



SHOWTIME

Saturday, May 5th, 2018 from the Center Stage Studios in Atlanta, Georgia

[We fade up as a very grand and booming instrumental is heard - something that could've been composed by John Williams... and in fact WAS composed by John Williams as the Walt Disney Company spared no expense for its newest content provider. We get a shot of what appears to be a film strip on screen, the AWA World Title the first image... but others quickly flash by - Ryan Martinez and Supreme Wright at SuperClash VI... Julie Somers moonsaulting onto Kurayami from SuperClash IX... Stevie Scott and Juan Vasquez squaring off all the way back at SuperClash I... quicker shots of Marcus Broussard, City Jack, Calisto Dufresne giving way to Jack Lynch, Jordan Ohara, and Kerry Kendrick... a glimpse of Melissa Cannon fading to Michelle Bailey fading to Harley Hamilton... Jim Watkins battling Joe Petrow... Ron Houston using a Fade To Black on an opponent... Hannibal Carver diving off the video wall at Eternally Extreme 2... Ayako Fujiwara delivering a German Suplex to Lauryn Rage... Violence Unlimited brawling with the Lynch Brothers... Shadoe Rage jumping off the top of a massive steel cage... Jackson Hunter swinging a shovel... Derrick Williams catching Ohara with a Future Shock as Ohara dives from the top... Next Gen using a Doomsday Device on the Soldiers of Fortune... and on... and on... and on...

...until they all explode into a logo that reads "THE AWA ON ESPN."

A voiceover.]

"ESPN welcomes you to the following presentation of the American Wrestling Alliance."

[The music and imagery fade and are replaced with 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."

[Back to black for a moment...

With a blackened screen only lit by a white spotlight, a song begins to play.

It is Panic At The Disco's new single "Say Amen (Saturday Night)"

And that black screen changes to show past highlights of AWA superstars in action - starting with a shot of Kimmy Bailey and Ayako Fujiwara delivering a sandwich lariat on a helpless foe...

...and we cut to a studio shot of Bailey, Fujiwara, and Molly Bell posing for the camera, Bell clawing at the air as Bailey strikes a double bicep pose and Fujiwara crosses her arms confidently.]

#And every mornin' when I wake up
I wanna be who I couldn't say I'd ever been#

[Cut to Omega being hurled off the top rope by Polemos in an assisted splash...

...and cut to a studio shot of Omega striking his signature pose as Polemos towers behind him, tugging a glove into place.]

#But it's so much more than I ever was
If every night I go to sleep knowin' #

[Cut to Harley Hamilton and Cinder hoisting the Women's World Tag Team Titles overhead as Kelly Kowalski and Casey Cash celebrate in the background...

...and then to a studio shot of the foursome, smirks all around as Cash gleefully polishes the belts upon Seductive and Destructive's shoulders.]

#That I gave everything that I had to give
Then it's all I could've asked for#

[Shadoc Rage comes soaring off the top rope, dropping a Death From Above double axehandle on a victim...

...and then a studio shot of Rage decked out to the nines, pointing to the camera, nodding his head confidently.]

#I've been standing up beside everything I've ever said, but
Oh, it's Saturday night, yeah#

[Cut to a quick montage of shots of AWA superstars in action: Atlas Armstrong applying the torture rack backbreaker... Odysseus Allah winning the Battle Royal at SuperClash... Sid Osborne diving off the apron into a cannonball... Trey Carson delivering a big boot to the mouth.]

#I pray for the wicked on the weekend
Mama, can I get another amen?#

[Victoria June lifting an opponent in the Scorpion Crosslock as Kayla Cristol soars off the top rope with a leg drop... Ricki Toughill driving her hind quarters into someone's face with a running hip attack... Laura Davis, Carolina Colton, and Trish Wallace standing over a fallen foe...]

#Oh, oh, oh, oh, oh, oh, oh, it's Saturday night, yeah#

[Derrick Williams delivering a Future Shock... Odin Gunn planting a foe with a Death Valley Driver... Jackson Hunter waffling someone with a shovel... Jack Lynch locking the Iron Claw on an opponent.]

#Swear to God, I ain't ever gonna repent
Mama, can I get another amen?#

[The American Idols throwing a double superkick... Masks For Money mauling a victim in the corner... Wes Taylor and Tony Donovan using their assisted CattleBuster DDT... the Soldiers of Fortune cutting a promo as Meekly wildly waves the flag.]

#Oh, oh, oh, oh, oh, oh, oh, it's Saturday night, yeah#

[Michelle Bailey flattens someone with a Britney Spear... Hannibal Carver drops someone with the Mind Eraser...]

#If I had one more day to wish
If I had one more day#

[Lauryn Rage unleashes a Perfect Punch... the Peach Pits pose at the top of the aisle... Kerry Kendrick drives home a running kneelift as Miss Sandra Hayes looks on... Raphael Rhodes smashes in a cheekbone with a forearm crossface.]

#To be better than I could have ever been
If I had one more day to wish#

[Jordan Ohara sails off the top with a Phoenix Flame... Next Gen drop someone with the Generation Gap... Julie Somers uncorks a top rope moonsault.]

#If I had one more day
I could be better, but, baby#

[James Lynch smashes someone with a steel chair... Ryan Martinez spikes someone with a Brainbuster...]

#Oh, it's Saturday night, yeah#

[...and as the final lyric echoes out, Supernova holds the World Title over his head...

...and with a flash, we find ourselves inside the Center Stage Studios in Atlanta, Georgia.

The initial wide shot of the makeshift arena shows the expected ring with black ringside mats all around it. The ringposts and apron are a deep purple color while the ropes and turnbuckles are gold-colored. There are no barricades surrounding the ringside arena, leaving an empty space between the ring and the front row of fans seated on bleachers stretching up several rows towards the rafters where flags from countries around the world are hanging. We can also see a trio of large TV screens hanging high above the ring - high enough not to be caught in a standard camera shot but low enough for the fans in the arena to be able to see.

The shot pans across the crowd, showing the entrance staircase to land on the stage where we see our familiar announce table set up on one side and an interview podium on the other in front of another TV screen with the Showtime logo pulsating on it. A large black curtain has been set up as a backdrop behind the entire elevated stage area with small white LED lights stitched into it to create a starry effect.

As our shot lands on the interview platform, we catch our first glimpse of one of our hosts for tonight's action - a stunning brunette in a deep purple dress with a sparkling silver necklace hanging around her neck and a huge smile on her face. This is Mariah Wolfe.]

MW: IT'S... SHOOOOWTIIIIIIIME!

[The crowd in Atlanta's Center Stage Studios ROARS as Wolfe grins.]

MW: The American Wrestling Alliance is ON! THE! AIR! Right here in Atlanta, Georgia at Center Stage Studios for the newest addition to ESPN's stable of shows - Showtime! I'm Mariah Wolfe and I'll be one of your hosts for the next two hours... and-

[A boisterous voice sings out.]

"And doooooon't you! Forget about me!"

[The crowd cheers again as Sweet Daddy Williams sashays into view, shaking what the Good Lord gave him to a big crowd reaction!]

MW: How could we EVER forget about you, Sweet Daddy Williams?

SDW: You're too kind, Miss Mariah, too kind indeed... and I KNOW Hotlanta would NEVER forget good ol' Sweet Daddy Williams! Hotlanta, lemme hear ya!

[He cups a hand to his ear, soaking up the cheers of the roaring crowd!]

SDW: That's what I like to hear, baby! And Miss Mariah, there's a reason these people are here shoutin' themselves hoarse and it ain't JUST because of you and me, girlfriend!

[Mariah chuckles.]

MW: You're absolutely right, my friend! It is the Bon Voyage edition of Showtime here tonight as we get ready to hit the road for the summer starting next week in Los Angeles!

SDW: The City of Angels is callin' our names, Miss Mariah, but before we hit the road, jack, we got one heck of a show for our favorite home crowd!

MW: A big night ahead of us - we've got the AWA National Title on the line in our Main Event with Jordan Ohara defending the gold against Raphael Rhodes!

[A big cheer goes up for that!]

MW: We've got tag team action by the plenty - the Lariatos are here... the Blackjacks are here... the Bishops are here taking on the Aces In The Hole!

[More cheers!]

MW: Ricki Toughill's got an opponent waiting for her as well... and the only ones who know who it is are E-Girl MAX!

[Boos for E-Girl MAX... mostly.]

MW: "Cannonball" Lee Connors is taking on Dirt Dog Unique Allah! Trey Carson's here in action! Wade Walker's got someone gunning for him as well and that's just the tip of the iceberg! And we're not going to waste a single second more as we head up to the ring for our opening match... and on the call for that one and all the matches all night long are Lori Dane and Ben Waterson!

[Mariah points off-camera and our camera whip-pans over to the announce desk where Dane and Waterson are seated.]

LD: Thanks, Mariah... thank you, Sweet Daddy Williams... and Ben Waterson, The Battle of London is in the books, we've got Royal Crown champions which we'll be

talking about as the night goes on, but right now, all eyes are on Dodger Stadium in less than a month's time for the hottest event of the summer - Memorial Day Mayhem!

BW: We rocked the UK so hard, we caused it to break off from the EU, Dane!

LD: Ben, that happened like... two years ago. We didn't have-

BW: And if the people of California aren't careful, we just might send a crack right down the middle of the state and send SoCal floating off into the ocean!

LD: That seems seismically unlike-

BW: NERD!

[Dane sighs.]

LD: It's gonna be one of those nights, huh? Let's go the ring.

[Dane shakes her head as we whip-pan again over to the ring, showing Megumi Sato in the middle of the squared circle ready to get down to business.]

MS: The opening contest here on Showtime is a tag team match scheduled for one fall with a fifteen minute time limit! Introducing first... in the ring at this ti-

[Megumi is cut off by someone jumping in from off-camera, snatching the mic out of her hand, and bellowing with a whip of his long, frizzy mane...]

"ARE YOU READY TO ROCK?!"

[The fans boos Jimi Jam Jester appropriately as he headbobs his way around, looking out seemingly oblivious to their reaction.]

JJJ: I SAID... HOTLANTA, G-A... ARE YOU READY TO ROOOOOOCK?!

[More boos rain down on Jester who grins with a nod.]

JJJ: WELL, ALRIIIIGHT!

[He smirks as he hands the mic back to Sato, giving her a little pat on the shoulder as he does. She cringes, raising the mic again.]

MS: As I was saying... already in the ring at this time... at a total combined weight of 484 pounds... from the Sunset Strip...

...Laredo Morrison... Jimi JAAAAAAAAAM Jester...

..THE BAAAAAAAAANNNNNNNNNND!

[Jester approaches the corner, leaping high (or as high as Jester can manage) to slap the outstretched hand way up in the air of Laredo Morrison.]

BW: I love these guys, Dane.

LD: That is very much on brand for you, Ben Waterson.

BW: I feel like I should be offended by that... but all I wanna know is, do you think after they win tonight, they'll play their new single?

LD: New single?!

BW: "Love Me Luscious." Haven't heard it yet?

LD: I don't... wait... what?

[Jester is now waving in Lori's direction from the ring.]

LD: Oh, good grief.

[Megumi raises the mic.]

MS: Annnnnnnnd their opponents...

"NO EVIL CAN ESCAPE..."

"...OMEGA!"

[With a flash of light, accompanied by John Barry's majestic "Overture" from "The Black Hole," a caped figure in black, royal blue, and gold emerges from the entrance. He crooks his elbows, places his wrists just above his hips, and turns his palms upward.]

MS: From Neptune... THIS. IS. OMEGAAAAAA!

[Then John Barry foreboding "Main Theme" from "The Black Hole" plays as the arena lights dim to a sickly red.]

MS: And his partner... from The Darkness... he is the God of War...

...POOOOLEEEEEMOOOOS!

[The towering demigod sweeps his way into view, joining his much-smaller partner on stage. Omega offers up a high five... and perhaps surprisingly, gets one before the duo heads towards the ring. The weedy Omega charges down the aisle, his cape billowing behind him, occasionally outstretching his hands to slap palms with the adjacent fans.]

LD: Now THIS is more my speed, Ben!

BW: And THAT is on brand for you, Dane.

LD: And I'm not offended one bit by that. Omega and Polemos, making their return to tag team competition here tonight after both competitors recently suffered injuries at the hands of Odin Gunn and the Desperadoes. It was just two weeks ago right here on Showtime where we saw Omega back in action against the World Television Champion Odin Gunn, cashing in his guaranteed title shot after his Run The Rankings victory... and now the big man is back by his side and these two are looking to make some noise in the World Tag Team Title division.

[Polemos goes stomping down the aisle, his cloak made of animal skins draped across his broad shoulders. He tugs on the cuff of his gloved hand as he approaches ringside, before reaching up to grab the top rope the floor to pull his giant frame onto the ring apron.

Omega slides into the ring, leaving his cape on the floor. He climbs onto the middle robe and cuts another of his trademark "Omega poses," before nodding and giving a cool "thumbs up" to the fans.]

LD: These two are certainly one of the most popular duos on the roster and you gotta think they're looking to get this win tonight to put them in perfect position to

challenge the winner of next week's battle between World Tag Team Champions Next Gen and the Gold Standard as they head into Vegas for Saturday Night Wrestling.

BW: Hahhahahah!

LD: What's that about?

BW: I'm just imagining all the terrible, horrible, WONDERFUL things that Mifune could do to Omega.

[Polemos unclasps his cloak, which he lets fall to the floor. His ring attire looks to be stitched together from a variety of hides, dyed assorted shades of a dark, putrefied red, and his horned mask appears more stylized, resembling a dragon skull, open at the jaw to show a whiskered chin. He steps over the top rope easily, and glares over to Omega, who nods and returns a cheesy "thumbs up."]

LD: Both teams huddling up, a little last minute strategy as we're just about ready to get things started here on Showtime... this special Bon Voyage edition of Showtime.

[Omega whispers something to Polemos who nods before exiting... and then Jimi Jam waves his partner out of the ring on the other side.]

LD: It looks like it's going to be Jimi Jam Jester starting things off against Omega... and this is an interesting clash to be sure.

BW: Omega's got his work cut out for him in there with The Talent.

LD: I'm sorry... the what?

BW: The Talent. In every great band, there's the Talent and The Big Man. Springsteen and Clemons. Axl and Slash. Michael and Tito.

LD: I... huh?

[Jester grins, high-stepping his way out to the middle of the ring where Omega awaits him...]

"DING! DING! DING!"

[...and he lunges at Omega who ducks under, rocking him with a right hand... and another... and a third!]

LD: Omega lighting up Jester at the outset of this one!

[Grabbing the arm, Omega goes to whip Jester across but Jester reverses it, sending Omega into the ropes...]

LD: Oof! Facefirst goes Omega down with the drop toehold!

[...and Jester is immediately up, going into a celebratory dance with lots of arm waving and hip thrusting to jeers from the crowd.]

LD: Jimi Jam certainly seems proud of himself after that.

[Jester heads towards his corner, chatting it up with a grinning Laredo Morrison who hypes up his lead man.]

"That was great, baby! You're the man, Jimi!"

[Omega gets to a knee on the mat, looking up at the taunting Jester...]

LD: Jimi Jam Jester... Ben, come on! You'd think they'd won the way he's acting!

BW: It's just a matter of time now if you ask me. Can you imagine Jimi Jam against the Shadow Wolf?

LD: Hmmm.

BW: Hey... HEY! Why are you smiling like that?!

[As Omega gets to his feet, he advances on Jester who drops back, hands raised with a "whoawhoawhoawhoa WHOOOOOA!" as he backs towards his corner. Omega is stopped by the official to jeers from the crowd.]

LD: Jimi Jam Jester backing down from Omega...

BW: Well, that Martian was gonna attack him!

LD: Neptunian.

BW: I'm sorry, I don't speak Polish.

[As the referee backs away, Omega lunges into another tieup, backing Jester towards the ropes...]

...but Jester uses his leverage advantage to spin Omega's back into the ropes before they get there, landing a sneaky cheapshot right hand to the jaw!]

LD: Hard right hand by... what did you call him? The Talent?

BW: That's right!

LD: If he's the Talent, this Band is in trouble.

[Jester takes a step back, crossing his arms...]

LD: Ohhh! Cross arm chop to the throat!

[Omega collapses to a knee, coughing violently as the referee warns Jester for the illegal strike.]

BW: You still want to badmouth Jimi Jam?

LD: Rules or no rules, that was an impactful blow...

[Jester brings Omega back to his feet, whipping him across the ring. He goes into a wild kata mid-ring...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

[...and drops the oncoming Omega with a knife edge chop complete with his best Van Damme pose afterwards!]

LD: ...and the... I guess you'd call them martial arts skills... coming into play here.

[And again, Jester's on a celebratory parade, circling around the ring as Omega drags himself across the mat towards his corner. Jester is in his own corner, running his mouth to Morrison.]

"Did you see that one, big man?! He's down and he's STAYING down, you hear me, big man? This kid ain't got nothing on The Talent! He ain't got nothin' on the Big Man! He ain't got nothin' on any of us!"

[And while Jester is talking at Morrison, Omega reaches up...]

LD: We've got a tag!

[...and the big man steps over the top rope to cheers from the crowd, walking out to mid-ring as an alarmed Morrison points him out to Jester who is not paying a lick of attention, still talking up a storm...]

"Ain't nothin' to worry about, Big Man! I got this guy! You get the night off, ya hear me?"

[...and as he spins around to face down Omega...

...he finds himself face to masked face with the God of War, causing a high-pitched yelp to emerge from him before he collapses to the mat, scrambling backwards to laughter from the AWA faithful.]

LD: Looks like Jimi Jam wants absolutely no part of the God of War, Ben.

BW: This masked freak wears skins and pelts to the ring! Can you blame him?!

[Jester slides back his corner on his rump, reaching up a desperate hand as Laredo Morrison confidently reaches over the top to slap it.]

LD: But if Jester is afraid of Polemos, Laredo Morrison certainly is NOT!

BW: Big Man coming in!

[The six foot eight, 321 pound Morrison stomps across the ring, getting right up in the masked man's masked face, jabbing a finger in his chest as he verbally lays into him...]

LD: Uh oh. This might not turn out well for-

[...and from the finger to the fist, Morrison rears back and throws only to have the mighty Polemos block the punch before throwing one of his own.]

LD: -ohh! Big right hand by Polemos! Make it two!

[A third one sends Morrison stumbling backwards towards the ropes...

...which is where he quickly sticks a thumb in the eyehole of Polemos, blinding the big man!]

BW: Haha! Even a God of War can't be spared from the Greco Roman thumb to the eye, Dane!

LD: Polemos temporarily blinded, Morrison spins him back into the ropes and-
OHHHH!

[Morrison throws a big standing clothesline, flipping the masked man backwards over the top rope...

...where he lands on his feet on the floor to a HUGE ROAR from the Atlanta crowd!]

LD: ON HIS FEET!

[Polemos reaches under the ropes, hooking the ankles of Morrison to yank him off his feet and under the ropes to the outside where he POPS him with an uppercut!]

LD: Big right hand by Polemos this time... and that one rocked Laredo Morrison!

[Morrison staggers away, circling around the ringpost as Polemos starts after him...]

“OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

[...and a running Omega LEAPS off the ring apron, flipping into a somersault that wipes out Morrison on the outside to a BIG CHEER!]

LD: OMEGA TAKES TO THE SKYYYYYY!

BW: He’s not the legal man! What kind of nonsense is this, Dane?!

LD: Omega’s been through a rough go of things lately at the hands of the Desperadoes and he’s taking it out on Laredo Morrison right about now!

[On his feet, Omega strikes his signature pose to more cheers from the Atlanta crowd as Polemos drags Morrison off the floor, tossing him back into the ring.]

LD: Polemos puts Morrison back inside... and he’s coming in after him now. Omega and Polemos turning momentum on their side and looking to take advantage of it.

[With both big men from their respective teams back in the ring, Polemos is advancing on the stunned Morrison who falls into the neutral corner as he gets to his feet, throwing a big right hand at the masked man!]

LD: Morrison not out of it quite yet and-

“WHAAAAAACK!”

“OHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

LD: -a JAW-JACKING UPPERCUT BY THE GOD OF WAR!

[A second uppercut lands before Polemos gives his gloves a tug, whipping Morrison across the ring where he hits the neutral corner hard, staggering back out...]

LD: OHHH! BIG BOOT! CHECK THE DENTAL WORK ON THAT MAN!

[With Morrison down, Polemos covers, whipping his head back as the referee counts once... twice...]

LD: Morrison kicks out at two.

BW: The Big Man’s not goin’ down without a fight, Dane.

LD: No doubt about that. Both of these teams likely looking to impress the front office who will be looking for new challengers to the tag titles no matter the result next weekend in Las Vegas.

[Climbing to his feet, Polemos pulls Morrison up with him, muscling up the 312 pounder...]

LD: BIIIIIIIG BODY SLAM BY POLEMOS!

[...and with Morrison down, Polemos bounces off the ropes, leaping high...]

LD: AND A LEGDROP AS WELL! ONNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOO!

[...but again Morrison kicks out, escaping the pin attempt.]

LD: Two count for Polemos, trying to wear down his counterpart in The Band - both these men serving as the size and muscle for their much-smaller partners.

[With Morrison down, Omega sticks out his hand, shouting to his partner...]

LD: And on cue, that much-smaller partner wants back in there... and there's the tag!

[The crowd cheers the tag...

...but is immediately alarmed as Polemos yanks his partner by the hair into a front facelock...]

LD: What in the...?

[...lifting Omega up for a suplex, twisting...]

LD: He's got him up annnnnnd...

[...and THROWS him down in a front layout on top of the prone Morrison!]

LD: ...INNOVATIVE DOUBLE-TEAM OFFENSE BY POLEMOS AND OMEGA!

BW: You got scared senseless there, Dane. You thought the big bad monster was going to turn this runt into paste. Geeky paste.

LD: Polemos certainly has a dark history, serving as muscle for Veronica Westerly and the rest of the Korugun Corporation for a big chunk of 2017... another two count for Omega there and this opening match on the Bon Voyage edition of Showtime continues...

[As Omega climbs to his feet, he turns towards the boisterous and obnoxious voice of Jimi Jam Jester loudly and shrilly complaining about "the illegal double team"...

...and Omega responds by running into the corner and throwing a dropkick that knocks Jester off the apron to the floor!]

LD: OH! Down goes Jimi Jam to the outside! That'll shut him up... for a moment at least.

BW: You got a problem with The Talent speaking truth to power?!

LD: It wasn't truth at all! There was a tag! It wasn't an illegal doubleteam!

BW: But it COULD have been!

[Omega jerks around at a shouted warning from the crowd, twisting to bury a right hand into the ribs of the risen Laredo Morrison who is looking for a double axehandle!]

LD: Omega goes downstairs - rights and lefts!

[With Morrison reeling, Omega dashes to the ropes, leaping to the middle rope, springing back as he twists around...

...and lands on Morrison, wrapping his legs around the head...]

LD: WHOOOOOOOAA! SPRINGING HURRICANRANA BY OMEGA!

BW: Do they even HAVE hurricanes on Neptune?! What's the weather like there?!

LD: I don't have the slightest clue, Ben.

[Omega scrambles up, watching as Morrison struggles up off the mat, charging in on him...]

LD: Another dropkick! And back to the buckles goes Morrison!

[Swinging an arm into the air, the crowd cheers as Omega leaps to the middle rope, holding up his fist for all to see...]

"ONE!"

"TWO!"

"THREE!"

"FOUR!"

"FIVE!"

"SIX!"

"SEVEN!"

[...but before another count can come down, Jimi Jam Jester climbs up on the middle rope, reaching up with his lanky frame and long arms...]

LD: OHHH! HE GOES TO THE EYES ON OMEGA!

[...and as Omega leans over, rubbing his eyes, Jester loops his hands around the back of the neck. He leaps, jumping off the apron as Omega comes flopping down off the middle rope, his throat being SNAPPED down across the top!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

LD: Now THAT'S an illegal action, Ben!

BW: Oh yeah?! And I suppose Omega was just giving him some lovetaps with those clenched fists!

[Omega crashes down on the mat, flailing and kicking as he coughs...

...and a grinning Jimi Jam Jester soon finds himself on the run, the masked Polemos in hot pursuit!]

LD: Jester's running for his life on the outside here in the Center Stage Studios in Atlanta!

BW: But in the meantime, The Band's got Omega right where they want him, Dane!

[Dragging a flailing Omega off the mat, Morrison chucks him towards the ropes, catching him on the rebound...]

LD: LIFT! PIVOT! AND DRIIIIIIVES HIM DOWWWWN! POWERSLAM BY MORRISON!

[...and with Omega still struggling for air, Morrison hooks the leg tightly.]

LD: We've got one! We've got two! We've got- noooooo! Out at two! Omega just barely gets that shoulder up off the mat to keep himself in this one. Close call for the team of Omega and Polemos!

BW: And as big of a fan of The Band as I am, Dane, that would've been a HUGE upset!

LD: It certainly would. Omega and Polemos are currently ranked the number three contenders to the tag titles held by Daniel Harper and Howie Somers, Next Gen.

BW: For another week.

LD: We'll see about that. I've got a feeling Harper and Somers are ready for Takeshi Mifune and Bret Grayson.

BW: How can anyone EVER be ready for an Olympic gold medalist and the Shadow Wolf?

[Pulling Omega off the mat while barking at the official, Morrison delivers a two-handed shove to the chest, knocking Omega back into the corner. The so-called Big Man steps in, striking a single bicep pose...]

LD: OH!

[...and lands a standing clothesline...]

LD: OHHH!

[...and another...]

LD: OHHHHHHH!

[...and another, Morrison shouting out "BAM!" with each one delivered.]

BW: Looks like Omega bought a ticket to the Gun Show!

[Morrison cuts off the attack at a bellow from the official, shaking his head before LAUNCHING Omega three-quarters of the way across the ring with a king-sized biel throw!]

LD: OMEGA NEARLY GOT SENT HOME LIKE ET, BEN!

BW: The kid took flight there thanks to Laredo Morrison... and look at here, Dane... The Talent is looking for the kill!

[Jester thrusts his arm in repeatedly, nodding his head and practically begging to be tagged back in.]

LD: There's the tag to Jimi Jam Jester...

[Jester immediately pulls Omega up, pushing him back into the neutral corner where he grabs hold of the back of Omega's head...

...and with a quick whip of the head, sending his wild mane flopping around, Jester lands a headbutt...]

LD: Headbutt connects... maybe? I can't really tell with all that hair flying!

BW: And the hits keep comin', Dane! The Headbanger's Ball is on!

[A handful more headbutts presumably land, leaving Omega stunned as Jester charges from the corner, pulling Omega with him before leaping into the air...]

LD: OHHH! HAIRPULL FACESLAM! OMEGA'S FACE DRIVEN INTO THE MAT!

[...and with Omega laid out, Jester looks for another pin attempt.]

LD: Jester makes the cover - The Band for the wiiiiii... no! Omega kicks out again at two!

[The crowd cheers the resiliency of Omega as Jester complains to the official, shouting "ONETWOTHREEREFCOMEONNNNNN!" as the official holds up two fingers in response.]

LD: Jimi Jam didn't seem to like the count there but the match goes on...

[With Omega down on the mat, Jester backs up, measuring him, and then with a three-step jog, he leaps up...]

LD: ...OHHHH! KNEE BETWEEN THE EYES!

[Jester lands the kneedrop, rolling through it to sit on the mat, a wicked grin on his face as he lolls his tongue out of his mouth with a more subdued "yeaaaah, alright!" than we heard earlier.]

LD: Jimi Jam Jester and Laredo Morrison have turned this thing around and now it's The Band who are in control of this opening tag match on Showtime...

[Jester comes up to his feet, looking over the corner where Morrison gives a nod, swinging his leg up on the top rope...

...and with a handful of mask, Jester RAMS Omega's head into the raised boot before tagging Morrison back in.]

LD: Laredo Morrison-

BW: The Big Man.

LD: -back and legal in the ring... and what in the world is he doing now?

[To the jeers of the AWA faithful, Morrison is playing to the crowd, clapping his hands, cupping his hand to his ear...]

LD: Uhhhh.

BW: I can barely hear myself! This place is going crazy!

LD: What in the world are you - and he - talking about?!

[...but while LaredoMania is going wild, Omega is crawling like a madman towards his corner where Polemos is waiting for him, a gloved hand outstretched across the ring...]

LD: Omega's going for it! Omega's going for the tag!

[...but before he can get there, Morrison comes rushing over, drilling Polemos with a right hand to jeers... and then planting himself in front of Omega, cutting him off and pulling him to his feet...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[...where Omega leaps up, snapping his boot off the back of the head!]

LD: BACK BRAIN KICK CONNECTS!

[Omega pushes up to his knees, looking over the prone Morrison...]

LD: ANNNNNNNNNND...

[...and with a diving lunge...]

LD: TAG!

[...but Morrison swings a knee up, catching him in the ribs in mid-dive!]

BW: Ha! I don't think so, Dane!

LD: So close right there but Morrison blocks it and... HERE COMES POLEMOS!

[An enraged God Of War swings a leg over the top rope, looking to get some payback for Morrison's right hand...]

...but the official bravely dives in front of Polemos, trying to block his path.]

LD: The referee got in there! He's trying to keep Polemos from getting in there illegally and... what the heck is Jester doing?!

[Rushing in with the referee's back turn, Jester smirks before raising his arms over his head, clapping his hands together...]

LD: Oh, come on!

BW: What? I heard a tag - didn't you?!

LD: I heard one but I definitely didn't SEE one!

[Jester drags Morrison to his feet before turning their attention to Omega, whipping him across as Polemos is forced out...]

LD: Shoots him in annnnnd...

[...and with the arms around each other's shoulders, they deliver a double big boot to an incoming Omega!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[As the referee turns around, he finds Omega covered by Jester, diving down to count...]

LD: He's not legal, ref! He's not legal!

[...but the official counts anyways, once... twice...]

LD: OUT JUST IN TIIIIIME!

[Jester shrieks "WHAAAAT?!" at the official before climbing to his feet, stomping angrily a few times before a shout from Morrison gets him back on track.]

LD: Jester's pulling Omega up...

BW: Finish him! Close out your set with a bang, Jimi Jam!

[Jester jams Omega into a front facelock, bellowing "IT'S OVER, BABY!"]

LD: He IS looking to finish it! He's looking for Going Platinum!

[The former rock star jerks his head back and forth, his hair flipping around as he starts swaying his hips...]

LD: Jester's got him hooked for that swinging neckbreaker and...

[...but before Jester can execute his signature maneuver, Omega straightens up...]

LD: BAAAAACKDROPS HIS WAY OUT OF IT!

[Omega collapses to his knees, crawling forward as the crowd gets louder until...]

LD: TAG!

[...and in comes the mighty Polemos, charging hard towards the rising Jester!]

LD: CLOTHESLINE ON JESTER!

[Polemos jerks around, charging across the ring...]

LD: AND HE SENDS MORRISON TO THE FLOOR BEFORE HE CAN COME IN!

[The crowd is ROARING for Polemos as he tugs his glove, shoving his arm up into the air for all to see...]

LD: He's calling for the chokeslam!

"TEN MINUTES GONE BY! FIVE MINUTES REMAIN!"

BW: There may only be five minutes left in the time limit but if he hits the chokeslam, he's not gonna need five seconds!

[As Jester regains his feet, Polemos reaches out, wrapping his hand around the throat!]

LD: HE'S GOT HIM HOOKED!

[The crowd is ROARING as Jester swats helplessly at the grasping hand...]

