SHOW OPEN

SMASHIE! SHMASHIE!

Backstage during DEFtv, just prior to the main event, Butcher Vic is dressed up in his greatest impression of Jack Harmen, aka High Flyer, one of Deacon's biggest rivals. The roar and rush of the Faithful is muted but electric in the background. It's shortly after the segment that occured with Ned Reform, where he unconvincingly protrayed this role for the Faithful.

If you looked at the expression on Vic's face though, you'd have thought he had just given an Oscar Winner performance.

Butcher Victorious:
Main Event Baby! Main Event Butcher! Get that money.

Smiling as if all eyes were on him, he looks around the locker room, and spots one half of the PCP, the D. He shouts out.

Butcher Victorious:
Hey! Did you see? I'm an actor now! BUTCH VIC... I MEAN, AIN'T NO ONE FLYER... THAN HIGH FLYER!

The D looks up, and then does an eye squint. You know, one of those squints where you try to figure out who the fuck is talking to you, and then realize who it is and need to quickly put distance between you and this fool speaking to you who's name you don't remember?

That's what happens here.

Butcher shrugs his shoulders, and turns to Iris Devine who's rushing past him with medical supplies.

Butcher Victorious:
Hey!

Iris Davine:
Are you dying?

Iris doesn't break stride as she passes him.

Butcher Victorious:
But... I'm High Flyer!

Undeterred with a smile that would rival Harmen's cheshire cat grin, Butcher turns around...

BAM.

A large boot strikes Butcher across the face, sending him flying into a large collection of inappropriately placed boxes. Entering into frame is a seething Jack Harmen. Almost inhuman, he kind of looks like a dragon blowing smoke from his nostrils he's so disturbed. He tries to say something, but the words choke in his throat for a moment before he regains his resolve.

Jack Harmen:
You pretend to be me again and I'll end your pointless career.

Harmen just takes a moment to soccer kick his ribs once. Butcher lets out a groan.

Jack Harmen:
Nobody pretends to be High Flyer except for me!

He pauses, and thinks to himself.

Jack Harmen:
And well, maybe the boy...

With one last snarl and a rib based soccer kick, Harmen storms off, leaving a confused and bewildered Butcher to rub his head and wonder what sort of train just ran him over.

HOT KNOWLEDGE

During a random commercial break on the last DEFtv…

Footage recorded from the crowd rolls as Malak Garland walks to the ring with a purpose. Percy Collins stands amongst the fans as he wields his phone to record what promises to be a scintillating promo.

Malak climbs into the ring with microphone in hand and cuts right to the chase.

Malak Garland:
We have limited time right now because the Favored Saints need to pay the bills so I'd appreciate it if everyone would just shut the hell up so I can say what I need to say and we can all move on. I'm about to drop some hot knowledge on all your stupid faces.

BOOOOOOOOOO!

Malak Garland:
Wow, not sure if I can work within these harsh parameters. Knowing I have a time limit gives me severe anxiety. I can handle your boos though. Those certainly don't bother me.

He adjusts his pose. Percy shouts some loving encouragement from the crowd but he's much too far away to be heard.

Malak Garland:
This is what I like to call a no nonsense approach. I know you all saw my fireside chat and my new t-shirt promo along with the subsequent tail tucking the illustrious Kerry Kuroyama has done, so that's why I'm out here to do what I do best, which is trash talk.

The phone Percy is holding picks up his gleeful giggles.

Malak Garland:
First off, I realize I've made a lot of enemies in my short time here in DEFIANCE. Conor Fuse.

The crowd reacts positively.

Malak Garland:
You're nothing more than a geek's wet dream. You probably play every video game on easy mode and even then, you only play the first fifteen minutes and then we never hear about it again because you simply can't commit.

His pacing in the ring is feverish.

Malak Garland:
Let's face it, you're a poor man's Darin Zion which isn't saying much to begin with. Both of you need to get your parents permission before leaving your respective houses!

Percy starts trying to incite a Malak Mania chant, but he's the only one doing it from the crowd.

