

SHOW OPEN



MATERIAL GIRL

We see Tabitha Kinsey's parlor room, decorated with her past titles and honorary degrees and framed photos with global dignitaries and people of power, her magazine covers, and more. She sits in her high-backed chair, sipping on her tea. Behind her on the desk are her nest of Faberge Eggs.

The door creaks open. The newly engaged Caitlyn Kinsey walks in. Her black hair has changed slightly from her manic pixie dream girl banged look to something more traditionally straight. She's wearing a grey sweater over a white blouse tucked into pressed khaki pants.

Tabitha Kinsey:

Ah, Caitlyn, lovey! Come in! We have much to discuss.

Caitlyn Kinsey:

I... I know. First, just about the wedding —

Tabitha Kinsey:

There's no need to discuss that, lovey. I understand JJ took you by surprise. I have been a part of wrestling weddings before. Don't worry, I will keep my distance since I know it may be... awkward... between me and Teri. Of course, she might not be there if things go awry for her beforehand.

Caitlyn squirms.

Tabitha Kinsey:

So what I would like to do is to have a celebration afterwards on your own. You can have it on my yacht in Martha's Vineyard, and then you can depart with your true love around the world wherever you want! All expenses paid for.

Caitlyn Kinsey:

Grandma, you don't have to do that.

Tabitha Kinsey:

Folly. You are my only granddaughter. And while there have been many things I have enjoyed since my return to wrestling... the best part, by far, is the development of our long overdue relationship. I could not possibly adore and love you more, and your happiness is all I want. I certainly carry some responsibility for my strained relationship with your mother. I never want that to happen to us.

Caitlyn Kinsey:

I... I feel the same about you. Oh, uhm, except for meeting JJ, of course.

Tabitha Kinsey:

I also have one more gift for you, lovey.

Tabitha reaches back behind the Faberge Eggs and has a white envelope. In old handwriting the envelope reads "INSTRUCTIONS."

Caitlyn Kinsey:

Grandma, I can't. You've already given me too much money —

Tabitha Kinsey:

It's not money. It's something else that will provide you with your future. But you will receive it only after your wedding celebration is completed. It's also the most treasured gift I can give you.

Tabitha puts the envelope back between her Faberge Eggs.

Tabitha Kinsey:

Now is when you want to begin to talk to me about your match.

Caitlyn Kinsey:

Yes, I... I have a few things to say.

Tabitha Kinsey:

Of course. But first, allow me to show you something.

The Faceless Butler starts to set up a video projector. The camera shows a family video in the same film stock of the beginning credits of "The Wonder Years."

Tabitha Kinsey:

Do you remember your 7th birthday party? When your mother actually returned my call and decided to let you come over for the small party I had planned?

Caitlyn Kinsey:

I... I don't, actually.

Tabitha Kinsey:

Do you still like Madonna, dear?

Caitlyn Kinsey:

Uh, yeah, of course. The greatest, except for maybe Taylor Swift.

Tabitha Kinsey:

Who?

The film plays and we see Caitlyn at her birthday. Aurora is actually laughing and having a good time next to Tabitha as Caitlyn comes out dressed like a 7-year-old Madonna standing next to a real-life Madonna impersonator who is doing the singing. Description and everything.

Caitlyn awkwardly lip-syncs. She doesn't quite know the lyrics.

Young Caitlyn:

(Poorly Lip-syncing to the song) Some boys romance/some boys slow dance/that's all right with me/If they can't raise their interest/Then I have to let them be

Then young Caitlyn looks up at her beaming grandmother and there's a new look of confidence on her face. These lyrics she knows and she actually sings them.

Young Caitlyn:

Some boys try and some boys lie but I don't let them play, no way/Only boys who save their pennies/Make my rainy day...

The whole party now sings, except for Tabitha

Young Caitlyn/Party:

Because we are living, in a material world/And I am a material girl/You know that we are living in a material world/And I am a material... a material... a material girl!

Back to our current timeline.

Caitlyn Kinsey:

Oh my god... How do I not remember any of this? At all?

Tabitha Kinsey:

Well, that's because I had yet another huge argument with your mother after the party. That was actually the last time I saw you, until recently. I'd imagine it's not a memory your mother is fond of, so I assume she made sure it was a memory you never had, even if it was a happy one.

Caitlyn looks down at the floor, a hint of guilt on her face.

Tabitha Kinsey:

After the party, I got you a nice present to give to you for the next birthday celebration of yours I would be so lucky to attend. Obviously, that never happened. But I'd like to give you the present now in celebration of your big win, lovey.

The Faceless Butler comes with a poster of Madonna's True Blue album cover. There's also something in silver written on it that Caitlyn reads.

Caitlyn Kinsey:

"To my biggest fan, Caitlyn Kinsey, Tabitha's Little Material Girl" Wait, how...

Tabitha smiles.

Tabitha Kinsey:

Oh, I've known Madge for years. When did we first meet? I think Paris Fashion Week? The only reason she couldn't come to your actual birthday party was because she was in London recording Hard Candy.

Caitlyn Kinsey:

What's that?

Tabitha Kinsey:

Exactly. Anyways, I showed Madge your performance when we met for lunch with Camilla and she signed it right away.

Caitlyn Kinsey:

That's so embarrassing, Grandma!

Tabitha Kinsey:

Well, anyways, the poster is yours, lovey. It's a long-awaited gift, and one you deserve for your fantastic first victory!

Caitlyn fidgets.

Tabitha Kinsey:

Now is when you're supposed to tell me how you didn't want to win your first match that way, and you're mad at me for how I manipulated the situation.

Caitlyn Kinsey:

Well, yeah. You completely did. You convinced me to put my career on the line. Then you and Cristiano attacked JJ's friends, and you tried to rip off Teri's finger. And you know me and JJ want to stay out of all of this.

Tabitha Kinsey:

Well, of course I attacked Teri. Because she stole my wedding ring and nearly broke my face. That's how wrestling works.

Caitlyn Kinsey:

And then you had Dubya come out to distract the ref before I won. And you know I despise Dubya. I could have won that match on my own.

Tabitha Kinsey:

You're also conveniently forgetting the part where you willingly used the Faberge Egg I paid someone to stash at ringside that you discovered.

Pause.

Caitlyn Kinsey:

I didn't want to win my first match like that. The only reason why I used it is because, well... I was in the moment and desperate.

Tabitha Kinsey:

Well, lovey, the thing is... you won your first match. And it went beyond just you preserving your young career. Caitlyn, do you really think I'd let that be the end of your career? I have a team of former Attorney Generals on retainer for issues such as that. Deep down inside, you knew that.

She doesn't let Caitlyn respond.

Tabitha Kinsey:

No, Caitlyn. There was another reason why you wanted to win. Why you needed to win, wasn't there?

Caitlyn Kinsey:

Yes... because... because I didn't want... I didn't want to disappoint you.

Tabitha sips her tea gently.

Tabitha Kinsey:

I know, lovey. Because you've come to understand the name Kinsey means something. People with our last name, of our societal place, do not make it a habit of losing. Plus... my aim was not to manipulate you. It was to put your fiance to the test.

Caitlyn Kinsey:

Wait, what? I thought you liked JJ?

Tabitha Kinsey:

I do. But Because he left you by your lonesome to save that wretched Teri --

Caitlyn Kinsey:

Because you were torturing her!

Tabitha Kinsey:

Believe me, I could have done much worse. He went to Teri's aid. And like I told you previously... you have to ask yourself who and what he truly puts first. It wasn't you and what I think you have come to understand. You may want to talk to him about that before you marry him.

Caitlyn Kinsey:

We did already. He apologized.

Tabitha Kinsey:

Good. But is he going to apologize the next time? Or the time after that? People get attached to the apron strings of their mothers, even if it's their mother in name only.

Caitlyn doesn't say anything.

Tabitha Kinsey:

Now is the time when you awkwardly leave to tell me you need to go watch JJ's first match in a few months. I understand. He's the man you love. But, just remember... my marriage to your dear, departed grandfather worked so

well because I was my own person first. Is it the same with you... lovey?

Caitlyn looks down and nods.

Caitlyn Kinsey:

Thank you, Grandma. For the talk. For the gift. For everything.

Caitlyn takes the giant, framed Madonna poster and goes. Tabitha strokes Livia The Cat, who now purrs and meows.

BADLANDS

JJ Dixon stands in the backstage area. His dark hair is now styled up a bit with a 1960s Greaser beat poet look. He's wearing an older blue denim jean jacket without sleeves, no shirt on underneath showing his physique (a slimmer, more athletic frame since he's forsaken weight training for more natural methods) over black trunks.

JJ Dixon:

I'm about to step into the ring Strong AF. I feel for you, brother, because you're at a crossroads.

