

MEMORIAL DAY MAYHEM

**MAY 29, 2017
ALLSTATE ARENA
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS**

[A black screen.]

White text appears on behalf of the AWA legal team to inform you of the penalties involved if you happen to do things with the Pay Per View that you're about to watch that you shouldn't.

The shot fades up to a black screen with the AWA logo splashed across a starry field. A barrage of lasers flash in from all sides of the screen, etching along the borders of the letters, illuminating the plain white text into glowing and glittering gold. A deep voiceover begins. The words "American Wrestling Alliance" come up one by one at the bottom of the screen.]

"The recognized symbol of excellence in professional wrestling."

[The logo fades as we fade through black to a shot of the American flag flapping in the breeze atop the USS Lexington. The voice of Gordon Myers is heard.]

"Francis Marion Crawford once said... 'They fell, but o'er their glorious grave floats free the banner of the cause they died to save.'"

On this Memorial Day, we proudly send our thoughts and our prayers to the memories of those who have died for their country and to the loved ones they left behind."

[A silent moment, still holding on the flag before fading back to black...

...and then up to a glistening room filled with natural light. A large circular table sits in the middle of it. Beams of sunlight hit the silver table, causing it to gleam when you catch a glimpse. Five men sit around the table.

The camera sits in the middle of the table from what we can tell by our first shot of Ryan Martinez. The former AWA World Champion... the AWA's White Knight has a serious look on his face as he speaks.]

RM: I'm glad you all could make it today for this final strategy session before we walk into the Tower of Doom. All of you are joining me tonight for different reasons...

[A cut to Jordan Ohara sitting at the table, leaning forward.]

RM: For some of you, it's a chance to prove you belong with the top guys in this sport.

[Then to Jeff Matthews.]

RM: For others, it's a chance to prove to the world that you've still got it.

[Then to Supreme Wright.]

RM: For some, it's about saving the company that gave you your start.

[Then to Jack Lynch.]

RM: And then there's...

[Ryan pauses as the camera cuts back to him.]

RM: Jack... what the heck are you even doing here? You're not even in the match any more!

[Cut back to Lynch who shrugs sheepishly.]

JL: Sorry, kid. Ever since the Spur shut down, I miss all those times we all used to get together and hang out. You, me, Bobby, Travis...

SW: Craven.

[Lynch cringes.]

JL: I thought we weren't allowed to talk about that.

RM: We're not. Okay, so... fine. You can stay, Jack. But if you're gonna stay, I want answers.

[Lynch smirks.]

JL: No, I don't know what she sees in him either.

[Lynch throws a knowing look at Supreme Wright who grimaces.]

JL: But seriously... you want to know who your partner is?

[Martinez nods.]

RM: Of course. You're asking me to trust someone in that Tower and I don't even know who it is!

JL: But you trust me, right?

RM: With my life.

JL: And have I ever steered you wrong?

[Martinez arches an eyebrow.]

JL: I mean... lately?

[Martinez slaps a hand on the table.]

JL: When it mattered?

[Finally, Martinez shrugs.]

RM: Okay, fine. But... the guys are nervous.

[Cut to Ohara and Matthews who nod and Supreme who fake yawns.]

RM: Tell us who it is. You said it was someone that Castillo wouldn't expect.

JL: And that's true. See, the way I looked at it, boys... is that the four of you climbing into that Tower in Chicago... you guys are heroes to a lot of people in that locker room and in that crowd. So, when a group of heroes needs an ally... who better than a superhero?

[Lynch points to the door which opens and shuts on cue. Ryan Martinez cranes his neck, trying to get a look. A "THUNK! THUNK! THUNK!" is heard as boots meet floor, walking closer to the table. Ryan's eyes get wider as the person approaches and finally comes to a halt at the table.]

RM: You?

[We cut to a shot of Wonder Woman herself, Gal Gadot, in full costume standing at the table looking down at the five men.]

WW: Who were you expecting? Superman?

[Martinez' jaw drops.]

RM: Jack... she's not really...

[Jack clears his voice in a panic.]

JL: Easy, kid. We talked it over and she's ready for this fight.

RM: But...

[Wonder Woman fixes her eyes on the AWA's White Knight.]

WW: I'm always ready for a fight, Son of Martinez. Are you?

[Martinez nods, still in shock. Wonder Woman snorts.]

WW: You don't look ready for battle... none of you. In fact... I think if I'm going to be a part of this team... you boys need some upgrades. You are superheroes in your own way, right? Let's make you LOOK like superheroes.

[We get a closeup of Jordan Ohara.]

WW: The Phoenix, huh?

[With a snap of her fingers and a flash of light, we see Ohara in a golden feathered mask with deep crimson wings hooked to his arms and a vinyl tank top with a burning bird in the middle of it. Ohara grins at his new attire.]

We cut to Ryan Martinez.]

WW: The White Knight.

[Another snap and flash leaves Martinez in a pure white sleeveless ring jacket, a huge metal sword in one hand atop a white stallion.]

RM: This is...

WW: Perfect.

[Cut to Supreme Wright.]

WW: And you.. you need-

[Wright slowly shakes his head, a stern look on his face.]

WW: No, that works for you. Good, good.

[Wright crosses his arms in satisfaction.]

Cut to Jack Lynch.]

WW: The Iron Cowboy.

[A look of panic comes over Lynch's formerly-grinning face.]

JL: Wait! No! I'm not in the mat-

[A snap and a flash leaves Lynch in what looks like a suit of armor with a cowboy hat on top of his head.]

JL: Too late.

[Cut to a chuckling Jeff Matthews.]

WW: And lastly... the Madfox.

JM: Oh god, no.

[A snap and a flash...

...and Matthews gets a cute little pair of fox ears with a nose to match. He looks disgusted as he touches said nose.]

JM: I am NOT wearing this to the ring.

[Cut back to Wonder Woman who smiles.]

WW: Now you look like heroes! Now you look worthy of standing by me in combat! Are you ready?

[There's some grumbling around the table.]

WW: ARE YOU READY?!

[The grumbling turns to shouts in the affirmative.]

WW: Good. Then let us fight. Let us win. And let us feast on the glory that comes from victory!

[More shouts of support!]

WW: Because it's Memorial Day Mayhem... and the fight... starts... now!

[And with that... and a smile from Wonder Woman... we cut to black...

...and as a burst of red, white, and blue pyro screeches to the top of the Allstate Arena, we are LIVE on Pay Per View. The roaring Chicago fans, thrilled by the AWA FINALLY coming to town, are on their feet paying tribute to the greatest professional wrestling company on the planet.

As another blast of rockets and their accompanying red glare light up the sky, we see our setup for the evening. The usual AWA elevated stage is at the top of the aisle, a large polished metal "X" at the rear of it to celebrate the tenth edition of this legendary event. Two large video screens are on either side of the X currently swirling with the MDM X logo upon them.

The cheers continue as our camera sweep down the slanted metal ramp heading from the top of the aisle towards the red, white, and blue roped ring, surrounded by red ring aprons with the MDM X logo on them, blue ringside mats, and a trio of tables staffed by our announce team, our secondary announce team for a special Internet broadcast of the event, and our timekeeper and ring announcer combo. Black metal barricades are around the ringside area, keeping the masses at bay.

With the cameras still setting the scene, we get the soundtrack to go with it with the comforting tones of Gordon Myers' voice.]

GM: Good evening, everyone! It is a SOLD OUT crowd as the American Wrestling Alliance comes to the great city of Chicago for the very first time for a historic night! It was May 24, 2008 in the Fort Worth Convention Center where this event occurred for the very first time... and we've come a long way, baby! We've got a huge night ahead of us with three title matches, the annual AWA Rumble, and of course, don't forget about the Tower of Doom!

[We cut to a shot above the ring showing the threatening sight of the Tower of Doom hanging above the ring, three steel cages getting smaller as you get higher. The voice of Bucky Wilde cuts into the shot.]

BW: How could we forget about it, Gordo? It's hanging over our heads!

[Gordon chuckles as the shot cuts to he and Bucky at ringside. Gordon is the ultimate professional. His black suit and white dress shirt are perfectly pressed and only broken up by a stars and stripes flag tie that a grandchild might have given him as a gift. His matching black eyeglasses rest on the bridge of his nose, his hair that perfectly seasoned blend of salt and pepper. The smile is there too. Warm, comforting... welcoming you home.

His partner looks like a Crayola factory vomited on him. Sky blue pants, a red jacket, and a heavily bleached white shirt make up his ensemble with a Statue of Liberty tie that has a "light up" torch on it. "Big Bucks" has never looked... gawdier.]

GM: I am Gordon Myers and this... of course... is Bucky Wilde and we'll be with you tonight all night long, calling all the action on what has become the AWA's annual kickoff to summer!

BW: Gordo, you said we've come a long way since the first Memorial Day Mayhem but it seems like only yesterday we were in that Convention Center calling the action as the AWA crowned its first champion - Marcus Broussard.

[Cut to a shot of a waving So Cal Shark - sitting at the alternate commentary table - who points to the camera.]

GM: And while the National Title is not on the line here tonight due to Maxim Zharkov's entry into the Rumble, the AWA World Title IS at stake when Johnny Detson defends the gold against a former World Champion... and the man who defeated Detson for the title the last time he held it... Jack Lynch!

BW: I just can't handle the thought of a Lynch being the World Champion again, Gordo. I just can't do it. We got rid of the old man... we got rid of Scumbag Travis... please... no more Lynches! No more Lynches as champions! Why can't Jack take the hint and get out of town?!

GM: We're not starting with this already please! It's going to be a tremendous night and we're going to kick things off with a grudge match six months in the making. Let's go to the ring and Rebecca Ortiz!

BW: Oh yeah!

[We cut to the ring where the lovely Miss Ortiz is standing in a sequined royal blue dress cut in just the right places. A huge beaming smile is on her face as she raises the mic for the first time tonight.]

RO: Ladies and gentlemen... the following contest is the opening matchup here at Memorial Day Mayhem and it is your 30 For 30 Challenge!

[Big cheer!]

RO: It is set for one fall with a thirty minute time limit and the winner of this match will earn the #30 position in tonight's Rumble... while the loser will be SUSPENDED for 30 days!

[Another cheer!]

RO: Introducing first...

["Can't Hold Us" begins to play as the crowd gets up and cheers.]

GM: And here we go with the first match officially getting Memorial Day Mayhem underway in the Windy City!

[Ortiz continues.]

RO: He hails from El Paso, Texas... weighing in at 195 pounds...

COOOOOODYYYYYYYY MERRRRRRRRRTZ!

[Out from the back runs Cody Mertz, stopping at the ramp. Mertz stands there wearing his traditional long white tights with the two green vertical stripes going down each leg. He has on glossy white boots and a white Combat Corner tee shirt.]

BW: Look at Mertz out here wearing white like he's some sort of innocent good guy... Gordo, I have it on good authority that he was trying to keep Michael Aarons down and ride HIS coattails to success!

GM: Good authority, huh? Would that happen to be Michael Aarons who told you that?

BW: He might've mentioned something over dinner.

[Mertz hops back and forth on each leg as he psyches himself up for the upcoming match before taking off in a sprint down the ramp. As he gets to the ring, he dives,

sliding head first under the bottom rope, immediately popping back up in the middle of the ring and raising his arms to the cheers of the crowd.]

GM: This one has been some time in the making, ever since Michael Aarons turned on his partner at SuperClash, costing them the AWA World Tag Team Titles for a third time, and more, importantly costing them their friendship.

BW: Their friendship? Please Cody Mertz has lived off Michael Aarons for too long! He wanted this match and he'll soon learn to regret that! In fact, he's going to have 30 long days to think about what he's done!

GM: Somebody will, that's for sure.

[As the Macklemore song fades, "My Type" from Saint Motel begins to play, immediately changing the mood of the crowd.]

RO: Annnnnnnnd his opponent... he hails from Carson City, Nevada... weighing in at 225 pounds...

MIIIIIIIIICHAELLLLL AAAAAAARONNNNNS!

[The crowd erupts in jeers for the announcement.]

GM: And here comes the other half of Air Strike, the man who betrayed his partner, and a man some would say is the hottest new singles star to this roster in quite some time.

BW: And the ones who don't say it are either jealous or wrong!

[Walking out from the back, standing directly under the X, comes Michael Aarons. A huge smirk plastered on his face, he makes his own X symbol with his arms before he begins to gyrate under the display to the beat of his own entrance music.]

GM: Never at a loss for confidence nowadays, is he?

BW: Why should he be, Gordo? He knows what he's capable of now. For years, he thought he was only good as part of Air Strike with Mertz but Mertz' injury last year sent Aarons on a quest to find himself. He wrestled in Europe. He wrestled in Japan. And he found out that he wasn't just part of that team... he was the STAR of that team!

GM: I thought they BOTH were the stars of that team.

BW: That's what Cody Mertz wants you to think.

[Aarons begins to strut out from under the X as he makes his way down the ramp, stopping to dance every now, flirting with the women and infuriating the rest. He is wearing a black leather sleeveless vest with long purple tights with gold geometric shapes designed all over the tights.]

GM: Aarons had some success recently in a Battle Royal... an outing he thinks is a sneak preview of what he'll do in the Rumble here tonight... IF he makes it. Remember, the winner of this one gets the #30 spot in the Rumble... the loser? They're not even in it at all!

BW: They're going home until the end of June, daddy! No wrestling anywhere in the world for them!

GM: The stakes are certainly high in this one, fans.

[Still shimmying and shaking, Aarons finally gets to the ring, walking around it to the far side where he approaches the timekeeper's table where Rebecca Ortiz has taken a seat. A smug smile on his face, Aarons walks up to Ortiz...]

MA: This one's for you, Becky!

[He starts gyrating his hips wildly as Ortiz grimaces, averting her eyes.]

GM: Oh, come on!

BW: Oh yeah! Shake that thang for the womenfolk!

GM: And it's plainly obvious that Rebecca Ortiz wants no part of this vulgar display by Aarons and-

[The camera is on Aarons as the crowd starts to pick up in volume, getting incredibly loud just before Aarons pitches violently forward, falling into the ringside barricade thanks to a Cody Mertz baseball slide!]

GM: MERTZ ON THE MOVE AND DOWN GOES AARONS!

BW: Hey! This match hasn't even started yet!

GM: The bell hasn't rung but I think it's definitely started, Bucky!

[Mertz grabs his former partner, shoving him back against the ringside railing, winding up...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

GM: Overhead chop down across the chest of Mertz!

[Aarons stumbles away alongside the railing, the crowd still cheering as Mertz pursues his former partner. He grabs him by the sleeveless vest, jerking him back against the railing again, pulling the vest off his shoulder...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

GM: Another hard chop by Mertz and Aarons is reeling early on, fans!

[Aarons stumbles away from Mertz again but Cody is right behind him, grabbing him by the hair as Aarons falls against the ring apron. Mertz pulls his head back...]

BW: Not the fact! Watch the fa-

[...and SLAMS him facefirst into the ring apron!]

GM: Ohhh!

[Aarons grabs at the bridge of his nose as he staggers away again, the crowd continuing to cheer the fired-up Mertz.]

BW: Look, I understand that Mertz is angry, Gordo, but that could've been VERY costly for Michael Aarons! You know he's got a GQ cover shoot tomorrow, right?

GM: He does not!

BW: That's what I heard!

GM: From him!

BW: Irrelevant!

[Mertz grabs his former partner by the back of the tights, tossing him under the ropes into the ring as referee Andy Dawson waves for the bell.]

“DING! DING! DING!”

BW: What?! The man is down and being attacked and you’re ringing the bell?! What kind of referee does that?!

GM: This one sure did as Andy Dawson starts us off. Both members - former members, I should say - of Air Strike are back inside the ring now.

[Aarons gets to his feet, stumbling across the ring towards the ropes as Mertz follows in on him...

...and gets a boot to the gut!]

GM: Oh! Aarons goes downstairs, looking to turn this thing around.

[Grabbing Mertz by the arm, Aarons turns to whip him across the ring.]

GM: Irish whip by- no, reversed by Mertz!

[The whip sends Aarons bouncing back as Mertz dives at his feet, causing Aarons to hurdle over him. The second rebound sees Mertz leapfrog over him.]

GM: Up and over goes Mertz this time... Aarons off the far side...

[And a standing dropkick takes Aarons off his feet, putting him down on the canvas where he quickly scrambles up...]

GM: Aarons gets dropped with that dropkick but he’s right back up... and another one takes him down a second time!

[The duo of dropkicks has Aarons dazed as he scrambles back up to his feet again where Mertz is waiting with a third dropkick that puts Aarons down on the mat and sends him rolling out to the floor.]

GM: Three big dropkicks by Cody Mertz and Michael Aarons is in desperate need of a breather, fans.

[Out on the floor, Aarons sits on the barely-padded concrete for a moment, catching his breath as Mertz stomps around the ring, shouting “COME ON!” to the already-cheering Chicago fans who grow louder at the exultation.]

GM: Mertz is fired up! And Aarons looks like someone threw a bucket of cold water on his chances of being #30 tonight in the Rumble! A lot at stake in that Rumble, fans. Of course, the winner gets a future shot at Jack Lynch or Johnny Detson or whoever the World Champion might be.

BW: And don’t forget the added bonus now. A quarter of a million dollars to whoever takes the stupid mask off that stupid Masked Outlaw’s stupid face!

GM: The bounty has been placed by Javier Castillo and Johnny Detson and it certainly brings a new element to the Rumble, Bucky.

BW: That's right. A lot of guys are gonna see that Masked Outlaw in there and take their chances with him with that much at stake.

[Aarons peels himself up off the floor, taking a walk around the ringside area as Mertz continues to pace inside the ring, eager to get his hands on his former partner and friend again.]

GM: Aarons pulls himself up on the apron as the referee counts...

[Mertz walks over towards Aarons who pulls back, shaking his head as the referee steps in, blocking Mertz.]

GM: Aarons saying he won't get in unless the referee gets Mertz back and so the official obliges...

[Aarons shouts "keep him back! Keep him back!" as he finally steps back into the ring... which is when Mertz brushes the official aside, rushing Aarons with a flurry of haymakers in the corner!]

GM: Right hands! Right hands by Cody Mertz! He's lighting up Aarons with those!

[Aarons tries to cover up from the blows to the head when Mertz grabs an arm, whipping him across the ring to the far corner...]

GM: Aarons hits the corner... staggering out now...

[Mertz ducks down, doubling up as he elevates Aarons into the air, throwing him down with a big backdrop!]

GM: Aarons goes HIIIIIGH into the rafters with that one, fans!

BW: This is ridiculous, Gordo! It's like a damn mugging!

[With Aarons down and reeling, Mertz gets a slight running start, leaping up to drop his near 200 pound frame down in a senton.]

GM: Backsplash by Mertz - quick cover!

[A two count follows before Aarons slips a shoulder up in time.]

GM: Two count only there... and oh my!

[The crowd ROARS as Mertz swings a leg over Aarons, grabbing him by the hair and pistoning his punches into the skull of his former friend!]

GM: Mertz pounding away on Aarons and Chicago loves it!

BW: Who gives a damn what Chicago loves?! Those are illegal closed fists, ref! Do your job in there!

[The referee does protest the blows, forcing Mertz to break it off at the count of four. Mertz climbs to his feet, shaking his own hand as he stomps around the ring angrily.]

GM: Mertz might've hurt his own hand there punching Aarons.

BW: Good! Serves him right!

[Aarons slowly pulls himself off the mat as Mertz moves in, winding up...]

“WHAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!”

GM: Knife edge chop by Mertz... and Aarons goes falling back against the ropes.

[Mertz follows him in, winding up...]

“WHAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!”

GM: Another chop! Mertz again taking it to his former partner...

[He grabs Aarons by the arm, whipping him across the ring.]

GM: Backdr- no, leapfrogged by Aarons!

[Aarons whips around, grabbing his former friend by the hair, and YANKS him back, sending the back of Mertz’ head BOUNCING off the canvas!]

“OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

GM: Oh my! A timely counter by Michael Aarons and... wow!