Malak Garland:
Sgt. Safety. You're next. Glad to see you back on some of the cards although your relevance is non-existent so long as you're involved with anyone else but me.

Garland chuckles.

Malak Garland:
Then that brings me to Kerry Kuroyama. The big tough guy. The Favored Saints Champion. Kudos, Kerry. No really, good for you for making something out of your otherwise train wreck of a career.

The booing becomes more intense.

Malak Garland:
Seeing that you're finally getting somewhere, it will only make your tears taste even better once I finally do get what I want and believe me when I say this, I will get what I want because I always do. You're nothing to me, Kerry.

Malak quickly drops out of the ring and finds a light tube resting under the apron. He leans it gently on his shoulder.

Malak Garland:
Once I'm done with you and I've proven how extreme I am and I've taken your belt away, maybe you can go back to being Seattle's Best or whatever that trash on fire team was.

Malak waves the tube around in the air.

Malak Garland:
My time is almost up because the commercials are ending. How sad for all you mindless nimrods. Enjoy the view from beyond the barricade where you filthy animals belong.

Cut.

REAP

A montage feed between Crimson Stalker and Gage Blackwood rolls, first with Stalker attacking the FIST of DEFIANCE after Teresa Ames sent him out to initiate their feud. The scene interchanges with Blackwood sitting behind a DEFIANCE Road backdrop and speaking into the camera.

Gage Blackwood:
Jason. You are a pawn.

Footage of Blackwood being unable to fight Stalker off airs.

Gage Blackwood:
In a game I don't understand.

Clip: Stalker and Gage fighting before the FIST of DEFIANCE match on DEFtv airs.

Gage Blackwood:
I have seen blokes like you come and go.

Clip: Stalker getting the better of Blackwood, knocking him down and finally hitting him with a lead pipe.

Gage Blackwood:
You are not the first to put me out.

Clip: Blackwood being attended to by DEFSec followed by being carted off with what looked to be a significant injury.

Gage Blackwood:
I get back up even when I'm not supposed to.

Footage of Jessica Reeves airs at the DEFy Awards Show, shouting to those in attendance how her father is being used by The Kabal.

Gage Blackwood:
Pleas from your daughter are supposed to make you a sympathetic figure? You knew exactly what you were doing when you organized The Kabal. It was YOUR brainchild.

Clip: Stalker being directed to the ring in chains and a mask.

Gage Blackwood:
What is the proverb? You reap what you sow.

Clip: Blackwood wrestling, and defeating, Tyler Fuse.

Gage Blackwood:
Well you REAP what you sow. My FIST up your ass.

The montage changes to the pay-per-view match graphic between the two. Gage Blackwood, FIST across waist and Crimson Stalker tied up, face shield on, Teresa Ames giggling in the background.

Gage Blackwood:
The REAPers are your creation. Christ, your name is STALKER.

The graphic cuts and goes back to Gage Blackwood.

Gage Blackwood:

You’re an animal. Aye, so am I. After next week, you and your Kabal will be finished. Teresa? You’ll have to look for another way to take this noble raider down because you’ll be skint, too.

Cut.

NIL

A shadowy boardroom.

Malak Garland snidely smiles as he sits at the head of a table, opposite to a group of persons in business suits. Naturally, he's surrounded by his Comments Section crusaders.

A hefty stack of papers are slid to his attention along with one of those fancy twistable pens.

Malak Garland:
Look at me, look at me. I'm at the head of the table. That would make a delectably selling t-shirt if you ask me. Haha. Now, do I need to waste my time and read this or can I just accept it and sign like I do with any and all end user agreements on my phone?

Asking a question he probably shouldn't be, he doesn't receive proper direction from the nameless and faceless suits on the other end of the table. Fortunately for Malak, super statistician, ALEX leans in.

ALEX:
I've looked over the contract beforehand. It's ironclad, sir.

Malak nods approvingly as he twists the pen open and signs his name away.

Malak Garland:
Glad someone does their job around here unlike you Favored Saints who just sit there and collect a paycheck.

