced. I'm not...

DEC4L:

HEY! Coach Silver. Oscar F'N Burns! How's it goin' fam?

Oscar nearly jumps! The former two-time FIST of DEFIANCE eyes down the young student of Vae Victis' own Lindsay Troy...

Oscar Burns: (straining)

...Declan.

DEC4L:

I feel like I'm failing a vibe check here, so let me just be 100 with you for a second. I've been watching DEFIANCE since way before any of you knew who in the world I was. I'm a HUGE fan, really I am. Just to share a ring with you, TWICE even, was totally an honor. I don't want you to think I was trying to finesse you or anything. It wasn't about trying to make you take an L, I just wanted to show the world what I have to offer, you know, soooooo truce?

The PogChamp extends a hand and is met by glares. Before Burns can reply, Sonny taps him on the shoulder.

Sonny Silver:

Hey... remember. Focus on your thing. Let me talk to the kid.

Sonny turns to face Declan.

Sonny Silver:

Declan Alexander. BRAZEN Champion. Already making a lot of waves. I saw you first-hand down there. I can see what LT saw in you. You have something. You HAVE to have something in order to...

He eyes Burns, who shoots him a look back that could kill someone if looks did such a thing

Sonny Silver:

...Do what you did two weeks ago. But let's talk business, kid.

A giant grin forms across the lips of the Intrepid Influencer, he cracks his fingers before continuing.

DEC4L:

I'm a bit of a business man at times. What's on your mind, Coach?

Sonny Silver:

I saw your UNCUT interview. So... I understand this right, you want to be a member of Vae Victis, is that it? This is really what you want? Cause I'll be honest... you have a lot of UNNATURAL talent. I don't think the entire time I helped with BRAZEN last year that I saw anyone that could do what you do at such a young age... but there's plenty more to what we do than this. And this ain't your streaming, gaming, Tikkety-Toks bullshit. This is real life. This isn't a game. That something you think you could handle if we let you into Vae Victis?

DEC4L:

Look, I know I'm young but I've made an entire empire on doing things people have told me I can't handle. My entire family told me I couldn't stream because it would make me fail my classes. Passed. Honor roll. W. I was told I couldn't be a professional wrestler and the only reason I got signed to BRAZEN was because of my social media following. Now I'm the BRAZEN Champion. W. Nobody is going to tell me that I can't do something, Coach.

Suddenly, Butcher drops the bags he's been holding in the background.

Butcher Victorious:

Oh, no! No! BUTCH VIC... AIN'T GONNA TAKE THIS SHIT!

He marches up to Declan.

Butcher Victorious:

No... Dude! Do you know how much footage I've been studying since working for Oscar Burns? How many bags have I had to drag? How many times have I had my life threatened by Clay Byrd for, quote, "looking at his hat funny?" I spent a week in jail cause I couldn't pay their tab i didn't know I was paying, but that's cool... that's cool. And it's a cool hat... where was I? Oh yeah...

He taps the BRAZEN Championship on Declan's shoulder.

Butcher Victorious:

I'm challenging YOU to a match for that title! TONIGHT!

Sonny and Oscar exchange glances, but PogChamp doesn't look worried.

DEC4L:

Unlike some people, I ain't here to stan my way into Vae Victis. My record speaks for itself. If you want to take a shot at the champ you best not miss, BV. Call me Declan Alexander Hamilton, because I don't throw away my shots. I'll see you in the ring, simp... and hey, Coach. Come out and watch. Bring Burns. Take some notes. I think you'll like what you see.

Declan takes his leave and Butcher watches him leave. Burns doesn't say a thing, but still looks like his blood is about to boil over.

Sonny Silver:

Hey. Focus on tonight. Lindsay likes that kid, so I'll deal with it...

Butcher Victorious:

Then Butch Vic will bring the BRAZEN Championship to Vae Vic!

Sonny mutters angrily under his breath as he and Oscar walk away. Butcher starts to daydream about title success while wheeling bags as the show moseys on elsewhere.

DEX JOY vs. CORVO ALPHA

DDK:

Up next, a rematch of the absolute brawl we witnessed two weeks ago at DEFtv 177!

Lance:

Coming out of ACTS of DEFIANCE, Dex Joy seemed set on a collision course for a confrontation with the FIST of DEFIANCE, Lindsay Troy. And while that may still be the case, a speed bump in the form of the monster, Corvo Alpha, presented itself and... what a speed bump it was.

DDK:

We were talking during our last commercial break, Lance and I, about just how scary a moment that was for us. After that brutal, grueling contest... seeing Dex get busted open like that. The way his head snapped back when he hit that ringpost. Let's be honest, Dex Joy has been running hard. When the bell rang and Corvo Alpha was called the winner... There was genuine concern out here that Dex Joy was seriously hurt.

Lance:

Well, we do know that he was given sixteen stitches from that impact on the ring steps but avoided a concussion. I'm told that the symptoms from the stinger he also suffered two weeks ago have subsided but his doctors remain concerned. They've asked him to stay off the road and rest and yet... Dex Joy is here tonight and on UNCUT he demanded a rematch against Corvo Alpha and that rematch is up next.

The house lights slowly dim.

♪ "Electric Funeral (Instrumental) by Black Sabbath" ♪

Darren Quimbey:

Ladies and gentlemen, our next match is scheduled for one fall... Introducing first, accompanied to the ring by his handler, Lord Nigel Trickelbush, he hails from Parts Untold and weighs in tonight at 266 pounds...

Lord Nigel is already at the apex of the rampway, right arm sweeping majestically towards the rippling curtain. Corvo Alpha bursts through, nearly tearing the curtain off its moorings. A red wound of crimson paint smeared across his bare chest, he wears no face paint. Stomping down the aisle, he slides into the ring and lingers in a corner.

Darren Quimbey:

Call him... CORVO ALLLLLLLPPHHHAAAAA!

Lord Nigel ascends to the ring apron, doffing his cap to enter. He finds his charge in the corner and sedates him with a calming hand on his slumped shoulder.

The music fades.

Darren Quimbey:

And his opponent...

Section by section, all across the Michael J. Hagan Arena, lights start to go out block by block. The Philly Faithful buzz with excitement. On the DEFIATRON, a strong brick wall appears before a MASSIVE black and gold wrecking ball explodes through it in dramatic slow motion.

♪ "Fight Back" by Konata Small ♪

Dex Joy explodes onto the stage himself, decked out in a black and gold wrestling singlet with matching boots and pads. The DEFIANCE Wrestling Faithful show him love and he pauses atop the ramp to point out every section in the building and show them some love back.

Darren Quimbey:

From Los Angeles, California... Weighing in tonight at 344 pounds... He is the LEADER of DEX'S WRECKIN' CREW!!

Dex Joy:

WHO WRECKS LIKE DEX?!?!

NO ONE!!!

Joy charges down the aisle, tagging hands along the way, a quiet determination etched across his face.

Darren Quimbey:

He is DEEEEEEEEEEEEXX JOOO-

DDK:

LOOK OUT!

Dex hits the ring and doesn't wait for a bell! Both men wildly throw closed fists as Trickelbush and Darren Quimbey are ushered out of the ring by Jonny Fastcountini.

DING DING

Lance:

On UNCUT last week, Dex Joy said he wasn't going to wait for doctors' permission... It seems he doesn't care to wait for the official's permission either! Alpha seemed ready for it and LOOK at this flurry! Two bulls just pushing each other around the ring!

Joy uses his natural height and weight advantage to muscle Alpha into a corner. For every knee that Joy lands low, Alpha is finding an elbow to land high, and vice versa. Each man trades strikes.

DDK:

Dex Joy irish whips Corvo across the ring and Corvo collides shoulder first with that turnbuckle!

Dex wastes little time following Corvo into the corner with a splash, but at the last possible moment, Corvo ducks out of the way.

DDK:

Nobody home and Dex hits chest first, staggering backwards! BIG running lariat from Corvo Alpha nearly takes Dex's head off!

Lance:

We saw the damage that lariat from Corvo Alpha can do two weeks ago and you've gotta believe that Corvo Alpha is gonna go with what works.

The camera lingers on a shot of Lord Nigel Trickelbush, leaning under the bottom rope into the ring, barking direction towards his charge.

Lance:

You've gotta believe that THAT man, Nigel Trickelbush, knows that Dex Joy is hurt and he is going to have Alpha target that head, target that neck-

As if on cue, Corvo stands over Dex and starts blistering him with closed fists to the forehead. Referee Fastcountini is quick to interject, finally getting Alpha to let up.

DDK:

Targeting those sixteen stitches-

Lance:

He may have had one punch for each of them!

DDK:

And Dex Joy, being wrenched to his feet by Alpha – SHOVED Alpha off of him! Kick to the stomach! Joy grabs Alpha! SUPLEX! NO! Alpha lands on his feet, modified rear waistlock by Alpha – and now Joy just drives them both BACKWARDS into the corner! Joy just CRUSHED Alpha in the corner!

Lance:

Dex Joy and his rare combination of size, strength and speed! Always aware of his surroundings, just stopped Corvo Alpha in his tracks!

Alpha shakes out the cobwebs for a moment – and then erupts out of the corner at Joy. Dex catches him and SLAMS him in a sit-out sideslam and hooks the leg.

ONE!

T–

DDK:

Alpha kicks out! But Dex is on him! Pulls Alpha back to his feet by his hair! Scoop! SLAM! Falling head-butt–

Lance:

Dex is favoring his neck after that move! That might have been ill-advised!

DDK:

Meanwhile, Alpha is back up! Joy catches him low with a knee! Irish whip! Dex drops down as Alpha hits the far ropes – Joy POPS ALPHA UP and catches him with a CUTTER!!

