

RE-ACTS OF DEFIANCE: NIGHT ONE

SATURDAY NIGHT SPECIALS

The press pool rises to their feet as the reunited Saturday Night Specials appear in the conference room. Brock Newbludd, Pat Cassidy, and Ophelia Sykes are all dressed in their street clothes, with Pat and Brock both sporting a cold one. The duo fist bump various members of the press as they make their way to the table. To everyone's surprise, the trio is followed by a fourth person: Deb Warestein! Deb sits next to Brock as Ophelia takes her seat next to Cassidy.

Tim Tillinghast:

Guys, it's great to see you back. Now that The Lucky Sevens have lost the Unified Tag Team titles, are your plans to once again return to title contention?

Brock Newbludd:

You're a straight shooter, Tim. I like that about you. So, I'm sure you'll understand where I'm comin' from when I tell you that The Saturday Night Specials never stopped being contenders. We were voted the number one tag team in the world for a reason, buddy. Probably the same reason why Tom Morrow put a "no rematch" clause in The Sevens' contract to deny us our shot. Gold or no gold, we're still not finished with The Lucky Sevens, not by a long shot. And as far as the new champion go, I'm not thinkin' about what's wrapped around LTT's waists right now. I'm thinkin' about what's wrapped around my two friends' fingers. The gold can wait because tonight we celebrate!

Cassidy, who was leaning back in his chair, moves forward and puts his mouth in front of the mic.

Pat Cassidy:

Timothy, we got [BLEEPED] out of our titles. We're gonna get 'em back. Even if we have to [BLEEP] our way back into them.

A beat. Brock smiles, shaking his head. It takes Cassidy a second, but he gets there.

Pat Cassidy:

Uh. Figure of speech...

Jamie Sawyers:

Hey guys. Great to see you back in form. Pat, this is a question particularly for you: how did it feel trying to hold down the fort in Brock's absence?

Cassidy tags a big swig before he answers.

Pat Cassidy:

Sawyers, I'm not gonna pretend I'm not proud of what I did in the tournament. And kicking Ned Reform's bitchass. But I can tell you this, kid: The Saturday Night Specials ain't done as a team by a long shot. We got unfinished business. And I'm damn sure happy to have this guy back.

Bro fist bump.

SuperDEFFan64:

Hello! SuperDEFFan64! Nice to see you again, Pat and Brock! And Deb and Ophelia! My question is for Pat and Brock: Who do you think this boyfriend is that Siobhan Cassidy keeps hinting at? And Pat, if she invites this boyfriend over for Thanksgiving dinner, what are the chances that you reach over the table and strangle this man?

Newbludd crosses his arms and frowns.

Brock Newbludd:

Great to see you too, buddy. Gonna shoot it straight to you, too. I really haven't been keeping tabs on my ex since she punched me in the nuts and we broke up. Being kidnapped really sucked up a lot of my time. But, what I can tell you

with one hundred percent certainty, is that I don't give a shit what that soul-sucking snake woman is up to.

Pat Cassidy:

Siobhan ain't dumb enough to bring whoever he is around me. Or at least I think she isn't. These days I'm not so sure.

Ophelia seems to be about to say something, but Cassidy waves her off. She pouts.

Christie Zane:

Brock, this one is for you. I mean... what the heck is up with Davey LaRue!? How did all that go down, exactly?

Brock's eyes narrow in anger slightly as he scoots up in his chair and leans into the mic.

Brock Newbludd:

Turns out the world's friendliest bartender is actually a backstabbin' sonuvabitch, that's what's up with Davey LaRue. Truth be told, I didn't see it coming. I didn't see it coming because I trusted him enough when I needed him the most. When Ballyhoo burned down, I didn't just lose my business, I lost everything. I literally lived there.

Newbludd shakes his head in anger.

Brock Newbludd:

Now, for how I ended up hogtied in that shithole trailer? Long story short, it also turns out that Davey's "friendship" was a complete lie. He was jealous. Jealous that he was stuck behind the bar while Cass and I were out winning gold. I don't know what all Reform promised him, but apparently, it was enough for him to do what he did. Shit, they almost pulled it off too. Too bad Dr. Ned and the boys didn't factor ol' wildcard Debbie into the equation!

Brock offers Deb a fist bump and she returns it with a giddy smile.

"Detective" Chris Chickentenders:

Uhh hey dudes, what's up? And... a special hello to the *ladies*.

The greasy teenager winks and blows a kiss to Deb and Ophelia. Deb seems disinterested, but Ophelia smiles and pretends to catch it, batting her eyes.

"Detective" Chris Chickentenders: (pulling out his notepad)

First of all, I just wanted to say that there's no need to thank me for solving this whole kidnapping mystery. Just doing The Job. I'm just happy to see that you're back, safe and sound... PAT CASSIDY. Anyway, my only question for you dudes relates to another case I'm currently working: The Case of the Missing Plaguebringer. Do any of you think there's a possibility that the LaRue brothers may have also abducted Arthur Pleasant?

Newbludd puts a hand to his chin and thinks for a second before shrugging his shoulders.

Brock Newbludd:

That's a great question and an even better theory. I didn't see Pleasant when I was tied up in a dark room but he could've been there. It was a double-wide trailer.

Brock looks at Deb Warenstein.

Brock Newbludd:

Yo, Deb. Did we forget to grab Arthur Pleasant on our way out?

Disgusted, Warenstein rolls her eyes at the grinning Newbludd as he turns his attention back to "Detective" Chickentenders.

Brock Newbludd:

Guess we can't help ya, detective.

Cassidy is having a side conversation with Sykes, who is looking into his eyes and giggling. Brock elbows him and he snaps back to attention.

Pat Cassidy:

Oh yeah. What was the question>

Brock Newbludd:

Arthur Pleasant.

Cassidy blinks.

Pat Cassidy:

Who's that?

Craig Hamburgers:

hello deb it's me craig hamburgers you babysit at my house sometimes, can you teach me how to get on television that was AWESOME thank you.

Deb Warenstein:

OK like, maybe when you're older? And aren't we, like, on TV right now?

Yannick Fillimore:

Guys, might I propose a better idea than a rebuilt bar. Thinking about an underground lair where you can host fight pit matches. You'll need ample space for cameras for ample camera cuts. Plus the construction will allow for a pre-fight pit concrete construction ladder match. Your thoughts.

Brock Newbludd:

If there's room in the basement...sure?

Cassidy blinks. He points to Fillimore.

Pat Cassidy:

What the [BLEEP] is this guy talking about? Who is this [BLEEP]ing guy?

Cassidy is getting worked up, but Brock talks him off the ledge.

Brock Newbludd:

It's okay, buddy. Let it go.

Cassidy relaxes, but does make the "I point to my eyes then I point to you to let you know I'm watching you" motion toward Yannick.

Deb Warenstein: (to Ophelia)

How does it feel knowing that I'm way smarter and prettier than you and I found Brock and you didn't?

Sykes suddenly begins to scowl. She turns to look at her fellow interview-ee.

Ophelia Sykes:

Listen you little bitch, don't think I won't...

Cassidy snatches the mic away from her, and he grins toward the press.

Pat Cassidy:

That's all for us, g'night everybody!