I'm in one, too.

In the most important way, this has been the best few months of my life. I fell in love with my future bride, Caitlyn Kinsey. They've also been confusing months, since I've had to walk around the minefield between Caitlyn's grandma and my forever "It's Complicated" Teri Melton.

But, man, these past few months have been some of the worst of my life, too. It's taken me a while to process all of that. And it made me think about my mom -- wherever she is right now.

I told ya'll about my upbringing a little bit -- growing up in Houston-area apartment complexes best known for their asbestos exposure. My Ma Dukes? She tried her best, but man she was constantly in some drama and runnin' into calamities.

But a moment that stands out the most for me? My mom got herself together enough for us to move into a place where I had an actual bed and everything and not one I had to fold up into a couch every morning.

She was so proud and happy that she was finally able to make that dream of hers happen, because as small as it may seem to be, she was finally getting to where she wanted to be.

A few weeks living there, the refrigerator shorted out. The landlord? Some rich guy who owned a bunch of buildings, wearing some expensive suit, driving around town in a black Mercedes. He said we broke the fridge and refused to pay to fix it.

My mom broke down crying, because she didn't have the money to fix a lousy \$250 refrigerator. And the crying didn't stop for weeks. She just stayed in bed. Soon enough, me and my mom were moving back into a place that should've been condemned and I once again enjoyed the comfort of a pull-out couch bed.

Now, you all know my story here in DEFIANCE -- a struggling kid right at the "good luck in your future endeavors" area of the roster for years. But I kept holding on, waiting for my chance. Because all I wanted was for people to know the name JJ Dixon.

Guess what?

I met Teri Melton. I won matches. I won matches on Pay Per Views. I beat the great Oscar Burns. I damn nearly won the FIST.

People knew the name JJ Dixon!

Hell, dare I say that me and Teri - okay, mostly Teri - became the darlings of UNCUT?

Uncut Gems!

Uncut Gems!

Uncut Gems!

JJ smiles and motions with his arms for the crowd to make this chant louder.

JJ Dixon:

But then my shoulder? It went pop. Then it went more pop against Nathan Eye. Then it went completely dead against Arthur Pleasant. I had surgery. I got shelved for a bit.

Now, an injured shoulder ain't the biggest thing in this history of wrestling injuries. But the biggest injury came to my brain, right? I just got filled with all of this anxiety, 'cause it's still very fresh in my memory that I was about to get my dream taken from me. Was I going to get booted from DEFIANCE again? Was I going to go back to being a punchline?

Were people going to forget the name JJ Dixon?

Now, I fell into a whiny, introspective, existentialist Teenage Wasteland phase, complete with a backpack with an alien patch and a My Chemical Romance T-Shirt. Actually, check them out, Welcome To The Black Parade rips.

But a few days ago, I dug into the classics courtesy of a Teri recommendation -- Bruce Springsteen, especially, and the song "Badlands," specifically. And I didn't hear, but I felt those lyrics, man.

JJ closes his eyes and starts to sing in a decent Bruce impersonation.

JJ Dixon:

I'm caught in a crossfire that I don't understand.

And all of a sudden, I realized why my mom broke down and cried that day. Because that was how I felt about myself -- why, when I had all of the momentum in the world, did I have a setback like that? And my mom, she felt that way, too. She felt trapped, like she'd never be able to escape, that everything she ever earned was going to be taken from her.

I feel that way. I know there's a lot of you out The Faithful who feel that way, too.

Maybe it was when you had to park your beater old car on the side of a road, now equipped with two flat tires and an already maxed out credit card. And right then, a 17-year-old driving a new Escalade drives by and he and his friends roll down the window to laugh at you.

Maybe it's because you're six figures deep in student loan debt and you have to work a job you hate with a boss you despise and you'll never be able to make the movie you already filmed in your head. And then you hear about your college classmate who just got a plum job working on a film set, all because daddy knows a few people in the industry.

Or maybe you just feel lonely and out-of-step, like you don't belong, and you have nothing to show for all the hard work you do, while the people who already have find ways to just take more and more.

Like Bruce sang in Badlands...

You spend your life waiting for a moment that just don't come.

JJ shakes his head, with an understanding but sad look on his face.

JJ Dixon:

But I refuse to wait for a moment that just don't come. I'm going to make moments happen.

Because they ain't just for me. They're for everyone who needs a moment for themselves, too.

I've come to not accept but to embrace that I ain't just wrestling for myself. I'm wrestling for all the people like us who want and need someone to fight for us -- like the little kid I was, watching his mom cry because a creep landlord refused to fix a refrigerator that cost \$250.

There's another line in that song that also gets me, man.

For the ones who had a notion, a notion deep inside. It ain't no sin to be glad you're alive.

BOOM. Once I heard -- no, felt -- that line, it clicked with me that I'm so incredibly lucky that I had my friends and especially Caitlyn at my side, to let me know I wasn't going through this alone.

They reminded me. I am a professional wrestler -- and a damn good one.

This business has given me so much, even with all the ups and the many, many downs. I made deep connections and lifelong friendships with people who truly get me and love me.

Most importantly, I get to share all of this with the love of my life, my future bride, Caitlyn Kinsey!

Don't get married!

Don't get married!

Don't get married!

JJ does an "aww shucks" chuckle at that chant, knowing the reputation of The Faithful's cynicism. He just continues.

JJ Dixon:

It's also about loving the work that gets you there -- the work that makes you better. I ain't just talking about in-ring and training. I'm talking about the work I have to do to be a better friend, a better man and, in just a few days, the work it takes to be the best damn husband I can be!

Because I don't want people to know the name JJ Dixon.

I want the name JJ Dixon to mean something!

I want the name JJ Dixon to mean something to the people out there who've been told their whole damn lives their names don't mean nothing by the people who already have everything.

I want the name JJ Dixon to mean something... to you!

JJJJJJJ!

JJ smiles and pumps his fist against his heart with each chant of the letter of his name.

JJ Dixon:

Now we get to you, Strong AF.

I've known you for a while now. I've never really liked you all that much. You walk in the locker rooms in DEFIANCE and down in BRAZEN and when I run into you at the gym, shoving people around, actin' like you're somebody special just because you're big and think you're bad.

I ain't never really cared for people like you, Strong AF.

But now? You just got tossed to the curb by your old pals in Team HOSS.

So you've got to ask yourself where you stand, not just as a wrestler, but as a man.

Are you going to look at yourself in the mirror about why you're out on your own? Are you going to accept that -- like me, like everyone -- there's a lot of work you need to do to become better?

And like I said before, not just at our profession.. But at life itself.

Or are you going to stay in your old ways, kicking people when they're already down, laughing at people who ain't as strong as you?

You need to ask yourself if you want people to just know your name as it currently stands... or if you want your name to mean something.

I can't answer that for you.

But what I can and will do is ram your skull into the mat after a drive straight down...

JJ's learned from Teri (aka the best.) He pauses and smiles so the crowd says it with thim.

JJ Dixon/Crowd:

Sun! Set! Boulevard!

When you wake up, I hope you figure that out for yourself.

As for me going forward? Besides being married, there's one thing on my mind.

And the best lines in Badlands say it all!

(Singing)

Poor man wants to be rich/Rich man wants to be king/The king ain't satisfied/until he rules everything.

JJ Dixon?

Well, until we make things right in this world, he ain't ever going to be satisfied!

JJ smiles and tosses the microphone up in the air and lets it fall to the floor as the crowd once again starts to chant his name. As he starts to walk to the ring. Right as the song cues up...

JJ DIXON vs. STRONG AF

♪ "Badlands" by Bruce Springsteen ♪

The UNCUT crowd is on its feet, with the bigger Bruce fans in the crowd clapping along to the up-tempo and joyous tempo of the sound. JJ then walks out, and throws his fist high into the air to their applause. He then starts screaming at the crowd in words we can't hear from the top of the entrance.

Strong AF is already in the ring, leaning against the top rope, staring at JJ, before heading to his corner.

DDK:

Those were some strong and rousing words from JJ, partner!

Lance:

Yes they were, Keebs. You can tell he's gone through a lot these past few months and weeks, as he recounted. It's also really clear that JJ's incredibly pumped up for his first match since his loss to Arthur Pleasant!

DDK:

From what it sounds like, JJ's made a return much quicker than originally thought after his surgery. We heard he would be out for months!

Lance:

At DEF 178, JJ detailed his revamped training routine developed by Teri Melton after he lost a classic against MV1 just two weeks earlier, moving from weight training to an all-natural exercises built around a high-active cardio routine. JJ attributes that to getting back so quickly.