BW: Did you see Mertz’ head bounce off the mat?!

GM: I certainly did... and look how proud Michael Aarons is of himself, fans.

[Aarons smirks, sauntering around the ring a bit, enjoying the boos of the Chicago fans. He blows a kiss to them, getting even more boos.]

BW: Listen to these fans, Gordo! They love Michael Aarons here in Chicago!

GM: Love him? Are you hearing things? They’re booing him out of the building practically!

BW: Eh, it’s a thin line between love and hate.

[Aarons works his way back towards Mertz, stomping him a few times before he pulls him to his feet.]

GM: That one move by Aarons completely turns this around and... wham! Big chop by Aarons now!

[Pushing Mertz back into the corner, Aarons squares up, throwing a left jab... and another... and a third... and then a big right uppercut snaps Mertz’ head back before causing him to slump down to a seated position in the buckles.]

BW: Hah! And Michael Aarons just showed Mertz he’s not the only one who can throw a punch, daddy!

GM: Oh, come on!

[The crowd jeers as Aarons plants his boot on Mertz’ throat, pushing down as he hangs off the ropes for extra leverage.]

GM: That’s a choke, referee!

[Dawson recognizes it, starting an immediate count that reaches four before Aarons backs off, raising his hands as he walks out to the middle of the ring, again getting booed by the crowd.]

GM: Aarons getting an earful from these fans but he doesn't quite seem to care, Bucky. Long gone are the days when Michael Aarons as part of Air Strike was one of the most popular competitors on the roster.

BW: That's right, Gordo. He DOESN'T care... because what does that get him, huh? What DID that get him? He was second banana to an inferior wrestler in Cody Mertz!

GM: They were tag champions, Bucky! Here... in Japan... they were arguably the greatest tag team in AWA history!

BW: A SHARED spotlight every night. And Michael Aarons is too good to share his spotlight with ANYONE, Gordo!

[Aarons moves back in on Mertz who has pulled himself to his feet in the corner.]

GM: Aarons on the attack... another big right hand... and a second!

[Grabbing the arm, Aarons whips Mertz across the ring to the far corner where Mertz hits the buckles. Aarons comes charging in after him, building up speed...

...and runs RIGHT into a raised boot from Mertz to big cheers!]

GM: Ohhh! Mertz caught him coming in... and now he's looking to build off that!

[Mertz hops up to the midbuckle, giving a shout to the fans as he leaps off, snatching a headscissors, and flips Aarons over to the mat with a rana!]

GM: What a maneuver out of Mertz and he turns it around again!

BW: Back and forth this one is going so far, Gordo. It may come down to who can string together a few big moves and get the win.

[Aarons scrambles off the mat as Mertz moves in on him, pushing him to the ropes where he whips him across...

...but Aarons reverses it!]

GM: Aarons with the reversal, Mertz to the far side and...

[Rebounding back, Mertz ducks under a back elbow attempt by his former friend, leaping up to the middle rope, and springing back into a crossbody that takes Aarons off his feet to cheers!]

GM: ...and another reversal! These two very evenly matched so far!

[A two count comes off the crossbody before Aarons kicks out, sending Mertz right back to his feet, grabbing the rising Aarons.]

GM: Scoop and a slam by Mertz, right down by the ropes...

[Mertz grabs the top rope, slingshotting over the ropes to the apron. He pauses a moment, giving a salute to the crowd before he slingshots back over, dropping a leg down across Aarons' throat!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: Slingshot legdrop and a beauty by Cody Mertz!

[Sitting on the mat, Mertz signals to the referee to count, earning another two count before Aarons escapes.]

GM: Another two count there for Mertz, Aarons reeling from the impact of that one.

[Aarons rolls under the ropes to the apron, breathing heavily as he tries to get back to his feet...

...which is when Mertz sprints alongside the ropes, leaping into the air, snatching his former friend's head between his legs, swinging himself over the ropes as well, and SNAPS them both off the apron and down to the floor with a hurricanrana!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: MY STARS! WHAT A MOVE OUT OF CODY MERTZ! Both men go down HARD on the floor, fans!

BW: A dangerous move by Mertz... a lot of risk in that but it looks like it paid off for now!

GM: High risk offense by Cody Mertz, learned in his early days down in El Paso when he worked in that lucha libre environment. Later, he'd come to train in the Combat Corner... and even spent more time there last year when recovering from his injuries, but he's never forsaken elements of that high-paced, high risk lucha style, Bucky.

BW: I just wish he'd wear the mask like those lucha guys do.

GM: Why's that?

BW: So I don't have to look at his ugly face.

GM: Would you stop?!

[Dragging himself off the floor, a banged-up Mertz pulls his former friend up, shooting him under the ropes back into the ring.]

GM: And Mertz puts him right back in. He's got that offense where he goes from the ring to the floor but Mertz wants to win this in the ring. He wants to pin or submit his former partner where all can say and show him who the better man truly is.

[Mertz pulls himself up on the apron, looking in at Aarons who pushes up onto all fours...

...and with a nod, Mertz slingshots himself over the top rope, and DRIVES both knees down into the spine of Aarons!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: GOOD GRIEF!

[Mertz flips Aarons over onto his back, snatching a leg in a pin attempt.]

GM: ONNNNNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOOOO!

[But Aarons again slips out, breaking up the pin cover.]

GM: Two count only for Mertz! What a spectacular move that was though... and that's going to do some damage to the back of Michael Aarons for sure!

BW: The hard fall to the floor... the slingshot knees right there. Aarons' back has gotta be screaming in pain at the moment and this is Cody Mertz' chance to try to take advantage of it.

GM: Mertz to his feet now... moving towards Aarons who is crawling, trying to create some space between himself and his former partner...

[Mertz grabs the back of Aarons' tights, hauling him to his feet alongside Mertz who hooks him, lifts him, and drops him with a leaping back suplex!]

GM: Ohhh! A whole lotta impact right there... and another cover... and another two count for Mertz!

[Mertz claps his hands together as he rises this time, showing a little frustration as he does a quick lap around the ring, figuring out his next move as Aarons again crawls across the ring, flinging his torso down between the top and middle ropes.]

GM: Uh oh!

[Mertz eyes Aarons in a vulnerable position, swinging his arm around with a nod. The crowd cheers as Mertz dashes to the ropes, rebounding back at high speed...]

GM: Mertz looking for that Tiger Kick and-

[As he comes back, the El Paso native leaps up between the top and middle ropes, grabbing the ropes to stop his momentum, swinging his legs back...

...as Aarons pushes off the ropes, sets his feet, and STRIKES!]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

BW: SAY GOODNIGHT TO THE DAYLIGHT!

[A powerful superkick snaps between the ropes, catching the spinning Mertz in mid-move, causing him to let go of the ropes and take a nasty fall to the floor!]

GM: Good grief! Aarons kicked him RIGHT in the mouth and Mertz dropped... he might be hurt out there, fans! That was an absolutely devastating counter and-

BW: And I'm pretty sure Aarons lured him in on that, Gordo. He put himself in PERFECT position for that move, knowing Mertz wouldn't be able to resist it... and then WHAMMO! He nailed him with that superkick!

[A smirking Aarons leans against the ropes, tapping his temple to jeers from the Chicago crowd as he looks out on the floor where referee Andy Dawson is kneeling next to Mertz, checking to see if he can continue.]

GM: A hard fall to the floor for Cody Mertz and the referee is making sure he can go on in this one.

BW: He should call it a night. Call it a night, pack it up, and hit the road for 30 days while Michael Aarons steals the show in tonight's Rumble!

[Aarons steps out on the apron, looking down on the hurting Mertz as the referee rises, waving for the match to continue. The Carson City native shakes his head at Mertz...]

"Ya never learn, Cee Dee."

[Aarons hops off the apron as the referee slides back in, watching as Aarons makes his way over to his downed partner.]

GM: Big stomp across the chest... and another!

[With Mertz reeling in pain on the thin ringside mats, Aarons drags him up by the hair, walking him towards the apron...]

GM: Facefirst into the apron!

[Mertz slumps over the apron as Aarons sneers at the jeering crowd...]

"You're welcome!"

[...and then SLAMS Mertz' face into the apron a second time!]

GM: Aarons taking advantage of Cody Mertz' weakened state out here on the floor.

[He shoves Mertz under the ropes, climbing back up on the apron as the referee warns him to keep the action inside the ring.]

GM: With Cody Mertz down on the mat, Aarons steps back inside the ring as well... measures his man...

[A big running elbowdrop finds the mark on Mertz...

...and Aarons stays like that, resting his head on his fist as he waves to the official.]

GM: The referee with the count...

[A two count lands before Mertz lifts the shoulder with relative ease.]

GM: Two count only thanks to the lackadaisical cover by Michael Aarons.

BW: I'll agree with you there...

GM: Well, I would think-

BW: ...it was only a two count.

GM: Unbelievable.

[Aarons climbs back to his feet, looking down on the prone Mertz. He pulls him off the mat by the hair, lifting him right up into a bodyslam...

...and then walks to the corner, hanging him by his feet from the top turnbuckle, dangling Mertz back in the Tree of Woe.]

GM: Mertz gets hung upside down and he's helpless there, Bucky.

BW: He sure is! Aarons has got him right where he wants him!

[Mertz tries to sit up a couple of times, trying to get himself free as Aarons backs across the ring...]

GM: Mertz is trying to get loose and...

[Aarons charges across the ring, leaping into the air...]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: DROPKICK ON THE MONEY!

[A smirking Aarons yanks Mertz down, applying another cover.]

GM: He's got one! He's got two! He's got- no! Just a two!

[This time, Aarons seems a little agitated, barking at the official as he glares at him.]

BW: Obvious slow count. I totally agree with you, Michael.

GM: The count looked good to me.

BW: With those glasses you've got in, half the people in this crowd probably look good to you too... and believe me, a bunch of 'em need to learn that the four food groups aren't pizza, sausage, beer, and those beef sandwiches.

[With Mertz laid out on the mat, Aarons gets back to his feet again, backing to the corner where he hops up on the midbuckle, beckoning his former friend to get to his feet...]

GM: Aarons is perched up there on the second rope... Mertz struggling to get back to his feet...

[But as the El Paso native gets there, his former partner leaps off the ropes, snatching his head as he flips over him, driving the back of his skull into the canvas with a flipping neckbreaker!]

GM: OHHHH! That might do it, fans!

[Aarons seems to agree, waving his arms apart in a "it's over!" gesture as he dives across Mertz' body.]

GM: ONNNNNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOO! THR-

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: Kickout! Kickout! Cody Mertz gets the shoulder up in time!

BW: What?! That was DEFINITELY a slow count!

[Aarons is instantly back on his feet, reading referee Andy Dawson the riot act about the speed of the count. The referee backpedals, holding up two fingers as Aarons grabs at his own head, letting loose a frustrated shout.]

GM: Aarons thought he had him but no dice!

[Aarons spins back towards Mertz, marching towards him as the fan favorite struggles to get up off the canvas. Aarons shoves him back into the corner, winding up...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

GM: Knife edge chop by Aarons and you could hear that one down in the bleachers at Wrigley!

BW: I heard you were down there this week with those bums!

GM: It's always a good time when the Giants get beat, Bucky.

[Aarons lands a second chop before grabbing his former partner by the arm, whipping him across the ring...]

GM: Irish whip to the corner..

[But as Mertz approaches, he extends his arms, pushing himself up into the air as his partner runs in after him and SLAMS chestfirst into the corner to cheers from the crowd!]

GM: HE MISSED! AARONS MISSED THE MARK!

[Aarons stumbles backwards as Mertz sets his feet, leaps up, snatches a headscissors, and SPIKES Aarons headfirst into the canvas with a reverse rana!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: OH MY STARS! MICHAEL AARONS JUST GOT _DRIVEN_ INTO THE CANVAS BY THAT MOVE FROM MERTZ! HE MIGHT BE OUT!

[But with Mertz banged up from Aarons' offense earlier, Mertz is down on the mat too, unable to take advantage of his spectacular move right away.]

GM: Both men are down! Both men are hurting! Both men are trying to win that #30 spot in tonight's Rumble and to avoid being sent packing for a month! But who can get up first, Bucky? Who can find the guts to get up and keep fighting?!

BW: Michael Aarons. Duh.

GM: Glad you gave it some thought.

[Mertz rolls over onto his back, chest heaving as he struggles to sit up, sliding his elbows under him to prop him up. The crowd is roaring, imploring him to keep going as he slips a leg under him, taking a knee... throwing a glance at Aarons who is near the ropes, trying to turn himself over...]

GM: Mertz might still have a chance! He needs to make the cover! He needs to-

[Mertz makes a dive to cover Aarons...

...but Aarons manages to turn over, rolling under the ropes to the apron before Mertz can get there. The fans jeer the narrow escape as Mertz grabs at his hair, groaning in frustration!]

GM: He couldn't get there in time! Aarons escapes to the apron... and Mertz pushing himself to his feet now, looking to capitalize on Aarons being down.

[Back standing, Mertz reaches over the top rope, dragging a struggling Aarons back to his feet...

...which is when Aarons sticks a thumb in Mertz' eye!]

GM: Oh! Come on!

BW: Gets 'em every time!

[Mertz stumbles back, rubbing at his eye as Aarons quickly turns to climb the turnbuckles. He steps up to the second rope, getting one foot up top...]

GM: Aarons is making the climb! Trying to take advantage of his cheap shot and...

[With Aarons almost to the top, Mertz rushes the corner, leaping high into the air, snaring his former friend's head between his legs once more...

...and SNAPS off another rana, throwing Aarons halfway across the ring where he BOUNCES off the canvas!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: MERTZ EXPRESS! MERTZ EXPRESS!

[Mertz flips over onto all fours, crawling quickly across the ring, diving across the prone Aarons!]

GM: ONNNNNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOOOO! THREEEEEEEEE-

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: SHOULDER UP! SHOULDER UP!

[Mertz rolls off Aarons, again grabbing at his head in frustration.]

GM: He thought he had him, fans! Cody Mertz thought he had him there and-

[The crowd begins to buzz at the sight of someone running down the aisle.]

GM: What the...?! What the heck is HE doing here?!

BW: I don't know.

[The jeers get louder as Chaz (or is it Chet?) Wallace leaps up on the apron, leaning over the top rope, shouting at the referee. The official pulls away from Mertz and Aarons, turning his attention to the inbound Wallace twin.]

GM: One of the Wallaces is up on the apron and... he's arguing with the referee about something...

[Mertz gets to his feet, hands on his hips as he stares at the conflict.]

GM: What is this all about? What business does he have out here, Bucky?

BW: I told you, I don't know!

[But as one Wallace gets the referee's attention on him, we spot the other Wallace suddenly appear on the other side of the ring, sliding headfirst under the bottom rope...]

GM: The other one's in the ring! Where the heck did HE come from?!

[He stands behind Mertz, fingers wiggling with anticipation as Mertz leans down, dragging Michael Aarons to his feet...

...and Aarons shoves Mertz backwards, sending him towards the Wallace who leaps up, snapping his feet into the back of Mertz' head!]

GM: DROPKICK!

[The blow sends Mertz falling back the other way towards Aarons who buries a kick in the gut, hooking an inverted facelock as one Wallace bails from the ring...]

GM: Wait! Not like this! Not like-

[...and the other drops to the floor as Aarons turns quickly and DRIVES Mertz facefirst into the canvas!]

GM: OHHH! SHATTERSHOT!

[Aarons dives across Mertz, wrapping up both legs as he rolls into a back press, the confused referee dropping down to count!]

GM: ONNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOO! THREEEEEEEEEEEEEEEE!

"DING! DING! DING!"

BW: HE GOT HIM! AARONS IS NUMBER THIRTY!

[Aarons rolls off Mertz at the sound of the bell, thrusting his arms up into the air as the crowd jeers loudly. A moment later, both Wallaces are in the ring, embracing Aarons and pulling him up to his feet.]

GM: And there are the American Idols in there with Michael Aarons and... well, it's obvious that this was a damn plan all along, Bucky.

BW: I love it when a plan comes together!

[The jeers intensify as Aarons and the Wallaces stand triumphant over Mertz, arms raised in victory.]

GM: Well, fans... we may not like it but Michael Aarons has won this match which means he'll enter tonight's Rumble at number 30 and... unfortunately, it also means that Cody Mertz will now be suspended for 30 days from wrestling anywhere in the world.

BW: See ya, Cee Dee! Maybe you can take a nice long trip somewhere and think about all your mistakes in life!

GM: The only mistake that Cody Mertz made was taking his eye off Michael Aarons when those Wallaces showed up at ringside, Bucky. Cody had this match well in hand until that point and...

[The trio exits the ring, taunting the fans and waving "bye bye" to Mertz in the ring as they back down the aisle.]

GM: I've seen enough of this. Let's go backstage where I'm told we have a very special guest standing by!

[Cut to the back in front of an AWA backdrop where "Sweet" Loud Blackwell stands with microphone in hand, motioning in someone from his side.]

SLB: An exciting start to what is likely to be a thrilling night here in Chicago at Memorial Day Mayhem, fans. And right now, I want to introduce you to my guest at this time. He is one of AWA's newest signed stars, from Louisville, Kentucky and one of the first second generation wrestlers from an AWA Original... Landon Grant!

[The camera pans out to show a young man, probably early to mid-20s, standing over Blackwell. His face shows his youth, but it also definitely shows a resemblance to an AWA star from yesteryear.]

Grant wears a pair of dark blue jeans, large silver horse buckled belt, and a vivid red crimson based plaid button down tucked into his jeans. He also sports a black sports coat that looks like someone just threw on him.]

SLB: Allow me to be the first to say... welcome to AWA and welcome on this momentous night in AWA history!

LG: Thank you, Mister Blackwell - this is one HUGE honor for me to even be walkin' these halls here, especially on an event like tonight!

SLB: I see you even dressed for the occasion.

[Blackwell smirks at this newcomer's attempt to dress up. But Grant takes the jab in stride, flashing a winking smile.]

LG: Heh, I'll be the first to admit I ain't a suit wearing type. But Mister Blackwell, I didn't make my way to these here halls by dressing fancy-

SLB: Just like your father-

[Grant puts a hand up, stopping Blackwell's next thought.]

LG: Honest to God, Mister Blackwell? I ain't done a thing to deserve taking another man's spot in that Rumble or to take a match on this show. Shoot, just talkin' right now, I feel I ain't earned the right-

[Grant shakes his head and wags his right index finger.]

LG: Check that, I know I ain't earned any rights here. None! To you? To those men gettin' ready to lay their heart and lives out on the line to tonight? And to all the fans? Shoot, right now I ain't more than dirt. But that's okay. That's where I am and should be and all I am.

[The smile wears away from Grant's face.]

LG: And Mister Blackwell, my pop? He told and trained me for everything I need to know walkin' these halls and competing in that there ring.

[Grant points off to the distance.]

LG: My dad, the man you all know as City Jack, he paved my way here and I won't deny that. His crew, his friends, and yes, his connections built me up, trained me, and pushed me to where I stand now, a member of the AWA locker room. I will never deny that, ever! Because as long as I take in a breath, I will say how proud I am of who I am and what wrestling brought to me!

[Grant steps back, catching himself a little, and looks on at Blackwell with a smirk before leaning back into the mic.]

LG: But like I said, I ain't deserved the seconds I already took tonight and the way I intend it? I'll have lots of time to fill you all in on me, Landon Grant.

[A figure appears suddenly, from off-camera, on the opposite side of Sweet Lou. Grant immediately stiffens, his fists clenching at his sides at the sight of the man in question. Former World Heavyweight Champion "Ladykiller" Calisto Dufresne is already dressed for his match later on with Max Magnum, but he seems to be taking a keen interest in the young man before him.]

CD: Sorry to interrupt... ah hell, what am I saying, I'm not sorry. I was just walking by on my way to dismantle Stevie Scott's new toy and I thought I might have misheard... did you say your name was _Grant?_

[The young man says nothing, but stares coldly at Dufresne.]

CD: Something wrong with his ears, Lou?

[Blackwell shakes his head.]