The Faithful hit their feet!

Lance:

Could this be it?!

ONE!

TWO!!

THR– KICKOUT!!

Dex smiles at a worried Lord Nigel, pacing at ringside, as he finds his feet. Pulling Alpha back to his own – Corvo grabs a handful of the front of Dex's tights and YANKS Joy towards him, sending him head & shoulder first into the turnbuckle with a **THUD**.

DDK:

Oh my! Did you hear that, Lance?

The floor camera rushes to get a close up of a very dazed and glazed Dex Joy hanging between the ropes, working to pull himself to his feet. His right hand cradles the back of his head. A trickle of blood runs from his stitches and into his eyes like a "check engine light".

Lance:

Dex Joy could be in trouble here...

Corvo doesn't wait for Dex to get upright on his own, grabbing him from behind and HURLING him overhead with a

suplex!

DDK:

That's a three hundred and fifty pound man Corvo just launched overhead! And land on his head, Dex did! But look at the fight in this man! Against all odds, he is back up! Alpha CHARGES!!

Dex sets his feet, grabs Corvo Alpha and BIELS him up and over the top rope. Alpha lands on the apron before eating a HUGE boot in the face from Dex that sends Alpha reeling off the apron and *crashing* into the guard rail!

Lance:

Launches Alpha outta the ring, giving Dex Joy a chance to catch his breath!

Dex cradles his head for a moment before standing upright, fired up.

DEX JOY:

WHOOOOO WREEECKS LIIIIKE DEEEEEEEEX?!?

NO OOOOOONE!!

The crowd goes right into the *WHOOOAAAA* as Dex bounds off the ropes and-

DDK:

WHOA-PE SUICIDA!!! NOOO!!

CRASH!

Lance:

Corvo turned out of the way!! Dex Joy THROUGH THE ROPES AND HEAD FIRST INTO THE RINGSIDE GUARDRAIL!

The Faithful gasp together as several fans in the front row lean over the rail to encourage an unmoving Dex Joy to get up. Joy doesn't have time to consider it as Corvo Alpha is immediately there, pulling him to his feet. Lord Nigel barks at his dog, eyes angry and urgent. Corvo grabs Joy and nails a LIFTED DDT onto the ringside floor.

SPLAT!

The Wrecking Crew is despondent as Dex flops over on the floor, the stitches on his head now a mangled red mess of blood.

DDK:

Alpha is quick to pull Joy to his feet... and it's taking quite a bit of effort to do so, Lance... rolling him back into the ring and in behind him...

Lance:

Corvo is feeling the opportunity here, you can see it in every move he makes; the clear focus. Climbs the turnbuckle!! I think we can count on one hand how many times we have seen Corvo Alpha take flight off the top rope!

Alpha struggles with balance for a moment... then LEAPS - Dex Joy SNATCHES him out of the air and onto his shoulders!

Lance:

THUNDEROUS DEX-5! But look at Dex, clutching his neck and head after delivering that high-impact maneuver to Alpha!

Wincing in pain, Dex crawls over as Jonny Fastcountini gets into position.

DDK:
COVER!

ONE!

TWO!!

THR- NOOO!

Lance:

Alpha shoots a shoulder up! And Dex rolls away to catch his breath and... oh, Keeps... I'm worried about his neck. Everything he has been through these last few months... what we saw last week, now this dive into the guard rail... I don't like this...

The camera gets tight on Dex's face; teeth gritted, eyes clenched shut, one hand on the back of his head, the other clenching the back of his neck. Referee Jonny Fastcountini kneels at Joy's side, visibly concerned.

Lance:

You can see the anxiousness on the face of Ref Jonny as he checks on Dex Joy. As I look around the jam-packed Michael J. Hagan Arena, I see a lot of distress and unease on the faces of Dex Joy's Wrecking Crew and the Faithful at large!

We see Dex wearily brush Jonny off just as Alpha is getting to his feet. Alpha works to pull Dex to his feet by his face and hair, ignoring an earful from Fastcountini in the process.

DDK:

JUMPING PILEDRIVER from Corvo Alpha! Are you kidding?!? He hooks BOTH legs on Joy!

ONE!!

TWO!!!

KICKOUT by DEX JOY!

Lance:

The fight and the drive inside of Dex Joy has been well documented over the years here in DEFIANCE and we are seeing that never quit, never stop attitude on full display tonight!

DDK:

But when is enough enough?!

Dex moves slowly to his knees before Alpha mounts him and starts laying in forearms, elbows and first the the back of his head and neck. The crowd groans in anger.

Lance:

That's a fair question, Keeps.

The blows continue to reign down, Fastcountini continues to warn Alpha, Alpha doesn't hear him.

DDK:

LOOK AT THIS! Ref Jonny just PULLED Alpha off of Dex!! And now Alpha SPINS on Fastcountini!!

Lance:

With the best of intentions, Jonny may have just made a grave miscalculation!

Alpha stands over the referee, threateningly, for a moment. Sensing a change of temperature in the air, and as the Faithful start to cheer, Alpha turns – and walks into a HUGE POUNCE BY DEX JOY! DEXY's MIDNIGHT RUNNER!

DDK:

Alpha just got pounced and BOUNCED across the ring!

Lance:

But that took a lot out of Dex! He can't capitalize!

Bloody and battered, Dex finds himself clutching his neck again with one hand and waving the ref off with the other. On the other side of the ring, Lord Nigel whispers words of dark wisdom in the ear of Alpha and Corvo opts to roll under the bottom rope and out of the ring.

DDK:

Dex spots Corvo on the retreat and he is pressing the attack, following Alpha outside.

Lord Nigel leaps on the apron to argue with Fastcountini, leaving Alpha to his own twisted devices. As Dex slides under the bottom rope to give chase, Alpha HURLS a steel chair at Dex Joy's face. Dex deflects it as best he can into the ringpost behind him – but is unable to do the same to the RUNNING BOOT behind it–

OOF!!!

DDK:

DEX'S HEAD WAS IN BETWEEN ALPHA'S BOOT AND THAT RINGPOST! WHAT A DEVASTATING IMPACT!

Lance:

Alpha swings Dex towards the apron and is rolling him back into the ring ... oh my, Dex is really on dreamstreet...

DDK:

Alpha scoops Dex up... another display of power... POWERBOMB – DEX'S HEAD CAUGHT THE BOTTOM ROPE!! My GOD!!

Lance:

Dex Joy is in trouble!

Alpha doesn't go for a pin! Just another mount and another ASSAULT! Unprotected strikes to Dex's head–

Lance:

Dex is out!

DDK:

–one after another! Referee Jonny Fastcountini is splitting time checking on Dex Joy and warning Corvo Alpha that he could be disqualified with some of those blows and–

A distraught Fastcountini stands full up-right, looking towards the timekeeper, and calls for the bell.

DING DING DING

DDK:

What the–

Alpha's blows are halted by Lord Nigel appearing on the ring apron. At ringside, Darren Quimbey adjusts his ear-piece as he is fed the call.

Darren Quimbey:

Ladies and gentlemen, the referee has ordered that this match be STOPPED... the winner of this bout... CORVO... ALLLPPPHAAAAA!

Lance:

I think Jonny saw something there when he checked on Dex. This... could be bad.

Lord Nigel points to ringside. Head hung low, Alpha slips out of the ring and muscles the metal ring steps into the air to an *OHHHH!!!* from the crowd.

DDK:

What is this all about?! He just threw the steps over the top rope and into the ring! The match is OVER!

Lance:

Tell that to Corvo Alpha!

Lord Nigel steps over Dex Joy's unmoving body to a chorus of boos from the Wrecking Crew only to then walk up to the top of the steps. He retrieves a microphone from his jacket and the audible contempt only rises. DEFmed team members attempt to get in the ring but Alpha chases them all out, swinging wildly at them. Standing at the top of the ring steps in the center of the ring, with a bloody and seemingly unconscious Dex Joy at the bottom of them, his smarmy smile is at its smarmiest.

Lord Nigel Trickelbush:

Your passion. Your courage. Your drive.

Nigel sweeps the hat off of his head melodramatically, ostensibly a cue to Corvo to pull Dex Joy up to his knees. He does so to rising tension in the building.

Lord Nigel Trickelbush:

Honestly, I expected so much more... of all of it. You're a disappointment, Dex Joy. And we are finished with you.

Standing on the second step, Alpha pulls Joy up and forces his head between his legs. The Faithful groan as he lifts him up and LEAPS–

DDK:

JUMPING PILEDRIVER ON THE STEPS!! NO!!! That man is hurt!

Lord Nigel is resplendent atop the steps, arms held high and wide. DEFsec swarm the ring. Alpha brains the first with a right hand and the second with a super kick before slipping under the bottom rope and out of the ring along with Lord Nigel.

Dex Joy lies face down, motionless, in a pool of his own blood as the dastardly pair retreat up the ramp and backstage.

Lance:

Dex Joy is seriously hurt, people. DEFmed are on scene. They are checking on him. Obviously, this is a grim situation. Dex Joy does not *appear* responsive, however that is no indication either way of his overall condition.

DDK:

Sugar coat it all you want, Lance. Two weeks ago, it was bad. Tonight... it's somehow worse. And I'm concerned that

Dex Joy is significantly injured.

COMMERCIAL: DEFIANCE ROAD 2023



LIVE FROM MSG January 25 & 26!