Brock and Pat do their best to keep Deb and Ophelia apart as they all move toward the exit.

TERI MELTON AND JJ DIXON

The conference room is set up with the press and photographers, most of whom are talking among themselves for a few seconds. Then the lights in the room go out suddenly. There's a little buzz - "What the?" - and then the lights come back on.

Sitting in a chair behind a table is Teri Melton. She's still wearing her outfit as during the match - a tiara with a sapphire blue gem in the middle, dangling silver earrings with sapphire blue gems, and an emerald blue shawl over a silver sparking dress, no cigarette holder. Behind her to the left is JJ Dixon, now showered, his hair in Don Draper perfection, wearing a stylish, perfectly-fitting suit with a dress tie. And to the other side lurking and scowling as always is Zoltan.

Teri Melton:

First, I'd like to begin by saying that some people are acting as if we should be thankful for being "allowed" to participate in this press conference. We will absolutely NOT do that. Because we have proven that we BELONG. We belong along the list of the top stars in DEFIANCE. We belong in that ring and in that locker room. And we belong here today. Not we'll take your questions.

Christine Zane:

What's next for you and JJ?

Teri Melton:

And Zoltan. He's a part of this trio as well and does a lot more than just serving as an enforcer. He does a lot more than anyone will ever know.

Christine Zane:

Of course. And Zoltan.

Teri Melton:

We have many things in mind for what is next. But we will continue our march forward. Mr. Dixon is only just now realizing his immense potential. He has gone from someone just seconds away from quitting professional wrestling to becoming The Special Attraction. Now comes the next chapter of us evolving our combined talents together into a stable that will not be denied. We have chips on our shoulders -- massive chips. And what you are also starting to see are that there are members of The Faithful who see something in themselves with us. There are many people who are cast-offs. Who have been dismissed. Who have given up or are close to giving up on their dreams. Those people see a world rigged against them. Well, we will one day topple this world - DEFIANCE, the top professional wrestling promotion in this world. That is the ultimate goal... to rule this promotion with an Iron First.

Yannick Fillimore:

Teri, let's not do close ups without makeup okay? And why JJ? Why not someone like Dandelion?

Teri Melton:

First, Mr. Fillimore, I will give you one warning and one warning over. Never mention my appearance again. Is that a question you would ask Lindsay Troy? Now, I am not an athlete. I am not a wrestler. But while I present no physical threat to you... if you offend me one more time I will destroy you.

She pauses and lets the threat sink.

Teri Melton:

Now, my return to professional wrestling is a long time in the making. I did not just decide to appear one random week. It has been months - years - of me plotting the course, along with the very valued assistance of Zoltan. I have scouting reports and dossiers on every single performer who has ever performed in either DEFIANCE or BRAZEN, along with

several other promotions around the world. I wanted to find a wrestler to align with who had talent but was missing a little something to get them to a next level. I wanted to find a wrestler with not just elite athletic talent, but athletic talent to make the elite jealous. I wanted to find someone with a chip on their shoulder, even if they may not have realized it at the time. I wanted to find someone who not just could be a future champion in DEFIANCE, but somebody who WOULD be a future champion once I took him under my wing and mold him into stardom and unleash both his potential and match our collective ambition.

Tim Tillinghast:

Hey Teri - would you ever be interested in a charming and funny wrestling pundit? Asking for a friend.

Teri smirks for a second. Then she slowly stands up, slowly leans over seductively, and flirtatiously smiles at Tim.

Teri Melton:

Mr. Tillinghast, I first want to commend you on all you have done for DEFIANCE and compliment you on your career. You see, Mr. Tillinghast, I am not like other people in DEFIANCE. I appreciate what you do. And I see the influence you have. You don't just reflect the voice of the fans. You also shape how the fans feel, don't you? That gives you quite a bit of power. And, well... power is the ultimate aphrodisiac. And that makes you more than just charming and funny, doesn't it? Feel free to have... your friend... get in contact with me, especially if he'd like a one-on-one interview.

Deb Warenstein:

My question is for Teri, is your father or brother the Cryptkeeper because, like, you totally look like you're related.

Teri Melton:

Ms. Warenstein, I am not offended by your question. I was once in your shoes. I grew up in the wrestling industry. And I myself was a bratty little girl acting snotty around wrestlers to try and get a rise out of them. I understand you more than you will ever know.

She purses her lips, biting her tongue, thinking about what to say next.

Teri Melton:

But I have to say, I'm also jealous of you, Ms. Warenstein. Because you're still young. When I was your age, I was young... and naive. I did not see what was going to happen to me. I did not realize that I would be exploited. I did not know that I would be told I would only matter because of my appearance. And once I started to believe that, I cannot tell you how damaging that was. To have to constantly worry about how many calories a day I was ingesting. To constantly worry about my wardrobe. To always have a smile on my face at autograph sessions with leering, creepy men who make suggestive comments, all so the powerful men who run professional wrestling could make a profit off of my name. And then when I put my foot down, I was blackballed.

Teri continues to look at Deb.

Teri Melton:

So, Ms. Warenstein. Keep in mind that one day they will ask you about YOUR appearance. They will try and make you obsess over your body. And I just hope that you aren't as naive as I was, and you stand up for yourself right away. And never insult a woman about her appearance again. Women have to stick together... except, of course, if another woman has something that you want.

Craig Hamburgers:

hello JJ no one likes terimelon she's a big cheatie cheater why do you listen to her thank you.

JJ leans forward.

JJ Dixon:

Thank you for this question, Mr. Hamburger.

JJ says this to the child without any sense of irony.

JJ Dixon:

Because this is something I really want to address. The first time Teri appeared at ringside, she jabbed a cigarette into Nicky Synz's eyes. That's not something that I knew about as it happened, but only after the fact. I was upset about that, but I did realize that it has always been in the back of my mind that I needed to do a little bit more to get ahead. It was the same when I slammed Earl Lee's face through a chair. He was my mentor. He was like a father figure to me. But, also, he held me back. And there was anger brewing inside of me for years. And while Teri may have manipulated a situation to get me to take a drastic action... it's something that I also needed to do in order to break ranks with him forever.

JJ pauses.

JJ Dixon:

But I want to point out that since that time, Teri has not once interfered in any of my matches. She never lied to me about any of her actions. She stated right away that she was manipulating me. Professional wrestling is an industry where people manipulate and get manipulated constantly. But she was honest. She is the only person who has ever been honest with me. And she is, quite frankly, the only person who has ever saw the talent I had, but has allowed me to realize that I have that talent, but all I need now is ambition.

JJ pans his face going forward.

JJ Dixon:

But she has also brought out of me a chip on my shoulder. A reminder that many, many, many people have gotten opportunities that I should have gotten. And there are a lot of people out there who feel the same way - that we don't look the right way, that we don't talk the right way, that we didn't go to the right college, or even went to college. And those are the people we are fighting for. So, Mr. Hamburger, to answer your question -- that is why I listen to her. But rest assured, we will fight dirty. We will do bad things... but to people who deserve it. And you are only just beginning to see what we are capable of doing. We are the next big things in DEFIANCE... and soon enough, we will just be THE big things. Because I am The Special Attraction. And I command the spotlight!

Teri stands up with a frenzied smile.