He finishes signing.

Malak Garland:
Do you know how much I do for you people? I am the star franchise player and re-signing me to this big deal is the best decision you've ever made.

He laughs.

Malak Garland:
Now, letting me run amuck is even more genius. You see, thanks to your passive approach to discipline, I've been able to amass a ton of heat, which gives me all the warm and fuzzies.

Malak snaps his fingers as ALEX collects the contract and begins bringing it over to the FS suits.

Malak Garland:
ALEX, there is a provision in there to ensure I get the most amount of money compared to anyone else on the DEFIANCE roster based on the usage of my name, image and likeness, right? RIGHT!? I'm about to cash in like an NCAA athlete who hasn't proven anything yet.

ALEX nods.

ALEX:
Yes, of course. It's in section five, subsection two.

ALEX finishes handing off the contract to the steely Favored Saints. The Snowflake Superstar dusts his hands like a job well done and rises from the negotiating table.

Malak Garland:
Perfect! Then our job here is done. Signed on and locked up for another couple lucrative years. Pleasure to make your acquaintances, Favored Saints. Always a pleasure doing business. Get the door, ALEX.

The chief strategist does what he’s told as Malak exits the room.

LUKE ALI'I vs. DAVIS BLOOME

DDK:
Welcome back for our next match! Coming up, we have a BRAZEN Showcase match to look at some of the rising stars of BRAZEN! Up next, Davis Bloome is one-half of a tag team called BADASS and will be taking on the Hawaiian super heavyweight, Luke Ali'i!

Lance:
BRAZEN's talent level has been getting brighter and brighter lately and I always look forward to their progression! We'll see how they do!

The camera goes to ringside with Darren Quimbey!

Darren Quimbey:
The following singles match is set for one fall! Introducing first… from Pearl City, Hawaii, weighing in at 367 pounds… **LUKE ALI'I!**

♫ "Get Up On My Level" by Mike Zombie ♫

The sound hits and out comes a massive man! Standing 6'4" and weighing 367 pounds… the man wears black tights, a blood-red sash and taped red feet with no shoes. With long black curly hair, a thick beard and red tape on his wrists, the massive Luke Ali'i kneels on the ramp, puts a fist to his hear and looks up before bringing it down on the ramp. He lets out a shout and then leaps back up to his feet before heading to the ring!

DDK:
Luke Ali'i is one of the very few men to pin the monster Killjoy in BRAZEN and has been so impressive. Trained by Sonny Silver, this man looks like he could be a force to be reckoned with.

Lance:
I believe that! And I've heard that size belies his speed. I'm looking forward to seeing him compete.

Luke walks up the steps, wipes his bare feet on the ring apron and then steps into the ring before he waits for his opponent.

Darren Quimbey:
And his opponent, accompanied by Tripp Wise, he is one-half of BADASS… from Tacoma, Washington, weighing in at 227 pounds… **DAVIS BLOOME!**

♫ "In One Ear" by Cage The Elephant ♫

Out walks Tripp Wise and Davis Bloome, the brothers-in-law/tag team ready for a fight. Wise and Bloome both ignore the fans and talk amongst themselves. They walk out in matching blue "BADASS!!!" hoodies before they enter the ring. Bloome and Wise get ready as the hoodies come off. Davis looks ready to scrap while Tripp Wise is on the floor.

DDK:

And BADASS have been a great team as well! Davis Bloome sees singles action tonight!

Lance:
Davis will have his work cut out for him, but he hasn't met a rule he hasn't broken. And Tripp Wise is at ringside.

Davis talks to Tripp and starts to hand over his hoodie… and then THROWS it at Luke! The big Hawaiian native gets attacked by Tripp and and Jonny Fastcountini calls for the bell!

DING DING!

DDK:
That's a good plan, I guess! A small distraction leads to a kick to the face from Davis Bloome! He has Luke rocked!

He tries to chop the big man and really lays into it. And we mean REALLY lays in! He throws several chops and then tries to shake the pain out of his hand. But when he turns, Luke is standing there and removes the hoodie calmly from his head. The crowd start a chant while Luke Ali'i sits there.