BRAZEN CHAMPIONSHIP: DECLAN ALEXANDER (C) vs. BUTCHER VICTORIOUS

DDK:

I can't remember the last time the BRAZEN Championship was defended on DEFTv, but here we are! After an open challenge on DEFTv 177, current BRAZEN Champion Declan Alexander answered the call and pinned Oscar Burns in an attempt that we now know was to make an impression on the Favoured Saints in hopes of a reunion with his trainer, FIST of DEFIANCE Lindsay Troy, and her faction Vae Victis.

Lance:

Well it certainly did that, Darren. To show he's for real, Declan has decided to put the BRAZEN Championship on the line against another Vae Victis hopeful in Butcher Victorious, a BRAZEN graduate in his own right and Oscar Burns understudy?

DDK:

It's a complicated relationship for sure, but he took exception to Declan's actions and aspirations, so now we're going to settle things here in the ring where Darren Quimbey is waiting by.

Inside the ring, Darren Quimbey stands by with microphone in hand before the cheering Philly Faithful in the Michael J. Hagan Arena on the campus of St. Joseph's University. Go Flyers.

Darren Quimbey:

The following match is scheduled for the BRAZEN Championship and is for ONE FALL!

Half the roster has a stroke as music immediately kicks in, as Butcher Victorious wastes no time answering the call of destiny.

♪ "Popsong Singalong" by Flyscreen ♪

While the lighting package used for "Stranger Fruit" kicks in, the song does not as the strictly forbidden anthem has not yet been earned by the Official Wrestling Understudy of DEFIANCE. Butcher Victorious marches out before the Philly Faithful to a choir of jeers with microphone in hand. He quickly begins shushing the crowd to a louder bellow of disapproval as the music immediately cuts. By his side, Sonny Silver on one end who doesn't clearly want to be there, along with Oscar Burns, who is pensive.

Butcher Victorious:

Sonny Silver... can I get an intro from the greatest intro man to ever do it?

He tilts the microphone over to Vae Victis' official spokesman.

Sonny Silver:

...Eat shit.

Some laughter erupts from the crowd while Butcher

Butcher Victorious:

It's cool, it's cool. We're all cool. But now, Butcher Victorious... is about to drop a beat. Hit it...

♪ "Stranger Fruit (instrumental)" by Zeal & Ardor ♪

Sonny Silver and Oscar Burns take a seat and want nothing to do with Butcher Victorious as he sings.

Butcher Victorious:

VAE VICTIS WITH YOUR FRIEND BUTCH VIC! THAT'S MY NAME AND I GOT THE STICK! WHOO-OOOH!
WHOO-OOOH! STRANGER FRUIT, BEANS ARE MUSICAL FRUIT, THE MORE YOU EAT, THE MORE YOU

TOOT! WHOO-OOOH! WHOO-OOOH!

He continues crooning.

Butcher Victorious:

DECLAN, YOU BITCH! YOU'RE GONNA GET HIT! I'LL TAKE YOUR BELT THEN I'M GONNA GET LIT! WHOO-OOOH! WHOO-OOOH!

After he's done what is generously called singing, he storms down towards the ring, jerking his arms away from Philly fans trying to reach out and giving them the bras d'honneur before rolling into the ring.

DDK:

I will say... singing aside... Butch Vic has made some improvements in the ring since becoming Oscar Burns' understudy, so I suppose the unorthodox training has paid off in some aspects. He's won his last two matches against Theodore Cain and Lee Laz by using tactics that Burns would employ!

Lance:

I hate to say it, but he might be favored to win this match? Despite being astronomically ahead of the learning curve, it's taken DEC4L a lot of luck to get to where he is today. We were just as shocked as everyone else when he caught Oscar Burns on 177, but it's not like Burns had time to prepare for that match. With a little preparation, especially with some help from Vae Victis, we might have the title change hands here tonight.

As The Liberal City Landlord begins to climb to the top rope to give the Faithful another chance to voice their opinions the lights in the arena shift to dark hues of purple and blue and yellow lights chase around in the circle above the ring. Then, The Payload™ begins to float down from the rafters and give a first-person perspective of flight down towards the entrance where DEC4L stands wearing his trademark D4 varsity style jacket and the BRAZEN Championship draped over his back. He raises the title in the air as The Payload™ races over his head and the DEFIatron flashes a blinding white light.

I just wanna feel... A-LIVE!
♪ "Brachyura Bombshell" by Attack Attack! ♪

Spinning around, Declan Alexander tosses the championship back over his shoulder and gleams down towards the ring behind emerald eyes. He wipes the non eyeblacked side and shoots a wink over towards Sonny and Oscar with a finger gun as he passes.

Quimbey:

And his opponent from Brookline, Massachusetts. Weighing in at 229 pounds, he is the current BRAZEN Champion, "DEEEEC4L" DECLAN ALEXXXXXXANDER!

As The Payload™ continues to give aerial shots on the DEFIatron, Declan has no problems slapping five and fist bumping the Faithful on the way to the ring, seemingly catching the attention of a lot of the younger crowd. Even posing for selfies along the way, much to Butch's dismay.

DDK:

Big time moment for the 21 year old champion, Lance. Former Star Cup Champion. Winner of the latest Tag Party along with partner Conor Fuse. Defeated Oscar Burns on his first appearance on DEFtv. He's got a lot to prove.

Lance:

He's not in the kiddie pool anymore! This is his chance to show his big win wasn't a fluke and impress a new set of fans who are over the age of 18.

DDK:

He had that following before he even came to BRAZEN due to his streaming success. He won over a lot of BRAZEN fans that had their doubts and he looks confident he'll do the same here in DEFIANCE.

Inside the ring now, Declan hands the BRAZEN Championship over to Rex Knox who hoists the championship high over his head to show the Philly Faithful the stakes of the fight. Both competitors exchange "pleasantries" drowned out by the music as Rex hands the title to someone at ringside and the music cuts. It's time to rock and roll!

DING! DING!

Butcher Victorious storms in hard with a running lifted knee but he'd dodged by DEC4L who immediately sets up for the Play of the Game but it's well scouted by Butch Vic! As he lifts the arm Butch grabs it and falls to the ground in an awkward armbar. He doesn't get the chance to really tighten it up before the champion gets a foot on the ropes. Knox calls for the break but the Liberal City Landlord doesn't head, waiting for the whole five count before breaking the hold. Oscar Burns claps on stage for a note well taken as Knox forces Victorious away from Declan who just begins to reach his feet before Butch Vic blows past Knox and finally hits that rising knee to an unexpected champion knocking him through the ropes and onto the apron.

DDK:

An early advantage taken by the challenger here, bending the rulebook to his favor.

Lance:

Bend but don't break, just like Oscar Burns taught him.

DDK:

Declan is going to have to keep his eye out for shenanigans or his title reign could be in serious jeopardy tonight!

Declan uses the ropes to pull himself back up to his feet, but Butcher Victorious lands a textbook springboard dropkick knocking him off the apron and onto the concrete floor below. The Official Wrestling Understudy of DEFIANCE takes a moment to make sure Silver and Burns are paying attention to his impressive outing before bouncing off the ropes and leaping towards Declan on the outside with a suicide dive, but the champion sees it coming and rolls out of the way leaving the challenger to crash to the concrete floor and roll into the steel barricade. Rex Knox begins the count as Declan dusts himself off and rolls into the ring, hoping to show the challenger how it's done before rushing the ropes himself and leaping onto the top rope and jumping onto a newly standing Victorious with a huge cross body!

DDK:

That's one way to win over the Faithful!

Lance:

Declan got a TON of height on that move!

The count gets to seven as Declan grabs Butch and tosses him into the ring, following him in, and going for a quick cover!

ONE!

TW... KICKOUT!

DDK:

A long one, not quite two.

Lance:

Declan needs to press the advantage and try to end this thing quickly, Darren. Who knows what Victorious will come up with if he's given an inch here.

DEC4L quickly jumps on a headlock and uses it to raise Butcher up to his feet, immediately the challenger begins to elbow the champion in the ribs to force his way out, but Declan grabs the opposite shoulder of his opponent and drops them both to a side russian legsweep... but then he rolls through! Side by side on their feet again Alexander throws Butch down with a snapmare and then dropkicks him in the back of the head! Now DEC4L takes the opportunity to

look at the Vae Victis members at ringside and duck off his hands before lifting Butcher to his feet and forcing him into the corner. Immediately the challenger tries to fight his way out with a series of body shots, stunning the champ and giving himself the opportunity to push his way onto the top rope. The Liberal City Landlord gets up to his feet on the top before Alexander dives forward and strikes the top rope, forcing Butch to fall jewels first onto the top turnbuckle!

DDK:

High risk, no reward for Butch Vic!

Lance:

That one is going to hurt in the morning!

Using his athleticism with Victorious in a precarious position, Declan leaps up onto the top rope in a single jump to the shock of the Faithful! Going for a frankensteiner the champion is caught and can't get the rotation over before the challenger lifts him mid move and dives off the top rope with a MASSIVE powerbomb (not a Cowboy)! The ring still shakes as Butch goes for the pin with the tights!

ONE!

TWO!

THREE?

NO.

Declan kicks out at the 2.99 second mark!

DDK:

How did Alexander kick out of that?!

Lance:

I don't know but he needs to get it together quick! Butch is looking at Burns to end this thing!

Victorious "salutes" the Faithful once again as they roar for Declan's escape. He does a cut-throat motion signaling the end for the PogChamp. Lifting Alexander up off the mat, the challenger locks the champion in a front headlock ready for A Winner Is Me! As the maneuver starts, Alexander backflips and lands on his feet to a massive pop from the Faithful!

DDK:

I can't believe what I just saw!