Teri Melton:

And Teri Melton. Is ready. For her closeup!

CONOR FUSE & MALAK GARLAND

Conor walks into the picture sporting a neon green and black "8-Bit Badass" t-shirt and neon green Adidas track pants. Malak Garland follows behind Conor but it's delayed, as Fuse is already sitting, taking a sip of his water before a rattled snowflake weaves his way across the stage and finds a position beside his "best friend". Malak is wearing a blue and gray SNES inspired "16-Bit Boss" shirt and has a pair of Gatorade White Frost bottles in his hands.

Malak Garland:

Want one? It's better than water. Replenish your eLeCtRoLyTeS.

Malak mutters to Conor, half extending his arm out to place a sports drink in front of his partner. The duo are ready to field questions.

Craig Hamburgers:

Hello, why is this still happening? I hate it. Conor, I hate Malak, why don't you hate him the way I hate him? Thank you.

The Ultimate Gamer glances over to Garland and The Keyboard King seems like he wants nothing to do with this question, burying his nose into his phone while taking cautious sips of his white frost.

Conor Fuse:

Just because I team with this guy doesn't mean I *like* him. Sadly, Craig, I'm bound to a forever contract within The Comments Section. Some would even say it's ironclad.

Conor pauses.

Conor Fuse:

Some would say.

The gamer leans back in his chair as they go to the next person.

Deb Warenstein:

Conor, if you could launch Malak into the sun would you prefer a catapult, a rocket ship, or a gigantic slingshot?

Garland has a deer in the headlights kind of look while Conor smirks.

Conor Fuse:

A giant rocket ship. Yeah. Yeah! A giant rocket ship.

Malak tries to breathe while Conor fields another question.

SuperDEFFan64:

Hello, Conor Fuse and hello, triggered snowflake. I love tag team wrestling... PUT IT IN MY VEINS!

Finally, Garland's had enough.

Malak Garland:

GET TO THE POINT!

SuperDEFFan adds another thought.

SuperDEFFan64:

Great match between you and PCP! My question is for Conor Fuse only because I don't roll with no snowflakes! How much longer do we need to put up with this facade that Malak Garland cares about your best interests? Can you just break that crybaby's jaw already so we can get to you winning the FIST of DEFIANCE already?!

Once again Malak is triggered while Conor tries to diplomatically handle the question.

Conor Fuse:

Look, none of this is ideal. I get it.

Fuse turns to Garland.

Conor Fuse:

But you said we're cool now, right?

Garland nods, albeit holding back tears because of what kind of traumatic night he's been through.

Malak Garland:

Yeah and plus I got you a Gatorade. White Frost. It's dece.

Conor brings his attention back towards Super Fan.

Conor Fuse:

He said we're cool. So if we ARE cool, if we ARE friends... then I'm gonna push this man to be better. I'm gonna use

my spot in The Comments Section to make sure we do good, other than bad! I mean, did you see what Malak did tonight!? A 450 splash! He has the potential inside himself to be a fighter... to actually be DEFIANT. Now I know what you're all gonna say... I'm crazy, I'm insane. But know this... we were friends before our fallout. Maybe it was a superficial friendship. Maybe this one is, too. But I'm here in The Comments Section forever, eh? So if Malak really wants to be my friend, we're gonna make this work. I will not sit here in this group and play the victim. I will empower.

Conor leans over and smacks Malak on the shoulder.

Conor Fuse:

Above all else, this guy didn't even cheat tonight. He's got it in him. I promise all of you, a DEFIANT Malak Garland IS possible!

The room is stunned. There's silence for quite some time before the next question is asked.

"Detective" Chris Chickentenders:

Hi, yeah, uhh, just wanted to ask, what's your favorite cop game? Mine is Battlefield Hardline, because shooting criminals is freakin' badass. Except I keep gettin' pwned in the online battles. Do you know any cheat codes that might help me win?

Fuse nods like this is a solid question.

Conor Fuse:

Mario Kart 8, best party game there is. Then again you really can't go wrong with any Mario Kart game, or Mario Party for that matter. Like, I know some of the later Mario Parties get a bad rep but hey, honestly, they can all be fun in their own right. The latest one on Switch is solid, give it a try. My gripe is... with Mario Kart, you should really have the 9th edition out already but they just keep going to the well with Mario Kart 8 and now all these new DLC race tracks appear and it's like, dude, yeah, it's solid no doubt but give me what I want. I want a completely new game!

Malak Garland:

PUBG for me.

Malak's response is subdued and quiet as silence befalls the room again... likely because Conor went on too long.

Eventually, the armchair reporter speaks up.

Yannick Fillimore:

What's with the fWo hate? Everyone knows they sucked.

Garland's eyes glisten. It's like he's been given the magical soapbox to spew from.

Malak Garland:

Yes, yes they did suck! Wow okay, I like you Yannick!

Meanwhile throughout this ramble, Conor is the one who seems disinterested and almost rather disheartened Malak's roasting a now defunct company. Garland is diving further into what he's known for, instead of the DEFIANT Snowflake Conor wants Garland to become.

Tim Tillinghast:

Guys, I know this is a very volatile and unlikely pairing. But dare I say... I saw some real tag team potential tonight. Any chance you guys could ever get on the same page and go for the straps once more?

Conor is quick on the reply.

Conor Fuse:

I'm game. Dude, I'm game for anything.

Malak can't reply, he's too busy mumbling fWo slander to himself, completely triggered by the previous question. Fuse pats his frienemy on the back and then both exit, stage right but not before Malak grabs the Gatorade bottle his partner neglected to pick up.

Malak Garland:

Hey cOnOr, you forgot your White Frost!

REZIN

The double doors at the front of the room dramatically swing open without warning, causing everyone to turn in their seats. Clad in a hospital smock and foam neck brace, "The Escape Artist" Rezin enters the conference room. The press pool is silent as he angrily marches down the makeshift aisle down the middle of the seats, comes around the table, and falls into one of the seats.

Rezin:

Arright, gang, listen up... I got about four minutes and twenty seconds until the docs figure out that hobo I switched places with ain't me, so let's dive right into it.

Deb stands up first.

Deb Warenstein:

Hi how are you alive right now?

Rezin shrugs.

Rezin:

Honey, wish I knew. The Void sees fit to keep me livin', breathin', and walkin' through this hell that is my professional career. So... here I am. Still standin'. Still smokin'. Next question.

The floor goes to young Craig Hamburgers.

Craig Hamburgers:

hello do you think if you poured the bongo water onto clay byrd he would become brick byrd, also are you ok thank you

Rezin sullenly shakes his head.

Rezin:

Nah, kid, I ain't okay. I just nearly had my head taken off by some giant cowboy. I dunno if the bong water would turn him into a brick, but I'm not sure I'd wanna do that anyway, cause take it from me, little duder: he hits hard enough as it is.

SuperDEFFan64 pops excitably out of his chair.

SuperDEFFan64:

Hello, Rezin! SuperDEFFan64 and also RezinNumberOneFan! Ha! I got that screenname! Other Rezin Number Fans can suck my BALLLLLLS!

He clears his throat after his rando outburst.