JJ continues to head to the ring, slapping fans with members of the crowd who are reaching out to him. JJ smiles the entire time. JJ hops up on the ring apron, before stepping through ropes and onto the second turnbuckle, while nodding along to the song. He proudly looks around the arena holding his hands up.

Then the chorus comes in with Bruce and the E Street Band singing BADLANDS! The arena's floodlight flash brightly in sync with those words. The rest of the chorus slowly winds down before stopping. JJ leans off and tears off his Jean jacket and tosses it down with enthusiasm to the floor and screams out "Come onnnn!!!!" as the crowd starts to cheer more!

The music stops abruptly and JJ hops off the corner with the audience applauding.

Benny Doyle calls for the bell.

DING DING

As soon as the bell rings, Strong AF charges and rams JJ with a running shoulder block.

DDK:

And now we see how Strong AF feels about this jubilee.

Lance:

JJ got caught up in the excitement of this return and raucous response. I can't blame him, but Strong AF has a lengthy track record of success here, even with his recent ousting in Team HOSS.

The big man now wrenches on JJ's left shoulder. And a second time. And a third time.

Lance:

That's the shoulder JJ had surgery on a few weeks ago. While he healed up much faster than expected, that is going to be a huge target — especially for someone as vicious as Strong AF!

JJ grabs the top rope with his right hand. But instead of breaking, Strong AF continues to wrench the left arm. JJ still holds onto the top rope and uses the leverage he has to do a forward flip. And then chops Strong AF's grip.

DDK:

JJ now hits the former Team HOSS member with a forearm! And another. And now he bounces off the rope and takes him down with a clothesline!

Lance:

All done with his left arm! And you can tell JJ is thrilled to test it out in combat.

JJ now lifts Strong AF by the hair/head. JJ then crouches down and picks him up in a Fireman's Carry and he starts rotating.

DDK:

Airplane Spin of all moves! I am counting 4... 5... 6 rotations! He stops and —

Strong AF's back snaps hard into the ring after JJ throws him down hard with a forward slam off his shoulders. JJ then scans the crowd and has a big smile on his face before he jumps —

DDK:

Standing Shooting Star Press!!!

One!

Two!

No!

Lance:

I was talking to JJ a few days ago about this match. He said that he was working on a style of wrestling he's calling "Old School Cool" where he combines time-tested offense with a more modern approach where he uses his mind boggling athleticism to his advantage.

JJ now whips Strong AF into the ropes and leaps so his knees/feet are almost at head level. Strong AF goes to block what he believes is going to be a —

DDK:

Dropkick, no! Instead, JJ came down hard with a footstomp!

Lance:

The World's Most Athletic Footstomp!

Before Strong AF can even register the pain to his right foot, JJ is already flying back in the air and now hits a textbook dropkick that knocks Strong AF through the middle and top rope to the floor.

DDK:

JJ kips up and hops to the top rope from a standing position! What insane agility and balance!

JJ then jumps off with some kind of twisting moonsault thing. He quickly gets on his feet as the crowd is applauding.

JJ Dixon:

!! AM! THAT! DUDE!

J!J!J!J!J!

Strong AF rolls himself into the ring as JJ hops up to the ring apron and continues to play to the crowd. Strong AF seizes the opportunity, and chokes JJ from behind. He then starts to waylay JJ with clubbing forearms to the chest.

DDK:

You can hear those thuds all over the arena!

Lance:

There's always a danger when any wrestler gets too amped up for the moment.

Strong AF turns JJ around and falls back with a vertical suplex.

One!

Tw-no!

Strong AF now says something to fans at ringside who start to jeer him. He snarls back as he picks JJ and whips him into the ropes --

DDK:

JJ reverses, and the big man off the ropes -- pop up inverted atomic drop!

Strong AF bends over and holds his groin region while his mouth forms the shape of an "ohhhhhh." JJ quickly then flips over his opponent with a Canadian Destroyer!

One!

Two!

No!

Lance:

There's a reason why moves like the inverted atomic drop work have worked so well since professional wrestling started -- especially when you can back them up with a move like that!

JJ gets up before Strong AF does. The former Team HOSS member swings wildly with a clothesline that JJ ducks. JJ catches him and looks to the crowd quickly and hoists him up for an atomic drop.

JJ:

BOOM!

DDK:

Now JJ turns 90 degrees, a second atomic drop! (The crowd now also says "Boom") Now another 90 degrees (Strong AF: "My butt hurts!") and now a fourth!

CROWD:

BOOM!

The shockwaves from the fourth and final atomic drop cause Strong AF to jump off his feet into the ropes. On the rebound, JJ crouches down and has Strong AF on his shoulders and JJ turns over with a Cartwheel Death Valley Driver. Then in one motion, JJ hops onto the second rope and bounces off and hits a back heel kick to the face of the sitting Strong AF.

One!

Two!

Thr-no!

Lance:

That combination of strength and agility is possibly unmatched in DEFIANCE!

Strong AF from his knees punches JJ in the midsection, followed by a second, and then a forearm to JJ's jaw. The Seattle Strongman gets to his feet and clocks JJ with a short-arm clothesline.

Lance:

Any man this strong can always come back in a wrestling match.

Strong AF quickly yanks JJ up and whips him into the corner. But as he charges, JJ slips between the top and middle ropes. Strong AF runs chest first into the corner.

DDK:

JJ is on the apron, measuring Strong AF for something... He springboards --

JJ catches a lot of air and then spins around as he comes back to earth with --

DDK:

Backrake! Did I just call that right? Did I just see a Springboard Backrake?

Lance:

Yes. Yes you did.

Strong AF is thrown off-balance by that move, allowing JJ to roll him up --

DDK:

No, JJ lifts the former powerlifter up... buckle bomb! JJ charges -- running big boot across the face!

Strong AF starts to fall forward, but JJ hooks him in a full nelson.

JJ Dixon: *[to the crowd]*

TIME! FOR! A! DRIVE!

JJ then swings Strong AF's head down with a forward Russian Leg Sweep.

DDK:

Sunset Boulevard!

JJ hooks the leg and the crowd counts along with him.

One!

Two!

Three!

DING DING DING**Darren Quimbey:**

The winner of this match... "The Special Attraction" J! J! Dixon!

The anthemic Bruce Springsteen song starts to play again with the crowd clapping to the strident tempo as JJ catches his wind, with a smile on his face. Then he looks up the aisle with a smile on his face. He runs over to the ropes and holds the top and middle rope open as Caitlyn Kinsey comes into the ring, a matching smile on her face.

And just like her match at DEF 189, JJ lifts her up as they exchange a deep, passionate teenagers-in-love kiss as the lights once again flash with the chorus of the song.

DDK:

What a rousing return to form for JJ Dixon!

Lance:

You have to believe that the rocket that has been propelling JJ Dixon's career these past few months has been

refueled with his soon-to-be-wife Caitlyn Kinsey by his side!

THE MAN IN THE MIDDLE

A television studio. A DEFIANCE banner hangs in the background with two comfortable chairs in front. In one of those chairs, dressed in a suit, is DEFIANCE announcer Lance Warner. Across from Warner, wearing a tank top and workout pants, is Levi Cole.

Lance:

Levi, I want to thank you for joining me here tonight.

Levi Cole:

My pleasure, Mr. Warner.

Lance:

I wanted to sit with you tonight to discuss the controversy at which you now find yourself at the center. Last week, we heard from your mentor, Ned Reform, for the first time since DEFCON. He challenged Masked Violator One for a contest at Maximum DEFIANCE. But beyond that, he seemingly laid a large responsibility at your feet. Levi, he has given you the power to decide whether or not Ned Reform remains in DEFIANCE.

Cole doesn't say anything. His eyes flicker in uncertainty.

Lance:

We've seen your friendship with MV1 develop in recent months. But we also know you deep your ties with Mr. Reform go. Now you're being asked to choose between the two - it seems both men are drawing a hard line in the sand. I have to ask: where is your head at?

Cole's eyes flicker again. He sighs and shifts uncomfortably in his chair.

Levi Cole:

Been having a tough time with this, Mr. Warner.

Lance waits, seemingly expecting more. When Cole doesn't elaborate, he probes a bit.

Lance:

I can imagine. Can you talk a bit about your relationship with MV1?

Levi Cole:

He's a great guy. Real kind heart, you know? He's had my back and I really appreciate that. A truly loyal friend. Someone I like working with.

Lance:

Sounds like you've made up your mind then, huh?

Cole scowls.

Levi Cole:

Do you know how much I owe Doctor Reform, Mr. Warner? What he's done for my career? For me personally?

Lance:

Some might argue that you've already repaid him for that ten times over...

Cole sighs, and leans back. He rubs his hands through his blond hair.

Levi Cole:

I just don't know, Mr. Warner.