LD: He's gonna-

[...but before Polemos can lift Jester into the air, his ankle is grabbed from the outside by Laredo Morrison!]

LD: Morrison from the floor!

BW: The Big Man makes the save! Jester was in trouble but Morrison bails him out!

[With a mighty yank, Morrison pulls Polemos off his feet, dragging him under the ropes to the outside...]

LD: Morrison pulls him out to the floor and-

"CLAAAAAAAAAANG!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[...and RAMS Polemos' masked skull into the steel ringpost!]

LD: THE SKULL MEETS THE STEEL ON THE FLOOR!

[Polemos staggers away, leaning heavily on the ring apron for support as Morrison trashtalks him angrily...]

LD: Polemos is in some trouble and... OMEGA!

[...and the crowd ROARS as Omega HURLS himself off the top rope!]

“OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

LD: OMEGA WIPES OUT MORRISON ON THE OUTSIDE!

[Jester looks on in shock and horror as Omega lays out Laredo Morrison on the floor...]

...which makes him totally unaware as a slightly-dazed Polemos slides in behind him, climbing to his feet...]

BW: JIMI, BEHIN-

[...and as Jester jerks around, he gets a gloved hand wrapped around his throat. The crowd ERUPTS for the goozle and this time, the God of War wastes no time in hoisting Jester into the air...]

“THUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUD!”

“OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

LD: CHOOOOOOOKESLAAAAAAAAAAAAAM!

[With Jester laid out on the mat, Polemos points to the corner where Omega has climbed back up on the apron. The seven footer marches over and slaps the hand...]

LD: The tag is made... and Omega’s going up top!

[The Neptunian steps to the top rope as Polemos joins him in the corner, reaching up with his powerful arms...]

LD: MISSION CONTROL! WE HAVE...

[...and HURLS Omega into the air, sending him rocketing towards the prone Jester!]

LD: ...LIFTOFF!

[Omega CRASHES down on Jester to a HUGE ROAR, reaching back to hook a leg!]

LD: ONNNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOOO! THREEEEEEEEEEEEEE!

“DING! DING! DING!”

LD: They got it!

[The crowd cheers as Omega pops up off the mat, raising his arms overhead as Polemos sweeps in beside him, ruffling the hair of his favorite Neptunian.]

LD: Big win for Polemos and Omega, looking to work their way up the ladder of contention for a shot at the World Tag Team Titles... and I bet they wouldn’t mind another crack at the Desperadoes too, Ben.

BW: They're just barely mobile after their last crack at the Desperadoes... maybe they should leave well enough alone.

LD: Omega and Plemos are making their way over to our interview area... and I'm sure Mariah and Ess-Dee-Dub are going to get all the breaking news on just what Omega and Plemos have in store for the AWA this summer. Guys?

[We cut over to the interview podium with Sweet Daddy and Mariah Wolfe. Before joining the hosts, Omega makes one final appeal toward the fans, striking the "Omega Pose." Plemos lurks behind, taciturn and foreboding as always.]

MW: Thanks, Lori! Your winners in our opening contest, Omega and Plemos, back in action finally!

O: wwwwwwwwwWHAT'S UP, ATLANTA!

[Big cheers from the home crowd.]

O: That's right, the High Council of Justice is back, and Plemos, drink it in, homie!

SDW: ...homie...?

[Plemos, his face mostly hidden behind his skull-like mask, accepts the cheers of the fans for his return with a slow nod.]

O: Mariah, Sweet Daddy... The Band are tough opponents. Earth troubadors are just as tough and war-like as they are on Neptune, I see.

SDW: Musicians are known for being warriors?

O: Of course, Sweet Daddy. I myself had to master the holophon before I was taught Venusian Aikido.

[The usually unflappable Sweet Daddy seems utterly bemused by that piece of trivia.]

O: Plemos here? He's getting pretty good with the tympani. But there's one piece of percussion that has been flustering both of us, and it's the cowbell. I'm sure you know who in the AWA likes to wield that.

SDW: That's right, baby. Those dangerous, dirty Desperados put you and the big man outta action and away from the pay winda for a few weeks.

[Omega scowls beneath his mask. Plemos balls and flexes his upright fist, tugging at the cuff of his glove with the other hand.]

O: And not only that. Not only did they do me dirty by keeping me from even getting a fair shake at Odin Gunn and the TV title, they did everyone who put in the work running the rankings dirty. They did Plemos dirty, because he and I were going to shoot for a higher spot in the tag rankings so that we could challenge for the World Tag Team Championship. Just when the God of War was getting his groove back, Curly Bill and the Texas Ranger and Pedro Perez, they swoop in and put us out of action! Why just look at poor Plemos...

[Plemos is, as usual, utterly impassive. His whiskered jaw is firm and expressionless.]

O: ...The poor guy looks completely heartbroken! Why would you make this man unhappy?! Now if I left it up to him, he'd go and do something irrational, like seek vengeance on his own like he's been seething about. He wants to use rocks--

[Polemos pipes up off microphone, startling Mariah and Sweet Daddy when he growls, 'ROCKS!']

O: ...A lot of rocks...

[Polemos growls a louder 'ROCKS!']

MW: Y-yeah, I had been wondering what that crate full of rocks backstage was for...

O: He's spent a lot of time collecting rocks, Citizen Wolfe--

[Polemos roars out an anguished 'ROOOOCKS!,' behind Omega and the hosts. Omega wheels around to address him finally.]

O: [scolding] I said: No... rocks! Okay?

[Polemos throws up his hands, then folds his arms truculently, as if to say 'fine, whatever.']

O: Desperados... we tangled before at SuperClash, and even though we came out on top then... we underestimated you, and the depths you'll sink to. Next time... you'll be surprised by the heights the Neptunian and the God of War can ascend to. Omega and Polemos... OUT!

[Omega and Polemos head off stage, Omega muttering something about 'choke-slams, not rocks.']

MW: I... well, quite frankly, I'm not even sure what to say about that. I'm looking forward to seeing Omega and Polemos get another match scheduled with the Desperados... and for everyone's sake, let's hope there are no rocks involved.

SDW: Amen to that, sista.

MW: And in perhaps the biggest shifting of gears ever, let's talk about something else coming up this summer that the whole world is talking about and that's the Brass Ring Tournament. Sixteen competitors - eight men and eight women - setting out to prove that they belong in that locker room backstage. They've come from all over the world to earn a spot as a member of the AWA roster and their quest to make it begins...

[She points to the screen...]

MW: ...right now!

[...and the screen goes a spiral wipe into a graphic that reads "BRASS RING 2018" with a pumping synth tune under it. There is a voiceover.]

"The first four participants in the 2018 Brass Ring Tournament!"

[And the graphic spins out to reveal a pair of black wrestling boots with purple laces.

We get a quick chyron introducing the man standing in said boots as "The Iron Kraken" Rodrick Storm as the camera begins to pan up revealing the back of the legs of a man, upon the right knee is a black knee pad with purple trim and this black and purple theme continues upon the wrestling trunks. The word STORM is

written upon the trunks in purple letters. As the upward pan continues a massive back is seen adorn in scars from various wars in the ring.

Slowly, the imposing figure begins to turn around to gaze upon the camera. The camera pauses and just takes in the massive individual before it. As they do upon his back, scars adorn his chest and shoulders, yet his face appears younger than the physical damage upon his body would indicate. He has short, slicked back brown hair and a well trimmed beard. His eyes are hazel and stare deeply into the camera as he begins to speak.]

RS: They told me this is just an introduction, a moment for me to tell each and every one of you who I am. I've always thought a picture is worth a thousand simple words.

[The man pauses for a moment allowing the audience to soak in his image.]

RS: I am Rodrick Storm, but for the past five years, Japan has referred to me as the terror from the deep, 'The Iron Kraken'. Fear overtakes their souls as I descend towards the ring, for they know the carnage that is coming. As you gaze upon me, the trauma that I have endured stares at you in the form of scars.

[Rodrick pauses again and inhales deeply for a moment.]

RS: Scars from each battle I have been in. From each and every single one of these scars, pints of blood have stained the canvases of arenas throughout Japan and always the same questions are asked of me. Why do you do it? Why go through panes of glass? Why wrap barbed wire around yourself? Why stand in the center of explosions? Why do you do it?

[A smirk crosses the lips of the Iron Kraken.]

RS: Because The Iron Kraken can! You see, black eyes and bruises fade away with time. Cuts can be stitched. Broken bones heal... scars may remain but they paint the picture of who I am and what I will do to achieve victory.

I will bleed and put my body - hell, my life on the line for infamy! If people can't stand to look at the scars upon me, so be it. They will never understand sacrifice... they will never understand the desire to be the best in the world.

[Storm shakes his head and quickly shrugs his shoulders.]

RS: So be it. Let them be mediocre, as I reach for infamy!

[Once again, the massive man pauses and rolls his shoulders forward as he does so.]

RS: And that quest for infamy will continue in the United States. The eyes of the big ones have finally been opened and realization of what the terror from the deep is capable of has been witnessed. They've seen my battles, they've seen the victories and glory that I have obtained. They've finally seen my... how did they put it? Oh right, my potential.

Potential?!

[A guttural growl comes forth from Storm as he continues to speak.]

RS: Potential? I've struck fear into the hearts of the bravest, I've broken the bones of the toughest, I've laid waste to the masses and you dare call it mere potential? I WILL show you potential! The potential for a massacre!

These seven vict-

[Storm clears his throat.]

RS: -competitors you have placed before me will not stop me from grabbing the Brass Ring and earning my rightful spot here in the AWA!

[Without warning, his hand engulfs the camera lens causing all to fade to a shaky black...

...and we fade to a new shot, the chyron quickly identifying our first female competitor as we see Combat Corner Wrestling's resident problem, Felicia Love.

In the background, Natalia Kills' "Problem" plays over a montage of interspersed footage of Felicia Love throwing fast and furious strikes and leaping through the air with the greatest of ease to land devastating blows to hapless opponents and sparring partners.

The image then cuts to Felicia Love, sitting on the edge of a building, looking out over what is obviously the Manhattan skyline from the Queensbridge view. She is a tiny, wiry woman dressed in a black spandex catsuit with a white fur ruff around the collar, thigh high black boots and fingerless gloves. Love's platinum hair contrasts sharply with her brown skin. The Filipina shifts her gaze from the stars to the camera with irritation.]

FL: When you're small, it's so easy for people to overlook you. I've been overlooked my whole life. "Oh, aren't you sooo kewt. Yes, you are. You're sooo tiny."

[She rolls her eyes impressively and pulls a snarky face. In the background, the first verse of "Problem" fades almost to an inaudible level.]

FL: Like being tiny is a compliment. In this world, the big and strong take what they want and they push the small into the shadows. Well, nobody is pushing me into the shadows. Not the CCW office, not my opponents, not anybody.

[The shot cuts to images of Love lashing out at training dummies with kicks, chops, elbows and knees. The display is ferocious. The shot comes back to Love who has turned her back to the Manhattan skyline and is staring directly into the camera with expressive dark eyes.]

FL: I was the last person added to this tournament because the person that was actually chosen had to drop out. That's her bad luck. Seems like everybody around me suffers from bad luck from time to time. It's something to look out for.

[She licks her lips and purrs seductively.]

FL: In fact, anybody they line up in the ring with me is going to have bad luck, but I am five feet of ferocity and I'm going to scratch and claw and fight my way through all seven other women in this tournament.

[She laughs vivaciously. The cackle is harsh and full of mean spirits.]

FL: The great thing about being small is they never see you coming...

[She swipes at the camera with her clawed glove.]

FL: ...until it's too late.

[The chorus of "Problem" fades up, getting louder and louder as Felicia Love hops to her feet with tremendous natural grace.]

FL: I'm going to win.

#I'm your dream girl
This is real love
But you know what they say about me...
That girl is a problem#

[And the footage fades through black...

...only to come back up on an empty Japanese noh theatre. In the space, on either corner of the stage are four easels with paintings, which seem oddly... animated. Our helpful chyron makes it clear who we're about to see - AKANE.]

CAPTION: "Free will is an illusion."

[As the caption fades, a figure in an extremely brightly colored and heavily clashing coat stands in the middle of the stage. Her(?) face is covered with a blank, traditional noh theatre mask, although you can see the bright golden locks flowing from behind the mask.]

CAPTION: "What makes a girl become a professional wrestler?"

[She turns to one easel, which resolves into a blurry family portrait. The mother and father's faces are obscured by noh masks as well, but the grinning, cuddly baby they hold has deep, dark brown eyes.]

CAPTION: "That girl must be born healthy and have some at least aptitude in sport."

[The masked figure turns and points to a second easel, which resolves itself into a portrait of a prepubescent girl in a figure skating outfit. Although the picture is blurry, one can make out deep, dark brown eyes and a mischievous grin before another noh theatre mask manifests over the portrait's face and obscures her appearance.]

CAPTION: "At some point she must decide to become a wrestler."

[The masked figure points to the third easel: a easel full of brightly colored, slightly disturbing drawings of grotesque cartoonish figures. For a few frames, you might make out the name "Sorrell Onisha" signed at the bottom...]

CAPTION: "A result presumably of first wanting to become one, but from where does that want arise?"

[The masked figure glides over the to final, largest easel, which animates to display images from a professional wrestling match. The clips all have the same subject: a waifish young woman in brightly colored and heavily clashing ring gear flying around a wrestling ring, golden locks flowing behind her.]

CAPTION: "The want arises from the result of an inexplicable combination of events and forces that she will never understand."

[Jump cut to a wide shot of the empty noh theatre, where the masked figure stands alone on the stage. The camera tracks in closer...]

CAPTION: "The Avenging Angel."

[...Uncomfortably closer. The figure grips the bottom of her mask...]

CAPTION: "The One They Call the Witch."

[...Closer, until the uncanny noh mask almost fills the frame. She pulls the mask down slowly, until two mischievous deep, dark brown eyes peek out from behind the mask...]

CAPTION: "AKANE."

[...and we fade once more from the slickly-produced video to something a little more raw.

The lens of a set-up camcorder flickers to life, as we open to the interior of a dingy motel room, parts unknown. The room is small and cramped, lit only by a single, bare yellow bulb hanging from the ceiling. The walls are stained and peeling. And standing in the middle of the room, we see the competitor named by the chyron - Elijah Wilde, a hulking figure of a man, weighing somewhere in the vicinity of three hundred pounds. A thick, dark beard frames his face and his hair is a wild, unruly mess of black, styled in a quiff. He wears a black t-shirt with the sleeves cut off and the following words in alternating red, white, and red stacked upon each other on the front:

DEATH
ELIJAH F'N WILDE
DESTRUCTION

He stares into the camcorder, his voice calm and resonant.]

EW: For years, I've clawed and scratched my way to the top. I've bled, I've broken bones, I've sacrificed everything. Everything! I've fought in high school gyms in the middle of nowhere, in front of half a dozen people and I've fought in sold out arenas halfway across the world, just to get to this point.

[Elijah pauses, a flicker of emotion crossing his face.]

EW: And now, finally... FINALLY, they're giving me a shot. A chance to grab that brass ring. A chance to prove myself. A chance to show the whole world what I'm truly capable of.

[He leans forward, his voice rising with intensity.]

EW: But let's be real: This isn't some gift that was handed to me and I'm not grateful for it. This is just ANOTHER test. One that I've passed time and time again. A test to see if I'm worthy. A test to see if I belong. A test to see if I can break through yet another glass ceiling.

[Elijah paces back and forth, growing angrier by the second.]

EW: Well, I've broken through every damn glass ceiling that's ever been placed over me! I've shattered expectations, defied odds, and left a trail of destruction everywhere I've ever went! For ten years, I've been grabbing at imaginary brass rings and desperately reaching for my reward! And it was always just out of reach... just out of my grasp. But now I've finally made it to the final destination on this long, hard road.

The AWA.

[He stops pacing, stopping right in front of the camera.]

EW: This tournament? This is just another obstacle in my way. Another hurdle to leap over. And I believe me, I WILL leap over it, and take what the AWA has denied me for so long.

[A beat.]

EW: I WILL win this damn contract.

[He leans into the camera, his eyes burning with intensity.]

EW: I'm a destroyer. I'm a force of nature. I'm your worst [bleep!]damn nightmare.

[He smiles, flashing a predatory grin.]

EW: I'm Elijah Wilde, and I'm coming for everything that's mine.

[Wilde reaches over and switches off the camera. Fade to black.]

We fade up on a dark but starlit Los Angeles sky, our focus on the stars themselves before slowly panning down to reveal we're in the middle of a completely empty Dodger Stadium... almost. The camera shot shows row upon row of empty seats with the stadium lights glowing down on them...

...and then slowly zooms in on the top deck, the cheapest seats in the ballpark to where someone is seated.

We cut to that "someone" to reveal the man once known as El Cholo... Los Angeles' native son, Juan Vasquez, sitting in a seat with a wistful smile on his face.]

"This... this is where it all began."

[Vasquez looks out on the field as the camera follows his gaze.]

"Right here. So many nights as a kid. Watching Gods walk among men."

[We can hear an echo of the immortal voice of Vin Scully on the call - "High fly ball into right field... sheeeee isssss GONE!" Vasquez smiles, nodding his head.]

"This is where it started for me. The rush. The roar of the crowd."

[He points down towards the field.]

"I knew I would never be like them. I wouldn't be Hershiser or Fernando..."

[The voice again - "if you have a sombrero, throw it to the sky!"]

"...Gibson or Guerrero... that wasn't my destiny. But this is where I heard the cheers of the fans for those men and knew my destiny was to one day hear them for me."

[Vasquez nods, closing his eyes, leaning back in his seat...]

"Can't think of any place I'd rather be when it ends."

[...and as we hold on Vasquez' face, serene... at peace... happy...

...the shot fades back up to the night sky where the Memorial Day Mayhem graphic appears with all the show info and the words "23 DAYS REMAIN."

Fade to black...

...and with a graphic reading "EARLIER TONIGHT," we fade back on the locker room area where we find "Cannonball" Lee Connors standing in front of a red curtain with the Showtime logo stitched across it. Connors is dressed in a white gi with a dragon breathing fire on the breast and wears a headband with a matching graphic. The usually upbeat youngster seems a little down as the camera comes up on him.]

LC: This isn't what I wanted.

[Connors shakes his head.]

LC: When I came back from my knee injury earlier this year, it was a blessing. I'd worked hard for the moment, no doubt, but the doctors said it was a miracle I was ready for action already... and I planned on taking that miracle... that blessing... and making the most out of the opportunity that I was given to come back to the AWA and all our fans ahead of schedule.

[He sighs.]

LC: I wanted to fight the best the company has to offer - I was looking for matches with Odin Gunn... with Jordan Ohara... and instead, I found myself wrapped up in this mess with the Allahs.

[He holds up a hand.]

LC: Don't get me wrong. Odysseus Allah is a top flight competitor. The man's got incredible ability and it would be an honor to step into the ring to test my own skills against his.

But his father?

[Another shake of the head.]

LC: The man is a legend. When I was just getting into this business, I wore out my copy of Seven Tables of Fear. Even if you toss aside everything else he's ever done in this sport, he'd have that one epic, unforgettable match to hang his hat on. He deserves to be honored... respected... revered for what he did that night in Skydome twenty years ago.

But his days in this ring have passed him by.

[Connors grimaces.]

LC: We all know Dirt Dog Unique Allah has his demons... and maybe those demons unfairly brought on the end of his career too early. But whatever caused it, that career is over. He should NOT be in the ring tonight...

His career is over... and I should NOT be the one responsible for making him understand that.

[Connors' expression changes, more resigned and determined now.]

LC: But so is the life I lead. This is where we are. It's Bon Voyage to Atlanta for the summer tour where the AWA is going all over the US and Canada and showing the world that Showtime is the place to be... and I'm happy to be here for it. But in order to have the summer that I want... that I dreamed of when I was laid up in a physical therapist's office getting my knee right... I have to do what I've been dreading to do for the past two weeks now.

I have to end the legend of Dirt Dog Unique Allah.

[Connors squares up on the camera, placing a clenched fist into an open palm in a sort of pyramid as he closes his eyes, harshly exhaling.]

LC: So be it. See you in the ring, legend.

[And we fade to black...

...and then we fade back out to our co-hosts at the interview podium.]

MW: Lee Connors certainly seems ready for battle despite the conflict within over having to face Dirt Dog Unique Allah.

SDW: You know, Mariah... sometimes you gotta face someone you don't want to face. That's just how this business goes. It could be someone you're afraid of... or you care about... or that you don't feel ready for... but in this case, Lee Connors wants a better ending to the story of Dirt Dog Unique Allah that DOESN'T involve him getting hurt by "Cannonball."

MW: It hardly seems like too much to ask but that's the situation he finds himself in later tonight... but right now, let's talk about the competitor in our next match, Ess-Dee-Dub, who is fresh off appearing in that International trios match at The Battle of London - Rory Smythe!

SDW: Rory Smythe has been fightin' to make an impact in the AWA for a long, long time now. He tried ridin' with Hayden... no luck. He tried hangin' with the Irishmen... couldn't hang tough. And now he's out here with Sonova and still fallin' short in his hometown. From what I'm hearin', the boy is hot under the collar and lookin' to make some changes startin' right here tonight.

MW: It's about time to find out as we head down to Megumi for the introductions!

[We fade from the interview podium to the ring where Megumi Sato is standing.]

MS: The following contest is scheduled for one fall with a ten minute time limit!

Introducing first... already in the ring at this time... from Atlanta, Georgia... weighing in at 185 pounds...

...KELVIN KNIGHT!

[The youngster from Hotlanta raises an arm to a decent reaction from the Center Stage crowd.]

MS: Annnnnnnnd his opponent...

[The arena is plunged in darkness. As the horns introducing Garbage's "The World is Not Enough" starts to play, some illumination is cast upon the entranceway, revealing the figure of Rory Smythe, still half in shadow.]

MS: Hailing from Chelsea, London, England, he is accompanied to the ring by Xenia Sonova, and weighs in at 265 pounds...

RRRORRRYYY SMYTHE!

[Smythe is dressed to compete in a pair of plain black trunks and matching knee pads and boots. He simply stares out at the crowd, glowering.]

LD: "Her Majesty's Might" returns Stateside after a trip to his hometown, and I don't think he looks mighty happy, Ben.

BW: Things haven't been going so well for Rory Smythe recently, between his Royal Crown performance, falling short in the Last Chance Battle Royal and the loss in that European showcase match at Battle of London... He's downright seething.

[Xenia Sonova steps out from behind Smythe, dressed in a strapless black tube dress, with a corset-style bodice and a high slit, and a pair of black kitten heels. She steps forward and leads the way towards the ring, mouthing the words sung by Shirley Manson.]

I KNOW HOW TO HURT

I KNOW HOW TO HEAL#

I KNOW WHAT TO SHOW AND WHAT TO CONCEAL#

[As they make their way down the aisle, Smythe appears to ignore the crowd, focused instead on the woman in front of him.]

I KNOW WHEN TO TALK#

AND I KNOW WHEN TO TOUCH#

NO ONE EVER DIED FROM WANTING TOO MUCH#

[Reaching the ring, Sonova climbs the steps, onto the ring apron and steps through the ropes, into the ring. Smythe follows close behind, wiping the soles of his boots on the canvas before stepping through the ropes. He joins Sonova in the center of the ring, places an arm around her and, as she looks up at him, the pair kiss, ignoring the jeering crowd.]

BW: Awww, that's so sweet.

LD: I don't think the fans in Atlanta are as appreciative.

BW: That's 'cause they know nothing about true love, Dane.

[As the music fades, Smythe accompanies Sonova to his corner, holding the top and middle ropes apart for her to exit the ring. Exchanging a nod, and a "You've got this" from Sonova, Smythe turns around and yells at the official to ring the bell.]

"DING! DING! DING!"

LD: Smythe not wasting any time, goes right into the collar-and-elbow...

[Smythe just bullies his way out of the tieup, ducking under into a go-behind, powering his opponent up...]

LD: Ooof! Smooth takeoff but a rough landing there for Kelvin Knight on that suplex!

BW: Don't sell it short, Dane. That was a high-angled belly-to-back suplex that might've broken the kid in half!

[Even with Knight in a wrecked pile, Smythe doesn't let up, staying on him with a few short boots to the head and neck before pulling the young competitor, who seems on rubber legs, back to his feet, drawing his head into a front facelock.]

LD: This kid is out on his feet already but that's not giving Smythe pause at all as he hooks him up and...

[With the help of a handful of tights, Smythe lifts Knight straight up, so that Knight is upside down and vertical, perpendicular to the mat.]

LD: ...a show of strength by "Her Majesty's Might" as he holds Kelvin Knight up in the air...

BW: That's five... Six... Seven seconds... Eight... All the blood just rushing to Knight's head, and Rory Smythe is barely breaking a sweat, Dane!

LD: Smythe might not be breaking a sweat, but Kelvin Knight's about to have his body broken!

[Smythe falls backward, slamming Knight back-first into the mat. In a show of athleticism, Rory Smythe kips himself up back to a standing position.]

LD: And with all the potential the wrestling world has seen in this young man for so long, could that loss in London have been the turning point to bring us a whole new Rory Smythe?

BW: That's a tough loss to get over so I wouldn't be surprised if Smythe is a little extra motivated this week.

[He strides over to the laid out Kelvin Knight and reaches down for his limp form as Knight has rolled onto his stomach...]

BW: Deadlift gutwrench! Another show of strength by Rory Smythe...

LD: Smythe has Knight over one shoulder... he's got one arm, both arms wrapped around Knight's midsection...

[...and from what all assumed would end in a suplex, Smythe transitions to an over-the-shoulder backbreaker...]

LD: Smythe with a submission hold! Using that power to ragdoll his opponent around and-

[...and in short order, the referee is calling for the bell.]

"DING! DING! DING!"

BW: Wow! Impressive win for Smythe - this kid tapped out in no time flat after he got locked in-

LD: Let him go! Enough is enough!

[The official yells at Smythe to release the hold.]

BW: Smythe really pouring it on, showing everyone what Her Majesty's Might is capable of!

[The referee increases his demands, threatening the Brit with a reversal of the decision if he doesn't let go...]

LD: Smythe punishing this young local competitor, really taking advantage of him being overmatched! There's no call for this, Ben!

BW: I don't know, Dane. Maybe there is. Maybe for someone who has been overlooked, passed over, had the Internet call him a bust - this is the perfect way to send a message.

[...and as the official starts a five count that'll end in a loss for the powerhouse, Smythe unceremoniously releases Knight, dumping him to the mat.]

LD: Such disrespect!

[The official nods at Smythe, reaching out to raise his hand but Smythe angrily jerks the arm away...]

LD: Not even allowing the official to raise his hand. Sonova gets to do it though... of course.

[The crowd jeers as Sonova raises her man's hand, gesturing to him.]

LD: Rory Smythe, your winner, fans.

[And just like that, they both exit the ring, leaving the defeated opponent and jeering crowd behind.]

BW: It looks like they're heading to the interview area, Dane.

LD: Maybe our colleagues can get a word or two out of him to explain all this... Mariah, over to you.

[Cut to Mariah Wolfe, who has stepped out from behind her podium, as she tries to wave Rory Smythe over to the interview area. We see Smythe pause at the top of the steps. He leans over and whispers something to Sonova, then, with a sneer directed at Mariah, he continues walking to the back. Xenia Sonova approaches the interview platform and the beckoning Mariah Wolfe.]

MW: Rory Smythe making his exit - was it something I said?

[Wolfe smirks as Sonova joins her.]

MW: Xenia Sonovan, congratulations on the win.

[Sonova gives a nod but stays silent.]

MW: Let's talk about last weekend at The Battle of London. What was it like to be back in London last week? We know your man is London born and raised, but you also spent part of your youth there. Was it a homecoming of sorts for you as well?

XS: Homecoming? For me? For Rory? No, Mariah, The Battle of London was no homecoming. You know why?

[Mariah shrugs.]

XS: Because it was clear from the outset that the AWA Front Office, that Interim President Zharkov, the whole lot of them was determined to embarrass Rory in front of his hometown fans!

[The fans jeer that accusation as Sonova nods.]

XS: Making him jump through hoops to get to the Royal Crown, when Rory would have been the natural choice to bear that accolade! Ultimately denying him the opportunity at the last minute! And, then, instead of showcasing... Properly showcasing Rory in a match befitting his station as London's favorite son, you forced him to share the spotlight with the likes of Arthur Banks? Adrian Kirk? Robinson and Kurkura?

[Sonova spits out the names with disgust, taking a moment after to compose herself.]

XS: The disrespect, Mariah. Well, Rory wanted me to deliver this message on his behalf, as his manager, confidant and advocate: "Her Majesty's Might" is done playing Zharkov's and the rest of management's game!

From now on, Rory Smythe plays his own game... And that game is going to lead to a whole lot of broken bodies, Mariah... That game promises pain and that game promises destruction... for any poor soul put in Rory's path.

And you can't blame anyone else but the powers that be, because it is them who has set Rory on this path!

[Sonova glares into the camera.]

XS: To the members of the AWA locker room... Let's... Play.

[With a lingering glare directed at Mariah Wolfe, Xenia Sonova exits the interview platform.]

MW: Menacing words on the part of Xenia Sonova and... well, total silence from the likes of Her Majesty's Might - a duo claiming they're playing their own game now. Right now though, we're heading backstage to our good friend Sweet Lou Blackwell who is standing by with another pair of AWA competitors who say they are DONE with playing. Lou?

[We fade to the backstage area where Blackwell has planted himself between a surly David Layton and a definitely-less-chipper-than-usual Billy Givens - collectively known as The Aces In The Hole. Layton appears ready for action in a navy blue workout tracksuit while Givens is in a subdued-for-him paisley silk shirt over a pair of brand new-looking blue jeans and cowboy boots. He's wearing a cowboy hat as well with a large peacock feather sticking out the top.]

SLB: Thanks, Mariah... and gentlemen, playing or not, you certainly have your work cut out for you later tonight when you face former AWA tag team champions in The Bishops. What's the gameplan to take down and potentially take out the unpredictable Duane Henry and the monster Cletus Lee?

[Givens shakes his head.]

BG: Unpredictable? Unpredictable, Lou?! I'll tell you what's unpredictable - it's what this guy right here - my best pal Davey Boy Layton - is gonna do when he gets his hands on the people who messed with his Papa back at the Tenth Anniversary Show. See, a lot of people who have seen us since we debuted like to point out what an odd couple we are... how I'm flash and sass and he's gruff and tough... and to those people, I say - you don't know the half of it, sister!

[Layton claps his hands together loudly, causing Lou to jump slightly.]

BG: Because where we come from deep in the heart of Texas, Sweet Lou, there are a lot of rules to follow. There's the law, of course... there's the laws of nature... there's the Good Lord's rules... your mama and daddy's rules... and then there's just reality. And reality says that if you don't want to get your rotten teeth smacked right out of your hollow gourd, you better not mess with family.

Davey Boy here will tell ya... he and his dad aren't the same. They don't see eye to eye on much. But they're blood... and when you mess with blood, you're pickin' a fight that you just can't win, hear me?

[Blackwell nods.]

SLB: David Layton, can you tell us about your relationship with your father?

[Layton grimaces at Blackwell, shaking his head.]

BG: He don't much like to talk about that, Lou... so lemme talk about something else. Let's talk about that big, bad, nasty man in Cletus Lee Bishop, okay? And I said it all right there. He's big. He's bad. He's nasty. I hear tell that when he was around here the last time, it took years before someone could even knock him off his feet.

This time? It's gonna take one night, I promise you that. 'Cause I'm gonna bring the sizzle... Davey's gonna bring the steak... and we're gonna break that big man down and show him that when he's flat on his back, he's no bigger than the biggest bully on the block, Sweet Lou.