SuperDEFFan64:

Anyway... tough loss tonight. I'm sorry that Vae Victis had to cheat to beat you, but I know that you'll be back. Keep fighting the good fight, my friend... also, where can I score some really good um... herbs?

Rezin nods.

Rezin:

Ain't anything "good" about this fight, but thanks for the kind words, my dude. As for the actual *kind* you're looking for... it's California. There's a place on every block legally selling it.

Our resident teenage self-styled detective stands up, thoughtfully tapping his notebook.

"Detective" Chris Chickentenders:

Uhh hey man, have you talked to Crimson Stalker lately? Any word on when he'll be back? Was he... kidnapped? Cause I can help investigate...

Rezin scratches his head.

Rezin: (*shaking his head*)

Ain't heard anything lately, duder. Sorry. Dunno what he's doing or where he is, and I'm not sure I care, if I'm bein' brutally honest. I mean, Stalks is my friend, I hope he's doin' well, but I've been a bit preoccupied with my own shit lately to really pay any mind to all his family drama.

Up comes Yannick Fillimore.

Yannick Fillimore:

Could you not be anymore one dimensional and boring? Like I'm so over you.

Rezin scoffs.

Rezin:

I ain't all that fond of me either, if I'm bein' honest. But bruh, seriously, I ain't in this to entertain normies like you. If you're fixin' someone a bit more deep and excitable, then I dunno, maybe give dudes like Arthur Pleasant or Gunnar Van Patton a call. I'm sure they could use the paycheck.

Hard eye roll. Meanwhile, clearing his throat, Tim Tillinghast rises next.

Tim Tillinghast:

The fire we saw out of you tonight absolutely blew me away. Between this and you lasting until the finals of the ACTS tournament, I think you're poised for absolute superstardom. I know that idea probably runs counter to everything that you stand for, but could you ever see yourself pushing aside the urge to consider yourself a sell-out if we see your name in lights?

Rezin sighs.

Rezin:

Ya know me, Timmy: I'm a man of PUNK ROCK principles. I ain't here in DEFIANCE to get my face slapped on a t-shirt and sold for fifty bucks at the merch booth; I'm here to blaze up the dopes and flip off the ropes. I ain't ever tried to be a "star"; I just try to be the best of what I am. And if that nuclear fire you speak of just happens to burn so bright that the people feel compelled to call me a wrestlin' star, then I guess it is what it is. I can take it or leave it.

He sighs again, although this time it comes out more as a beleaguered groan.

Rezin:

Thing is though, Timmy... I'm beginnin' to realize that of all the things that should worry me by climbin' HIGH-er in the ranks, "sellin' out" ain't one of them. Thanks to the oppressors in Vae Victis, the proverbial glass ceiling right now is practically bulletproof. It doesn't matter if any of you or the fans out there see me as a star, because they don't, and they never will, and they'll never allow me to get there on my own merits. Because they're fff--earmuffs, Craig, buddy--because they're fuckin' assholes, insecure about bein' outshined by someone who lives and breathes the spirit

of DEFIANCE inside and out.

Finally, Chris Trutt sheepishly stands up.

Chris Trutt:

Rezin?

Rezin: *(nodding respectfully)*

Trutt...

Chris Trutt:

Clearly, this night didn't go the way you wanted...

Rezin:

No, Trutt, it certainly did not. Your powers of deduction are stellar as always.

Chris Trutt:

Right, well... be as it may, I can't help but wonder, where exactly do you go from here? Do you continue to wage war against Vae Victis, or is this loss a sign that perhaps you should just cut your losses and move onto other opportunities?

Rezin mulls the question over for several moments, muttering quietly to himself a few times. Clearly something he's torn on.

Rezin:

...what would be the PUNK ROCK thing to do, Trutt? That's what I ask myself. And obviously, the PUNK ROCK thing ain't to just roll over and die after gettin' beat down this way. Bein' PUNK ROCK means gettin' back up, dustin' myself off, and come back swingin' harder than ever.

He groans again.

Rezin:

But dude... there's only one of me. And they just keep gettin' bigger and bigger. Who do ya think will be the next "stunning" addition to Vae Victis? The return of Bronson Box? Impulse? Eric friggin' Dane? Doesn't matter, cause the point is, they'll always have the numbers over me...

His head shakes.

Rezin:

And yeah, even when faced with a hopeless cause like this, everything inside me--everything that's in my NATURE--compels me to keep ragin' against the great oppressors of DEFIANCE. But man... look at me...

He holds out his arms and draws attention to the hospital gown he's wearing.

Rezin:

How much more can I withstand? How much am I SUPPOSED to withstand? How many more cradle piledrivers do I need to take? How many more Texas-sized lariats can I withstand? What's gonna break first: my BODY, or my MIND?!

He shakes his head again, defeated, and slumps in his chair.

Rezin:

I can't compromise what I am... and I can't win. Dambled if I do, dambled if I don't. I'm trapped in a paradox that even this Escape Artist can't break from. So where do I go from here, Trutt? Well, I've done about all that I can do, so wow 'bout this...

He rises up to his feet.

Rezin:

I'm goin' home.

He begins to head for the door. Murmurs ripple through the members of the press on this last comment, but he's already on his way out.

Rezin:

Good luck with Vae Victis, DEFIANCE. It's your problem now.

TOM MORROW

Tom Morrow looks frayed. He looks frazzled. He looks a little bit... okay, a LOT bit annoyed with what just happened with The Lucky Sevens just a little bit ago. The twin giants are nowhere to be found, but Morrow is about to snap in front of the press pool right now.

Tom Morrow:

This... this is the biggest goddamn SCREW JOB! This is... no! The fucking Saturday Night Specials are BACK?! Titaness low blowed one of my clients! That should have been a damn disqualification! And Carolina Cortez? Uriel Cortez's MOMMY attacks me?! I should SUE HER until she's in the dirt due to insurmountable debt! We're gonna... we're gonna!

When he finally makes it to the press pool on stage, he sees the faces.

Tom Morrow:

Oh, I bet you're all LOVING this, huh? You want to see Better Future suffer, huh? You get your jollies from watching my clients GET FIRED, come back from the brink, get rehired to make THE MOST MONEY of anyone in this company only to see them get SCREWED out of the Unified Tag Team Titles! The titles that belonged to them! To me! To us! I bet you're ALL just tickled pink, aren't you?

He looks over at Deb Warenstein in a frenzy.

Tom Morrow:

What the HELL do you want?!

Deb Warenstein:

How does it feel to be a loser? I can't relate so I'm just wondering

Morrow looks like he's on the verge of a breakdown.

Tom Morrow:

You... AHHH! You know what? I'm going to sue YOU, too. I'm gonna sue your family! This place has to be breaking some kind of child labor laws letting these little punk kids into our pressers! This has to be some kind of sick joke!

Yannick Fillimore:

You should join forces with VV and The Comments Section.

Tom Morrow:

...oh, sweet God, someone is ribbing me. No, I shouldn't join with anybody. Better Future Talent Agency are the goddamn Alpha AND Omega of DEFIANCE! The Beginning and The End! Things happen here because WE ALLOW THEM TO HAPPEN! Write THAT down, you stupid little putz! Anyone else here want to make some jokes?

Sure enough... the cruel hand of irony rears its ugly head.