Lance:

Well, you're going to have to choose. It's no secret that Ned Reform's contract status with this company has been uncertain over the past few weeks. And now that Mr. Reform has an "out" of this company, he's putting it all on you whether he goes or not. You choose MV1, Reform says he is gone. You return to Ned, and he stays in DEFIANCE. So... what is your decision?

A long pause. Uncomfortably long. Finally, Cole reaches down and rips the mic clipped to his shirt off. He mouths "I'm sorry" off mic before storming away, leaving a flabbergasted Lance Warner. Warner shakes his head as we fade out.

TRIPP WISE vs. LEE LAZ

DDK:

Before taking on one of our newcomers, Ria Lockhart, we've got Tripp Wise in action going one-on-one against Lee Laz of OnlyFlips!

Lance:

Tripp Wise made no bones about the fact he was sour that he had to be within BRAZEN's developmental program for the last several years while a newcomer like Ria Lockhart gets right to the top. But Lockhart, a veteran with over ten years experienced, worked hard in her own right to get here.

DDK:

Meanwhile, we're gonna see if Lee Laz can fare any better than his partner, Kenny Yi, did against Victor Vacio by taking on a main roster star in Tripp Wise. Let's go to Darren Quimbey for the next match!

To the ring we go.

Darren Quimbey:

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

♪ "In One Ear" by Cage The Elephant ♪

Out from the back comes a man wearing black trunks, knee pads and boots... oh, along with a sparkling blue bow-tie and collar, not to mention sparkling blue with tux tails on the back! He carefully poses to the side on the ramp and has a microphone in hand as Quimbey announces him.

Darren Quimbey:

...From Tacoma, Washington, weighing in at 231 pounds... **"THE WISE ASS" TRIPP WISE!**

And inside the ring, the camera cuts to Lee Laz with the OnlyFlips valet, Liz Icarus, at ringside.

Darren Quimbey:

And his opponent, accompanied by Liz Icarus and representing OnlyFlips... weighing in at 194 pounds... **LEE LAZ!**

Laz raises his hands in the air and then does a quick jumping backflip in place! Meanwhile, Tripp Wise has hit the ring with microphone in hand as his music cuts!

Tripp Wise:

All right, all right! Kentucky! I've got this great joke...

He THUNKS Lee Laz upside the head with a microphone!

Lance:

Hey!

Tripp Wise gets jeers as he yells into the microphone.

Tripp Wise:

Two muffins are in an oven! One muffin says, "is it hot in here?" Then the other muffin turns... **"HOLY BALLS, A TALKING MUFFIN!"**

He stomps at Lee Laz a few more times and gets boos until the referee Rex Knox yells at him to back away! Tripp puts up his hands defensively as Lee Laz has been roughed up in the corner.

DDK:

Tripp Wise had a little bit of bitterness about him when he called out Ria Lockhart and she put him in his place.

Lance:

Is Lee Laz going to try and fight?

Rex Knox asks him if he wants to continue. Liz checks on her friend, but Lee nods that he wants to continue. The Faithful cheer him on a bit as he tries to pull himself up.

Lance:

I guess he is!

Rex Knox calls for the bell.

DING DING

The PUN-isher charges and stomps away at Lee Laz in the corner quickly. He continues to stomp away for a few moments and then backs off... before charging right back in with a big running clothesline in the corner. Laz gets hurt, but it goes from bad to worse when he follows the clothesline up with a big running bulldog out of the corner!

DDK:

There's some actual fire coming from Tripp Wise tonight. He wants to show what he can do? Maybe he's gonna take this seriously?

He stands up after and then jumps and hits a seated senton right into the chest of Laz. Then he goes right into a headlock... and a noogie.

Lance:

Scratch that, I guess.

DDK:

Wise having fun at Lee Laz's expense right now.

He continues to apply the noogie until he's done messing with him and then stands up before talking trash to the downed Laz.

Tripp Wise: *[Dave Coulier-style]*

Uppercut! It! Out!

Then hits him with a big uppercut to the jaw!

DDK:

That was... interesting... application of a solid European uppercut by Wise!

Laz is staggering around the mat with Liz Icarus looking out for him. The young Seattle native tries to get back into the match as he's stuck on the apron. Tripp looks out to the crowd and asks if they want him to do another uppercut, but they boo him in return. He ignores them...

Lance:

Tripp needs to stop playing around and finish this.

But The Wise Ass does no such thing. He grabs Lee Laz as he's struggling in the apron, but gives him another noogie. He's having himself a grand old time after he lets go...

...Until Laz comes back with a rope-assisted jumping kick! And another!

DDK:

That's why you can't underestimate any opponent!

Laz is hurt but he's trying to fight back into the match while The PUN-isher is stunned from the pair of kicks when the springboard flying forearm catches him too!

Lance:

Tripp Wise off his feet! Where does Lee Laz go next?!

DDK:

I don't know! Tripp trying to bail on this match!

After taking a few hits, The Wise Ass is hobbling around the outside of the ring. Laz takes a few moments to get himself up, but the OnlyFlips member goes off the ropes and hits a somersault tope through the ropes to wipe out Tripp!

DDK:

GOODNESS! Talk about OnlyFlips! That somersault tope not only looked amazing but he cleared those ropes with ease and takes down Tripp Wise!

Liz Icarus is getting the crowd to cheer on Laz as he gets up and helps Tripp Wise back into the ring with a shove. He starts climbing up top the top rope, but the attacks from Tripp are clearly slowing him down.

Lance:

Too many of these risks may hold him back after the beating Tripp administered to start this match! . What will he do this time?

DDK:

He has a finishing move called He Lives! A modified 450 splash of sorts!

Laz tries to take flight... but lands on a pair of knees by Wise! The Faithful groan as Tripp gets back up and grabs the back of his neck!

DDK:

Wise saw the 450 coming and got the knees up... Have A Nice Tripp!

The three-quarters Russian legsweep puts Wise on the mat! Tripp yells out "HAVE A NICE TRIPP!" and then heads out to the ring apron almost immediately.

DDK:

This one-two combination is highly effective, no matter what goofy name Tripp Wise gives it. The Have A Nice Tripp often leads to the diving senton... SEE YOU NEXT FALL!

The diving senton connects and crushes Lee Laz underneath his weight! Wise quickly leans back and smiles to the hard camera as the referee counts.

ONE!

TWO!

THREE!

DING DING DING

♪ "In One Ear" by Cage The Elephant ♪

Darren Quimbey:

Here is your winner of the match... **TRIPP WISE!**

Tripp gets up and then waves a hand, pointing for Rex Knox to lift it. He raises his arm and Tripp Wise has a big smile.

Lance:

Literally only one pinfall attempt this entire match, but it's the winning fall for Tripp Wise. He moves on to MAXDEF with a small win streak going.

DDK:

He does, but Ria Lockhart won't make it easy at all.

Tripp rolls out of the ring and then heads up the ramp as he adjusts his sparkling blue bow-tie.

Tripp Wise:

NASHVILLE! YOU'VE BEEN A GREAT AUDIENCE!

SHUT ME UP

Backstage at the YUM! Center.

David Fox paces back and forth the corridor, looking up from his trance on occasion to glance at the camera watching him. He's all smiles, after his recent visit with his rival, Vae Victis' Kerry Kuroyama.

David Fox:

Woouoooooo BUDDY was it fun watching the Pacific Butthead steam up tonight! He was looking at me like I ran over his dog and slapped his mama and he had NOTHING for me. NOTHING! That's gotta be *some* kind of first in dealing with Vae Victis, right? David Fox, one of the few, the proud, the guys who left Vae Victis *speechless*. You love to see it.

Fox stops on a dime, chuckling as his eyes meet ours on a more permanent basis.

David Fox:

I'm sure he'll be stepping into that ring in Nashville with a mandate from LT herself to not stop dropping me on my skull until *candy* starts falling out, but I'm ready for the challenge. I've shook off a looooooooooooooot of rust since we last linked up, so I am absolutely *POSITIVE* that things will go differently from last time. How sure am I?

A pause.

David Fox:

THIS sure. If you can put me in the same place you did right after DEFCON, Kerry, prove all that talk about me being "lesser-tier?" You won't see me on DEFtv for the rest of 2023.

Another chuckle.

David Fox:

No DEFtv, no Acts of DEFIANCE... nothing but UNCUTs and BRAZEN. I'll go down there and try and pass some skills down to the next generation and the hungry kids trying to claw their way up from the off-weeks. And you won't hear hide nor hair from me for the rest of the year unless you wanna pay a visit. You wanna shut me up, Kerr?

He shrugs.

David Fox:

Now's your chance. Don't blow it now, OK?

A wink.

Cut.