SLB: Calisto Dufresne... this is Landon Grant, the son of your former archrival, City Jack!

[A sly smirk passes across Dufresne's face.]

CD: So his ears DO work. So do his eyes, apparently. Not quite a spitting image of your old man then, eh, kid?

[Grant looks like he may come across Blackwell and make things easier for Max Magnum later tonight but Dufresne puts a hand up and smiles.]

CD: Easy, tiger, I'm not here to pick up where me and Jack left off. How's he doing anyway?

[The young man says nothing.]

CD: I have this effect on people. Well, anyway... tell your old man I said hi, and not to worry about any of these vets picking on you.

[A wink.]

CD: Calisto Dufresne will keep an eye out for you.

[With that, Dufresne turns on his heel and walks off camera as Landon Grant seethes and Blackwell simply shakes his head.]

SLB: Calisto Dufresne may be hearing the cheers of the fans these days... but it appears he has a soft spot for some of his misdeeds of the past. Landon Grant... welcome to the AWA, young man... and best of luck to you.

[Grant nods, taking an offered handshake from Blackwell, his eyes still drifting to where Calisto Dufresne made his exit...]

...and we cut to a darkened room, a mere silhouette. You can probably guess by now that this would be Madame X. She speaks, her voice still distorted.]

MX: Well done, Ayako. You not only beat my protege, but you demonstrated that killer instinct I know you have. Miyuki would be so proud.

But she would still be disappointed, in that you let your guard down long enough for me to strike.

Oh, you fought well. You took advantage of an opening, had me down, almost had me revealed to the world.

Once again, though, you let your guard down long enough for me to strike again.

[There's a brief moment of silence.]

MX: But you did beat my protege -- and, so, you get another chance against me.

For the past few months, Ayako, I have taught you to be focused on your objective -- that was, at one point, the Women's Title -- a prize for which I would never have lost my focus.

But you did, long enough for someone to strike. And that's why I came to the AWA -- to get you to understand focus.

I hope you are focused for tonight, Ayako. I really do. Because I promise you, you won't be facing my protege tonight. You will get me, the real Madame X.

And this time, I won't hold back, Ayako. I will show you my full hand, every move I know, every tactic I utilize, every method to my approach, that will be the final clues as to my true identity.

You have already been provided a few clues, Ayako. Tonight, you get the rest.

And if you should beat me tonight, I promise you no more tricks. I will reveal to everyone who I really am.

[Another moment of silence.]

MX: But if not, Ayako, there will be no more clues for you. The only thing you'll get is disappointment.

And I know Miyuki will not expect disappointment.

So show me, Ayako -- show me that you are focused. Because I can promise you who will be focused, not only on the task tonight, but the task that lies ahead -- the pursuit of the AWA Women's Championship.

That would be me.

[We fade from the mystery woman...

...and up to another shot backstage, where we see "Sweet" Lou Blackwell standing by with Ayako Fujiwara. The Olympic gold medalist is dressed in her wrestling attire, a sleek, sleeveless black catsuit with a corset-like top tied together with red string, fingerless elbow-length gloves, an elaborate gold embroidered belt sash, and knee-high boots.]

SLB: Ladies and gentleman, I have with me now, a young lady that's had all sorts of trouble with her opponent tonight, the mysterious Madame X. I'd like to welcome, Ayako Fujiwara!

[Ayako gives the slightest of bows to Lou.]

Ayako: Thank you, Blackwell-san.

SLB: Ayako, we saw Madame X attack you on the last edition of Saturday Night Wrestling and it looked like she managed to injure you. When I asked Dr. Ponavitch about your condition...

[Ayako cuts him off.]

Ayako: I know what you are about to ask and no, my knee is not 100%.

[She makes a determined look on her face.]

Ayako: But it is well enough. It will not stop me from defeating Madame X.

[She brushes the hair from her eyes.]

Ayako: For months now, Madame X has used the mystery of her identity to keep herself one step ahead of me. She has used it as a distraction, a diversion and used my obsession with removing the mask from her face to leave me vulnerable to her.

[Ayako shakes her head.]

Ayako: She even sacrificed her own student to me in order to give herself an opportunity to attack me. And like a fool, I didn't see it. I became consumed in my anger and frustration at Madame X and Donna Martinelli paid the price for it.

[She stares right into the camera with a remorseful look on her face.]

Ayako: I am sorry, Donna. For what I have done to you...

[The expression on her face hardens.]

Ayako: ...and what I am about to do to your master.

I do not know who you are, Madame X. But it doesn't matter. I know enough. I know you are vile. Wicked. EVIL. And I know that you deserve every single bit of the pain and punishment I plan to put you through inside that ring tonight.

[Ayako turns to the camera, speaking directly to Madame X now.]

Ayako: Madame X! I may not know your identity, but tonight, you will surely know mine!

I am Ayako Fujiwara! The best wrestler you will have ever faced inside a wrestling ring! I will suplex you. I will torture you. I will put you through the hell you have put me through. And I will defeat you.

I will make sure your identity becomes irrelevant. Because after I am done with you, you will be nothing more...

...than a faded memory.

[Ayako turns to Lou with a focused look on her face and once again gives him the slightest of bows, before turning and walking off towards battle.]

SLB: A quite determined Ayako Fujiwara ready to show the world that she means business tonight in the Windy City! Let's go the ring!

[We fade from the grinning Blackwell to a panning shot of the sold-out Allstate Arena crowd that is seen for a few moments before Rebecca Ortiz begins to speak again.]

RO: The following Women's Division contest is set for one fall with a thirty minute time limit! Introducing first... she hails from Parts Unknown... she has refused to weigh in for tonight's contest...

She is...

MAAAAAADAAAAAME X!

[There's no music, no fanfare, as the masked woman known only as Madame X walks down the aisle. She is dressed all in black, from her mask to her bodysuit to

her wrestling boots. She keeps a steady pace on her way down the aisle, the fans booing.]

GM: This mysterious woman has been taunting Ayako Fujiwara with her presence, all while saying she's trying to teach Ayako focus. Tonight, maybe we'll find out who this woman really is.

BW: Or maybe it's Donna Martinelli under the mask again.

GM: Actually, Bucky, I can confirm that Donna Martinelli is in the building tonight. In fact, that was a condition that Javier Castillo made contingent upon making the match official, and he has made clear that Martinelli is not allowed to come to the ring.

BW: And you can confirm that she's in the back?

GM: I have been informed that she is - maybe we can get a camera back there.

[A shot cuts to the back, showing Martinelli standing before a monitor, nervously looking at the image on the screen.]

BW: Well, I guess that confirms it, Gordo.

[Meanwhile, Madame X has reached ringside and climbs onto the apron, then steps between the ropes. She walks to a corner of the ring and stands there, turning toward the aisle.]

GM: So perhaps we'll find out who is the woman behind the mask tonight.

BW: That is, if Ayako can beat her. And given how Madame X has been two steps ahead of her for months now, I doubt she can!

[Madame X stands, waiting for her opponent as Rebecca Ortiz begins again.]

RO: Annnnnnnnnnd her opponent...

[There's a very loud roar of cheers as the lights go out and "The Cyborg Fights" by Makoto Miyazaki plays. The roar grows even larger once the crowd sees Ayako Fujiwara emerging from behind the curtains, dressed in an elaborate purple Susohiki-style kimono with plum flowers and momiji patterns, emerging from behind the curtains with her arms spread wide apart. She stops at the top of the aisle and lower her head momentarily to soak in the crowd's reaction, before lowering her arms and making her way down to the ring with a noticeable hitch in her step.]

RO: From Fujinomiya, Shizuoka Prefecture, Japan... weighing in at 73 Kilograms... she is a former Olympic Gold Medalist...

AYAAAAKOOOOO FUJIWARRRRRRRA!

[Stopping as she reaches the ring, Ayako grabs the edge of the apron with both hands and bows deeply, before sliding in under the bottom rope. As she pops up to her feet, Ayako lifts her arms into the air and is suddenly bombarded by red and white streamers from all sides by the ringside fans!

As the ring attendants clear out the streamers from the ring, Fujiwara removes her kimono, revealing a powerfully built, thickly muscled body with broad shoulders, large thighs and an athletic frame. She is dressed in a sleek, sleeve-less black catsuit with a corset-like top tied together with red string, fingerless elbow-length gloves, an elaborate gold embroidered belt sash, and knee-high boots. Fujiwara

then interlaces her fingers and fixes her eyes on her opponent, calmly rotating her wrists in a way that can only be described as chilling.]

GM: A very determined-looking Ayako Fujiwara, who hopes to vanquish Madame X here tonight, once and for all.

BW: I'd usually say she's got a chance, but did you see how she was limping? Did you notice she didn't do her usual spin when they threw those streamers? I think that figure-four around the ringpost that Madame X gave her, left her with a bum leg!

[Fujiwara stands in the corner, staring across the ring as referee Shari Miranda moves swiftly to speak to both competitors...

...and signals for the bell!]

"DING! DING! DING!"

GM: And here we go!

[The Olympic gold medalist goes tearing across the ring at the sound of the bell, making a lunge to secure a double leg takedown but the masked woman flattens out, stuffing the takedown attempt, wrapping her arms around Fujiwara's torso.]

BW: An Olympic gold medalist just got her takedown STUFFED, Gordo... and there ain't a lot of women in the world who can do that.

GM: Possibly a clue to the identity of the mysterious Madame X... rolls through...

[The masked woman rolls to her side, taking Fujiwara with her as she rolls all the way over to the same position before sitting out, snatching a seated front facelock, cranking up on the neck.]

GM: Fujiwara needs to be careful here, that hold is quite close to a guillotine choke and-

[Fujiwara slides her legs under her, pushing off to flip over Madame X, pulling herself free of the hold, landing on her feet. She whips around, making a lunge at Madame X who is quick to get up... but not THAT quick as Fujiwara muscles her up into the air, swings her around, and flings her down to the canvas with a thunderous slam!]

GM: OH MY!

[Fujiwara is right back up, giving her leg a quick shakeout before hooking the masked woman from behind as she gets up, snatching a waistlock that she again uses to lift Madame X into the air, throwing her down to the mat!]

GM: A second big takedown by Ayako!

[The Olympian gives a big roar as she circles a stunned Madame X...

...and then dives on top of her, trying to hook her fingers underneath the mask!]

GM: She's going for the mask, Bucky!

BW: What?! She can't do that!

GM: You tell her that!

[Madame X swings her arms up, struggling against a determined Ayako Fujiwara as referee Shari Miranda shouts at Fujiwara to let go of the mask...

...and let go of it she does as Madame X rolls out to the floor, gesturing angrily at the ring as she tugs her mask back into place. Fujiwara shouts something in Japanese at Miranda before brushing past her.]

GM: And Fujiwara's going out after Madame X!

[The masked woman spots an angry Fujiwara coming for her and decides to make a run for it, sprinting around the ring with the Olympic gold medalist in hot pursuit!]

GM: We've got ourselves a footrace on the floor!

[Madame X swings around the ringpost, holding about a half ring lead on a slightly-hobbled Fujiwara as she rolls back inside the ring, dashing to the ropes as Fujiwara slides in after her.]

GM: Madame X coming back strong and-

[Fujiwara leaps into the air, pumping a leg...

...and DRIVING her boot into the chest of Madame X, taking her off her feet and sending her rolling back across the ring!]

GM: OHHH! What a kick out of Fujiwara!

BW: But again, she grabs the knee afterwards, Gordo! How much damage was done to that knee on Saturday Night Wrestling?

[The Olympic gold medalist stomps towards the downed Madame X, pulling her off the mat to all fours...

...and then wraps her powerful arms around the masked woman's torso, lifting her up off the canvas!]

GM: PURE! POWER!

[Fujiwara holds Madame X in the gutwrench, walking around the ring her, continuing to show off that incredible strength...

...and then tosses her effortlessly across the ring with a released gutwrench suplex!]

GM: Fujiwara's incredible power on display here tonight in Chicago! And we don't know a lot about Madame X but you can take one look at her and know she can't match power with the Olympian!

BW: She's tall, Gordo... gotta be close to six feet. Maybe about a buck forty... buck fifty... but she's lean. Lean and mean.

GM: That's for sure.

[Fujiwara walks across the ring where Madame X is starting to stir, reaching around to cup her chin with one hand...

...and then hooks her fingers into the eyehole with the other, yanking up and back on the mask as the crowd roars!]

GM: And she's going after the mask again, fans!

BW: Fujiwara's focused on getting the mask off - maybe more than actually wrestling here tonight.

GM: It's hard to blame her for that, Bucky. Madame X has been haunting Ayako Fujiwara for months now and tonight, she's got a chance to solve this mystery and perhaps get this monkey off her back so she can get back to focusing on the Women's World Title which we'll see defended later tonight.

[Madame X whips an elbow back, catching Fujiwara on the side of the head. A second one causes her to release her grip on the mask, stumbling back as the masked woman tugs her mask back in place again. We can now see the eyehole however has been stretched out, revealing more skin underneath. She twists around, taking aim...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

GM: Knife edge chop to the chest of Fujiwara!

BW: We still don't know who she is but we know she packs a wallop, Gordo.

GM: She certainly does and-

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

GM: An overhand chip this time, finding the mark on Fujiwara. Ayako got distracted in going after the mask and-

[Madame X swoops in alongside Fujiwara, lifting her up off the canvas, spinning 90 degrees, and DROPS her down on the back of her head and neck with a ring-shaking backdrop suplex!]

GM: Back suplex perfectly executed! And that one might've rang Fujiwara's bell, fans!

[With the Olympic gold medalist laid out, Madame X leans across in a lateral press, not bothering to secure a leg as the referee makes a two count.]

GM: Two count only off the suplex. Whoever is under that mask, she looked pretty lax on that pin attempt, Bucky.

BW: I think she knew Fujiwara wasn't going to be beaten with it and it was just a check to see how much damage she's done.

[Back on her feet, Madame X drives a stomp down to the chest of Fujiwara... and a second one keeps her there as Madame X walks away, soaking up some jeers.]

GM: Madame X taking a little walk around the ring here... I'm not sure why as it allows Fujiwara to get back to her feet and...

[The masked woman circles right back to Fujiwara, slamming home a boot into the midsection, snatching a front facelock, slinging an arm over her neck, and immediately takes her up and over with a textbook snap suplex!]

GM: Madame X not wasting any time there with that suplex... one quick motion, no hesitation at all.

BW: Kinda how you might see Fujiwara do it when she's not preoccupied with pulling that mask off.

GM: I'd have to agree with that, yes.

[Dragging Fujiwara off the mat, Madame X shoves her back into the corner. The referee protests as she moves in, swinging a knee up into the midsection once... twice... three times before finally backing off at the referee's orders...

...and then walking right back in, grabbing Fujiwara by the wrist.]

GM: So much for listening to the official... big whip on the way...

[Fujiwara hits the buckles hard as Madame X drops to a knee from the exertion of the whip... and then charges right in after her!]

GM: Here she comes!

[But at the last moment, Fujiwara pulls herself clear as Madame X SLAMS chestfirst into the corner!]

GM: Ohhh! Madame X hits the corner hard!

[Fujiwara swoops in behind her, snatching a rear waistlock...]

GM: She hooks her! Miss Germany gets those hooks in and-

[But before Fujiwara can even attempt a lift, Madame X slips her leg around Ayako's, blocking the effort.]

GM: Nice counter by-

[Fujiwara immediately gives up the waistlock, grabbing the bottom of the mask with both hands and pulling hard!]

GM: She's going for it again! She's going for that mask again!

[The crowd cheers loudly as Fujiwara manages to get the mask up over Madame X's chin!]

GM: She's gonna get it! Madame X is fighting it but-

[With Madame X now desperately trying to pull the mask back now, Fujiwara gives up her efforts to snatch the mask, reapplying the waistlock on a surprised Madame X...

...and DUMPS her on the back of her head with a German Suplex!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: MISS GERMANY STRIKES AND STRIKES HARD HERE IN THE WINDY CITY!

[Hanging onto the grip, Fujiwara rolls over, dragging Madame X back to her feet as the crowd buzzes with anticipation...]

GM: She's gonna do it again, fans! Fujiwara with the hands clasped and-

[For a second time, she lifts Madame X into the air, dropping her down on the back of her head and neck!]

GM: Make it two for Miss Germany!

BW: The Allstate Arena may be about to see something the United Center doesn't get to see much of these days with the pathetic Blackhawks getting swept in the first round, Gordo.

GM: What's that?

BW: A hat trick!

[With Madame X hanging limply from her arms, Fujiwara sets her feet, lifting her into the air for a third time and lets go...]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: RELEASED GERMAN! ALL IMPACT, NO BRIDGE!

[The masked woman is folded up on the canvas from the impact as Fujiwara stacks her up, leaning on the legs to pin her down to the canvas.]

GM: Fujiwara's got her down for one! She's got two! She's got- ohhh! Madame X kicks out at two and change!

BW: Well, we can add resiliency to the things we know about Madame X, Gordo. How many women would be able to kick out of THREE Fujiwara suplexes? Those are Olympic gold medal worthy and so is that kickout, daddy!

GM: It certainly is impressive, Bucky.

[Fujiwara gets to her feet, barking something in Japanese at referee Shari Miranda who looks puzzled and holds up two fingers.]

GM: I didn't know Shari Miranda speaks Japanese.

BW: I don't think she does, Gordo. But I think she had a hunch what's on Ayako Fujiwara's mind. She thought she had a three count there but Miranda's telling her she's wrong.

[With Madame X crawling to all fours, a steaming mad Fujiwara circles around her, ending up standing in front of her as Madame X straightens up, a little wobbly as she does. Fujiwara angrily extends a finger into her masked face, barking at her in Japanese.]

GM: Again with the Japanese. I'd love to be able to tell you what she's saying, fans, but she certainly seems upset.

[Fujiwara steps back, swinging her leg up for a big Spartan kick to the chest...

...but Madame X catches the kick, holding it for a moment...]

GM: Madame X catches the- OHHHHH!

[The crowd echoes Gordon as Madame X swiftly - and viciously - twists to the side, ripping and tearing at the knee of the Olympic gold medalist.]

GM: DRAGON SCREW LEGWHIP BY MADAME X!

[Fujiwara cries out, grabbing at her knee as she lies on the canvas, Madame X kneeling over her.]

BW: That was perfectly executed, Gordo! Fujiwara's knee just got tweaked, torqued, and shredded by Madame X!

[Madame X rises to her feet, looking down on Fujiwara who is rolling back and forth, clutching her knee in pain as the official checks in to see if she can continue.]

GM: Fujiwara obviously in a tremendous amount of pain after that legwhip and... Madame X isn't letting up!

[Grabbing the boot, Madame X extends Fujiwara's leg, holding it for stiff kicks to the knee as the crowd jeers.]

GM: The masked woman is all over her on the canvas, punishing that knee!

BW: And I'll tell ya something, Gordo. Ayako may be strong as an ox but if she can't stand, she can't throw people around like a sack of nothing!

GM: Absolutely right.

[Still holding the leg, Madame X whips it around in a spinning toehold and then drops down, sandwiching Fujiwara's knee between her own and the canvas!]

GM: Ohhh! And now Madame X is showing us some technical expertise, working over that knee!

[Fujiwara sits up, grimacing in pain. She takes a wild swipe at Madame X who avoids it and then POPS her with a short forearm, knocking her right back down to the mat.]

GM: Tremendous torque on the knee as Madame X tries to rip it to pieces...

[Getting back to her feet, Madame X keeps her grip on the foot, sliding it under her armpit as she flips Fujiwara onto her stomach.]

GM: Half Boston Crab applied by Madame X, bending that knee at an awkward angle!

[Madame X continues to shift her footing, applying different angles of force so that Fujiwara can never settle into the pain in just one spot.]

GM: Fujiwara crawling at the mat, looking for a way out of this hold.

[The Olympic gold medalist stretches out her arm, looking to grab the bottom rope...

...but suddenly Madame X twists around the leg, dropping down to lock her arms around Fujiwara's face, pulling back on her head!]