“Detective” Chris Chickentenders:

The Lucky Sevens aren't here, huh? Almost as if they were... MISSING.

Chickentenders pops the collar to his trench coat.

“Detective” Chris Chickentenders:

Looks like I got some work to do.

Morrow's head sinks into the press table. Several bangs of his head follow.

Tom Morrow:

You know what? YOU KNOW WHAT?!

He reaches into the pocket of his sportscoat and slaps it down on the table.

Tom Morrow:

I had a written statement prepared for you all... but I'm going off the cuff. You biased media pieces of shit want a quote for your shitty little 12 Twitter followers? Here it is...

The BFTA Brainchild stands up and slams both hands into the door.

Tom Morrow:

Titanes Familia were the better team for ONE GODDAMN NIGHT. My clients, The Lucky Sevens, are the BEST GODDAMN TEAM! EVERY NIGHT! WE! ARE! NOT! DONEEEEE! JUST YOU WAIT!

Ryan Scott is about to stand up and ask Morrow a question, but Morrow brushes past him and immediately takes a powder.

Tom Morrow:

Get out of my way, asshole...

He shoves past him and charges out one of the rear exits of the press room.

RE-ACTS OF DEFIANCE: NIGHT TWO

DEX JOY

Dex Joy is now sitting for the press and has an ice pack still fixed on his neck with one good hand after his brutal match with Vae Victis's Kerry Kuroyama. He watches SuperDEFFan64 jumps up from his seat.

SuperDEFFan64:

YAAASSSSSS! My boy, Dex Joy! YES! Scoring one for the husky folks! Can... can I come up there and fist bump you?

SuperDEFFan64 runs up to dab. Dexy Baby bumps fists with the DEFIANCE Super Fan

SuperDEFFan64:

All right, now my question... What's next for Dex Joy? You've beaten Henry Keyes, Oscar Burns, and now Kerry Kuroyama clean! Is it reasonable to guess that the FIST of DEFIANCE is in your sights, or do you want to tangle with the giant cowboy they got last night?

Dex Joy:

Right and to the point, pally! The day that Kerry Kuroyama decided to step his unwanted self out into my match with Rezin was the same day that Vae Victis made an enemy of me! I don't care about giant Yosemite Sam, but I do care about whoever wins tonight's FIST title match! That's all I'm going to say on that.

Craig Hamburgers:

that was the best fight i think i ever saw how the heck did you WIN i didn't think you would win that ruled, thank you

Dex Joy:

Craiggy! My young pally! Hey, can someone get me a pen please?

A PA hands Dex a pen to Dex. He signs a piece of paper with his autograph and asks the same PA to give it over to Craig Hamburgers.

Craig Hamburgers:

thank you Dex thank you thank you!

Dex Joy:

Unlike my match with Kerry ... no sweat, kid. Unlike those gum-bumping, double-talking, ass-bag out-of-touch elitists Vae Victis, I will give them credit. They are the toughest of the tough bastards. These most recent matches I've had: Oscar Burns on two pay per views. Henry Keyes! Kerry Kuroyama in three different matches. These have all been some of the toughest competitions I've faced in DEFIANCE Wrestling. Iron sharpens iron, young pally. If I want to be on top of the mountain, I need to challenge myself ... they're the toughest of the tough ... but Kerry just found out that Dexy Baby here? Dexy don't break!. Thank you for the question Craig!

Tim Tillinghast:

Dexy, baby, great win. Now that you've dispatched with Kerry, I have to ask: are other members of Vae Victis now in your sights?

Dex Joy:

Timmay Timmay Timmay ... you bet there is and if Lindsay Troy is the one that wins tonight's main event, she's next. I've already smashed through all of her little foot soldiers. This fist is going to go through the Vae Victis Mount Rushmore and if she has that title, she's the last one on my list.

Yannick Fillimore:

Why do you like The Faithful? You'd be much better off if you went for the Tag Titles with Victor Vacio. Your thoughts.

Dex pauses at the question.

Dex Joy:

Umm ... pally as much as I'd love to hold those Unified Tag Titles one day, I'm afraid that's not my plan right now. I've got my eyes on singles gold. I've been the Favoured Saints champ. I've been the Southern Heritage champ. One day, Dexy Baby is going to be the FIST and FACE of DEFIANCE! Also I haven't even met Victor Vacio. Wasn't he the weirdo with the mallet?

"Detective" Chris Chickentenders:

Yeah, hey, uh, there's been something on my mind a while now, and I gotta ask: how long has Nathaniel Eye been gone? Do you need help filling out a missing person's report?

Now Dex looks sad at the mention of his best friend who hasn't been on the roster in a while.

Dex Joy:

That's the sad part about the journey I'm on, bud. I'm alone doing it. My bestest buddy Natty Eyce had to have a second surgery on his shoulder after they found a bad staph infection from the first surgery. His timetable was six to eight months but it set him back. He misses you all and I know one day, Nathan is gonna be back and kicking better than ever. Thanks everyone for the questions!

DANGEROUS MIX

The segment begins with the Dangerous Mix of David Fox and Mushigihara, fresh out of the showers and into some clean, comfy clothes, casually walking by the press table. David in particular is still wearing the loaded glove he used to win for the team tonight, admiring it like one would an expensive watch. The pair takes their seats, while David nonchalantly points to a random interviewer in the crowd and is audibly saying "lay it on me."

SuperDEFFan64:

YASSSSSS MORE TAG TEAM WRESTLING! I TOLD YOU ALL LAST NIGHT TO PUT IT IN MY VEINS! GIMME!

After a confused look from The Dangerous Mix, SuperDEFFan64 clears his throat and sits down.

SuperDEFFan64:

My first question is for David Fox! Great win tonight and what a great stipulation! Wrestling CLEARLY does not have enough "...On A Pole" matches these days! Now that you're done with Gentlemen's Agreement, are you possibly looking at going after the Unified Tag Team Titles?

David chuckles and nods.

David Fox:

Great question, my dude. And yeah, the idea of fighting over a weapon is something we could stand to revisit more these days. To answer you, yeah. The big man and I have visions on those tag straps. After all, we had a chance at them before Lord Autumnbottom and his lackey stepped in.

A sigh.

David Fox:

And now that we've dispatched them tonight, I think it's time to get back on that path and make a run for the gold once again.

SuperDEFFan64:

And my last question for Mushigihara...

He tries to get a question out.

SuperDEFFan64: (straining to say it right)

O... SU? (looking around the room) I'm asking him if he can help me track down SuperDEFFan32 and uranage him through a table for trying to short me money on a Bronson Box action figure I tried to sell him! I'm sorry if my dialect was off or if I said something mean about your mother.

David and Mushi turn to each other, staring for a few seconds before they simultaneously nod, and Mushi comes back to the mic.

Mushigihara:

It's alright, friend, I think we're going to put that whole routine to pasture now.

recordscratch.wav

An eerie silence falls upon the room, as the big man shrugs and smiles. His speech is clear, without any hint of an accent.

Mushigihara:

Oh. Yeah. I guess I never came out about that here, did I? Yes. I can speak proper English. And I always could.

He pauses and lets out a little "whew."