BRAZEN ONSLAUGHT CHAMPIONSHIP: LORD SEWELL (c) vs. ???

DDK:

Coming up next, we've got a new addition to tonight's card... Lord Sewell of Gentlemen's Agreement will be putting up his newly-won BRAZEN Onslaught Championship in an open challenge tonight against any member of the BRAZEN roster! How'd this come about, Lance?

Lance:

During the last BRAZEN Double Shot, then-champion George Othello was set to defend the title against the "Royal Guard" of Gentlemen's Agreement, Earl Roberts. Instead, Lord Sewell -- a main roster member - demanded the shot in his place. Sewell subsequently won the match and the title with help from that loaded white glove he and Oliver Tarquin Monroe like to use!

DDK:

Gentlemen's Agreement have been demanding title opportunities and when they weren't getting it, they went to BRAZEN and took one for themselves. Now, we'll have to see who will get this chance to step up to a main roster talent! That match is right now!

And now on over to Darren Quimbey at ringside.

Darren Quimbey:

The following singles match is an open challenge set for one fall and it is for the BRAZEN Onslaught Championship! Introducing first...

♪ "Land of Hope and Glory" ♪

The theme plays and out walks Lord Sewell, wearing a red overcoat with yellow epaulettes, while being applauded by his longtime tag partner Oliver Tarquin Monroe, who is wearing a dark gray sleeveless coat over a well-tailored shirt and tie, which fits snugly to expose his muscular frame. Behind the two men walks the now-christened Earl Roberts, the former Southern brawler, not resorting to wearing a red button-up coat with a white hat ala the British Royal Guard.

Darren Quimbey:

Being accompanied by Oliver Tarquin Monroe and "The Royal Guard" Earl Roberts, representing Gentlemen's Agreement... from Long Melford, England, weighing in at 234 pounds, he is the defending BRAZEN Onslaught Champion... **LORD SEWELL!**

Lord Sewell opens his coat to reveal the BRAZEN Onslaught Championship around his waist. Once he steps into the ring, he takes off his jacket, he neatly folds it and then hands it off for Earl Roberts to take. He is handed a microphone as his music fades out.

Lord Sewell:

Greetings, whelps! The Honorable Viscount Vice Admiral Ernest Sewell, but you may address me as Lord Sewell... tonight, I demand satisfaction!

The crowd boos the pompous England native.

Lord Sewell:

Because this company continuously REFUSES to acknowledge the class and reverence that myself and Mister Monroe bring to the wrestling ring of DEFIANCE, I took it upon myself to accept a challenge of one of their young men... that... ugh... WELSHMAN, George Othello and took this little trinket for myself. I am your NEW BRAZEN Onslaught Champion! A title that used to be reserved for BRAZEN's knuckledraggers is now a title that will be made of 100% class and sophistication!

He lightly tugs at the title around his waist.

Lord Sewell:

So since I walked into their house, put my feet up on their table and took something from them, the gentlemanly thing to do would be to give someone the chance to come here and take the BRAZEN Onslaught Title tonight! So if you find yourself feeling feisty... let's engage in a gentlemanly game of the in-ring fisticuffs!

He hands over the title to the masked BRAZEN referee known simply as The Referee. He holds the title up as Sewell gets an opponent...

♪ "Big Dreams" by The Score feat. FITZ ♪

The Faithful are unfamiliar with the music, but out comes out a handsome young man wearing a silver sparkling singlet, knee pads, boots and a mouthguard as he smiles at the camera. He grins and runs a hand through his shoulder-length black hair. He points at the Faithful and tries to get them all fired up as he approaches the ring.

Darren Quimbey:

Introducing the challenger... from Reseda, California, weighing in at 228 pounds... he is the self-proclaimed "World's Sexiest Suplex Machine" ... **LEX SUPLEXY!**

Lance:

Young Lex Suplexy coming out here to take up the challenge! He's a man that's out to prove that all amateur wrestlers aren't just boring stiffs that can work the mat. This kid has a unique fashion sense to him, but he's very capable! And as his name suggests, he knows his way around throwing people around!

DDK:

I have heard of this kid! Coming back from injury. What a moment this could be for him tonight!

Suplexy hits the ring and then throws up two fists for the crowd before he enters the ring. Lord Sewell looks disgusted by his opponent's gaudy appearance. He pops the crowd with a quick standing backflip in the ring and gets them fired up more before the match begins.

DING DING

Lord Sewell and Lex both lock up in the center of the ring and start jockeying for the first advantage of the match. Suplexy manages to get him into the corner quickly, but Lord Sewell hangs on and then applies a tight headlock to try and keep the challenger at bay.

Lance:

Lex Suplexy was almost a candidate for the Olympics in amateur wrestling, but decided he wanted to pursue this professionally by adding his own flair to what we know of amateur wrestlers! He was signed to BRAZEN just after ACTS of DEFIANCE last year after a tryout!

DDK:

And he's got the basics down! He shoves Sewell into the ropes! Big hip toss!

Sewell gets snapped over with a quick arm drag by young Lex! When he gets up, the self-professed Super-Sexy Suplex Machine puts a boot in his gut and then shows why he's called what he's called with a beautiful double arm suplex!

DDK:

Suplexy with the double arm suplex! Cover!

ONE!

TWO... NO!

Sewell kicks out, but Lex stays on him with a fireman's carry takeover as he's grounded, then rolls up to his feet with

Lord Sewell on him!

Lance:

Great movement by Lex trying to keep him up.. No!

Lord Sewell gives the BRAZEN standout the slip by sneaking out of the fireman's carry... then THROWS him shoulder-first into the corner!

Lance:

Effective counter by Sewell... but is THIS how he's going to keep the Onslaught Title? Doing things like that? Didn't he just say he was going to be a gentlemen?

DDK:

Say one thing, do another! And now Lord Sewell with the cravate... then a big knee lift to the face!

Suplexy is scrambling around on his knee when Sewell grabs him by the arm and snaps him with a big short-arm clothesline! He hangs onto the arm and pulls up Suplexy slowly before hitting him with a second short-arm clothesline! Sewell mockingly shakes the challenger which gets him jeers before he yanks Suplexy off the mat to hit a third consecutive short-arm clothesline! After the multiple shots, he goes for a cover with a forearm placed on Lex's face.

ONE!

TWO!

NO!

DDK:

Some guts on display by Suplexy, but Lord Sewell has the match in firm control right now.

Lance:

And now he's back to the neck with that Cravate! He knows full well if you control the neck of your opponent, you can control the body!

DDK:

One of wrestling's most basic fundamentals!

He continues to apply the neck crank down on Lex Suplexy and keeps him grounded. Oliver Tarquin Monroe and Earl Roberts both watch on and act as the cheering section for their stablemate. The cravate gets a little bit tighter, but Lex tries to fight to his feet! He elbows Sewell in the gut time and time again in order to free himself! When Sewell backs off, the defending Onslaught Champion runs at him...

Only to catch a big overhead belly-to-belly suplex from Suplexy!

DDK:

Lex Suplexy with the counter! And now he kips up to his feet!

Suplexy is cradling his neck, but he's able to ride along with the adrenaline and The Faithful get behind him as he stands to his feet! Roberts and Monroe both yell at Sewell and warn him against standing, but when he does, he gets picked up by Lex! He holds on...

Release Northern lights suplex!

DDK:

Another great suplex from the BRAZEN standout! And another kip-up!

Lex is on his feet a second time as a staggering Lord Sewell rises. He swings at Lex, but he underhooks one arm, then catches the other. Then Sewell gets taken over with a trapping overhead suplex!

Lance:

That was great! Will three suplex variations lead to a three-count?

Suplexy has The Faithful starting to believe!

ONE!

TWO!

NO!

The fans deflate after the kickout by Sewell! Suplexy asks the referee, but only gets two fingers in response.

DDK:

What a series of suplexes, but can he land the one that's going to get him the title?

As a stunned Sewell tries to stand, he feels the arms of Lex wrap around his waist for a German suplex of some sort. He gets him off his feet, but Lord Sewell kicks his legs and then sends Lex forward into the ropes. Lord Sewell gets The Referee's attention... for Earl Roberts to SOCK Lex in the mouth with a discus punch between the ropes!

DDK:

Hey! The Referee doesn't see the cheap shot from Earl Roberts on the outside!

The Faithful boo as Lex is punch-drunk, allowing Lord Sewell to grab him by the arms, then twist him around into a straitjacket neckbreaker!

DDK:

And Lord Sewell calls that move the Gentleman's Pact! Right into a cover!

Sewell hits the neckbreaker variation on Suplexy and then pins him with the forearm draped across his face.

ONE!

TWO!

THREE!