[Blackwell nods again, barely able to get a word in with Givens' motormouth ways.]

SLB: This isn't going to be a walk in the park for you two though. You know how successful the Bishops have been here in the AWA in the past.

[Givens nods.]

BG: In the past, they were the kings of the world... walkin' tall and kickin' tail... but the past is the past and while we know we're in for a fight, we also know we're ready for one. So, Cletus Lee... Duane Henry... get yourselves ready 'cause the Aces are comin' for ya right quick!

[Givens gives a whoop, clapping his hands together as he strides off, leaving David Layton to glare menacingly into the camera for several more moments before he too exits...]

SLB: A man of few words... but a whole lot of intensity right there, fans. The Aces In The Hole versus The Bishops later on tonight but right now, let's head back to Lori and Ben!

[We fade from backstage back to our announcers seated at their desk. Dane is wearing a navy blue sportscoat over a white silk blouse as Waterson sets in a olive-colored suit.]

LD: Thanks, Lou... can't wait for that tag team showdown later tonight... but right now, we're about to head to the ring for Women's Division action.

BW: The hottest division in all of wrestling.

LD: That's right... and of course, we also now know that the ESPN 30 For 30 on the birth of that division will air the Sunday before Memorial Day Mayhem and I can't wait for you all to see the finished product of that one. But right now, we're not here to talk about talking... we're here to talk about action and coming up in just a moment, we're going to see E-Girl MAX's Casey Cash in action, Ben.

BW: E-Girl MAX in the house!

LD: They certainly are... and we already know we'll see some involvement from E-Girl MAX here today, as they will be responsible for picking the opponent for Ricki Toughill, but that's not all we'll see of them, I'm sure.

BW: I don't know why you sound disappointed when you say that.

LD: They just frustrate me, that's all.

BW: That stinks for you, Dane. I don't think they're going anywhere any time soon.

[Lori sighs, and motions off-camera.]

LD: Go to the ring already.

[We cut to the ring, where Megumi Sato stands in the center.]

MS: Our next contest is in the Women's Division, set for one fall with a ten minute time limit! Introducing first, already in the ring, weighing 122 pounds and hailing from Ellijay, Georgia...

...MISTY FOWLER!

[There is a healthy round of applause for the local, a lean young woman wearing a pink and white gingham print set of sports bra and athletic shorts, along with white kneepads and boots. Her dirty blonde hair is tied in a ponytail, and she waves out to the crowd.]

LD: This is our first time seeing Misty Fowler, who hails from the "Apple Capital of Georgia".

BW: What, the tech company bought a town in this crummy state?

LD: No, Ben, the fruit. There's a festival in October.

BW: A festival? For fruit? Why would anyone have a festival for fruit?!

LD: Let's get back to Megumi while Ben processes the information about activities in the great rural communities in our country.

[We hear the start of a complaint from Ben Waterson, which is immediately cut off as Megumi Sato starts to introduce the other participant.]

MS: And herrrrrr opponent... she states that she is from "the greatest city in the world", Baltimore, Maryland... weighing 141 pounds, she is a member of E-Girl MAX and the "Charm City Cutie"...

CAAAAAAAAAAAAAASEYYYYYYYYYYYYYYY
CAAAAAAAAAAAAAAASHHHHHHHHHHHH!

WOOOOOOOOOOO!

[As "1 of 1" by SHINee plays, we see the head of Under Armour Pro Wrestling Marketing, Riley Campbell, rush to the entrance ramp with her camera to snap pictures as a frowning Casey Cash walks out. She's greeted by a loud initial scream from the teenage girls in the audience, followed by the deeper-pitched booing of the rest of the audience.

Casey's wavy hair, worn loose down to her shoulders, is sporting a new chocolate cherry balayage, her natural deep brown hair with tones of cherry red highlighted throughout. Resting on the crown of her head is a pink-framed pair of heart-shaped sunglasses. She's wearing a black halter/shorts set with pink flamingos and small flowers patterned throughout, along with black Under Armour kneepads and boots. Around her wrists are Under Armour sweatbands.

Walking behind her is Harley Hamilton, wearing her AWA Women's World Tag Team Title belt around her waist, and carrying her World Tag Team Champions of the Universe belt over her shoulder. Harley is dressed in a form-fitting turquoise romper made from semi-transparent fabric with a deep V-neckline with a button-down front and long, sheer balloon sleeves that reach the mid-forearm. The bottom portion

consists of shorts with an ethereal gossamer-light fabric that flares out into a swirling short skirt. The two stop for a moment as they reach the apron, as Casey takes the sunglasses off her head and puts them onto Harley's.]

LD: Oh great. Just what we needed. Once again, Casey Cash is unable to handle things by herself, as Harley Hamilton is coming out here with her, along with E-Girl MAX's own personal photographer, Riley Campbell. Why not go all the way and bring the Thompson Sisters out here? For that matter, where's Cinder?

BW: Well, first things first, Riley Campbell is not E-Girl MAX's personal photographer. She holds a very important position with Under Armour, a manufacturer of fine, functional sports equipment. Under Armour, I Will.

LD: I get that they're a sponsor, but now's not the time!

BW: There's plenty of time to talk about one of our great sponsors.

LD: I'd rather you talk about where Cinder is.

BW: I have no idea, Dane. E-Girl MAX has been awfully quiet about who's going to replace the injured Kelly Kowalski tonight against Ricki Toughill, so maybe it's Cinder. We all know she'd love to take another chunk of flesh out of Toughill. Maybe Cinder's filling in whoever the replacement is on all of Toughill's weaknesses.

LD: I'm sure that's the last thing Ricki Toughill needs, but we'll find out about that in just a short while.

[Casey and Harley get onto the apron together, with Casey climbing through the ropes and into the ring. Casey clears the ropes and Harley remains on the apron, pointing to Misty Fowler. We then hear Harley shout out...]

"GET HER CASEY!"

[And suddenly Casey runs across the ring, blindsiding an unsuspecting Misty Fowler with a forearm! Referee Pete "Blue Shoes" Miller frantically signals for the bell, then warns Casey about the cheap shot. Casey rolls her eyes, knocking her opponent into a seated position in the corner, choking her with the sole of her boot.]

LD: Look at this, Ben! Casey Cash just jumped Misty Fowler at the bell! What on earth was that for?

BW: It seems like whenever Harley Hamilton tells Casey Cash to get someone, Casey jumps right into action!

LD: But why? What did Misty Fowler do to deserve this?! Cash is choking this poor young woman in the corner!

[Miller's count reaches four, and Cash takes her foot off of Fowler's throat.]

LD: Casey Cash is very aware of the referee's cou- HEY!

[Cash grinds the side of her boot into Fowler's face, raking across with a bootsrape. As Miller protests and Fowler shrieks in pain, Cash again runs a bootsrape across Fowler's face.]

LD: Two blatant bootsrapes by Casey Cash! Ben, I've never seen Casey Cash this vicious! I know she's been rapidly improving while wrestling on our live events, but this is a whole new side to her!

BW: After seeing what happened to her friend at the hands of Ricki Toughill, as well as having to take that long plane ride to London on the Under Armour private jet with an empty seat that was supposed to be filled by Kelly Kowalski, I don't blame her for getting a little tough!

[“Blue Shoes” finally gets Cash out of the corner, as she looks at Harley Hamilton on the floor. Harley smiles and shouts out...]

“STAY ON HER!”

[And Cash, motivated by her friend's encouragement, stomps over and grabs Fowler by the boot, dragging her into the center of the ring in spite of Pete Miller's objections.]

LD: Cash has dragged Fowler into the middle of the ring, now she's getting Fowler to her feet...

[Cash gets Fowler into a standing position, then slams a knee directly into Fowler's kidneys, causing her to scream out in pain.]

LD: And a hard knee strike right into Fowler's back!

BW: And you know she likes that elevated version of the Boston Crab, which she calls the Baltimore Crab. That does a ton of damage to an opponent's back!

LD: Especially if she drives her knee into her opponents' spine like she did against Katrina Coleman.

BW: Knock it off, Dane, the replay was inconclusive.

LD: Because Under Armour got the replay cut off before we could see it!

[Cash looks out to the floor, where Riley Campbell is snapping away with her camera. She grabs Fowler around the waist, then nods out to Campbell.]

“THIS ONE'S FOR THE 'GRAM!”

[Then, in one swift motion, she lifts Fowler into the air and drives Fowler into her knee, resulting in a cheer from Harley Hamilton and the teen girl contingency, but boos from the rest of the audience. Cash releases her grip and Fowler crashes to the mat, clutching at her lower back.]

LD: A backbreaker by Casey Cash!

BW: And you saw Riley Campbell's flash going off when it happened, that's going to get a lot of engagement on Under Armour's social media.

LD: Probably from bots.

[Cash drives another knee into Fowler's back, then grabs fistfuls of Fowler's hair and slams her head into the mat! Cash stands over Fowler, a smug grin on her face - with Riley Campbell's flashbulb going off in the background - as we hear one more shout from Harley at ringside.]

“SHE'S HURT! FINISH HER OFF, CASEY!”

LD: Harley Hamilton seemingly calling for mercy here, Ben.

BW: If she hooks that Baltimore Crab, that's no kind of mercy. That's an execution.

[Cash grabs Fowler by the ankles, looking out to Campbell at ringside to make sure she's in the right position for good photos. She then hoists Fowler's legs up, turning Fowler over onto her sternum, and keeps the legs in the air, applying the Baltimore Crab!]

LD: And you called it, Ben! There's the Baltimore Crab! Cash has this young woman trapped in that elevated crab, pressing all of her weight down on her sternum!

BW: She's bending her into a U-shape, Dane! You ever been in a hold like that? It hurts like hell!

LD: There's no doubt about how much this hold hurts, look at Misty Fowler waving her arm! The way Casey Cash has her elevated, she can't tap the mat!

[Fowler's arms frantically wave, trying to find the mat to tap, before eventually she finds another way out.]

"I QUIT! I QUIT!"

[Pete "Blue Shoes" Miller acknowledges the verbal submission, waving his hand in front of Casey Cash and signaling for the bell. Cash, however, just shakes her head and smirks.]

LD: Oh come on! Casey Cash has the submission, but she's not letting go!

[Miller yells for Cash to break the hold, finally starting a count, as once again, Cash breaks on four. She dusts her hands with satisfaction as Harley Hamilton enters the ring and gives her friend a big hug.]

LD: And look at this jackal Harley Hamilton, acting like Casey Cash just won the NBA Finals.

BW: Fat chance of that happening, Baltimore doesn't even have a team.

LD: That's not what I meant!

BW: But you know who might? Under Armour athlete Stephen Curry and the Golden State Warriors! Under Armour, Protect This House!

LD: I can't believe how easily you can be bought out.

BW: Hey, my favorite color is green. My second favorite color is blue, because that's the color of the check Under Armour cut me.

[We hear a sigh from Lori Dane.]

LD: Well, fans, Casey Cash is lucky she didn't get disqualified for how long she held that Baltimore Crab on Misty Fowler-

BW [interrupting]: She's got until five, Dane. It's perfectly legal until the ref gets to five.

LD [ignoring him]: -and now I really feel for Mariah Wolfe, who's standing by with two of the members of E-Girl MAX.

[We cut to Mariah Wolfe and the interview area, where she is joined by Harley Hamilton and Casey Cash. Casey primps her hair as Mariah frowns.]

MW: A little unnecessary, don't you think?

CC: What, my new hair? You don't like my hair, Mariah?

HH: Do you think Mariah knows anything about hair? She's just jealous. Ignore her, Casey.

MW: I wasn't talking about your hair, I was talking about that Baltimore Crab you used, and how long you left it on after your opponent already submitted.

[Casey gasps in shock, as Mariah holds up a finger.]

MW: You know you held that hold on for too long!

[Harley shakes her head, interjecting.]

HH: After everything that's happened in the last couple of weeks, you'd think you would be a little more sensitive towards our feelings. We're still in the deepest stages of mourning, Mariah!

MW: You look just fine to me.

[Harley points to her heart.]

HH: We're hurting right here!

CC: Yeah! We've been really sad since Kelly got hurt!

HH: And Casey was so proud of her tribute to Kelly, too. But of course, you just ignore it.

[Mariah looks at the two members of EGM in confusion, when Casey disdainfully points to her hair. Mariah's jaw drops a little.]

MW: That's your tribute? Your new hair color?!

[Casey gasps again, then points a finger at Mariah.]

CC: I'll have you know I was at the stylist for four hours to get this look! Harley and Cinder both have some kind of red in their hair already, so I wanted some too, to show Kelly just how much she means to us!

[Mariah shakes her head.]

MW: You could just send her a card.

CC: I did! And flowers!

[Harley holds up a hand.]

HH: You don't have to justify anything to Faux-resa. But enough about the tragic past. We're not here just for tributes to our dearly departed friend, you know! Casey, don't you have some important business you want to discuss?

[Casey firmly nods.]

CC: I do! And I know she's out there lurking, so... Betty Chang!

[A big cheer from the crowd at the mention of everyone's favorite pint-sized martial artist!]

CC: I have something to tell you, and I want you to get out here and look me in the eyes when I say it!

HH: And you can even bring that weird friend of yours with you, too!

[The crowd cheers for Betty Chang's name as well as the assumed reference to Charity Rockwell, then murmurs for a few moments. Harley folds her arms as Casey puts her hands on her hips, tapping her foot. After another couple of moments pass, we hear a loud cheer from the crowd, as Betty Chang and Charity Rockwell walk into the interview area, with Mariah Wolfe stepping between the two sides. Betty is dressed in a style bearing more than a passing resemblance to Minnie Mouse, wearing a red polka dot sundress with her hair done up in space buns, complete with a big red bow. Meanwhile, Charity Rockwell is wearing a vintage dress reminiscent of Joan Crawford's black dress in "Grand Hotel" with a deep, plunging asymmetric neckline with a large white lace collar giving the faintest glimpse of cleavage.]

BC: The time for talking passed us all by a long time ago, Casey! From now on, I think we should let our fists do the talking!

[Betty gets into a zenkutsu-dachi, ready to strike, as Harley waves her hand dismissively.]

HH: Oh my gosh, calm down you Taekwon-doofus! We're not here to fight.

CC: Yeah! I'm only here to talk!

[Charity chimes in from behind Betty, who relaxes her stance.]

CR: I say that's a load of horsefeathers after all the times you tried to get the jump on Betty and only to get the applesauce beat outta' ya'. And then Harley Hamilton tried to put us both out of commission after Betty kicked her head from here to Kalamazoo! Do you think we were born yesterday?

[Casey rapidly shakes her head.]

CC: I'm serious! I just want to talk!

CR: Now look here, sister-

BC: Hold up a sec, Charity. Let's see what she has to say first.

[Betty stands upright out of her stance, attention piqued. Charity rolls her eyes at her former classmate, as Casey points a finger at Betty.]

CC: Look, we've fought three times now, right?

BC: Yeah, and you better not say anything about my karate being illegal! And even if it was, I've beaten you with judo, I've beaten you with Taekwondo and I've beaten you with wrestling! You have no excuses left, Casey!

[Casey and Harley look at each other, both slightly shrugging, a tacit denial to admit the legality of karate and Betty's victories over Casey. They both turn their attention back to Betty, whose eyes show a glare of rising anger.]

HH: Whatever, Wendy Wu: Homecoming Warrior...

BC: What's that supposed to mean? I loved that movie!

[Harley rolls her eyes.]

HH: ...the fact is, this thing between you and Casey has gone on long enough. It's about time we ended this. Tell her Casey!

[Another firm nod by Casey.]

CC: That's right! In two weeks' time, when Showtime is finally out of this crummy city-

[The Atlanta fans boo Casey's trashing of the Hollywood of the South.]

CC: -and we go to an even crummier city in... what's it called? Regina?

HH: Ew, no. We're never going back to Saskatchewan.

CC: Thank goodness. Canada. Ugh.

[Charity shakes her head and sighs.]

CR: It's RESEDA, you pair of dumb Doras.

CC: I knew that! Anyway, when we get to that dump, here's the offer... you and me, one on one.

[Charity laughs from the background.]

CR: Again? You haven't beaten Betty in three tries, and you want a fourth?

BC: Yeah! What's the use of fighting you again? You're just going to run away-

[Betty points at Harley, who slaps her hand away.]

BC: -or get her to interfere!

[Casey frowns, rolling her eyes.]

CC: I wasn't finished! Jeez. Like I was saying, you and me, one on one... and no matter what the result is, that's it. One of us wins, one of us loses, and no more rematches.

[Betty arches an eyebrow.]

BC: No more complaints about my martial arts?

[Casey holds up a hand, keeping her index, middle, and ring finger up while touching her thumb to her pinky.]

CC: I promise. No more complaints. No more running away. One of us is going to win, one of us is going to lose, and that's it!

[Betty motions to Casey's hand gesture.]

BC: You've got a lot of nerve invoking that!

[Charity puts her hand on Betty's shoulder.]

CR: I don't think she's foolin', doll. She was a Gold Award Girl Scout.

[The crowd lets out a mixed reaction of surprise and confusion, as Betty looks shocked.]

BC: She was?! No way!

[Betty narrows her eyes at Casey.]

BC: Prove it.

[Once again, Casey holds up her hand, keeping her index, middle, and ring fingers in the air while touching her thumb to her pinky.]

CC: I will do my best to be honest and fair, friendly and helpful, considerate and caring, courageous and strong, and responsible for what I say and do, and to respect myself and others, respect authority, use resources wisely...

[As Casey recites The Girl Scout's Law, Betty's eyes grow wide until she too holds her hand up into the air with the same three-finger gesture and begins reciting it along with Casey.]

CC and BC: ...make the world a better place, and be a sister to every Girl Scout!

[There's a moment of silence as they finish, the two staring each other in the eye. Finally, Casey breaks the tension.]

CC: So are you in or not?!

[Betty hesitates for a moment, with the crowd torn between "DON'T DO IT!" and "FINISH HER OFF!" shouts. Charity leans in and whispers something into Betty's ear, and Betty nods.]

BC: You're on!

[The crowd cheers as Casey, Harley and Riley Campbell walk away. Mariah leans in, sticking the microphone in Betty's face.]

MW: After all Casey Cash has put you through, how can you be so sure that you can trust her now, Betty?

BC: Because it's Girl Scout Law!

[Betty walks away marveling at the revelation that Casey Cash was a Gold Award Girl Scout, with Charity Rockwell following. Mariah gets a self-satisfied smirk on her face.]

MW: I guess in two weeks' time, when Showtime is on tour in Reseda, California, we'll get to see the way the Girl Scout cookie crumbles! We'll be right back, fans, don't you dare go away!

[Fade to black.]

After a moment, the ESPN 30 For 30 logo comes up on the screen with the words "COMING MAY 27th, 2018."

We come up on a shot of Lori Dane - a talking head shot.]

LD: They told me repeatedly - "there's no room for women's wrestling in the AWA." It wasn't even up for debate really. I mean... I wasn't surprised. Look at what happened in the E.

[We get a brief still photo publicity photo shot of "Luscious" Lori Dane holding the EMWC Women's Title.]

LD: Yeah, I held the title but for the life of you, could anyone remember who I beat for it? Or if I even defended it on TV? I was a house show gimmick. Someone they could trot out there to get whistled at and make the guys drop money for bikini 8X10s at intermission.

[Cut to a talking head of former AWA competitor Melissa Cannon.]

MC: Most of the talented women's wrestlers in the 80s and 90s were in Japan. There were a handful here but for every Jessica Starbird, you had an "Erotic" Erin. For every Lori Dane, a Satin Sheets. The women in the States were being treated as a sideshow and everyone knew it. The Throbbing Mattress Kittens? Give me a [BLEEPING] break!

[Cut to Laura Davis with a smirk on her face.]

LD: The UWF took it pretty seriously but very few other places did. Even the so-called biggest promotions on the planet didn't give us the time of day. Hell, some of the best women were better in the ring than the top men at times... but you'd never know it by the way they promoted us.

[Back to Dane.]

LD: I was a friggin' co-owner of the company and I still couldn't get it done for a long damn time. But when it changed...

[Dane raises her eyebrows as we fade to a graphic that says "THE BIRTH OF THE AWA WOMEN'S DIVISION."

The "Coming Soon" graphic returns for a moment before we go back to black...

...and then fade up to "Superstar" Steve Rogers in the backstage area.]

SSR: Welcome back, you ruffians, to the premier piece of programming for the American Wrestling Alliance - Showtime right here on ESPN. It's already been a stellar night of action here in Atlanta as we get ready to depart on a summer long tour... but there's at least one member of the AWA locker room who WON'T be on tour with us this summer... and that's Kelly Kowalski.

[Ricki Toughill enters from off camera, a hoodie and backwards ball cap over her ring gear (which themselves are virtually street clothes). She is looking pensively off-camera, aware of being interviewed, but not really present mentally.]

SSR: But that brings me to Ricki Toughill at this time. E-Girl MAX lobbied to choose your opponent tonight and you accepted. After that tragic mishap two weeks ago with Kelly Kowalski, you must have a lot on your mind.

RT: Ugh. You and I both are blessed with tact and finesse, ain't we? Look, I know I don't have to explain what I'm thinking to you. There's a whole bunch of your peers who lost time and opportunities too, Steve, and I know that you feel it in your knees, just as I feel it in mine.

[Toughill sighs.]

RT: The long and short of it is Kelly Kowalski may be out for some time. That's the coin she decided to flip when those ring mats got pulled up and she decided she wanted to join the edgy piledriver club.

Do I feel bad about it? Yeah! But does it serve me to continue to beat myself up about it? No. It could have just as easily been me on the shelf, because five years

ago, it WAS me on the shelf with a broken back. It was me contemplating whether or not my career was over.

[A shake of the head.]

RT: Nah, I've been in the ring with Kelly and I know that in some form or fashion, she'll be back and wanting to spill my blood. And I will remind her to count how many times Harley Hamilton and Cinder and Casey Cash and all their little courtiers actually visit her and check in on her now that she is no longer useful to their purposes.

So I'm gonna ask Suga'n'Spice, and the Thompsons, and even Casey Cash: what do you stand to gain if they send you after me? See, I survived a broken back, and a few dozen injuries beside, guess what? I'm still here.

[A confident nod.]

RT: So to whomever it is that your AWA Women's World Tag Team Champions have decided to sic on me, before you step through that curtain over there, remember who it is that's going to be waiting for you in that ring. My advice to you if you want to be the one to take me out?

Let someone else try first.

[Toughill storms off, leaving the Superstar behind.]

SSR: Hmpf. I didn't even get a word in edgewise.

[Rogers looks irritated as we fade back out to the ring where Megumi Sato is standing.]

MS: The following contest is set for one fall with a twenty minute time limit in the AWA Women's Division!

[Big cheers go up!]

MS: Introducing first...

[Sato lowers the mic.]

"ALL MY LIFE I WANTED TO BE SOMEBODY AND NOW HERE I AM!"

[The roar of Suzi Quatro brings the arena to life. A tomboyish-looking woman with a messy undercut combover bursts her way through the curtain exuberantly. Ricki Toughill makes her way down the aisle, pumping her fist up in salute over her head to "The Wild One (Single Version)."]

MS: From Rochester, New York... weighing 160 pounds...

...RICKIIIII TOOOOOOOOOUGHILLLL!

[Ricki Toughill rolls into the ring under the ropes, and props herself up on the middle rope. She looks like a wayward schoolgirl: a tattered dress shirt and loose necktie cover a plaid kilt with a corseted tank top, with ripped black fishnets and a pair of well-loved Converse high tops. Most prominent among her half-dozen tattoos is the large octopus occupying her right shoulder. She backs into the corner, does a few squats and lunges, and blows another pink bubble, waiting to see what the world - and E-Girl MAX - has in store for her on this night.]

LD: Ricki Toughill looks like she's ready, Ben, for whatever is coming her way.

BW: It's gotta be unnerving though - to be about to face someone that people out for your blood have hand-picked. The E-Girl MAX girls are no fools either - whoever they've picked is going to be VERY dangerous.

LD: Ricki Toughill's never backed down from a fight and I don't think that's about to change, Ben.

[Suddenly, Center Stage erupts into a massive mixed roar of cheers and boos, as Icona Pop's "I Love It" begins to play over the PA system, announcing the arrival of E-Girl MAX. The boos quickly overwhelm the high-pitched squealing of the teenage girls in the audience, as we see the three remaining members of E-Girl MAX: Harley Hamilton, Cinder and Casey Cash, appear from behind the curtain, accompanied by the camera-wielding one-woman paparazzi, Riley Campbell. There is no pomp or circumstance in their entrance, just the scowls of three very angry young women. They remain in front of the curtain, as Harley produces a microphone, pointing an accusing finger at Ricki Toughill in the ring.]

HH: You... YOU!!!

[Harley shakes her head.]

HH: You have no idea how much grief you've put us all through. You've always been an annoying thorn in our side, but now you've truly gone past the point of no return, Ricki Toughill-...

"TEAR HER FLESH N' GNAW ON HER BONES! I'LL RIP THE EYES OUTTA' YER HEAD!!!"

[Screaming like a banshee, Cinder tries to make a mad dash towards the ring, but the combined might of Casey Cash and Riley Campbell hold back the fun-sized Scottish wild child. Harley strokes Cinder's fiery red hair, trying to settle down her tag team partner.]

HH: Calm ocean waves and lavender vanilla bath bombs, Cindy. Keep a cool head. We'll get our pound of flesh, but we don't need to dirty our hands doing it.

[Harley turns her attention back to Ricki in the ring.]

HH: As much as any one of us wanted to get the chance to take revenge for Kelly, there was one person backstage that wanted a piece of you even more than we did!

[The camera cuts to Ricki Toughill, catching a look of confusion on her face. Harley notices Ricki's confusion as well, smirking.]

HH: It seems like you have quite the sordid history with them, Ricki... but that's not really surprising, is it? Who doesn't have a sordid history with a walking disaster like you? But this person made it clear that they would take you to hell and back to settle our grudge! So it was a total no-brainer that we chose our newest friend to finish you once and for all...

[A pause for dramatic effect.]

HH: ... HARPER HANNIGAN!!!

[The crowd reacts in shock as Toughill's jaw drops.]

LD: WHAT?!

BW: Oh dear god!

LD: The Fawcett Family's Harper Hannigan?! That's who they picked?!

BW: It sounds like that's who offered!

[A harmonica plays to cue the start of "Bad Obsession" by Guns N' Roses. It's accompanied by a cowbell and an instant later...

...the sound of a chainsaw revving.]

HARPER HANNIGAN!!

[The curtains fly open, and sure enough, the first thing that comes into view is the whirring blade of a chainsaw. Harper Hannigan walks out, grinning maniacally as they raise the chainsaw to the sky. They are barefoot, wearing severely worn black jeans with horizontal slashes cut into the fabric starting at the thigh and ending above the knees. They wear a black tank top with the slogan "THE SAW IS THE LAW" across the chest and let loose a banshee-like scream as they whip their head back, their long black mohawk hair whipping through the air.]

#I can't stop thinkin' thinking 'bout sinkin' #
#Sinkin' down into my bed #
#I call my mother #
#She said I'm sick in the head #

[Hannigan switches the saw to one hand... lowering it onto the platform, causing Casey Cash to shriek and jump behind her allies. Hannigan lifts a heavy metal chair in the other hand, having unhooked it from around their neck...

...and SMACKS it down on the metal and wood stage, causing a loud "CRACK!" to ring out over and over as the EGM girls huddle to the side, trying to keep clear of Hannigan who points to them before stomping down the staircase towards the ring, swinging the length of chain overhead.]

#It's a bad obsession #
#It's always messin' #
#It's always messin' my mind #

[As the EGM crew disappears backstage, Hannigan reaches ringside, the chain coiled up in hand as they stare up into the ring at Toughill who has exited the ring for a moment, obviously looking to regroup at this shocking development.]

LD: Harper Hannigan is the opponent... and Ricki Toughill looks like she's seen a ghost!

BW: A ghost with some evil intentions, Dane. I know a little of the history between these two and-

[Hannigan dives under the bottom rope, coming to their feet with the length of chain dangling...]

"WHAAAAAAAAP!"

[The sound of steel chain links slapping down against the canvas is skin-tingling...]

"WHAAAAAAAAP!"
"WHAAAAAAAAP!"
"WHAAAAAAAAP!"
"WHAAAAAAAAP!"

[...and when Hannigan flings the chain down, they break into a charge, throwing themselves sloppily between the ropes with a suicide dive, jamming their elbow into the jaw of a shocked Toughill!]

“OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

LD: HANNIGAN FLIES TO GET THIS ONE STARTED!

BW: Get it started?! The bell hasn't even rung yet!

[Spilling outside the ring, Hannigan climbs off the mat, a homicidal glare in their eyes as they look around at the ROARING crowd for the hot start as referee Shari Miranda shouts at Hannigan to get back inside the ring, pleas that fall on deaf ears as Hannigan drags Toughill off the floor...]

LD: These two have quite the history as students of the game would know and-

[...and lifts her right up into powerful scooping arms, stepping forward with Toughill's struggling frame..]

LD: LOOK OUT!

[...and the fans rapidly scatter as Hannigan HURLS Toughill upside down towards the wooden bleachers!]

“OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

LD: BODYSLAM DOWN ONTO THE BLEACHERS! THAT WAS SICK, BEN WATERSON! ABSOLUTELY SICK!

BW: You talk about the spine meeting the pine - Ricki Toughill's entire back went CRASHING down onto the solid wood of the bleachers here in Center Stage Studios - and when we said we were heading out for the summer, I sure don't think the fans here in Atlanta - or the owners of the building - thought we were tearin' the joint down as a parting gift! Good lord almighty!

[With Toughill sprawled out upside down across a few rows of clearing seats, Hannigan steps up into the seating area, kneeling down on a bench to grab Toughill by the hair...]

LD: Ben, we haven't seen much of Harper Hannigan in scheduled competition yet... but from what we've seen and what we know about their history, is there any reason to think Harper Hannigan isn't an instant threat to walk out of Los Angeles as the winner of this year's Rumble?!

BW: A match like the Rumble is BUILT for someone like Harper Hannigan! No rules! A streetfight in every sense of the word! If they want to bring that chain in there, who's gonna stop 'em? I would never put odds on someone making a PPV debut by winning a match like the Rumble... but if you were gonna do it, this might be the pick right here.

[...and smashes their fist down into Toughill's head several times!]

LD: E-Girl MAX made this pick to avenge the injured Kelly Kowalski and I don't think they could've made a better one! Harper Hannigan is a beast unleashed in full for the very first time here on the Bon Voyage edition of Showtime... and I can't help but notice the absence of "Doctor" Harrison Fawcett and the Fawcett Family, Ben.

BW: The Family is about business... this is personal, I think. Hannigan and Toughill go back a long ways to their days in New York fighting in every Elks Lodge, Armory, and Boys and Girls Club in the Northeast... this is just another chapter in their wars.

[Dragging Toughill out of the bleachers by the hair, Hannigan rockets her under the ropes into the ring before rolling back in herself. Referee Shari Miranda throws up a hand, trying to prevent more offense but Hannigan's not one for obeying orders and storms past Miranda to viciously stomp the downed Toughill with their... less than sanitary... bare feet.]

LD: You don't see a lot of competitors in today's game compete without footwear of some sort, Ben.

BW: Those feet are a weapon of their own! Just look at them! They look disgusting!

