

SHOW OPEN

"THE LOST CAUSE" VICTOR VACIO

Victor Vacio enters the room, having showered and changed from his ring attire, other than his black lucha mask. In place of his black boots and black tights ... black boots and black slacks. If it wasn't for the black dress shirt and blazer, you'd likely notice no difference at all.

Off mic, Vacio can be heard.

Victor Vacio:

¿Qué es esta tontería?

Vacio takes a seat at the table and adjusts the microphone to his position. With his elbow on the table and hand to his masked face, he waits for a moment and when no question is asked; he looks around for DEFIANCE staff with a shrug and questioning hand gesture. Someone takes notice and cues the first query.

Reed Schwartzman:

Hello, I'm Reed Schwartzman with the Dropkick Digest, and this is my first DEFIANCE presser. My question relates to the final moments of your match. It almost seemed as though HFIV had the Causa Perdida foiled when he pulled official Benny Doyle in the way at the last moment, but then you landed short of a full execution. Was this out of concern for the official?

Victor Vacio:

No entiendo tu idioma ...

Vacio looks around for staff once again, shrugging ... once again with growing frustration.

SuperDEFFan64:

Congratulations on your win tonight! Do you see yourself wrestling for a title soon with this victory and can I have a replica of your mask to sell?

Victor Vacio:

Oh, ¿esta es la prensa falsa de la que siguen hablando? ¿Sí?

Vacio looks around for an answer from the surrounding staff but no one pipes up.

Yannick Fillmore:

Hi, what is the reason for your mask?

Victor Vacio:

Es para que tu madre no corra al ruedo para estar con un hombre de verdad, pinche pendajo!

Vacio motions toward his mask and gestures with increasing frustration.

Tim Tillinghast:

Sir, you put on a masterclass on how to out-wrestle your opponent tonight. You showed that there is a side of you that not many get to see: a ring general. Even though I don't think you're going to respond to me, I have to ask: why sully that by resorting to the post-match nonsense?

Victor Vacio:

¿Por qué ninguno de ustedes Marks habla español? ¿Cuántos luchadores han pasado por DEFIANCE? ¿O la lucha libre en general? ¡Próxima pregunta!

Lance Warner:

Victor, as we lead up to DEFCON and even during... it was very obvious, for the first time since you arrived in BRAZEN, that you obviously understand and speak English... So, why show up for a press conference just to play up

the language barrier?

Vacio turns his head and narrows his eyes, almost like a dog trying to understand.

Lance Warner:

Tú puedes hablar ingles. ¿Por qué te niegas a hacerlo aquí y ahora?

Vacio smirks, leaning back in his chair. He nods in a facetious agreement as he interlocks his fingers, with his hands resting on the edge of the table.

Victor Vacio:

Fuck ... you, Lance. ¿Entiendes eso?

Lance waves Vacio off and takes his seat, knowing there is no point trying to get through to him.

Craig Hamburgers:

hello yes how is your sauce thank you

Victor Vacio:

Ask .. Lance.

Chris Chickentenders:

Uh yeah hey, are you still connected with that Rick Dickulous guy at all? He left his shirt at my mom's house.

Victor Vacio:

Dogs, yes? Perrito!

Vacio, smug as ever, finds his purposefully limited English humorous but tries to hide it.

Ryan Scott:

After the end of the match, I have got to ask you, are we heading to a Hair Vs Mask match?

Victor Vacio:

Hair? ¿Cabello? Ah, si ... Hair of the Dog, yes?!

Vacio pulls reaches into his jacket pocket and pulls out the dreaded lock of High Flyer IV's hair.

Victor Vacio:

¡Toma eso!

Vacio laughs hardily as he stands up from the table.

Victor Vacio:

Se acabó.

Vacio turns to leave the table and finds the approaching High Flyer IV in his eye line.

Victor Vacio: *[to the press core]*

Ah, yes ... Hair!

He holds up the lock, only lowering it a bit to lean down and grab the microphone; still in it's round weighted stand. He raises it to his standing height, causing some tension on the mic cable and ensuing feedback. He pulls the microphone away from his face until the shrill feedback subsides.

Victor Vacio: *[gesturing toward HF IV]*

... of the dog!

DEFSec led by Wyatt Bronson floods in and find their way between the pair before any violence can ensue. DEFSec keeps HF IV in the wings as Wyatt Bronson and a pair of his jack booted black shirts urge and user Vacio off set, the opposite direction most have and will come and go.

HIGH FLYER IV

All attention points toward HFIV, who nods his bright blue hair and pulls the straps on his LET singlet. He awkwardly takes a seat in front of the microphone setup. He mutters loud enough for the mics to pick up.

HF IV:

He's the puta. I'm the punto....

HF IV looks over the crowd and points out to Yannick. Yannick stands.

Yannick Fillmore:

Why do you like high flying intravenous lines?

HF IV blinks.

HF IV:

I don't understand the question and I won't respond to it. You, Small child.

Craig Hamburgers:

hello yes how many high flyers do you think there will be 100 years from now thank you

HF IV takes a moment. He strokes his chin. He leans in.

HF IV:

Seventeen. Good question. Man with a forum name on his t-shirt who somehow has a press pass.

SuperDEFFan64:

Sorry you lost! As the fourth in line to carry the High Flyer name... can you get me a hook me up if I want to be High Flyer V can I stop being a 64?

HF IV:

Wait, you're 64? Dude, honestly, I'm kinda jealous. Super Mario 64 was money, so you got good company. Listen, I'm not gonna be HF IV forever, and when the next person takes the mask and the moniker, you two can form a tag team and just call yourselves Sixty-Nine. I'd pay good money for that.

Deb Warenstein:

Who is your bestie bestie between Archer and Kaz, I promise I won't tell

HF IV:

Listen, I've known Archer longer, and we sync, we work together well. It's like a well oiled machine in that ring. But Kaz, man, Kaz is just chill. Dude gets me on a level most don't. Don't make me choose. We're family. You might have a favorite in your own family, but that don't matter. Family's family. Yeah? That being said, probably the best question so far. I'd ask you all to at least step up to Deb's level here. Tim, let's bring this back to the match.

Tim Tillinghast:

Gutsy performance kid! If you could go back, what would you change about your approach?

HF IV:

Honestly... That stage is daunting. Listen, last time I was out there at a DEFCon? Dan Ryan was powerbombing my dad into a pile of mush. I didn't know what to expect when I went out there on my own, fighting my own battles in front of all those people. I've been wrestling for years but that's the biggest crowd I've ever seen. Next time, it won't rattle me like it did tonight.

Reed Schwartzman:

Looking back, had you not used the official as a human shield in the final moments of that match, do you think the

outcome would have been different?

HF IV shifts in his seat.

HF IV:

Honestly, what I said to Tim about DEFCon, it being daunting, that's all true. But it's not my answer. I just, I shouldn't have brought Doyle into things. I had other options. Better options. I'll pay whatever fine. I'll know better next time. Sorry Benny. My instincts just took over... and I hate that... stupid, lazy... I can't believe Victor has a victory over me. You know the prick knows English right? He totally understands and can speak it but he just doesn't. It's infuriating. Calls me a puta... I'm el punto.

Ryan Scott:

I'll ask you the same question as your opponent tonight. Are we heading to a Hair Vs Mask match?

HF IV gripes his snipped hair, lopsided as it is now. He grits his teeth.

HF IV:

You know, when I first joined BRAZEN, we were still pretty young. LET wasn't a thing. Most our champs were still in school or on the indies. But Vacio man... that guy was just butter. So I watched him. I started looking at tapes. I started using some of his movements, climbing the ropes, dude's got skill and balance. And I told him, before LET, you and I, we could take this place over. You got natural talent. I got skill and pedigree. Vacio, he didn't seem to care. He never seemed to care. He didn't care when he won the BRAZEN belt. He didn't care when he got promoted. He didn't care when he got his first ppv match. He didn't care how many times he lost. He. Doesn't. Care. So what if I take his mask? It means nothing to him...

HF IV cracks his knuckles into the mic.

HF IV:

That being said, it does mean something to me to be the one to take it from him. So yes. I'll put the rest of my hair on the line. I can grow that back. You can't grow back a mask. Mexico kills you for that. And even Vacio has to care about that.

HF IV quickly stands from the table, bumping the mic as he's ushered off the proper way off stage.

SCROW

Scrow enters the press room with Hive. Scrow has a splint over his nose and a bit of bruising under his eyes. Both are dressed in their street clothes. He sits down takes a swig of water, she takes a seat next to him. They both look out into the press core.

Reed Schwartzman:

Congratulations tonight.

Scrow:

Merci.

Reed Schwartzman:

Tell us, what was going through your head in those last few minutes of the match? Were you confident you had this in the bag after locking in the figure four around the post?

Scrow:

Honestly, no. Scrow spent hours studying film on Crimson. The man has taken some beatings before and just kept coming almost like Domsday from Superman.

SuperDEFFan64:

That match was BRUTAL! LOVED IT! With Crimson Lord now fully behind you, what is next for Scrow, and why is it autographing these pictures that just happened to be in my jacket pockets? Along with a perfectly-conditioned pen. Ink levels have been checked thoroughly.

Scrow: *[looking at Hive]*

Was there something Scrow missed here?

Minerva smirks but doesn't answer.

Scrow:

Hemp

Tim Tillinghast:

Now that you've put this never-ending nonsense behind you, what are your plans to get back on track with your wrestling career? You have all the tools to be a top guy.

Scrow:

That Mr. Tillinghast Scrow will address on DEFTV.

Chris Chickentenders:

That... was... BADASS, dude! You handed that super huge dude his ASS! I keep telling people that THIS is what every wrestling match should be! So my question is, when do we get the movie version, and can I play the part of Reaper the Grey?

Scrow:

Ah...you might want to ask PCP about a movie version. That is not Scrow's forte.

Craig Hamburgers:

hello yes is reaper gray reaper real, or is he your alter ego thank you

Scrow:

Never thought that bulging mass of abuse would have so many fans. Scrow will just say this no he is not.

Deb Warenstein:

Have you ever wondered why Reaper the Grey's name was Reaper the Grey and not just Reaper Grey? Like, what was the point of the "the?" Also congrats on the win, snaps for you.

Scrow:

Scrow's guess it was to separate him from the rest of the Reapers. Gracias!

Yannick Fillmore:

Wondering why you blatantly stole the figure four leg lock off the ring post from Tyler Fuse. Wondering, not asking you.

Scrow:

Scrow does not recall Tyler's name on the move. If Tyler has a problem with it he knows where to find Scrow.

Ryan Scott:

Now that business with the House of Harvest is over, what is next for you?

Scrow:

Scrow swears you and Tim must be secret twins. Like Scrow told Tim tune into DEFTV and find out.

Scrow gets up with Hive, he says one final thing to the press core.

Scrow:

Danke

The two leave.

"DEC4L" DECLAN ALEXANDER

"DEC4L" Declan Alexander walks into the room freshly showered, wearing some DEC4L merch (now available on DEFshop) and a pair of blue jeans with a pair of Jordans. He takes off his D4 logo hat and places it on the table in front of him, dejected. He runs his hand through his hair, trying to make it look somewhat serviceable before leaning forward into the mic.

DEC4L:

I just wanted to start things by thanking the DEC4LLION for all their support tonight. I heard you and you were all bangin'. Fam, DEFCON hits different and this isn't the way I was expecting things to go. So thanks again for your support. It means the world. I'm ready for some questions.