Then quickly hits a desperation Repentance kick sending both competitors down hard to the mat. The Philly Faithful clap and stomp, trying to breathe life into the Intrepid Influencer as both men lay flat on their backs on the canvas. Rex Knox begins the count for a double KO.

Lance:

That might've taken the wind out of both of them, what happens if neither man wins here?

DDK:

I'd assume that means Declan retains but neither man really scores any "points" towards becoming a full-fledged member of Vae Victis.

Lance:

Wow. Could you imagine?

Both men begin to stir at four. Much to the displeasure of the Faithful, it's actually Butcher Victorious who manages to

get up to his feet first, but just barely. It appears Declan Alexander was laying in wait as he shoots up to a crouching position and instinctively Butch Vic goes for the arm, but there's nothing there! He was faked out with the C-C-C-COMBO BREAKER! After the whiff, the PogChamp leaps into the air with a jumping european uppercut he calls the Dragon Punch! On impact Butcher Victorious spins around in the 360 before...

DDK:

PLAY OF THE GAME! PLAY OF THE GAME!

Lance:

WHAT A SERIES OF MOVES BY THIS KID!

Dropping him with a jumping cutter, Alexander hooks the leg!

ONE!

TWO!

THREE!

DING! DING! DING!

♪ "Brachyura Bombshell" by Attack Attack! ♪

Sitting on the mat, DEC4L holds the back of his neck in pain before powering his way up to his feet and having his arm raised in victory by Rex Knox. Grabbing back his BRAZEN Championship, Declan leans against the top rope and watches Sonny and Burns gather their things and share a conversation between themselves.

DDK:

Impressive showing from the kid tonight Lance, proving why he's the BRAZEN Champion.

Lance:

I'd say! Makes you wonder what this kid might look like in a few years. Just wow.

DDK:

Butcher Victorious wasn't well... Victorious tonight, Lance, but I can't help but mention the progress he's made since coming up to the main roster. I thought he had won this match despite that incredible performance from DEC4L.

Lance:

Close for sure, but was it close enough to gain approval from Vae Victis? Only time will tell.

COMMERCIAL: DEFy AWARDS



FIST & SOHER BATTLE ROYAL

To the ever present DEFIANCE commentary team at their desk.

DDK:

Ladies and gentlemen... it's now time for tonight's HUGE main event! Someone on the DEFIANCE roster is going to get the chance of a lifetime... quite literally.

Lance:

It's a twenty-five person Battle Royal, but it's no regular Battle Royal. No competitor in this match has EVER held either the FIST or the SOHER. Which means no matter who wins, someone has a chance to skyrocket their careers.

DDK:

The final person eliminated will be granted a shot at Henry Keyes' SOHER at our big end-of-the-year UNCUT special from New Orleans. And the winner... well, the winner goes for the big belt and becomes the number one contender for the FIST... challenging at that very same event!

Lance:

If I'm Vae Victis, I'm keeping a very close eye on this one. Especially since no member of the group is a participant in the match.

To the ring, where Darren Quimbey stands, looking as spiffy as ever.

Darren Quimbey:

Ladies and gentlemen... it's now time for an OVER THE TOP BATTLE ROYAL to determine the number one contender for both the Southern Heritage Championship AND the FIST of DEFIANCE!

RAAAAAAAAAAH!

♪ "The Fixer" by Pearl Jam ♪

Darren Quimbey:

And our first competitor in tonight's battle royal... hailing from Parts Undisclosed and weighing in tonight at two-hundred-forty pounds... he is **MASKED VIOLATOR #1!**

MV1 bursts through the curtain with a single arm and a single finger raised high over his head. Dressed in his signature bright red wrestling singlet and matching boots, pads and wrestling mask. He walks down the aisle tagging every outstretched hand.

DDK:

MV1 has been on a roll, Lance and I've heard some backstage call him one of the fastest rising DEFIANTS on the roster. A win here would cement that status.

MV1 rolls under the bottom rope as the lights go out black and the DEFIATron screen shows Teri Melton, in her pink/pink/pink get-up walking to the ring, cigarette holder in place. Behind her to the right in his funeral suit is Zoltan. And between them, to the left, is "The Special Attraction" JJ Dixon wearing a floor-length pink robe with various sequins and jewels, "JJ" in cursive in silver.

JJ Dixon:

This is Nevermind hitting the record store shelves. This is LeBron's first game. This is The Simpsons debuting on prime time. Tonight is the night everything changes. Because this is when "The Special Attraction" JJ Dixon shows out and breaks through and ascends to the top of DEFIANCE..

Teri Melton:

Our mission is simple. The Uncut Gems are here to become the most powerful entity in professional wrestling. These well-manicured fingers will rule DEFIANCE with an iron fist... and our reign will start much sooner than anyone could

predict. I guarantee this to happen because Teri Melton... is ready...

Teri bends down as JJ Dixon and Zoltan start to make their "DiamondHands" gesture.

Teri Melton:

For her close-up!

The lights come back on as JJ Dixon stands on the apron, still in his robe, as he makes his "DiamondHands" gesture, along with Teri and Zoltan standing on the floor. He and MV1 glare at each other as he steps into the ring.

♪ "Fur Elise" by Cole Rolland ♪

The crowd begins to jeer and boo as Ned Reform, TA Cole... AND Teresa Ames walk out to the stage. Reform is all smiles, waving to his "adoring" crowd. Cole can barely stand still. He's ready for some action and Teresa blows kisses to The Philly Faithful.

Darren Quimbey:

Introducing next... Ned Reform, TA Cole and Teresa Ames!

Reform scowls at the absence of his title but there's no time to worry about that now. He points his merry possie toward the ring as they begin to walk toward MV1 and JJ Dixon.

DDK:

We all saw what went down last night between The Honor Society as Los Titanes Familia. Uriel Cortez, Dan Leo James and Titaness are all in this battle royal, so The Good Doctor is going to have to reckon with his actions if he hopes to win this one.

As Reform, Cole and Ames enter the ring...

Lance:

Folks, we've got to take our last commercial break for the evening! When DEFtv returns... it's time for a Battle Royal!



DEFtv returns just in time for...

♪ "Drink" by Alestorm ♪

The people come alive as Pat Cassidy and Brock Newbludd bound out onto the stage full of piss and vinegar. The Saturday Night Specials are flanked by Ophelia Sykes, who gives Pat a quick peck on the cheek before turning and heading to the back. Brock and Cassidy both turn to each other with grins before nodding and exchanging a fist bump.

Darren Quimbey:

"Black Out" Pat Cassidy... "The Innovator" Brock Newbludd... The Saturday Night Specials!

DDK:

While those men are the longest reigning Unified Tag Team Champions in history, neither have held singles gold here in DEFIANCE.

Lance:

That's right, Keeps. And the end-of-the-year extravaganza is taking place at the Grand Opening of the NEW Ballyhoo Brew, so you've got to believe either one would love to have the home-field advantage on that night.

As The Saturday Night Specials get into the ring, we can see that the squared circle has filled up considerably during the commercial break: in addition to MV1, JJ Dixon, Reform, Cole, and Ames... we now have Count Novick, The Monster, Strong AF, Aaron King, Nicky Synz, Reaper Green, "Skyfire" Zack Daymon and "The Iceman" Leo Burnett of the Rain City Ronin, Nathan Cross, both members of Gentlemen's Agreement, and Tyler Fuse. Around the ring stand a swarm of different colored Reapers, likely there to support their boy Green.

♪ "RISE (remix)" by Glitch Mob, Mako, The Word Alive and BOBBY ♪

A LOUD eruption of cheers comes out from the Philly Faithful! One by one, all four members of Titanes Familia make their way out! An enthusiastic Dan Leo James, almost tripping on the stage. Minute, flipping forward on the stage before pointing up at the skies. "The Show of Force" Titaness, flexing on the ramp. And finally, "The Titan of Industry" Uriel Cortez, DEFIANCE's only three-time former Unified Tag Team Champion ready to mess some folks up. They fill the ring one by one with huge title opportunities on the line.

♪ "King DeDeDe Remix Theme" from Kirby's Dream Land ♪

The crowd comes alive again as Conor Fuse pops out from the FIST logo. He's not alone as Malak Garland follows behind.

DDK:

Last night... Sgt. Safety was destroyed by Lindsay Troy. Conor Fuse came down to stand up for Safety and we had an impromptu title match. Well, as impromptu of a "match" you can get.

Lance:

Lindsay Troy cheated, of course, with help from Henry Keyes. It was barely a legal contest.

DDK:

If Conor can win this battle royal, he'll get a fair shake.

Lance:

Don't forget Malak Garland has had a lot of issues in the past with Lindsay Troy as well!

DDK:

We'll see just how "good" Malak is going to be in this contest.

Fuse and Garland make their way down the ramp. Once The Snowflake Superstar sets eyes on the *other* Fuse brother in the middle of the ring, however, Garland shakes with anxiety.

Conor pats Malak on the back, not knowing what rattled him. In reality, it could be a million different things so Conor doesn't ask any questions. Once he realizes Malak isn't moving (because Tyler has also noticed Malak), the younger

Fuse grabs Garland by the arm and literally pulls him to ringside before they both enter the squared circle.

♪ "Apocalyptic Havoc" by Goatwhores!! ♪

DDK:

Wait... what!?

The fans seem just as surprised as Keebler... but in a good way!

Lance:

Ladies and gentlemen, we heard on DEFradio that Rezin was going to be taking a hiatus from DEFIANCE... but it sounds like he changed his mind!

The place has come unglued as Rezin's theme blares throughout the Michael J. Hagan Arena! In the ring, all the competitors have their eyes stuck on the entrance, awaiting this final surprise. And they wait. And wait. And wait.