[The camera zooms in on Hannigan's bare feet - perpetually looking filthy with sharp, jagged, and discolored toenails that look to be lethal weapons in their own right - just before they stomp Toughill again.]

LD: Ricki Toughill is completely overwhelmed by this surprise pick by Hamilton, Cinder, and Cash... and she is struggling to get out of the gates as... wait a second! Hannigan's got the chain, Ben!

BW: The bell hasn't even rung yet, Dane! This is totally legal!

LD: I'm not sure anything about Harper Hannigan is legal!

[The crowd jeers as Hannigan loops the chain around the face of Toughill, the steel links digging into her skin as Hannigan plants a bare foot between the shoulderblades, pulling back hard!]

LD: AHHHH!

BW: I hope you like hockey, Dane, 'cause we're about to have a face off!

[Referee Shari Miranda is right in her face, bellowing at Hannigan to break off the illegal attack as Toughill grunts in pain...]

LD: Well, if E-Girl MAX was looking for someone to hurt Ricki Toughill, they may have found the right person for the job, Ben!

BW: Absolutely. Toughill may be headed for a hospital bed right next to Kowalski when this one's all over!

[...and Hannigan abruptly lets go of the chain, letting it fall to the mat, piling on top of Toughill as they snap their head towards Shari Miranda, stomping towards her as Miranda backpedals quickly... and then dives out of the ring to avoid Hannigan's wrath!]

LD: Watch yourself, Hannigan! You put your hands on an official and this one's over in a hurry!

BW: Dane, it STILL hasn't started! Where the heck does Miranda get off trying to control Harper Hannigan when the bell hasn't even rung?! It's unconstitutional if you ask me!

LD: How in the world is it unconstitutional?!

BW: Freedom of expression!

[Toughill pushes up to a knee as Hannigan spins back towards her, approaching her downed foe...

...who erupts upward, using Hannigan's own chain to smash a chain-wrapped fist into the abdomen!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

LD: TOUGHILL GETS SOME OF HER OWN WITH THE CHAIN!

[Hannigan staggers backwards, clutching at their stomach as Toughill winds up with the chain...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[...and WHIPS Hannigan across the back with it, sending them tumbling through the ropes to the outside. This time, it's Toughill who angrily spikes the chain down on the canvas, shouting after Hannigan who is kneeling on the floor.]

LD: TOUGHILL SENDS HANNIGAN TO THE FLOOOOR!

[An irate Toughill steps out on the apron...]

"YOU WANNA HURT ME FOR A PAYDAY?!"

[...and then barrels down it, throwing herself into a somersault, wiping out Hannigan on the outside to big cheers!]

LD: DOWN GOES HANNIGAN ON THE OUTSIIIDE!

[Toughill comes up off the ringside mats on a knee, cradling Hannigan's head with one arm while smashing her fist into their face with the other!]

LD: AND NOW IT'S TOUGHILL ALL OVER HANNIGAN ON THE OUTSIDE!

[Hauling Hannigan to their feet, Toughill takes aim and...]

"CLAAAAAAAAAAAAANK!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

LD: SHOULDERFIRST TO THE POST!

[Hannigan slumps against the ringpost as Toughill steps around to the other side, grabbing Hannigan by the wrists...]

LD: What is this now...?

[...and with one arm trapped around the post and Hannigan unable to escape...]

"CLAAAAAAAAAAAAANK!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

LD: SHE YANKS HANNIGAN INTO THE POST!

"CLAAAAAAAAAAAAANK!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

LD: AND AGAIN!

[Toughill hangs on this time, planting a foot on the post and pulling hard, driving Hannigan's face into the steel as Toughill tries to pull her through the steel!]

LD: HANNIGAN'S FACE BEING GRINDED INTO THE STEEL RINGPOST!

[Toughill suddenly lets go, muttering as she turns away from Hannigan who sickly grins, hanging onto the post to stay on their feet...]

"You no good piece of sh-"

[The audio is cut out as Toughill lunges back at Hannigan, digging a thumb into their eye as Hannigan groans in pain...]

LD: She's gouging her eye! Going right after it!

[...and Hannigan jams their palm up under the chin, shoving Toughill away as they stagger blinded down the apron...]

LD: This fight continues to rage on - and yes, I know, Ben... the bell STILL hasn't rung! I don't even know if Shari Miranda's going to be able to start this match at all!

[Toughill advances on Hannigan from behind, reaching out to grab the greasy looking mohawk...]

LD: Toughill by the hair... FACEFIRST OFF THE APRON!

[...and whipping Hannigan around, sweeping an arm at the fans...]

LD: AND TOSSES HANNIGAN INTO THE SEATS!

[Hannigan crashes shoulderfirst into the wooden bleachers as Toughill shouts at them again...]

"TELL HAMILTON THIS ONE'S FOR HER!"

[...and then BOOTS Hannigan hard in the ribs...]

"AND CASH!"

[...and again...]

"AND CINDER!"

[...and again, leaving Hannigan curled up in the fetal position on the wood.]

LD: Ricki Toughill is INCENSED, Ben!

BW: A death mark's not an easy thing to live with.

[Toughill grabs Hannigan by the mohawk again, dragging them to their knees on the bench...]

...and SMASHES their face down off the wood!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[Toughill drags Hannigan back to their feet, looking around with another sweep of the arm to clear the crowd...]

BW: Our insurance rates are rising by the minute!

[...and with a big toss...]

"THUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUD!"
"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[...Toughill uses a biel throw to toss Hannigan through the air, flipping them over to land spinefirst down on the wooden seating!]

LD: This is out of control! Shari Miranda is beside herself inside the ring! This one's never even gotten out of the gates and...

[Miranda, grabbing at her own head in shock, watches as Toughill hauls barely-standing Hannigan off the wood, dragging them back towards the ring.]

LD: ...Toughill puts Hannigan back in and...

[The crowd ROARS as Toughill reaches under the ring apron, pulling a trash can into view...]

LD: ...what in the...?! Fans, if you're just tuning in - this isn't a Street Fight! This isn't Falls Count Anywhere! This is scheduled to be a regularly sanctioned match under normal AWA rules-

BW: These two don't give a damn what the rules are! They're out for blood!

LD: Toughill tosses that trash can in... rolling herself back in now too...

[Retrieving the trash can, Toughill ignores the shouts of Shari Miranda, waiting as Hannigan comes up off the mat, staggering in a dazed circle...]

LD: TAKING OUT THE TRA-

[...but Hannigan brings their hands up, blocking the trash can shot!]

LD: -BLOCKED! HANNIGAN FIGHTING IT!

[There's a brief struggle over the metal can before Hannigan buries a bare foot into the midsection, doubling over Toughill...]

LD: Now it's Hannigan with the can and-

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"
"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

LD: -DOWN ACROSS THE BAAAAAACK!

[Toughill collapses down to all fours on the canvas, the dented trash still gripped in the hands of Harper Hannigan who sneers at her longtime foe before grabbing her hair with one hand, dragging Ricki up onto her knees...]

LD: What is...? Uh oh!

[...and slides the dented can over the head of Toughill, covering her face and upper torso as Hannigan backs off.]

LD: Toughill down on her knees! At the mercy of Hannigan!

[Hannigan takes aim on Toughill, glaring down...

...and rushes across the ring, smashing their knee into the dented can, knocking Toughill flat as the can goes falling aside!]

LD: TOUGHILL GETS LAID OUT BY HARPER HANNIGAN!

[Hannigan stomps madly around the ring, the crowd jeering the Rochester roughneck...]

BW: Look at Hannigan ruling the roost! E-Girl MAX getting EXACTLY what they wanted here tonight, Dane.

LD: And don't forget - they also get to pick Kowalski's replacement in the Rumble in a few weeks and Harper Hannigan is already in that match!

[...which is when Shari Miranda gets up in Hannigan's face, boldly shouting at the brawler...]

LD: Shari Miranda DESPERATELY trying to get some control so this match can start and-

[...and totally without warning, Hannigan snatches Miranda by the hair and HURLS her through the ropes to the outside!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

LD: Oh... OH... OHHHHH MYYYYYY!

BW: That's gonna cost 'em!

LD: A fine definitely coming Harper Hannigan's way after that!

BW: AT LEAST a fine, Dane. That was a blatant attack on an AWA official and no matter who you are, that ain't gonna fly!

[With Miranda sprawled out on the outside and the fans REALLY letting Hannigan have it now, Hannigan sneers madly at the booing Atlanta crowd before turning their gaze back on Toughill who has managed to roll to the outside...]

LD: After that, I've gotta think this match is thrown out before it even gets started!

BW: Yeah, but Hannigan's not done yet. If Toughill wants to survive this fight, she's gonna have to get back up and keep swingin'.

LD: E-Girl MAX getting their money's worth here tonight for sure.

[Hannigan steps to the apron, looking to finish the job they started...

...which is when Toughill does indeed get back up and keep swingin', grabbing a handful of mohawk to repeatedly hammer the skull of Hannigan before they can get through the ropes!]

LD: TOUGHILL STILL COMING!

[And with that handful of hair, Toughill drags Hannigan onto the apron...]

LD: Wait, wait, wait!

[...and HURLS them overhead, throwing them down on the barely-padded cement floor with a blood-curdling crunch!]

“OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

LD: SLAMMED ON THE FLOOOOOOOR!

[The crowd is ROARING now for the violence, breaking out into a “RIC-KI!” chant as Toughill slumps against the apron, nodding her head as Hannigan writhes in pain on the ringside mats!]

LD: Ricki Toughill - this match may be over, I’m sure it is - but the fight is not! Not in this woman - this proud, strong competitor who refuses to give up no matter the odds or the circumstances.

[Toughill pushes off the apron, looking down on the laid out Hannigan...

...and pauses.]

LD: What’s this now?

BW: Maybe it’s over.

LD: Maybe it is. We heard some remorse from Ricki Toughill a little earlier tonight about what happened two weeks ago to Kelly Kowalski so maybe Toughill is thinking she does NOT want such a thing to happen again here tonight.

[With a look of disgust, Toughill waves a hand at the downed Hannigan, heading towards the staircase that leads back up to the entrance stage.]

LD: And yes, Toughill is walking out now... leaving Harper Hannigan down and out on the floor. Ricki Toughill went through hell in his fight but she’s still standing and now she’s walking tall as she heads out of Atlanta and onto the summer tour with all of the AWA’s superstars here in Showtime.

[Toughill climbs the staircase, reaching the top...]

LD: A salute to the fans now, looking out on-

[...but as Toughill turns to face the cheering fans...]

LD: -FROM BEHIND!

[...she finds herself backjumped by Harley Hamilton, Cinder, and Casey Cash!]

LD: OH! IT’S E-GIRL MAX! THE WOMEN’S TAG CHAMPS AND CASEY CASH!

[The trio knocks Toughill down onto the elevated stage thanks to a leaping tackle by Cinder, barreling her over facefirst on the wood and metal platform...]

LD: Ricki Toughill gets attacked from behind... and all THREE of these jackals are putting the boots to Ricki Toughill, Ben!

BW: Well, you had to think that if Harper Hannigan couldn’t get the job done alone, E-Girl MAX was going to be there to help them out! They wanted their pound of flesh for what happened to Kelly Kowalski and damn it all, they were going to get it no matter what!

[A shout of “HOLD HER, CASEY!” gets Cash to hold the arms of a struggling Toughill as Cinder and Hamilton take turns pounding fists into the skull of Toughill!]

LD: Toughill's caught in a three on one at the hands of E-Girl MAX!

[And as the camera pulls back, we see Harper Hannigan dragging themselves foot by foot, inch by inch up the steel stairs...]

BW: And I don't think Hannigan's done either!

LD: Look out!

[...a quick camera cut shows Lori and Ben scrambling as Cinder savagely smashes Toughill's face into the announce desk!

Cinder shouts something in Dane's direction...]

LD: What are you on about now? I didn't do anything to you!

[...and then Cash sneaks in a few kicks to the ribs on the downed Toughill again. She grabs Toughill by the hair, pulling her up to smash the head down again...

...but this time, Toughill blocks it to a big cheer!]

LD: Ricki's trying to fight her way out of this three on one!

[A snap elbow to the gut doubles over Casey and leaves her open to Toughill smashing Cash's face down on the table, sending her sprawling on the stage!]

LD: RICKI FIGHTING BACK!

[A right hand for Cinder... a matching one for Hamilton as the World Tag Team Champions stagger away, leaving Toughill to advance on one or the other. She chooses her former ally, snatching Cinder by the hair to deliver a headbutt that sends Cinder sprawling on another part of the stage...]

LD: She's taking on BOTH tag team champions and-

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[The crowd reacts as Harper Hannigan drags themselves to their feet, drilling Toughill in the back of the head from behind!]

LD: HANNIGAN FROM BEHIND!

[Hannigan madly stalks away, tearing out their own hair as they back towards the entrance curtain, waving a wild arm from side to side...]

LD: Hannigan's trying to create some space and...

[...and suddenly charges forward, sprinting at the stunned Toughill who is trying to regroup...]

LD: BIG FOOT!

[...and swings the leg up, catching Toughill under the chin, snapping her head back, and LAUNCHING her into the air...]

LD: OH!

[...sending her flying backwards...]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[...into an awkward as hell looking fall onto the metal staircase, the back of her head snapping down onto a step!]

LD: Oh... oh no.

[There's a hush that falls over the crowd for the hard and dangerous-looking fall as Toughill goes motionless on the staircase. E-Girl MAX - now back up and watching - look on with disbelief at first as Hannigan nods approvingly of what just happened...

...and then there's almost glee in the eyes of the EGM gang as they go rushing down the stairs, whipping out a phone and start taking selfies over the wrecked frame of Ricki Toughill!]

"THIS ONE'S FOR YOU, KELLY! WE LOVE YOU!"

[A few quick pose changes and a few more snaps get jeers from the Showtime crowd before the floodgates open backstage, sending a rush of AWA officials and medics out into view...]

LD: We've got... fans, we've got officials out here now... we've got medical personnel. An awful fall by Ricki Toughill off our stage here and down onto the staircase. Ben, we've seen Ricki Toughill take some terrible falls in her career but this... this might be the worst of all.

BW: The back of her head... her neck... right down on the staircase. Harper Hannigan came to do damage tonight and damage she did.

[The camera cuts to a closeup of Toughill, gripping the hand of Kevin Slater.]

LD: She's moving... thankfully, we can see some movement, grasping the hand of the former World Champion, Kevin Slater who has dealt with his own share of career-threatening injuries in his time. Maybe the right man to be able to utter a few comforting words to Ricki right now. We... can someone get E-Girl MAX out of here?!

[Adam Rogers and John Shock are doing exactly that, nudging them back up the staircase to the stage...]

LD: This is a bad scene, fans... and we're going to get away from it. We'll try to update you after the commercial but right now, let's... yeah, let's get out of here.

[We abruptly cut to black...

...and then back up on a shot of Ryan Martinez walking down the aisle. From the scenery around him, we can see this slow motion footage is from right before WarGames at SuperClash IX.]

#When you wish..#

[Dissolve to the White Knight throwing knife edge chops at the towering form of Torin The Titan...]

#...upon a star#

[...to Martinez and Derrick Williams working together to use a double clothesline to take the giant off his feet...]

#Makes no difference who you are...#

[...to a closeup of a bloodied Martinez, looking up in shock as a hobbled Shadoe Rage joins him in the cage...]

#Anything your...#

[...to the White Knight driving Vasquez' skull into the canvas with his signature brainbuster...]

#...heart desires will...#

[...to Martinez hooking John Law in a crossface, wrenching back with all his might as Law struggles to hang on...]

#...come to you.#

[...to a crowd shot of a group of young fans holding up a banner that reads "THE WHITE KNIGHT FOREVER!" as a voiceover begins...]

"Ryan Martinez, you and..."

[Cut to a shot of a bloodied but smiling Ryan Martinez standing triumphant with his teammates...]

"...Team AWA just won the Main Event at SuperClash! Now what are you gonna do?"

[...to a regular speed shot of Martinez still in the double cage, looking into the camera's lens with a grin...]

RM: I'm going to Disneyland!

[...and we fade to a shot of the Disneyland logo before fading to black.

And then back up on the Brass Ring Tournament graphic, promoting the event to come all summer long...

...before spiral wiping to our first competitor of this batch of promotional clips, the chyron unnecessarily identifying the man standing in a parking lot somewhere, stepping out of the car in frame as Will Robinson. Robinson is a young man, tousled brown hair, fashionable matching stubble, brown eyes, wearing an overcoat over a red Liverpool Football Shirt.]

WR: I've worked all over this world, mate. From England, ta Japan, ta Mexico, ta the States, and one thing's been common. That's whenever anyone sees me, they're in for a Thrill.

[Robinson smirks.]

WR: For tha ones tha' don't know me, I'm Will "The Thrill" Robinson.

You've seen tha videos, tha viral moments, and I've been in all o' them. And the one place I still need ta be, to prove tha' I'm the biggest star of my generation, is to be in tha' AWA.

[Robinson runs a hand through his hair.]

WR: An' it starts at tha Brass Ring Tournament.

What better place ta show my skills to tha AWA than against tha other up n' comers of my generation.

So everyone get ready, 'cause Will Robinson's comin' ta give ya tha Thrill o' yer lives, an show everyone jus WHY I'm pegged as the next big thing in Wrestling.

[And we fade away from Robinson...

...and up on a familiar setting, the Combat Corner training center. A ring sits in the background, empty, ropes slack. Weight training equipment, combat ropes and more adorn racks. The place where upcoming CCW, and hopefully one day AWA stars, train and hone their skills.]

V: Ah, so this is where the big boys play.

[Sauntering from the side and by sauntering I mean way too purposefully comes a well built gentleman in a Combat Corner tee and white striped black athletic pants. Brown hair parted to the side is framed by cauliflowered ears. His nose isn't perfectly straight and his jawline is wide and used to punishment. Thick forearms and hands made for gripping fall from the sleeves of his tight shirt. Ladies and gentlemen, the chyron says Danny King.]

DK: NCAA Champion. All American. Three time Global Fighting Champion. Life long fan of pro wrestling. Did you know before I became the toughest man on the planet I tried this beautiful sport?

[He tilts his head quizzically as if awaiting an answer.]

DK: I did. I found some bloke with a gym to train me. Show me the ropes so to speak. And, frankly, I picked it up pretty quickly. That's what I do. So I got some matches in some gyms and veteran halls, wrestled some other blokes and beat the hell out of them and then, with all the audacity in the world, I thought "Danny, you're pretty good. I think you should go pro and get under those big lights!"

[Shaking his head, he sighs, chuckling under his breath.]

DK: All steak, no sizzle. Yup. That's what they told me. (mimicking someone else's voice) "Ya just don't got it, Dan. You're just not that exciting, Dan. It ain't just about being the best mat wrestler in a generation, Dan." And then he clapped me on my shoulder and sent me packing.

Got that from all the major promotions over the years. AWA. World of Combat. Tiger Paw, everywhere one after another. Steak doesn't sell tickets. So I packed my bag and decided "Danny, time to beat people up." We all know how that went.

[A montage reels on the screen. Danny King is shown fighting in Japan, taking down men, grounding and pounding them from their back. Another shot of him slamming a pale Russian fighter. People cheering, on their fight applauding his efforts. Then a bloody faced, sweat covered King having his hand raised and a belt being put around his waist. Then again. And a third time. Back to the Combat Corner.]

DK: Now, I appreciate that I didn't have the sizzle you were looking for. I wasn't no fajita plate but boy oh boy you missed out on something. This steak became the number one best fighter on the planet for a damn decade and you missed out on the millions the GFC made off my back. But...

[A long, long protracted and frustrated back echoes out. King shakes a single finger, obviously about to make a point.]

DK: But then this guy, this guy thinking about maybe hanging up the gloves, taking my truck off into the sunset and fishing my days away gets a call.

[Again, he mimics someone.]

DK: "Hey, kid, we've been watching you. We're pretty impressed with your development." My development?! Ha! The best fighter on the planet and you are impressed with my development? Well damn duh. Anyhow.

[Breathe.]

DK: "I think we have an opportunity you'd like. The Brass Ring, Dan. We want you in the 2018 Brass Ring. We're putting together our best field yet, Dan. We think you'd be perfect, Dan" Yeah, well no kidding, Sherlock. Gladly. Put me in, coach. But know this. Know what's going to happen to any of those other seven men you put against me. You see, they are Cessna prop planes and I am a Leer jet. They can't compete. They're good, great even.

I'm better.

[King steps forward, head framed in the camera.]

DK: God made 4 billion men and NONE of them are as tough as Danny King. Any of you, I have no preference, you have no choice but with this voice I will say. I may not have all the charm but I'll do all the harm. You see, when it comes to Danny King and anyone one on one? You'll need 9-1-1. Three time Global Fighting Champion, boys. And not against a single can.

But at the end of the Brass Ring tournament, boys... you'll know who is the toughest man.

[He glares intensely, a weigh in type stare that makes all the fighting news clips. The kind they put in opening montages.]

DK: Me. Danny King.

[And we fade from the former GFC Champion...

...and up on the man who the chyron introduces to the world as Armani Avery shot from underneath as he poses like Usain Bolt in the 'throw a lightning bolt' pose in his compression shorts and black and gold UnderArmour track shoes. The camera slowly zooms in on him, taking in his lean but very defined and muscular physique. Avery's bare chocolate brown skin glistens. Avery looks like a sculpture. The camera finally gets close to his head as Avery holds the pose.]

V/O: Introducing ... Armani Avery ... the son of football legend Anthony Avery and successful lawyer, Agatha Avery.

[The shot switches to a family picture of Anthony and Agatha holding a young Armani Avery in their arms.]

V/O: This son of Atlanta has been a stand out in Combat Corner Wrestling. Today, he is one of the eight entrants on the men's bracket of the Brass Ring tournament. And he aims to

"PSSST!"

V/O: Huh?

"PSSST!"

[The image of Avery stage whispers to the camera, breaking the statuesque pose.]

AA: Hey man, you wanna hurry this up. I can't hold this pose forever.

V/O: You want to cut to some clips?

AA: Please.

[The shot turns to the CCW combine. Armani Avery is shown pushing the speed sleds at a blistering pace down the track as people look on in awe. Then the shot goes to Armani at the vertical leap, smacking all the flags except the last three. The measurement 44" shows on the side.]

V/O: An incredibly explosive athlete, this six foot three two hundred sixty five pound blue chip specimen has taken a phenomenal mix of speed and explosive power and mixed it with strength and endurance.

[The shot shows Armani Avery hurling a medicine ball across the Combat Corner in an overhead toss and then hitting the ropes at a blistering pace.]

V/O: In the ring, he combines this amazing athleticism into an incredible wrestling package.

[The shots cut to clips of Avery in action in CCW, hitting opponents with high flying dropkicks, tossing them with suplexes and knocking people down and out with furious strikes.]

V/O: And he has perhaps the most impressive finisher in CCW

[The shot cuts to Avery hooking an opponent up face to face and loading up]

AA: Wait wait wait... hold up, slime.

[The shot abruptly cuts back to Avery.]

AA: Don't show 'em that. They gotta watch the tournament if they wanna see that. Namtalmhout?

V/O: Sorry. If you want to see the most spectacular finishing move in CCW watch this man in the Brass Ring tournament. Anything else, Armani?

[Armani breaks his "Bolt" pose and shakes it off, facing the camera.]

AA: Just come check your boy.

[Armani smiles for the camera. His teeth are perfect. His smile is blindingly white. A sparkle flashes over his tooth on the screen and the sparkle sound effect goes "DING!" Avery tilts his head down towards the camera, smiling mischievously.]

AA: It's gonna be a good time. Bet!

[And we fade once more in this promo package...

...to end with a shot of a weather worn row house. Paint peels from the plank siding, a gutter hangs precariously. In the backyard., there's a plastic, colorful playset of slides and swings. The screen door is closed and through it you see an older lady cradling a young girl in her arm as she stirs something in a steaming pot.

In the background, a well used TV plays some cartoon of a sort. It's a quaint setting and sitting on the step in front of this screen door is another woman. She isn't the embodiment of beauty or athleticism though her frame presents some measure of power. Her wet hair, perhaps just out of the shower, is tied in a ponytail and exposes a well scarred forehead. She has a bit of a belly, presented more perhaps because of the white tank top she wears. Sweat pants finish the ensemble, her feet bare. A brown bottle of beer dangles between her fingers and of course you can't see just what it is. Advertising rights and all that. The chyron lets us know this is Riley Bennett as she begins to speak.]

RB: Ya know, I never thought it would happen to some working girl in the old Bluegrass. Working lil shows on weekends for who'll take me and working a diner during the day to make sure my ma and girls got food on they plate e'rey night. But hey, someone decided to hang out in the Two Keys a bit too long and here we are.

[Reaching around she pulls out a stapled collection of papers.]

RB: Oh yeah, name's Riley Bennett and someone off their rocker sent me a contract for the Brass Ring tournament. They saw some tapes or Youtubes of me working some shows around here, doing a couple things in Japan the couple times I went there. Oh man, have you ever flown overseas? Boy-ohhhh that was somethin'. Ya could see just water fore'er. Wild times. They called this mother a' two and asked if I'd want to come work this tournament in the [BLEEP]damn...

[Emotion overcomes her. She swings her beer even more, taking a deep swig.]

RB: In the damned AWA. The biggest darned wrestlin' show around. My girls gets to see their ma on TV doing somethin' they've never seen this ol' cat do and darnit if I ain't gonna put in the most damnedest effort this body can.

Yeah, I get it, I ain't the prettiest, I ain't some hourglass model...

[She chuckles, grabbing her belly.]

RB: ...and yeah I got this but my pa brought me up right. We ain't grew up easy. No way. We changed our own tires. I mowed lawns and fixed fences and helped our neighbors do theirs. I played sports even if I didn't wanna and I worked wherever my pa wanted me to work. And sometimes, if we were lucky, we even got three meals a day and we had a warm Christmas meal and for a minute, just for a minute, my pa could pretend everything was good even if the coal was rotting out his lungs inside him.

[Again she pauses, wiping an eye, chuckling at the misfortunate memories.]

RB: So yeah, girls, I got no bones to pick but I got bellies to feed and I got a couple sweet cutest things in the world who look up to their ma and who I want to make proud and make them realize you can do anything ya darn want. So yeah, when they ain't looking, when they at school tomorrow I'll be runnin' around like a chicken with it's head cut off to get ready to go be on TV but when they get home? I get to be their ma.

And soon I get to be on TV and I'll get things done the only way I know how these days? By throwing these ole hamhocks around like my Pa taught me to do. No heat, girls, but you ain't got the reasons I do to win this thing. Trust me. Until two lil buttons are beggin' for hugs, you just ain't knowin' what I am fightin' for.

[And with an emotional expression on her face, we slowly fade away back to the Brass Ring Tournament graphic.]

LD: The Brass Ring Tournament is coming, fans! We've met eight of the competitors already tonight and we'll be meeting the rest before the night's over... and Ben, what a tournament this is going to be.

BW: Dane, you and I have been on the other side of this before, yeah? These days, we've got jobs, we've got a paycheck, we've got fans who know who we are... but there was a time not that long ago that you were making sex jokes on TV just to keep your job...

[Dane nods mournfully.]

BW: ...and it wasn't that long ago that I was in a rusted out warehouse in Southern California letting your hubby grind me into the mat to teach me how to be a part of this wonderful world.

[Dane grins at that memory.]

BW: So, I feel for these men and these women. They're where we were not that long ago... and when you hear a story like Riley Bennett, fighting for her kids to have a better life than she had... when you hear a story like Danny King, looking to live his childhood dream before he hangs 'em up... it's inspirational and it makes you want them to succeed. A tournament like this provides opportunity. A chance to make a name for yourself. A chance to show the world that you belong here for good. Only two of 'em are gonna make it to the end of the rainbow though but I can't wait to see which two.

LD: Well said, my friend. And speaking of opportunities and inspirations... in just a few moments, Ben, we're going to be hearing some pre-recorded words from Michelle Bailey fresh off her victory in the UK last weekend at The Battle of London when she outlasted Trish Wallace, Lauryn Rage, and Ayako Fujiwara to become the very first Royal Crown winner...

BW [cutting in]: Talk about a lucky break.

LD: What do you mean?

BW: Didn't you see the way Ayako Fujiwara was battering her during those last few minutes? Imagine if that rule allowing for eliminations over the top rope wasn't there. I doubt Michelle Bailey would've been able to beat her without that rule.

[Lori frowns.]

LD: You sure know how to rain on a parade, don't you.

[Ben shrugs.]

BW: Just being honest.

[Lori shakes her head.]

LD: Fans, let's go back last weekend to a conversation between "Sweet" Lou Blackwell and Michelle Bailey, moments after Michelle's win. Fortunately, our cameras were there and we have the footage for you. Take a look.

[We cut to "Sweet" Lou Blackwell standing outside of Dr. Ponavitch's medical area, with a graphic marking "LAST WEEK - BATTLE OF LONDON" on the upper left side of the screen. In the background, we hear the roaring of the crowd.]

SLB: As you hear the battle taking place for the World Title between champion Supernova and challenger Juan Vasquez, I'm here to take you into the medical area to show you the aftermath of a similarly hard-fought contest.

[Blackwell nods, leaning in close to the camera.]

SLB: And of course, to get one last chance to try and scoop Bucky Wilde.

[Blackwell winks and resumes his original posture, pointing to the sign on the door.]

SLB: Behind this door is Michelle Bailey, fresh after her victory in the Royal Crown, being attended to by the AWA medical staff. As you recall, she got quite the nasty cut on her forehead during the bout. I feel it is my journalistic duty to provide you, the AWA Galaxy, with an update on her condition... and of course, to try and see if tonight's victory has changed her thoughts about Julie Somers' offer of a title match at Memorial Day Mayhem.

[Blackwell casually knocks on the door, and we hear a "come in!" He opens the door, and after a few steps inside, we see Michelle Bailey, bloodied and tired, holding a bottle of Rebel Kitchen coconut water in one hand, and in the other her iPhone, where she is FaceTiming someone.]

MB: Ah, I have a visitor!

[From the speaker of the phone, we hear a feminine voice say "call me back later!" Michelle nods, then ends the FaceTime.]

SLB: I'm sorry to interrupt, I hope that wasn't important.

MB: Oh, it was, just not urgent. I always get in touch with Natalie after a match, especially, well...

[She gestures toward her forehead.]

MB: One that turned out like this.

SLB: Does she get concerned?

MB: I think that's a natural feeling, to be concerned for someone you care about being bloodied. I try to tell her that it's part of the job and happens sometimes...

[Michelle shrugs.]

MB: But it's still a little difficult to actually see, I'm sure.

SLB: How are you feeling, though? Has the good doctor given you a diagnosis?

[Michelle nods as she sips from her drink, and Blackwell arches an eyebrow as he sees the contents from the bottom of the bottle.]

SLB: And should that coconut water be pink?

[Michelle smirks as she finishes her sip.]

MB: It just means it's not overly processed, it's natural for it to turn pink. And yes, Dr. Ponavitch put me through concussion testing and I passed. I just need a couple of stitches.

SLB: I'm certainly glad to hear that, and so will the fans watching this when it airs. That was quite a battle you had today, don't you think?

MB: It was! I'll be honest with you, Lou, I'm a little overwhelmed that I actually won the whole thing. I know Lauryn Rage got a little under my skin earlier, but she's a very tough opponent.

SLB: Quite tough. Is that why you dipped into your bag of tricks and pulled out Miyuki Ozaki's Rainbow Bridge?

[Michelle smirks again.]