Reed Schwartzman:

Declan... obviously, not the ending you were looking for tonight, but I think I speak for many when I say that you had a very impressive showing out there against a tenured DEFIANCE veteran. That being said, did Kerry's attack before the bell influenced the outcome of this match?

DEC4L:

Thanks bro, it means a lot but I didn't leave the gaming chair to be impressive and lose. I'm high-key disappointed in myself regardless of what Kerry did before the bell. I hold myself to a high standard and don't like taking L's. I appreciate the words of encouragement though.

Ryan Scott:

Great job out there Declan I can see you are going to be the future here in DEFIANCE. So what are some of your goals you have?

DEC4L:

Goals? Let's start with winning a big match. As I just said it's pretty frustrating to keep coming up empty handed. Beyond hitting the gym and the ring, trying to fix what went wrong, and winning a big match I hope to establish myself on the DEFIANCE roster and be catching a lot less L's.

SuperDEFFan64:

That match was DOPE! You came really close to beating Oscar Burns and you came really close to beating Kerry Kuroyama. What do you think you might have to change? Also, will you finally accept my friend request in Destiny 2? I am SuperDESTFan64 there. Thank you!

DEC4L:

"I get so many friend requests, fam, it probably got lost in the shuffle. When I get home I'll go through the crazy and see if I can find it. As for coming really close to winning... frustrating. I feel like I'm doing all the right stuff and the results aren't coming. I'm not used to losing so I'm going to go back to the drawing board and try to figure this out but... it wears on you."

Tim Tillinghast:

You were money tonight, sir. No shame in losing to the best. Now it's time to get serious - you've shown us you have all the tools. What's your goal for DEFCON next year?

DEC4L:

Thanks again for the encouragement, fam, it's helping me see the bigger picture. My personal goals for next year? I'm a big dreamer, Tim. I try to bring that protagonist energy with me wherever I go. So if I could open or close one of the nights next year, entering with a title and leaving with a title, that's what I expect from myself.

Craig Hamburgers:

hello yes I love your twitch stream I watch all the time, are you excited about tears of the kingdom thank you

DEC4L:

Who isn't?! It's going to be so good, bro. The game I was really looking forward to was Star Wars Jedi: Survivor to continue Cal Kestis' story but with the optimization issues going on with PC I've been holding back on streaming it. Hoping those problems get solved quicker than they did for Cyberpunk and I can knock that out before Tears but we'll see. If they don't, it'll be a sadger, but I'm happy to keep streaming Apex or Valorant until then.

Yannick Fillmore:

Hi, Yannick Fillmore here. Don't care for you, don't care for online stupidity. Why do you hide behind a Twitch screen? I'm sure you don't have Twitter Blue like I do, either.

DEC4L:

Mods? That's cap, bro. One of us is in the ring and the other one is in the stands. No need to be salty. Just keep buying the merch.

Chris Chickentenders:

Hi, uh, I only follow chicks on Twitch, but that being said, do you know any of them, and can you hook me up with one?

DEC4L:

I mean... I do, but do you see any chicks hanging all over me? Haha. I might not be the best person to ask but I will give you some advice. Just be respectful and be yourself, fam. Remember the right girl for you won't always be necessarily who you want but who you need. All love my dude. If you don't mind, I have to get with my editors and see about my next week of content before I hit the sheets tonight. Saaaaaaalute! You all are amazing. Except that dude.

Declan smirks and points to Yannick Fillmore before he picks up his hat and places it back down over his head. His shoulders slump a bit as he raises a hand in appreciation and exits the room.

JACK HARMEN & TERESA AMES

Jack Harmen walks into view and sits down at the podium. A few flashbulbs crackle but not for Harmen. Teresa Ames salutes the room full of reporters as she saunters in after Jack. She plunks down in an open spot beside him.

Ryan Scott:

Hello you two. Jack what made you want to help Teresa? For you Teresa where did you find your cellphone when Jack got the tag? Who exactly were you texting during a match?

Teresa covers Jack's microphone.

Teresa Ames:

I'll field this one, Jacky. Look, Scott Ryan or is it Ryan Scott!?

Jack Harmen:

Doesn't matter.

Teresa Ames:

Doesn't matter, what made him want to help me was the fact that Jack Harmen is an industry legend. He saw a damsel in distress out there in the ring and he did the right thing by inserting himself into things! For that, I'm forever grateful to my Jacky in the box. As for who I have text threads with is none of your dang business. That's private and will always remain as such!

Craig Hamburgers:

Hello, yes hi, Jack, did you convince Teresa that you were a building and so that's how you teamed up, thank you.

Jack Harmen:

What makes you think I'm not a building? NEXT!

Reed Schwartzman:

You surprised many with your appearance here tonight, Jack. I'm curious though, were you planning to compete at all when you arrived here tonight?

Jack Harmen:

No, I didn't think I'd compete. I thought I'd hung my boots up for good, legit, the papers had it right. But I can't stay away from this business, man with a Jewish nose. I was in the back, watching the monitors and I just saw that smug smile on Tyler's face. I knew I had to be the one to kick it clean off 'im. Helping out someone as beautiful and crazy as Ms. Ames is just the icing on top of a vagina shaped birthday cake.

Ames blushes with genuineness at the comment.

Tim Tillinghast:

I'm sure there will be some questions about your... involvement but rest assured I don't care. Mr. Harmen, will you be taking young Ames under your wing?

Jack Harmen:

I'd like to think I take ALL of DEFIANCE under my wing. We don't advertise it often, but I'm down there at BRAZEN twice a week running sessions. Anyone from DEF can come down for a tune up or a question or a session, our doors are open. Some people take the opportunity more than others. Ames however, doesn't need me to take her under my wing. She's already the full package. You saw how much heart and perseverance she showed? You can't teach that. It's admirable.

She blushes yet again.

Chris Chickentenders:

Sir, my dude, I salute you sir. In my eyes, you are forever a legend. You have gone to the top of the mountain, and achieved what every man wants for himself. So I gotta ask, how long have you been hittin' it?

Jack Harmen:

Uh... yes. Of course. See, a gentleman never discusses his conquests, but in this case, I haven't been given the pleasure of climbing the ASMR mountaintop. Now, if you're asking how long I've been having sex? As long as I've been wrasslin'... so since I was 16 years young.

Teresa Ames:

Excuse me, yes hi, I'd like to interject to you Mister Chicken tendies. Where do you get off asking such rancid questions? The fans love me. Harmen loves me. Everyone loves me. That's all the love I'm receiving right now. Heck, it's all the love I'm open to so layoff will ya? Ain't no "hittin dis" anytime soon.

SuperDEFFan64:

JACK IS BACK!

Jack Harmen:

Yo.

SuperDEFFan64:

AND TERESA... Teresa is looking mighty fine right now. First question, are you back permanently, Jack?

Jack Harmen:

I'm never leavin'. You'll dig up the wrestleplex foundation in forty years and find me buried next to Scott Douglas and Sonny Silver, I'll tell you what... As for me competing actively? I'd like to, and we'll see how well the body maintains.

SuperDEFFan64:

And second question for Teresa... I have \$50 gift card for Red Robin? Will you Red Robin Yum with me and then sign my receipt? Not to sell it. I'm not unscrupulous!

Teresa rubs her chin, deep in contemplation.

Teresa Ames:

I'll sign that for ya. A public appearance with an adoring fan sounds good to me but you're going to get the house show signature! It won't be on the receipt though. I'll get you a nice eight by ten.

Deb Warenstein:

Hayyyyyy girl, you looked fire out there, what's next for you?

Teresa Ames:

I'd be a liar if I said I didn't have some scores to settle. I can't allude to any more details than that at this moment but stay tuned. The Tasty Gurl has you covered.

Yannick Fillmore:

Here's how I would've done it: Teresa Ames' mystery partner is Tripp Wise. Makes a lot more sense to me, no?

Both Jack and Teresa no-sell the comment. Onto the next and final question for the duo.

Rich Lather:

Rich Lather with the Lather Times here. Teresa, what do you use to wash with in the bath? Is it bar soap? Conditioner? Liquid pump? I'm dying to know because your skin looks ubiquitous, girl.

Ames chuckles.

Teresa Ames:

I enjoy a good bath bomb. I find it both soothes my skin AND my soul. Thanks for that heartwarming question, Rich. You're a stand up guy.

With that, Harmen and Ames end up going their separate ways off the stage.

TYLER FUSE & PRINCESS DESIRE

The scene opens to Tyler Fuse and Princess Desire quietly walking into room and taking a seat behind the interview table. The questions begin.

Reed Schwartzman:

What was going through your mind after the surprise appearance of Harmen, and his unplanned entry into the match?

Tyler runs a hand through his face and hair. He leans back in his seat and expresses through body language he's not going to answer the question. Meanwhile, Desire is staring into the ceiling.

Some time passes. The person who is handling the press conference likely points to someone else for them to ask a question, although this isn't viewable since the camera remains on the talent.

Ryan Scott:

So Tyler, are you going to throw another temper tantrum if I mention a certain someone that cost you two your match tonight? Easy you two no need to get violent here. Were either of you expecting the fight Teresa gave you here tonight?

Desire hasn't made eye-contact with anyone and Tyler cracks his fingers and then loosens his shoulders.

Time passes.

Another voice speaks.

Tim Tillinghast:

What exactly do you gain from this? From these silly little games? Tyler, you're so talented. You're both parents now. Isn't it time to grow up and be above things like this?

Finally, it looks like Princess' interest has peaked. She raises her eyebrows, takes a deep breath and leans forward.

Only to lean back in her chair.

Time passes.

Craig Hamburgers:

Hello yes, when is Tyler going to start calling himself Prince Desire and when will you be king and queen? Thank you.

Nothing.

Eventually, it's time for another question.

Chris Chickentenders:

Dude, I think you need to give Scraw some credit for rippin' off his twisty leglock thing around the post. Just saying.

Clearly by now it doesn't look like Tyler wants to be there.

Yannick Fillmore:

Here's how I would've done it: Princess Desire is the new manager for JJ Dixon and Tyler Fuse's partner is Gunther Adler. Concrete construction ladder match against Teresa Ames and Tripp Wise.

Tyler looks over to Jane and then both stand up at the same time and exit out of view.

The camera spins around to Yannick Fillmore.

Yannick Fillimore:

I thought it was a great idea myself.

The scene fades.

MV1

Dressed in a red tank top and blue wind pants, Masked Violator #1 enters the press room to polite applause. Smiling as he takes his seat, it's clear that MV1 has changed red wrestling masks since his match and it appears there's a small bulge just above his right eye where, presumably, a bandage has been applied.

He adjusts the table mic, pulling it closer.

MV1:

Howdy, folks. I, uh... I suppose first I wanna say how blown away I continue to be by this roster. I'm incredibly proud and honored to be in that locker room amongst the best and brightest performers in the sport. What a darn show, eh? As for my match, I know you fine people have questions... I'm going to do my best to answer some of them. But the fact remains that there's a lot more I don't know than what I do, so... I guess on that note, I'll take whatever you got for me.

Ryan Scott, of the Defiant, is the first to step up.

Ryan Scott:

Congratulations first off! Now with Nigel at the unemployment line, do you plan on trying to get your partner back or just let him find his own way?

MV1 stifles a smile, nodding his head.