The Faithful begin to grow restless.

DDK:

Does someone need to wake him up backstage?

Lance:

It's not a ridiculous question...

Finally, to the disappointment of the fans and confusion of the DEFIANTS in the ring, Rezin's music comes to a hard stop. In its place...

♪ "Stranger Fruit" by Zeal & Ardor ♪

BOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO!

The now infamous theme song for Vae Victis hits and out walks Oscar Burns, dressed in his ring gear. Clay Byrd, Kerry Kuroyama, the SOHER Champ Henry Keyes, and the FIST of DEFIANCE Lindsay Troy follow the Technical Spectacle out from the back. The Besties and Kerry have folding chairs under their arms and bottles of champagne and glasses in their hands. Keyes is wearing a throwback Big Damn Hero shirt in honor of his Bestie and Troy is wearing a throwback Always Bell Clapping shirt in honor of hers. Kerry's got his own retro threads with an old Oscar Burns "WE LIKE GRAPS" tee.

Butch Vic is nowhere to be found. Thank God.

DDK:

Wait... it was stipulated that this battle royal was only for people who have never held the FIST or Southern Heritage titles... what is HE doing here?!

Burns has a microphone. Not far behind him, The Cowboy Colossus of Vae Victis, Clay Byrd lurks. The two men make their way down the ramp while the rest of Vae Victis plunk down in their seats and start pouring the bubbly.

Oscar Burns:

Oh, what? Surprised to see me? Well, unlike that stupid burnout, Rezin, I never give up on DEFIANCE. And I would never give up on a chance to compete for the top titles in our sport! So since Rezin has smoked himself somewhere into a stupor -- probably living out of a dumpster -- I'm taking his spot in the name of Vae Victis... and the name of ME! BECAUSE I! AM! DEFIANCE!

BOOOOOOOOOOO!

Lance:

He's... come on, he's just going to be allowed to do this?

DDK:

We don't know what kind of sway he or Vae Victis have pulled to make this happen or if this is just of Oscar's own accord -- that one seems more likely -- but officials aren't stopping him, either way. Plus, with Clay Byrd at ringside, YOU tell him Oscar can't join this!

DING DING**DDK:**

Here we go!

Once the bell sounds, everyone pairs off and begins to defend their grounds. The teams stay together while the single wrestlers find their own way through.

Reaper Green begins to fight with Titus Campbell while a pack of Reapers cheer him on from the outside. Suddenly, however, Tyler Fuse bursts into the brawl and shoulder blocks Reaper Green right into the ropes...

And then tosses his feet up and over, onto the pack of Reapers below!

DDK:

Reaper Green is the first one gone thanks to Tyler Fuse!

Lance:

Rather poetic Tyler, a former Kabal member, takes care of the Reaper in the match.

DDK:

And quickly, too.

Titus Campbell is none too happy with Tyler getting into the middle of his fight. He follows this with an inside-out clothesline to Fuse but The OG Player ducks the shot and smacks Titus square across the face. This is followed by a dropkick to the midsection. Campbell is off balance as he wobbles into the ropes... and then Fuse levels Campbell with a forearm smash, takes hold of Titus' massive tree trunk legs...

And drops him out of the ring!

DDK:

Amazing display of power by Tyler Fuse. He gets the better of Campbell again, after defeating him yesterday in the FS match. Tyler could earn a FIST shot tonight and/or technically work his way to a SOHER match through two more FS Title defenses.

The cameras change to another battle, Pat Cassidy alongside Brock Newbludd against the Gentlemen's Agreement. Lord Swell is going blow-for-blow with Cassidy, while Oliver Tarquin Monroe is toe-to-toe with Brock Newbludd.

It looks like the Gentlemen's Agreement is getting the better of SNS, before Cassidy and Newbludd absorb a couple of hits. Then they smack each other on the chest and shoot forward with lariats, knocking OTM and Swell to the mat. Cassidy and Newbludd "cheers" each other with invisible red solo cups before they both take hold of Lord Swell and eject him from the ring.

OTM, however, is harder to remove. As Monroe's grabbed by his tights, he spins around and takes both Cassidy and Newbludd by their tights instead. He tries to eject the former UNIFIED Tag Team Champions but they hold onto the top rope, bounce back into the ring and level Oliver with double back elbows right to the face!

Newbludd calls for the end as Cassidy looks to head to the top rope... until Brock suddenly realizes what's up and

shouts no. Brock puts his arms in the air, like this would be a bad idea.

It takes Cassidy a moment but then a lightbulb goes off.

DDK:

Yeah boys, no unnecessary risks here.

Instead, Newbludd and Cassidy hit a spike piledriver without going to the top, a modified Keg Stand. Cassidy launches OTM over the top rope and to the floor below!

Black Out pats his teammate on the chest with a "thanks buddy." Brock winks in return.

The scene switches to Ned Reform, who has now tightly wrapped both his hands and feet around the bottom rope and hanging on for dear life as he shouts at TA Cole, who stands in front of him, to fight people away. Cole listens, too, and throws a fist at anyone who's coming towards them.

Meanwhile, Conor Fuse and Malak Garland are fighting with their backs against each other, taking on all comers. To Malak's credit, he doesn't seem to be taking things lightly. Garland hits Dan Leo James with a forearm shot before Strong AF comes in there to take DLJ away from him. Soon enough... Rain City Ronin enters the picture. The Keyboard Warrior doesn't back down and pumps a number of forearm smashes into Leo Burnett's face.

Malak Garland:

TOO MANY LEO'S. I'm super triggered!

Malak's serious while Conor shakes his head. Fuse and Zack Daymon exchange knife edge chops.

Conor Fuse:

STFU, man.

The Comments Section battles it out with RCR while MV1 and JJ Dixon are fighting it out, too. Teri Melton hops up and down, ready for her close up when Dixon earns his FIST opportunity.

DDK:

I don't think MV1 AND Dixon have fought anyone else so far.

In the middle of the ring, Oscar Burns, a shit eating smile on his face, takes Nathan Cross and ejects him. Burns dusts his hands to a chorus of boos.

DDK:

Absolute garbage that Oscar's allowed in this match.

Burns marches over to Strong AF and Dan Leo James. James sees Burns coming and whacks Oscar as hard as possible in the chest. Burns falls to the mat and the crowd gives a cheer based on the impact. James turns his attention back to Strong AF and throws AF into the ropes. The big man (DLJ) clips the other big man (SAF) under the jaw with a superkick. Strong AF wobbles into the ropes... and Dan Leo James decides to take the risk. He runs into the ropes on the far end and levels Strong AF with a Dash and Bash high-speed shoulder tackle! This is followed by numerous, wild chops to Strong AF's chest... working him ever so closely into the ropes!

James winds up for a big clothesline...

Strong AF ducks it!

Strong AF takes James by the tights and ejects him from the ring!

NO!

Dan Leo is still alive. He doesn't go through the ropes, he grabs them and holds on. Then he crushes SAF with a clothesline and throws AF out of the ring.

Immediately after, Burns comes in with a low blow and a look on his face like "did I do that?" The Philly Faithful boo. Burns spins around to find someone else to pick on.

...While all of a sudden, emerging from a pack of wrestlers is The Monster, looking right out of Frankenstein. He looms over Dan Leo James, pulls James up onto his feet...

The seven foot monster eyes a six-foot-seven monster before lifting DJL in the air, for a gorilla press slam-

James escapes. He hits the ropes when suddenly Uriel Cortez is there, too. They double clothesline The Monster out of the ring!

DDK:

HEY! Hold on just a second!

Just then, Vae Victis' newest member, Clay Byrd, enters the ring.

DDK:

He's not in this match!

The Monster from Plainview has his eyes locked on Dan Leo James and Uriel Cortez. They don't see Byrd until it's too late.

Clay is no small man, either. At 6'7", the VV giant screams before launching himself at Dan Leo James and nearly snapping his neck off with a Texas Lariat. Clay grabs James by the tights and throws him out of the ring. At the top of the ramp, Troy, Keyes and Kuroyama let out a cheer and raise their champagne glasses.

Stunned by this blindsiding attack, Cortez takes the fight to Clay but suddenly Oscar Burns emerges into the picture. The two VV members begin knocking Cortez down to a knee.

DDK:

Uriel has faced Oscar for the FIST before, a few years ago...

Titaness is brave enough to jump onto Clay's back as she rips at his eyes, trying to knock him away... but then Teresa Ames pulls Titaness off the Texan.

DDK:

Hold on a second here!

Out of nowhere, Dr. Ned Reform removes himself from the bottom rope. He snatches the unsuspecting Titaness and throws her out of the ring!

Reform snickers to himself before he goes back to the same spot he came from... right behind TA Cole and hugs the bottom rope. The Good Doctor tells TA Cole to be on edge for anyone coming but Cole raises an eyebrow and looks down at The BRAIN of DEFIANCE.

TA Cole:

I didn't hear that one. What did you say?

Before Reform can clarify, Cole is ambushed by Conor Fuse and thrown over the top rope! Reform screams at Conor but the gamer acts like he can't hear anything. Fuse goes back to fighting Count Novick.

Meanwhile, Byrd beats down Cortez. He pulls the former Tag Team Champion to his feet and obliterates Uriel with a

spine buster slam. Byrd hands off the fallen Titanes Familia member to Oscar Burns...

But Oscar eats a big boot to the face and Clay is leveled with a right fist to the temple! The crowd cheers as Uriel Cortez is going to throw Burns from the ring-

Until Ned Reform drops from the bottom rope again. Reform figures this is his shot...

DDK:

Oh no you don't!