"SHIT WAS ASS! SHIT WAS ASS! SHIT WAS ASS! SHIT WAS ASS!"

DDK:
What… is that the new "you effed up" chant?

Lance:
No idea, but that was NOT smart by Bloome!

Bloome fires off a series of forearms to rock Luke, then runs off the ropes… however, when he comes back, Luke LEAPFROGS over him! When he comes back, Ali'i catches him on the side… then drops him with an inverted Samoan drop!

DDK:
Oh, my lord! That was amazing! A big man like that shouldn't be able to leap to that height!

Tripp Wise is on the outside and looks freaked out by the predicament his bro-in-law is in while Luke waves his arms and gets the Faithful going. Bloome tries to go to the corner and nursing a sore back, but now nurses a sore front, thanks to a running back elbow in the corner by Ali'i! And to make it more amazing, he executes a lucha roll out from the corner, pops back up and then rocks him with a splash! As if that wasn't bad enough for Davis, he takes a snapmare out of the corner, then gets WHACKED with a big double chop to the back! The crowd is thoroughly impressed with the speed and agility of the big man!

Lance:
I think this one is going to be done quick!

DDK:
I think so, too. Luke Ali'i is looking great so far.

He gets ready to launch another attack while Davis Bloome is still reeling on the mat. However, when the athletic super heavyweight doubles over, Tripp Wise jumps on the ring apron to try and distract the big man.

Tripp Wise:
Hey, fatty! I got a movie for you! "A Fridge Too…"

He doesn't get to finish aping his Simpsons quote because Luke fires off a huge savate kick, knocking him flat-ass off the apron quickly!

DDK:
Tripp just paid for that! I think he's done for!

But he may have helped his partner because Davis Bloome fires a running knee to his back, knocking Luke into a corner. The strong style half of BADASS fires off a series of elbows and then bounces off one side to deliver a corner elbow smash. The first blow looks like it does some damage so Davis comes back and hits a shotei palm strike in the corner!

Lance:
Tripp still helped out even getting kicked off the apron like that!

He delivers another kick to the face and then pulls him out of the corner with a DDT! He finally gets Luke down and then finally has the chance to mount a comeback!

DDK:
Davis Bloome making with the stomps now! He has Ali'i where he wants him!

He continues to stomp away on Ali'i as he still tries to stand. Tripp then tries to go for another DDT… but it isn't enough to stop Luke and then he gets up and then pitches Davis to the ropes… then DROPS him with a big blizzard-style suplex!

DDK:
Impressive suplex by Ali'i! He pitches him across the ring!

The big man gets back to his feet and then rolls forward to get back up. He picks up Wise and then when he comes back, Ali'i rolls forward with a MASSIVE forward rolling kick and knocks down Wise!

Lance:
He rocks Davis Bloome with that huge kick!

Ali'i gets to a knee and then starts to hoist Davis Bloome on his shoulders. He paces around the ring with him once and then spins out before CRUSHING him with a huge fireman's carry into the powerslam!

DDK:
He's done for! He calls that The Impact Crater! And that's exactly what he left behind in that ring!

Luke kneels forward with a knee on Bloome's body and hooks a leg.

ONE… TWO… THREE!

He throws the limp leg of Davis aside and then stands up. Ali'i gets his arm raised by Fastcountini and eggs on the crowd as they cheer.

Darren Quimbey:
Your winner of the match… **LUKE ALI'I!**

DDK:
A great showing by Luke Ali'i tonight! He flattens Davis Bloome!

Lance:
I wouldn't be shocked to see more of this big man!

Luke climbs through the ropes and walks down the steps to exit the ring. After stroking his beard, he looks out to the crowd and then smiles before heading to the back.

SPORTS DESK ANALYSIS

Studio pot lights shine down on the sports themed arrangement. A sharp looking desk plunked right in front of a three camera panel completes the set. Crew members buzz about, taking their positions behind the cameras as Martin Evans-Everett VI and Thurston Hunter find their seats behind the desk.