MV1:

I didn't come back to DEFIANCE looking to put anybody out of work. But, then again, I've also never encountered anyone as despicable and depraved as Nigel Tricklebush. It's not lost on me that, if things had gone a little different, he might be sitting here gloating right now instead of me. As for Number Two... I don't know what comes next. Do I "plan on getting my partner back"? Yeah. Yeah, always. He's the only guy I've ever leaned in for a tag from. And... I can't picture it being anyone else. Thanks for your question.

Schwartzman is next.

Reed Schwartzman:

Congratulations tonight. Tell us, in your opinion, what was the difference-maker in those tense last minutes of the match? Do you feel Tricklebush's presumed turning on Corvo Alpha bought you the time you needed to get a second wind?

#1 measures the question as it comes, turning it over in his mind.

MV1:

Thanks for the question. That was one of the hardest matches of my career, no doubt. But... I think it's hard to say who really turned on who, you know? After DEFtv 185, I was thinking that was it. I was hoping that finally, quite literally, Number Two'd been "un-leashed" on the man who took his life away. I think that's what we saw. And what happened tonight, with Nigel attacking Corvo – I have to be honest, I didn't even see that happen, I was a little loopy, I've since been shown the play-back – I think all of that was just an extension of the *choice* that my old friend was able to make. And for a man who's been called a mindless monster and a puppet... to see him finally retake control of his life... to finally MAKE a choice for HIMSELF, after all of this time... that was a monumental step forward. I don't know entirely where he is at... I just know we've got a lot closer to a better place. If that makes sense. I... don't even think I answered your question. Sorry. Maybe I'm still a little loopy.

MV1 blushes, awkwardly chuckling to himself, a few reporters joining in.

Craig Hamburgers is helped up.

Craig Hamburgers:

hello yes you're so cool and nice and you fight for your friend, why are you called violator thank you

The collective press (and MV1) share a laugh at the kid's precociousness. Smiling, #1 leans in to the mic.

MV1:

That's a great question, little man. Thank you! Yeah, people ask me about the name all of the time. *"It doesn't fit", "it's dumb", "it's holding him back"*, I've heard all of it and, hey, it's cool. There *are* some people who like it and I appreciate that, too. The name goes back way further than I do in this business. I might be #1 today, but I am far from the very first man to wear this mask and bear this name. There's a history to it. There's a respect I have, for the sport and for the people that came before me, the people who gave me all the opportunities that got me to DEFCON, that got me sitting in front of you all tonight. The mask and that name are meant to honor that. The powers that be here were throwing other ideas around; *"What about Masked VINDICATOR #1?"* Man, I don't know...

MV1 chuckles to himself.

MV1:

You like school, little guy?

Craig giggles to himself, not ever really answering.

MV1:

One of my favorite things to study was the dictionary when I was about your age. You go ahead and look "violate" up in a dictionary and you know what it says? Well... it says a lot, some of those qualities more perhaps in line with my former partner... You know what? Don't look it up. Ask Dad to. When he does, if he looks closely, he might see *"to defy"*... and I'm all about violating expectation, the norm AND Lord Nigel Tricklebush. I say all of that to say: Gee, kid, I hope the name grows on ya.

Craig flashes a "#1" index finger – and MV1 throws one up back at him – before melting back into his seat as the incredibly pompous Yannick Fillmore stands up.

Yannick Fillmore:

Thanks for ruining the best part of DEFIANCE outside of Arthur Pleasant in Lord Nigel Tricklebush.

Chuckling once more, MV1 glances around as if he is being pranked before realizing he isn't.

MV1:

You're welcome. And hey, me and Arthur have some unfinished business so... maybe you can thank me again later, too!

MV1 looks for the next question and SuperDEFFan64 doesn't hesitate.

SuperDEFFan64:

Fellow man with a number in his name! Do you see you and Corvo Alpha being a tag team again after this win tonight?

MV1:

Hi there. Yeah, like I said earlier... that's always the goal. Will it be on the next DEFtv? Man, I don't know. I *hope* so!

Tillinghast is next.

Tim Tillinghast:

This has to be a huge moral victory for you. Do you see your future continuing to "save" your former partner, or is it time to focus more on your own career and aspirations?

MV1:

It is a pretty big moral victory I guess, yeah. I think, geez, everybody wins with that man outta here. As for your second question, I don't see those two things being any different.

Chris Chickentenders dramatically sweeps a lock of hair from his eyes as he stands.

Chris Chickentenders:

Hey, Corvo Beta... I bet you think you're badass and all, but that butthead Nigel Tricklepussey pretty much did all the work for you, and you can't deny that. Corvo Alpha RULES!

Another snort from MV1 as he offers a shake of the head.

MV1:

Oh boy, "Corvo Beta"... that's good. Don't let DEF Creative hear that one, sheesh!

The pool chortles as one.

MV1:

You've actually fallen butt-backwards into making a really good point, young man. Nigel Tricklebush "did all the work" tonight, you're right. His actions put me in this chair, sure. Those actions also put him OUT of DEFIANCE. I'm fine with that. If you ask me, "Corvo Alpha" won tonight. My hand might've been raised. But he won, too.

Chickentenders isn't satisfied, but retakes his seat regardless.

MV1:

Anything else? **pauses, looks around** Alright. Thanks, everyone. Enjoy Night Two!

MV1 graciously waves as he exits.

GAGE BLACKWOOD

Gage Blackwood walks into the room with a towel around his neck, while still wearing his kilt-inspired wrestling gear.

Ryan Scott:

Welcome back Gage! What did it feel like out there when you stepped through that curtain?

Blackwood nods but takes a minute before responding.

Gage Blackwood:

Aye, it felt great to get back out there. Been away for a while now, had a chance to recover from injuries, I'm feeling very good.

SuperDEFFan64:

GAGE IS BACK! KNEES TO SKULLS! I have no questions, just welcome back!

Blackwood tries to hold back a smile.

Yannick Fillmore:

Saw your appearance coming way ahead of time. Too predictable. Really disappointed it was you who came to save Elon Musk from a beating. I'd have liked a way better surprise but if you ask me who, I don't know who.

Gage has a look on his face as if suggesting "who the hell is this guy" before realizing he doesn't have to respond because Yannick didn't ask a question.

Craig Hamburgers:

Hello, yes, I'm going to ask Boxer the same question, what do you think of Scottish superteam and can I be your manager? Thank you.

Blackwood wipes some sweat off his forehead.

Gage Blackwood:

Right now I'm happy to be back in the ring and DEFIANCE. I have no idea what's going to happen next but you're welcome to cheer me on, kid.

Blackwood looks to another reporter.

Reed Schwartzman:

Great to see you back, Gage. I was just wondering, given how quickly this match went, do you feel it absolved you of the loss of the Southern Heritage Championship to Dex Joy in a lopsided contest back at Ascension 2020?

Blackwood tilts his head, he forgot about that match.

Gage Blackwood:

That was a long time ago and I'm a different man now.

Blackwood turns to his right.

Chris Chickentenders:

Yeah hi, uh, are you mad at all that Jack Harman stole you chick?

It takes Gage a moment to think about it...

Gage Blackwood:

I'm sorry but I'm not caught up with DEFIANCE yet and I didn't watch DEFCON. I don't know who Jack Harman "stole" from me, I'm unattached.

And onto the final question.

Tim Tillinghast:

I've missed you. Please kick the head off Arthur Pleasant next.

Blackwood winks towards Tillinghast.

Gage Blackwood:

Be careful what you wish for...

He promptly stands, thanks the interviewers and exits stage right.

NED REFORM

There is a murmur among the press pool as a figure walks through the door nearest to the podium. Check that... two figures. Ned Reform, a white towel around his neck, leads the way... but he is flanked by a track suit wearing Levi Cole. Reform's face is unreadable. Cole looks somewhat nervous. In Ned's hand is a bag of Lays BBQ potato chips.

Reform takes a seat first. He looks to the ceiling and leans back in his chair, not making eye contact with any of the press. Cole sits next to him, and he leans forward into the mic.

TA Cole:

Uh, hello everyone. I'm gonna be fielding the questions tonight if that's alright. The Doc has a lot on his mind.

A murmur of disappointment among the press. Cole sticks his tongue out as he seeks out a person to call on.

TA Cole:

Yes. Mr. Scott?

Ryan Scott:

Hey Doc, so what is your next scheme to try and get fired here? By the way you need to fire your booker.

Cole squints. Looks confused. He turns to Reform. He tries to cover the mic with his hands, but he doesn't do a good enough job.

TA Cole (trying to speak quietly):

Uh... what's a booker?

Reform looks Cole dead in the eye. He remains expressionless for several seconds. Then, still looking at Cole, he reaches out and grabs his bag of chips. He opens it with a loud pop. Cole figures out that he's on his own.

TA Cole:

Um. I can't speak about Dr. Reform's future employment plans at this time. And I don't gamble, so I don't think I know any bookers. Mr. Fillmore?

Yannick Fillmore:

Does this mean you don't have Twitter Blue anymore like I do?

Reform's eye twitches. He crunches on a BBQ chip. Loudly.

TA Cole:

Uhhhh... next question! You!

SuperDEFFan64:

Doctor Ned Reform, how much trouble do you think you're in by the brass now that this stunt you have failed... also, did you talk to Elon Musk at any point? Not that I want his autograph to sell, cause he's trash... but I know people who might!

Crunch. Crunch. Crunch.

A single bead of sweat runs down Cole's forehead.

TA Cole:

I'm sure that the uh, bosses, uh... know how valuable the Doc is. I'm sure he'll be fine. And uh, no... we didn't... uh... we didn't talk to Musk at all.

Crunch. Crunch. Crunch.

Reed Schwartzman:

Just wondering, in your opinion, why was this such a quick match? Would Dr. Reform have been better prepared if he had prior knowledge of his opponent?

TA Cole (relieved to know what to say):

YES! If you watch closely, Doc Reform was actually trying to speak to Blackwood to better understand what was going on when he was attacked. Blackwood took a cheap shot and was smart enough to take advantage and not let the Doc get his bearings. It was dirty pool.

Cole is pleased with that answer, and he looks to Reform for approval. He receives nothing but a blank stare and potato chip crumbs in response.

Tim Tillinghast:

Why would you do this in an attempt to get released? Aren't you opening yourself up to legit legal trouble?

TA Cole:

Uh, we can't discuss that. Legal stuff, you know?

Craig Hamburgers:

hello yes how did you feel about that space x rocket blowing up, thank you.

Cole smiles.

TA Cole:

Hey little buddy! I'm not sure what you're talking about, but I like rockets and I like explosions, so that sounds A-OK by me! Thanks for coming.

Reform, through potato chip bites, snorts in disgust.

Chris Chickentenders:

Hi, can the doc challenge Joe Rogan to a boxing match next? That dude's BADASS, and would probably make you eat your own butt!

Cole again looks nervous.

TA Cole:

Yeah, well... uh... Joe Rogan does rock. But I don't think The Doc will be involved with any people outside of wrestling anymore. Besides, The Doc would embarrass him. Uh, respectfully. Okay. One more maybe? You! Girl!

Deb Warenstein:

Hi Lexi would you please deliver a message to Ned for me? OK.. *clears throat* get wrekt

Reform stands up suddenly, his chair falling backwards behind him. He crumples his bag of chips and throws it in Deb's direction before storming out.

TA Cole:

Uh... I guess that's it, guys. Thanks!

Cole quickly scurries after his mentor.

SNS

There is a rumbling amongst the gathered media as the press conference room's double doors open up and the newly crowned tag team champions arrive in style aboard their customized Ballyhoo Brew golf cart. Practicing the importance of always having a designated driver, Ophelia Sykes sits in the driver seat with one hand firmly on the wheel while her other hand expertly holds a plastic cup of beer so as to not spill.