Mushigihara:

I hid that for a good while, didn't I? I had my reasons for why, and why I decided to actually start talking now. I'll talk about those down the line. But for now, yeah. Turns out I'm not just pro wrestling's version of a weird alien tree after all. So ask away!

Tim Tillinghast:

Huge win tonight, boys. Congrats. Considering that you're building some real solid momentum - any words for the current DEFIANCE Unified Tag Team Championships, Los Titanes Familia?

Mushigihara smiles as he takes the mic once more.

Mushigihara:

Well, the Familia are Unified Tag Champions for a reason. They're as tough as it gets, and I can vouch for that, having gone hand-to-hand especially with Uriel Cortez. We definitely aim to try and face them once again down the line, with the belts on the line. David and I have been on quite a roll as of late, and I think if we faced them soon... it wouldn't be an easy match at all, but I definitely believe we could win and become champions.

Fox nods in agreement.

Craig Hamburgers:

hello fox is my second favorite character in super smash bros after captain falcon, do you think you could start doing a falcon punch in your fights with the loaded glove, also hi mushimushi

The now-talkative Kaiju smiles and waves to his young fan.

Mushigihara:

Hey, Craig!

David Fox:

Great question, little dude. I mean, I wouldn't rule it out, but you gotta remember that not every match Mushi and I are in's gonna have a loaded glove on a pole, and generally the ones that don't, we'd get disqualified. Not really something we want to do if we're gunning for those tag belts, you know? Tell you what, though. Next time we have a match like that, I'll see if I can pull it off.

David's eyebrow perks up.

David Fox:

Hey Craig, ask your parents to give me your Friend Code. We can see how you do against my Mega Man. Sound good, bud?

Craig nods and gives a big thumbs up to the stage.

“Detective” Chris Chickentenders:

Hey, umm... wasn't there like another dude with you guys at one point? Whatever happened to him? Could he have been... KIDNAPPED?

The “detective” whips out his notepad and pen, ready to go to work.

David Fox:

Guessin' ya mean Eddie Dante, huh? Yeah, he took a leave of absence recently because of some family stuff. He would rather we not talk about it, but he keeps touch with me and Mushi, and we're still tight as ever. We plan to keep the lights on for him whenever he comes back, but for now, the Mix is a two-man show.

Yannick Fillimore:

I don't understand your team. When will you side with Mikey Unlikely and create 21.2K?

The Mix look at each other, confusion on their faces, before going back to their respective mics with a tandem...

David Fox and Mushigihara: (in unison)

...what?

MASKED VIOLATOR 1

MV1 enters to polite applause from the press, dressed in a bright red tank top and yellow gym shorts, he is still sporting the blue mask he wore at the end of his bout. Taking a seat with a smile, he scoots into the table and moves the microphone closer to him as he clears his throat.

MV1:

Howdy, folks. Happy to be here. This is my first time so, please be gentle.

Chris Chickentenders is the first to raise a hand.

“Detective” Chris Chickentenders:

Hey dude, I always wondered, what's with the “one” at the end of your name? Like, is there a Masked Violator 2? You guys should be a tag team or something. Also, could you get me Corvo Alpha's autograph next time you see him?

MV1 is equal parts confused and amused, looking around the room, possibly for a little help.

MV1:

Uh. ...is he serious?

“Detective” Chris Chickentenders:

Totally.

MV1:

Well... yes, there actually is a Masked Violator #2. And, yes, I think we should ‘totally’ team up, too. As for the

autograph... well... I'll see what I can do.

MV1 blinks the confusion away as Tim Tillinghast steps up next.

Tim Tillinghast:

MV1! This might just be the moment we all look back at when you truly arrived in DEFIANCE. Beating someone like de Vargas is no small feat. Do you feel that you've grown in your in-ring skills since arriving in the territory?

MV1 clears his throat and moves closer to the mic stand on the table before him.

MV1:

I do, Tim, yeah. I've always been a tag team wrestler... always playing off my partner, feeding off of them, leaning on them. This has been a different experience, for sure. A learning experience, and hey, I'm still learning. Alvaro de Vargas is a talented, accomplished wrestler. No doubt about it. The only thing stopping ADV from being in the upper echelon of DEF, in my view, is the quality of people he surrounds himself with. But back to your question... yes, I'm proud of tonight's match, I think I've grown... and I've got a long way to go. Thanks, Tim.

With a nod, MV1 turns towards young Craig Hamburgers, who holds his arm up high like a second grader who desperately wants to be called upon.

Craig Hamburgers:

hello do you think this proves once and for all you're way better than corvo alpha and that there is a reason you're masked violator number one and not number two or three or seven or ten, thank you

MV1 smiles as stifled chuckling sweeps through the room.

MV1:

I think tonight proves that the bad guy doesn't always win. And I hope it also proved that I'm more than just a number. Thanks for your question, kid.

Craig melts back into his chair with a grin as smarmy Yannick Fillmore steps up.

Yannick Fillmore:

It's not working for you or Corvo. When do you drop it and become Corvo Alpha 2?

MV1s brow furrows under his blue mask as he flashes a wan smile in the smarks direction.

MV1:

Any day now, buddy. Any day now.

MV1's eyes move back across the rest of the room, politely letting Yannick know he is done. SuperDEFFan64 is up next.

SuperDEFFan64:

Hello, Masked Violator #1! SuperDEFFan64! As a man with a fellow number in his name... and with a one in it, meaning first of your kind... it is an honor to be speaking with you!

MV1 chuckles.

MV1:

I'm equally honored to speak with you, friend. What's your question?

SuperDEFFan64:

You used the Alpha Clutch against Alvaro de Vargas and choked him out, which was badass for such a nice guy! If I wanted to, can I start a fan page so I may also be MV#1Fan? I'll even spill it like MV with a number one, but fan. That's

right... I will have a monopoly on ALL the first fans of wrestlers!

MV1:

Honestly, I'd be honored, man. Consider yourself officially MV1Fan1, brother!

SuperDEFFan64 high fives himself before retaking his seat.

MV1:

If there are no other questions... I'd just like to say that I'm proud to be a part of DEFIANCE... and that I'm just getting started. Thanks, folks.

TYLER FUSE

Tyler Fuse casually walks into the room, finds the middle of the interview table and sits down. As always, no flash and straight to the point.

“Detective” Chris Chickentenders:

So hey, um, Conor, I know I already asked you last night, but did you change your mind on those cheat codes?

Tyler stares blankly in Chris' direction, likely insinuating the interview will move on. It does.

SuperDEFFan64:

Hello, Tyler! SuperDEFFan64! Can you teach me to break bones like you did with Nakazawa, Jack Harman and his kid? I have some... unfortunate... business dealings I need to get out of with SuperDEFFan10. I uh... well, HE'S saying I shorted him on buying a jock strap owned by Eric Dane... and it was just some random jockstrap I bought from the store... and used once...

He looks around sheepishly.

SuperDEFFan64:

...Several times.

Tyler's facial expressions suggest he's not going to answer this nonsense, either.

Craig Hamburgers:

Hello are you ever happy, do you need a hug, maybe not from Conor but also maybe from Conor, thank you.

Fuse rolls his eyes.

Tyler Fuse:

I'm good.

And he looks in another direction.