GM: Whoa! STF locked in now! A smooth as silk transition from one hold to the next!

BW: She looks like Supreme Wright in there, Gordo!

[Fujiwara again cries out as her neck is pulled back awkwardly. Madame X hisses "QUIT!" through her mask as the referee leans in to check to see if the Olympic gold medalist wants to quit.]

GM: Fujiwara says no, trying to hang on!

[Madame X wrenches back harder on the neck, again hissing "QUIIIIIIT!" without raising the volume, an obvious attempt to keep her identity a secret. Fujiwara defiantly shakes her head no, making another lunge...

...and wrapping her hands around the bottom rope!]

GM: She gets to the ropes! Freedom for the Olympic gold medalist from this punishing hold!

BW: That's what you think!

GM: Madame X isn't breaking the hold, Bucky! She's hanging on!

[The crowd jeers as Shari Miranda shouts at her before starting a five count.]

GM: If she reaches five, Madame X will be disqualified!

[The count reaches four and change before Madame X lets go JUST before five, allowing Fujiwara to use the ropes to drag herself out onto the apron as the crowd jeers the questionable tactics of the mysterious masked woman.]

GM: Fujiwara finally gets free... and goes right out on the apron, trying to catch a breather from the punishment her knee has been put through over the past couple of minutes.

[But Madame X has other ideas, stepping through the ropes while ignoring Miranda's protests as she drops down to the floor.]

GM: Madame X out here... perhaps looking for another illegal advantage...

[The masked woman grabs Fujiwara by the ankle...

...and the Olympic gold medalist lashes out with the other foot, catching Madame X in the masked face!]

GM: Oh! Fujiwara fighting back!

[Grabbing the ropes, Fujiwara tries to drag herself away from a stunned Madame X who rushes forward, smashing a forearm between the eyes of Fujiwara, knocking her right back down on the apron.]

GM: Ohh! What a shot that was!

[She twists Fujiwara so that her torso is back under the ropes, her legs dangling off the apron...]

GM: No, oh no!

[...and grabs the leg, lifting it high, and SLAMMING the back of the knee down onto the edge of the ring apron!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: An absolutely vicious attack on the part of Madame X on the floor!

[Fujiwara howls in pain as Madame X grabs the foot, giving it a hard yank before swinging it up again, and slamming the back of the knee down into the edge of the apron a second time!]

GM: Madame X is absolutely DESTROYING that knee out on the floor, fans! Ayako Fujiwara is in a lot of pain... and in the kind of trouble that we rarely see from here. She's such a dominant competitor typically, it's unusual to see her down like this.

BW: And the fact is, she's being outwrestled, Gordo! Madame X isn't cheating in there. She's not using a chair or anything like that. She's simply beating Fujiwara at her own game!

GM: Which makes the plot even thicker as to who is under that hood, Bucky, because there are few women in the world who can claim to even be remotely on the same level as Ayako Fujiwara inside a professional wrestling ring.

[Fujiwara pulls herself back into the ring, dragging her body across it as Madame X takes the long way, slowly climbing the ringsteps, waling out to the middle of the apron where she turns to look at the fans, spreading her arms to the side and hooking her thumbs towards herself.]

BW: There's something familiar about the way she moves in there, Gordo. I just can't quite place it.

GM: I'm with you there, partner. But there's no time to figure that out now because Madame X is on the move, looking to do even more damage to the downed Fujiwara.

[The Olympic gold medalist has managed to pull herself near the far ropes, grabbing hold of the middle as Madame X approaches. A desperate Fujiwara leans back, throwing a wild front kick that the masked woman sidesteps, throwing a precise dropkick to the other leg, knocking Fujiwara down to the mat.]

GM: Wow! What a counter that was!

BW: Such precision. Such technique! I can't wait to find out who is under this mask, Gordo, but at this rate, we may never know!

GM: It's clear that Ayako Fujiwara came to Chicago tonight with the intent of learning her tormentor's hidden identity but you're right, Bucky... it's certainly not going her way right now.

[Madame X slings the leg over the bottom rope, stepping up on the middle and DROPS her weight down across the knee! Fujiwara sits up immediately, howling in pain for a moment before a well-placed forearm shot knocks her back down.]

GM: And every time it looks like Fujiwara might get back into this, Madame X is there to put her down. This is quite the impressive performance here in this one, Bucky.

BW: You know, it's not over yet but with all the talk about who's going to be the next to challenge for the Women's World Title lately... I wonder if it's this woman right here, Gordo! She's beaten Fujiwara once already. If she does it again, she might rocket right up the Number One Contender status!

GM: It's certainly a possibility. Of course, we also know that if Medusa Rage captures the title later tonight, she says she's giving it up and that there will be a tournament to crown a new champion - a tournament I'd expect to see BOTH of these women in if it happens.

[Madame X leans down, hauling Fujiwara to her feet where the Japan native struggles to keep weight off the injured knee. A knee to the gut doubles her up as Madame X snatches a front facelock, slinging the arm over her neck...]

GM: Another snap suplex perhaps?

[...and then reaches down, hooking the injured leg.]

GM: Fisherman suplex on the way...

[She promptly lifts Ayako up and takes her down hard, maintaining a picture perfect bridge off the suplex!]

GM: ...and she got it all! The referee down to count! She gets one! She gets two! She gets thr-

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: Kickout! Kickout at the last possible moment by Fujiwara!

[Madame X rolls to a knee, looking up at the referee who holds up two fingers. With a slight nod, the masked woman retakes her feet, moving towards Fujiwara who is again trying to crawl away from her...

...which is when Madame X lifts the injured leg off the mat by the foot and DRIVES the kneecap down into the mat!]

GM: Goodness! Absolutely brutal... and that'll cut off Fujiwara from any attempt to get a breather.

[Madame X grabs the leg again, hauling Fujiwara to the center of the ring. She points to her downed opponent... then points to the crowd, earning some more jeers before picking up both legs, looking to step through...]

GM: Another submission on the way - looking for that scorpion deathlock it looks like!

BW: Named after famed lucha libre star, El Scorpion.

GM: Something like that.

[But Madame X's efforts hit a snag as Fujiwara catches her foot as she tries to step through, pushing back on it and fighting the effort to secure the hold.]

GM: Fujiwara is fighting back! Trying desperately to stay out of this hold!

[Madame X pulls her leg back out, slamming her knee into the back of Fujiwara's knee before she tries to step through again...

...but again Fujiwara manages to block it!]

GM: Another try for the hold but Fujiwara is keeping her at bay so far!

[A frustrated Madame X withdraws again...

...and as she does, Fujiwara draws both legs in tightly to her torso and SHOVES Madame X off, sending her crashing backwards into the turnbuckles to a big cheer!]

GM: Big counter by Fujiwara! The fans in Chicago letting her hear their support... but is it enough, Bucky? Is it enough to give her the time she needs to recover and get back on offense?

BW: I don't know, Gordo. She's been through a lot.

GM: But if we know anything about Ayako Fujiwara, it's that she can HANDLE a lot as well!

[Fujiwara scoots backwards, grimacing as she grabs at her knee. Madame X, stunned by the hard smash into the buckles, remains there, holding the back of her head as Fujiwara pushes up to a seated position, breathing heavily for a few deep breaths before she fights her way to her feet to a huge cheer!]

GM: She's up! Ayako is standing!

BW: Yeah, but barely! Look at her, Gordo! She can't even put weight on that leg!

[With a hobbling hop type of gait, Fujiwara moves across the ring towards Madame X, reaching out to grab her by the wrist...

...and YANKS her violently into a short-arm clothesline!]

GM: OHH! Devastating short clothesline by Fujiwara... and she's hanging onto that wrist, maintaining control on it...

[Madame X is reeling as Fujiwara drags her off the mat a second time...

...and pulls her right into a second short-arm clothesline, dropping the masked woman again!]

GM: Fujiwara starting to build up some momentum, fans!

[The Olympic gold medalist lets loose a tremendous roar in Japanese, earning a roaring cheer in response from fans who mostly have no idea what she just said as she drags Madame X up once more...

...and pulls her into a rear waistlock!]

GM: Miss Germany going back to the well once more!

[She wraps her powerful arms around Madame X's midsection, still trying to keep weight off one leg...]

BW: There's no way she gets this on one leg! No way!

[Fujiwara struggles and strains, trying to get her up... and then puts the bad leg down, putting her weight on it to try and get the suplex...

...but the momentary delay allows Madame X to pull off a slick standing switch, burying a short forearm into the kidneys which sends Fujiwara stumbling forward, creating enough space for Madame X to lunge forward, slamming her shoulder into the back of the injured knee!]

GM: OHH! She clipped the knee! She clipped her from behind!

BW: Totally illegal on any given Sunday, Gordo, down at Soldier Field but here where real athletes do battle, it's all fair game!

[Fujiwara is absolutely screaming in pain now as Madame X grabs the foot, dragging her out to the middle of the ring once more...]

GM: And I think Madame X smells blood in the water, fans! She's got her down, she wraps up the leg... figure four perhaps?

[Madame X leans over, ready to pull the other leg up and lock in the submission hold...

...when Fujiwara reaches up, hooking her fingers into the eyeholes of the mask, and pulls Madame X down into a tight cradle!]

GM: CRADLE! CRADLE!

[The referee drops down to count.]

GM: ONNNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOOOO! THREEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEE!

“DING! DING! DING!”

GM: SHE GOT HER!

[The pin breaks apart, a defeated Madame X going one way and Fujiwara rolling the other...

...but as Fujiwara sits up, a grin on her face... we quickly realize that she’s still holding the mask!]

GM: She’s got the mask too! She went for the cradle and-

BW: She used the mask for leverage!

GM: She ripped the mask right off and- who is it?! Who is it?! She’s got her head down on that mat... I can’t quite-

[But as Madame X suddenly pushes up to her knees, a mix of humiliation and pure anger crosses a very familiar face...]

GM: THAT’S LAURA DAVIS!

BW: It sure is!

[The crowd reacts in shock as “The All-Around Athlete” glares at the kneeling Fujiwara.]

GM: Laura Davis has made a name for herself all over the world, Bucky. She won gold in Canada, she dominated Japan... and now she’s here!

[The camera shot holds for a few more moments, making sure everyone sees the identity of Madame X before she suddenly lunges, tackling Fujiwara back down to the mat!]

GM: The match may be over, fans, but it looks like the fight is just getting started!

[With Fujiwara on her back, Davis snatches the injured leg, squeezing it between her own as she cranks back on the heel!]

BW: THat’s a heel hook, Gordo!

GM: Davis going right back after the leg, working on that heel hook and that could rip out the ankle AND the knee! Fujiwara screaming in pain, Davis is determined!

[Referee Shari Miranda jumps in, ordering Davis to release the hold but the Indiana native has no intentions of doing that, continuing to stretch out the leg as Fujiwara slaps the mat repeatedly.]

GM: Fujiwara is tapping out but the match is over! She won!

BW: She doesn’t look too much like a winner right now, Gordo!

GM: Davis is ripping and tearing at the knee and ankle... Miranda screaming at her to let go...

[Miranda signals for the bell again. It rings as she waves her arms towards the back.]

"DING! DING! DING!"

GM: Miranda needs help out here! She's shouting at Laura Davis but Davis isn't releasing this hold...

"DING! DING! DING!"

GM: The bell is ringing, the crowd is jeering, and Laura Davis doesn't give a damn about any of it! She's determined to do as much damage as possible to the injured leg and-

[The crowd cheers a little bit as we spot some AWA officials and more referees running down the aisle towards the ring.]

GM: Here comes some help for the referee... but is it enough? Can they get Davis to break this hold?

[Former World Champion Kevin Slater is screaming at Davis, ordering her to release the heel hook as Fujiwara writhes in pain on the mat. The word "SUSPENSION!" gets loudly thrown her way...

...and with one last twisting torque of the ankle, she lets go.]

GM: Finally, she lets go! Finally, she allows Fujiwara out of that hold!

[The crowd is all over Davis as she gets to her feet, staring down at her victim.]

GM: Laura Davis with an absolutely vicious attempt to injure Ayako Fujiwara and... why? Why, Bucky? What was ANY of this about?!

BW: I don't know, Gordo. I suppose we'll have to get that story from Laura Davis at some point... but right now, the story is that Fujiwara is hurt and she may be hurt badly!

[Davis continues to stare down at Fujiwara who is clutching her knee, being tended to by Shari Miranda and backstage official John Shock.]

GM: Fans, this is a bad scene inside the ring. It looks like Laura Davis is finally walking out of there but... Fujiwara may need some help doing that. The ankle and knee were severely attacked by Davis. The Olympic gold medalist is in obvious pain... Dr. Ponavitch coming down the aisle now as well.

[Laura Davis works her way up to the top of the ramp, still being jeered as she slowly turns back towards the ring, extending her arms and hooking her thumbs in her direction.]

GM: Laura Davis is Madame X, fans... the mystery is solved... but now the question is - why? And maybe the more pressing question is - how much damage did she do to the knee of Ayako Fujiwara?

[With Fujiwara's face etched in agony as Dr. Ponavitch tends to her, we fade up to another part of the arena where we find "Sweet" Lou Blackwell standing outside of a luxury suite.]

SLB: A chaotic scene out in the ring just now with the official arrival of Laura Davis here to the AWA. You know, the wrestling world has been buzzing in recent weeks over the aggressive actions of the AWA Talent Relations office, scooping up talent from all over the globe to bring to the fans here in 2017... and right now, inside this luxury suite I'm standing outside of is someone from the early days of the AWA. Not only that, but someone who has been rumored to make a big comeback here in the AWA any day now... and I intend to get the details right here, right now! So come with me, let's get some answers.

["Sweet" Lou walks into the luxury suite, where he finds two people. The first is a blonde white woman, approximately 5'7", wearing a blue tank top and a black skirt. The other is a brown-haired white man, approximately 5'9", wearing a black sports jacket, white button-down shirt, and jeans, with sunglasses resting on the crown of his head. The woman is noted personal trainer and nutritionist Dana Kaiser, and the man is a none-too-pleased Raphael Rhodes, who pops the sunglasses down over his eyes once he spots Blackwell entering the suite. The crowd inside the Allstate Arena reacts to seeing Raphael Rhodes on the AWA video walls as Blackwell speaks.]

SLB: Raphael Rhodes, a long-time stranger to AWA rings, what brings you to Chicago today?

[Rhodes points at Kaiser, and turns away from Blackwell. Kaiser steps into Blackwell's path.]

DK: "Sweet" Lou, I don't believe we've met. My name's Dana Kaiser, and I'm the business manager of Raphael Rhodes. He's asked me to handle the media for him.

SLB: And from what I understand, also his wife.

[Kaiser's eyes narrow.]

DK: Irrelevant, don't you think? Do you ask everyone their personal matters when you come to discuss business?

[Kaiser smiles at Blackwell.]

DK: But true. And the last personal matter I'll discuss today. Ask your questions.

[Blackwell seems a little caught off-guard by having someone blocking his path to the person he was planning to interview but quickly regroups.]

SLB: Well, I... I understand that Raphael has been in negotiations with the AWA about a potential return, and... he's here. That obviously lends some credence to those rumors, don't you think?

[Kaiser gestures out the front of the luxury suite to the arena.]

DK: When you get the chance to witness such a great night of action in person from such a lavish suite...

[Kaiser glares at Blackwell.]

DK: ...in spite of occasional prying interruptions...

[Kaiser smiles again.]

DK: ...why wouldn't you take up a generous offer to come witness it? And after all, Chicago's not a long flight from where we're located in Minneapolis. In fact... we've

gotten some pretty generous offers from AWA Talent Relations over the last few weeks, haven't we, Raph?

[Rhodes nods slightly, still not looking at Blackwell or Kaiser.]

DK: We didn't get many calls from the AWA over the last couple of years, since Raph's last Rumble. Not even when the AWA toured Europe last year! I have to admit, he was a little sour about not getting a call about that, but you must've known he wasn't living in Europe at the time, right?

[Kaiser smiles, elbowing Blackwell in the ribs.]

DK: Benefit of the doubt, right?

[Kaiser chuckles.]

DK: That HAD to be the reason. Right?

[Blackwell again looks a little flustered.]

SLB: With all due respect, ma'am, I'm not sure why Talent Relations didn't call hi-

[Kaiser interrupts.]

DK: It doesn't matter why. Look, Raph knows the wrestling business is fickle. What matters is that the AWA is calling him now. Because we're here in good faith. And you know... obviously you're putting us on TV in good faith.

[Kaiser pauses, as though an idea has come across her mind. She looks back to Rhodes.]

DK: Hey babe? Sign it.

[Rhodes turns back to the camera, and reaches into his jacket pocket.]

DK: You want a scoop, "Sweet" Lou? You're going to get your scoop. Come take a look.

[Kaiser leads Blackwell over to Rhodes, who produces paperwork from the jacket pocket.]

DK: This is the AWA contract that Talent Relations sent us. I looked it over and the terms are satisfactory to us. Raph has a lot of things he wants to accomplish in the wrestling business, "Sweet" Lou...

[Rhodes also pulls out a pen, flips open the contract to the last page, and swiftly signs it.]

DK: ...and he'll be accomplishing them here in the AWA. There's your scoop. Now take this...

[Kaiser collects the contract and hands it to Blackwell.]

DK: ...to your bosses. We have our own copy. I'm sure they'll be happy to see it.

[Rhodes underhand pitches the pen to Blackwell, and puts his sunglasses back on.]

RR: Keep the pen, mate.

DK: Just a little gift. Bye.

[Kaiser glares at Blackwell, dismissing him.]

SLB: That... is definitely a scoop! Yes. Thank you!

[Blackwell scurries from the room, and stops just outside the suite. He takes a quick glance at the contract.]

SLB: Well, how about that, fans! Raphael Rhodes has signed a new contract with the AWA! And how about that Dana Kaiser too, wow. I wonder how much I can get for the pen on eBay. Strictly for charity, of course! Fans, later tonight, we're going to see the AWA's annual Rumble with 30 of the world's best climbing into that ring with the last man standing earning a future shot at the AWA World Title! Who's it gonna be? We caught up with a few participants in tonight's Rumble - let's hear their thoughts just a short while before this high stakes battle!

[We fade to a shot of "Golden" Grant Carter standing in front of an MDM X backdrop, dressed for action. A big grin is on his face.]

GGC: Yo, it's your ol' pal, GGC here... gettin' ready to spend a Monday night in Chicago just like countless Friday nights in Jersey. When I hit the streets of Jersey for a night out, I know there's a good chance that I'm going to spend my night throwin' fists.

They may be bigger...

[He shrugs.]

GGC: They may even be better...

[A grin.]

GGC: But they'll never be golden... PUT 'EM UP!

[He throws his gloved hands up in the air as we fade to Kaz Konoe and Luciana, who are standing in front of a white wall. Konoe has on a white baseball jersey, with black pinstripes and "Renegado" in a black cursive font across the front, and black pants. Luciana has on a midriff-baring leopard print tank top over a red bra and a black miniskirt. She also has a twisted red bandana tied around her head, knotted at her forehead. Luciana leans against Konoe, who has his arms around her waist, while she distractedly reaches back and plays with his hair.]

KK: TORA Kitty... Still so angry... ¿Por qué, gatito? Maybe TORA Kitty need to get together with fellow neko-chan Molly Bell and make more gatitos together... Maybe then TORA Kitty less frustrated and angry all the time, hmmm?

[Luciana dismissively lets out a burst of air from her lips and mutters under her breath, "Fine pair they'd make."]

KK: Or TORA can keep playing with cheap toy belt... Let it weigh TORA down... Hold TORA back, because while you keep holding up that title you say you rebuilt, like it mean anything here, I break out of MY CAGE and not Tiger Paw, or TORA Kitty, who more like little cat pinky, going to get in my way, or hold me back!

TORA not in Memorial Day Rumble, but twenty-nine other men will be. Some of them I actually respect... Maxim Zharkov... Callum Mahoney... Max Magnum... Logan Blackburn... Any of those can take the opportunity away from me... An opportunity at the biggest, most important championship in our sport!