Next to her sits "Black Out" Pat Cassidy. Still in his ring gear, the Scrapper from Southie sticks an arm out the side of the golf cart and raises it up high, while he also raises a glass of beer to his lips.

Pat Cassidy:

WHAT'S UP, YOU [BLEEP]ING CLOWNS!?

Finally, standing on the back of the cart with the other title belt hoisted up high is "The Innovator" Brock Newbludd. Glassy eyed and grinning from ear to ear, Brock let's out a victory cry.

Brock Newbludd:

THE BOYS ARE BACK, BABY! BALLYHOOOOOO!!!

Driving in between the rows of chairs set up in front of the press conference table, Ophelia show parks the Bally-Wagon in front of the reporters.

Ophelia Sykes:

Give it up for the NEW Unified Tag Team Champions...The Saturday Night Specials!!

The gathered press give a respectful round of applause for the newly crowned champions and Craig Hamburgers jumps at the chance to fire off the first question.

Craig Hamburgers:

HELLO YES I AM VERY HAPPY WITH YOU TWO BEING THE CHAMPS CAN I COME UP AND GET FIST BUMPS THANK YOU.

Brock Newbludd:

I'll do you one better, buddy! We'll come to you and deliver that fist bump!

Pat Cassidy:

COME HERE, YOU!

Pat slides out of the cart, while Newbludd hops off the back. Things go awry for Brock though when one of his boot tassels gets hung up on the back of the cart and he lands back first on the ground. An audible "Oooooo" emits from the room but Newbludd recovers quickly, choosing to yank his foot out of his boot instead of untangling the knotted up tassel. Cassidy helps Newbludd to his feet and together they head over to Mr. Hamburgers.

Pat Cassidy:

You listen to ol' Uncle Pat, boy. He who goes to bed with itchy asshole wakes up with stinky finger. You hear?

Newbludd tousles the young man's hair and raises his fist up. Craig, seemingly ignoring Cassidy's nonsense, smiles and the two smack fists. Brock pulls his fist back in mock pain.

Brock Newbludd:

Hot damn, Craiggers! You hit harder than either one of those Luck boys!

With that, The Specials' return to their ride, ready to field the next question.

SuperDEFFan64:

THE TITLES ARE BACK WITH BROCK NEWBLUDD AND PAT CASSIDY! PUT THAT TAG TEAM WRESTLING IN MY VEINS!

Brock Newbludd:

You damn right they are, bro! Right where they belong! I dunno about puttin' anything in your veins but why don't you have a cold one on us!

Pat Cassidy:

I [BLEEP]ing love you, man. [BLEEP] yeah. In fact, I love you all.

As Cassidy smiles at the press with slightly glazed eyes, Newbludd rummages in the cart's basket and procures a can of beer. Closing one eye, he zeros in on SuperDEFFAN64 and fires the can towards him. His drunken aim is terrible and the can sails high and smashes into the back wall.

Brock Newbludd:

Well, ain't that some shit...

Pat Cassidy:

Don't worry, I got it!

Cassidy reaches into the basket and struggling to keep it all together, grabs at least six beers. He is about to just hurl them all at the press with reckless abandon when Ophelia puts her arm up and stops him. He squints at her, but she shakes her head no, and he seems to accept this, dropping the beer back into the basket and sitting back down.

Ryan Scott:

Congratulations gentlemen! After that brutal match how are you two feeling physically?

Newbludd takes a drink and shrugs his shoulders.

Pat Cassidy:

You should [BLEEP]ing see the otha guy.

Brock Newbludd:

Adrenaline and alcohol are working their magic right now, brother. I tell ya what, though. I bet we're feelin' alot better than Max and Mason!

Tim Tillinghast:

How vindicating tonight must have been for you! Where do you think this win places you in terms of your legacy as a team?

Brock Newbludd:

Timmay! Vindicated and inebriated, brother! And as far as legacy goes, shit, if you ask me...which I guess you did...I say we've only just begun.

Pat Cassidy:

I dunno about legacy, nerd, but I know the places it puts me on top of your mo...

He stops. Realizes he's sitting in a golf cart being driven by his girlfriend. Smiles sheepishly.

Pat Cassidy:

That is... good question, chum.

With a laugh, both Saturday Night Specials unleash a cracking high five that echoes throughout the room.

Reed Schwartzman:

Intense, grueling match, gentlemen. You have my thanks for that performance. Just wondering, how was it that the two of you remained in lock-step, even after the match extended beyond the first pinfall?

Pat Cassidy:

That's cause we're brothers, random guy.

Cassidy points to his head. Then points to Brock's head. Then back to his own. Then to Brock's

Pat Cassidy:

Same wavelength.

Brock Newbludd:

Yeah, new guy! We're like fuckin' jaeger pilots, bro!

Chris Chickentenders:

You dudes were straight BADASSES tonight! But once again, I'm gonna ask... can I get some VIP access to Ballyhoo? If you're worried about serving minors, it's no prob, cause my dad's a lawyer and he plays cards with a dude in excise.

Pat Cassidy:

WOAH, shelve the legal talk, poindexter. You can come in whenever you want! Let's go now! I own the [BLEEP]ing place!! I'm like a god!

Cassidy leans back, yelling toward the ceiling.

Pat Cassidy:

I AM A GOOOOOOOOOD!

Newbludd let's out a drunken cackle and starts whipping the title belt over his head in a helicopter motion. And that is apparently the only response he will be giving to that question.

Yannick Fillmore:

You two should've broken up a long time ago. Here's how I would've done it: Brock starts dating Ophelia when Pat goes dark for a while. Pat comes back and sees Brock and Ophelia are dating now, so he's going to get revenge but we switch courses hard outta nowhere and suddenly it's Pat vs. Corvo Alpha so Brock can't challenge for the UNIFIED Tag Team Titles. Then we UN-UNIFY them and then create a new Tag Team World Heavyweight Championship where Brock and Declan win. Your thoughts?

Cassidy doesn't say anything, instead he charges at Fillmore with his fists cocked. DEFsec is on him in a sec, holding the large wrestler back as Yannick recoils in fear. Cassidy lunges, but he's held tight.

Pat Cassidy:

I'll break YOU up you little [BLEEP]!!

Brock Newbludd:

Let's take him to Ballyhoo and stick his head in the deep fryer! That question had way too many words and I don't like that!

Fillmore seeks higher ground as Cassidy reluctantly allows himself to be brought back to the cart. He flips Yannik the bird one more time before sitting down and grabbing another cold one.

Deb Warenstein:

I don't have a question just yay I'm so excited yay!!!!

Newbludd's eyes go wide in excitement and he points a finger at Deb.

Brock Newbludd:

DEBBIE! My Subaru drivin', hillbilly beatin', savior! We wouldn't be here if it wasn't for YOU! I MUST REPAY YOU!

Newbludd falls off the back of the cart again but manages to stick his arms out and catch himself at the last second. Eyes wild in excitement, he grabs onto the cart and pulls himself back up. Sticking his head into the front of the Bally-Wagon, he rummages through the front compartment.

Brock Newbludd:

Where is it!? You see my GVP knife, bro!?

Cassidy shakes his head but Ophelia comes to Brock's aid as she reaches down and produces a ridiculously big knife with the letters "GVP" carved into the handle. A nervous murmur rumbles through the press room as the drunken Innovator stumbles away from the cart, knife in hand.

Brock Newbludd:

Eaaaaasy, folks...

Walking over to a confused Warenstein, he drops down to a knee in front of her and smiles.

Brock Newbludd:

Debbie. My hero. You saved The Saturday Night Specials. You're the best fan a guys could ask for...

Reaching behind his head with his free hand, Newbludd gathers his impressive mullet together in it. Then, he takes his limited edition GVP knife and much to everyone's surprise he chops it off. With a tear in his eye, he offers the clump of mullet to his biggest fan.

Brock Newbludd:

So, you don't ever forget me, Debbie...

With that, Newbludd puts the knife in his teeth and gives Warenstein a bow, nearly falling over as he does so. Overcome with emotion, Debbie clutches the hair in both hands as tears begin to fill her eyes.

Cassidy groans, as if waking from a dream.

Pat Cassidy:

Alright, this is [BLEEP]ing boring. SNS OUT BITCHES!

Cassidy urges Ophelia to hit the gas. When she refuses, he instead leaps from the cart and dramatically flings himself through the door. Knife still clutched in his teeth, Newbludd drunkenly chases after his best friend. Rolling her eyes, Sykes puts the Bally-Wagon into gear and follows her team out the door.

REZIN

Snotering, spitting, and sputtering like an unintelligible wild man, Rezin rounds the backdrop and enters the conference room. The Favoured Saints Championship hangs on his shoulder like a new, shiny patch added to his battle vest. He drops it onto the table and seats himself, grinning like a jackal as he looks over the press pool

Rezin:

Arright, gang... let's get this fire started! Miss Warenstein, would you be so kind as to kick it off by gettin' the obvious outta the way?

Deb Warenstein: *(shouting from the back)*

YOU'RE STILL AN UGGO!

Rezin nods.

Rezin:

Noted. And now with that outta the way, let's get into it. DEFtendo 64, you're up!

SuperDEFFan64:

Thank you, Rezin! Thank you for saving us from the tyranny that was Oscar Burns! He made me pay a fine every time he caught me trying to sneak into the locker room for merchandise to sell! Now that we're free from the tyrannical oppression of that Kiwi dictator, what's next for Rezin?

The Escape Artist thoughtfully scratches his beard in thought.

Rezin:

Hmm... there are a multitude of possible avenues I could go down at this point. I could use my newfound celebrity status to start a mass influencin' campaign, and get all these kids in on the "burn down your local police station challenge". I could get a life-sized statue of myself made outta cocaine, and have a wild weekend. I could take a trip to France, maybe smooth things over after accidentally settin' fire to Notre Dame a few years ago. Or maybe I can even pursue my longtime childhood dream of purchasin' a nuclear submarine, and settin' about World War Tres.

He smiles wryly.

Rezin:

But ya know, Supes, I think the path I'm gonna follow is the one I've been on since I came back: usin' this belt to take down the REST of Vae Victis! Who's next? Lil' Nicky Feelmore

Yannick Fillmore:

Ummm you were totally the wrong call to win. You need to go through MOAR hard times.

Rezin:

My dude, I assure you, I go through PLENTY of The Hard Times! Readin' at least five articles a day! Yeah, ya heard me right: READING! Been a regular subscriber for years, I tell ya! Tell me, 'Nick, have ya read this one? "Pretentious Douchebag Gives Top Ten Reasons Why His Wife Left Him". Or how bout, "Opinion: If You Look Around the Presser Event and Don't See the Poser, You're the Poser." Next question, let's go with Mr. ROMEO SIERRA, as they say in the Nato Phoentic Alphabet!

Reed Schwartzman:

Rezin, in the final exchanged of that contest, did you--

Rezin:

WAIT-WAIT-WAITASEC... who the hell are you?

Reed Schwartzman:

...um, Reed Schwartzman?

Rezin stares at him intently.

Reed Schwartzman:

Of Dropkick Digest?

Rezin stares at him intently.

Reed Schwartzman:

I'm sorry, I'm new.

Rezin:

AH... that explains it. Well buddy, sorry to do this to ya, but I was referrin' to the *original* guy with the initials "R-S". Which would be Mr. Scott. So if ya could...?