Cortez lets go of Burns. He sees Reform from the corner of his eyes so he turns, catches Reform with an UNGODLY chop across the chest with so much force that Dr. Ned completely flies up over the top rope and out of the ring!!

BBBBOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO!!!

DIRECTLY after, Oscar Burns ejects Cortez from the battle royal to the loudest boos of the night!

The jeers turn to cheers, however, as none other than Count Novick walks into the center of the ring. The vampire sees two angry Vae Victis men in front of him...

Count Novick:

Vae Victis! Prepare VOR A VRIGHTFUL VURY!!!

Oscar gives his head a shake and Clay Byrd bursts forward, destroying Count Novick with another Texas Lariat. Clay peels Novick off the canvas and throws him out of the ring. Vae Victis are loving this as they finish off another glass of champagne and pour themselves some more.

Lance:

So these eliminations count, right? Even though Clay isn't legal?

DDK:

Unfortunately, yes.

The apron closest to the entrance way begins to shuffle when none other than Jonathan-Christopher Hall and Vickie Hall emerge!

Jonathan-Christopher Hall:

I love you, baby!

Vickie hums with delight.

Vickie Hall:

I love you too, baby.

Jonathan-Christopher is dressed in hot pink tights and Vickie sports a plethora of pink shades across her gear. She's wearing a pink sundress, pink leggings, a pink furry kitty hat and sparkle pink boots. Jonathan-Christopher eyes referee Hector Navarro on the outside.

Jonathan-Christopher Hall:

Sorry we're late but my baby and I are going to enter this match.

DDK:

Can they do this? I thought the Battle Royal was twenty-five people.

Navarro looks down at the match card he has and gives a shrug.

Lance:

I suppose he found their names.

Jonathan-Christopher rolls into the ring when Vickie is about to follow... but she sees Teri Melton standing there.

Vickie eyes Teri... it's a pink-off as the announcers try to decide who is wearing more shades of the colour.

Vickie Hall:

Tacky. So, so, tacky, girl.

Vickie enters the ring to find her man. They stand in the center of the canvas. Vickie tosses her hair back and wraps her arms around Jonathan-Christopher.

Vickie Hall:

I can't believe we ever left here. PRIME is not romantic when it's led by a trash bag succubus.

Jonathan-Christopher Hall:

Baby, we will find love in DEFIANCE. You're going to win this match and become the next- HOLY FUCKING SHIT!

Jonathan-Christopher Hall is absolutely decapitated by Clay Byrd! The Texan plucks the dubbed Forever Man off the canvas and hurls him out of the ring with ease.

Vickie glances up at Clay.

She gulps, hard.

Vickie Hall:

COMING BABY!

And then she throws herself over the top rope and onto the floor.

Clay (and Oscar) look unstoppable until Conor Fuse decides to make his way over and stands in front of both of them.

The Ultimate Gamer shakes his head. He turns his attention to Oscar Burns.

Conor Fuse:

Pathetic.

And then to Clay Byrd.

DDK:

My understanding is Conor and Clay are VERY familiar with each other outside of DEFIANCE...

Conor eyes the giant Texan. Then gives a shrug.

Conor Fuse:

Honestly, I'm not surprised-

Right before Fuse finishes his sentence, Clay kicks the gamer below the belt. Byrd wraps his hands around Fuse's neck and then tosses him into the air-

But Conor catches the top rope and bounces back into the ring. He races towards Byrd and hits him with a hard superkick under the jaw! It stuns the big man so Fuse does it again... and again... and...

Burns with a hardout headbutt to Conor Fuse! The Power-Up King drops to the mat and a chorus of boos follow. Burns

looks down at one of his bitter enemies and then slowly raises his head...

Staring at the frozen Malak Garland.

Burns' body language suggests he'll allow Garland to make the first move.

But The Snowflake Superstar is going nowhere and Burns knows it.

WHAM!

DDK:

Tyler Fuse with a spear to Burns!

Although not typically liked by The Faithful, the crowd comes alive upon seeing Tyler stand up for his brother. Pat Cassidy and Brock Newbludd have knocked Rain City Ronin to the mat and are now free to fight, too. They see Byrd and Burns collecting themselves in the middle of the ring and spring into action. Cassidy goes low on Byrd and Newbludd goes high on Burns. The Faithful cheer on as SNS throws the VV members into one another before Pat hits a back elbow followed by a side Russian leg sweep on the much larger Clay Byrd. Brock has an easier time with the smaller Oscar Burns; he chains together a short-arm clothesline, into a superkick, into a snapmare dropkick.

Daymon and Burnette race in. They see an opening, they both take hold of Cassidy and Newbludd and eject them from the ring in stunning fashion!

The crowd is shocked...

Until Pat Cassidy skins the cat and Brock Newbludd pulls himself through the second rope.

DDK:

They both held on!

The arena is rocking as Cassidy and Newbludd enter the ring again, with Zack and Leo not knowing what's up.

But the second Cassidy lays his hands on Leo Burnett, Malak Garland scoots in there and ejects Leo himself!

Garland tries to shake off the serious anxiety he's going through while looking at Cassidy.

Malak Garland:

So many Leos!

Cassidy's demeanor suggests confusion, as if telling Malak *he* had that one. The interaction goes no further, however, as Oscar Burns has collected himself and attacks Pat Cassidy. Malak Garland runs to the other side of the ring in order to flee.

Brock Newbludd and Zack Daymon are battling it out. Teresa Ames stays on the lookout for anyone coming to her, Conor Fuse finds Clay Byrd and Tyler Fuse is up against MV1 and JJ Dixon.

Tyler throws MV1 into the ropes while JJ Dixon comes over to help. Fuse and Dixon hit the Violator with a double shoulder block but then Tyler levels Dixon with a left hand. Fuse goes to eject Dixon from the ring but JJ holds onto Tyler's arm and sends the OG Player into the ropes instead. However, Tyler baseball slides out of the ring. This allows MV1 to regain his footing, find Dixon and hammer him with an elbow. Dixon Irish whips MV1 into the ropes until they both crash into each other, hitting the ropes.

DDK:

Oh my!

Lance:

Dixon and MV1 eliminated each other!

As Dixon and MV1 collect themselves on the mat, another member joins them on the floor below by the name of Zack Daymon.

DDK:

Newbludd throws Daymon out!

Left inside the ring: Pat Cassidy fighting Oscar Burns, Conor Fuse battling with Clay Byrd (who isn't legal in this match), Malak Garland who's hunched over in a corner and Brock Newbludd who just discarded the last Rain City Ronin.

...And Tyler Fuse who slides back into the ring from his earlier baseball slide exit.

Fuse sees Newbludd, Newbludd sees Fuse. There's an agreement they'll meet in the center of the ring until Teresa Ames pops up from... from wherever she was.

DDK:

Ames is also still in this match.

Teresa giggles upon seeing Tyler and Brock. She looks at Newbludd first.

Teresa Ames:

Single, I see...

She giggles again.

Teresa Ames:

I see, I see...

Brock has a look on his face suggesting a HARD no thank you before the entire dynamic is interrupted by Clay Byrd throwing Conor Fuse into the three of them. Byrd bounces off the ropes and aims at Conor's neck with a clothesline- but Newbludd connects with a side tackle spear to Clay instead! With the giant Texan on one knee, Brock, Conor and Tyler immediately go for the kill. Tyler and Brock lift him up in the air and then drop Clay in the middle of the ring with a brainbuster. Conor hits the ropes and stomps on Clay's head with the Head Stomp!

The three of them throw Byrd out of the ring while Teresa Ames watches with love in her eyes.

Knowing Clay can come back at any time because it wasn't an official elimination, Conor ensures he goes through the top and middle rope before he leaps onto the top turnbuckle pad.

Conor Fuse:

F U BUDDAAAYYYY!

Fuse jumps and hits Clay with another Head Stomp as The Faithful flood the arena in cheers. Newbludd moves on to help Cassidy with Oscar Burns when Conor Fuse slides into the ring and meets his brother in the center of the canvas.

The Faithful anticipate the two Fuse's going at it...

When once again Teresa Ames appears, quite literally popping up in-between the two brothers. She looks at Conor and places a finger on his chest, beginning to walk all the way around him.

Teresa Ames:

You know, I could be your *Twilight Princess*.

Conor shivers at the thought of it.

Teresa Ames:

I love cosplaying.

But then Ames turns her attention to Tyler. She places a finger on his chest and starts walking around.

Teresa Ames:

I wasn't into the whole *guy* thing recently but two gaming brothers? Oh, oh my...

Conor taps Ames on the shoulder as she turns around.

Conor Fuse:

He's taken.

The younger Fuse throws Ames out of the ring to a chorus of cheers! Conor brings his attention back to Tyler Fuse. The crowd anticipates they're going to pick up where they left off when Malak Garland pops up in-between the both of them, just like Teresa Ames did.

Malak Garland:

Conor, I need to speak with you for a second.

Conor tilts his head, as if this is CLEARLY not the time and place.

Burns hurls Cassidy into the group. Pat knocks into Tyler as both men fall to the mat and a desperate Burns then punts Brock Newbludd below the belt.

Conor moves Garland to the side as he races in, looking for the Head Stomp on Oscar but "DEFIANCE" side steps, albeit barely. Burns winds up for a hard out headbutt when-

WHEN MALAK GARLAND THROWS OSCAR BURNS OUT OF THE RING!!!

HOLY SHIT!

HOLY SHIT!

HOLY SHIT!

Garland doesn't know WTF got into him. He's beside himself! The fans are cheering loudly... and the snowflake stands alone in the middle of the ring.