MB: Sometimes I get a little thoughtful of people in my life who mean something to me when I'm competing in a match where emotions run a little high. You saw me pay tribute to Jeremy Rhodes, one of the men who trained me... I think those of us who had him in our lives still struggle with the thought that he's gone. To be here in England, after everything he always told me about it, I can't help but think about him and how he might be proud of me. As for Miyuki, well...

[We see the smirk widen and turn into a smile.]

MB: There's a reason that move is so effective, even against someone as headstrong as Lauryn Rage.

SLB: And surely, Ayako Fujiwara adding a crossface helped.

MB: It did. It certainly did.

SLB: You know, on social media, fans really appreciated how boldly you and Ayako fought each other when it came down to the two of you. That's especially so after hearing your thoughts about how Harley Hamilton and Cinder had earned the right to do what they did a few months ago at SuperClash and Steal the Spotlight.

[Michelle nods her head as she takes another sip.]

SLB: How did it feel to get another opportunity to wrestle against Ayako?

MB: Well, not to put anything past Lauryn Rage or Trish Wallace, but I was really hoping it would come down to Ayako and me. I chose Ayako to be my first opponent when I came back because of how much I think of her skills. I'm proud to have her mentoring my daughter because of those skills. It wasn't going to be easy, but to get to the last part of the match against someone as tough as Ayako, well... it's worth the effort.

SLB: And the comparisons to what happened at Steal the Spotlight?

[Michelle shrugs once more.]

MB: Harley Hamilton and Cinder have their way of doing things, as is their right to do when they earn it, Ayako Fujiwara and I have our own way when we earn it.

[Blackwell can't help but smile as he nods his head.]

SLB: And of course, you know that just opens the floor to more questions about your future, and whether you'll be taking on Julie Somers in Los Angeles. I know you promised the scoop to Bucky Wilde, but I have to let you know, Interim President Zharkov confirmed to me moments ago that your win tonight moves you up to be the Number One Contender to Julie's World Women's Title. Does your win tonight, your new ranking, and perhaps the conversation you had earlier with Juan Vasquez... does that change anything about your feelings?

[A moment passes as Blackwell's question sits in Michelle's mind. She takes another sip from the bottle of coconut water, processing the inquiry, before lowering the bottle and giving Blackwell an answer.]

MB: It does.

[Blackwell's eyes light up.]

SLB: Does it, now? Would you like to tell us?

[Michelle bites her bottom lip, then answers.]

MB: I didn't say how it changed... just that it changed. I'm sorry, Lou, but I'm afraid I need to keep my promise to Bucky.

[Blackwell snaps his fingers in mock disappointment.]

SLB: Well, I'm sure the world eagerly awaits that segment at Saturday Night Wrestling on May 12 in Las Vegas. Can't fault me for trying.

MB: I wouldn't expect anything less.

[The two exchange a wink, and we cut back to Lori Dane and Ben Waterson in real time.]

BW: You've got to be kidding me, she still isn't sure she wants the shot?

LD: That's not what she said, Ben. She said that her feelings changed.

BW: She's the Number One Contender now! How could she not immediately take that shot?!

LD: She stated her reasons, and I'm sure you'll get your answer next week on the Call of the Wilde.

BW: Bailey can make all the noise she wants about gratitude and respect and not wanting to feel like she's jumping the line or taking someone else's spot but I've got another theory, Dane, and you're not going to like it.

LD: What's that?

BW: I think she's scared.

LD: What?!

BW: I think she's scared that she's waited her entire career for this moment - a shot at the Women's World Title - and if she blows it in Los Angeles, what's it all been for? She knows this might be it for her - a one and done shot at the biggest prize in the sport - and she doesn't have the guts to put herself through that.

LD: Michelle Bailey is one of the bravest women I've ever known, Ben Waterson, and I think it's ludicrous to even suggest that might be the reason she hasn't accepted Julie Somers' challenge for Memorial Day Mayhem.

BW: Well, if I know Bucky, he's gonna get the answer... and we'll see who is right.

LD: I'm sure we will. Fans, we've got another break coming up right now but when we come back, it'll be tag team action with a little lucha libre flair that I know you will NOT want to miss!

[Lori winks at the camera as we fade to black.]

We fade up from black onto black and white footage of an empty arena - likely the Crockett Coliseum from the looks of things - with deserted chairs and a wrestling ring with no one in it.

We see Karl O'Connor walking up a set of steps with the aid of a cane, moving slowly and deliberately, putting much of his weight on the cane. He slowly takes a seat, looking down onto the ring as the camera cuts to a closeup of him and we hear his voice.]

"I can still hear the echoes chanting my name."

[A closeup on his eyes, wrinkles showing the years and the mileage on his body.]

Cut to a shot of "Big" Jim Watkins standing in a locker room dressed in an old brown ring jacket, running his finger down the trim as we hear his recognizable voice.]

"Time has not silenced the crowd."

[We get a trio of old pieces of footage - Brett Bryant in his younger days with his arms raised over his head, Cameron O'Connor applying a spinning toe hold on an unknown foe, and Blackjack Lynch raising his black glove-covered hand into the air as his gravelly voice is heard.]

"I never did a moonsault..."

[Cut to a modern day closeup shot of Blackjack Lynch's eyes, a notable scar over one of them...

...and then a shot of Terry Shane Jr. in a suit looking out over the empty arena with his voiceover.]

"...or walked the top rope."

[Oliver Strickland sits on a locker room bench, his eyes drifting across the vacant room as he speaks.]

"There were no pyrotechnics..."

[And onto Ivan Kostovich who runs a hand over the links of his old Russian chain now hanging from a hook on a door as we hear his heavy accented words.]

"...no fancy, flashing lights."

[Cut to a series of modern shots of current day AWA superstars in action - Jordan Ohara diving off the top rope with a crossbody to the floor... Julie Somers using a moonsault from the top onto a standing opponent on the outside... and we hear Karl O'Connor's voice again.]

"We never flew through the air."

[Cut to O'Connor sitting in the Crockett, cane in hand as he looks at the empty ring...

...and then old footage of a defiant Blackjack Patterson shaking his head, refusing to submit to a painful hold as we hear Jim Watkins.]

"We were men of courage..."

[Closeup on Watkins' eyes in present day before cutting to Blackjack Lynch wrapping his hand around a foe's head as his voice is heard.]

"...men of steel."

[And then back to modern day shots of Juan Vasquez leaping off the top of the Woodshed, plummeting down... to Shadoe Rage hurling himself off the top of a super-sized steel cage... to a blood-covered Hannibal Carver wielding a steel chair as we hear Terry Shane Jr's voice.]

"They were men without fear."

[Cut to a shot of Blackjack Lynch standing in the ring, raising a hand in the air as if saluting the crowd as we hear his voice. We can actually see a ghost-like vision of cheering fans around him...]

"I can still hear the echoes cheering my name."

[...but when we cut to the opposite angle, we can see he's all alone in the ring.

And we cut again, this time showing the legendary Hamilton Graham standing outside the ring, a hand draped over the rope, a hungry look upon his face, wishing for one more moment of glory as we hear his familiar voice.]

"Today... I cheer for them."

[And as we fade to black, a graphic comes up promoting "AWA LEGACY" before we fade all the way out...

...and then fade back up to live action in Atlanta where we get a backstage shot of "Cannonball" Lee Connors throwing rounding kicks at a heavy pad being held by Betty Chang and Charity Rockwell. Chang shouts encouragement to her friend as he delivers another blow...]

LD: Lee Connors getting ready for his showdown with Dirt Dog Unique Allah in just a little while...

[...and then to another part of the backstage area where we can see - but not hear - Dirt Dog having a conversation with his son, Odysseus, who looks a little heated as he speaks to his father.]

LD: ...and a strategy session elsewhere in the building with the Allahs. That match is coming up in just a little while but right now, let's go over to Megumi Sato!

[We cut to the ring where Megumi is standing.]

MS: The following contest is a tag team match scheduled for one fall with a fifteen minute time limit! Introducing first... already in the ring at this time... from Atlanta, Georgia... weighing in at 444 pounds...

...BILLY AND JIMMY BRRREWSSTERRR!

[The two hometown wrestlers raise their arms to a mixed reaction from the Center Stage crowd.]

MS: Annnnnnnnnnnnnnd their opponents...

[Resorte's "Cada Hogar" starts to play over the PA system as Guerrero Oscura steps through the entranceway trailed closely by Rey Fuerza.]

LD: Alright! It's lucha libre time here on Showtime, fans!

[Rey Fuerza has on a red mask with gold trim, red tights, with the image of a war hammer smashing a lightning bolt airbrushed in gold on the right thigh and the letters "RF" in a Medieval Gothic font, crowned with the same four point crown as on his mask, on the left thigh; black knee pads and black boots.

Guerrero Oscuro has on a black mask with smoke gray trim, and plain black tights, knee pads and boots.]

MS: Hailing from Lagos de Moreno, Jalisco, Mexico, and weighing in at a total combined weight of 412 pounds... they are the team of Rey Fuerza and Guerrero Oscuro...

LA NUEVA GENERACIÓN OSCURA!

[With a nod to each other, Rey Fuerza and Guerrero Oscuro begin making their way towards the ring, Rey Fuerza taking the right side of the aisle, while Guerrero Oscuro takes the other. As they make their way down the aisle, they reach out to high-five and slap hands with as many fans as they can.]

CADA HOGAR, CADA LADO, DESDE UNA BASE #
MONTADO, CADA VUELTA, CADA PASO AUNADO #
HA HECHO FALTA EL LLEVARLO CLARO, DESPUÉS #
DE TODO HA HABIDO LEGADO, ESTANDO DE FRENTE #
HACIA EL MAÑANA, ESTANDO ENTRE LA LUZ Y LA CALMA #
NUESTRA LA HISTORIA DE RAÍZ HUMANA, USOS Y COSTUMBRES #
NUESTRA ALMA

[Reaching the ring, Guerrero Oscuro takes a running start and slides under the bottom rope. Popping back to his feet, he climbs a corner on the far side of the ring, and points to the fans, in acknowledgement of their cheers.]

CADA HOGAR #
CADA HOGAR #
CADA HOGAR #
CADA HOGAR #
CALMA ... ALMA ... #
ALMA ...

[Rey Fuerza, meanwhile, climbs the steps, onto the ring apron. He grabs hold of the top rope and slingshots himself into the ring, rolling forward towards the center of the ring and takes the knee. Rey Fuerza points to his cousin, who points back at him and the two thump their chest with a fist.]

LD: La Nueva Generación Oscura making their Showtime return after several weeks away, Ben. What do you know about their absence?

BW: I've heard there was some paperwork issues as there often is with international talent plus some nagging injuries that needed to be dealt with. But they're back now and this is yet another big boost for the tag team division.

[As the music fades, Rey Fuerza rises to his feet, while Guerrero Oscuro steps off the ropes. Joining his cousin in their corner, they discuss some last-minute strategy, as they await the start of the match.]

"DING! DING! DING!"

LD: And we have Guerrero Oscuro starting things off here with Jimmy Brewster.

[The luchador comes towards the larger competitor, quickly tangling up into a collar and elbow that Brewster dominates with his bigger size, pushing Oscuro back before snatching a side headlock.]

BW: And this will be the key for the Brewsters, Dane. Use that size. Use that strength. Control the pace of the matchup. You can't let these luchadors use their speed, quickness, agility... you just can't do it.

[Brewster cranks the headlock a few times, out in the middle of the ring before he transitions into an armwringer..

...but Oscuro is ready for the opportunity, flipping forward out of the armwringer into one of his own, twisting the arm around into a rear hammerlock as the fans cheer the athletic reversal.]

LD: Very nice show of skill on the part of Guerrero Oscuro-OH! Brewster plants that elbow right upside the ear!

[Spinning around, Brewster throws a big haymaker that sends the luchador falling backwards into the ropes before winding up to throw another.]

LD: Referee Scott Ezra warning about the closed fists... Brewster sends the luchador across...

[The big whip sends the luchador bouncing back, ducking under a wild swing from Brewster on the first pass. He hits the ropes again and is caught on the second pass, getting picked up for a possible backbreaker or a side slam, but Guerrero Oscuro rides the momentum, scissoring Jimmy Brewster's head with his legs, and brings him down with a flying head scissors!]

LD: Whooooa! What technique and skill out of Guerrero Oscuro!

[And as Brewster scrambles up, he's met with a dropkick on the chin that puts him right back down...]

LD: Nice dropkick, Ben.

BW: Almost Flawless, eh?

LD: I see what you did there and- OHH! A dropkick for brother Billy as well!

[Having cut off Billy Brewster before he could get through the ropes to attack, both Brewsters roll out to the floor...]

LD: The Brewsters bail out after the pair of dropkicks... and now Oscuro with the first tag of the match...

[Rey Fuerza jogs down the apron, scaling to the top rope in two quick steps as the crowd rises to their feet...]

LD: OFF THE TOP!

[...and the crowd ROARS as Fuerza wipes out both Brewsters with a flying cross body to the floor!]

LD: Big dive early on in this one... and is this what you meant by letting the luchadors control the pace, Ben?

BW: It absolutely is. The Brewsters are going to need to find a way to bring this to a halt if they want to come out on top of this one.

[Rey Fuerza drags Jimmy Brewster to his feet and rolls him under the bottom rope before climbing up onto the ring apron himself, grabbing hold of the top rope...]

LD: OFF THE TOP AGAIN!

[...and leaps to the top, springing off into a second crossbody...]

“OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

LD: Jimmy Brewster flattened out and Fuerza eats canvas right there! A hard fall there... and Jimmy tags in Billy, bringing his brother officially into the match for the first time.

[Billy Brewster is still a little staggered from the crossbody to the floor as he marches in, pulling Rey Fuerza up off the mat...]

LD: OHH!

[...and the crowd reacts as Fuerza promptly leaps up to smash a knee up under the chin!]

LD: LEAPING KNEESTRIKE CONNECTS!

[Fuerza falls back to his corner, slapping the offered hand.]

LD: Another tag by the luchadors...

[But as Oscuro tries to come back in, Billy Brewster charges forward, throwing a big boot to the side of the head that sends him to the floor!]

LD: Wow! What a hard-hitting exchange here by these two hungry teams looking to make their mark on the tag team scene!

[Fuerza tries to get his hands on Billy Brewster after the running boot but Pete “Blue Shoes” Miller intervenes, keeping them apart...

...which allows Jimmy Brewster to hit the floor and go to work on Oscuro.]

BW: Look at this! Brilliant strategy by the brothers Brewster, the referee tied up as Jimmy works over Oscuro on the outside with those big forearms to the mush!

[Jimmy lands a few clubbing blows across the back before wrapping his arms around the torso and...]

“OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

LD: Spinefirst into the ring apron goes Guerrero Oscuro!

BW: These Atlanta vets showing the advantage of experience... and Jimmy puts him back in, right where Billy can take advantage.

[Billy lands a few hard stomps to the lower back before grabbing the wrist, dragging the luchador across the ring before slapping the offered hand of his brother.]

LD: And that doesn’t take long for Jimmy Brewster to tag back in.

[Billy pulls Oscurro to his feet, standing chest to chest with him as Jimmy slips in... and Billy shoves Oscurro backwards into a forearm shank to the kidneys by Jimmy!]

“OHHHHHHHHH!”

BW: Working the back is one surefire way to slow down a faster opponent... and these Brewsters are showing me something, Dane.

LD: They sure are... and they may be showing the luchadors something as well.

[Grabbing the arm, Jimmy Brewster wings Guerrero Oscurro into the empty neutral corner, slamming him against the buckles. He pauses, pumping his fist a few times to a mixed response.]

LD: The fans in Atlanta not sure what to make of these two though, torn between wanting to cheer for the hometown wrestlers but not liking their tactics.

BW: They'll like 'em if they win.

[Brewster points to Guerrero Oscurro, then throws out his arms in an “It's over!” gesture. He yells to his brother, “I'm gonna squash him like a bug!” and charges towards the corner...]

LD: Brewster on the move!

[...but Guerrero Oscurro tucks his head, front rolling out of the corner and out of Jimmy Brewster's path as Brewster SLAMS chestfirst into the buckles!]

BW: Oof! Guerrero Oscurro rolled out of the way and Jimmy Brewster hit the corner hard! Jimmy might have spent a little too much time showboating to the crowd there.

[As Jimmy Brewster staggers backwards, away from the corner, Guerrero Oscurro grabs a hold of him and locks in the inverted facelock. He shows off some uncanny strength as he picks up his larger opponent, holding Brewster up nearly vertical, before dropping Brewster forwards, sitting down and slamming the opponent back-first into the mat.]

LD: Unusual offense out of Oscurro... slams him down hard...

[Climbing to his feet, Oscurro slaps the offered hand...]

LD: ...and another quick to tag to Rey Fuerza, making him legal as he starts climbing again...

[...and Fuerza leaps into the air, crashing down on a sitting-up Brewster with a seated senton off the top!]

LD: OHHH! Seated splash connects!

BW: Possibly knocking all the wind out of him with it too.

LD: You could say he hit it with mucha fuerza, Ben.

BW: YOU could but I've got my dignity, Dane.

LD: I'll remember that the next time I hear you talking about Under Armour.

[With his brother down and potentially about to be pinned, Billy Brewster comes through the ropes to attack, rushing Fuerza with a clothesline but the luchador ducks under, running to the ropes where he leaps up...]

LD: SPRINGBOARD...

[...flipping backwards for a moonsault!]

LD: ...NO! CAUGHT! BILLY BREWSTER SHOWING POWER!

[Fuerza, however, wriggles free to land on his feet behind Billy, shoving him hard into the corner...]

...which is Jimmy Brewster's cue to bury a right forearm into the lower back, preventing Fuerza from doing more damage!]

LD: The Brewsters working in tandem now, double whip on Fuerza...

[But Fuerza ducks under a double clothesline attempt, rebounding back with a split-legged dropkick that puts the brothers down!]

LD: ...nicely done with the dropkick!

[Guerrero Oscuro comes back in, the referee throwing up his hands in frustration at the chaotic action as each luchador grabs a Brewster, flinging them into the ropes...]

LD: Nueva Generaciòn Oscura send the Brewsters for a ride...

[...and on the rebound, both luchadors muscle up a Brewster, swinging them around...]

LD: OHHHH! DOUBLE TILT-A-WHIRRRRRRL!

[With both Brewsters laid out on the mat and the crowd cheering, the Jalisco, Mexico natives rush to opposite ropes, leaping to the middle, springing back...]

LD: DOUBLE MOONSAULT ON TARGET!

[...and both stay covering as the referee shrugs and decides to count both!]

LD: ONNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOO! THR-

"OHOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO!"

LD: DOUBLE KICKOUT BY THE BREWSTERS!

BW: And I don't have a clue who the legal competitors are anymore, Dane!

LD: Neither do I... hopefully the referee does as Oscuro pulls Jimmy Brewster to his feet, shoots him in again...

[He tilt-a-whirls him up and around again, this time keeping him on the knee as he brings him down...]

LD: ...another backbreaker, hanging on though...

[...and at a gesture from his cousin, Rey Fuerza leaps from the mat to the top rope in a single bound...]

LD: Fuerza's up top annnnnnnnd...

[...and leaps high into the air, tucking his body...]

LD: ...ELBOOOOOOWWWWWW!

[...and as his elbow smashes down across the sternum of Brewster, it flips him off the knee as Oscuro hooks the leg, rolling him onto his shoulders!]

LD: ONNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOO!

[Fuerza dashes across, connecting with a low dropkick on Billy Brewster, driving him through the ropes to the floor as the referee slaps the mat a third time!]

LD: THEY GOT 'EM!

"DING! DING! DING!"

LD: A big win for Nueva Generación Oscura in their return to action here on Showtime, Ben!

BW: An impressive win. An exciting win for these fans in Atlanta. These guys come into the AWA with a lot of hype behind them as international superstars that the Internet fans adore... now they gotta live up to the hype in the biggest ocean with the biggest sharks gunnin' for 'em.

LD: Absolutely... and this tag team division is heating up to a boil! After saluting these cheering fans, it looks like these dynamic luchadors are making their way over to the interview area to talk to Mariah and Ess-Dee-Dub!

[We cut over to the interview area where we see the aforementioned co-hosts next to it, waving over the victorious tag team.]

SDW: That's right! Come on over, boys, Sweet Daddy wanna hear from you, Hotlanta wanna hear from you, and the AWA Galaxy wanna hear from you!

[The members of Nueva Generación Oscura ascend the staircase to the entrance stage, still waving and pumping fists at the crowd, who cheer them in return.]

SDW: That's right, Hotlanta, show these gentlemen your love! Now, boys, it's another successful outing for you tonight, but you heard what Ms. Lori Dane said, this division is getting hot and we've got a stacked, and I do mean STACKED, tag team division here. What do you two have in mind to make sure you plant a foothold, if you will, here in the AWA?

[It is Guerrero Oscura, as usual, who steps up to the proffered microphone.]

GO: Let me first say, Sweet Daddy, it is an honor, always, for us to compete in front of these fans here at Center Stage Studios, and to show off what we can do... El Legado de Lucha... The legacy of lucha libre... To showcase it to the AWA Galaxy. We do not take these opportunities lightly and we do not take them for granted.

[The crowd cheers that!]

GO: Now, when we are not competing, we are watching. We consider that part of our training and we are very much aware, Sweet Daddy, Mariah, just how competitive the AWA tag division is.

And we're not just talking about the champions, or contenders the likes of the Soldiers of Fortune, Wes Taylor and Tony Donovan, or Omega and Polemos. So

many of these teams we would be proud to compete against in the ring. Some of them... Less so.

[The mic is offered to Rey Fuerza who speaks in his native tongue.]

RF: Los Desperadoes, no sabéis el verdadero significado de la desesperación. Sois una jauría de perros salvajes que se aprovechan de vuestro número, ¿y para qué? ¿Así que Odin Gunn podría conservar el campeonato mundial de televisión sin ensuciarse las manos? ¿Ese es el líder al que seguís?

Y Masks for Money, usamos nuestras máscaras por orgullo por nuestra herencia. Vosotros lleváis vuestras máscaras por cobardía, porque tenéis que ocultar vuestra vergüenza al mundo.

[Oscurito nods as the fluent members of the Atlanta crowd cheer.]

GO: Maybe we have been watching too much and not taking action enough... We should have been there when the Kabukicho Assassination Maniac Squad took liberties with our countryman, Tizona, and Yoshi Fujiwara.

You see, KAMS might have been a dominant trio in Japan... They are a dominant trio now. But we know a thing or two, about being part of a dominant trio. That's okay... Brian James and Jackson Hunter can have first dibs on those three. We will wait our turn.

And then we have Generation Lost, a group of boys with pedigree... But instead of living up to your respective legacies, chicos, you have chosen to squander them with your frat-boy antics! You four are not a lost generation... You four are simply a wasted generation! And if you disagree with our assessment, chicos? Well... It may be a while before Nueva Generación Oscura earns a shot at the World Tag Team championships, but we've got all the time in the world to take on any two of you four and shut your big mouths at the same time.

[Oscurito bows his head to the interviewers.]

GO: And, now, Mariah, Sweet Daddy, since we won't be back here for a while, we hope you'll excuse us while we go enjoy our last evening in Atlanta before Showtime hits the road. Thank you for this opportunity to address the AWA Galaxy; the pleasure and honor, as always, is all ours.

[The two luchadors shake hands with Sweet Daddy Williams and, with a slap to his tag team partner's shoulder, Guerrero Oscurito leads the way, as they exit the interview area.]

MW: Alright, AWA fans... Nueva Generación Oscura looking to make waves here in the AWA Tag Team Division.

[Sweet Daddy Williams chuckles.]

SDW: They gonna have to join the club, Miss Mariah - after what we saw earlier with Omega and Polemos and what we're GONNA see later with the Bishops and the Aces In The Hole... not to mention a week from tonight... lawwwwwd have mercy, the AWA Tag Team Division is heatin' up!

[Williams fans himself with his hand as Mariah grins.]

MW: And speaking of that tag team title showdown a week from tonight, let's take a look at everything coming your way a week from tonight in Las Vegas for Saturday Night Wrestling LIVE right here on ESPN!

[A graphic comes up promoting said event.]

MW: This is going to be an EXPLOSIVE one, fans! It'll be trios action in Sin City when the Slam Sorority takes on the unlikely trio of Lauryn Rage, Kimmy Bailey, and Pink Cashmere! We'll actually be seeing Cashmere in action a little later tonight and we'll get her thoughts on that matchup.

[The graphic changes.]

MW: We'll be just a couple of weeks away from the farewell match - the retirement of the legendary Juan Vasquez - when we roll into Vegas but you better believe that Mr. Vasquez isn't walking out of Vegas for the last time without making some headlines.

[And again.]

MW: It was back at National Wrestling Night when Julie Somers offered to put her Women's World Title on the line at Memorial Day Mayhem against Royal Crown winner Michelle Bailey... but Bailey has been slow to accept the challenge. Now, we've heard her reasons... but next weekend, Bucky Wilde makes his return to the AWA for a special edition of The Call Of The Wilde to try to get the answer himself!

[And again.]

MW: We've heard the hype for weeks now and in Las Vegas, we get the scoop as "Hotshot" Stevie Scott has promised to reveal to the world exactly who he's negotiated for Max Magnum to face at the kickoff to the summer!

[And yet again.]

MW: How about this one? After the chaotic scene at National Wrestling Night, Damian DeVile has called out his own father - Caleb Temple - to confront him in Las Vegas to tell the world their twisted and tangled story.

[And more.]

MW: The World Television Title will be on the line when the undefeated monster Odin Gunn of the Desperadoes defends his title against the former Dog of War Wade Walker who we'll be seeing in action later tonight as well. But after battling to the time limit, this time these two will face off with a FIFTEEN minute time limit.

SDW: And that may not sound like much, Miss Mariah, but five whole minutes can make all the difference when it comes to that World Television Title.

MW: Indeed it could... and speaking of making a difference, Sweet Daddy, Ryan Martinez has asked Derrick Williams to come to the ring in Las Vegas so they can talk about what happened at National Wrestling Night. Will THAT make a difference to the Future as he's still reeling from being taken out by Martinez after their tag team win?

[And one last change.]

MW: And finally, the big one - the World Tag Team Title match pitting the champions Next Gen taking on their challengers, the Gold Standard! We've been waiting on this one for months but we're hearing it's official that Bret Grayson is medically cleared and he'll join the Shadow Wolf, Takeshi Mifune, in going for their first taste of championship gold in Sin City!

[The graphic disappears.]

MW: It's going to be a wild night in Vegas... and with the Showtime summer tour and Memorial Day Mayhem just days away, you can bet that what happens in Vegas next weekend will certainly not STAY in Vegas! Join us right here on ESPN one week from tonight for all the action and excitement! And speaking of action and excitement, it's always exciting when "Cannonball" Lee Connors hits the squared circle! Megumi, take it away!

[Wolfe grins as we cut to the ring where Megumi Sato is standing.]

MS: The following contest is scheduled for one fall with a fifteen minute time limit. Introducing first...

[The sounds of "Snakes" by Ol' Dirty Bastard ring out over the PA system to jeers from the AWA faithful.]

MS: ...from Brooklyn, New York... weighing in at 238 pounds and being accompanied to the ring by his son, Odysseus...

...DIRT! DOG! UNIIIIIIIIIIQUE! ALLLLLLLAAAAAAAHH!

[Odysseus Allah strides into view, stomping down theatrically with his fists down at his side, soaking up the jeers of the crowd...]

LD: Uhhh... well, there's Odysseus but...

[...and after Odysseus jerks around, glaring at the curtain, Dirt Dog Unique Allah comes stumbling into view, grabbing hold of the curtain to steady himself. He smiles at the crowd, mostly jeering but there are a few 90s fans who shout it out for him.]

LD: Ahhh, okay... there he is now.

[Dirt Dog shuffles forward, flinging an arm around his angry son's shoulders, gesturing to the ring as he moves past him, walking with an awkward gait, slowly moving down the steps as Odysseus gives a shake of his head, following behind him.]

LD: Dirt Dog Unique Allah heading to the ring... and while I'm sure he's kept busy on the independent scene, the last time Allah competed on a regular basis was right here in the AWA as a member of a tag team known as the Walking Dead, Ben.

BW: Oh, don't remind me... man.

[Dane chuckles as Allah nears the ring, rolling under the ropes as his son stays ringside, glaring up at the jeering fans.]

LD: Odysseus Allah looks most displeased at the reaction of these fans for his father, Ben.

BW: I get it. Most everyone has a soft spot for their old man no matter who he is or what he's done, right? And look, Dirt Dog Unique Allah has quite the history behind him - runs in the Double Eye, the E... even here... but he's also got quite the checkered history of behind-the-scenes issues. He's been to rehab for alcohol on multiple occasions... he's even had some run-ins with the law. So, that legacy doesn't shine as bright for him as he does for some of the other legendary fathers who deck these halls. That's gotta be tough for the kid.

[Dirt Dog flops backwards into the corner, waiting for his opponent to arrive.]

MS: Annnnnnd his opponent...

[The lights dim as the sounds of "You're The Best" begin to ring out to big cheers from the Atlanta crowd!]

MS: ...from Winnipeg, Canada... weighing in at 177 pounds...

..."CANNONBALLLLLLLL" LEEEEEEEE CONNNNNNNNORRRRRS!

[Connors springs forth through the curtain to even louder cheers, dressed in the same gi and headband we saw him in earlier. He grins to the cheering fans, pumping a fist to them as he starts his way down the stairs.]

LD: Lee Connors heading to the ring, ready for a fight he did not want, Ben.

BW: It's the fight he's got so he better get ready.

LD: Connors enjoying the cheers of this Atlanta crowd who've really taken to the young underdog.

[Connors reaches out to slap a few hands before hopping off the staircase, climbing up on the ring apron. He tugs the black belt from around his gi, yanking it off to reveal a bare torso and full-length red tights with white stripes. Grabbing the top rope, he slingshots over the ropes into the ring, climbing up on the middle rope to salute the fans...

...which causes Dirt Dog Unique Allah to climb up on the opposite buckles, pointing to another part of the crowd that jeer him!]

LD: A very different response for Dirt Dog than "Cannonball."

[The referee watches as Connors hops down, ready for action...

...but Allah does not, still playing to an ungrateful crowd.]

LD: Can someone let him know the match is about to start?

[Allah waves his arms up, trying to get the crowd louder..]

LD: Any time now.

[...and as the referee shrugs at their inability to get him down, he signals for the bell.]

"DING! DING! DING!"

[With the bell sounding, Dirt Dog Unique Allah hops down off the middle rope with a flourish...

...and immediately strikes a makeshift ugly as sin martial arts pose.]

LD: Oh, jeez.

BW: Haha! A little bit of Drunken Monk Fighting!

LD: Is that really a thing?

BW: As far as you know.

LD: What I know is this is Dirt Dog Unique Allah mocking Lee Connors and his martial arts background. This is no different than someone striking the Crane Kick pose from The Karate Kid!

BW: Hey, for all you know, Dirt Dog's a damn ninja!

LD: I don't think so. Not one bit.

[Connors disdainfully shakes his head, gesturing at Allah to the official who shrugs, waving for the action to start...]

LD: Not a whole lot that Davis Warren can do about it but Lee Connors is obviously upset. Trying to keep his cool. It's been made very clear that Connors really did not want this match... really did not want any part of potentially hurting Allah who many believe should NOT be in a match at this point of his career at all. The fans of the AWA want to remember the Allah from Ring Wars 3 and the legendary Seven Tables of Fear match with Joe Petrow at the Skydome in Toronto... not like this.

BW: A whole lot of trash talk online has been raining down on Allah since this match was announced... and I'm curious to see if that fires up the oldtimer.