Reed Schwartzman:

Oh, um... okay.

Schwartzman awkwardly retakes his seat with Ryan Scott comes to the podium.

Ryan Scott:

Congratulations Rezin! Now that you have stripped Oscar of his power, who is next on your list of Vae Victis members?

Rezin:

Well, there's a fine selection to choose from, but I'm pretty sure I made my intentions clear in the closin' moments there as I held up this belt, looked into the camera, and called my shot.

Rezin finds the camera posted in the back of the room.

Rezin:

BUTCHER VICTORIOUS your days are numbered, bruh! Next question, how about Mr. Tillin'hast.

Tim Tillinghast:

This has to put any doubts you've ever had about your ability to bed. You sir, are a star. You sir, belong in the main event. You've got the Favoured Saints Championship. As you alluded to, the current SOHer is Henry Keyes. Are we on course for a final confrontation?

The Goat Bastard facepalms.

Rezin:

Shit, wait, KEYES! FUCK! Forget that last answer! KEYES! YES! Obviously. Geez, Butch Vic? The fuck was I thinkin'?

He shakes his head.

Rezin:

Damb this Four-Twentification and the tricks it plays on my mind... anyway, YES, TIM! We are INDEED headin' for a FINAL CONFRONTATION! An ULTIMATE BATTLE! A DUEL of DESTINIES! Your own dearly beloved bong-rippin', back-flippin', acid-trippin', ICE-BERG TIPPIN' Goat Bastard against that DIRTY, ROTTEN CYCLOPEAN SCOUNDREL of the seas and sky...

He raises his clenched fists into the air and shakes them with rage.

Rezin:

THAT MUTHERFUGGER HEHNNHERRY GGGHHHHCCCKKKKKKKKEEEEEYYYYEEESS!!

His fists come down and pound the table.

Rezin:

Of all the crazy sum'bishes I've scrapped against here in the ol' red and black, ain't anybody seen me and trusted me like HANK did! He was my one and only FRIEND in this place! And what happened? That skeevy QUEEN got in his ear, and then he kicked this black and shriveled and barely-hangin'-on heart of mine straight into the trash!

In a fury, he shakes his head.

Rezin:

Hank was my DUDE! My BRO! My MAN! And he tossed me aside like SHIT on his VICTORIAN-ERA BOOT so he could wear pink and be a part of the Cool Kids Club! After I gave him my BELT back at DEFCON 2021, humbly acknowledging that HE was the PUNKER of the two of us! I ain't lettin' anybuddy just WALK AWAY from a betrayal like that!

He snatches up the Favoured Saints Championship and drapes it back over his shoulder.

Rezin:

But that's where THIS belt comes in! Four wins, and I bank my shot against the Southern Heritage Championship! Four wins, and HAANNRRRRYYY KUUUOOOEEEEYYEEYYEEYYEEESSS AIN'T GOT ANYWHERE ELSE TO RUN!!

He suddenly realizes that in the midst of his monologue, he somehow came to stand upon the table. Clearing his throat, he returns to terra firma and retakes his seat.

Rezin:

Uhh, anyway, let's go with Craigy.

Craig Hamburgers:

hello yes how hard was it to wrestle in two pay per views so close together in three matches total are you ok, thank you

Rezin scoffs.

Rezin:

Naw, kiddo, ain't anything hard 'bout! I'd wrestle erry night if I could!

He suddenly gets serious.

Rezin:The *real* hard part... is errything in between.

♪ "Laura Palmer's Theme" by Angelo Badalamenti ♪

As music seems to come in out of thin air, Rezin's face becomes lost in a thousand-mile stare.

Rezin:

The idle gaps of silence, sittin' at home with nothing to do but feel the pain coursing through my body. Nothin' to do about *think*. About what I'm doin'. About where I'm at. About what it all means in the end. Thinkin' about the absurd lengths you go to to feed a need for ESCAPE. Wonderin' where and how it all ends... and what I'd really have left to show for it all. There ain't anybuddy there to tell me what's right, and what's solid! All I have are the thoughts racin' through my head to keep me company! It's the SILENCE that's hard, Craig... the dreaded SILENCE that STILL HAUNTS ME! I DON'T WANNA THINK in that silence! I JUST WANNA BE! CRAIG! CRAAAIG!! CAN'T YA

UNDERSTAND WHAT I'M SAYIN'?! I CAN'T TAKE THE LONELINESS ANY LONGER! I JUST WANNA **BE**, MY BOY! I JUST WANNA **BE**!

The music subsides, as do his theatrics. The young Hamburgers is wan after witnessing the Goat Bastard's deep dive into existential dread.

Rezin:

Oof... sorry. Again, I blame the Four-Twentitudeness. Chris, ya got anything?

Chris Chickentenders:

No, but, um... my dad says you still owe him his retainer. He said

Rezin:

Well, Chris, just tell Mr. Chickie-Tendie that I'll square up with him first thing tomorrow, as I just so happen to sittin' pretty well financially right now!

He says with a grin... and then immediately scowls.

Rezin:

I mean, not that I NEED to be well-off financially! I still hate Capitalism, errybuddy! HEAR THAT?! CAPITALISM SUCKS!! I just, ya know, need money for weed and cheeseburgers and wrestlin' lessons and shit. Okay, anyway, where does that leave us?

Reed Schwartzman:

Um... do I get a question?

Rezin:

...who are ya again?

Reed Schwartzman:

I'm Reed Schwartzman from the Dropkick Digest. And my question is related to your match.

The Escape Artist balks.

Rezin:

"Related to the MATCH?" Bruh, are ya like a REAL journalist? Ya gotta get with it, my man! This is a WRESTLING PRESSER! We don't ask match-related questions here! Gonna give people the impression that this is an actual SPORT or something!

Reed Schwartzman:

I'm... sorry?

Rezin:

Okay, well ya gotta catchphrase at least! But I expect ya to be bringin' me REAL questions next time though, Shlotzma!

Reed Schwartzman:

Schwartzman.

Rezin:

Whatever! I'm lettin' off the hook for tonight, rookie! But right now, I gotta jet, cause I gotta spliff that's longer than my arm and a callgirl that looks like Kat Dennings waitin' for me back at the hotel, and I'm fixin' to destroy the both of 'em before this night is through! Keep it cheesy, ya scum!

Rezin waves as he stands up, readjusts the newly won Favoured Saints Championship, and exits the ring while firing

up a joint.

NATHAN EYE

Next up in the press conferences is Nathan Eye. He has been taped up and patched up following his technical victory over JJ Dixon.

Nathan Eye:

Greetings, my Eye-luminati! Every one of you who believed in me made this victory possible. You may ask questions when you are ready. Let's go to Ryan Scott.

Ryan Scott:

Brutal match out there Nathan, What has Davine told you about your battle scars?

Nathan Eye:

Excellent question. Ryan, I am no doctor ... but if I was, I'd be so good at it. I'd tell my patients to really listen to your body. Don't be afraid to ask for help if you need it. Don't be afraid to tell your body to take an extra day of rest. Scars remain, but they are symbols of the things we've overcome. The scars on my shoulder show that I spent *fourteen months* on the shelf to get back to you, the DEFIANCE Wrestling Faithful and my Eye-luminati! Tonight, any scars left from this match are a stark reminder that JJ Dixon is far, far inferior to me. Thank you, Ryan.

Next is Reed Schwartzman.

Reed Schwartzman:

Are you happy that your victory came by way of stipulation, or would you have rather accepted the loss?

Nathan Eye:

The rules that were put in place by Teri Melton were broken by JJ Dixon. If he can't follow his own rules, that's his fault and not mine. A win is a win, Mr. Schwartzman!

Tim Tillinghast:

Why are you the way you are?

Nathan Eye:

Death changes things, Tim. I used to be a doe-eyed blue chipper that thought the world was black and white. But again after *fourteen months* and *two shoulder surgeries* and *a staph infection* ...

There are lots of groans in the room for yet another reminder of his injuries. Tim Tillinghast is doodling pictures in his notepad while Nathan Eye is speaking.

Nathan Eye:

I learned the world was whatever I wanted to make it, Tim. I decided that Eyes on the Prize was my new mantra! I conceptualized, I actualized and I realized that I can do anything I want! Nobody gave me a snowball's chance to win this match and who's got the dub when it's all said and done? Overcoming adversity makes me the way I am, Tim. Thank you!

SuperDEFFan64:

I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU WON... I mean, can you autograph my book?

Nathan Eye:

No. Next question.

Craig Hamburgers:

hello yes if you were nathan nose would you have a nose on your forehead, thank you.

Nathan Eye:

I should hope not, son, but let me tell you about a time I was in a horrible automobile accident where that very thing

could have happened! My nose could have b

More groans erupt from the room.

Nathan Eye:

Okay okay another time then!

Chris Chickentenders:

Hi, yeah, uh, how do I say it again? Is it "EYE is that guy" or "YOU is that guy?" Or shouldn't it be "You ARE that guy?" Could you clear this up for me? Thanks, dude.

Nathan Eye:

I sure can, young Eye-luminati member! See it is a clever play on words where Eye is substituted for the letter "I" so it sounds like your first example is the correct one. Eye – as in my last name – is that guy!" and if you buy Natty Eyce's new book ...

Natty Eyce reaches under his table and pulls out a new book.

Nathan Eye:

Part one of many in my ongoing autobiography! *251 Pounds of Pure Perseverance: Nathan Eye Eyes the Prize!* Buy this book Mr. Chickentenders and you can be that guy like Eye! I'll be adding chapters very soon on how I stopped JJ Dixon from murdering me with a chain. Pre-orders now on defiancewrestling.com! Anyone else!

Yannick Fillmore:

How do you feel about working your next program with Jay Harvey?

Nathan Eye:

I have no idea who that is ... but pre-order my book and we'll talk! Remember! Eyes on the Prize and you can win anything you want!

Nathan Eye grabs his book and throws it on the table in front of Yannick Fillmore before he leaves the conference room.

TERI MELTON

The lights in the press conference room go off completely. Then, a spotlight glares with Teri Melton in her resplendent silver hair/gown combination sitting behind the desk before the lighting adjusts back to normal. Teri has her nose turned upwards as it's clear she has a lot on her mind.

Teri Melton:

Thank you so much, everyone. The reason why I am here tonight despite our unfortunate loss is to address my adoring public! Your Uncut Gems had two goals for the evening -- one was to defeat Nathan Eye, which did not occur. And the second was for me to do as I always do. Since my arrival in DEFIANCE, I have stolen wallets. I have stolen hearts. And, most of all, I have stolen the spotlight! I am not an athlete. I am a woman of glamour. But I still ascended to the top rope -- a place I have never ascended, while wearing \$1,000 Christian Louboutin heels! -- and jumped off to put Nathan Eye through a table! It was a magical moment... but, sadly, an unfortunate one as it inadvertently led to JJ Dixon's loss. But, alas, even with that -- my adoring public is already clamoring for a rematch! But I... (Teri gulps.) I do have an update as to why "The Special Attraction" is not here with us tonight. He has been rushed to the local hospital to have his left shoulder looked at and attended to --

Jamie Sawyer:

On that note, I heard that JJ Dixon refused to let you go to the hospital with him, instead going with his girlfriend Caitlyn Kinsey, and that JJ had some harsh words for you after the match regarding your actions and need to 'steal the spotlight.' Can you elaborate? Teri fidgets in her seat with rare nervousness.