Yannick Fillimore:

You're great. But why haven't you overtaken Malak Garland for leader of The Comments Section?

Tyler becomes restless entertaining these questions. He shifts in his chair a couple of times.

Tyler Fuse:

I have no interest interacting with Malak Garland and company.

The room is silent and signifies another question to be asked.

Tim Tillinghast:

Do you have any sympathy whatsoever for the legacy of a man like Jack Harmen?

Tyler Fuse:

No.

And with that, The OG Player stands and walks off the stage,

TITANES FAMILIA

One night after their TOIT NUPS have been completed, the party continues well into their press conference. The new Unified Tag Team Champions, Uriel Cortez and Titaness, both walk into the press room with all titles in tow. Dan Leo James in a blue and gold Titanes Familia tracksuit is holding a sign with "JUST MARRIED SUPER QUICK" over his head cheering on while Uriel's lucha BFF, Minute - also in swank tracksuits after their earlier match - brings up the rear with Thomas Keeling and Carolina Cortez behind them. After dropping the five belts on the press table, Cortez and Titaness share a kiss as Thomas Keeling greets the room of both aspiring journalists and DEFIANCE superfans.

Thomas Keeling:

Ladies and gentlemen of the wrestling press... Mr. and Mrs. Uriel Cortez!

Applause rings out from the room! Dan Leo James and Minute both have a seat next to them at the table while Thomas Keeling and Carolina Cortez all stand by.

Christie Zane:

First off, congratulations to the happy couple!

Uriel Cortez:

Thank you, Christie.

Titaness:

Yes! Thank you!

Christie Zane:

And congratulations to Minute and Dan Leo James! My first question is for Dan... it's been a whirlwind few months for you. You go from winning the Ascension Battle Royale in BRAZEN to earn a spot on the roster with your mentors, you join Titanes Familia. And... you learned a chokeslam! How are you feeling right now?

James can't contain his excitement.

Dan Leo James:

Freakin' awesome, Christie. I... I don't have any words! I had my first pay-per-view or premium live whatever the nomenclature is for these big shows! My first win, too! Pinned that tool, Aleczander. I'm pretty happy, Christie! Thank you! I'll tell you something I haven't told anyone publicly yet...

He leans forward.

Dan Leo James:

My own family pretty much disowned me after I joined DEFIANCE. Cause they don't approve of it. They had a future planned out for me with the family business, but this is what I've wanted to do. I want to compete! I want to travel the world! I want to make fans happy, put smiles on faces and if that includes me falling on my ass as I do it, then that's good. And the fact that I have THIS family here helping me? I'd though y'all were kooky-dooks if you told me last year that this is how things would go. So thank you.

Up next, Yannick Fillimore.

Yannick Fillimore:

No one wanted to see you win. Thank you.

Uriel Cortez:

And I'm sure you and a million other trolls can go back under your bridge or your mom's basement and complain. But the people whose opinions matter to me are all on this side of the table. Next.

Tim Tillinghast:

Congrats all around - both professionally and personally. HUGE title win for you, Uriel and Titaness. Will you be giving the team that The Sevens originally robbed of the belts - The Saturday Night Specials - a shot?

Titaness and Uriel both nod.

Uriel Cortez:

Thanks, Tim. We appreciate all the coverage you've given to DEFIANCE. When Titaness and I started down this path, we had literally no idea up until the last forty-eight hours it would end with us being married AND Unified Tag Team Champions. But the goal has always been the same. SNS have supported us through our darkest times and it seemed only right to return the favor.

Titaness:

He's right. They will absolutely get a shot at these titles. Uriel and I are talking to officials this week. Maybe a big title match in the works. But in the meantime, we'll be defending against anyone who wants to fight us for these.

Next up, Craig Hamburgers.

Craig Hamburgers:

hello congratulations on getting married, everyone was so happy, does this mean you're going to get babies now thank you.

Titaness is trying not to laugh behind the press table.

Titaness:

Cart before the horse, kid. Pretty sure that your parents need a permission slip before you can ask these kinds of questions.

Minute:

Si. Cover your ears, kids. Who's next?

The next up is good old "Detective" Chris Chickentenders.

"Detective" Chris Chickentenders:

Yeah uhhh, what detective agency did you guys go through to find that geezer who married you? Hey, wait... isn't his SON missing?

Thomas Keeling:

No, son, I only WISH he was. I'm a spry young... sixty-five. Ahem.

And lastly, SuperDEFFan64.

SuperDEFFan64:

Hello! SuperDEFFan64! Congratulations on both winning the Unified Tag Team Titles AND the coolest shotgun wrestling wedding I think has ever been done! Maybe the only one that has ever happened without drugs and drive-through chapels involved.

Uriel Cortez:

Thank you. I think I heard of that one a long time ago. Crazy shit.

SuperDEFFan64:

That splash off the top rope! That was FUCKING AMAZING! Right onto Max Luck! I don't think you've busted that out since you were Dude In Mask II back in No Brand Wrestling!

Uriel Cortez:

Don't know who that is, man.

SuperDEFFan64:

Okay. Wink. Yep, I just said wink. Anyway! You got the gold! You're married! Where do you go from here?

Titaness looks at Uriel.

Titaness:

Well, first thing's first... I'm changing my number. Some weirdo has been texting me since yesterday about this wedding. But the other thing is we meant that. After everything Uriel and I have been through, it's tag partners for life now.

Uriel Cortez:

Tag partners for life. We're defending these titles against anyone who wants to catch these hands, so if you want some of this, bring it the fuck on.

Minute:

Congrats, Uriel and Princesa!

Carolina Cortez: (speaking in sign language)

I'm proud of you, mijo.

Uriel signs back.

Uriel Cortez:

Thank you, Mom.

Another round of applause for the new Unified Tag Team Champions and Titanes Familia (except Yannick Fillimore cause his faves didn't win).

VAE VICTIS

The entirety of Vae Victis sit at the table. The newly anointed FIST of DEFIANCE, "The Queen of the Ring" Lindsay Troy occupies the center seat with regal authority, title displayed on the table before her. She is flanked by retaining SOHER Champion "The Kraken" Henry Keyes and VV's own mouthpiece, Sonny Silver. Filling out the rank and file are other members Oscar Burns, Kerry Kuroyama, and newest acquisition Clay Byrd.

Their presence convey a sense of grace and magnetism. Professional wrestling royalty.

Then Chris, the fucking idiot, rises to his feet and asks the first question.

"Detective" Chris Chickentenders:

Yeah, hi, um... I just had some questions I wanted to ask, since I'm still on the case to find Dan Ry--

Kerry Kuroyama:

Chris...

The Pacific Blitzkrieg shakes his head, warning the greasy wannabe investigator that he's barking up the wrong tree.

"Detective" Chris Chickentenders:

Jeez, um, okay... well how about instead, can I ask who the new big dude is, and why is he dressed like a cowboy?

Clay Byrd:

Hey, detective fuckface. Come up here, lil closer. Lemme get a real good look at ya. Come on up... I ain't gonna bite. Let this fuckhead come right on up ta the front row. Get outta his way, he's a smart kid. Deserves the front row. There we go, now I can see ya.

Clay looks the kid over, up and down, before continuing.