LD: Connors still not looking to advance on Allah... Allah still in that... I guess we'll call it a karate stance but Connors isn't taking the bait. He wants no part of trading martial arts attacks with Allah... perhaps feeling it would be unsporting considering his background...

[Suddenly, Allah tires of waiting, rushing forward with a sloppy barrage of wild punches being thrown. Connors easily avoids them, backstepping, sidestepping, ducking, slapping away...]

LD: Allah on the attack and-

[...and then Allah goes for an off-balance high kick, swinging wildly as Connors easily backsteps, swatting it down as Allah goes down, landing on his rump to laughter from the crowd!]

LD: -oh... oh, that's...

BW: Alright, maybe he's not a ninja.

[Connors shakes his head again, watching as Allah angrily sits on the mat, glaring at the laughing fans...]

LD: The fans having a good time at Dirt Dog Unique Allah's expense... but Lee Connors is not. He wants no part of this - that much is obvious. He may be regretting taking this match at all, Ben.

BW: Well, he's in it now so unless he wants to walk out and take the L, he's going to have to figure out a way to win while keeping his morals or whatever intact.

[Connors again complains to the official who shrugs again.]

LD: Davis Warren again letting Connors know there's nothing he can do about the situation...

[Connors steps closer to Allah, leaning over and extending a hand...]

LD: Maybe Connors trying to see if Allah wants to bow out gracefully and-

[...and Allah pops up off the mat, raking his fingers across the eyes of Connors!]

"OHHHH!"

LD: ALLAH TO THE EYES!

BW: Heheh... that wily old veteran!

[Grabbing Connors by the hair, Allah RAMS Connors' head into the top turnbuckle!]

LD: And just like that, Dirt Dog Unique Allah showing off some of the brilliance of his glory days, using his opponent's overconfidence against him...

[Snatching a loose side headlock, Allah presses Connors' face into the top rope, walking along the ropes and raking his face...]

LD: Ohh! Ropeburn on the top, taking the skin right off Connors!

[Reaching the middle of the ropes, Allah presses the throat down on the top rope, choking Connors as the referee counts...]

LD: Three... four... fi- breaks just in time and- OH! He snaps him backwards, sending him down on the canvas!

[With Connors down on the mat, Allah hops up on the middle rope, flashing a pair of middle fingers at him...]

LD: Ahh, the 90s.

[...and dives off with a big splash, crashing down on Connors' torso!]

LD: Splash from the second rope!

[Allah nods along with the referee's count of one... of two...]

LD: Connors kicks out in time!

[The 90s superstar gives a loud "THAT'S THREE! THREE! CAN YOU COUNT, REF?! ONETWOTHREE!" The official holds up two fingers in response as Allah mutters something in his direction, turning to grab a fistful of Connors' hair.]

"Come on, Karate Kid... let's do this thing..."

[A whip sends Connors across into the ropes as Allah doubles over for a back drop...

...but Connors leapfrogs up and over, landing on his feet behind Allah who pops up, sweeping around...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

LD: BACK KICK ON THE JAW!

[...and Connors lands a back hook kick without looking, snapping Allah's head back as he dead man falls onto his back!]

LD: CONNORS FOR THE WIN!

[The referee drops to count!]

LD: ONNNNNNE! TWOOOOOO!

[But Allah weakly pops a shoulder off the mat, breaking the count to the disappointment of the fans.]

LD: Only a two count off that kick... and that's the kind of thing I think Connors is looking for. One shot... one kick, maybe a quick KO victory to avoid putting Allah through too much punishment.

[Connors grimly shakes his head again as he watches Allah roll onto a hip, struggling to get back to his feet...]

BW: If Connors wants that quick win, he should suck it up and put a bullet in Old Yeller here.

LD: BEN! This is a family show!

BW: Wasn't Old Yeller a family movie?

[Connors pulls Allah the rest of the way to his feet before getting shoved back a step, Allah throwing a wild haymaker...]

LD: BIG RIGHT!

[...but Connors ducks underneath it, causing Allah to whiff on the blow before Connors throws rapidfire rights and left to the body, hammering the ribcage!]

LD: Connors trying to chop him down and...

[A deadleap sends Connors high into the air where he scissors the head of his opposition, flipping him over in a tightly cradled rana!]

LD: ...whoa! Sheer athleticism by Connors!

[The referee slaps the mat once... twice...]

LD: Allah slips free again!

[Allah scrambles up off the mat where Connors is waiting to snatch him up and drag him down...]

LD: SMALL PACKAGE! ONNNNNNE! TWOOOOO! Nooooo! Out at two again!

[Connors claps his hands together in frustration as he scrambles up, waiting for Allah to get off the mat before Connors rushes him, ducking low and taking him down into a schoolboy rollup!]

LD: Another cradle gets one! TWOOOO! NO! Allah breaks free again! And Ben, you can really tell that Lee Connors is trying to win but also trying to not hurt Dirt Dog Unique Allah!

BW: That might be his downfall.

LD: Allah's up again... Connors hooks the legs, takes him down... CRADLE!

[A flip-over double leg cradle puts Allah down again...]

LD: ONNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOO! TH-

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

LD: A little bit closer call there but Allah still gets free!

[Both men scramble up, Connors a step ahead of the older Allah...

...but perhaps lacking the years of experience, Connors leads with his chin as Allah reaches up!]

LD: AGAIN! AGAIN ALLAH GOES TO THE EYES!

[The crowd jeers loudly as Allah cackles at the sight of Connors frantically rubbing his eyes, trying desperately to clear his vision as Allah grabs his wrist, whipping him across...]

LD: Irish whip...

[...but Connors ducks under the knife edge chop attempt...]

LD: ...ducked down and keeps going... to the ropes...

[...and ducks under a wildly-thrown clothesline as well, keeping on his path towards the ropes a third time...]

LD: ...ducked again annnnnnd...

[...and leaps into the air, landing on the middle rope, snapping off a picture perfect mid-ring moonsault on the standing and shocked Allah!]

LD: ...MOONSAULT CONNECTS! NORTH-SOUTH FOR THE WIN!

[The referee slaps the mat once... twice...]

LD: HE'S GOT THR-

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

LD: JUST IN TIME AGAIN!

[There's a mad scramble to the feet again as Connors rushes to the ropes, rebounding back towards the rising Allah...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[...and DRILLS Allah in the chest with a palm strike, sending Allah flopping backwards across the ring, dropping into the ropes.]

LD: Oh! Solid contact there by "Cannonball" Lee Connors puts Allah on the ropes and... what's this now?

[Connors starts to step forward but furrows his brow, frowning as he watches Allah leaning against the ropes, breathing heavily and clutching at his chest. He gestures at the official...]

BW: It looks like Connors is trying to get the referee to see if Allah can continue, Dane.

LD: That might an excellent question from the looks of him right now.

[Allah is quite literally sucking wind at this point, badly out of shape in comparison to Connors who implores the official again to check...]

LD: The referee - Davis Warren - stepping in now, checking to see if Allah is okay to continue this match...

[But as the official steps towards him, Allah reaches out and shoves him back, sending him stumbling backwards...]

LD: What's with these people putting their hands on referees tonight?!

[Allah goes charging in blindly, running headlong and headstrong at Connors...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

LD: SUPERKICK ON THE MONEY!

[The thrust kick snaps Allah's head back, sending him staggering backwards, his eyelids heavy and fluttering...]

BW: That might do it, Dane! He might be out on his feet!

[...and sensing a chance to end it, Connors swoops in behind Allah, snaring a rear waistlock...]

LD: Connors hooks him and-

[...but a desperate Allah grabs the too close referee by the shirt collar with both hands, pulling him forward right up against Allah's chest!]

LD: What is he...?

[The referee's vision temporarily shielded by Allah, Allah swings his leg backwards and upwards, driving his heel squarely into the groin!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

LD: LOW BLOW BY CONNORS! MULE KICK STYLE!

BW: This might do it, Dane! We might be about to witness a major upset and-

[With the fans jeering his illegal strike, Allah shoves the official aside, managing to reverse the waistlock into one of his own...]

LD: Now it's Allah looking to take advantage as he-

[...but Connors snaps an elbow back into the temple once... twice... three times!]

LD: Connors elbows his way out...

[Ducking down, Connors reaches between his own legs to grab Allah's ankle, yanking it out from under him, putting Allah down on his back as Connors abruptly straightens up, clasping his hands in front of him...]

LD: ...Connors sets and...

[...and SNAPS OFF a picture perfect standing moonsault into a double kneedrop down into the chest of Allah!]

LD: ...OHHHHH! HE CRUSHED HIM! CRUSHED HIM UNDER THE KNEES!

[Connors stays on him, reaching back to hook a leg, leaning deep into the cradle for one... two...]

LD: HE GOT HIM!

“DING! DING! DING!”

[...and Connors immediately rolls off the downed Allah, looking almost disappointed as he sits on the mat.]

LD: Lee Connors picks up the win, continuing to return from his injury suffered late last year... and Ben, what do you chalk up that look on his face to?

BW: I don't know, Dane. Maybe disappointed he had to use a move like that to defeat Allah. But he should be celebrating the win no matter how he had to get it!

LD: That's just not the way Lee Connors operates, Ben. He's got more character than that... and we know he had no desire to try to hurt Allah and ultimately, he waited as long as he could to try to minimize the damage - but in the end, he needed one quick strike to get the job done and-

[The crowd groans then jeers as a victorious Lee Connors gets assaulted from behind by Odyessus Allah...]

“OHHHHHHHHHH!”

[Grabbing the top rope, Allah starts viciously stomping Connors...]

LD: And just like that, we're seeing the younger Allah take out his frustrations on his father's opponent!

[The crowd is jeering as Allah leaps up, dropping a knee between the shoulderblades of a prone Connors!]

LD: Odysseus Allah has been nothing but trouble for the AWA locker room since arriving last fall! This kid has a major chip on his shoulders, Ben.

BW: A whole lot of talent though.

LD: No doubt about that... but that talent gets overshadowed by his attitude all the time!

[Allah drops another knee down on Connors as his father pushes up off the mat to his knees, looking across to see his son assaulting his opponent... and waves a hand tiredly, cheering him on.]

LD: Well, Dirt Dog certainly likes what he's seeing here, Ben.

BW: What's not to like? He took the L but now his son is putting a beating on the guy he gave it to him.

[Allah stomps Connors some more, the crowd's jeers getting louder as Dirt Dog climbs to his feet, stumbling over towards the assault...]

...and joins right in, delivering a few stomps of his own as the fans let the Allahs have it!]

LD: And now it's a two on one in there! This is out of contro- OH!

[The crowd has a similar reaction to Lori as Odysseus wheels around, anger in his eyes as he delivers a two-handed shove to the chest of Dirt Dog, knocking his father down to the mat!]

LD: He just pushed down his dad, Ben!

BW: And then goes right back after Connors! Maybe that's his way of letting his dad know that this is HIS fight now! Dirt Dog took his shot, came up short, and now it's Odysseus' turn to do damage!

[And finally, a handful of AWA officials hit the ring, trying to restore order. Odysseus lays in a few more stomps for the road before backing off, raising his hands as he gets an earful from Tommy Fierro.]

LD: Tommy Fierro out here, the former World Champion looking to get some control of this situation...

[Allah drops to his back, rolling out of the ring in a huff to the floor where he promptly slams his hands on the ring apron. He stares at his father in disgust. Angrily, the younger Allah turns away from the ring and stomps his way up the ramp. His face is set up like a rain cloud as he pulls the band from his hair and lets his short dreadlocks spill down around his head. As he hits the top of the ramp Mariah Wolfe moves to intercept him.]

MW: Odysseus, can I get a w-

[Allah comes to a hard stomp, glaring at the AWA reporter. He breathes heavily, holding his hands up at his sides.]

OA: Mariah, respectfully, if you don't get that microphone out of my face I'm g-

[Sweet Daddy Williams steps protectively in front of Mariah.]

SDW: Listen here, baby. You might be mad cuz yo daddy lost in that ring but don't lose yo doggone mind. You ain't gonna do nuthin to this here lady, Jack.

[Allah breathes heavily, chewing his lips with his fanged teeth as he contemplates his options.]

OA: Aight, cool. No damn comment. Good enough, old man?

[Allah pushes past the pair of interviewers and disappears through the curtains. Williams and Wolfe look at each other and both draw a deep breath, exhaling in relief. Unique Allah climbs up the ramp behind them.]

DDUA: You got questions, I got answers. "Cannonball" Lee Connors, you listen to me, muhfu. This ain't over between us! You hear me, muh_

[Allah Senior's rant is cut short as Odysseus Allah bursts through the curtains again. He grabs his father by the back of the neck.]

OA: Oh no you don't. You ain't tellin' these people nuthin'. You had your time in the spotlight. Let's go, Pops.

DDUA: But I was right in the middle-

OA: I said we're going.

[Unique stares into his son's cold eyes. He sees something there that gives him pause. Quietly, he nods his head as Allah Junior pushes him ahead of himself and through the curtains out of sight. Odysseus glares at Williams and Wolfe in turn.]

OA: Happy?

[He doesn't care about their answer. He's gone through the curtains before they could even answer. The interviewers look at each other silently as we fade to black.]

And then back up to a shot of a darkened room, a filtered spotlight shining down in the middle of it. We can hear footsteps in the background.

Thump.

Thump.

Thump.

The steps are drawing closer it seems.

Thump.

Thump.

Thump.

And they come to a stop revealing the face of Ryan Martinez, still battle-weathered from his bloody war at SuperClash IX.]

"They call me the White Knight."

[A quick shot of Martinez delivering brutal chops to the chest of the King of the Death Match, Caleb Temple.]

"The son of a Hall of Famer."

[A shot of House Martinez - father and son - standing in the ring with Gunnar Gaines.]

"The former two-time World Champion."

[A shot of Martinez standing over Juan Vasquez with the World Title in his grasp.]

"And I am AWA."

[We get an almost identical shot in the darkened room but this time with Supreme Wright standing center stage.]

"The greatest professional wrestler on the planet."

[Cut to footage of Wright cranking on the arm of Casey James.]

"A two-time World Champion"

[Wright holds the title overhead with a defeated Dave Bryant in the background.]

"I am AWA."

[Wright is replaced by Julie Somers.]

"The Spitfire."

[A shot of Somers flipping off the top rope, crashing down on top of Kurayami with the moonsault.]

"The Women's World Champion."

[To SuperClash IX and Somers holding the title over her head.]

"The heart and soul of the Women's Division."

[Somers trading blows with Lauryn Rage inside a steel cage.]

"And I am AWA."

[Somers is replaced by Jordan Ohara, the National Title slung over his shoulder.]

"The Phoenix."

[Ohara dives off the top rope, smashing down with a Phoenix Flame splash.]

"The National Champion."

[Ohara stands on the midbuckle, holding the title up over his head.]

"A once in a millennium talent."

[A series of quick chops lighting up Juan Vasquez.]

"I am AWA."

[The champion is replaced by a grinning Michelle Bailey.]

"The Platinum Princess."

[Bailey tears across the ring, smashing home a Britney Spear on Laura Davis.]

"Former EMWC champion."

[A quick still photo comes up of Bailey holding a championship title aloft.]

"The heart and soul of the- Julie said that?! Grr!"

[A playful Bailey plants her fists on her hips, striking a pose.]

"And I am AWA."

[Bailey is replaced by the face-painted Supernova, the World Title secured around his waist.]

"The icon."

[We get footage of Supernova way back in the day, trading blows with Mark Langseth.]

"The franchise player."

[Supernova using the Heat Wave splash on Shadoe Rage.]

"The World. Heavyweight. Champion."

"And I... AM... AWA."

[We get quick shots now, individual shots...

Jack Lynch.]

"I am AWA."

[Shadoe Rage.]

"I am AWA."

[Hannibal Carver.]

"I am AWA."

[Howie Somers.]

"I am AWA."

[Daniel Harper.]

"I am AWA."

[Harley Hamilton.]

"I am AWA."

[They come quicker and quicker, all repeating the tagline - James Lynch, Victoria June, Cinder, Kerry Kendrick, Ayako Fujiwara...

...and this time, each time they say it, they stay on screen, the framed shot getting smaller as more people are added to it...

Laura Davis. Jackson Hunter. Bret Grayson. Ricki Toughill. And on. And on. And on.

And the photos all disappear, leaving just the tagline behind...]

"I am AWA."

[The graphic fades and is replaced with more text - "The American Wrestling Alliance. Every Saturday Night. ESPN."

Fade to black.

As we fade up on footage marked "EARLIER TODAY," we find Wade Walker being interviewed by "Sweet" Lou Blackwell. Again, the last Dog of War standing looks like a completely different animal in a tailored ivory-colored suit jacket, a pair of stylish sunglasses hooked into the open collar of his sky blue dress shirt. He rubs his hand together patiently.]

SLB: Alright, Wade Walker... we heard the news earlier this week that The Desperados are looking to line up your next opponent for you... although I suspect you know The Desperados seldom work alone.

WW: 'Specially since Pedro Perez stole The Dogs of War playbook and handed it Curly Bill on a silver platter.

SLB: You do seem to have found yourself on the wrong side of that, haven't you, Mr. Walker?

WW: Maybe, but I'm starting to like it this way, Sweet Lou. That AWA Television Title? That felt pretty sweet in the hand.

SLB: Of course, you're referring to two weeks ago, when you faced the reigning TV Champion in an impromptu challenge. The crowd out here thought you won. You thought we had a new champion, and the audience at home didn't know any better. But the timekeeper and referee said the time expired before the three count came down.

[Walker shrugs.]

WW: That's okay. I don't want to be carrying any asterisks or footnotes in my title history like some people got to.

Now if Curly Bill and Pedro want to line someone up to wear me down because the want to give the Saint of Killers an easy night at the office, there's not much I can do to change that. But I know they think...

[He looks down at the floor and chuckles darkly before continuing.]

WW: ...They KNOW... that in a fair fight I can beat Odin Gunn. And if I can beat Odin Gunn, what does that mean I can do to everyone other Desperado, huh?

[And with that, we fade back to our announce team.]

LD: Wade Walker, obviously disappointed that he didn't get to hang onto the World Television Title two weeks ago when it appeared to all of us that he'd won it... but he's going to get another shot a week from tonight in Las Vegas. It's Wade Walker versus Odin Gunn for the World Television Title in a match with fifteen minute time limit...

BW: IF he gets through whoever the Desperadoes and "Curly" Bill have in store for him tonight.

LD: And it's time for us to find out exactly who that is so Megumi, the floor is yours.

[We fade to the ring where Megumi Sato is standing.]

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

["One Shot" by Rollins Band starts up over the PA and the fans cheer, anticipating the arrival of the biggest threat to Odin Gunn and the World Television Title.]

MS: From MOTOR CITY, MICHIGAN... weighing 278...

...WAAAAAAAAAAAADE WALKERRRRRRRRRRR!

[Walker is a slapped together white man with tan skin and shoulder length, stringy, thin blonde hair. His biceps and forearms are bulging, and he's got the tattoo of the sun god holding a three pronged pitchfork on his right shoulder. He looks very much like a Nordic deity. Walker is in midnight-blue toned urban camo cargo pants tucked into black combat boots, the remains of a midnight blue flak jacket fashioned into a vest that he seems poised to burst from at any moment. His face is a picture of stoicism, the calm before the metaphorical storm that is sure to follow.]

LD: The Number One Contender to the World Television Title is on the scene and looking to gather a little more momentum heading into his big title clash in Las Vegas!

BW: Momentum is one thing but survival should be the goal. Who knows who's about to come through that curtain for "Curly" Bill?!

[Walker settles against the ropes, staring up the staircase towards the stage, waiting...]

MS: Annnnnnnnnnd his opponent...

[There's a brief delay where no one emerges. Walker turns towards Megumi who shrugs her shoulders before exiting the ring.]

LD: Megumi Sato is leaving. She's done her part. No one's told her who the opponent is either.

[And finally, "Curly" Bill Webb emerges onto the entrance stage, followed by the masked Texas Ranger with his bullrope in hand as Webb smiles at the jeering crowd.]

CBW: Hold the applause, hold the applause... you're gonna wanna save it until you see who I've found to be the opponent of Mr. Wade Walker here tonight.

[Webb nods, grinning.]

CBW: It wasn't easy, Mr. Walker, I tell you that. You have quite the reputation in that locker room as someone who it is wise to not get on the bad side of. A whole lot of people afraid you might break 'em in half and leave 'em in pieces.

[He holds up one finger.]

CBW: But I found a man eager and willing for the task. A man who said he'd face anyone I wanted him to face...

[He rubs his fingers together.]

CBW: ...if the price was right. And like good ol' Bob Barker, I kept dropping greenbacks on him until that frown turned into a smile.

[Webb holds, a big grin on his face now until...

..."What a Beautiful Day" by dead horse plays as Smasher Salazar slowly ambles from the entrance, his long greasy hair hanging into his eyes.]

LD: Well, I can't say this is TOO much of a surprise, Ben.

BW: Not one bit. If you're looking for a man willing to leave another man laying for a pile of cash, you don't have to look too hard or far as long as Smasher Salazar is around.

[The lower half of his face is covered by a black bandana, and he is wearing a sleeveless T-shirt bearing the logo of "Kicks 101.5FM", an Atlanta country music radio station, as well as a pair of filthy jeans and well-worn black boots. Conspicuous by its absence is his bullwhip, although he carries his taped up Dr Pepper bottle in his equally well-taped left hand. He leans over to Webb, shaking his hand with a nod before heading towards the ring.]

LD: And this match just became a very dangerous situation for Wade Walker, Ben.

BW: Absolutely. Walker's no walk in the park... he's no tune-up match before a bigger match. He's tough, he's cold-blooded, and he's ruthless.

[Salazar continues his slow walk down to the ring, occasionally lifting his bottle to his mouth underneath the bandana to spit. His eyes dart around Center Stage, never staying fixed on any one person or thing, until he gets to the ringside area. He calmly walks up the steps, placing the bottle on top of the ringpost, and steps through the ropes. As he clears the plane of the ring, he pulls the bandana down around his neck, letting his tobacco-stained grin show. Webb and the Ranger follow behind, taking up positions at ringside as Wade Walker looks between the three individuals, trying to keep his head on a swivel.]

"DING! DING! DING!"

LD: Hour One is just about in the books here tonight on the Bon Voyage edition of Showtime on ESPN but we've got one more to go! Wade Walker who is one week away from challenging the undefeated Odin Gunn for the World Television Title is taking on Smasher Salazar... thanks to "Curly" Bill Webb and the Desperadoes... and I don't like this for Wade Walker one bit, Ben.

BW: You smell a setup?

LD: Of course! Don't you?

BW: Well, yeah, but I thought it just might be these unwashed fans in Atlanta.

LD: BEN!

[Walker stares across the ring at a grinning Salazar who looks quite pleased with his evening's plans.]

LD: Wade Walker's been an absolute force of nature since the Dogs of War split up... so you can just imagine how big the pay off from the Desperadoes was to get Salazar to take this match, Ben.

BW: I don't have to imagine - I saw the stack.

LD: Wait! You knew?!

BW: Uhhhhh.

LD: How many bills in the stack?

BW: I'm not at liberty to say... but if things go Smasher's way tonight, the afterparty might actually have brand name liquor rather than that brown label swill he usually drinks.

[And with Walker set for action, the omni-present "Curly" Bill climbs up on the apron, drawing Walker's attention towards him. The powerhouse steps close, his fists balled up and ready to throw...

...but before he can, he gets drilled with a clubbing forearm across the shoulderblades by a charging Salazar, knocking Walker off-balance and into the ropes as a smirking Webb drops back down.]

BW: That was rulebreaking 101 right there and Walker fell for it like a green eared rookie, Dane.

LD: The Desperadoes lurking out here at ringside for this one... Webb and the Ranger anyways. I saw Pedro Perez earlier today so I know he's here as well... but I hear Odin Gunn is in seclusion training for his big defense next weekend in Vegas on Saturday Night Wrestling.

[Swinging Walker around with his back against the ropes, Salazar lowers the boom, driving in some heavy-handed blows to the ribcage of the powerhouse...]

LD: And Ben, this is one of the rare occasions where Wade Walker collides with someone in the ballpark size-wise.

BW: Salazar at 6'4 and just South of three bills is definitely the kind of big body that could give Walker some trouble when he's used to overwhelming his opponents with his size.

LD: What happens when someone like Walker faces someone like Salazar or even Odin Gunn and that size and power edge is cut down dramatically?

BW: For someone like Walker, he's also got incredible explosiveness - we see it with the Spear... with the Superman Punch... and that's the kind of shift in approach we need to see out of him to succeed against an opponent like those, Dane.

LD: Salazar continuing to work those ribs with those heavy hands of his, battering the body...

[Turning Walker back to the ropes, Salazar leans on the back of the neck, pushing his throat down on the top strand...]

LD: ...and a blatant choke now, not caring one bit that he's in full view of the referee...

[The official gets on Salazar's case, laying a count on him...]

LD: ...and that means to me, Ben, that there's gotta be a real question in how much Smasher Salazar is interested in scoring a win here tonight versus how much is he interested in just trying to maim his opponent and pick up whatever payday he got offered by "Curly" Bill.

BW: Why not do both? Two paydays are better than one.

[...and as Salazar breaks at four, he digs his taped fingers into the eyes of Walker, using the gouging grip to drag him away from the ropes as Walker cries out, trying to pull the hands away!]

LD: Get him out of the eyes, ref!

[Another four count follows before Salazar yanks his hands clear, giving a rake on the way out of the gouge, grinning at the official as Walker stumbles back towards the ropes...]

LD: And a move like that could certainly put Walker's shot at the gold in jeopardy... and part of me has to wonder if that's what "Curly" Bill's ultimate goal is here tonight. Walker's a serious threat to the World Television Title - undefeated champion or not - and I've gotta think Webb would prefer he be out of the picture.

[Switching his grip to the arm, Salazar sends Walker across the ring, bouncing him off the ropes...]

LD: Walker off the far side, ducks the clothesline...

[...and as Walker comes off the far side...]

LD: ...and HITS one of his own! Down goes Salazar!

[...and Walker pumps his arm, getting the fans going as Salazar comes up off the mat...]

LD: Another one! Walker brings the thunder and he's raining down clotheslines on Smasher Salazar!

[...and there's a third!]

LD: Three big clotheslines has Smasher Salazar reeling early on in this one, fans!

[The Atlanta crowd is rockin' for Wade Walker, urging the big man on as he pumps both arms this time, drawing a big cheer as he lowers himself into a crouch, waving for Salazar to get up...]

LD: Wow! He's looking for the Spear already! He's trying to finish this one fast!

BW: Self-preservation is the key to this one, Dane. He needs to be in top shape if he's going to stand a solitary chance in hell of beating Odin Gunn next weekend in Vegas so finishing it early is key!

[...and as Salazar rises off the mat...]

LD: HERE HE COM-

[...Walker starts forward but is abruptly stopped short as the masked man on the floor reaches in to hook the ankle!]

LD: THE TEXAS RANGER STOPS HIM!

[The crowd jeers loudly as the masked man openly hangs onto Walker, preventing the likely match-ending Spear in full view of the referee who stomps over angrily...]

"YOU!"

[...and points right at the Ranger...]

"YOU'RE GONE!"

[...and the crowd ROARS as the masked man drops back, throwing his arms up in protest as "Curly" Bill swats the ring apron with his hat on the outside...]

LD: Alright! The referee sends the Texas Ranger off for blatant interference and...

BW: LOOK OUT!

[...and as the masked man was pitching a fit outside, he fails to notice Wade Walker slide out, getting a running start around the ring...]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[...and CUTTING the Ranger in half with a massive spear on the outside!]

LD: HE BREAKS HIM IN TWO!

[Walker gets up, the crowd ROARING for him as he glares at "Curly" Bill from across the ringside area. Webb anxiously backs up, waving his hands and shaking his head...]

LD: And "Curly" Bill wants no part of Wade Walker! In the meantime, we might need a spatula out here to collect the pieces of the Texas Ranger on the outside.

[Walker points a threatening finger at Webb before turning back to the ring, climbing up on the apron, ducking through...]

...and charging Salazar delivers a big running kick to the side of the head, knocking Walker down to a knee as he falls through the ropes!]

LD: Ohhh! Again, a distraction on the outside allows Salazar to get the advantage...

[Two more big boots to the ribs sends Walker down on the mat where Salazar immediately leans on the top rope, stomping the ribcage below him!]

LD: ...and now Salazar's targeting the ribs of Wade Walker, driving that shoe leather into the flesh and bone!

[Salazar sneers as he drops down, driving a knee into the exposed ribs!]

LD: Ohhh! Nearly three hundred pounds down on the ribs!

[A second and third kneedrop land, flattening out Walker on the canvas as Salazar puts a foot on the bottom rope, pushing up a bit for extra height to drop an elbow into the ribs!]

"OHHHHHHHHH!"

LD: High impact elbow by Salazar... and right there, Ben! Right there might tell us everything we need to know about this match. He's got Walker down. He's got Walker hurt. And he didn't even think about going for a pin!

BW: I don't think this is any great mystery, Dane. Webb wanted this match, Webb got this match... and it's not so he can do scouting on Walker. He wants him out of commission whether Salazar can beat him or not.

[Down on the mat, Salazar rolls to the floor, grabbing Walker by the arm and hauling him around so that his upper body is hanging outside the ring...]

LD: And I don't think Wade Walker wants any part of Smasher Salazar on the outside... ohhh! Big elbow driven down into the throat!

[...and with Walker's head draped backwards off the apron, exposing the wide open throat...]

LD: Another big elbow down on the throat!

[...and with Walker gasping for air, Salazar drags him off the apron to the floor, looking to do more damage...]

LD: Out to the floor they go... and again, I think this is the wrong part of town for Wade Walk-

"OHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[The crowd reacts as Walker shoves Salazar off, sending him crashing backfirst into the steel ringpost!]

LD: -MAYBE NOT!

[And Walker raises his arm, dropping down into a crouch again as the crowd ERUPTS!]

LD: Here comes the Spear! Here comes the-

[But Walker suddenly straightens up, turning towards the entrance stage as the crowd reacts loudly...]

LD: Oh, come on! It's Pedro Perez this time!

BW: We knew he was here, Dane, and you knew there was a big chance of this! The Desperadoes don't come alone!

[Walker steps closer to the steps as the crowd gets louder, sensing the chance of a Dogs of War throwdown...]

LD: Well, this might be an added attraction right here! Who DOESN'T want to see those two go at it after the garbage Perez pulled earlier this year?!

[Walker shouts up the stairs at a smirking Perez who implores him to come and get him...

...which opens the door for Smasher Salazar to come lumbering away from the post, living up to his name with a clubbing forearm shot that sends Walker falling forwards onto the entrance steps!]

LD: This is ridiculous, Ben! The Desperadoes getting involved again... and is THIS what we have to look forward to in Vegas?!

BW: I don't know but you can't argue that it's been damn effective. Walker looks all sorts of lost out there... and look at this now!

[The crowd reacts as Salazar grabs Walker by the back of the head, kneeling on the staircase as he SLAMS Walker's face down on the steps...]

LD: Bounces his skull off the steel steps leading up here by us!

BW: Hopefully this time it stays down there, Dane.

LD: On that, we agree for sure.

[...and a second time facefirst off the steps!]

LD: Walker's in some trouble now... and look at Pedro Perez. He's loving this! That treacherous little-

BW: He's right there, Dane! You keep this up and the Desperadoes may be coming for YOU next!