Teri Melton:

You might very well think that but I couldn't possibly comment. But I will state that things in partnerships frequently do become heated, especially after unfortunate losses and when injured. And, sadly, regrettable things are unfortunately said when there's a third party involved, especially one with a growing... influence. But I can assure you, Your Uncut Gems will regroup and will reclaim our momentum!

Yannick Fillmore:

Teri. Dream matches for you... GO!

Teri Melton:

Your Uncut Gems do not have any dream matches, Mr. Fillmore. It's our desire to become someone's dream match. But, that said, I am thrilled beyond delight that Tabitha Kinsey has arrived here in DEFIANCE. If you are not the wrestling historian you should be, Ms. Kinsey was the greatest champion of her era in the 1980s and early 1990s, before wrestling became as widely broadcast as it is today. Ms. Kinsey was my mentor when I was starting to learn the business. I am glad she has returned, not just because it's time the industry lauded her for her accomplishments, but so I can show her the lessons I proudly learned! While her granddaughter Caitlyn and myself may have some... well, disagreements about how much she should be involved with JJ Dixon... it is truly a dream come true that Tabitha has returned.

Tim Tillinghast:

Tough loss. Dixon wrestled his heart out and lost on a technicality. How do you go back to the drawing board now, Ms. Melton? Also, call me.

Teri Melton:

I do owe you a phone call, Mr. Tillinghast. If you are in Hollywood over the next few weeks, lunch and dinner... and perhaps more... is on me! As far as the drawing board, Your Uncut Gems will refocus ourselves going forward, and making sure that some voices are kept out of the conversation.

SuperDEFFan64:

I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU LOST... can you autograph my vintage Teri Melton poster?

Teri Melton:

Yes, Mr. SuperDEFFan64, if that is indeed your real name. I always have time to sign autographs for my adoring

public!

Chris Chickentenders:

Hi, yeah, uh, why isn't JJ this BADASS like, ALL the time? I think you should have a dog collar on him all the time!

Teri Melton:

Uhm... no comment, Mr. Chickentenders.

Reed Schwartzman:

I think many of us would agree, that was a very brutal contest. What prompted someone like you, Ms. Melton, to put yourself into harm's way and get involved?

Teri Melton:

Because Your Uncut Gems are not just about winning matches, Mr. Schwartzmen. We are about stealing the spotlight. As I've said before -- while this promotion may be called DEFIANCE, I have another name for it -- MINE! And what I mean by that, it's my -- I mean, our -- goal to be the biggest stars in DEFIANCE. That requires more than just having brutal matches. That requires more than winning matches. That requires taking drastic measures to create lasting memories for my adoring public! And, years from now, what they'll remember most from this night is The Dive From The Great Dame of DEFIANCE!

Ryan Scott:

Are you done hogging the glory from Dixon yet Teri? You would think after tonight and you costing him his match you would rethink your spot by his side.

Teri coldly stares at Ryan.

Teri Melton:

I don't have time for any more of these questions. My adoring public awaits, and I also must go visit Mr. Dixon as well!

Teri snarls at Ryan before quickly regaining her composure and walking off, her head held high.

TITANES FAMILIA

Sitting at the table now are the members of Titanes Familia, each with a bottle of water at the table next to them. From left to right, Dan Leo James, Minute, Uriel Cortez and Titaness all get ready for the questions to be fired their way.

Reed Schwartzman:

Congratulations tonight, everyone. The sequence of events leading up to that finish was quite amazing. Explain how the four of you have such synergy with each other?

Uriel looks at the rest of the group.

Uriel Cortez:

The magic of family. Family will always carry one another and the rest of that shit will fall into place...

Dan Leo James:

Awwww. Thanks, Giant Dad.

Uriel leers over at Dan and shakes his head.

Uriel Cortez:

Okay, it's the fact that we study. We watch tape. We train together. We want to be the best in tag team division or in singles. That doesn't come by resting on your laurels.

Minute:

Si. Everything we do... Eso es familia. Tonight showed me I do have a place in the group and I'm happy to have learned from it.

Next up... Tim Tillinghast.

Tim Tillinghast:

It fills my cold heart with joy that everything is okay in Titanes land. Minute, I won't ask for specifics as to your next steps. No spoiler. I guess I have two questions: 1.) Uriel and Titaness, with Minute doing his own thing, is there a renewed focus on the tag belts for you? and 2.) Aren't you all overdue for a name change?

Uriel Cortez:

Second question first, Tim... I've been told by DEFIANCE management they will not allow any more name changes because they are tired of making outdated merchandise for us and they will dock it directly from our checks. So no messing with our money. Titanes Familia now and forever, so sayeth the checkbooks.

Titaness raises a hand.

Titaness:

I can fill in the first question... yeah, we do want the titles back. The Lucky Sevens took those belts from us and we've never had a chance to get them back... but this is a family effort. We'll touch on that in a little bit, though, but the bottom line is no matter right now who the champs are... you got those belts, then we're going for these belts.

Yannick Fillmore:

When are you four finally going to agree on things?

Minute stares blankly at the rest of the crew.

Minute:

Aren't you the amigo that keeps fantasy booking Uriel Cortez to run over everyone and give him all the titles?

Uriel Cortez:

Give that man the book.

Craig Hamburgers:

hello yes your family is awesome and how did that happen, thank you.

Dan Leo James:

Craig Hamburgers! I love your reviews! Especially that one match you called totally awesome cause it was! I hope DEFIANCE paid for all your therapy when Alvaro de Vargas nearly murdered Henry K...

Immediately, Minute reaches over and covers Dan's microphone.

Minute:

Cállate!

Titaness:

We worked at it, Craig! Like you've seen, families fight, but families grow, too. Nobody here is perfect, but we try.

SuperDEFFan64:

Question for all of you! Minute, can you possibly autograph a mask for your boy, SuperDEFFan64?! Uriel and Titaness... with you as the tag team, where does that leave Dan Leo James? Will he also be a singles wrestler like Minute?

Minute:

Si... I can get you autographed mask after this show. I'm in a good mood tonight.

SuperDEFFan64 stands up.

SuperDEFFan64:

And what about you, Dan? Where does that leave you?

Uriel and Titaness then turn over to Dan.

Titaness:

Dan, we wanted to talk to you about that.

Dan Leo James:

Yeah?

Uriel Cortez:

Yeah. You're as much a part of this team as anybody else. We want those Unified Tag Team Titles and we want you to team with me and Titaness. Any two of us can represent the tag team and we want you there when we get those titles back. Familia Rules.

Dan Leo James:

You're darn right this Familia rules!

Uriel doesn't even bother to correct him as Dan jumps out of his seat and hugs Uriel around his big chest as he's seated. As the press room continues noting, something jogs Minute's memory.

Minute: [looking at SuperDEFFan64]

Si... wait... aren't you that tonto who was hiding near the dumpster earlier today?

SuperDEFFan64 stands up and walks out of the press room... but not before he's heard running into a trash can.

SuperDEFFan64: [outside the press room]

OOOOWWWW! SHIT! MY KNEE! I'M GONNA... ow! Wait! I saw Oscar Burns spit his gum into this trash can! Jackpot!

The rest of the press pool try their absolute best to ignore him.

Chris Chickentenders:

Yeah hi, you guys would all be more badass if the tiny dude with a mask was huge and named whatever is Spanish for hour--Hour-o?--but anyway, if you guys are all such good friends, then why did the one big dude pick up other big dude and throw him at the big dudes they were fighting? Please explain this for me. Even part-time private investigator of my BADASS genius can't figure this out.

Dan Leo James looks at Chris Chickentenders proudly.

Dan Leo James:

That was all my idea! I was like, "Hey, Uriel! I'm a big person! Throw me at these other big persons!" And you know what? It totally worked! We showed Team HOSS who's the real best big persons tonight! And that, Mister Chickentenders, is how we remain badass!

Uriel Cortez:

That's really all I can do in that ring, honestly. I chop people or I throw people at other people, so it worked. I think we're gonna call it here, but to recap... Minute. Singles Titan. Danny is gonna team with me and Titaness full time. We're coming for gold!

Dan Leo James:

Hey, Chris, did you ever figured out who ran over... OW OW OW!

Titaness grabs the ear of Dan.

Titaness:

Stop. Now.

BRONSON BOX

All murmur and chatter stops as the doors to the conference room open with a louder than normal bang. Already showered and changed into his classic brown with gray pinstripe three piece suit. He quickly makes his way towards the table. With a quick tug on his shirt sleeves and a deep throat clearing, room silencing grunt Bronson Box stares hot daggers at the collection of “journalists” sitting across from him.

Bronson Box: *[nodding at the first in line]*

Proceed, gentlemen.

Reed Schwartzman:

Congratulations tonight. Mr. Box, as it relates to the match, that was quite a struggle at the end as you attempted to lock in the Boston Massacre. Does it worry you that a future opponent may one day have some of your techniques scouted? How do you continue to evolve in today's wrestling landscape?

Bronson Box:

It's no big secret Bronson Box has always had a bit of trouble *outside* of DEFIANCE Wrasslin'... my career, the fact I *have* a career is due to the my time right here. My time here from start to [censored] finish was, bloody hell... my *blood* is mixed in with the blasted foundation. Day one. Ya' feel me, lad? Day bloody one. This particular landscape is inescapably mine. I am a creature *of* it. It may evolve, and the wrestling world at large around that... but DEFIANCE is where Bronson Box thrives... and makes history. Always has been, always will be.

Tim Tillinghast:

Sir, no disrespect: you are clearly, as always, a tough bastard. But is there any chance you feel like time is catching up with you? Don't get me wrong, you looked great out there... but how much is really left in the tank?

Bronson Box: *[a curt sniff as he leans forward]*

I'm just shy of my fiftieth birthday. There's yer' wee headline. As fer' my tank it's *girthy* my boy and just simply brimming with pain and sufferin' fer' all that wish it. Next [censored] question... you... whatever you are, go. Now.

SuperDEFFan64:

Um, right right... Welcome back! How would you compare your match with The D this time around compared to your last tenure in the company when you also returned against The D?

Bronson Box:

That seems like more of a question for him, aint it? I think I saw him just now comin' around back in Doc Iris' room backstage...

The comment draws some laughs from the room. Boxer points at the next question asker in the pecking order.

Chris Chickentenders:

Sweet mustache, dude! Just wondering, now that you're back, can we expect DEFIANCE to be fucking BADASS again? Cause I got a list of wimps whose butts I'd love to see you kick.

Bronson Box:

Oh, from what I hear there's a veritable *host* of ham and egggers running around here claimin' to represent the return to DEFIANCE's “glory days”... cute little faction name all in latin. The latest bunch of self righteous bastards in a long forgotten line trying to either “harken back” or flat out lay claim to what Bronson Box *built*. I'll promise you this lad, this ain't some sort of hall of [censored] fame victory lap. See boy... ol' Boxer's got a little list all his own.

Craig Hamburgers:

hello yes why does it say ask at your own risk are you going to hurt a child or something and follow-up why are you back, thank you

Bronson Box:

Please, it's been a good decade or more since I did any *real* kidnapping...

Another legit laugh from the room.

Bronson Box:

I'm back because there is a whole host of individuals walkin' around here who are in desperate need of a DEF history lesson. It so happens to be a subject I wrote the bloody book on.

Yannick Fillmore:

Hi, Yannick Fillmore. I'm a big critic here and since you've been out for a while I'm wondering why not change up your look a little? Do you dance? Sing? How about some purple ring gear? I'm also thinking earrings. You'd kill in earrings.