Martin Evans-Everett VI:
Hello folks, and welcome back to the DEFIANCE Sports Desk. I'm your host, MEE6, alongside everyone's favorite street fighter, Thurston Hunter.

Thurston Hunter:
Isn't this set nifty neato, Mart? Mal sure did a great job of securing this studio for us to talk about the upcoming pay-per-view.

Martin nods in agreement as he turns in his swivel chair.

Martin Evans-Everett VI:
Indeed. What should we talk about first?

Thurston smacks his forehead as if there is even an option.

Thurston Hunter:
Duhhh, we need to talk about the only match that matters and that's the one with our good friend Mal in it.

Martin Evans-Everett VI:
I suppose so—

Thurston cuts his co-anchor off.

Thurston Hunter:
There is a voice in my earpiece right now. I HEAR IT! OH BOY, SOMEONE ABOUT TO GET STREET FIGHTED WITH TINY BRUISES!

Hunter's eyes light up like a Christmas tree.

Thurston Hunter:
My golly goodness! I hear Mal's voice in my earpiece! He's the executive producer of this fine segment, after all.

Martin Evans-Everett VI:
Well don't just leave us in suspense, Thursty. What's he saying?

Hunter immediately grabs a pen on the desk in front him.

Thurston Hunter:
Mal is shouting at me to pick up this pen. He is telling me to hold it while I do analysis of how great he is because he says all analysts instantly look more credible when holding a pen and talking on TV. Huh, I never really noticed that before.

Hunter pinches the pen between his fingers as he tries to act like he's been a broadcaster before.

Thurston Hunter:
So let's talk about Mal then. He's the apple of everyone's eye. He wants to street fight and bruise up Kerry Kuroyama so bad and I say kudos to that. As he should. Kerry is a highly overrated jerkface. Do you agree, Mart?

Martin is also quick to grab a pen in front of him.

Martin Evans-Everett VI:
Hmmm mmmm hmmm. Yup. I agree with my 'heart center' as our triumphant leader would say. If I were ranking wrestlers, which I've been known to do from time to time, I'd rank Malak number one with a bullet! Isn't that right, Game Boy? Please everyone, welcome our in-studio guest, The Game Boy!

One of the three cameras move to catch The Game Boy, standing stoically in the corner, assumingly seething at the teeth, under his mask of course.

Martin Evans-Everett VI:
Can we get a comment from him? Thurston, make sure he's holding a pen so he looks like he knows what he's talking about!

Thurston springs up from his chair and brings his pen over to The Game Boy. Thurston offers it to him.

Thurston Hunter:
Here you go big boy, now you're a sports analyst too—

Game Boy guzels Thurston by the throat as his breathing intensifies.

Thurston Hunter:
Gahhh. Can't quite breathe. Need to hold the pen. Street fighted. Urgh.

The shot cuts back to MEE6 who just looks perplexed.

Martin Evans-Everett VI:
Ummmm Game Boy, maybe relinquish your hold on Thurston? He was just trying to make you look good on TV. Just like how Malak was trying to make Kerry Kuroyama look.

The Game Boy throws Thurston down before walking off the set.

Thurston Hunter:
My pen exploded. I got tiny ink bruises on my handed.

Martin Evans-Everett VI:
Let's send things back to arena.

SHAKE ON IT

The scene opens backstage at the WrestlePlex, where LANCE WARNER stands with a microphone in hand. He checks his smartwatch for the time, apparently waiting on somebody. None other than Malak Garland walks into frame with his head down, buried in his phone.

Lance:
There you are!

Malak lazily raises his gaze from his device.

Malak Garland:
Here I am indeed. I got your stupid memo for this stupid, redundant backstage interview. So here I am. Why did you want this interview anyways? Haven't I been on this show enough?

Lance:
Oh… I didn't ask for this interview. But, he did.

Quietly sliding into the frame, clad in jeans and a black Seattle's BEAST t-shirt, Favoured Saints Championship draped over his shoulder, is "The Pacific Blitzkrieg" KERRY KUROYAMA.