[Dragging Walker off the stairs by the arm, Salazar takes aim...]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

LD: WHIPPED INTO THE RING APRON!

[...and Walker collapses to his knees, grabbing at his lower back as a confident Smasher Salazar ambles over towards him.]

LD: Salazar drags him to his feet, rolls him back in...

[The big man from Cut and Shoot, Texas rolls in after him, rising to his feet as "Curly" Bill looks on eagerly...]

LD: "Curly" Bill is enjoying this one... and he may be looking for Salazar to finish the job now, Ben.

[Salazar hauls a climbing Walker off the mat, using a big hooking right to the ribcage that forces Walker back into the corner again...]

LD: Oh! Oh! OHH! OHHH MYYY! Heavy body shots in the corner, Salazar's wearing out the ribs and back of the former powerhouse of the Dogs of War!

[...and with a lift under his arm, the Texan steps out of the corner and DRIVES Walker down across a bent knee!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

LD: And right back onto the back that just hit the apron! The torso of Wade Walker is taking a pounding at the hands of Smasher Salazar... and "Curly" Bill is loving every second of it!

[A clapping Webb gestures to him...]

"Put 'im down, Smasher!"

[...and as Salazar climbs to his feet, he gives his benefactor a nod, backing towards the corner...]

LD: What's he looking for now? Boosting himself up onto the second rope...

BW: And anyone who has seen Smasher Salazar over the years knows the one and only thing he likes to do from there!

[...and with Walker still unmoving on the mat, Salazar puts his massive body in the air, kicking out his legs...]

LD: HYDRAULIC PRESS!

[...and CRASHES backfirst on the canvas as Walker rolls clear!]

LD: THE POOL IS EMPTY AND THAT'S A BIG BACKSPLASH!

[Salazar grimaces, rolling to a hip grabbing his lower back as Walker rolls to a knee, trying to get to his feet...]

LD: Wade Walker saved himself in the nick of time... and now he's got an opening to get back into this!

[Climbing to his feet, Walker grabs his own back as Salazar reaches a vertical base...]

LD: Both men up...

[...and they come together in a flurry of fists!]

LD: ...and BOTH MEN SWINGING!

[The big haymakers are flying like wild, bringing the Atlanta crowd to their feet!]

BW: FIGHT! FIGHT! FIGHT!

[But Walker's fists are flying a little quicker, landing with a little more oomph on Salazar's jaw!]

LD: WALKER'S TEEING OFF! BACKING HIM DOWN!

[A desperate Salazar reaches out, raking the eyes of Walker!]

LD: OH! COME ON!

[With Walker stunned and blinded, Salazar sneers before charging back into the ropes, bouncing back with momentum...

...and Walker leaps into the air, CRASHING a double axehandle hammer into the chest of the rebounding Salazar!]

LD: MJOLNIR! MJOLNIR!

[With Salazar down HARD off the hammer blow, Walker throws up his arms, stomping across the ring to a ROAR from the Atlanta crowd...

...and then crouches in the corner, his target in his sights once more!]

LD: And don't look now but Walker is looking for the-

[The crowd ERUPTS in jeers as Pedro Perez climbs up on the apron to interfere...

...but this time, Walker is ready for him, charging and leaping...]

LD: SUPERMAN PUNNNNCH!

[...and the heavy blow sends Perez down to the floor to a ROAR!]

LD: DOWN GOES PEREZ!

[Which brings "Curly" Bill Webb up on the apron, hootin' and hollerin'...]

LD: Webb's up...

[...and Walker rushes him too, leaping and swinging...]

LD: ...AND DOWWWWWWN!

[...and another Superman Punch sends Webb sprawling to the outside!]

LD: OH YEAH! HOW GOOD THAT MUST FEEL!

[Salazar again tries to take advantage, rushing Walker from the blind side, looking for a wild clothesline...]

LD: CLOTHESLINE DUCKED!

[...but Walker's ready this time, ducking down and running past Salazar, hitting the far side, rebounding back at high velocity...]

LD: SPEEEEEEEAAAAAAAARRRRRRR!

[...and after cutting Salazar down to size, Walker balls up his fists, planting them in the motionless Salazar's chest, nodding along with the count of...]

LD: ONNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOO! THREEEEEEEEEEEE!

"DING! DING! DING!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[...and the excitement of the three count is instantly cut off by a diving Texas Ranger BASHING the back of Walker's skull with his cowbell!]

LD: THE DESPERADOES STRIKE!

[The masked Ranger is quickly to his feet, dropping down to his knees with the cowbell to the skull again...]

LD: The Texas Ranger trying to finish what Smasher Salazar started and take Wade Walker out of his title match with Odin Gunn!

[Grabbing his jaw, Pedro Perez rolls into the ring to join the attack, diving on top of his former ally with pummeling fists to the head and neck...]

LD: Perez is in there now too! This is out of control!

[Perez grabs Walker by the arm, hauling him up as the Texas Ranger wraps the bullrope around the throat, strangling the air out of the victorious Walker!]

LD: We've got trouble! Wade Walker is in trouble, fans!

[But the crowd soon ERUPTS in cheers!]

LD: OMEGA! POLEMOS! HERE COMES THE CAVALRY!

[Omega comes flying down the steps, diving headfirst into the ring only to leap up, smashing a forearm into the Ranger's jaw, sending him flopping backwards to the mat to big cheers!]

LD: Omega and Polemos are coming to the aid of Wade Walker and just in the nick of time!

[Perez grabs the bullrope, looking to crown Omega with the cowbell...

...but the masked giant Polemos intercepts, snatching Perez by the throat with a mighty gloved hand!]

LD: POLEMOS HOOKS HIM!

[And he lifts Perez high into the air for all to see...]

"THUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUD!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[...and DRIVES him down with a thunderous chokeslam!]

LD: OHHHHHHH, THE CHOKESLAAAAAAAM!

[Perez is flattened out on the mat, the Texas Ranger reaching under the ropes, dragging him to the outside...]

...and Omega helps Wade Walker sit up on the mat, patting him on the back as the Desperadoes regroup and flee on the outside.]

LD: And on this night in Atlanta, at least... the Desperadoes lose this battle!

[Smasher Salazar is holding Pedro Perez up in the aisle as the Texas Ranger and "Curly" Bill Webb shout up at Omega and Polecos who have gotten Walker back on his feet now.]

LD: And the heroes are standing tall!

[Walker reaches out, shaking the hand of Omega with a "thank you." Omega nods, responding back "we've got business of our own with them" as we fade to black...

...and then back up on a shot of Ryan Martinez walking down the aisle. From the scenery around him, we can see this slow motion footage is from right before WarGames at SuperClash IX.]

#When you wish..#

[Dissolve to the White Knight throwing knife edge chops at the towering form of Torin The Titan...]

#...upon a star#

[...to Martinez and Derrick Williams working together to use a double clothesline to take the giant off his feet...]

#Makes no difference who you are...#

[...to a closeup of a bloodied Martinez, looking up in shock as a hobbled Shadoo Rage joins him in the cage...]

#Anything your...#

[...to the White Knight driving Vasquez' skull into the canvas with his signature brainbuster...]

#...heart desires will...#

[...to Martinez hooking John Law in a crossface, wrenching back with all his might as Law struggles to hang on...]

#...come to you.#

[...to a crowd shot of a group of young fans holding up a banner that reads "THE WHITE KNIGHT FOREVER!" as a voiceover begins...]

"Ryan Martinez, you and..."

[Cut to a shot of a bloodied but smiling Ryan Martinez standing triumphant with his teammates...]

"...Team AWA just won the Main Event at SuperClash! Now what are you gonna do?"

[...to a regular speed shot of Martinez still in the double cage, looking into the camera's lens with a grin...]

RM: I'm going to Disneyland!

[...and we fade to a shot of the Disneyland logo before fading to black.]

And then back up to live action to our interview area on the entrance stage.]

MW: Welcome back, fans, to this Bon Voyage edition of Showtime... and what a night it's already been, Sweet Daddy!

SDW: And we're just scratchin' the surface, Miss Mariah!

MW: We've already seen some great action... and coming up in just a little bit, we'll be headed right back to the ring for more tag team action but before we do that, we just want to take a moment and provide an update on one of our competitors we saw in action earlier. Ricki Toughill took on Harper Hannigan who was selected by E-Girl MAX to take on Toughill as a replacement for the injured Kelly Kowalski. That match ended in a no contest when the referee could never gain enough control to start it... but it also ended in a very serious situation when Ricki was knocked backwards off the stage by Hannigan and took a very hard fall on the steel and wood entrance steps. We could see Ricki's back and neck take a hard shot... as well as the back of her head.

[Williams nods.]

SDW: It looked bad - it sure did... but... there's a light at the end of the tunnel, darlin'.

MW: That's right. We're being told by Doc Ponavitch's team that while Ricki has been transported to the local hospital for further testing, early examination says she's got some bad bumps and bruises and may be out of action for a couple of weeks but on the whole, she got lucky.

SDW: If she checks out in okay shape after that fall, I'd say she got REAL lucky, Miss Mariah. That coulda been a bad, bad scene.

MW: Our best wishes go out to Ricki and her recovery... but shifting gears, we got another update during the break and that has to do with our first Showtime On Tour show in two weeks in Reseda, California where we now know we'll see "Cannonball" Lee Connors taking on Odysseus Allah after what went down here earlier tonight.

SDW: That's gonna be a hot one in Southern California, baby!

MW: It sure is and I can't wait to see it. But now, let's head down to the ring to Megumi Sato for the introductions on our next match!

[We crossfade to the ring where our Japanese ring announcer is standing, two scrawny looking grapplers bouncing off the ropes behind her.]

MS: The following tag team contest is set for one fall with a fifteen minute time limit. Introducing first... already in the ring at this time... from Macon, Georgia... Bill and Tony... THE ANNNNNNDERSONNNNS!

[The aforementioned scrawny looking kids get a big cheer from the local crowd as they stand in their long tights waving to the fans.]

MS: Annnnnnnnd their opponents...

[The opening guitar riff to "The Fall" by Place of Skulls begins to play.]

MS: ...from Dallas, Texas, weighing in at a combined 509 pounds and accompanied by Bobby O'Connor...

...Jason Whittaker and Dustin Sanderson...

...THE BLAAAAAAAAAACKJAAAAAAAAAAAAACKS!!

[The drums kick in, the curtains fly open, and out walk the black clad cowboys themselves. They each hold a side of the curtains open, as out walks Bobby O'Connor. O'Connor walks slightly ahead, only to turn around and point at both men....

...who suddenly go charging down the staircase towards the ring as O'Connor gives off a wicked grin.]

LD: Uh oh.

BW: These two ain't gettin' paid by the hour, Dane!

[Whittaker and Sanderson hit the ring on the charge, diving under the ropes, coming right to their feet. The quicker Sanderson clears the ring in a few steps, leaping into a big forearm on the ear of Bill Anderson, sending him through the ropes to the outside. The shocked Tony Anderson looks to respond but the six foot six Jason Whittaker runs him right over with a leaping shouldertackle to jeers from the crowd and applause from the proud O'Connor who joins his duo at ringside.]

LD: This one may be over before it even gets started, Ben.

BW: The Blackjacks may be here to send a message tonight.

[Dragging Tony Anderson off the mat, Whittaker smashes him with a big right hand that sends Anderson falling back into the turnbuckles as Sanderson stalks around the ring, moving to the opposite corner...]

LD: Has this match even STARTED yet?! I didn't hear a bell!

BW: The Andersons are BOTH hearing bells ringing right about NOOOOOOW!

[Ben's shout comes as Sanderson barrels across the ring, leaping into a clothesline that shakes the ring and Tony Anderson...

...and as the official finally signals for the bell, Sanderson drags Tony out of the corner in a front facelock...]

LD: Well, there's the bell but-

[...muscling him into the air for a suplex before twisting to throw him down with an impactful bodyslam!]

LD: -ohhhh! Big slam out of the suplex position by Dustin Sanderson...

[He stomps across the ring, slapping the hand of his partner who JUST got on the apron.]

LD: ...and a quick tag there. Whittaker back in, dragging Tony Anderson to his feet.

[Steadying him in place, Whittaker drops back into the ropes, throwing himself forward on the rebound...]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

BW: LARIAAAAATOOOOOOO!

[...and delivers a body-rockin' lariat that dumps Anderson in a heap on the canvas.]

LD: That might be it right there, Ben!

BW: You talk about a Texas-sized lariat, that right there would make a certain Texan from the good ol' days find his accent again.

[Lori chuckles as Whittaker slides into a kneeling cover, getting one... getting two...]

LD: Oh jeez.

[...and the pin count stops as Bill Anderson dives onto Whittaker, flailing at him with weak rights and lefts.]

LD: I'm not sure that was a good idea at all. Bill Anderson breaking up the pin but... he might've been better off just letting it end right there.

[Whittaker slowly gets up, ignoring the right hands being thrown by Anderson...

...and then BURYING a boot into the midsection, doubling him up.]

LD: Uh oh... this can't be good!

[Whittaker steps into the standing headscissors, lifting him up with ease...]

LD: He's got him up!

[...and POWERBOMBS him down onto his own brother!]

LD: Lord have mercy!

BW: Because the Blackjacks sure aren't!

[A gleeful Bobby O'Connor rubs his hands together menacingly, nodding his head as Sanderson calls for the tag.]

LD: That's not enough!?

BW: I guess not! It's over when the man of God on the outside says it's over!

[Whittaker gets up, slapping the offered hand as Sanderson comes through the ropes, waving a hand to direct traffic...]

LD: Uh oh... we've seen this before. Sanderson climbing the ropes as Whittaker... he's got Tony Anderson again. The brothers Anderson are having a rough night at the office.

BW: And it's not about to get any better.

[...and with Tony up on Whittaker's six foot six frame, perilously balanced on his shoulders in an electric chair, Dustin Sanderson scales the ropes, putting his own large body on the top rope for a moment before...]

LD: OFF THE TOP!

[...he leaps off, snaring a side headlock as they plummet downwards, DRIVING Tony Anderson's face into the canvas with a bulldog headlock!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

LD: You can count to a hundred after that but thankfully we only need one... two... and three.

"DING! DING! DING!"

[Before the bell can finish ringing, O'Connor is already up on the apron. He nods at Whittaker and Sanderson as he enters the ring.]

LD: O'Connor making a beeline for Megumi Sato... looks like he has something on his mind.

[Sato raises the mic despite the hand already held out towards her.]

MS: Here are your winners... THE BLAAAAAAAAACKJAAAAAAAAACKS!

[O'Connor stands in front of Sato, smiling kindly, hand still extended. Sato hands him the microphone and the former one half of the TexMo Connection bows his head.]

BOC: I wish I could say that I'm here to congratulate the TRUE Blackjacks on another undeniable victory. I wish I could say that I'm here to tell you all of our plans of moving further through the ranks on our way to an inevitable championship match...

[O'Connor nods, smiling at his two men.]

BOC: ...and even more inevitable victory. But alas, the body of the AWA is still riddled with disease. A disease that clings to its belly like a lamprey. A disease with one repulsive name.

[O'Connor scowls.]

BOC: Lynch.

[The crowd explodes with cheers at the mere mention of their favorite wrestling family, as O'Connor nods sadly.]

BOC: I know. I too cheered when I thought we were about to wipe the lecherous sinner Travis Lynch off the map. It was in all of our grasp, I feel your pain in having to look at his blasphemous face... I really do.

[Cheers turn to boos as O'Connor shrugs.]

BOC: I know. It makes the heavenly chorus turn to jeering. I've heard it myself, that is an excellent imitation.

[O'Connor raises an index finger.]

BOC: Although imitating the voices of the most high will only land you in the fires with the Lynches... so repent.

[The boos increase in volume, joined with a chant of "BOB-BY SUCKS!"]

BOC: Yes, the Bobbysoxers. Still grateful for their support. But sadly, someone else has offered support. Support that only the Devil himself would appreciate. Larry Wallace.

Larry, you are on the list of those that left me to suffer in a hospital bed. Of those that have me and me alone to thank for what career you've had. I don't know who

sent you, if it was the false heretic Blackjack Lynch or any of his hellborn children... but I have only one word of advice for you.

Repent.

Because even though you've thrown in your lot with sinners, it isn't too late for your immortal soul.

[The Blackjacks step forward, nodding.]

BOC: As far as your time on Earth, I'm afraid it's already too late. Divine punishment must be brought down on you and the rest of that disgusting family. Because we will face you anytime and anyplace.

[O'Connor places his free hand over his heart as Whittaker and Sanderson bow their heads and clasp their hands together in prayer.]

BOC: And may the Lord forgive the heap of broken bones we leave in our wake.

[The mic is lowered as the trio stands over their broken opponents as the fans let them have it...

...and we abruptly cut to our interview position where Mariah Wolfe is shaking her head.]

MW: Well, the Blackjacks and the always-controversial Bobby O'Connor with some words aimed at "Flawless" Larry Wallace and Travis Lynch... and that's a tag team clash that seems sure to be headed our way in the very near future, Sweet Daddy.

SDW: After all the trauma laid down on the Lynches by that yellow-bellied Benedict Arnold and his thugs, I can't wait to see Travis get a little bit of payback for his family, Miss Mariah.

[The crowd cheers that idea as Wolfe nods.]

MW: Speaking of the future though, it's time to take a look at our next batch of participants in the Brass Ring Tournament which will be running all summer long as Showtime hits the road, jack! Let's take a look...

The screen goes a spiral wipe into a graphic that reads "BRASS RING 2018" with a pumping synth tune under it before we move to our next piece of Brass Ring introductory footage where we appear to be in a locker room as the chyron promoting "Big Boss Shinza" fades in - it could be at the Crockett Coliseum during a CCW taping. It might even be at the Combat Corner. Or maybe not.

Shinza's not dressed in a Combat Corner T-shirt like your average trainee. In fact, she has on an outlandish split-style vinyl jacket, the right side of it black in color, while the other side is white. The hiragana for Shinza "しんざ" is printed in gold on the left sleeve.

Under the open jacket, Big Boss Shinza has on a midriff-bearing, bandeau-style white tube top. She has on loose, white pants adorned with pink, petal-like patterns. The pants feature the striking golden words "BIG BOSS" emblazoned across the right thigh. In her right hand, Shinza brandishes a kendo stick, which she waves about absent-mindedly as she speaks.]

BBS: Well, well, well... Guess who's the lucky girl to have been extended an invitation to be a part of the AWA's Women's Brass Ring tournament?

[Now she holds the kendo stick with both hands, pointing it down the lens of the camera. She squints slightly, as if aiming for her mark.]

BBS: I guess I should be flattered... It's a pretty big prize for a pretty big deal. An AWA contract? Maybe a shot at a title? Who would pass on such an opportunity?

[Big Boss Shinza goes back to holding the kendo stick with her right hand, leaning it nonchalantly against her right shoulder.]

BBS: But, really, it is the AWA that should be flattered.

[She jerks her left thumb towards herself.]

BBS: Because I am Big Boss Shinza and the Big Boss is always looking to extend her dominion.

Big Boss Shinza heading for the Big Time? Come on! It's only a matter of time.

[She holds out the kendo stick with her right hand, pointing the tip to the camera once more. Big Boss Shinza smirks.]

BBS: Unfortunately for the rest of you bakas in this tournament, all you'll be receiving is pain, as Big Boss Shinza puts the lot of you down.

But that's why I am the Big Boss and you? Are not. Ha!

[Shinza brings the kendo stick down forcefully, as the shot fades down...

...and then up on a dark studio. Sitting in a chair in front of the camera is a man of medium build wearing a black dress shirt, a black vest, a white tie and black dress pants. His brown hair is brushed back off his stubbled face, revealing a landscape of little dings and scars betraying extensive fighting experience. His expression looks almost bored. As the chyron identifies him as "Adrian Kirk," an interviewer speaks from off-camera...]

"So what can you tell us about yourself? What can you tell us about Adrian Kirk?"

[Kirk shifts in the chair slightly, looking slightly annoyed]

AK: Tell you about Adrian Kirk? What do you want to hear?

[Adrian's thick Brummy accent is thankfully not to be reproduced in text. A chugging guitar riff over drums fades in as he leans forward]

AK: You want to hear about my presence?

[Cut to footage from CCW in the Crockett Coliseum, where Adrian Kirk, dressed in simple black trunks and boots, headbutts an opponent, staggering them back into the ropes. Kirk sets his jaw and follows up with an offensively hard hitting lariat, making contact just as the opponent rebounds a bit, giving them nowhere to go. Cut back to Kirk in the studio...]

AK: Do you want to hear about my technical expertise?

[Cut to more CCW footage, this time with Kirk reversing a headlock by blatantly biting his opponent's hand, a crazed look in his eye. While his opponent screams in pain, the referee gets right into Kirk's face, yelling for the break but Kirk doesn't seem to be aware of it at all. Cut back to the studio]

AK: [Smirks] Maybe you want to hear about my connection to the fans?

[Cut again to the Crockett Colosseum, where Adrian Kirk stands at ringside, perfectly still, staring at a woman in the crowd. She jabs a finger toward his face over and over, yelling what appears to be some pretty scathing insults. Kirk simply sneers back at her, shaking his head. Cut back to the studio. The music stops.]

AK: It'd just be a load of bollocks, wouldn't it?

[The music comes back, rising in intensity. Cut to a collage of shots, each one showing Kirk attacking a different opponent. First, a slap to the face. Next, Kirk trades forearms with a much larger opponent and appears to get the upper hand. After that, a shot of Kirk bringing an opponent to one knee with a chinlock by stepping on their calf, and then suddenly releasing the hold and viciously stomping on their ankle. Finally, we see a shot of Kirk locking on a Fujiwara armbar, but bending the opponent's fingers backwards to apply the pressure. Again, we see the crazed look in his eyes as he cranks on the hold... Cut back to Kirk in the studio]

AK: What do you want? D'you want to hear how happy I am for the opportunity? Listen: The only thing you need to know about me is that I'm going to WIN the AWA's Brass Ring tournament. Not just appear. Not just place. Win.

Now, I know that's a bold statement. If anyone's got a problem with that, well...

[Kirk raises a fist and smirks.]

AK: ...I'm sure you'll find I'm very accommodating to differing opinions.

[The music hits a crescendo as we see a number of shots of Kirk hitting the same move over and over again. It's the Royal Flush - A snap suplex where Kirk jumps back at the height of the suplex and drops the opponent down in a sitting powerbomb. The impact of each Royal Flush hits on the main beat of the music playing underneath, building up until the music stops and we cut back to a scowling Adrian Kirk in the studio.]

AK: They call me "The Crusherweight." Pleased to meet you.

[A couple of percussive guitar chords sound as Kirk's face is replaced with a graphic...

ADRIAN KIRK - THE CRUSHERWEIGHT.

Fade to black...

...and then back up.

Night. The name "CATALINA LOPEZ" briefly flashes across the screen in fancy cursive, before we see a sleek, black Audi A8 roaring down an empty highway. The engine growls as it picks up speed, the wind howling in its wake. The shot focuses on the car's wheels as they rip across the road, moving with deadly precision. Suddenly, the car slams to a halt. It screeches, kicking up dust as it comes to a stop directly in front of seven silhouettes. The headlights of the car illuminate the silhouettes, revealing effigies of...

AKANE

Big Boss Shinza

Felicia Love

Isabella Liriano

Jojo Washington

"Diamond" Lily Driscoll

Riley Bennett

...all competitors, in the women's bracket of the Brass Ring Tournament. The sound of the engine fades into the quiet night.

There is a moment of stillness.

We then see high-heeled platform shoes hit the pavement with a crunch. The camera lingers on the shoes for a second, but then... slowly, it begins to rise. Higher and higher. A pair of long, toned legs in sheer black stockings emerge from the shadows, moving with deliberate grace. As it does, we hear the voice of Catalina Lopez, narrating over the scene.]

"It was never my dream to be a professional wrestler."

[The camera pans up.]

"My father taught me a long time ago, that dreams were a waste of time. That's why I don't have dreams."

[We keep panning up...]

"I have goals."

[...past an impossibly short, black, pleated mini skirt and a baby tee with a portrait of Marie Antoinette and the words "DRAMA QUEEN" underneath, that hugs her silhouette as the camera continues its ascent.]

"It was always my goal to become a professional wrestler. But when I finally arrived in the AWA, all I saw were dreamers, chasing dreams."

[Finally, the camera reveals the full figure of Catalina Lopez, standing tall at 6'5, a commanding presence in the night. Her hair cascades far beyond her shoulders in untamed dark curls. Her expression is playful, dangerous. It is then, we realize to our shock and surprise, that she holds a flamethrower in her hands.]

"And in order to achieve my goals... I will have to shatter so many beautiful, wonderful... WORTHLESS dreams."

[With a cool, calculated motion, she takes a step forward, taking aim with her flamethrower, the camera staring right down the barrel with it's ignited flame.]

"Challenge accepted."

["WHOOSH!" The flamethrower roars, as the flame shoots forward like a dragon's breath, as it engulfs the effigies. The fire spreads quickly, from one effigy to the next. As each effigy lights up, with the flames crackling and igniting, footage of Catalina in action is interspersed within them. We see Catalina lift countless opponent after opponent high into the air by the throat effortlessly, before driving them down fiercely into the canvas with her trademark Choke Slam.]

"One by one, the ladies in the Brass Ring Tournament will wake up from their beautiful, wonderful, worthless dreams and realize the cold, terrifying reality that they face:

I am six feet five.

I will continue to be six feet five.

And no amount of hoping, praying, wishing or dreaming is ever going to change that."

[Catalina takes a slow, deliberate step back, putting on a pair of rather comical pineapple sunglasses as she watches the flames dancing before her eyes.]

"I will win this tournament. And the hottest division in professional wrestling..."

[The fire grows, merging into one large inferno, the effigies now indistinguishable from one another in the blaze.]

"...is about to get a whole lot hotter."

[The camera lingers for a moment, capturing the fiery spectacle and the towering figure of Catalina Lopez. The scene fades as the flames roar into the night...

...and comes back up one more time.

The screen is black, then you can hear the sounds of a crowd chanting...]

"LIR-I-ANO!"

"LIR-I-ANO!"

[The screen fades up on footage of a young woman, with shoulder-length curly black hair, wearing brightly multicolored gear hitting her opponent with a dropkick in CCW.]

"LIR-I-ANO!"

[The screen blinks to the same woman executing a deep arm drag.]

"LIR-I-ANO!"

[And blinking up to the woman hitting a flying cross body from the top.]

"LIR-I-ANO!"

[And again, the cycle repeats until the picture switches to the woman in front of a CCW banner.]

"Legacies are a hard thing to live up to, especially when your legacy is Jose Liriano's.

Growing up, my abuelo took pride in everything his brother did. He was our hero, the man a whole island looked up to. Carrying that name means a lot. Carrying that name means everything.

It's a lot to live up to, and I intend to do just that.

It's been a long time since people outside of New York have heard the name Liriano.

The people in Texas are excited about it.

And now, with the Brass Ring tournament, the world is gonna be excited about it.

Isa Liriano is going to set the world on fire - just watch me."

[And as the package ends, we get another graphic promoting the summer-long Brass Ring Tournament before we fade to black...

Cut to the members of Next Gen. Howie Somers is holding a big box in hand, while Daniel Harper is holding what looks like a small packet.]

HS: You know, Daniel, somebody once said that life is like a box of chocolates. You never know what you're gonna get.

[Yes, that would be a box of chocolates that Somers is holding.]

DH: That's a good observation, Howie. But if you ask me, life is more like a pack of AWA trading cards.

[Sure enough, in Harper's hand, that's a pack of trading cards.]

DH: You never know what you're going to get, but chances are, you're going to get something good.

[Somers glance at Harper for a minute, then nods.

Now in comes a voiceover.]

"It's the premier edition of Topps AWA trading cards. Featuring today's top AWA stars from the men's division."

[Images pop up of cards featuring Ryan Martinez, Supreme Wright and Shadoe Rage.]

"The top AWA stars of the women's division."

[Images pop up of cards featuring Julie Somers, Victoria June and Erica Toughill.]

"The top AWA tag teams."

[Images pop up of cards featuring The Soldiers of Fortune, The Gold Standard and KAMS.]

"The managers and announcers."

[Images pop up of cards featuring Miss Sandra Hayes, Sweet Lou Blackwell and Colt Patterson.]

"The legends of the ring."

[Images pop up of cards featuring Casey James, Marcus Broussard and Shane Destiny.]

"Even the founders of the AWA."

[And, yes, you get images of cards featuring Jon Stegglet, Bobby Taylor and Todd Michaelson.]

"Plus, look for special inserts."

[Images of a "Fantastic Finishers" card features Supernova putting an opponent in the Solar Flare, a "Dynamic Duos" card features Harley Hamilton and Cinder and a "Rising Stars" card features Max Magnum.]

"Along with cards featuring event-used memorabilia."

[Images of such cards, featuring Jack Lynch, Jordan Ohara and Ayako Fujiwara.]

"Autographed cards."

[Images of such cards, featuring Derrick Williams, Gordon Myers and Michelle Bailey.]

"Even dual autographed cards."

[And the image featured, of course, would be Next Gen, with Howie Somers and Daniel Harper's signatures on the same card.]

Cut back to Somers.]

HS: Now that one's a keeper.

[We pull back and see Harper going through the cards in his pack.]

DH: Cool... Hannibal Carver autographed card!

HS: [looks at the box of chocolates, then back at Harper] Um, you want to trade?

DH: [stares at his tag team partner] You call that a fair trade, dude?

[We then cut to an opened display box of the Topps AWA trading cards and hear the voiceover again.]

"Look for Topps AWA trading cards wherever trading cards are sold. Or order them at AWAShop.com."

[We fade to black...

...and then fade back up to live action inside Center Stage Studios where we find Lori Dane and Ben Waterson seated at the commentary position up on the elevated stage.]

LD: Welcome back to this special night here in Atlanta as all these great fans who are here week after week have come to bid us farewell for the summer!

BW: That's right, Dane. At long last, we're leaving this dump behind and heading on the road to such glamorous hot spots as... Reseda, California... Portland, Oregon... the frozen tundra of Canada...

LD: Oh, knock it off. You're as excited for this road trip as I am... it'll be like the old days! Back on the road, hittin' the towns...

BW: At least we're not running high school gyms in the middle of July in Texas anymore.

LD: That's it! Look on the bright side!

[Dane chuckles before continuing.]

LD: Fans, if you remember when Raphael Rhodes took on Johnny Detson for the World Title a few months back, he asked for just a camera, no interviewer present. Well, tonight, he gets a shot at the National Title, and he asked for the very same thing.

BW: Look, it's not exactly a secret that Raphael Rhodes and I don't get along. That said, I was with the man for a year in the Southern Syndicate. I used to see how he prepares for matches, and it's nothing like he does now. Last time he went into a big title match, he was extremely focused, and I have to be honest... if Sid Osborne hadn't derailed things for him, he very well could have beaten Detson.

LD: And how history repeats itself here tonight, as Sid Osborne has had a lot of recent problems with the champion, Jordan Ohara.

BW: That's putting it mildly, considering he physically destroyed the title belt Ohara's so proud of carrying.

LD: You have to wonder how things could play out here, but Ben, you mentioned extreme focus from the challenger. Let's hear what he had to say.

[We cut to a single camera's footage, set up on a tripod, facing Raphael Rhodes sitting on a bench in a small room somewhere within Center Stage. Rhodes has the hood of his Team England hoodie over his head, and has already changed out to his ring gear for the night. We can't see his eyes from under the hood, but based on posture he is staring at the floor with a stone faced expression across his lips.]