Without a word spoken or expletive uttered, Bronson calmly stands and steps away from the table. With the poise of a gentleman he walks towards the bullpen, sitting down in the empty chair beside the now visibly shaken Yannick Fillmore. Bronson lets the tension really settle in before resting his catchers mid sized hand on the back of Yannick's neck.

Bronson Box:

There was a time, lad, that I'd have put you through that table right there fer' a comment like that... understand? There was a time I was so bloody unhinged I nearly closed the *doors* of this company. Laid hands on a wee civilian fer' poppin' off when they should have minded better.

The true Ace of DEFIANCE has leaned in real close to the side of Fillmore's face for that last bit. You can tell Boxer is squeezing juuuuust hard enough to make Yannick *very* uncomfortable. Box sways the man back and forth a little as he continues on.

Bronson Box:

Lucky fer' you I'm a little older and a little wiser with a lot left to do around here. Now. Let's continue answering your last compatriot's question a bit there since you don't seem to have anything at all to offer these proceedings besides your sad little attempt to be *cute*. Aye?

The "critic" nods best he can muster under the circumstances.

Bronson Box:

I am back to dive in, lad. I'm back to, win lose or draw, upset the established order. Shamefully I've not really followed the product as closely as I should have. So I'm looking forward to making some new friends... as well as reacquainting myself with a few old ones. I wanna' break some shite, boy. I want to be a real [censored] problem for folks again.

The Original DEFIANT aggressively narrows his one good eye.

Bronson Box:

Any more [censored] questions... *critic*?

Craig Hamburgers:

holy crap, dude peed himself, check it out my guys

Indeed. Trapped under the twin weight of Boxer's paw and his sheer presence has caused Yannick Fillmore to literally wet himself. Bronson gives the poor bastard a firm clap on the back before standing and simply making his way towards the conference room door.

Bronson Box: [looking back over his shoulder]

We'll see you lot in Providence.

DEX JOY

Dex Joy is now at the conference room table after being checked out by the DEFmed staff just moments after his match with Conor Fuse.

Dex Joy:

All right pallies, fire away with the Qs about Dexy Baby's hard-earned W. Let's go!

Tim Tillinghast:

Am I looking at the next FIST of DEFIANCE?

Dex Joy is delighted to see Tim Tillinghast.

Dex Joy:

Tim-may! Good to hear from you again my friend! I'm gonna answer your question the best way I can ... kiddos, mute your ears.

Craig Hamburgers does. Chris Chickentenders doesn't.

Dex Joy:

You bet your sweet bippy you are, Tim. They tell you that you should never guarantee anything in professional wrestling. And maybe I shouldn't do that ... after what Corvo Alpha almost took away from me all those months ago, I've been given a second chance to come back and do what Dexy Baby does best and that is ignite the fires of the DEFIANCE Wrestling Faithful who want to see that title be relieved from the wrestling nazis called Vae Victis. Tonight's win over Conor Fuse gives me the chance to do just that! Great question. Who's up next?

Ryan Scott:

Hell of a match out there Dex! Congratulations, who would you have wanted to face in that ring next Alvaro De Vargas or Lindsay Troy?

Dex Joy:

Lindsay Troy. No question. Not to disrespect Alvaro de Vargas, but if anybody here in DEFIANCE Wrestling should get the pleasure of closing that loud mouth for more than three seconds, it should be Yours Truly, Ry-no. Bonnie Tyler belted it out that we need a hero! Not another loud-ass numb-nuts running this place with the FIST of DEFIANCE! Besides, I really want to hear the endless amounts of "JOY! TROY!" on all the marquees! Rhyming, pally! What else you guys got for me?

Reed Schwartzman:

Congratulations tonight, Dex. That was a battle to be remembered. How do you think you managed to survive that I Trigger? At what point did the moment occur to you, "It's now or never"?

Joy taps the side of his skull with his finger.

Dex Joy:

New guy! Welcome, Reed. Good question and ... whistles yeah that one rung Dexy Baby's bells. I didn't even get the chance to see it coming and the fact that he tried to use Malak Garland's finisher against me? That's when you effed up, boy. At that point, I knew it was time to swing for the fences cause I wasn't going to be able to take another one of those if he decided to go for it. And let me speak to my opponent. Put this quote out there, press pallies ...

Dex stands up out of his seat.

Dex Joy:

Conor Fuse! Tonight, you gave me possibly the best damn match of my career! Conor ... you should be where I am. You need to wake up, smell that caffi-nene and stop playing second fiddle to that snowflake and start reaching down deep within and figure out who you want to be. All right, who's up next?

SuperDEFFan64:

YOU WON! YOU WON! YOU WON! SCORE ONE FOR THE FAT GUYS! When can we expect you to win the FIST and score one for fat guys everywhere to show we matter?!

Dex Joy:

SuperDEFFan of the DEFFan Fam! Pally, I got told the main event of Maximum DEFIANCE in July is where Dexy Baby will be granted his title shot. I've waited this long, so three short months won't be long. This journey that Dexy Baby has taken and that you have all taken with Dexy Baby is years in the making. I ain't trying to "finish a story" or "face enough adversity" or whatever people in this position are supposed to do. I've faced more than enough of both of those things. I'm here to help DEFIANCE Wrestling move into a new chapter ... no, wait! A new book! I'm gonna call that book "How Dex Joy stomped Vae Victis Down for Good ... and other home gardening tips." Water your ficuses, people. Don't need to be Marie Kondo to know that's just common sense. Next?

Chris Chickentenders:

Yeah hi, are you proof that the only way for a fatty to get chicks is to just be a popular wrestler?

Dex Joy:

I'm here to give hope to fatties everywhere, Chicky T. For every naysayer like Lindsay Troy and Sonny Silver who don't have anything better than fat jokes from In Living Color in the 1990's, there's gonna be a guy like me telling them to pucker up and kiss the fattest, whitest part of this fine keister. They don't care how much weight I've lost. They don't care how many miles I've ran. They're so far up each other's asses, they can't see past these fine rolls. And that's why I've already won. Anyone else with a Q?

Craig Hamburgers:

hello yes i hope you become fist one day but please don't beat lindsay troy to do it, thank you.

Dex Joy:

Craig Hamburgers! My man! It's up to Alvaro de Vargas pally. If he don't get the job done, then I don't have a choice but to break a few hearts if Lindsay Troy is still the champ.

Yannick Fillmore:

God you are awful. So is Conor. I slept the entire match.

Dex Joy:

But you are still first in my heart, Yannick! Bring the hate, haters, and I'll drink it all down and piss out that positivity! Good night, everybody! Dexy Baby's head is still throbbing.

THE FLYING FRENCHIE

Freshly showered, resplendent in a gunmetal gray suit, black shirt and a shiny red tie, The Flying Frenchie, Pierre Delacroix, takes the open chair at the press conference table. With a gleam in his eye, he squares his beret.

The Flying Frenchie:

Let me start by expressing my gratitude to DEFIANCE and to ze Fait'ful, for welcoming me as a guest. As ever, I am proud of my efforts in ze ring, and while I came up short against Malak Garland tonight, it was not because I did not put fort' a full effort. I gave it my all, I came in wit' a strategy which I believed would carry ze day, and I was outwitted. Before DEFCON, I told ze world zat Malak Garland's skills at subterfuge were subpar, and tonight he proved me wrong. No shame in zat.

Wit' zat out of ze way, I am ready to take your questions.

SuperDEFFan64:

FLYING FRENCHIE! OH, MY GOD, OH, MY GOD, OH, MY GOD! YOU WERE MY FAVORITE IN THE FWO! WOULD YOU LIKE ME TO HOLD DOWN MALAK GARLAND WHILE YOU PUNCH? Also, do you have an extra beret or six I can sel.... give to young, starving orphans who have never owned wrestling merchandise of their own.

The Flying Frenchie:

I certainly could have used your help holding Garland down not too long ago. As for ze merchandise, mon ami, I've been doing zis too long to just give it away. But it was a nice try.

Yannick Fillmore:

I know you're a legend but it's time to hang it up, no?

The Flying Frenchie:

I completely agree wit' your first statement, but disagree on your second. Am I as good as I was at my peak? Non. It's true zat I'm not quite as quick as I once was, and I certainly feel ze matches more ze next morning, but I still have enough fight in me.

Reed Schwartzman:

My question, Mister... um, French? My question relates to the closing moments of that match. Do you think, had the interference not occurred, you could have escaped Malak's FOMO submission attempt?

Pierre lowers his head in thought for a moment.

The Flying Frenchie:

I want to tell you "yes". I want to say "I was just getting my second wind". Maybe if it had come earlier in ze bout, I could have powered out, but at zat point...?

Non, I've changed my mind, I could absolutely have escaped ze FOMO, likely directly into a successful pinning predicament. Curse zat Garland and his underhanded tactics!

Tim Tillinghast:

Tough loss, but from what I saw out there, you still got it. DEFIANCE could you use you. Have you signed a deal yet? Also, what are your thoughts on the current crop of talent?

The Flying Frenchie:

Ah, a chance to say somet'ing positive! I am happy to announce zat my management and DEFIANCE were able to agree to terms in ze lead up to DEFCON, and zat I officially signed ze contract before my match. I won't get into ze details, but I'll be around for a little longer. As to ze current crop of talent? Zis is quite ze locker room. Most of ze men and women here I only know th'rough reputation, but zat reputation was enough to get me to come back to ze US after nearly fifteen years wrestling exclusively in Europe.

Craig Hamburgers:

hello yes have you encountered other flyers from other countries in europe, i bet there's a flying finlandman or something thank you

The Flying Frenchie:

Ze Finns have traditionally been very ground based in zeir wrestling. I once wrestled Leaping Laine, a legend amongst ze Finns. Ze man had a hell of a dropkick, but zat was ze apex of his elevation. I have wrestled ze Sailing Spaniard, ze Gliding German and ze Bouncing Belgian. You are welcome to believe zat I am undefeated against all of zem, so long as you don't look up my records online. Next?

Chris Chickentenders:

Yeah hi, is it true that French chicks don't shave their pits?

The Flying Frenchie:

I am glad we have reached ze real questions. It's definitely true zat some of my nation's women, renowned for zeir beauty, grace, charm and lovemaking, have different grooming standards zan what you would consider ze norm. Still ot'ers maintain what we might consider a more modern look when it comes to zeir underarms. Some day, when you first know a woman's warm embrace, you may find yourself more focused on ze way t'eir arms wrap around you, and less on what's under said arms.

I believe zat's my time. As I told Monsieur Tillinghast, you will definitely be seeing me again. Good night.

VAE VICTIS

VAE VICTIS

The premier group of DEFIANCE athletes saunters into the room following the conclusion of the FIST of DEFIANCE match. Someone grabbed Lindsay Troy a VV zip-up on the way to this shindig, and she's got that on over her ring gear with the title belt over her shoulder. The rest of the lads are in street clothes. Everyone takes a seat and Sonny Silver starts things off. He's still wearing a partial bandage over his face and is nursing the kick from Alvaro late in the match, but he's victorious.

Sonny Silver:

What'd we say, fuckers? What'd we say? Henry Keyes! STILL the Southern Heritage Champion. Lindsay Troy! STILL your FIST of DEFIANCE! Alvaro brought it, but we brought it right the fuck back! Now... fire away, talking heads, because we've got a victory party to get to.

Yannick Fillmore:

Hello, I've been told there are no limits to the questions I can ask but I only have one. Vae Victis vs. 24K in a royal rumble match. Who wins and why is this a solid idea?