Kerry Kuroyama:
Hello, Malak.

The Snowflake Superstar eye's give Kerry a once over glare. He's unsure if it's really him or just a hologram.

Malak Garland:
Kerry? THE Kerry Kuroyama in the flesh!? Thought you were dodging me. My anxiety has been sky high because of it.

Kerry sighs as he musters up a heroic amount of patience and forces on a smile.

Kerry Kuroyama:
Malak… I'm thinking maybe you and I got off on the wrong foot. Which isn't to suggest I'm not still a tad… upset with you, for reasons that should be obvious. But I'm willing to look past that, in the interest of you and I having a respectful dialogue with each other. You know, like adults.

He briefly glances at the Favoured Saints Title on his shoulder.

Kerry Kuroyama:
When you first came to me requesting a shot at this title, I can definitely say I had my reasons at the time for saying no. But after some recent developments, and a few weeks of reflection, I suppose you could say I've had a change of heart on the matter.

In the background, Lance looks puzzled, but Kerry throws him a wink.

Kerry Kuroyama:
I can see now what qualities make someone like you, Malak Garland, a… "star" here in DEFIANCE. Qualities that extend beyond pure wrestling talent,I am loath to admit. Qualities that earn someone like you at DEFy at the end of the year, as opposed to an actual athlete like me.

Kerry takes a deep breath, shuts his eyes, and steels himself for what he's about to bring himself to say.

Kerry Kuroyama:
I feel, Malak, that there may be a few things I can learn from you. And, at the same time… there are quite a few things I want you to learn from me.

The smile on Kuroyama's face widens a bit. It doesn't look cordial, but almost sinister at this point.

Kerry Kuroyama:
That being said, I haven't forgotten your challenge. So, after some consideration, and because I'm still in need of a challenger, I'm willing to grant your request for a title shot at DEFIANCE Road, in a standard wrestling match.

Malak Garland:
Ummm, how about no. Don't try to steer the narrative. I want a Deathmatch because I'm hArDcOrE.

Kerry sighs again. His patience is clearly wearing thin, but he hasn't run out yet.

Kerry Kuroyama:
…how about No Holds Barred?

Malak Garland:
Deathmatch! Do I need to sign you up for spelling classes along with wrestling ones!?

Kerry grinds his teeth. He's still trying to force a smile, but rage is flaring up in his eyes.

Kerry Kuroyama:
…Falls Count Anywhere?

Malak steps into Kerry's personal space.

Malak Garland:
Death. Match. Kerry. You can finally get silly and cut yourself in the ring instead of a Friday night alone in your bedroom, listening to My Chemical Romance.

Kerry's smile hardly looks like a smile anymore. He groans like a dormant volcano. His fists are balled up. A very long, very tense moment passes, while Lance nervously looks between both men, expecting the scene to explode in violence at any moment. Finally, Kerry relents and nods.

Kerry Kuroyama:
What can I say, Malak? You drive a hard bargain. Okay, so be it… we'll have ourselves a Deathmatch. Shall we shake on it?

Kerry extends his hand. Reluctantly, Malak locates his travel sized hand sanitizer in his pocket. He covers his hands in the gel before obliging.They squeeze palms. Kerry smiles in earnest as he squeezes EXTRA TIGHT on Malak's hand with all of his strength, causing the challenger to buckle at the knees.

Malak Garland:
Owwie, owwww! That hurts! Let go of my hand!

Kerry releases the handshake, staring down as the tenderest of wrestlers who wrings his hands free of any pain as Lance nearly facepalms in the background.

HELLIONS

Blue Reaper:
I hate being assigned escort duty!

The Blue eyed Reaper is in disdain as they help escort 'Crimson Stalker' towards the back exit of WrestlePlex. The red masked Jason Reeves is surrounded by three colorless Reapers and the blue eyed one, leading the way.