But, like I said, I am not here to be held back by cages... And that means the cage of fear... And the cage of doubt... It's every man for himself in the Rumble and just as any of those men can take the opportunity away from me? I can be the one to kill the hope of twenty-nine other men WHEN I outlast the rest of them, because yo soy la Estrella Negra... Yo soy el Renegado de Japón... And the battle cry of Los Renegados?

Desafío.

Siempre desafío.

[We fade from Konoe and Luciana to a shot of Veronica Westerly standing in front of Ebola Zaire and Muteesa. She's dressed in a hip-hugging black full-length dress, a very familiar crystal hanging on a chain around her neck, dipping into a "classy" level of cleavage.]

VW: You have your orders, gentlemen. Javier has made it clear. Winning is irrelevant. We have no interest in seeing either of you against Johnny Detson for the World Title.

[She turns, her back to the camera now as she places a light palm on Muteesa's shoulder, causing him to jerk wildly to the side.]

VW: Javier wants the mask... and he's willing to pay very well to get it. Your mission tonight?

[She turns to the camera, a sneer on her lips.]

VW: Bring us the mask of the Outlaw.

[And we fade from Westerly and the Korugun soldiers to Kerry Kendrick in his ring gear. His stringy blonde hair has been wet down and hangs to his shoulders.]

KK: You know, for 29 other guys tonight, "Destiny" just refers to the name of the dancer they're going to be pouring their hearts out to at the strip club after Memorial Day Mayhem.

"Destiny" means something different to the Self Made Man. "Destiny" is the Foundation of the AWA finally getting my first World Title shot and finally being given the belt that I was meant to have. If anyone else doesn't think that's the sad fact of life-and that includes you, "Supreme" Wright...

[He points his finger straight at the camera.]

KK: ...then do something about it!

[We fade from Kendrick out to a panning shot of the Allstate Arena crowd.]

GM: The Rumble coming up a little later tonight, fans, and I can't wait to see it but coming up right now, we've got a hotly-anticipated showdown between a former AWA World Champion - and one of the most decorated competitors in AWA history - Calisto Dufresne when he takes on the rookie monster, Max Magnum, who will of course have "Hotshot" Stevie Scott in his corner.

BW: This one fascinates me, Gordo. Max Magnum's arrival has been hyped for YEARS now. He was labeled a "can't miss" blue chip prospect from the day he signed his AWA contract. Now, it took him a little longer to get here than anyone expected thanks to some injuries and political garbage but now he's here... he looks as dominant as we always thought he would... and he's got one of the greatest of all time leading him... but tonight, he's going to square off - like you said - a former

World Champion, a former National Champion, a former National Tag Team Champion... SuperClash Main Eventer... Stampede Cup winner... he's done it all, Gordo! Everything that you can do in the AWA, he's just about done it... but now he's coming back into the fire against Max Magnum... and I just can't pick a winner in this one.

GM: It will be very interesting indeed. And remember... while Dufresne can give it everything he's got in this one, Max Magnum has to think ahead to the fact that he's in the Rumble tonight! He's gotta save some strength for that!

BW: He's got plenty to spare.

GM: Fans, who will come out on top in this much-anticipated showdown? We're about to find out so let's go down to the ring!

[We fade to the ring where Rebecca Ortiz is standing.]

RO: The following contest is set for one fall with a twenty minute time limit! Introducing first...

[The heavy opening guitar and drumbeat of KISS's "God of Thunder" reverberates off the walls of the All State Arena, drawing both an anticipatory and a negative reaction from the capacity crowd.]

Coming first, it's the manager, the AWA legend, "Hotshot" Stevie Scott. Eschewing his former casual attire, Scott is much more business-like now with a perfectly-ironed pair of deep blue pants to match a khaki jacket over a light gray button-down. As he steps in front of the center of the X, he pauses... grins... and looks behind him awaiting the entrance of his prized client.]

RO: Accompanied to the ring by his advisor, "Hotshot" Stevie Scott...

...hailing from the city of Mountain Iron, Minnesota...weighing in at 295 pounds...he is...

MAAAAAAAX! MAGNUUUUUUUMMMMMMMMMMM!

[And there's the beast himself a few steps behind Stevie. Magnum is clad simply in black trunks, black knee and elbow pads, and black boots that reach halfway up his calves. The massive physical specimen is intense but emotionless as he takes his place beside his manager and pauses at the top of the ramp, Magnum hopping side-to-side, the video wall above them cutting between Magnum's power moves and dramatically-produced shots of him looking generally pissed off at the camera.]

GM: And here he is, alongside two-time National Champion, "Hotshot" Stevie Scott, in his first big match in the AWA. Bucky, there have been high expectations for Max Magnum since he signed with the AWA years ago. Any chance those expectations will be an albatross around his neck tonight?

BW: Hard to say, Gordo. On one hand, this is unlike anything he's done before. It's not Combat Corner Wrestling, and he's not across the ring from another young buck trying to make it big. He's at Memorial Day Mayhem, one of the biggest events of the year, and will be taking on one of the all-time greats in AWA history. But on the other hand, he's a physical specimen unlike anything we've seen before AND he's being advised by a man who is arguably the smartest man in the business in "Hotshot" Stevie Scott. So I have no idea, but I do know this... I can't wait to see this match!

[The edited song skips the first few lines and cuts directly into Gene Simmons' strikingly accurate description of Magnum 40 years prior.]

I WAS BORN ON OLYMPUS
TO MY FATHER, A SON
I WAS RAISED BY THE DEMONS
TRAINED TO REIGN AS THE ONE

[Stevie points toward the ring and leads the way with Magnum trailing a step behind.]

GM: We'll find out soon enough and what a feather in the cap it would be for Max Magnum to walk away tonight with a victory over a legend and future Hall of Famer like Calisto Dufresne.

BW: That's right... but look at the other side of the coin. A loss would be a big blow to the hype and the confidence of both Magnum and Stevie, and might even cause a rift between the two.

[While Stevie takes the conventional route of climbing the steps into the ring, Magnum chooses to display his freakish athleticism by simply jumping to the apron from a standing position.]

I'M THE LORD OF THE WASTELANDS
A MODERN DAY MAN OF STEEL
I GATHER DARKNESS TO PLEASE ME
AND I COMMAND YOU TO KNEEL

[The duo proceed to the center of the ring, where Magnum hops side-to-side, sweat already dripping off his face, and Stevie arrogantly laughs and points to his client. The song fades out while Stevie asks for a mic, gets one, and heads back beside Magnum.]

HSS: Calisto Dufresne.

[Big cheer at the mention of his name. Stevie makes a face that basically says, "are you people dumb?"]

HSS: These people in Chicago, for some reason, they seem to love you.

[Stevie shrugs.]

HSS: Problem is, they don't matter tonight.

[And a point to Magnum.]

HSS: HE is the only one who matters.

And Max Magnum is very... pissed... off.

[A close-up shot of Magnum's face verifies that claim.]

HSS: Tonight, Max wants more than his pound of flesh from you, and believe me, he is all too capable of taking it. Nonetheless, I am going to extend our offer to you one more time, because otherwise?

[The Hotshot smirks.]

HSS: You're about 60 seconds away from the beating of your life.

This is your last chance, Calisto. Leave. When "Sharp Dressed Man" plays? Walk the other way. Don't go through Chimpanzee. Don't emerge from that X up there. Take

your bag, head to your rental car, and get the hell out of Chicago with your physical, mental, and emotional well-being intact.

If not? Well...

You like to call yourself the "Ladykiller."

You'll get a first-hand education on what a "killer" REALLY is.

[Scott tosses the mic back towards Rebecca Ortiz who just barely manages to catch it. She glares in annoyance at the Hotshot, raising the mic again.]

RO: Annnnnnnnnnd his opponent...

[The classic rock tones of ZZ Top's "Sharp Dressed Man" come to live over the PA system to a big reaction from the Chicago crowd!]

BW: The moment of truth, Gordo - will Calisto Dufresne accept the offer and get the heck out of town?

GM: Highly unlikely, Bucky.

[Rebecca Ortiz continues.]

RO: From Avery Island, Louisiana... weighing in at 245 pounds... one of the all-time greats in AWA history...

CAAAAAAALIIIIIIISTOOOOOO DUUUUUFRESNNNNNNNE!

[From underneath the "X" emerges the former World Champion, staring down the aisle with a big grin on his face. The camera zooms in on him, his long blonde hair pulled back into a ponytail, showing off his high cheek bones and bronzed skin.]

"Not getting rid of me that easy, Hotshot."

[Dufresne has foregone his usual three piece suit entrance, going straight to his ring gear as he walks the aisle to the ring, getting hit with some - unusual for him - cheers.]

GM: We've done the resume, Bucky - and there's nothing left to describe Calisto Dufresne than exactly as Rebecca did... one of the all-time greats in AWA history.

BW: That's without a doubt, Gordo. And it was one year ago that Calisto was set to stand alongside Travis Lynch and challenge for the World Tag Team Titles but he was taken out by Wes Taylor and Tony Donovan. Jack Lynch stood in for him, Dufresne went home, and that's the last we saw of him until he showed up to represent Stevie Scott...

GM: Something that ended up being a cruel setup, Bucky, by Stevie looking to get some payback for their history. But tonight, that history becomes the present as Calisto Dufresne shows up here in Chicago to show the world that he's still got it and show this young man - Max Magnum - that he's not done yet!

[Dufresne reaches the ring, ducking through the ropes...

...which is when Stevie Scott yells "NOW!" and Max Magnum moves far too swiftly for a man of his size to ambush the former Southern Syndicate member!]

GM: OH!

[A clubbing forearm across the shoulderblades knocks the incoming Dufresne down to a knee and a second to the back of the head puts him down on the canvas.]

GM: Wow! Just like that, Max Magnum has put the former World Champion down on the canvas!

[Magnum leans down, dragging Dufresne to his feet, pushing him back to the corner. He charges the short distance in, laying a heavy shoulder into the midsection!]

GM: Ohhh! Big tackle in the corner - the match hasn't even started yet and... another tackle! And another!

[With Dufresne reeling in the buckles, Magnum steps back, taking a walk around the ring as Stevie shouts...]

"YOU SHOULDA TAKEN THE DEAL, OLD BUDDY!"

[A sneering Magnum walks back in the cornered Dufresne who shoves the questioning official aside, lashing out with his boot...]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: LOW BLOW! LOW BLOW! DUFRESNE GOES LOW ON MAGNUM!

BW: WHAT?! RING THE BELL!

GM: The match hasn't even started yet!

[The referee - Pete "Blue Shoes" Miller - grabs his head with both hands in shock as Magnum stumbles away, clutching the family jewels as Stevie Scott screeches with outrage on the floor.]

GM: Stevie Scott is beside himself but there's nothing the referee can do! The bell hasn't rung... the match hasn't started and-

"DING! DING! DING!"

BW: WHAT?!

GM: Now it has!

[With Magnum reeling from the low blow, Dufresne storms out of the corner, swinging a leg up into his doubled-up jaw!]

GM: Ohh! He pops him with a kneelift!

[Magnum snaps up, falling backwards but not going down from the blow!]

GM: What a shot it was but Magnum's still on his feet... Dufresne circling in on him, shoving him back into the corner...

[The former professional boxer squares up on Magnum, fists balled up and at the ready as Miller calls for him to back off.]

GM: Big right hand to the ribs... and another... the pugilistic professional going to work on Magnum!

[A right hook snaps Magnum's head to the side, falling chestfirst into the ropes as Dufresne is forced back by the referee.]

GM: Dufresne's got Magnum on the ropes and I don't think any of us imagined saying that quite so early in this one, Bucky.

BW: No chance but Dufresne's got ring savvy, Gordo. He's a general in there. The experience is overwhelming Magnum early on.

GM: Plus the low blow.

BW: If you want to make an omelette, you gotta scramble some eggs.

[As Magnum wobbles out to the middle of the ropes, Dufresne grabs him by the wrist...]

GM: Irish whi- no, reversed!

[And as Dufresne rebounds off, Magnum EXPLODES into a lifting double leg takedown, flinging him down to the mat where he quickly takes a mount, landing a pair of 12 to 6 elbows to the forehead before switching to mammoth hammerfists that rain down at will on the downed Dufresne who struggles to defend himself under them.]

GM: And just like that, Max Magnum completely turns this around, pounding Dufresne like he's putting nails through the canvas!

[The referee forces a break as a fuming Magnum gets up, walking around the ring, shouting "UP!" at this downed opponent as Stevie Scott looks on, grinning, rubbing his hands together.]

GM: Stevie Scott suddenly likes the look of what he's seeing quite a bit.

BW: It's hard to blame him, Gordo. Magnum absorbed some early offense from the former World Champion and now he's in complete control!

GM: And you have to wonder if Dufresne's long time away from the ring could have an effect on him in this one.

BW: Ring rust is never an easy thing to shake off, Gordo. I've had World Champions and Hall of Famers tell me you can do all the cardio and weights in the world but nothing prepares you for being back in that ring.

[Dufresne comes up off the mat as Magnum circles back towards him. The former World Champion swings a big right hand but Magnum absorbs it and keeps coming, bullrushing him back into the buckles where a pair of big forearms to the sternum land.]

GM: Magnum continuing to hammer away on Dufresne... big whip on the way...

[The Ladykiller hits the far buckles as Magnum follows him in, crashing into him with a running clothesline!]

GM: Big clothesline in the corner by Max Magnum!

[Stevie Scott's cries of "AGAIN! AGAIN!" are clearly heard as Magnum shoves Dufresne out of the corner, sending him staggering out towards the center of the ring...

...which is Magnum's cue to steamroll him, knocking him flat with a running clothesline to the back of the head that drops him!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: Good grief!

BW: And when you look at the arms of Magnum... the shoulders... the core... getting hit like that has gotta feel roughly like someone clubbing you in the back of the head with a baseball bat, Gordo.

GM: Calisto Dufresne went down like a rock... and again, Max Magnum is circling him like a shark... waiting for his next opportunity to strike.

[The former World Champion extends his arms, trying to push up off the canvas when a mocking Magnum shoves his head with the toe of his boot, laughing at Dufresne's efforts.]

GM: Max Magnum certainly enjoying himself in there right now in his Memorial Day Mayhem debut, fans.

[Magnum leans down, locking in a front facelock on Dufresne who is still on his knees, slinging his arm across his broad neck and shoulders...]

GM: You've gotta be...

[...and deadlifts him up off the mat, throwing him down with a violent vertical suplex!]

GM: Ohhhh!

BW: Even a basic weapon in the hands of a physical specimen like Magnum is a devastating blow! That was your standard vertical suplex, Gordo... but there was NOTHING standard about that!

[Magnum again stalks around the ring, waving a hand for Dufresne to get up off the canvas.]

GM: The former World Champion is certainly discovering what Max Magnum is all about here in Chicago tonight. This is an impressive performance by the rookie out of Mountain Iron, Minnesota...

[Snatching a handful of hair, Magnum drags Dufresne up to his feet again, wrapping his powerful arms around the torso...

...and HURLS Dufresne the distance of the ring with an overhead belly to belly, sending him crashing off the canvas before he rolls under the ropes to the apron, dropping off onto the barely-padded concrete floor!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: WOW! WHAT AN OVERHEAD THROW BY MAGNUM!

[Magnum climbs to his feet as Stevie scampers around joyfully, putting his hand above his head like he's searching for Dufresne. Magnum smirks at his manager's antics, being ordered to stand back by the referee as Dufresne tries to recover out on the floor.]

GM: Max Magnum... oh no, he's going out after him.

[Ignoring Blue Shoes, Magnum steps out to the apron on the far side, dropping off to the floor as Stevie Scott stands over Dufresne, taunting his former ally. Magnum circles around the ringpost, moving slowly towards the Ladykiller who is using the

ring apron to try and get up before Magnum gets there, Stevie Scott barking in his ear the whole time.]

“Stay down, Calisto! You tried and failed! There’s no shame in staying down!”

[A weary Dufresne takes a swing at his old ally who scampers away as Magnum stalks into view, marching towards the former World Champion who leans against the apron.]

GM: Magnum on the move here...

[He snatches Dufresne off the apron, wrapping his arms around his torso again.]

GM: Another one?!

[But before Magnum can snap off a second overhead suplex, Dufresne rifles a right hand into the temple!]

GM: Dufresne trying to fight his way out of this!

[A second blow lands... and a third... but Magnum is hanging on!]

GM: Dufresne can’t get loose and-

[The crowd cheers as Dufresne leans forward, sinking his teeth into Magnum’s forehead!]

BW: He’s biting him! He’s biting him!

[Magnum abruptly lets go, falling back a few steps, rubbing his forehead at the surprise attack!]

GM: Whatever it takes to get loose, I suppose...

[Dufresne grabs the reeling Magnum by the back of the head... and SMASHES his skull into the ring apron!]

GM: Headfirst into the apron!

BW: And this may not be where Magnum wants to be with Calisto Dufresne, Gordo. Ring rust or not, Dufresne is a master of doing damage out on the floor!

[Dufresne grabs the back of the head again, smashing it into the apron a second time. Magnum stumbles away, grabbing at his own face as Dufresne moves to pursue.]

GM: And now it’s Magnum trying to create some space between himself and the former World Champion who is looking to get back into this.

[Grabbing Magnum by the arm, Dufresne swings him back against the apron, lighting him up with a big chop across the chest...]

GM: Knife edge chop out on the floor!

[Dufresne gives a sweep of his arm towards the crowd, causing fans to scurry as he grabs Magnum by the wrist...]

GM: Big whip on the way!

[...and ROCKETS him into the ringside steel railing!]

"CLAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAANG!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: WHIPPED TO THE STEEL! OH MY!

[Magnum's crash into the steel causing him to slump against the barricade but still manages to stay on his feet as Dufresne moves in on him again, kicking him repeatedly in the chest and midsection.]

BW: This could be his chance, Gordo. He's taken a lot of punishment from Magnum but this could be his chance to turn it all around.

[Dufresne grabs the wrist again, whipping Magnum towards the ring apron...

...but to the shock of everyone, Magnum leaps from the floor to the apron - just like in his entrance - avoiding further damage. Dufresne's jaw drops as he looks up at Magnum who slowly turns, smirking as Stevie can be heard shouting "YES! YES!"]

GM: What the...?!

BW: WHO DOES THAT?!

[Dufresne surges forward, making a lunge at Magnum's powerful legs, yanking hard on one...

...and pulls Magnum's leg out from under him, causing him to fall to his butt on the apron where Dufresne grabs him by the head and just opens fire to the roar of the Chicago crowd!]

GM: RIGHT HANDS! RIGHT HANDS! THE FORMER WORLD CHAMPION IS GOING TO TOWN ON THE STREETS OF CHICAGO!

[A well-placed haymaker sends Magnum through the ropes back into the ring, scrambling quickly to his feet as Dufresne rolls back in after him.]

GM: Dufresne's got him on the run for the moment, chasing down the rookie...

[With Magnum in the buckles, Dufresne laces a boot into the midsection, grabbing him by the wrist again...]

GM: Irish whi- reversed!

[Magnum rockets Dufresne to the corner, charging in after him...

...which is when Dufresne leans back, raising a boot for Magnum to run chinfirst into!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[The crowd cheers as Magnum stumbles backwards from the timely counter, giving Dufresne room to strike again. He hops up on the second rope, raising his arms over his head...]

GM: OFF THE ROPES!

[...and gets snatched around the torso by the powerhouse from Minnesota!]

GM: MAGNUM CAUGHT HIM!

[The big man carries Dufresne around the ring, ragdolling him back and forth a few times as he walks to the far corner..

...and LAUNCHES him across the ring again, throwing him from corner to almost the other corner, bouncing him off the mat!]

GM: GOOD GRIEF! SUCH POWER!

[Magnum is immediately back up this time, moving in for the kill perhaps.]

GM: Magnum is coming quickly this time... pulls him back up... WAISTLOCK!

[And promptly, the Mountain Iron machine LAUNCHES him back across the other ring, throwing him violently down with a released German Suplex!]