DING DING DING

♪ "Land of Hope and Glory" ♪

Darren Quimbey:

Here is your winner of the match and still BRAZEN Onslaught Champion... **LORD SEWELL!**

Lord Sewell picks himself up and then holds the BRAZEN Onslaught Title belt over his head. Oliver Tarquin Monroe enters the ring to congratulate his partner with a hearty handshake and Earl Roberts stands still and is still shaking his fist from decking a good one upside the head of Lex Suplexy.

Lance:

A good showing tonight for Lex Suplexy, but Lord Sewell gets the win with help from Earl Roberts.

DDK:

This is the first of two title matches here on tonight's episode of UNCUT! Still to come in our main event, we've got Vae Victis' Henry Keyes defending his Southern Heritage Championship just before Maximum DEFIANCE against one-half of the BRAZEN Tag Team Champions... Count Novick. Stay tuned for more!

HONKY TONK BLUES

MV1:

For a man with your self-professed intellect and worldly experience...

He lets the set-up hang, listing in the moist breeze for a moment under the bright lights of the Ernest Tubb Record Shop marquee, before reeling it back in.

MV1:

You may *not* actually be the smartest man, Dr. Reform.

The Honky Tonk Highway glistens beneath a drizzling rain as downtown Nashville's nightlife powers on despite the inclement weather. Above the noise of wet tires and chatty sidewalk-strollers creeps the sound of a half-dozen music acts, wafting from the doors of several establishments on both sides of the street; Music City lives up to its name.

Standing out starkly amidst the pedestrians, mostly under umbrellas, is the masked man walking down the street. Under no umbrella and not minding, the scarlet of his mask is accentuated by the red neon lights of the establishment he drifts past. He finds that people offer him a respectful, if not puzzled, berth.

MV1:

I'm not trying to be insulting... I'm just being honest.

Blue eyes glancing up at the neon blue, red, and yellow "RIPPLED ROBIN" sign, he halts, head turning for the door. His pause allows us to hear some wailing blues emanating from inside the bar. His smile widens before extending that pause to allow a couple to pass ahead of him and duck inside, quickly folding their shared umbrella along the way.

Masked Violator #1 follows them in, as does our view, the sound crescendoing as we enter a dimly lit dive-bar. The surly bartender nods in MV1's direction as the masked man takes a stool at the bar. MV1 nods back with a lop-sided grin. When next he speaks, his voice admittedly competes with the live band melting across the room in the corner, but he is well-mic'd and comes through clearly.

MV1:

So quick to write off and dismiss everyone you encounter. So quick to presume and assume.

The bartender pops a cap and slides a frosty, dark beer bottle in front of MV1. MV1 politely drops a ten on the bar in front of him and slides it to the barkeep with another friendly nod of the head. He takes a sip, raises both cloth eyebrows at the bottle, then sets it back down nicely on a crusty cardboard coaster – eyes settling on the camera now behind the bar.

MV1:

Take this place...

MV1 sits back, glancing around the bar - and the camera sweeps on cue. Two stools down, a middle-aged man nurses a whiskey, mindlessly scrolling through his phone. Seated at the high-top behind him, a first date plays out before us as an earnest young lad chats up a smiling young lass. Behind them, two men argue, at each other and at the high-mounted TV. In a dingy corner, a four piece band desperately in need of upgrading two of them plugs away at basic 12-bar blues, bored out of their minds.

As we pull back, we see everyday people everywhere.

MV1:

Take these people.

#1 laughs at himself, shaking his head.

MV1:

Our differences couldn't be greater, Doc. You despise these people. Me? I recognize that these are the people that made me. These are the people that I fight to make proud.

A pair of presumably over-served college-age kids wanders behind MV1, clapping him on the back and offering bawdy encouragement as they pass.

Drunk Kid 1:

KICK THAT UGLY, BALD DORKS ASS, MASKED DUDE!

MV1:

I'm aimin' to!

MV1 chuckles again, tactfully waving his new friends off.

MV1:

Even that guy. Ok, maybe *especially* that guy. These are the people that buy tickets, that call in to wrestling talk shows, that buy the shirts and the foam fingers, that subscribe to DEFonDEMAND, that give me the opportunity to live out my dream every day. These are the people that put food on my table-

MV1 raises a toast.

MV1:

-and the drink in my hand.

He takes a quick sip and sets the bottle back down, pushing it away from him. Brushing any lingering moisture off his facial-fabric with the back of a hand, he smirks.

MV1:

These are the people I grew up with. The people that raised me. This is my community. And... Where *I* feel an obligation to give back... you somehow see an opportunity to separate yourself.

He shakes his head, eyes flitting from drink back to lens.

MV1:

I know you're busy crafting some kind of speculation and chatter about your supposed contract situation, but putting all of that nonsense aside... the money DEFIANCE pays you isn't pulled out of the air. It's the very people you talk down to and marginalize that cuts your check, Doctor. And yeah, they're incredibly willing to pay to see you get yours. They can't wait for you to get shown up, again. Ask anyone. America, and the World, loves to see you get embarrassed. They love watching you SUCK, Ned.

A group of women pass behind MV1, holding up index fingers and WOOO'ing unironically.

MV1:

I bet that's hard. Having an arena-full of screaming people who hate your guts. That can't be easy.

Eyes unfocused on the foreground, MV1 fiddles with his beer bottle for a moment then adjusts his weight on the stool.

MV1:

You're an interesting study, Doc. So seeking affirmation and acceptance. Was it abandonment? Where were YOU hurt, Doc? What happened? You know enough to know that you should look at that. We all carry something, Doc. What are YOU carrying? And why do you insist on pushing it on innocent people like Levi Cole?

Nervously picking at the bottle's label, MV1's eyes find the camera again.

MV1:

What's with people like Nigel Trickelbush? With people like Ned Reform? You've got me at MAXIMUM DEFIANCE, Doc. One-on-one in the ring. That's your chance to put up or get shut up. Why do you have to pull Cole into this? Really though. What's inside of you where you feel compelled to poison him?

His red mask is twisted, an angry grimace beneath.

MV1:

I'm asking... for a friend.

Pushing the bottle away, he sits tall.

MV1:

I'm asking for ME.

Wood scrapes wood as #1 pushes his seat back and stands up.

MV1:

I don't claim to be a genius like you, but... You want Levi Cole to take responsibility for your DEFIANCE future.

He makes brief eye contact with our off-camera gruff bartender and offers him one final quick nod, then locks with the lens once more.

MV1:

Like with Lord Nigel... Don't put it past *me* to dictate your DEFIANCE future, Doc.

MV1 turns to take in the band as the lead singer howls something particularly heartfelt and the camera sweeps the room, fading to black.

AURORA KAYE vs. NO FUN DEAN

The camera shows Aurora Kaye stretching in the locker room.

Lance:

Aurora Kaye is the daughter of Tabitha Kinsey. Everyone familiar with her said she was as naturally talented -- if not more -- than her mother, who was one of the most legendary wrestlers of all-time. Aurora had all of the tools -- strength, speed, athleticism and an innate knowledge of technical wrestling. In fact, an urban legend has it that Aurora Kaye once countered The Kinsey Leglock, redubbed The Gembreaker and used by Tabitha's charges The Company Men, when training with her mother. And no one has ever been able to solve that puzzle!

There's old footage of Tabitha Kinsey in the ring hooking her dreaded Inverted Figure Four, following by more recent footage of each member of The Company Men hooking to move onto Raiden and JP Reeves of NDR.

Lance:

Aurora was primed for stardom. To distance herself from her mother, she went under the name Aurora Kay. She wrestled in several regional promotions, and had some preliminary matches in the CSWA, which was one of the premier wrestling leagues of its time.

Aurora Kaye is in a CSWA ring against an undisclosed opponent. There's footage of her walking backstage with Zoltan and a younger Teri Melton in the background, giving Aurora a dirty look.

Lance:

But she soon became pregnant with her daughter, Caitlyn Kinsey. Aurora put her wrestling career largely behind her and embraced her passion for art and embraced her quirky, bohemian personality, and estranged from her mother Tabitha Kinsey. She was a proud single mother. But tonight, after years in the making, Aurora Kaye makes her national television debut!

Aurora turns to the camera with a very serious look on her face.

Aurora Kaye:

I have no regrets at all about giving up wrestling so I could focus on raising Caitlyn. Me and Caitlyn, we could not be closer. But, yeah, I'd be lying if there wasn't a little part of me that didn't want to at least make one appearance on a big, national stage. So, tonight's the night, as Rod Stewart would say... Dear God, did I just quote Rod Stewart in my first televised wrestling promo?

Aurora shakes her head in shame.

We cut to the ring.