Crimson Stalker:
… … … … … …

Blue Reaper:
You don't need a babysitter? We all know this Stalker but Teresa was very clear to us that due to Mr. Fear's wishes you are to be completely protected and under our supervision at ALL times. I have no desire to upset the Queen. We just need to load up in the ambulance outside and we'll be back in the lair in no time!

Pointing ahead Blue Reaper pushes towards the WrestlePlex exit and The Kabal Reaper squad guides Crimson Stalker forward.

CREEEEEEEK!!!

The WrestlePlex exit door makes a strange grating and creaking sound as it opens, this causes everyone to pause as Blue Reaper sticks his head out to look around.

Blue Reaper:
What the hell..? Do you all smell that? It smells like… like…. Piss and weed… ugh… i'm going to be sick!

Feigning sickness Blue Reaper stumbles forward out of sight outside and the colorless Reapers look to one another confused, Crimson Stalker meanwhile remains motionless, staring like an empty void forward to the ambulance parked outside.

THWACK!

A loud shackling is heard outside which causes the Reapers to panic, they spring forward running into the open door and are immediately barraged by the slamming metal door. Like a three stooges episode, suddenly the colorless Reapers are knocked out with stars in their eyes on the floor in front of Crimson Stalker. The masked Number One Contender for the FIST scans the scene but otherwise remains motionless and not talking.

Through the doorway, in steps "The Escape Artist" REZIN, dusting off his hands after a job well done. Following him in Chris Trutt, with a mic in hand.

Rezin:
Ya SEE, Trutt?! IT WORKED!! You owe me a SNICKERS!!

Chris Trutt:
Okay, I'll admit, your robot trash spider did the trick. I guess you have Henry Keyes to thank for all the engineering pointers. Bell me again, what are we doing, and why do I have to be here again?

Rezin:
DAMBIT, TRUTT, we've been over this! I'm here trynna upend the Kabal's big plans, and you're here because this is Uncut, and we need to start reestablishing our dynamic!

Chris Trutt:
Uhhh, Rezin…?

Trutt is looking past Rezin, and the Goat Bastard follows his gaze to see Crimson Stalker idly standing before them,

growling low from behind his mask.

Chris Trutt:
You sure about this?

Rezin:
NOT AT ALL! But don't worry… if things go south, I'll just throw you in the way and cheese it outta here!

The junior reporter audibly gulps as Rezin approaches his longtime friend with his palms held up.

Rezin:
Hey there, Boss! Long time no see! HEY! You know what I'm thinking? HAWAII!! Let's you and I blow this coop for a few weeks and have ourselves a vacation! We'll hit the beach, pour us some mai tais, rustle up trouble with the surf gangs, start up some terrorist cells… it'll be GREAT! Whaddya say?

Crimson Stalker says nothing. He continues to stare down Rezin, breathing heavily. In his head, gears may be grinding, but his eyes are completely vacant of any soul or agency.

Chris Trutt:
I don't think he hears you, Rezin.

Rezin:
Oh, he hears me… he's just too sunk too deep into all that Kabal shit to really be able to do anything about it. Which is a shame… I was kinda hopin' to get lei'd!

Rezin steps up to Crimson Stalker and snaps a few times in his face just to make sure he's listening.

Rezin:
You know what, Boss? When you brought me to this place, I was kinda hoping it'd be just like the old days. HARDCORE HELLIONS, shit! Just roaming around this place like a coupla wild beasts, fucking up anyone and everyone that was stupid enough to get in our way! That was what it used to be like…

Somewhat fearlessly, Rezin taps his hands against Stalker's chest. It doesn't go unnoticed by Crimson Stalker, but still, something deep in the corners of his mind keeps him from lashing out and crushing his old friend's head like a melon.

Rezin:
THIS, though? I dunno, man… it doesn't quite scream "PUNK ROCK" to me. It's become even more obvious just how fucked up this Kabal mess is, now that I'm on the outside looking in. I dunno what you got yourself involved in to get it THIS bad…

Crimson Stalker begins growling again… and Rezin not-so-innocently smiles as he wisely backs up out of his reach.