Kerry Kuroyama:

What's a "royal rumble" match?

Lindsay Troy:

Maybe it's like a Murder Rumble.

Sonny Silver:

Ignore that dumbass. Somebody ELSE fire away.

Den Warenstein:

Hiiiiii my question is for Archer. So does this, like, make you and Kaz auto members of Vae Victis or, like, junior members or, like, members in training? Also, love the fit, it's totes fire, no pun intended Sonny, okay, don't be mad.

Archer Silver:

One night only deal, Deb. This fit is great, though, right? Drip for days! But I was just here to cover for Unc tonight so he could sneak out if he needed to!

Sonny rubs a hand through the hair of Archer like a proud father... or uncle, in this case.

Sonny Silver:

Attaboy! Who's next?

SuperDEFFan64:

ALL OF YOU WON... except you, Oscar. Sorry.

Oscar is seething while Butcher tries to calm him down.

SuperDEFFan64:

With Vae Victis still holding the top championships, do you see anyone else stepping up to go after the Favoured Saints Championship? And what about the Unified Tag Team Titles?

Butcher Victorious:

BUTCH VIC... will use this stick. Rezin got LUCKY... and took the title. And might have cost Oscar a lot of money.

Oscar Burns:

GAGGHGGHGHGHGH!

Butcher Victorious:

HE'LL GET HIS ASS KICKED! WE AREN'T DONE WITH THAT BITCH!

Kuroyama noticeably nods slowly in agreement.

Tim Tillinghast:

Lindsay Troy and Henry Keyes, congratulations. But my spider sense is tingling: you have some rough competition on the horizon in Dex Joy and potentially Rezin. You've both been around long enough to know that no run of dominance lasts forever.

Lindsay Troy:

You're right, Uncle Timmy; no run of dominance lasts forever. But I'm not ready to let this one end yet. Dex Joy is tomorrow's concern, not tonight's. Tonight, I'm going to celebrate meeting Alvaro de Vargas where he was at, playing his game, and winning. I'm going to celebrate making him think twice about throwing any more fireballs for awhile. I'm going to celebrate returning the favor for what he and Junior did to Sonny. And most of all, I'm going to celebrate knowing that if I'm willing to do that Alvaro, what do you think I'm willing to do to Dex at Maximum DEFIANCE?

Tomorrow, I'll start concentrating on Dex Joy. And that's going to be a problem he's not ready to deal with.

Henry Keyes:

Hey, dummy. If, SOMEHOW, Rezin finds a way to keep his eye on the ball for three months straight for the first time in his life and, SOMEHOW, Rezin finds a way to defend his Favoured Saints championship enough times to earn the right to lose to me? Look at the scoreboard, Timmy. When Henry Keyes faces Rezin, Henry Keyes wins more often than not. I've proved it over and over for the better part of the year, and the crushing defeat of the longest-reigning Southern Heritage champion in history proves it once again - I am the GREATEST SOHER IN THE HISTORY OF THIS COMPANY. There's nothing Rezin can do to stop that.

Tim Tillinghast

One last question. Kerry Kuroyama: Why aren't you the leader of this group?

Kuroyama arches an eyebrow.

Kerry Kuroyama:

Really? Well, I appreciate the rub as always, Tim, but the primary reason why I'm not the leader is because Vae Victis really *has* no leader.

He points to Troy and Keyes next to him.

Kerry Kuroyama:

Make no mistake, you're looking at the two best in DEFIANCE right here. There's no disputing that, and it's the primary reason why they take point at the front of the echelon. But it's always been understood among us that this is a collective of like-minded athletes working toward a common goal. Nobody here is giving orders, and nobody is taking them.

Sonny clears his throat. Kerry notices him not-so-subtly nodding in Butcher's direction. The insinuation goes completely over Butch Vic's head, as he continues to nod with every word and pretend he's among contemporaries.

Kerry Kuroyama:

Well... so to speak. In any case, while I'm flattered that you'd see me in that role, the reality is that we keep the power balanced in Vae Victis as a way of holding each other in line. A happy compromise among all of us, so that we may continue being the greatest professional wrestling stable in the modern theater of the sport.

Craig Hamburgers:

hello yes why do they boo you when you're right and will you come to my eighth birthday party, thank you

Lindsay Troy: *(smiling)*

Well Craig, sometimes people just really like being both loud and wrong.

Henry Keyes:

We're proud of you for doing the right thing and staying loyal

Lindsay Troy:

And yes, if I can I'd love to go to your party. Can you have your dad write down the info for me?

Craig Hamburgers:

YEP YEP DAD YES YEP HE CAN RIGHT DAD YEAH YEAH? DAD?? DAD

Craig's father is doing his best not to fluster-blush at his child's obvious excitement and the anxiety at the prospect of hosting wildly famous professional wrestlers in his home.

Reed Schwartzman:

What do each of you have to say about your respective opponents' performances tonight? Wh...

Oscar Burns has finally had enough and yells into the microphone.

Oscar Burns:

LISTEN UP, YOU PRICK!

The Kiwi immediately gets the attention of everyone with his outburst at Reed Schwartzman.

Oscar Burns:

YOU THINK THAT YOU'RE FUNNY, REED?! HUH?! YOU THINK THAT ME LOSING THE FAVOURED SAINTS TITLE WAS A GREAT DEFCON MOMENT?! YOU THINK ME LOSING MY MONEY WAS A GREAT DEFCON MOMENT?!

Reed isn't even able to get anything out as Oscar continues.

Oscar Burns:

AFTER **EVERYTHING** I HAVE GIVEN YOU GCs! GIVEN THE DEFIANCE FAITHFUL... THE OSCAR BURNS FAITHFUL! FEEL-GOOD MOMENTS! SAVING THIS PROMOTION FROM **TWO** DIFFERENT TAKEOVERS! COUNTLESS IN-RING EPICS! AND YOU CHEER IT WHEN... A **DRUGGIE** BEATS ME?! YOU CHEER?! YOU LAUGH?! YOU HUMILIATE **ME?! THE MAN WHO SINGLE-HANDEDLY PUT THIS COMPANY BACK IN THE SPOTLIGHT WHEN EVERYBODY ELSE WANTED TO UP AND LEAVE?!**

The room is dead silent, though the Vae Victis crew are listening and nodding along with some of his points.

Oscar Burns:

!! NEVER! CHANGED! YOU PEOPLE DID! I TRIED TO IGNORE THE PEOPLE BOOING ME... YOU PEOPLE BROKE MY HEART... AND NOW, I'M GONNA BREAK ALL OF YOURS...

Oscar jumps up from the table, shoves Butcher Victorious out of his seat just to make himself feel better, and storms out of the press pool. It takes everybody a moment to recollect themselves.

Sonny Silver:

Burnsie's gonna be fine. Go ahead with your questions.

Next up is...oh no.

Chris Chickentenders:

Yeah, hey, uh, so my question is--

♪ "I Am The Cool" by Screamin' Jay Hawkins ♪

The world's most obnoxious song that isn't a cOnOr fUsE or Love Convoy entrance theme fills the air in the form of a ringtone.

Chris Chickentenders:

Oh, um... that's me. One sec.

Chickentenders pulls out his phone, checks the name, and answers. Meanwhile, Lindsay Troy's eye twitches and Henry Keyes has to hold her in place so she doesn't do a murder.

Chris Chickentenders:

Ummm, hey chief, what's up? Yeah, I was kinda in the middle of uh--

Something spoken on the other line hits young Chris like a jolt, knocking the sunglasses off of his face and revealing two very bewildered eyes.

Chris Chickentenders:

WHAT?! You say there's been a new LEAD?! And the force needs me BACK!?

Crash-zoom onto his face. A dramatic bar of light crosses his squinted eyes.

Chris Chickentenders:

Well, Chief... I'd say it's time for **Detective Chickentenders** to get crackin' on... *the CASE of the MISSING LORD NIGELBUSH!*

Dreary noir jazz literally begins playing out of nowhere as Chickentenders puts on a fedora and trench coat, pops the collar, hits a vape pen in lieu of a cigarette, and walks out into the rain.

As he leaves, a hooded figure enters. Reaper Magenta steps up to the podium.

Reaper Magenta:

Um... so hey, can I get in on the Pink Posse?

Deb Warenstein:

Oh! That's a question for me!!!!!!

Deb runs up to the table and pushes Butcher Victorious out of his seat, despite there being an empty chair where Oscar Burns was sitting. The President of the Pink Posse makes herself comfortable, smooths out her shirt, flips her hair just-so, and speaks into the microphone.

Deb Warenstein:

Hiiiiii it's meeeeeeee, Deb Warenstein! As the President of the Pink Posse there are a few questions that you have to answer for your membership to be considered. 1. Do you promise to wear pink on Wednesdays. 2. Do you promise to spread love and positivity in all its forms except where it concerns the Pink Posse's sworn mortal enemies including, but not limited to: Ned Reform, Ophelia Sykes, Arthur Pleasant, Vickie Hall, Quinn Fleetwood, Chet Fleetwood, anyone with the last name Fleetwood, Junior Keeling, Junior Keeling's associates because they're really mean, Tony Gamble, Teri Melton, Terry Woods, that really weird guy with the mask, no not him the other one, and all uggos everywhere? 3. Do you promise not to eat flesh because it's pink because that Terry Woods guy said he was going to and it was really creepy and I don't like it.

The specter of death with the magenta-colored mask and glowing eyes seems beset by this overflow of questions, and takes a moment to think it over.

Reaper Magenta:

Hmm, well, uh... first of all, if magenta is considered pink, then I pretty much wear it every day, including Wednesdays. As for the second question, um... sure? Who's Terry Woods? And uh, for the last question, no, I don't really eat flesh. Unless the Kabal doomburgers count.

Deb Warenstein:

We're still trying to figure that out and no the doomburgers don't count. Is the Kabal still a thing? I super hope not, they were all uggos. Ew. Let's just never mention them again okay?

She smiles sweetly. Reaper Magenta looks back and forth before finally nodding.

Deb Warenstein:

Okay yay! You are officially in the Pink Posse, don't forget to wear pink on Wednesdays and also in closing I would like to tell you that Ned Reform eats other people's lunches out of the fridge and blames it on TA Cole, don't let him lie to you, okay byeeeeeeeeee!!!!!!

With that, the Ben Franklin High School Prom Queen and Co-Valedictorian hops out of her chair and skips out of the room.

Magenta pumps a fist in celebration.

Reaper Magenta:

Hey, alright!

As he heads for the door, he not-so-subtly opens a transmission line through his mask.

Reaper Magenta: (*whispering*)

(dude... we're in)

Reaper Cyan: (*staticy, on the other end*)

COOL, CAN YA PICK UP SOME WINGS ON THE WAY BACK!?

Magenta paws at the speaker blasting in his ear as he exits the room. Vae Victis look at the door, then at each other.

Henry Keyes:

So, press conference over?

Lindsay Troy:

I'd say so.

Kerry Kuroyama:

It is. I don't know *how* I know, but I'm pretty confident that it's over.

Everyone gets up to go, forgetting that Butcher Victorious is still on the floor. He scrambles to his feet, dusts himself off, and looks out to the press.

Butcher Victorious:

See you at the afterparty. NOT!

He dashes after the rest of the group, trips over a microphone cable, tumbles off the stage and gets up again, only to stumble out the door.

The press conference fades.

THIS.

IS.

DEFIANCE.