DDK:

We've got five men left! Pat Cassidy, Brock Newbludd, Conor Fuse, Tyler Fuse... AND MALAK GARLAND!

A look of regret crosses Malak's face as he sees how angry Oscar Burns is outside of the ring, let alone the rest of VV at the top of the ramp. By now there are numerous referees nearby to make sure Burns is escorted out and there's also EMTs to look at Clay Byrd.

Lance:

I don't know if Malak has registered what he's done!

DDK:

I don't think any of us have!

Burns is throwing a motherfucking FIT. It's almost as if *he's* the snowflake at the moment. Burns is escorted all the way up the ramp while Conor meets Malak in the middle of the ring. Conor's face is beaming. He's jacked up, big time. Conor grabs Malak and smacks him across the face.

Conor Fuse:

You see that!? Huh!? THAT'S the person you can be, Mal! Let's fucking go!!! LFGGGGGGGGGGGGGGGG!

Conor smacks Mala's cheek again. It looks like he's getting through.

Meanwhile, Pat Cassidy and Brock Newbludd have pulled themselves up. They stand at one end of the ring...

Tyler joins his brother, and Malak Garland, on the other side.

DDK:

I think we have our teams. Battle lines drawn!

Cassidy and Newbludd are ready to go. Conor continues to pump up Malak.

Conor Fuse:

You good? You got it? We can do this?

Malak starts to nod, a little more intensity each time he's asked.

Conor whacks Tyler on the shoulders.

Conor Fuse:

Let's go, bro!

Malak's flowing with intensity until he sees Tyler is beside them.

Malak Garland:

Hi- him? He's too- too violent.

Conor shakes it off.

Conor Fuse:

Yeah man, we're all good. Okay? Don't worry about it. Tyler's fine, he's my brother.

Garland takes a moment to himself. Cassidy checks his watch and Newbludd gives a yawn. The Ultimate Gamer realizes this, so he taps Garland on the chest.

Conor Fuse:

OKAY?

Garland nods. He's ready to go.

Malak Garland:

Okay.

DDK:

WAIT A SECOND!

TYLER FUSE EJECTS MALAK GARLAND FROM THE RING!

The crowd is stunned! Cassidy and Newbludd are also stunned!

And Conor Fuse stands there with his arms out, staring at his older brother in disbelief.

Conor Fuse:

Dude?

The typically stoic Tyler Fuse isn't bothered.

Tyler Fuse:

Screw that guy.

DDK:

Tyler Fuse tossed Malak Garland out of this match! The teams were set, Tyler was going to fight with Conor AND Malak!

Lance:

It IS every man for himself, you know... I don't think Tyler could trust Malak.

The scene changes to Garland, who rests on a knee and begins to cry. He quickly scurries up the rampway and out of sight before Conor looks at his brother once more and then at SNS.

Coming to terms with what happened, it's obvious Conor's still going to side with his brother.

Conor Fuse: *[huffing]*

Alright, let's do this. Like old times.

SNS meet the Fuse Bros. in the middle of the ring as Pat pairs off with Conor and Tyler with Brock.

DDK:

We have our final four, folks! This might be every man for himself but for the moment we're being treated to SNS vs. The Fuse Bros. You got to think that the strategy here is to divide and conquer.

Lance:

This place is electric right now, partner. There's a lot of history, and talent, shared among these two teams. Now, let's see who's got enough gas left in the tank to come out on top.

With The Faithful buzzing in anticipation all around them, The Saturday Night Specials and The Fuse Brothers get down to business. Newbludd and Tyler collide into each other and engage in a rough collar and elbow tie-up. Brock immediately uses his size and strength advantage to drive Tyler back towards the nearest corner. His progress is suddenly halted when Fuse uses his speed to slip free and nail Newbludd with a drop toe hold. Finding himself suddenly falling forward, Brock is helpless as his face smashes into the middle turnbuckle.

DDK:

I might have to give Tyler Fuse the award for best drop toe hold of the year, Lance. Newbludd just ATE that turnbuckle!

Lance:

The instant you forget about the drop toe hold is when it gets you! Tyler used Brock's aggressiveness against him and now Newbludd's a wreck in the corner!

Meanwhile, as his partner crumples to the mat in a heap, Cassidy tries to take Conor's head off with a sudden forearm but Conor ducks it and performs a go behind. Before he can capitalize, Conor's sent stumbling backwards courtesy of a well placed back elbow that cracks him in the mouth.

DDK:

That elbow was right on the money and Conor's dazed!

Spinning on a heel, Cassidy charges the backpedaling Conor and rears back with one arm.

Lance:

Here comes Cassidy with that big lariat!

At the LAST possible second, Conor ducks and Cassidy's arm hits nothing but air as it accelerates over Fuse's head. Unable to stop his momentum, Pat bounces chest first off the ropes and stumbles back towards Fuse. Bent low with his hands on his thighs, Conor waits for the perfect moment as he watches Pat spin back around to face him. As soon as Black Out gets turned around, Conor NAILS him with a superkick underneath the jaw!

DDK:

Pat Cassidy's been rocked and now his back's up against the ropes!

Lance:

He's on dream street, partner, and Conor's looking to finish the job!

Still holding his jaw from Pat's back elbow, Conor takes a couple of quick steps back. Lining up the groggy Cassidy, The Ultimate Gamer does the ultimate side shuffle toward his target.

DDK:

This should do it! A second superkick serving for Pat Cass...

Before The Video Game Kid can get his leg fully up and extended Pat Cassidy surges off the ropes and turns him inside out with a desperation lariat! Catching the brunt of the clothesline while his leg was still up in the air, Conor violently flips backward to land hard on his stomach!

Lance:

Oh my! Where did that come from!?

DDK:

Pat Cassidy went all in on that and he connected with that homerun swing to stay alive!

With Conor lying face down next to him, Pat Cassidy digs deep and begins to push himself up off the mat. Over on the other side of the ring, Brock Newbludd finds himself digging out of a hole of his own after having his face smashed into the turnbuckle. Grabbing onto the top rope, the dazed Newbludd pulls himself up in the corner. Behind him, Tyler Fuse waits for Brock to get fully vertical, and the second that he does, The Game Changer charges in. Leaping high in the air, Tyler grabs Brock by the back of the head and drives his face into the top turnbuckle with a modified bulldog!

Lance:

Brock just ate turnbuckle for a second time! The Favored Saints Champion just might be too quick for him, especially at this point in the battle royale!

Shaking his head, Brock tries to create some space for himself as grabs onto the top rope with one hand and stumbles away from his fired-up adversary. Watching Brock drunkenly stumble away from him, Tyler's eyes grow wide and he explodes out of the corner to hit the opposite ropes with a full head of steam.

DDK:

Tyler Fuse hits the ropes and fires off of them like a rocket! I think we're gonna be down to three!

The crowd swells in anticipation as The Original Player One charges ahead and the veteran Newbludd manages to catch a glimpse of Fuse racing towards him. With only a couple of steps left, Tyler cocks an arm back for an elimination clothesline but his plan is suddenly derailed when Newbludd lunges forward to wrap both arms around him.

Lance:

Hang on! Newbludd caught Fuse!

DDK:

No! He's not going to...

Brock Newbludd answers DDK's question for him by lifting Tyler off the ground and violently popping his hips. Using Fuse's momentum against him, Brock sends the elder Favored Saints Champion flying over the top rope with an overhead belly-to-belly suplex! Soaring over the top, Tyler crashes down onto the floor!

Lance:

Unbelievable! Tyler Fuse has just been suplexed over the top rope and out of this match!

DDK:

Newbludd's still in this thing after pulling that suplex off but he's back down on the mat. That last ditch effort might have drained whatever was left in his tank.

With The Faithful now up out of their seats and cheering at the top of their lungs, Newbludd breathes heavily while he lies on the mat. Over on the other side of the ring, Pat Cassidy and Conor Fuse have both made it back up to their feet. Not skipping a beat, the two punch drunk rivals immediately begin laying into each other with cracking knife edge chops.

Lance:

Listen to those chops, Keeps! I can hear them from up here!

DDK:

There's no love lost between Conor Fuse and Pat Cassidy, partner. Right now they're writing another chapter in their long and bloody history!

After absorbing another stinging chop across his chest, Cassidy grits his teeth and lunges towards Fuse just as he was winding up to deliver another knife edge. Caught off guard by his opponent's change in tactics, Conor suddenly finds himself caught in a rear waistlock. Instincts and speed kicking in, Fuse stomps down on one of Cassidy's feet and Pat is forced to loosen his grip slightly as he growls in pain. Conor sees his opening and takes his shot by reaching up behind him and grabbing Cassidy by the back of the head. Kicking his legs out, Conor drops down to mat and hits Black Out with a reverse jawbreaker!

Lance:

Conor Fuse with a HUGE move that looked like a combination stunner and jawbreaker!

DDK:

Whatever it was, it did the trick! Pat Cassidy's found himself on the ropes yet again!

Wincing in pain as he puts a hand up to the top of his head, Conor dismisses the pain with a shake of his head. With Cassidy holding himself up by the ropes, Fuse notices Brock has made it back up to his knees. Still groggy, Brock manages to catch sight of Conor just as the speedster springboards off the ropes to hit him with springboard shotgun dropkick!

Lance:

Conor smartly cuts Newbludd off immediately and Brock's back down to the mat!

Rolling onto his back, Conor does a cheer inducing kip-up.

DDK:

The Power Up King is feeling it! Has Conor Fuse's time come!?

Without skipping a beat, Conor hops over Brock and hits the ropes. Running like a man possessed, Fuse sets his sights on Pat Cassidy and barrels towards him. Much like what just happened to his brother, Conor's plans suddenly go sideways when Cassidy surges off the ropes to hit him squarely in the gut with a knee!