Rezin:
But what I do know is, if you're still in there, and you're suffering, then it's hard for me to feel any pity right now! Cause all THIS you brought on yourself! As well as the few rubes who were stupid enough to roll with you, who never asked to get caught up in this bullshit! Like Jessica… and ME!

Rezin DEFIANTly points down the Number One Contender. It can't be said if Crimson Stalker is hearing any of this, but he nevertheless remains idle.

Rezin:
But even if it IS just a lost cause, Boss, I still got one more shot-in-the-VOID idea in helping you ESCAPE this mindfuck of an existence! All I gotta do is kick that fucker SCROW's head off nat DEFIANCE Road, and BURN this rotten Kabal into a smoldering power of ASH!! And THEN…

The Escape Artist smirks as he waves goodbye.

Rezin:
…it'll all be ALOHA, baby!

Trutt follows Rezin off screen as Crimson Stalker's mask breathes with DEFIANCE, each pulsating exhale causes steam to escape the loose corners of the crimson fabric. Shuffling is heard from outside as Blue Reaper stumbles inside, staring up at Crimson Stalker as he stares back at him, the soulless stare suddenly filling with a glimpse of life.

Crimson Stalker: *[mumbling]*
HELLIONS……..

Blue Reaper tilts their head at Jason Reeves as they move in to check on their fallen mates, Crimson Stalker stares in the distance in which Rezin and Trutt departed as we fade to black.

SICK OF ME YET?

Percy Collins:
Okay, we're recording.

Percy's voice emanates from behind his phone as he's one again recording his BFF Malak Garland. This time, the two men are sitting quietly in Malak's spacious rental car. The environment surrounding the car is serene. Nice and quiet, just how Malak likes it.

Malak Garland:
Okay, so I just had a delectable little encounter with the Favored Saints Champion, Kerry Kuroyama and he finally accepted my challenge for a Deathmatch on pay-per-view. So I decided I needed a little reflection drive, which is why Percy and I have found this wondrous parking spot to sit and have a chat. Isn't that right, my friend?

The camera bobs up and down with Percy's compliance.

Malak Garland:
Anyway, I won't take up too much more of everyone's time as I'm sure they've seen enough of my face on UNCUT tonight.

Percy Collins:
I won't have you talk down about yourself, Malak! Not now and especially not ever on live broadcast television. As your sports psychologist, it's important to ensure your mind is free from tyranny and scrutiny, personally or publicly. March on I say, march on!

Malak realizes Percy is right.

Malak Garland:
Yeah, I hear you! Thanks for that Percy. You have uplifted my spirit, vitality and chakra. Not to mention, you have rid my body of any and all self-doubt anxieties I had built within. I know everyone out there watching is holding time and space for me and that warms my heart.

Percy Collins:
Don't forget about driving home the narrative, Mal!

Garland raises a finger.

Malak Garland:
You got it wrong, Percy. It's all about STEERING the narrative, which is a hard thing to do.

Percy Collins:
How so, Mal?

Malak Garland:
Well, steering the narrative doesn't mean you control it. If you try to control the narrative, then that implies you're always trying to direct things and possibly create your own narrative, separate from reality whereas STEERING the narrative infers there is only one singular narrative that I fancy to lightly influence from time to time. It's a subtle art but one I take great pride in. Yes, I can concede there is one singular narrative instead of one for each individual. That's why the work I'm doing is so daunting. Don't you see? That's why I have to win this Deathmatch. THE narrative on me right now is an unsavory one. I'm looking to change that.

The Keyboard King leans into the steering wheel. His hands rub it's leather with grace.

Malak Garland:
I'm going to win the Deathmatch, win the Favored Saints belt, becomes the face of hArDcOrE all in one fell swoop and STEER the narrative that I, Malak Garland, am the single greatest force in DEFIANCE Wrestling history.

Now it's Percy's turn to get nice and close with his phone camera.

Malak Garland:
And I'll show how I've done it all without help, too!

Cut.

THIS.

IS.

DEFIANCE.