GM: GERMAN! RIGHT ON THE BACK OF THE HEAD!

[Dufresne rolls to his side, clutching the back of his neck in pain as Magnum gets up, bouncing from foot to foot as the crowd jeers.]

BW: And look at him, Gordo! Fresh as a daisy! He could do this all night!

[With Dufresne down on the canvas, Stevie nods approvingly.]

"You got him, Max! You got him now!"

[Magnum nods to his manager as he approaches the downed Dufresne, pulling him up to his feet by his long blonde ponytail...

...and ducks down, lifting Dufresne up... and pressing him overhead!]

GM: MILITARY PRESS!

[Magnum turns around, showing off his strength to the Allstate Arena crowd. He makes the full circle, turning to every side of the ring.]

GM: My stars! What a strength and-

[Dufresne suddenly reaches down, digging his fingers into the eyes of Magnum..]

GM: OH!

[...which allows Dufresne to slip out behind Magnum, dropping down to a knee!]

GM: Dufresne escapes! The wily veteran will not go down without a fight!

[Getting up, Dufresne falls back into the ropes, rebounding back...]

GM: CLOTHESLINE!

[The blow lands... but Magnum does not fall, staggering back a step!]

BW: Are you kidding me right now?!

[Dufresne shakes his head in disbelief, dropping back into the ropes a second time, charging off...]

GM: A second clothesline... and again, Max Magnum WILL NOT FALL!

[Magnum stumbles and staggers but to the dismay of the former World Champion, he stays on his feet...]

GM: Dufresne can't believe it and neither can I, fans! He's throwing everything he's got at him with those clotheslines but Magnum is absorbing them and somehow managing to stay on his feet!

[Dufresne shakes his head with a grimace, dropping into the ropes one more time, running past the dazed Magnum to hit the far ropes...]

GM: Dufresne REALLY building up speed now... here he comes!

[But the third clothesline attempt is thwarted as Magnum whips around, catching the rebounding Dufresne in a fireman's carry lift! The crowd ERUPTS, knowing what's about to come!]

GM: HE'S GOT HIM UP FOR THE BOMBSHELL! HE'S GOT-

[But a wiggling and struggling Dufresne manages to slip free, landing on his feet behind Magnum...]

GM: Dufresne slips out... boot to the gut...

[The former World Champion snatches a front facelock, the crowd EXPLODING at the sight of it!]

GM: HE'S GOING FOR THE WHAM BAM-

[But before Gordon can even call it, Magnum has lifted Dufresne straight up off the mat...

...and shoved him up onto his shoulders, holding him in the fireman's carry as the crowd roars!]

GM: HE'S GOT HIM UP!

[Magnum goes into a spin, building up steam as the crowd buzzes with anticipation...

...and SHOVES him skyward, sending him spinning through the air before he CRASHES down to the canvas!]

GM: BOMBSHELL! BOMBSHELL!

[Magnum dives across the downed Dufresne, hooking a leg.]

GM: ONNNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOO! THREEEEEEEEEEEEE!

"DING! DING! DING!"

[Magnum immediately climbs to his feet, looking down at Dufresne - perhaps a little bit of respect on his face for the fight - as Stevie Scott climbs into the ring, thrusting his fists triumphantly into the air.]

GM: Max Magnum with that devastating Bombshell scores a victory here in his AWA Pay Per View debut, defeating a former World Champion in the process in Calisto Dufresne, Bucky.

BW: Dufresne gave it all he had but Magnum was just too big... too strong.

[Stevie raises Magnum's hand into the air, pointing at him as Rebecca Ortiz makes it official.]

RO: Here is your winner... MAAAAAAAAAX MAAAAAAGNUMMMMM!

[The Hotshot nods his head, again pointing to Magnum who slowly lowers his arms, looking down at the prone Dufresne. The big man turns to Stevie, a questioning look on his face. Stevie shakes his head as he gestures to the back.]

"Nope. We did what we came to do. You don't fight for free, Max... ever!"

[Magnum almost looks disappointed as Stevie Scott sits on the ropes, holding them open for his charge as the duo makes their way up the aisle. Scott throws a slight bow towards the ring, leaving his former friend in a heap.]

GM: Stevie Scott perhaps showing a little bit of mercy for his former friend and ally, leaving Dufresne in a heap as these two make their way out of here. An impressive debut win - the first of many I'd imagine on Pay Per View - for the man known as Max Magnum. Fans, let's go backstage where Sweet Lou is standing by!

[We cut back to the locker room area where Sweet Lou is indeed standing by in front of a MDM X backdrop. He throws a nervous look off-camera before speaking.]

SLB: Thank you, Gordon... as you said, an impressive win for Max Magnum here in Chicago. He'll be in the Rumble later tonight... and so will my guest at this time... I drew the short straw on this one - thank you very much, Mark... King Kong Hogan, come on in here...

[Hogan lumbers into view, wearing a stained pair of blue jeans with no shoes. His torso is bare, showing a littering of nasty looking scars including a mess of scarred tissue over his heart. He's wearing a heap of white athletic tape wrapped around his head and his eye.]

SLB: King Kong Hogan, the moment is just about at hand!

[Hogan giggles... yes, giggles. It's as unsettling as you might imagine.]

KKH: The time is at hand... tick tock tick tock... the seconds counting down, little doggie... the seconds counting down until... YOU!

[He points wildly at the camera, his tongue lolling out.]

KKH: GET! PUT! DOWN!

[He chuckles again, a breathless sort of wheeze.]

KKH: Supreme, when I first laid my eyes on you, I said what kind of man is he... what kind of man goes into battle and isn't willing to use everything he can to survive? What kind of man says "the only thing I need are my hands!"

What kind of man does it? And now I know. It's you... and you're right...

[He grabs at the white tape, ripping and tearing at it.]

KKH: ALL YOU NEED ARE YOUR HANDS, LITTLE DOGGIE! ALL YOU NEED ARE YOUR HANDS BECAUSE YOUR HANDS... CAN DO... THIS!

[The tape gets pulled away, revealing heavy bruising around the eyesocket and his eye badly discolored. He flings the tape to the side, cackling madly.]

SLB: Dear god, man! What in the-

[Hogan angrily interrupts, grabbing Blackwell by the chest and shoving him back against the wall.]

KKH: GOD HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH IT! I am not what you'd call a holy man, Lou... but I've read my good book cover to cover... and I know what the powers above approve of.

And this...

[He points to his injured eye.]

KKH: They tell me you're old school, little doggie...

[He smiles... also creepy to see as he sticks his tongue through a gap where a tooth or two should be.]

KKH: Well, I'm Old Testament, young pup...

An eye for an eye, they say.

[He nods his head, rubbing his hands together menacingly.]

KKH: You came for my eye...

[He points a finger to the badly-discolored eye.]

KKH: ...and now I'm coming for yours!

[With a rush, he palms the camera lens, causing it to go to black as Blackwell exclaims "hey!" and we cut back to a panning shot of the Allstate Arena crowd, standing and cheering as the camera washes over them before we dissolve back to Gordon and Bucky at ringside.]

GM: King Kong Hogan out for a little... biblical retribution tonight in Chicago. Fans, before we move on to our next match, I want to personally take a minute to thank all of the fans out there - all over the world - who have served their country. Memorial Day, over the years, has taken on a feeling of celebration... of hot dogs and hamburgers... of beaches and pool parties... but at its core, it should be a day of remembrance. A day to honor those who served so bravely and paid the ultimate sacrifice so that we can be here today.

BW: Amen, Gordo.

GM: And on that note, a member of the AWA locker room has asked for some time to deliver a very special Memorial Day message.

BW: Who is it? The Soldiers of Fortune?

[Gordon lowers the mic, smiling as we sit in silence for a moment...

...and when the piano intro from "I Can" rings out across the Allstate Arena, the crowd erupts into a frenzy.]

BW: Aw, man...

[Jordan Ohara bounces out onto the stage. He is dressed in shiny white tights with Carolina blue phoenixes emblazoned upon them, his custom Carolina blue Air Jordan XI's with the black heels, and a blue version of his stylized Phoenix wing ring

jacket. Ohara's wavy hair is tied up in an elaborate top knot and he's grown out a chinstrap beard and mustache. He plays air piano along with the music and then bounces down the ramp, slapping hands with the crowd as he makes his way to the ring.]

GM: The always popular Jordan Ohara is on his way to the ring. The young man has a busy night here tonight in Chicago, Bucky, competing in both the Rumble as well as the Tower of Doom later tonight.

BW: If he makes it to the Tower of Doom. You know that the Korugun soldiers will be gunning for him in that Rumble - they'd love to take someone out and might even earn themselves a nice little bonus from Javier Castillo if they pulled it off.

GM: Ohara climbing into the ring now, mic in hand...let's hear what's on his mind on this special holiday.

[As the music fades and crowd noise dies down, Ohara stands facing the hard camera.]

JO: Hello Chicago!

[The crowd ROARS in response, bringing a smile to the Phoenix's face.]

JO: You guys are hot tonight! I love Chicago!

[More cheers goes up as Ohara grins.]

JO: It's already been a big night here and we're nowhere close to done... in fact, my night's just getting started. Because in just a little while now, I'm gonna come out here with twenty-nine other competitors... and I'm going to show them all why Jordan Ohara is THE guy to beat in that Rumble. And after I've won the Rumble and locked in my future shot at the World Title... then...

[Ohara points over his head at the Tower hanging above the ring.]

JO: ...then we go to war inside three cages stacked on top of each other. We didn't start this fight, Chicago... Javier Castillo and Korugun started it... but in that Tower tonight, I'm gonna climb in there with four of the best in the world and we're gonna FINISH this fight!

[Another big cheer!]

JO: Chicago, you're a special town and I am so happy to be here today because Chicago is very important to me. You know, I AM named after an athlete who became very famous in Chicago and won six championships here. Michael Jordan! The Great number 23!

[The crowd cheers in appreciation of the glory days of their Chicago Bulls.]

JO: So it's great to me that I get to be part of the greatest team in the AWA in the city where the greatest team in basketball played. But before all that... I wanted to share a special moment with you here today because you're Chicago and because you're as special to me as what is about to happen next. Today is Memorial Day...

[Some cheers from the crowd as Ohara nods.]

JO: That's right. And I wanted to come out here and talk a little about what this day means to me. You see, when I was a kid growing up, all my friends...their favorite day of the year was Christmas.... or their birthday maybe... or even the last day of school...

[Ohara chuckles as some higher-pitched voices in the crowd cheer.]

JO: You kids know what I'm talking about!

But not me... nope. For me, my favorite day of the year was and is Memorial Day.

Sounds weird, right? But lemme explain.

[Ohara pauses, stroking his new facial hair.]

JO: See, some of you might not know... but my mom is a retired sergeant in the United States Army.

[Big cheers go up from the crowd as Ohara beams proudly.]

JO: And some people who used to wrestle here would make fun of me for being a momma's boy, but I'm proud of that. See, my parents met when my mother was stationed in Japan. I was born there and lived there until I was thirteen years old when my mother was moved back home to Charlotte and my father, a professional wrestler in Japan, didn't want to come.

So when I came to the United States, it was just me and my mother in Charlotte, North Carolina. It wasn't easy for a veteran to get restarted, especially one who had a kid. But she continued to serve her country. Sometimes that meant she had to send me back on a plane to Japan to live with my father while she was redeployed... and that's what she did. Knowing she wasn't going to see her only son for... who knows how long... but she did it for you... for the people of this great country.

[More cheers as Ohara nods.]

JO: She gave everything she had for this country. And sometimes it would break me up as a child because I missed her so much, but she would always explain to me about the sacrifices a soldier had to make and that's why Memorial Day was so special. It honored the soldiers who sacrificed for their country since the Civil War.

[Ohara pauses a moment, getting a little choked up.]

GM: Bucky, don't you say a word.

[Ohara composes himself before speaking again.]

JO: My mom taught me everything about this day. She told me that Memorial Day isn't about barbecues or pick-up games down at the park. It wasn't about a day off from school. It wasn't about hanging out with the family or the kids on the block. Nah, Memorial Day - for my family - was about sacrifice. It was a day when my mom would tell me about the amazing men and women that she served with if she were home with me or somewhere in the world serving her country to keep me safe.

Some of them weren't as lucky as her... Some of them didn't make it home from their service. So we would spend every Memorial Day honoring them... telling their stories... and remembering the ultimate sacrifice that they paid.

[Ohara nods as some more solemn cheers ring out.]

JO: Mother's Day was my day to tell my mom how much I loved her and everything she did for me all year long. But Memorial Day was my day to tell my mom how much she meant to our country... how proud I was of her and all that she'd done...

and how much she inspired me to be the man that I am. My mom taught me that I can do anything... just like the song says. And I hope all of you have someone in your life who does exactly that for you.

[More cheers as Ohara smiles.]

JO: But you know... I didn't just want to say all those things out here on the mic to all of you...

[Ohara steps through the ropes to the apron, grinning down at the front row.]

JO: No, no, no... I wanted to get my mom up out of her seat...

[The Phoenix hops down off the apron, approaching the barricade where we see a light-skinned Afro-American woman with wavy brown hair pulled back into a pony tail and green eyes. She appears to be somewhere in her mid forties and is dressed in the Army Class uniform. She is obviously embarrassed, trying to shield her face as Ohara approaches.]

JO: And I want to get her up in that ring... so I can tell her myself.

[Ohara pauses by the barricade, extending a hand to the woman who is smiling and laughing now.]

JO: Sergeant Maxine Ohara... Sarge... my mom... my hero... if you'd please join me in the ring.

[A moment passes before she gets to her feet, extending her hand to her son. The pride in her face is evident. Ohara suddenly leans forward, placing his hands under her arms and lifts her over the barricade, setting her down next to him. She cuffs him on the back of the head, looking embarrassed as the Phoenix shrugs sheepishly.]

GM: A very special moment going down here in Chicago tonight, fans, and I - for one - am honored to be a part of it.

[Jordan again takes his mother by the hand, leading her to the barricade where she walks up to the ring, ducking through the ropes. Jordan trails behind, stepping in after her.]

JO: Now, Mom..., I already told all these people a little bit about what his holiday means to me... and what you mean to me. But right now, I wanted to get you in here so that I can tell you to your face how proud I am of you and your service to this country right here in the city where your favorite athlete ...

[Sergeant Ohara can be heard saying "Second favorite." The Phoenix chuckles, waving a hand.]

JO: Alright, alright... your SECOND favorite used to play.

[Maxine Ohara smiles as the crowd rises to its feet, cheering her on. She again smiles, looking embarrassed as Jordan joins in on the applause. He turns to her and salutes before he addresses the crowd.]

JO: My mom taught me that this country is about freedom... about liberty... about being able to speak your mind and worship who you want and love who you want and...

[Jordan shakes his head.]

JO: My love for this country comes from her. And I couldn't be prouder to be in this ring with her tonight.

[More cheers.]

JO: So, with that in mind... I would like you all to please rise, place your hand over your heart, and I'd like my mother - Sergeant Maxine Ohara - to lead this crowd in the Pledge of Allegiance.

[A big cheer goes up as the fans not already standing get up to join in. Sergeant Ohara smiles, returning her son's salute before giving her son a kiss on the cheek as she retrieves the mic. The video walls light up with video of an American flag waving in the wind as raises the mic.]

SMO: I pledge allegiance...to the-

[A voice rings out over the PA System, interrupting Sergeant Ohara.]

"Ha ha ha ha, Little Ohara!"

[The genial and receptive fans in the Allstate Arena change moods quite suddenly with the arrival of the National Champion, Maxim Zharkov, to the stage. The title belt rests over his shoulder as he looks down the ramp as the mother and son combination inside the ring.]

MZ: And mother of Ohara too. How lucky.

[Zharkov sneers at the Oharas as the fans jeer.]

GM: Maxim Zharkov out here, attempting to ruin this special moment between Jordan Ohara and his mother, Sergeant Maxine.

BW: Zharkov and Ohara have been on a collision course for several weeks now. I thought they'd might go at it in the Rumble or something but I didn't expect to see this.

GM: If someone back there can hear me, can we get Maxim Zharkov out of here please?

[Zharkov looks disdainfully as the waving flag on the video wall.]

MZ: America.

[He shakes his head.]

MZ: So proud you are of being an American, Little Ohara. They say so many Americans are proud of their country... wearing their t-shirts that look like flags, drinking American beer, and singing country music songs.

[He snarls.]

MZ: Pathetic. Little Ohara, you say America is about freedom... about liberty... about choice...

[He waggles a finger, starting to walk down the aisle now.]

MZ: ...and you bring your mother out here in her uniform for... what? Propaganda. Heh.

[Zharkov reaches the ringside area, moving to the ring steps.]

MZ: You have forgotten, Ohara. The myth of the idealistic America is over. The people around the world see the truth - even if your own citizens cannot. The world sees you as imperialistic. The world sees you as greedy, throwing away your people's lives for bigger swimming pools and faster private jets.

[Zharkov ducks through the ropes, Ohara stepping in front of his mother as he does. The National Champion pauses, a smile breaking through on his face.]

MZ: Look at you, Ohara; holding your mother's hand like a little boy at the supermarket, afraid to be lost!

[Jordan goes to take a step forward towards Zharkov but his mother's grip on his wrist prevents it.]

MZ: Is this what this country stands for? After all the atrocities committed by this country's military to people around the world, and you want to stand this woman up for some propaganda purpose?

[He waves a dismissive hand at Sergeant Ohara who looks concerned.]

MZ: In the Soviet Union, we hold parades for our armed forces. We give them medals! We do not stand them up and make them beg for scraps from the ungrateful capitalist bourgeoisie!

Tiny Ohara... since this is your favorite holiday, I feel like giving you a present. Would you like that?

[Ohara doesn't respond.]

MZ: I give you the gift...of mercy.

[Ohara stares coldly at Zharkov.]

MZ: Tiny Ohara, please... I beg of you... if you attempt to honor your mother by stepping into the Rumble with me tonight, the only thing she will witness is the Phoenix be crushed under the boot of the Last Son of the Soviet Union.

Don't make me do this on your favorite holiday, Ohara.

[Zharkov waits for an answer.. and getting none, he turns his gaze onto the other person in the ring.]

MZ: Mrs. Ohara...

[Off-microphone, you can see her clearly respond with a "Sergeant Ohara."]

MZ: Ah yes... so proud you are of that uniform you wear. So proud in your role of American hostilities around the world. The world's policeman they say. Fitting. Because your policemen here in America are big, overblown bullies puffing out their chests as they beat the innocent too!

[He waves a hand.]

MZ: Is that what you are proud of... Maxine?

[Sergeant Ohara steps out from behind her son now, her eyes burning with anger.]

MZ: You are proud to murder innocent children in the sands of Iraq... of Afghanistan... of-

[She closes the distance, getting closer to the Russian as she holds an arm back, keeping Jordan from advancing behind her.]

MZ: I have upset you. My apologies.

[Sergeant Ohara seems to calm down a little.]

MZ: Now, I too admire you, Mrs. Ohara. Because unlike your weak, pathetic son... you are not afraid to confront me.

[Jordan does step forward now, still behind his mother. Zharkov sneers, waving a hand towards him.]

MZ: Even now, he hides behind you! Phoenix, does she fight all your battles for you? Such strength in an American woman is unusual, no?

[Zharkov smirks, stepping back.]

MZ: It is no wonder your father abandoned the both of you, you weak little bast-

[The Phoenix moves quick...but his mother moves quicker.]

"SLAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[But before Zharkov can respond to the slap across the face, Jordan Ohara throws himself into a full double leg takedown, toppling Zharkov down to the mat.]

GM: IT'S BREAKING DOWN IN CHI-TOWN!

[Ohara is swinging wildly now, landing heavy blows on Zharkov who raises his arms, trying desperately to cover up!]

GM: Maxim Zharkov went too far! He crossed a line and now he's paying the price for it!

[But Zharkov is bigger and stronger than Ohara, reaching up, snatching a flailing arm, and flipping him over onto his back where the Tsar goes to work with some heavy strikes of his own...]