No Fun Dean is in the ring already, wearing a T-Shirt with his name on it and generic black trunks. He holds his fist high in the air with a miserable scowl on his face. Next to him, with a not-quite-as-miserable scowl on his face, is Slightly Fun Jen.

Darren Quimbey:

Now coming to the ring, making her DEFIANCE TV debut is Aurora Kayyyyyeee!!!

♪ "Another Girl, Another Planet" by The Only Ones ♪

The up-tempo late-70s power pop song plays as Aurora Kaye comes out. She has long dyed green hair to her back and is wearing a fully body suit similar to something someone in the X-Men would wear in a green and gold pattern that has a gold comet flying across her stomach. The crowd has mild interest at seeing the debut of Aurora, who has only made a handful of backstage appearances since her daughter and granddaughter's arrival to DEFIANCE.

DDK:

This is an interesting debut, as you don't usually see a wrestler at this age appearing on national television for the first

time!

Lance:

You can't help but wonder how Aurora will handle the jitters and pressure that comes with the moment.

DING DING

Aurora and No Fun Dean lock up. No Fun Dean gets the advantage and hip tosses Aurora to the mat. Slightly Fun Jen has a very small smile appear on the cracks of her lips.

DDK:

No doubt Aurora also has a lot of ring rust to shake off!

Lance:

In a lot of ways, this is like the first match of her entire career. No Fun Dean doesn't have the best of records, but he has a lot more recent experience. We saw how much her daughter Caitlyn struggle with her first series of matches here in DEFIANCE!

They lock up again, and No Fun Dean again gets the advantage and a hip toss on Aurora. He snarls something that's not very fun. Aurora starts to get to her feet, but No Fun Dean pulls her by the hair down to the mat and cinches in a chinlock. Benny Doyle warns him.

DDK:

Aurora also isn't used to someone who will blatantly use actions like that, too.

Aurora though starts to power up with her legs, lifting both of them to her feet. She now elbows No Fun Dean in the stomach, followed by a second one.

DDK:

Aurora with some European uppercuts to No Fun Dean!

Lance:

And those are beautifully delivered!

Aurora then whips Dean into the corner, but he reverses.

DDK:

No Fun Dean charges -- no, Aurora with a leapfrog and catches him with her legs for a sunset flip!

One!

Two!

No!

Aurora now clobbers No Fun Dean with another European uppercut. After she hits it, he bails to the floor to speak with Slightly Fun Jen.

DDK:

Aurora Kaye bounces off the far ropes - Dean and Jen don't see her -- and what a tope between the bottom and second rope that takes both out!

The crowd gets up and erupts at the unexpected move. Aurora gets up and pumps her fist in celebration and pounds on the apron a few times.

Lance:

You can see right there why she was considered such a can't miss prospect all of those years ago!

Aurora rolls Dean into ring and has him in a front face lock. She then slingshots him off the ropes.

DDK:

Slingshot brainbuster!

Lance:

Great ingenuity from Aurora with that move.

Aurora quickly goes to the apron and up to the top. She looks to the crowd that starts applauding. She leaps off with a Shooting Star Press!

DDK:

She calls that Aurora Borealis!

One!

Two!

Three!

DING DING DING

Lance:

What a great debut years in the making!

Darren Quimbey:

Ladies and gentlemen, the winner of the match... Aurora Kayyyyyyyyy!!!!

Aurora stans on the middle rope and scans the crowd, a look of immense pride in her face, as the crowd applauds.

STILL GOT ONE GOOD FOOT

Footage filmed from the aftermath of the show's main event confrontation between the FIST of DEFIANCE Lindsay Troy and challenger Dex Joy.

Dex is hobbling through the curtains. He can put pressure on the leg, but there's a slight limp as he does so after being struck with a chop block to the left leg Lindsay Troy locked in a knee bar two weeks before that.

Taking note of a camera that his filming his limping through the backstage area after the show, Dex Joy is about to give the UNCUT fans some last words with DEFsec trying to keep the Biggest Boy from doing something too hasty.

Dex Joy:

LINDSAY TROY!!! SONNY BOY!!!

His loud and boisterous screams are loud through the halls backstage.

Dex Joy:

You tell the people that you're gonna put Momma Joy's Baby Boy in a body bag ... then *run* from the fight you and Sonny started?! That's proof right there you ain't fit anymore to be at the top of DEFIANCE Wrestling anymore! Dexy Baby is taking this one good leg and he's gonna use it to give you the *boot* so DEFIANCE Wrestling can have a new King of the Mountain!

One of the medical team tries to approach Dex but he waves them off and wants to walk out under his power.

Dex Joy:

We are gonna show Vae Victis that you don't rule ish anymore around here! We're sick and tired of being sick and tired of Vae Victis! The Wrecking Crew are marching right into Maximum DEFIANCE and you're gonna find out one thing, Queenie!

Dexy Baby beats on his chest.

Dex Joy:

... THEY DON'T MAKE BODY BAGS BIG ENOUGH TO HOLD THE BIGGEST BOY!!!

SOUTHERN HERITAGE CHAMPIONSHIP: HENRY KEYES (c) vs. COUNT NOVICK

DDK:

It's Main Event time here on UNCUT! In what can only be described as a mismatch on paper, "The Kraken" Henry Keyes has chosen to defend his Southern Heritage Championship - on the EVE of MAXIMUM DEFIANCE, no less - against Count Novick!

Lance:

This all stems from what took place previously on DEFtv - we all bore witness to the Henry Keyes SOHER Spectapalooza, sponsored by IHOP, and while the festivities started out great for Keyes, things took a turn!

DDK:

Rezin threw some verbal HEATERS in the direction of his former friend and Vae Victis as a whole, and then he blasted Henry Keyes as a cherry on top...and then, like a cherry on top of THAT cherry, Novick emerged and threw down the challenge for the SOHER!

Lance:

Does he really think he's going to woo Lindsay Troy?

DDK:

To do it, he'd have to stop one of the most dominant runs we've ever seen in DEFIANCE...so, no. I don't think he will.

♪ "Creepy Song" by Some Dude Playing the Organ ♪

On the DEFiatron, a castle on a hill. In a crackling thunder storm. The entire screen turns black and white with a filter that makes it look like an old talkie. A burst of lighting, and we are now inside the creepy medieval castle, and a figure shrouded in shadow slowly rises from the floor like a plank. And then...

♪ "Bloodletting (The Vampire Song)" by Concrete Blond ♪

A burst of fog billows out from the rampway. And in the center of that fog, a figure. A figure shielding himself from prying eyes by using his cape to hide his face. But there's no mistaking who this... and The Faithful sure know...

The Faithful:

AH!! HA!!! HA!!!

And with that, the cape is dramatically swirled away, revealing one half of the new BRAZEN tag team champions: Count Novick! The Count is dressed in usual gothic inspired ring gear, but also sports the gold wrapped around his undead waist. Novick grins a dastardly grin to the sea of Faithful cheering for him, creeping toward the ring with an exaggerated stride as his head shoots back and forth. Halfway down the ramp, he stomps directly in front of the camera to raise both eyebrows in quick succession before continuing his creepy dance to the ring.

Darren Quimbey:

Ladies and gentlemen, the following contest is for the SOUTHERRRRRRRRRN HERITAGE CHAAAAAAMPIONSHIIIIIIIP! Introducing first, the challenger! Hailing from Bran, Transylvania, and weighing in at two-hundred and one pounds... HERE IS... COOOUUUNT... NOOOVVIIIIICK!!

It's a sPoOoOoKy sight as Novick dramatically bares his teeth before ducking his face behind his cloak, turning his attention back up the ramp.

♪ "Stranger Fruit" by Zeal & Ardor ♪

It's doom and gloom and familiar text and beacons. All pink beacons, perhaps held over from the Spectapalooza - though sadly, we don't get the sweet marching band to play his theme. Keyes is not happy, and there is no pomp or

circumstance in his stride. The pomp and circumstance has already been ruined for him after the events of the Spectapalooza. He just wants to hurt someone.

Darren Quimbey:

And his opponent...hailing from San Francisco, California! He is the reigning and defending SOUTHERN! HERITAGE! CHAMPIOOOOOON! "The Kraken"! HenryyyyyyYYYYYYY KEEEEEEEEEEEEYES!

BOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO!

Keyes has already unstrapped his championship belt and passes it to referee Carla Ferrari as he locks onto Count Novick. Ferrari lifts the championship aloft for full camera view, and as if anticipating Ferrari's cadence, Keyes has taken a couple steps forward and his arms swing out wide just before Ferrari calls for the bell!!

DING DING

CRRRRRACKKKKKKKKKKK~::~!!

Lance:

BELLLLLLLLLLLLL CLAP!!!

DDK:

My GOD, that might be it!