Clay Byrd:

I dress like a cowboy fer the same reason ya dress like a kid who's still on his momma's tit at sixteen years old. It's just the truth.

Thoroughly grilled, Chickentenders returns to his seat, looking green in the gills.

SuperDEFFan64:

Hello, new DEFIANCE Overlords! SuperDEFFan64, though don't let the name fool you cause I am DEFIANCE's True Number One Fan! My question is for Oscar Burns... how did you go from beating everyone in DEFIANCE there is to beat, but you had to cheat to beat Rezin?

Burns looks completely flummoxed by the question.

Oscar Burns:

Hey... Vae Victis slander won't be tolerated, GC. I won't dignify your question with a response, so I'm going to let our good friend Sonny Silver answer this one? Sonny?

Sonny scoffs.

Sonny Silver:

In the words of famed philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche... "fuck you, fatty." Next question.

Craig Hamburgers:

hello aren't you too old to be called sonny, also what if all of you ended up being champions do you think that could happen, also clay byrd same question i asked rezin - if he poured bongo water on you would you become brick byrd thank you.

Sonny Silver:

I was old enough for your mother last night. So sayeth The Big Bad Voodoo Zaddy.

Clay Byrd:

Har, har, har. Like I ain't never heard some jokes 'bout my name before. Yer a cute kid. Get the fuck in the back with sixteen year old titty milk boy before ya get yerself hurt. And tell that pimple faced geek to take better care of ya. Can someone call CYS? Where the fuck are these kids parents?

Lindsay Troy:

Craig is a good boy, leave him be. Also, yes, we could all be champions; in fact, I think that's a very good possibility.

Yannick Fillimore:

Wondering if Thomas Slaine and Nick Synz would be a good fit for you. I think it's very clear it would be an excellent addition. Also when are you, Lindsay, going to turn on Henry Keyes because this alliance is kinda getting old.

Lindsay Troy: (glaring at Yannick)

When you lose your virginity.

Henry Keyes:

So, never.

Tim Tillinghast:

You are absolutely crushing it right now, and putting on some of the best matches on the show to boot. But when you're on top - as you all undoubtedly are - you have to know that there are going to be plenty of people lining up to knock you off your perch. In that spirit: Lindsay Troy, congrats on becoming the number one wrestler in DEFIANCE. Looking at the roster as it currently stands, who - in your mind - is the number one contender?

Lindsay Troy:

Thank you, Tim, for giving me the congratulations that I so rightly deserve. I feel like we should all congratulate ourselves for surviving the Stalker and Deacon eras of being the FIST. The Darkest Timeline is finally over and we made it out the other side.

Tim Tillinghast:

Yes, okay, but what about the number one conten-

Lindsay Troy:

Tim...I just won the title. Can't we all bask in my glory before I'm pestered with who I think should have a shot next?

Tim Tillinghast: (frowning)

Fine, I guess. Hen-

Lindsay Troy:

Besides, it's very obviously Sgt. Safety.

You can hear a pin drop in the room.

Tim Tillinghast:

You have to be joking.

Lindsay Troy:

Are you questioning the talent of the Safest Man in DEFIANCE, Tim? He just debuted a new finisher. Surely that merits some consideration.

Tillinghast blinks rapidly.

Tim Tillinghast:

I'm just going to move on. Henry Keyes - same question.

Henry Keyes:

I think it's time Count Novick earned a shot, don't you?

Tim Tillinghast:

It's a serious question, Henry, who do you see as the next-

Henry Keyes:

Tillinghast, you can throw anyone at the roster at myself or Miss Troy from here til Kingdom Come. The result is going to be the same: Vae Victis, running the show from the top thrones of DEFIANCE's singles division. For that matter, the happy little newlyweds who just won the tag straps might want to celebrate while they still can.

Tim Tillinghast:

Clay Byrd, why come to DEFIANCE? Why now?

Clay Byrd:

Us wrasslers got this bad feller app ya see. And LT was sittin' 'round just swipin' left on Heelder. That Doctor Ned feller? she swiped left. Bronson Box? She swiped left. Eric Dayne? Swiped left. Eugene Dewey? Swiped left. She was just swipin' and swipin' and finally there I was. Taller than her, strong, mean, big ol' sumbitch. Exactly what she was lookin' fer. Thanks Heelder.

Clay gives a thumbs up and a big smile while Tillinghast looks confused.

Clay Byrd:

But really Tim, look at the talent that's assembled here. How could ya say no? Ya get the call ta be part of somethin' this great, this perfect? How do ya say no? I mean look at us Tim, we're the pinnacle of perfection. This VV run, it's gonna be a fuckin' experience. One that DEFIANCE, and the rest of the wrestling world are never goin' ta forget.

Tim Tillinghast:

Oscar Burns - how can someone of your stature be a part of this group where someone else is the FIST? Will your competitive spirit really allow you to coexist with someone else holding the big belt?

Oscar Burns:

Hey... Timmy, I know that you're only doing your job, GC, so I won't bother reaching over this table to give you a right stretching for asking such a stupid question... I AM DEFIANCE! Not a tag line or a catch phrase... it just IS. I have laid out why I joined Vae Victis. I wanted numbers. They wanted a name to help spread their message that things at the top are now going to change. I've been FIST twice now, mate. Three World Titles in all since being in DEFIANCE. Right now, my concern is helping right the ship and that's what I'm going to do. I'm the measuring stick. I'm the man on the pedestal looking down at all these pretenders that want to be where I am. And to them, I say if you want to see where you rank, face me in that ring and I will happily show you the gulf between your talent and mine.

Tim Tillinghast:

Kerry, tough loss, but keep kicking ass. Not a question, really, but something I needed to say.

The Pacific Blitzkrieg nods.

Kerry Kuroyama:

The sad reality of this sport is that you can spend twenty minutes outwrestling your opponent in every single way, only to lose all that hard work in the blink of an eye due to a mental lapse. It won't happen again, I assure you.

Henry Keyes:

Prayers up for the next person doomed to fight Kerry Kuroyama.

Lindsay Troy:

Tonight was a show for the ages. Vae Victis keeps getting better and stronger and there's no end in sight to our dominance. Abandon hope all ye who enter, or are already in, DEFIANCE.

Fade out...

EPILOGUE

After about five seconds, the camera fades into a quiet and near empty Los Angeles parking lot. Stepping into frame, back to the camera, red hair flowing is none other than a beaten and dejected Jack Harmen. He takes one look around the empty parking lot, and the sound stage where the Press Conference was being held just a few hours earlier. All that's left are the stage crew sweeping and cleaning the various debris of a night of debauchery.

Harmen sighs. He reaches down and winces, rubbing his recently taped up knee. A brace is even put on to ensure stability.

Jack Harmen:

AGAIN!? I missed it AGAIN!

Harmen goes to soccer punt a stray can, but winces and falls, his plant leg being the target of Tyler's attack.

Jack Harmen:

... everytime.

Suddenly, a car pulls up. A door opens, a waft of smoke rises. A man walks over and lifts Harmen up, before tossing him into the passenger seat. Rezin leans down and looks into the camera Harmen had brought.

Rezin:

RELAX! ...it's consensual.

With a cackle, Rezin slams the door shut and it peels off into the night.