GM: And now it's Zharkov on top, hammering away on Ohara!

BW: We may need the jaws of life to get these two apart, Gordo!

GM: This one's been brewing for months now and it's broken loose here in the Windy City!

[Sergeant Maxine Ohara shouts at the big Russian repeatedly as he pummels her son. Zharkov throws a sneer in her direction...]

...and ends up getting rolled over again to big cheers!]

GM: And Ohara retakes the advantage, pounding the big Russian into the canvas! Blow after blow... all this anger and frustration at being unable to get his shot at the National Champion... all this anger at the words directed at his mother here tonight on this very special day for his family!

[Ohara suddenly gets up, dragging Zharkov up with him...]

“WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!”

[A big chop rattles across the chest of Zharkov as Maxine Ohara cheers her son on. A second one sends Zharkov falling back into the buckles as Ohara marches in, stepping up to the second rope...]

GM: The Phoenix is on the midbuckle!

[Ohara rains down fists to the face of Zharkov, not bothering to wait for the crowd to count along, just commencing with the pummeling!]

GM: Ohara pounding Zharkov repeatedly... and this is-

[Zharkov reaches up, using his strength to shove Ohara off, sending him several feet away where he lands on his feet.]

GM: OH!

[The National Champion comes charging out of the corner, going into a spin...]

GM: PEACEMAKER!

[...but Ohara sees it coming, ducking down as Zharkov goes sailing past him!]

GM: Ducked by Ohara!

[Ohara runs to the ropes, rebounding back, leaping into the air...]

GM: Crossbod-

[But as Zharkov takes his turn to duck, disaster strikes!]

“OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

GM: Oh no!

[The crowd falls to a hush as a flying Ohara - now with no target - absolutely wipes out his own mother with a crossbody block!]

BW: Cover her, kid!

GM: Would you... that’s not funny at all! Maxine Ohara... Sergeant Maxine Ohara is down.. .she got knocked flat by that... it was an accident... a horrible, horrible accident.

[Jordan Ohara is stunned, completely beside himself as he kneels next to his mother on the mat, cradling her head in his hands as Zharkov exits the ring, a satisfied smirk on his face.]

GM: She went down hard... hitting the back of her head on the canvas.

BW: She’s ex-Army, Gordo. I’m sure she’ll be fine.

GM: Bucky, what is the matter with you? She just got wiped out by her son - a 225 pounder - who was flying through the air at his rival! She hit the back of her head on the mat! She could have a concussion or...

[Ohara looks up helplessly, waving a hand towards the locker room where we quickly see AWA medical sprinting down the aisle towards the ring, running past the National Champion as he makes his exit.]

GM: Jordan Ohara is... after all those words about how special this day is for his family... how proud he is of his mother's service to her country... can you imagine how he's feeling now?

BW: You know, when I was in Little League, I threw a ball from the outfield once and I hit my mom in the head with it accidentally. You think it kinda feels like that?

GM: I... do not. Fans, we've got Dr. Ponavitch on his way out here... I can only hope that Maxine Ohara, Jordan's mother, is okay after that hard fall. She does appear to be conscious in the ring... she's obviously shaken up though... and like I said, she did hit her head on the mat so... well, it's better to be safe than sorry.

[The Phoenix is still kneeling beside his mother, his eyes glistening as Dr. Ponavitch arrives on the scene...

...and we fade to footage that is marked "Previously Recorded." The shot opens low to the ground on a black Toyota Camry as it drives into an empty section of the Allstate Arena parking. The car rolls to a stop and the driver's door opens. Out steps Shadoe Rage. He is dressed for battle in black leather pants and thick-soled motor cycle boots. He wears a RAGE COUNTRY T-shirt in black and a perfetto motor cycle jacket. The Canadian wild man stares at the hellish scene before him as he draws off his sunglasses for the camera to focus on his kohl-outlined crazed hazel eyes. The camera then tracks his line of sight to the Ring of Iron.

What Hell looks like. Around the asphalt lot underneath the arena, a squared circle of cars has been created. The cars are parked next to each other two deep on the sides of the makeshift ring. The fourth side of the ring is composed of an old yellow school bus. The bus and the cars have seen better days. The parking lot is unrelentingly grey except for signs and some colors on the posts to indicate where a person might be. Rage smiles, stroking his braided beard. He walks into the centre of the Ring of Iron, looking around happily.]

SR: Freak out! Freak out! Jackson Haynes, look around. Look around! Look around! Ring of Iron. This place is Hell! This place is Rage Country. This is my world. This is my Hell! And Jackson Haynes, you're walking right into my world! My private Hell!

[He slaps his gloved right hand down against the hood of an old car, muttering: "Oh yeah. This is going to be good!"]

SR: I've been waiting for this day! Let me take you back, Jackson Haynes! November 2015... SuperClash VII... Minute Maid Park... The Sensational Shadoe Rage incredible World Television Championship reign was unfairly ended thanks to a cheating referee and unfair rules. The world exploded ... they said that Shadoe Rage was going on to be a National Championship contender.. a World Title contender.. bigger and better things! Did that happen? No. No it didn't.

It's been one year since Shadoe Rage has had a shot at any of the AWA titles. It's been one whole... Why?

Blackjack Lynch.

[The camera focuses on Rage's deranged eyes framed by his wild bun of dreadlocks. His face is contorted with his unrestrained madness.]

SR: Blackjack Lynch has always been against me, whispering in the back rooms, poisoning the Championship Committee against me, stealing the rights of my heritage, faking a Sports Illustrated vote all to keep his family name on everybody's lips when everybody knows the Rages are the greatest family in professional

wrestling. No amount of back room dealing could stop Lauryn Rage from becoming the AWA Women's World Champion... the AWA World Television title means less than when I wore it. But the AWA behind that cheap bastard Texan tried to do everything it could to keep our name in the shadows.

You can't do it. No, you can't. You can't erase our name from history! I won't let you do it! And as the last Rage standing in the AWA it has been my holy crusade for the past year to erase the AWA of the name Lynch.

[Rage shakes his head in the negative, turning in a circle. His energy pulsates through him.]

SR: Travis is gone. The Old Man fell beneath my feet never to be seen again. There was just the Iron Cowboy left and he was too scared to step in the ring with me. He was too scared to step up and defend his family name! The name Lynch was in ruins and I was going to get back on track and take that National Title and take that World Title.

And then you showed up out of the blue.

All the way from Japan, Jackson Haynes, looking to cash in on Blackjack's name and defend his honor. So my crusade can't end until you're gone.

My crusade ends today. Get me, Jackson Haynes. It ends today.

[Rage slams his fist against the hood of the same car, denting the hood slightly. He leers in the camera.]

SR: We've battled each other in arenas all around the country. The rage and the hatred and the violence... it was too much... too big to be contained. The weight of two generations of Rages versus Lynches comes down to you and me in a Ring of Iron.

Javier Castillo, just brilliant!

I've got too much hate in my heart to beat Jackson Haynes in a ring. The violence between us can't be contained in a ring made of ropes and canvas. It has to be out here in a Ring of Iron ... tons of steel, asphalt and concrete. Ground Zero.

[Rage pirouettes, pointing to every car and the school bus.]

SR: Right here at Ground Zero, Shadoc Rage beats Jackson Haynes with anything and everything. I can slam your head with the hood of car. Throw you through a windshield just like you did me. Spike you on the concrete. Smash your hand in a car door. I can do whatever I want to you in here. I got you in Hell for as long as I want, Jackson Haynes. And I want you for a long time. I'm going to make you suffer down here. I'm going to make you pay leaving Japan to try to defend the Old Man. Right here in the Ring of Iron, Jackson, you're going to Hell... you're in Rage Country! You're in Rage Country! And you ain't getting' out! No, you ain't gettin' out!

[Rage leans against the hood of the car, laughing maniacally. He hugs his ribs from the depths of his deranged mirth. He kicks his feet on the hood as hysteria takes over.]

SR: You ain't gettin' out!

[We fade away from Rage to another shot that has the words "Previously recorded" flash across the top of the screen as we fade into a shot of Jackson Haynes, sitting

in the bed of his pickup truck. The Tennessee Madman is dressed in street clothes, taping his fists as he speaks to the camera.]

JH: I got a call from Dallas the other day.

[He shakes his head.]

JH: Nah, it wasn't the old man. He didn't like me when I was bustin' his boys' skulls ten years ago. He didn't like me when I married his oldest daughter. And he hates me even more now that he thinks I'm fightin' his battles for him. But if there was anything that old bastard Blackjack ever got right... he knows when a man's gotta' fight, he's gotta' fight. So the call wasn't from him.

Nah, it was Henrietta.

[Haynes shakes his head.]

JH: She cried, she begged me, she told me not to put her family through something like this again with that evil Shadoe Rage.

She ain't like the old man. I actually like her. But I told her the same thing I told all of y'all. This fight ain't for anyone but myself. It ain't for the old man...it's for my old lady. Ya' made my Samantha cry, Rage.

So now I'm gonna make you bleed.

[A wild-eyed look forms on Haynes' face.]

JH: They say you've got evil runnin' through your veins, Rage. Well, I wanna' see how much. I wanna' see if we can make that Ring of Iron covered in a beautiful, crimson red.

[A disturbed smile forms on Haynes' ugly mug.]

JH: The old man got soft in his age. He showed you mercy I never had the privilege of knowin' from him. He made the mistake of walkin' away from you before the fight was over.

[A beat.]

JH: I'll tell you right now...this ain't over 'til one of us has a tag on their toe.

[He begins to quicken the pace, wrapping the tape around his hand rapidly.]

JH: Tonight, you're gonna die, Rage. Nah, not in darkness...

...but with the spotlight of the whole world shining on ya'!

[And with the camera zoomed in on the crazed look on Haynes' ugly mug, we fade through black...

...and to an overhead shot of the Ring of Iron, a camera mounted somewhere high above the ground, showing the same scene that we saw Shadoe Rage in moments ago. A makeshift "ring" has been created out of cars, trucks, and a rickety looking school bus. Some of the vehicles look fresh off the freeway with a few dents and a broken out window. Some look like they've sat in a junkyard for a decade or more.

This is the battlefield El Presidente has chosen.

This is the Ring of Iron.]

GM: And there you see it, fans. The Ring of Iron. Javier Castillo wanted a fitting place for these two to go to war and I suppose this might be it, Bucky.

BW: Well, you said it yourself, Gordo. These two are too violent to be in the ring and we don't want 'em anywhere near us!

GM: That, my friend, is one hundred percent true. And now we're just waiting for-

[With a squeal and screech of tires, our camera shot abruptly cuts to find a pickup truck barreling towards the Ring of Iron at high speed.]

GM: What the...?!

BW: Is that Haynes?! He's gonna crash into the other cars!

GM: Slow down! SLOW DOWN!

[Another screech of brakes and tires sounds as the truck slams to an abrupt halt just before ramming into one of the sides of the "ring." The door swings open to reveal Jackson Haynes. He slides out of the truck onto the asphalt, dragging his trusty bullrope behind him. Haynes wears a pair of blue jeans and black leather boots. A white tanktop that has seen better days rounds out the ensemble as he starts shouting madly.]

"RAGE! RAAAAAAGE! WHERE ARE YOU, YOU SON OF A BITCH?!"

[Haynes approaches the Ring of Iron, his eyes scanning for a missing Shadoe Rage. He swings the bullrope down, the cowbell smacking into a hood of a car.]

"CLANK!"

[Haynes swings it again... and again...]

"CLANK!"

"CLANK!"

"CLANK!"

[He pauses, twisting around slowly, wary as he's ever been.]

"Come out, come out wherever you are, you piece of trash!"

[A "THUD!" is heard from off-camera, Haynes jerking around, fists balled up and ready...

...but he sees nothing.]

GM: Where is he, Bucky?

BW: I don't know. He's out there somewhere, Gordo. We saw him out there in that pre-taped interview a little while ago.

GM: Could he have left? I mean, it takes a crazy man to get inside a "ring" made of beat up old cars.

BW: Luckily for him, Shadoe Rage fits that bill to perfection.

GM: Shadoe Rage is nowhere to be found as Haynes steps past the first car...

[He steps up on the hood of the second, looking around, eyes peeled for trouble. The bullrope dangles from his hand as he waits to see where his foe has stashed himself...

...when suddenly the trunk of the neighboring car swings open, Shadoe Rage popping up with a tire iron in hand.]

"SURPRISE, MOTHERF-"

[The audio cuts out as Rage lunges out of the car, swinging the tire iron at Haynes' legs.]

GM: WHAT THE-?!

[Haynes stumbles backwards to avoid it, losing his balance and toppling over on the car as Rage climbs up on the hood with him, raising the tire iron overhead...]

GM: This is-

[...and takes a big swing downward at Haynes who just barely rolls out of the way!]

"SMAAAAAAAAAAAAAASH!"

GM: OH! He broke the windshield with that tire iron!

BW: Haynes is lucky that wasn't his damn skull, Gordo!

[Rage raises the tire iron up, ready to swing it again...

...but a kneeling Haynes rifles a taped right hand into his midsection!]

GM: Ohh! Right hand downstairs!

[The tire iron slips out of Rage's hand, clattering uselessly down onto the asphalt as Haynes. Haynes grabs a handful of Rage's bun of dreadlocks, taking aim and SLAMS a right hand between the eyes, sending Rage staggering backwards where he flops off the hood of one car and facefirst into the hood of the one he originally came out of it...]

GM: Oh no... oh no!

[Haynes smirks as he approaches Rage, grabbing the trunk with his right hand...]

BW: He's gonna-

[The crowd inside the arena reacts as the trunk door is SLAMMED down on Shadoe Rage's back, the former World Television Champion howling in pain from the impact!]

GM: Good grief!

BW: We're just a minute or two into this, Gordo, and they've already tried to bash each other with a tire iron and then slammed a car door on someone! What the hell is this gonna be like?!

GM: This is exactly what Javier Castillo had in mind, I'm afraid. Total... complete... brutal violence.

[Haynes raises the trunk up, ready to slam it down a second time...

...and then goes sprawling backwards, falling back against the hood of the car he was on moments ago.]

GM: What the...?!

[Rage rises up to his feet in the trunk of the car, crouching slightly due to the trunk door, a round object in his hand...

...which he SLINGS at Haynes, cracking him in the ribcage with it!]

GM: Was that... a can of oil?!

BW: It was! Rage just threw two cans of oil at Haynes who did NOT want an oil change here tonight in Chicago!

[Rage scrambles out of the trunk, approaching Haynes and burying a hard kick into the ribcage, causing the former tag champion to roll off the hood of the car, falling down onto the parking lot asphalt.]

GM: Goodness... and that's not the ring - which is hard enough as it is - that Jackson Haynes just fell onto, fans. That cold, unforgiving asphalt out in the parking lot of the Allstate Arena.

[Rage steps up on the roof of the car, an audible sound from where the roof dents in under his weight is heard. He raises his arms up over his head, looking out over the Ring of Iron in its entirety...

...and leaps from his perch as Haynes pushes up off the concrete, dropping a double axehandle down over the skull!]

GM: Ohhh! DEATH FROM ABOVE!

[Haynes is sprawled out on the ground as Rage stands over him, arm raised as he points to the sky, twirling his muscular arm around. For the first time, we see referee Koji Sakai who has drawn the unlucky task of trying to officiate this.]

GM: There's the referee whose only job in this one is to count a pinfall or check for a submission. Nothing else.

[Sakai implores Rage to go for a cover but Rage's cold eyes narrow on him.]

"You shut your mouth. He ain't gettin' off that easy... nuh uh...]

[Rage leans down, dragging Haynes by the back of his jeans off the concrete, twirling him around once...]

"THUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUD!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[The crowd inside the arena reacts as Haynes gets ROCKETED shoulderfirst into the car door, badly denting the metal as the Hammer slumps back down onto his knees on the asphalt.]

"Oh yeah, Haynes... oh yeah! You're gonna bleed that dirty Lynch blood all over Chicago, yeah! You hear me?! YOU HEAR ME?!

[He jerks Haynes up by the hair, smashing the point of his elbow down between the eyes once... twice... and three times before he allows him to slump facefirst back down onto the asphalt.]

GM: Shadoe Rage with Jackson Haynes down at his feet early on in this one.

BW: We think it's early on, Gordo. This could end at any second with the stuff they've got out there to hurt each other with.

[Rage pulls Haynes off the asphalt by the hair again, this time dragging him by it across the Ring of Iron to the opposite side. He stops at about the center of the "ring," grabbing the former Stampede Cup winner by the wrist...]

GM: An Irish whip?! In this?!

[Rage goes for a whip, aiming Haynes towards the side of the school bus which has definitely seen better days, its formerly canary yellow paint rusted and chipping away with time and abuse...

...but Haynes manages to reverse it, sending Rage rocketing towards it where he SLAMS backfirst into the side of the bus!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[Haynes grabs at his reddened shoulder, grimacing as he lowers his head...]

"You're gonna bleed, Rage!"

[...and runs at full speed across the Ring of Iron towards Rage who stumbles away from the side of the bus. Haynes scoops him up onto his shoulder in mid-run and keeps on running...]

"THUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUD!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: GOOD LORD! HAYNES _DRIVES_ HIM INTO THE SIDE OF THE BUS!

[A large dent in the side of the bus is visible as Haynes backs off, allowing Rage to slump down to his knees, arching his back in pain.]

BW: This is crazy, Gordo... but a guy like Shadoe Rage may be built for a match like this.

GM: How do you figure?

BW: Think about the crazy stuff he's been in in his career. Sure, Jackson Haynes is physical. Jackson Haynes is violent. But Shadoe Rage LIVES for stuff like this. Whether it was the Scaffold Match with Donnie White or the Escape The Cage match a few years ago... or even the match he's most famous for - Death In Darkness. That one's got C-4 in it, Gordo! Explosives! This is a fun night at the office for him.

[Haynes grimaces as he grabs Rage by the bun of dreadlocks again, yanking his head back...]

"You ready to meet your old man again?"

[...and SMASHES a right hand down between the eyes!]

"Tell him Jackson Haynes sends his regards!"

[And another one down between the eyes, the taped fist slamming into the skull in brutal fashion.]

"Tell him Blackjack says to burn down there!"

[Another fist bounces off the skull, causing Rage to topple facefirst onto the asphalt as Haynes stands over him, leaning against the side of the bus. Haynes takes a deep breath, walks forward and lowers himself to a knee...]

"Such a shame about that pretty, pretty face of yours..."

[He grabs the hair with both hands, a twisted smile on his face...]

GM: Oh no.. no, no, no!

[...and DRAGS Rage's face back and forth across the asphalt, the former Television Champion screaming in pain as the Hammer does his damage!]

BW: AGHHHHH!

[Haynes finally lets go, Rage flopping over onto his back, his arms up to shield his face as Haynes rises to his feet. The referee slides in, encouraging Haynes to go for a pin.]

"Heh. Not a chance, Koji. Not a chance."

[Haynes steps over Rage, a foot on either side of his prone torso as he looks down on him...]

"Don't hide your face, Rage. I'm sure it's not that bad."

[He slaps Rage's arm away from his face, revealing a nasty red scrape across the cheek and a pretty big cut on the forehead. A grinning Haynes reaches up, patting the bloodied face...

...and then drags his bloody hand across his t-shirt, leaving a red streak.]

"Now, that's more like it."

[The referee backs off as Haynes hauls Rage off the ground by the hair again, turning him back towards the bus...]

GM: Look out!

"THUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUD!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[Rage goes flying facefirst into the side of the bus, sliding along it, holding on to stay on his feet as a bloody smear follows him.]

GM: Oh goodness. Rage is BADLY lacerated, fans. He's been busted open and Jackson Haynes is a shark who smells blood right about now!

[Rage staggers along the length of the bus, ending up over where the end of the bus and the next block of cars meet. He falls forward, flopping facefirst onto the hood of the car as Haynes pursues.]

"Where you goin', Rage? You still wanna fight, don'tcha?"

[Haynes grabs Rage by the hair, pulling him off the hood...]

"THUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUD!"

GM: FACEFIRST ON THE HOOD OF THE CAR!