Count Novick CRUMPLES to the mat, and Keyes just chuckles. And chuckles again - my word, we're practically at a full giggle! He motions to a few of the Faithful in the front row and starts jawing at them.

Henry Keyes:

Should I pin him? Ya think? Is that right??

The fans throw up the big double-thumbdowns and boo and boo. Keyes kneels beside the fallen Novick, locks eyes with the fans he was jawing at, and goes for the "pin"...referee Carla Ferrari gets to a one count, and then Keyes just shoves Novick away! He rolls across the ring to the apron - Keyes follows him and shoves a second time, sending Novick spilling to the outside!

Henry Keyes:

WRESTLERS get pinned, you dolts! Referee, count out this trash!

Ferrari backs Keyes away from the ropes and scolds him for trying to tell her how to do her job; still, Novick remains dazed, but stirring, on the outside, and she begins her count (Count?)

ONE!

TWO!

THREE!

FOUR!

Novick shakes the cobwebs out and gets to his feet. Keyes takes this as an insult and decides to expedite the wait in between The Last Time He Hurt Novick and The Next Time He Will Hurt Novick by rolling to the outside, grabbing the Count by the head, and throwing him back into the ring. Keyes follows, and as both men reach their feet, Keyes immediately throws a Propellor Edge Chop! Another chop! Keyes has Novick against the ropes now, then grabs him by the ribcage, and HEAVES...

DDK:

BIEL TOSS BY HENRY KEYES!

Lance:

Count Novick just went FLYING across the ring! And look Keebs, look - the momentum of the throw sent Novick to the outside once again, and Keyes is back to barking at members of the Faithful!

The cameras pan over to the fans that seem to have grabbed Keyes's attention. It looks like a small group of grungy, scruffy bastards, all wearing different iterations of Rezin merch. One fan with a little salt in their beard has the Rezin anarchy-style logo on his shirt, another wears the Favoured Sinner design. The woman up front, a full head shorter than her friends, has the newest APUNKALYPSE NOW! merch and seems to be the main instigator with Keyes.

Henry Keyes:

You like Rezin so much, do you? Well guess what! Now THIS is happening!!

With a start, Keyes again follows Novick outside, heaves him back under the bottom rope, and power-stomps up the steps to re-enter the ring. He's got the wrists locked, and he throws a heavy knee...

DDK:

COIN!

Lance:

I know he normally likes to go for two, but he should really just finish this match now - Novick hasn't even come CLOSE to performing an offensive maneuver in this match!

Instead of going for the second Coin, Keyes releases the wrist locks and hoists Novick off of his feet. He repositions and hoists Novick upon his shoulders, and begins to spin and spin!

BOOOOOOOOOO!

DDK:

We haven't seen Keyes break out the Airship Spin in some time, partner!

Lance:

Even with the size disparity, this is an impressive feat of strength from Henry Keyes...but this just feels like some sort of slap in the face, doesn't it?

Lance:

I get what you're saying: "Look how silly it looks when I do the things you like", that sort of idea?

DDK:

He's making a pretty over-the-top goofy face Lance, I don't know if you can see it - but that's exactly what it seems like he's saying.

Keyes's tongue is sticking out and his one uncovered eye is wide and pointing in nonsensical directions as he spins in place with Novick on his shoulders. After a couple more spins, Keyes pushes his shoulders up and sends Novick tumbling to the mat and back outside. Keyes laughs maniacally as boos continue to rain down.

Lance:

Enough is enough, Carla Ferrari should consider stopping this!

DDK:

And look, the so-called Greatest SOHER of All Time is so tough, he's still letting a few of the Faithful get under his skin! Look at this!

The fans start a "THAT'S NOT PUNK ROCK" chant in their row, which grows to a few rows, then to a section, then

throughout the arena. Keyes scowls at this and shouts at Ferrari to begin her count. Ferrari admonishes Keyes again, and the two begin to bicker.

THAT'S NOT PUNK ROCK! CLAP CLAP CLAPCLAPCLAP

THAT'S NOT PUNK ROCK! CLAP CLAP CLAPCLAPCLAP

Ferrari gets the last word in over Keyes, who turns his attention to the chanting fans. His emotions have swung back and forth between sickening joy and general butthurt all night, but now, he's just blindly pissed. How dare these fucking people, after he proved to everyone that HE, in fact, was more Punk Rock than Rezin all those years ago, chant derisively at him?

ONE!

TWO!

THREE!

FOUR!

Keyes barks at anyone and everyone he can get his eye on to shut up, which only makes matters worse for him.

Henry Keyes:

YOU WOULDN'T KNOW PUNK ROCK IF IT FELL OUT OF THE SKY AND CRASHED ON TOP OF YOU!

THAT'S NOT PUNK ROCK! CLAP CLAP CLAPCLAPCLAP

THAT'S NOT PUNK ROCK! CLAP CLAP CLAPCLAPCLAP

FIVE!

SIX!

SEVEN!

Henry Keyes:

YOU BETTER QUIT CHANTING! I DON'T DESERVE THIS FROM YOU PEOPLE! I GAVE YOU PANCAKES!

EIGHT!

NINE!

Henry Keyes:

PANCAAAAAAAAAAKES!

...

...fans at home have noticed. Have you noticed?

Take a moment and see if you do.

...

...

Have you figured it out? Henry Keyes sure hasn't.

He hasn't noticed that Carla Ferrari stopped her ten count.

...

Why might a referee stop a ten count in this situation, one might ask themselves.

Henry Keyes isn't asking. He doesn't know to ask, is the problem. His eyes are red at the sight of Rezin shirt after Rezin shirt after anti-VV sign after booing fan. And so he doesn't see who's measuring him from the other side of the ring, ready to launch.

...

SMASHHHHHH!

DDK:

DROPKICK BY COUNT NOVICK TO HENRY KEYES'S BACK! Keyes is off balance, he didn't see that coming!

Lance:

Novick's not done!

DDK:

POISON-RANAAAAAAAAAAAA!

Lance:

VAE VICTIS SHOULD BE VERY VORRIED!

Keyes is full-on SPIKED on his head from the surprise one-two! The Faithful's boos now turn to raucous cheers and fans rise to their feet as Count Novick scrambles to the top rope! He does an inverted Sign of the Cross (watch wallet testicles spectacles?)...

Count Novick:

This is vor YOU, Lindsay Troy!

...and LEAPS...

...

CRASHHHHHH!

RAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAH!!!!

DDK:

THE GRAVEYARD SMASH! I CAN'T BELIEVE IT! WE'RE GOING TO HAVE TO RECORD NEW ADS FOR THE PAY PER VIEW, THERE'S GONNA BE A NEW SOHER!

Lance:

NOVICK WITH THE COVER!

ONE!

TWO!

...

...

...

THREEAWWWWWWWWWW!!

DDK:

Keyes BARELY gets the shoulder up, and - oh no! Look out!

It's a 2.9 by anyone's definition...and it's awoken the Kraken. His eye, once bugged out for his own laughs, is now bugged out from panic, anger, and desperation. Almost on autopilot, he forces himself upright and throws some ugly forearm smashes into Count Novick, whose adrenaline spike seems to have sadly faded as quickly as it came. Novick begins to fade from the strikes, until Keyes locks the wrists, takes a step and a half back, and throws his entire body weight behind a 1" x 1" point at the center of Keyes's knee in the direction of Novick's temple.

CRACKKKKKK!*BOOOOOOOOOO!***DDK:**

Keyes hits another Coin! Look at this, he's actually going for the cover here!

ONE!

TWO!

...

...

THREE!

DING DING DING

♪ "Stranger Fruit" by Zeal & Ardor ♪

Keyes doesn't wait for Carla Ferrari to raise his hand in victory before he springs into action, pushing and shoving the fallen body of Novick away from the center of the ring and towards the ropes a final time.

Darren Quimbey:

Here is your winner, and STILL, the Southern Heritage Champion of DEFIANCE... "The Kraken"! Henry! Keeeeeeeeyes!

With a great deal of exertion and pushing, Keyes has finally ejected Novick from the ring a final time. As he catches his breath, he staggers and drops to a knee, showing the effects of Novick's offensive flurry.

DDK:

Henry Keyes with the last word here in Louisville, and we're sure to see a WAR at MAXIMUM DEFIANCE, Lance!

Lance:

No doubt about it...Keyes may have ignored the looming threat of Rezin Retribution for the last few months, but he won't be able to ignore it anymore! Two men with incredible history face off for the Southern Heritage Championship, and it's the main event of Night One! You don't want to miss out on this show, ladies and gentlemen! We will see you in Nashville!

DDK:

Poor Count Novick...never had a chance to woo Lindsay Troy, did he?

THIS.

IS.

DEFIANCE.