Lance:

Don't count Pat Cassidy out yet!

Doubling Conor over with the perfectly timed kitchen sink, Pat Cassidy scoops Conor up off the mat. Holding Fuse horizontal across his chest, Black Out glances behind him to align himself with the ropes. Letting out a roar, Cassidy sends Conor flying over the ropes with a fallaway slam!

DDK:

Fallaway slam by Cassidy! Conor Fuse is eliminate—

Lance:

Did he? YES he did! Conor caught the rope! I can't believe it!

Neither can The Faithful. The building explodes in cheers as Conor Fuse somehow manages to stick a hand out and latch onto the top rope at the last possible moment. His flight abruptly stopped, The Green One whiplashes back towards the ring to land precariously on the apron. Running on pure adrenaline, Fuse pulls himself up by the ropes just as Cassidy gets back up to his feet.

DDK:

I don't think Cassidy knows what happened!

Propping up to a knee, the woozy Cassidy winces in pain and locks eyes with his only remaining opponent. His best friend and tag team partner.

Lance:

It doesn't matter, Brock did!

Having watched Conor amazingly save himself, Milwaukee's Beast frantically points behind his partner and the wide eyed Pat turns on a heel just in time to see Conor vaulting himself onto the top rope. Just as Fuse gets his feet underneath him, Black Out race towards him.

DDK:

Fuse with the springboard...NO! Cassidy has him!

Before he can launch, Conor is lifted up off the top rope by Cassidy! Pushing upwards with everything he has, the Scrapper from Southie military presses his oldest rival high above his head and HURLS him over the top rope! Conor soars through the air and crashes into his brother. Together, The Fuse Bros. fall into a heap onto the outside floor!

Lance:

Conor Fuse is eliminated! What an effort by The Codebreaker!

DDK:

And that means... well, look at the final two.

The crowd takes a second to buzz as they are disappointed by the elimination of the uber popular Conor Fuse... but once they get back into the match, you can sense the excitement building as Brock Newbludd and Pat Cassidy look across the ring at each other.

DDK:

This Battle Royal has come down to the longest reigning Unified Tag Team Champions of all time.

Lance:

They may be thick as thieves, Lance, but they're no strangers to fighting each other either... and this opportunity is too big to pass up.

We can't hear what either man is saying, but there's a lot miming across the ring between them while their mouths move. They are grinning, though, so it seems to be all good. Finally, when one of the camera men hops onto the apron to get a closer shot, Pat Cassidy turns and looks into the lens, close enough now for the mic to pick up what he's saying.

Pat Cassidy:

Winner buys the rounds tonight.

After a wink into the camera, Cassidy turns and moves into the center of the ring. Brock does the same. The Saturday Night Specials share a fist bump and a nod - before a lock up!

DDK:

Here we go!

The two men jockey for position, with Brock slowly able to move Cassidy back toward the corner. Once there, Brock breaks the hold and attempts a chop, but Pat ducks, darts behind Newbludd, and locks his arms around The Milwaukee Made Man's waist. What he was going for we'll never know, as Brock performs a standing switch and trades places with Cassidy.

DDK:

Newbludd looking for a German... no! Pat with back elbows fights his way free!

Cassidy off the ropes, but Brock ducks the incoming clothesline. On the second pass, Newbludd leans forward for a back body drop, but Cassidy stops his momentum and treats his tag partner to a sharp kick in the head! Brock is stunned, allows Pat to hook him for the Irish Goodbye Reverse STO... but Brock performs another standing switch and instead has Cassidy locked in position for the Shock & Awe! Pat is able to fall forward and his momentum brings Brock with him, snapping Brock off the second rope! Black Out runs at Brock with a clothesline that sends his tag partner up and over the top! The Faithful let out a collective gasp...

Lance:

No! Brock Newbludd hangs on the ropes and prevents himself from going over!

Cassidy, still in the ring, reaches for Newbludd... but Brock is quicker and meets him with a head to the gut through the middle rope. Cassidy doubles over, and Brock jumps onto the top rope, leaping into the ring with the Face Melter!!

DDK:

Pat falls like a ton of bricks! This is Newbludd's chance!

With Black Out on dream street, Brock muscles him up and begins to move toward the ropes as the crowd begins to stir. He manages to get him part of the way over the top when Cassidy suddenly grabs hold of the ropes, stopping his momentum. The next few seconds are a tug of war, with Brock pushing and Cassidy refusing to budge. Brock tries to get a lower position and use gravity to his advantage, but this allows Cassidy to fire off a few kicks to the head. Switching to a new tactic, Brock instead runs toward the opposite ropes, looking to charge into Pat and knock him to the floor. But Cassidy releases himself from the ropes and rolls into the center of the ring to meet Brock on the rebound! Newbludd hits the ropes, sees Cassidy is waiting for him, and tries to switch his strategy mid-stride by leaping into the air at his tag partner...

Lance:

...but Cassidy catches him mid-leap with an Alabama Slam! Brock's head drilled into the mat!

Now it's Pat Cassidy's turn to potentially end it. He brings his buddy to his feet, but doesn't go right for the elimination. Instead, he whips Brock into the corner and takes position across from him.

DDK:

Pat Cassidy appears to be readying for the Splash of Jameson!

The Faithful, as they are to do for upcoming signature moves, rises to their feet as Cassidy plays to them for only a second before running across the ring and leaping into the air...

RAAAAAAAAAA!

Lance:

NO! Brock caught him!! Overhead suplex!!! Cassidy over the top and to the outside!!!

DDK:

NOPE! Pat caught the ropes!

Cassidy made a desperate grab for the top rope and it paid off. He finds his footing on the apron, and turns right into...

DDK:

Superkick!

And that's all she wrote. Pat crumbles to the floor below and Brock Newbludd is officially the last man standing.

DING DING DING

♪ "Drink" by Alestorm ♪

DDK:

Unbelievable! It came down to both members of the Saturday Night Specials, but Brock Newbludd has become the number one contender for the FIST of DEFIANCE!

Lance:

But Pat is not completely on the losing end of this... he's now the top contender for the Southern Heritage Championship! Both of them will get title shots at our end of the year show... at the grand re-opening of Ballyhoo Brew!

DDK:

It's almost poetic.

Brock leaps to the top rope, celebrating alongside the roaring fans. On the outside, Cassidy moves into a seated position, sighing and shaking his head wistfully. The pity party only lasts for a few seconds, though, as he uses the apron to bring himself to his feet and then rolls into the ring. Brock gets down off the turnbuckle and turns to find his partner standing there. Newbludd's celebration becomes subdued as he instead sticks out a hand for his partner in crime...

...and Pat doesn't take it! Instead, he moves in for a bro hug as the crowd goes wild!

DDK:

Both of these guys know what was at stake and they both understand true competition. Class acts all the way. And now one of the most decorated tag teams in DEFIANCE history has a chance at singles gold!

Cassidy lifts Brock's hand into the air and points to him as the fans show their approval... but a few boos get mixed in as The Faithful's tempo suddenly shifts.

Lance:

Wait... Vae Victis is headed toward the ring!

Indeed they are. Not content with Clay Byrd's antics causing chaos in the Battle Royal, the group has left their seats and walks down the ramp. Surprisingly, however, we do not see scowls or anger... in fact, while it's hard to really read the expression of Kerry, Byrd, or Burns... both Lindsay Troy and Henry Keyes are smiling widely. Troy even offers a big thumbs up toward the two men in the ring as she approaches.

DDK:

Keyes has a date with Cassidy and Troy better be ready for Newbludd... and this is a powder keg that could erupt at any moment.

When Alestorm comes to an abrupt stop, SNS stops their celebration and each man takes a defensive stance as the members of Vae Victis surround the ring. Henry Keyes steps up onto the apron and Cassidy turns to keep a close eye on him. Lindsay Troy gets up on the opposite side, and Brock moves to be ready in case she should attack. Both Saturday Night Specials are back to back with their fists raised and ready to strike and The Faithful are on their feet in anticipation of a confrontation. As if speaking telepathically, both Keyes and Troy step into the ring at the same time. SNS tenses up when...

...Henry Keyes grabs Cassidy's hand for a hearty handshake!? The Kraken's eye is wild and wide with an iron lock onto Cassidy's face as they transition to a side five, then a triple scoop, then The Octopus, and followed by a seamless Confetti Toss into a Roman Gladiator forearm clasp. Black Out's face is pure confusion as a genuinely smiling Henry Keyes shakes his whole arm up and down, maintaining a firm grip on the Southern Heritage Title.

DDK:

What in the world...?

Likewise, Lindsay Troy is beaming a pearly white smile as she reaches for Brock, throws him a wink, and then raises his hand high into the air in victory! She points to Newbludd as if she is showing him off, and the Milwaukee Made Man's eyebrows go up in a combination of suspicion and bewilderment.

Lance:

This... this isn't sincere, right?

DDK:

I can't say, partner. They're not exactly known for warmth toward their opponents, are they? This is either a thinly veiled warning... or could they actually be looking forward to battling The Saturday Night Specials?

♪ "Stranger Fruit" by Zeal & Ardor ♪

It is Vae Victis' theme song and not The Saturday Night Specials that begins to echo throughout the arena. Our last image of the night is the middle of the ring, where the Southern Heritage Champion grins from ear to ear as he bombastically shakes the arm of his utterly confused challenger and our smiling FIST of DEFIANCE is raising the number one contender's hand in victory while he has no idea what is going on.

THIS.

IS.

DEFIANCE.