[Haynes sneers as he pulls Rage up again...]

"THUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUD!"

GM: AGAIN!

[He drags the bloodied Canadian up a third time, looking at him.]

"Shoulda let the old man be."

[He shakes his head...]

"THUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUD!"

[...and RAMS Rage's face into the now bloody hood of the car a third time! The former tag champion dusts his hands off, standing over the stunned and bloody Rage.]

BW: Both these men made their names as part of famous tag teams, Gordo. Shadoo Rage with the Prophets of Rage. Jackson Haynes with Violence Unlimited, of course. But they've got no partners to help them here tonight. They're completely on their own!

GM: Jackson Haynes is climbing up on the hood of this car now...

[Up on the hood, he drags the bloodied Rage up with him, turning around...]

GM: Haynes has got him by-

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[The crowd groans as Haynes HURLS Rage off the top of one car and into the open truckbed of a pickup truck parked next to it.]

GM: The Ring of Iron is absolutely DESTROYING the bodies of these men, Bucky!

BW: And they're BOTH supposed to be in the Rumble later tonight! How the heck is that gonna happen?!

GM: I have no idea.

[Haynes walks across the car, stepping into the truckbed where Rage is laid out inside. The referee slides up alongside the car, asking Rage if he can continue.]

GM: The referee just asked Rage if he wants to stop it...

BW: And I don't think we can repeat his answer.

GM: Suffice to say it was a no.

[The Hammer pulls Rage to his knees...

...and into a standing headscissors!]

GM: Oh no! Haynes may be looking to end this right here and now, fans!

BW: He's well-known all over the world for that powerbomb! You can't even count how many times he's finished an opponent with it!

[Rage can be seen grabbing at the floor of the truckbed, searching for a way to avoid being lifted into the air...]

...but to no avail as Haynes muscles him up into position!]

GM: POWERBOM-

"CRAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAASH!"

GM: WHAT THE-?!

[Rage slips free as Haynes crumples to the back wall of the truck cab...]

GM: What even happened there?

BW: Rage hit him with something. I don't know what he...

[...and a madly grinning Shadoe Rage climbs to his feet, holding the remnants of a beer bottle in his hand!]

GM: A bottle?! He hit him with a glass bottle?!

BW: I guess the owner of that truck had himself a good time in that pickup truck on occasion, Gordo!

GM: Rage picked up a beer bottle off the floor of the truck bed and bashed Jackson Haynes over the head with it and... oh my god.

[As Haynes drags himself up to his feet, turning to face Rage, we see a horrific gash on his forehead with blood streaming down into his left eye!]

GM: Oh... oh my god. We may need help out here now. We may need to stop this damn thing, Bucky!

[Rage cackles madly as he wobbles across the truckbed towards Haynes, the broken bottle still in hand...]

GM: No, no, no!

[...and attempts to drive the broken glass into the forehead of Haynes who brings up his hands to block it!]

GM: Rage is trying to use that broken bottle on Haynes!

BW: Haynes is fighting it though! He's fighting it with all he's got!

GM: Rage might be trying to take his eye out! He's a madman out there!

[Haynes' power is too much for Rage though, preventing him from using the bottle...

...on his head at least.]

GM: AHHHHHHH!

[The crowd in the arena reacts with disgust as Rage RAKES the broken bottle across the arm of Jackson Haynes!]

GM: HE CUT HIS ARM! HE CUT HIS ARM WITH THAT DAMN BOTTLE!

[Haynes cries out, grabbing at his arm where a red line forms and quickly starts to ooze blood from his bicep.]

GM: What a maniac! What kind of a lunatic does something like that, Bucky!

BW: THIS ONE!

[Rage tosses the bottle aside, narrowly missing Koji Sakai who has come to investigate...]

...and then grabs the bloody Haynes by the hair...]

GM: Rage has got him and-

[With a few step run, Rage HURLS Haynes from the truckbed towards the hood of the car where Haynes SLAMS down on the steel before rolling over near the windshield!]

GM: Good grief! A hard fall for Jackson Haynes... and Rage is going after him, fans! Rage stepping over onto that other car... pulls Haynes back...

[He pushes Haynes down on the hood...]

...and then LEAPS into the air, dropping all his weight down on a kneedrop that crushes Haynes underneath him, denting the hood of the car even further!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: Kneedrop on the hood of the car! Goodness!

[Rage kneels on the dented metal, his chest heaving as he wipes the blood from his eyes. Referee Koji Sakai leans in, "Come on, Rage! Pin the man!" and then scampers away from a threatened backhand.]

"Nah, nah... it's over when I say it's over!"

[The former World Television Champion promptly wraps his hands around the throat of Haynes, squeezing the windpipe!]

GM: He's choking him!

BW: And it's totally legal! If he wants choke him straight to unconsciousness, nobody can stop him except Jackson Haynes!

[The official is pleading with Rage to break the choke as Haynes' arms and legs flail on the dented car hood.]

GM: Haynes is fighting it! Trying to pry the hands off his throat! Trying to-

[Rage abruptly breaks the choke, grabbing Haynes by the hair and SMASHING a fist down between the eyes once... twice... three times.]

GM: Rage pounding the skull of the Hammer...

[Climbing to his feet, Rage stomps Haynes between the eyes as well, leaving the former tag champion laid out on the hood of the car. The maniacal Rage spreads his arms wide, twirling slowly on the hood of the car.]

"You think you're a killer, Haynes?! You're nothing, man! Nothing but blood and dirt under my boot!"

[He plants a boot on the chest, striking a double bicep pose as the referee attempts to make a count on top of the car, slapping it once... twice...

...and again diving backwards as Rage removes his boot, throwing a kick towards him! He points angrily at Sakai.]

"YOU DON'T END THIS! I END IT! YOU HEAR ME?!"

[Sakai nods nervously as Rage leans down, dragging the bloodied Haynes off the hood of the car. He pushes him forward, standing near the windshield.]

GM: Both men on their feet up on the hood of that car and... ohh! Haynes with a desperation right hand!

[The crowd inside the arena cheers as the big man throws a second haymaker, scoring and knocking Rage down to a knee.]

GM: Two big shots by Haynes has Rage down again and- WAIT!

[Rage suddenly surges to his feet, lifting the 310 pounder into the air...

...and steps forward, the glass cracking as he steps on the windshield before stepping atop the roof of the car...]

GM: ARE YOU KIDDING ME?!

"THUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUD!"

"CRAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAASH!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[The crowd inside the Allstate Arena is roaring as Shadoe Rage slammed Jackson Haynes THROUGH the sunroof on the car they were on, sending him crashing into the inside of the vehicle as Rage flops down on the windshield, body wrecked with exertion.]

GM: HE SLAMMED HIM! HE SLAMMED HIM THROUGH THE SUNROOF!

BW: MY GOD!

[Rage rolls over onto his back, bloody bubbles popping in the corner of his mouth as a chuckle escapes.]

"You... aggggh... you wanted... to go... to hell with me, Haynes?! WELCOME TO HELL!"

[He laughs again as the referee leans in through a busted out window on the driver's side, checking to see if Haynes is okay.]

GM: The referee... I think he can stop this, Bucky. The rules say pinfall or submission but I think no one would complain if he stopped this right here and right now.

BW: Jackson Haynes would.

GM: He might. But he shouldn't! What kind of torture must someone put them through to keep going in this?! He's been cut with a broken bottle after he got hit

over the head with it! He's been thrown into the steel on these cars repeatedly! He just got slammed through a sunroof! His body is bloodied and broken and... well, we know Shadoe Rage will do this all night if he can.

BW: You don't think Jackson Haynes would?!

GM: Of course he WOULD... but the question is if he SHOULD! And the answer is, quite clearly, no! He should not go on! He should call it a night.

BW: But what about his whiny Lynch wife and his screaming Lynch brats at home?!

GM: He's done his family proud here tonight, Bucky. He fought for the honor of his father-in-law, Blackjack Lynch, and he's done so in a way he can be proud of. There is no shame in losing to a maniac like Shadoe Rage. None at all!

[Rage rolls to his knees, blood streaming off his head onto the hood of the car as he continues to laugh.]

GM: Listen to him, Bucky! He's laughing! He's laughing at this! He's trying to end a man's career and he thinks it's funny!

[He slowly raises his arms above his head, climbing to his feet with a triumphant shout.]

"YO, ADRIAN! WE DID IT!"

[Rage again laughs loudly, his body heaving with the effort as he lowers his arms, staring straight into the camera...]

"I told you... I told you I'd end him. I told you I'd-"

[...and like a monster rising from the grave, a bloodied Jackson Haynes suddenly rises up through the shattered sunroof, littered with new cuts on his body!]

GM: OH MY GOD! OH MY GOD!

[Haynes suddenly reaches out, hooking a shocked Rage around the throat with both hands, yanking him over the cracked windshield...

...and drags him through the broken sunroof into the interior of the car!]

GM: HAYNES PULLS HIM INTO THE CAR!

BW: HOW THE HELL IS HAYNES EVEN CONSCIOUS?!

GM: I HAVE NO IDEA BUT-

[The cameraman moves quickly, catching some partially obscured shots of Haynes hammering Rage with fists inside the car..

...and then works his way around to look through the driver's side of the car where we can see Haynes looping the seat belt around the face of Rage, the belt cutting into the mouth as Haynes yanks back on it!]

GM: AHHHH!

[Rage's face is pressed up against the glass, bloody streaks on the driver's side window as he struggles to get the belt from around his face. He flops backwards, flailing about as Haynes moves the belt lower..

...and hooks it around his throat!]

GM: OH MY!

BW: HE'S STRANGLING HIM WITH THE SEAT BELT!

GM: The referee's gotta put a stop to this! He's gotta get in there and stop this! Haynes is trying to choke the life out of him!

[Rage flails at the center console, smacking his hands against it, searching for a way out as his tongue lolls disgustingly out of his mouth.]

GM: Referee Sakai is screaming at Haynes to let him go! Begging him to-

[Suddenly, the driver's side window EXPLODES as Rage's foot connects with the glass, causing Sakai to jump backwards as the formerly muffled cries of a gasping Rage are now clear as day. Haynes shouts at him through a bloody sneer.]

"YOU WANT SOMEONE TO DIE, HUH?! YOU WANT TO END SOMEONE?!"

[Rage's limbs start to slow, the consciousness being pulled from his body as he again grasps at the center console...]

GM: Rage is fading, fans! Shadoo Rage is fading fast and-

[...and when Rage jerks his hand away from the console, pressing it into the wrist of Jackson Haynes, Haynes lets loose a howl of agony, abruptly dropping the seat belt, falling back against the passenger door as Rage shoves the belt away, coughing and gasping as he kicks at the driver door, knocking it open.]

GM: What did he...?

[The camera zooms in a little closer, showing Haynes grasping his wrist in pain...

...and a glowing red cigarette lighter lying discarded on the center console.]

GM: Oh.. god. I'm going to be sick, Bucky.

BW: Did he just... he burned him, Gordo! He burned him with that cigarette lighter! He saved himself with it!

GM: An absolutely disgusting display of... unlimited violence, as Shadoo Rage would say, being put on by these two men... and I hope Javier Castillo is happy with himself! This is NOT the kind of action we should be seeing here in the AWA, Bucky.

BW: Are you kidding me?! This is great!

GM: This is brutal. This is sadistic. This is disgusting. And this is NOT the sport of kings that you and I have spent our entire lives dedicated to.

[Rage slips out the driver's door, flopping over onto the hood of the other car next to it. He drags himself across it, leaving streaks of crimson on steel as he rolls off the hood onto the asphalt... finally outside the Ring of Iron.]

GM: He got out! Rage is outside this makeshift ring and... does that mean it's mercifully over?

BW: Why would it be over? It wasn't an escape match! He's gotta pin the man or make him submit!

[Rage, down on all fours, begins crawling across the asphalt.]

GM: I don't know, Bucky. It looks like Shadoe Rage has had enough.

[With a loud bellow of a scream, Jackson Haynes emerges from the wrecked out car, blood streaming from various cuts on his body, cradling his now-burnt wrist...]

BW: HAYNES HASN'T!

GM: And you're trying to tell me this man is going to be in the Rumble tonight still?! No way! No way!

[Haynes shoves his way past the other car, striding out into the empty parking lot where Rage continues to crawl, making his way towards one of the cement pillars.]

GM: Rage is trying to get the hell out of here, Bucky, but Jackson Haynes will NOT be denied his pound of flesh tonight! He came here to Chicago... he came back to the AWA... with vengeance on his mind. He had to watch his wife and children cry on Thanksgiving Night last year for what Rage did to Blackjack Lynch... and now he wants to make him pay for that grievous offense!

BW: You think Marissa Monet and her kid are crying somewhere right now, Bucky?

GM: I have no idea... Haynes catching up to Rage now...

[Haynes reaches down, hauling Shadoe Rage to his feet by the back of his pants, grabbing a handful of hair with the other...]

...and ROCKETS him into the cement pillar, causing Rage to SLAM chestfirst against it with a sickening thud, sliding off it and stumbling across the asphalt, falling to his knees facing the Ring of Iron!]

GM: Haynes puts him into that giant cement pillar... and now Rage is crawling back the other way! Desperately trying to get away... desperately trying to find a way to escape the wrath of Jackson Haynes!

[Rage crawls, shoving himself to his feet, stumbling wildly. He throws a glance over his shoulder as Haynes stalks behind him, ready to put an end to this brutal war.]

GM: Rage is heading back towards that school bus now...

[Falling against the back of the bus, Rage grasps for the handle on the door, swinging it open...]

GM: Rage just opened the back of the bus!

BW: That's where all the cool kids sat, Gordo.

GM: Huh. I always sat up front.

BW: I rest my case.

[The Canadian wildman pulls himself up into the bus, falling to his knees inside it as Haynes approaches.]

GM: Rage is running for his life right now! Jackson Haynes is... oh no.

BW: He's got another tire iron!

GM: Who the hell left that out there?!

[Haynes pulls himself up on the back of the bus, climbing through the rear door after Rage who we see fall backwards on the floor of the bus, begging off as he scoots away from the vengeful Haynes...]

GM: We're having a hard time seeing... can we get a better shot of-

[A loud "CRASH!" is heard as one of the bus window explodes thanks to an errant Jackson Haynes tire iron shot that narrowly misses a fleeing Shadoe Rage.]

GM: Good grief!

BW: He almost got him! He almost nailed him there!

[An abrupt cut shows the interior of the bus, the camera moving around wildly. Apologies to the motion sickness-stricken at home.]

GM: We've got a camera in the bus now... and look at Haynes menacing Shadoe Rage with that tire iron!

[The cameraman is standing several feet behind Haynes, watching as another swipe with the tire iron barely misses Rage who slides back as the weapon hits the window where he was, knocking it out too!]

BW: Hey... uhh... there's someone driving the bus!

GM: What?!

[As the camera shot settles down again, we can indeed see someone sitting behind the wheel of the bus. Someone tall and large but unmoving. With their back to us, it is impossible to see who it is. Shadoe Rage falls to the floor, scooting backwards, pleading for mercy as Haynes stands over him, shouting...]

"HEY DRIVER! THIS PIECE OF TRASH IS GETTING OFF AT THE NEXT STOP!"

[As they near the front of the bus, Shadoe rolls to the side, falling into a seat as Haynes steps up, raising the tire iron over his head...

...when the massive form behind the wheel rises, turning to face the duo...]

GM: WHAT THE HELL?!

BW: IT'S DEREK RAGE!

[...and lashes out with his hand, wrapping it around the bloody skull of Jackson Haynes...]

GM: HE'S GOT HAYNES!

"CRAAAAAAAAAAAAAAASH!"
"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[...and DRIVES the back of his head through the bus window!]

GM: GOOD GOD ALMIGHTY!

[Haynes goes limp under Derek Rage's grasp, the seven footer dragging the Hammer back into the aisle, still in the clawhold...]

GM: Derek Rage... what the hell is HE doing here?!

BW: He's helping his brother!

GM: Helping him?! He HATES him! His brother got him FIRED the last time he worked here!

[The seven foot Rage drags Jackson Haynes down the aisle of the bus towards the back, our cameraman backpedaling fast, trying not to fall as the big man shouts "MOVE!" at him.]

We cut to the outside the bus, a different camera shot as our inside-the-bus guy comes leaping out, screaming "OUT OF THE WAY! OUT OF THE WAY!" as he gets clear...

...just as Derek Rage steps to the open bus door, holding Jackson Haynes in his powerful grip...]

GM: What's he doing up there?!

[Rage HOISTS Haynes into the air as he leaps off the back of the bus...

...and DRIVES him down onto the back window of the car with a thunderous clawhold slam!]

"THUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUD!"
"CRAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAASH!"
"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: HAMMER OF GOD! HAMMER OF GOD SLAM ON HAYNES!

[Derek Rage stays on him, leaving the clawhold in place on the bloodied skull of Haynes...]

GM: He puts Haynes THROUGH the back of that car... and this is academic now.

BW: It would be, Gordo... but where the heck is Shadoe Rage?!

GM: I don't... oh... my... god.

[A wide shot of the bus reveals EXACTLY where Shadoe Rage is!]

BW: HE'S ON TOP OF THE BUS! HOW'D HE GET UP THERE?!

[A bloodied and battered Shadoe Rage stumbles along the roof, muttering to himself as he reaches the rear of it.]

GM: GET HIM DOWN FROM THERE! GET HIM DOWN!

[Shadoe Rage looks down at the prone Haynes, waving a wild arm to instruct his brother to get out of the way...]

GM: DON'T DO THIS! DO NOT DO THIS!

BW: How the heck high is he up there?! Fifteen feet?! Twenty?!

GM: I HAVE NO IDEA BUT- NOOOOOOOOOO!

[His arms held high, Rage leaps into the air, soaring through the quiet of the empty parking lot, dangerous thoughts on his mind as he drops down... down... down...]

...and DRIVES his elbow down into the heart of the prone Jackson Haynes!]

"THUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUD!"

"CRAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAASH!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: OHHHHHHH MYYYYYYYY STARRRRRRRRRRRS!

[The impact causes both men to go still. Koji Sakai stands nearby, hands on top his head, shocked at the death-defying move from the AWA's resident madman.]

GM: They're down! They're both down! They're not moving! Not one bit and-

[Rage flops over, his arm barely dropping across the chest of Haynes! The referee looks puzzled for a moment and then seems to have a "screw it!" moment as he lunges forward, slapping the roof of the car once... twice... three times!]

GM: That's it!

[The referee points to Shadoe Rage who rolls off of Haynes, rolling right off the car onto the asphalt of the parking lot. A groan of pain escapes him as the referee shouts "THE WINNER IS RAGE!" pointing to the bloodied and broken former Television Champion who has rolled onto his back on the ground, his chest heaving as he grunts again.]

GM: Shadoe Rage has won this utter war of attrition between himself and Jackson Haynes and... wow. I would never call this a wrestling match, fans. This was a fight. Pure and simple. It was a war. Javier Castillo... I hope you're satisfied.

BW: I think he will never be satisfied, Gordo.

GM: Uh oh...

[The gigantic Derek Rage steps past the broken form of Jackson Haynes, still unmoving on the car as Rage stands, looking down at his brother.]

GM: And we know there's absolutely no love lost there, Bucky. This could erupt into another fight very easily.

BW: I still don't even understand what he's doing here!

[Derek Rage looks down at Shadoe, long and hard...

...and then slowly extends his long arm, his giant hand reaching out towards his estranged brother.]

GM: Wow... look at this...

[Shadoe Rage looks up, eyes stinging with blood as he glares coldly... disbelievingly even... at his brother...

...and then slowly raises his own hand to accept it. Derek hauls Shadoe to his feet, the two glaring at one another from close range.]

GM: The Prophets of Rage are standing tall... together... in the parking lot of the Allstate Arena. You talk about mayhem... I think we just saw it.

[Derek Rage releases his brother's hand, Shadoe falling back against the dented car as his giant of a brother simply turns and walks away...

...and we fade to...]

<TO BE CONTINUED!>