RR: Ten years ago, I left my life in England. I came to America, to a new group in Texas, and tried to make myself familiar with what it means to be a world class wrestler.

[Rhodes reaches under his hood, to scratch the back of his head.]

RR: I came to that group, to the American Wrestling Alliance, to make a name for myself. To prove my own worth, away from my home, where there could be no excuses to my successes or failures. My first night in, I saw a man named Kolya Sudakov carrying a beautiful belt, and I knew I'd need to make it mine.

[From underneath the hood, the stone face turns into a frown.]

RR: Then I ran into Juan Vasquez, a man I was put together with by chance. Anyone who knows their history knows what happened next... we didn't win the National Tag Team Titles like we wanted. We fell out. We marked each other for destruction, and I don't think anyone could say we succeeded at that. Took chunks of each other with us, but we clearly ain't destroyed.

[Rhodes scoffs.]

RR: Probably one of the rare times Juan Vasquez has failed at somethin', yeah? He pinned my shoulders, but he didn't ever break me.

[A shake of the head.]

RR: Bent my spirit right up though. And he did what he does after that, to show the world why he's the best. He dusted himself off, and he accomplished the goal I set out for myself when I walked into a television studio in Dallas in the fall of 2008. He won the National Title.

[Rhodes holds up two fingers.]

RR: Twice, actually. Broke my heart to see him with that belt, it did.

[Another shake of the head as Rhodes drops his hand down to his side.]

RR: And off I went to Japan, to try and have new dreams, new goals, but you ain't ever forgettin' what you left unfinished when you're a man like me. I got my shot to destroy Juan Vasquez, once and for all, at Memorial Day Mayhem. To shatter his legend... it ain't no myth, no matter how much I say it is. But last week, when I went back to England, I earned myself a chance to finish somethin' I started ten years ago.

[A smirk forms across the bottom half of Rhodes' face.]

RR: Do I, though? Because the belt got busted, and someone I knew is walkin' around sayin' he's the champ. What does that make you, Jordan Ohara? A man without a belt, and without his pride, yeah?

[The smirk turns back into a frown.]

RR: As I was gettin' the cut in my head sewn up, I heard you say you were goin' to put the National Title on the line... against Sid Osborne. You were so mad the lad won that tournament that you wanted to put that honor on the line against him, yeah? Awful convenient that you forgot you already had someone standin' in your path.

[Slowly, Rhodes starts to crack the knuckles on his hands, one by one.]

RR: Took me back a few weeks prior when I heard you lookin' right past me. Took me back to you tellin' the fans you want to be their hero. Took me back to hearin' you pour your heart out, talkin' about how you need the fans, you need to be this, you need to be that. That you wanted to be the honorable champion for them, yeah?

[Rhodes continues to work his knuckles, the sickening pop of the cracking punctuating each sentence.]

RR: Some honor you've got, not lookin' straight at the challenger you're facin'. I'll tell you somethin', lad. All these troubles you're havin' with Sid Osborne... I suppose it's my fault, ain't it? Because if I hadn't had to put him out at SuperClash, he wouldn't be fumin' like he's doin'. And if you're havin' as much trouble with Sid Osborne as it seems to be, lad...

[Rhodes looks up, removing the hood from his eyes, revealing a bandage covering his still-healing wound, and glares at the camera.]

RR: Your whole world's goin' to go pear-shaped when you face me. Especially when I hear you talkin' about how you're wantin' to be a hero, you want Osborne in a title match when you ain't even got past me yet. Brings back memories, yeah? Memories of another man who said he wanted to be everyone's hero.

[Rhodes stares for a moment.]

RR: Juan Vasquez.

[Rhodes resumes cracking his knuckles, now running down his right hand.]

RR: Because all those years, all those times Juan Vasquez and I put ourselves through the wringer, yeah? He was doin' it to show me what he said was the right way. He was doin' it because he fancied himself a hero.

[With a stomach-turning snap of his ring finger knuckle, Rhodes glares.]

RR: But he ain't ever had the gall to look past me, onto the next thing in his life. He's arrogant, but he ain't that arrogant. So that puts you in a pretty bleedin' rare class, don't it? Class of people who's more arrogant than Juan Vasquez, yeah? And that means you need a taste of what that man's goin' to get in a few weeks' time.

[Rhodes pops one last knuckle, on his pinky finger.]

RR: Every hero needs a villain to fight, yeah?

[Rhodes smiles.]

RR: Good thing I got plenty of experience bein' some dreamer's villain, and yankin' their head out of the clouds.

[Rhodes reaches over to the camera and switches it off, taking us back to Lori Dane and Ben Waterson.]

LD: Fans, as that was happening, we got word of a discussion that happened backstage. That discussion is still in progress, so let's take you there now.

[With a flash of the ACCESS 365 logo, we see another portion of the backstage area, as Dana Kaiser can be seen talking to someone out of shot. After a few moments, we get access to the audio.]

DK: -not asking you to do anything. You know you'll get a shot at him.

[As Kaiser pleads with her eyes, the person she's talking to enters the shot - Sid Osborne.]

SO: I think you're confused. Why would I need a shot at him, when I'm the last ever National Champion? As far as I'm concerned, the Main Event tonight is between an impostor and an old man, fighting for something that doesn't even exist. It was my property, so I smashed it to bits since scumbags couldn't stop trying to steal my property.

[Kaiser tries not to roll her eyes, managing to control her face just barely.]

DK: Look, the last time Raph went for a title, you got involved. I know you've got problems with Ohara. I'm just asking you to let Raph get through this match before you try to settle up with those problems.

SO: Why should I care about what Raph wants?

[Kaiser puts her hands on her hips, head tilted.]

DK: You shouldn't. There's no reason for you to care.

SO: See, I already said you were smarter than half of the people here. You already knew the answer before you decided to bother me tonight.

[Kaiser frowns.]

DK: You don't know what the answer will actually be if you always assume. I had to hear it from you directly to know it was "no".

[Kaiser turns to walk away, but stops for a brief moment.]

DK: Good luck, Sid.

[And Kaiser walks away, as Osborne scoffs.]

SO: I make my own luck.

[And with that, we cut back to Lori Dane and Ben Waterson.]

LD: That's a surprise, to see Dana Kaiser trying to get Sid Osborne to stay out of this.

BW: That's a calculated risk to take as a manager, Dane, but what on earth was she thinking? Not only did she not offer him anything, but she admitted it was a hollow request!

LD: I have to think Dana Kaiser was trying to get Sid Osborne to see sense. Of anyone in the AWA, Sid Osborne has listened to her most.

BW: He sure didn't listen to her there.

LD: Fans, in between the state of mind Raphael Rhodes is in, as well as Jordan Ohara fighting for the honor of the National Title, we've got one heck of a Main Event later on tonight... but right now, let's head down to the ring for action in the hottest division in professional wrestling - the Women's Division!

[We fade from the announce position to the ring where we see two competitors are already standing with the official speaking to them both - on one side, we see a tall, well-built blonde with muscles to spare in a deep crimson singlet sneering and on the other, the young lady we've come to know as Pink Cashmere with her usual pink afro puffed up. She's wearing a form-fitting singlet as well, full hot pink in color, which shows less muscle but with a more curvy physique.]

"DING! DING! DING!"

[The two grapplers clash center ring, wrapping up in a tight collar and elbow, shoving one another back and forth...]

LD: Both women looking for the early edge as it'll be the speed, the quickness, and the agility of Pink Cashmere against the sheer strength of the veteran from Tampa, Florida - Cathy Cameron.

[Cameron is powering Cashmere back, pushing her towards the corner..

...when Cashmere slides out, grabbing the arm, twisting her down with an armdrag!]

LD: Nice armdrag!

[Cameron is up and angry, rushing at Cashmere...]

LD: And another one!

[...and the Tampa, Florida native is right back up, charging again...]

LD: Hiptoss takes her over!

[Cashmere cartwheels along with the hiptoss, throwing a low dropkick to a seated Cameron, knocking her down on her back to the crowd's cheers!]

LD: Wow!

BW: And that's the quickness and agility you were talking about, Dane, and this kid's got it in spades.

LD: She sure does. Pink Cashmere has had a rocky start to her AWA career thanks to the Slam Sorority... but we've seen flashes of future success including showing off that Purple Rain Dance shooting star press in her debut.

BW: That whole chance of potential future success could come crashing to a halt though when she gets in that ring with the Slam Sorority again next weekend in Las Vegas.

LD: But she's not coming to Sin City alone, Ben.

BW: She might as well be! She might get along alright with Kimmy Bailey but she's not on the same page with Rage at all... and Rage and Bailey? That could blow up at any second!

[Cashmere approaches the ropes where Cameron is standing on the floor, grabbing the top rope with both hands...

...and an observant Cameron sees her intent and jogs around the ringpost, avoiding any potential dive to the outside.]

BW: Gotta be impressed by the awareness of Cathy Cameron, Dane.

LD: A well-established veteran down in Florida, getting a big shot to impress here on the Bon Voyage edition of Showtime and-

[As Cameron turns to address the jeering crowd, Cashmere steps over to the ropes near her, grabbing the top rope with both hands...]

LD: CASHMERE COMES IN ON A WRECKING BALL!

[...and DRIVES her feet into the face of Cameron, sending her staggering as Cashmere ducks through the ropes, standing on the apron...]

LD: Pink Cashmere caught her flush with that dropkick and... what's this now?

[With a fist over her head, Cashmere snaps off a standing moonsault off the apron, toppling a dazed Cameron down to the floor...]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

LD: STANDING MOONSAULT FROM THE APRON TO THE FLOOOOOOR!

[Cashmere lands on her feet, grinning and doing a little hip shakin' for the crowd who are cheering her on...]

LD: And this young lady has this Atlanta crowd rockin' and rollin', Ben.

BW: She's got 'em on her side... but she oughta quit dancing and stay on her opponent if you ask me. Carrying on like this instead of taking advantage of the situation is begging for trouble.

LD: On cue though, she pulls Cathy Cameron right up, tossing her back in...

[With Cameron down on the mat, Cashmere pulls herself up on the apron, walking towards the corner...]

LD: ...and it looks like Pink Cashmere might have more of that high flying offense in store for us, Ben.

BW: You mean that high risk offense?

LD: Stop! We're both right!

[Cashmere takes a step up the ropes, pumping a fist to the cheering fans before stepping to the second...

...and then to the top where Cathy Cameron is on her feet and charging hard, leaping to the middle rope, wrapping her arms around the torso!]

LD: Whoa, whoa, whoooooa!

[A frantic Cashmere battles back, flailing with rights and lefts and then lets the afro fly, a big headbutt that staggers Cameron...]

LD: Cashmere gets loose - uh oh!

[...and then pushes Cameron's head down, leaping over...]

LD: SUNSET...

[...but the powerful Cameron grasps the top rope, breaking Cashmere's grip on her upper thighs in the sunset flip powerbomb attempt...]

LD: ...CAMERON'S TRYING TO HANG ON!

[...but Cashmere continues trying, giving it all she's got to pull the bigger and more powerful opponent down until Cameron SMASHES a right hand down between the eyes!]

BW: Big right hand oughta knock some sense into Cashmere!

[Cashmere staggers out of the corner, wobbling in a circle towards center ring as Cameron sets her feet, throwing a glance over her shoulder...

...and then leaps blindly backwards, connecting with a flying back elbow that puts her and Cashmere both down on the mat!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

LD: Whoa ho! And now it's Cathy Cameron with an impressive show of athleticism, Ben!

BW: She's got a lot going for her... just needs that big break to maybe put it all together.

LD: Cashmere rolls over, into a cover!

[A two count follows before Pink Cashmere escapes!]

LD: Out at two for Cashmere to the enjoyment of these fans who've really taken a liking to her since her debut earlier this year.

[Back to her feet, Cameron lays in a few stomps before dragging Cashmere up by the afro and promptly burying a haymaker into the gut, sending her bouncing back towards the buckles...]

LD: The heavy hands of Cathy Cameron doing some damage... in the wrong part of town now...

[...where Cameron continues to hammer away, landing big right hands to the body... then to the jaw, leaving Cashmere clinging to the ropes as the referee reprimands the Tampa native.]

BW: This is Cathy Cameron's shot, Dane. She's got momentum on her side and she's overwhelming Cashmere in the corner.

[Grabbing the ropes, Cameron switches to big front kicks to the body, earning another four count from the official before she backs off with a sneer...]

LD: Irish whip on the way... Cashmere SLAMS into the buckles, staggering out...

[...and she wobbles her way back in on Cameron who powers her up, pressing her slightly overhead before dropping down in a sitout spinebuster!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

LD: That might do it! Down for one! For two! FOR THR-

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

LD: -AND THE SHOULDER JUST BARELY COMES UP IN TIIIME! Close call there for Pink Cashmere... and look at this, Ben! Cameron staying right on her, big right hands from the mount, hammering down onto Pink Cashmere!

[The referee again orders a break as Cameron rises, hands held high.]

LD: Cathy Cameron looking to score an upset here tonight... I suppose it would be an upset. We don't know a ton about either of these competitors, Ben.

BW: Speak for yourself, Dane. I know all about junior heavyweight fangirl Cashmere and yeah, I even know about Cathy Cameron who has been kickin' tail up and down the Atlantic for the past six years waiting for a shot like this.

LD: Well, it's a big shot for her for sure, pulling Pink Cashmere up to her feet again...

[Grabbing the arm, she whips Cashmere into the ropes, ducking down for a backdrop...]

LD: ...down for the backdr-

[...but the approaching Cashmere twists around, using Cameron's own back to propel her into a backflip over her!]

LD: -LANDS ON HER FEET!

[As Cashmere straightens up, Cashmere is standing behind her, swinging her arms together...]

LD: OHHH! RINGS HER BELL!

[...and a dazed Cameron wobbles in a circle as Cashmere tucks her pink afro under the chin, dropping down to a knee...]

LD: KNEELING JAWBREAKER!

[...and as Cameron snaps up, further dazed, Cashmere charges past her, hitting the ropes...]

“THUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUD!”

[...and leaps into the air, smashing Cameron’s face into the mat!]

LD: FACEFIRST INTO THE CANVAS!

[With Cameron prone, Cashmere pops up, looking around with a bit of a panic... and then rushes the ropes, ducking through to the apron...]

LD: Cashmere just kicked it into a higher gear - on the apron annnnnd...

[...and with a leap to the middle rope, Cashmere hops up to the top rope, springing off...]

LD: ...PURPLE RAIN DANCE!

[...and CRASHES down onto the prone Cameron with a Shooting Star Press!]

LD: SHE GOT IT ALL! HOLDS ON FOR ONNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOO!
THREEEEEEEEEE!

“DING! DING! DING!”

[Cashmere pushes up to her knees, pumping a fist with a huge grin on her face at the victory.]

LD: And there it is, Ben! Pink Cashmere picks up her first singles victory here on AWA television!

BW: A good win but as impressed as I was with both of these women, Dane, Cathy Cameron ain’t the Slam Sorority. Cashmere’s got her work cut out for her a week from tonight in Las Vegas.

LD: She sure does... and Cashmere is now making her way over to our interview position to our good friends Mariah Wolfe and Sweet Daddy Williams!

[As the pink puffy afro’d Pink Cashmere approaches the interview area with a relieved grin, Mariah Wolfe welcomes her.]

MW: Pink Cashmere, girl... get yourself in here!

[Cashmere does a little jog in place, throwing an arm out for a side hug from Wolfe.]

MW: A hard-earned win right there in front of these fans in Atlanta!

[Cashmere pumps her fist a few times, nodding her head at the cheering crowd.]

MW: And of course, I don’t need to tell you, my friend... but your first singles win on TV!

[Cashmere plants her fists on her hips, nodding her head.]

PC: First singles win on TV and NOTHIN’ could feel finer right now, Hotlanta!

[A big cheer goes up.]

PC: But Mariah, as much as I want to stand up here and soak all this love in and enjoy that win... it stings a little... it sticks in my craw a little, ya hear me?

[Wolfe nods.]

PC: Because... yeah, it's my first singles win on TV but I've been runnin' the roads from coast to coast, showing the great people of ALL these United States what Pink Cashmere is capable of...

[She shakes her head.]

PC: But it seems like every time I get myself on TV with a shot to do something, Trish Wallace is there... Carolina Colton is there... Laura Davis is there... and they're there to RUIN my night!

[Cashmere slaps a hand down on the desk.]

PC: Now, they're not here tonight... and that's a good thing 'cause if they were, you know they'd be runnin' out here and getting in my face... or more likely, Mariah, they'd wait until I was backstage and they'd jump me from behind and leave me laid out on the cold, hard concrete, yeah?

[Wolfe nods again.]

MW: That does seem to be their style.

[Cashmere nods.]

PC: Their style. Yeah, we'll call it that. But all that comes to an end next weekend in Vegas, Mariah. Because the Slam Sorority is coming to Sin City... but when they do, they're runnin' right into Kimmy Bailey, the red hot rookie stronger than an ox and tougher than a two dollar Downtown Vegas Prime Rib... they're runnin' into the first woman to wear a piece of AWA championship gold, Lauryn Rage... and you best believe they're runnin' into me - the Funk Machine, the International Lover, the Revolution herself - Pink Cashmere!

[Wolfe grins.]

MW: I gotta ask the question though, Cashmere. You got your break here in the AWA thanks to Lauryn Rage... but you've been nowhere near on the same page since then.

[Cashmere chuckles.]

PC: Mariah, there's a chance I'm not even standing here if it wasn't for Lauryn Rage. I might be down in CCW if I was lucky, knocking on the door, trying to grab a Brass Ring. But she grabbed me when she needed a partner and here I am. So, I'll always be grateful... but I'm also no pushover. I want to have her back in Vegas. I want to stand by her side...

[Cashmere points a finger at the camera.]

PC: ...but if she so much as looks at me cross-eyed, I'm gonna rip her hair out and I promise you that WON'T stay in Vegas.

[With a whoop, Cashmere claps her hands together and marches out of sight, leaving the cheering crowd behind...]

MW: She's a feisty one, fans! Pink Cashmere scores the win, looking ahead to next weekend on Saturday Night Wrestling when she teams up with Kimmy Bailey and

Laurnyn Rage to take on the Slam Sorority and I can't wait to see it! Fans, we've got another break on hand but when we come back, it'll be time for tag team action with the Aces In The Hole taking on former tag team champions, The Bishops!

[We fade from the grinning Mariah to black...

...and then back up. We see two young kids - a boy and a girl - standing at the barricade at an AWA live event. They are on their feet, screaming and shouting for the action in the ring. We can hear a bell and soon, Travis Lynch is standing in front of them, giving them both a high five with the AWA National Title belt hanging over his shoulder. The young man turns towards the camera.]

"Wow! I wish I could be the champion!"

[There's a voiceover.]

VO: Now you can!

[And with a flash of light, the young man has a replica of the National Title hanging over his shoulder. The boy yelps with glee, slapping the title belt with a big grin on his face. The voiceover continues as we see the title belts one by one.]

VO: Okay, maybe you can't be the champion but you can own your own version of the same title belts you see on TV each and every week!

The National Title, the World Television Title, the Tag Team Titles, even the World Heavyweight Title can be yours!

Kids sizes and adult sizes available.

[A quick shot of a grown man holding the World Title in the air, smiling broadly.]

VO: Oh, and don't think we forgot about you...

[FLASH!

And now the little girl from the start of the ad is holding her own version of the Women's World Championship.]

"I can be a champion too!"

[Cut to a three shot of the adult and the two kids each holding up their title belts.]

VO: Available now at retail stores everywhere and AWAShop.com!

[Fade to black...

...and then back to our interview podium where Mariah Wolfe and Sweet Daddy Williams are standing.]

MW: Welcome back to this Bon Voyage edition of Showtime right here on ESPN! As usual, it's been an exciting night of action right here at Center Stage Studios in Atlanta... but don't forget to stick around for tonight's huge Main Event. The AWA National Title on the line when champion Jordan Ohara meets challenger Raphael Rhodes... Rhodes, of course, earned this title chance when he defeated Takeshi Mifune at The Battle of London last weekend and-

[And abruptly, Mariah is cut off by a pre-recorded announcement bellowing out over the PA system...]

"LADIES AND GENTLEMEN... THE AWA'S NUMBER ONE RATED SEGMENT...

...THE FRONNNNNNNNNNT PAAAAAAXXAAAAAGE!"

[And as Prince's "Controversy" begins to play over the PA system, the fans erupt in jeers as both Wolfe and Williams look annoyed towards the entranceway where a few production team members are hustling into position.

One brings out a pair of wooden stools, setting them down towards the front of the stage, deliberately putting them down to partially block the co-hosts of Showtime. A second is setting up the usual folding table set up as a desk but at least we finally have a monitor instead of a hanging cardboard sign, although this monitor just has a simple "Front Page" in red block font on a white background.

The other is seen struggling to push a wheelchair through the entrance curtain, batting it back repeatedly as an angry voice rings out...]

"WATCH IT! WATCH IT, YOU IDIOT! YOU WANT TO KEEP YOUR JOB?!"

[...and after a moment, the wheelchair comes fully into view, with the loudmouth himself, Bryson Page, seated. Page is wearing black loafers, faded blue jeans, and a white T-shirt under an outdated tweed blazer, and of course a microphone in hand, sitting in a wheelchair with his right leg in a walking boot, elevated. Page looks around with a scowl as the crowd boos him, but also cheers his misfortune as the production assistant rapidly shuffles away.]

BP: Good help is hard to find, people. Always remember that.

[Page puts on a smug face with some effort.]

BP: And always remember that I am the host of this... the AWA's number one rated segment... THE moment worth watching... the show guaranteed to be more viral than swine flu... the-

[Another voice rings out.]

"Spare us, please."

[The crowd cheers as Sweet Daddy Williams steps out from behind the interview podium, mic in hand.]

BP: I'm sorry - between all the blubber in your cheeks, I couldn't quite underst-

[Williams steps closer.]

SDW: I said "spare us." Spare me all your jibber jabber! Spare Miss Mariah from listenin' to this garbage! Spare all these people from wastin' their hard-earned money on the likes of your motormouth!

[The crowd cheers that as Page looks back and forth upset.]

SDW: I've sat back there for months now, watchin' you come out and wreck our formats, doin' whatcha want when you wanna do it, stirrin' the stuff and causin' all sorts of problems.

[Page looks surprisingly proud of that.]

SDW: And even after you got what was comin' to ya at The Battle of London...

[The crowd ROARS at that memory as Page reflexively reaches down towards his heavily taped ankle.]

SDW: ...ya still can't manage to keep your mouth SHUT for a week!

[Page grimaces, squirming in his seat.]

BP: Listen here, you Master of Mediocrity... I'd invite you to step up to the plate and SHUT my mouth if you don't like what I've got to say...

[Williams nods his head, balling up his fists as the crowd ROARS at that idea.]

BP: ...but I know that even you wouldn't hit a man in a wheelchair.

[He gestures at himself with a smirk as Williams sighs.]

SDW: Nah, nah... I wouldn't. But I got a funny feelin' that maybe that wheelchair is just for looks... maybe it's-

[Page angrily interrupts.]

BP: For looks?!

[The people cheer as Page points to the ankle again...

...and then angrily turns in their direction, pointing at them.]

BP: Yes, you all would cheer at my misfortune. It's bad enough that I'm having issues recovering from my debilitating sports hernia, but NOW?! Now I have to deal with THIS!

[He points to the boot on his right leg]

BP: This ankle injury, this twisted and torn up ankle because that INGRATE, that "Legend" Whitecross put his hands on ME! ME! And put me in that Ankle Lock and... well, I'm lucky that it's just a sprain, and that my poor ankle wasn't torn off!

[The crowd cheers at that possibility]

BP: And you ingrates would cheer! I was so close. I was THIS close to getting cleared and finally getting back into the ring, but no... now, I'm stuck waiting for this ankle to heal!

But I tell you, I'll be back in the ring soon enough, and everyone will be sorry...

[He turns his attention back to Williams.]

BP: ...and I do mean EVERYONE.

[The crowd buzzes as Williams steps closer again.]

SDW: Is that a threat, little man? Wheelchair or not, I'm about to-

[Williams is cut off by the sound of "Money" by KMFDM playing over the PA system and the imminent arrival of two massive masked men.

First is the Golden Grappler - his mask golden with black highlights around the eyes, nose, and mouth. He's wearing a gold ring robe with "Grappler" on the back, gold tights with a black stripe down the side, and gold boots with "GG" embossed in black.

Behind is the more brash Ultra Commando 3, wearing his usual flectarn patterned camo gear, but primarily gold with white and black patterns.

Both move into flanking positions alongside a smirking Bryson Page as Williams takes a step back.]

BP: Oho... not so tough now, huh, tough guy? Maybe you'd like to meet my friends... and my guests on tonight's edition of The Front Page... the Golden Grappler... Ultra Commando 3... also known as Masks For Money.

[The crowd jeers the masked men who stare down Williams.]

BP: Gentlemen, gentlemen... please ignore these unwashed masses in the crowd, we're stuck with them, but it's great to have you here!

[The Grappler takes an offered mic.]

GG: Thank you, Mr. Page. We appreciate you having us, and I just wanted to say you have been doing an excellent job, raising the level of integrity in the journalism in the AWA. You tell it like it is, and speak the truth, unlike that mush mouthed Sweet Daddy Williams who we have to see every segment.

[Williams bristles at the comment as Mariah Wolfe moves next to him, trying to calm him down.]

GG: We were standing backstage, waiting to come out when we heard Williams saying... something... no one's ever quite sure what.... but it sounded like a threat and well... we thought our services might be needed.

[The masked Commando makes a show out of cracking his knuckles as Williams looks on, Mariah still trying to get him to back away.]

UC3: That's right. Retirement means nothing to us, old man. You step up to someone under our protection and you might not have to worry about next week's ratings... ever again.

[Page beams as the crowd jeers... and finally, Wolfe gets Williams to the other side of the podium as Page makes a dismissive gesture.]

BP: It's good to have friends in high places... and enemies in low places... and speaking of lowly enemies, boys, let's talk about what went down at National Wrestling Night with Martinez and Williams...

[The crowd cheers that duo as Ultra Commando raises his own mic.]

UC3: Hey, Williams and Martinez got lucky. We beat them first and we can do it again, but it looks like they're too busy bickering with each other to take another shot, and we're done with them anyway.

[Page looks surprised.]

BP: Done?

[The Grappler nods.]

GG: Yes Mr. Page, like we said weeks ago, our tormenting of Derrick Williams and Ryan Martinez was a contract. It's in our name, no job we won't take on, as long as we're properly compensated. And we were properly compensated for what we did

to those two. Admittedly, we did not get our bonus for shelving either of them, but still, we made out well in the end. Did you see the last Tag Team rankings?

BP: Why yes I did, and you debuted in those rankings finally at number 5.

[Grappler nods.]

GG: Yes, Number 5. We beat two of the AWA's top superstar - we should be number 1! But we'll forgive the Championship Committee's oversight. We'll be at Number 1 soon enough. Right now, we're going to take the money we earned... maybe a vacation. A vacation, Commando?

UC3: That sounds just about right, Grappler. Somewhere tropical - Caribbean, maybe Hawaii.

GG: Hawaii sounds great! Think of it, Mr. Page - these masks on a quiet beach in Oahu!

But while a vacation would be nice, we have other things to concentrate on. We currently have no other "contracts" to speak of so the Masks for Money are for hire, to take care of any of your problems...

[Grappler rubs his fingers together.]

GG: ...if the price is right.

[Page strokes his chin.]

BP: What would you boys think about working abroad? Say... London perhaps?

[The Grappler chuckles.]

GG: As long as we don't get paid in Euros, we're on the case. Gabriel Whitecross will be nothing but a bad memory if that's what you want.

[Page waves a hand.]

BP: Just a thought, just a thought... but if you don't have any contracts right now and no vacation in the works, just what ARE your plans moving forward?

[Grappler nods.]

GG: We're going to focus on getting that ranking up to Number 1, Mr. Page. We see 'em... right there...

[The Grappler points to the crowd and after a moment, the camera cuts to Daniel Harper and Howie Somers who get to their feet.]

GG: There they are. The guys we've got our OWN contracts out on. We're coming for those tag team titles... and you know why, Mr. Page?

[Page shrugs.]

GG: Because that's how you get paid.

[And with that, Masks For Money get to their feet, shaking Bryson Page's hand as they head off with their music playing...]

BP: There you have it, ladies and gentlemen - Masks for Money and it's time for them to make some money. They'll be in action a little later... and for these two, I'll... maybe I'll join commentary for this! Yeah, I'm going to whee-

[The mic goes quiet and Page is cut off. He incredulously starts screaming "I WILL NOT BE CUT OFF!!" as the screen cuts back to the ring where Megumi Sato is standing.]

MS: The following tag team contest is scheduled for one fall with a twenty minute time limit. Introducing first...

[Sato lowers the mic as "Nothin' To Lose" by Rebel Meets Rebel begins to play.]

MS: ...from Kingsland, Arkansas... at a total combined weight of 568 pounds... Duane Henry Bishop... Cletus Lee Bishop...

...THE BIIIIIISSSSSSSSSSSHOPSSSSSSSSSS!

[The former tag team champions come busting through the entrance curtain, stomping across the entrance stage and quickly heading down the staircase in beat up black jeans and boots.]

LD: The Bishops wasting no time in heading to the ring, Ben, for their first match back in many years.

BW: Another duo I'm quite familiar with. You know, they almost were in the Southern Syndicate at one point?

LD: Almost?

BW: Missed it by that much. It's all for the best though.

LD: Why's that?

BW: We liked to celebrate our wins with champagne and caviar. They celebrate theirs with cheap beer and roadkill stew.

LD: Lovely. Former tag team champions making their return to action in the AWA... and it remains to be seen if this is still the same Bishops we saw back in the day, Ben.

BW: If it is, the AWA tag team division - including Somers and Harper - better watch their backs.

[The Bishops hit the ring as Sato casts a wary eye towards the large Cletus Lee who towers over her in an intimidating fashion, waiting for their opponents to arrive.]

MS: Annnnnnnnd their opponents...

[Cletus Lee and Duane Henry Bishop eagerly look towards the entranceway, awaiting their first AWA sanctioned matchup in several years...]

LD: All eyes on the entrance and...

[The Atlanta crowd cheers at the sound of "This Is How We Roll" by Florida Georgia Line ringing out over the PA system.]

MS: ...from the great state of Texas... weighing in at 522 pounds... David Layton... the "Cowboy Casanova" Billy Givens...

...THE AAAAAAACES IN THE HOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOLE!

[The cheers pick up as the new tag team comes through the curtain...

...well, one of them does at least. David Layton steps out onto the entrance stage in simple black trunks and short boots, hands on his hips as he glares down the aisle at the ring.]

LD: I wonder what this is all about, Ben.

BW: That's a damn fine question, Dane. Where is Givens?! This is a tag team match!

[Layton points a threatening finger at the ring as the always-boisterous Duane Henry waves him towards the ring...]

BW: You think Givens got a case of the yellowtail before they came out here?

LD: I don't think so... but I am... wait a second! Wait a second!

[With the Bishops' eyes on Layton, they're completely unaware of someone slipping through the crowd, yanking off a hooded sweatshirt as they near the ring...]

LD: Givens is there! He's coming through the bleachers!

[...and the fans start to react as Givens pulls himself up on the apron, nodding his head to the crowd before leaping into the air, springing off the top rope...]

LD: OFF THE TOP!

[...and after spinning through the air, Givens CRACKS Duane Henry with a spinning leg lariat to the back of the head, sending him flying through the ropes outside the ring to a HUGE ROAR!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[Givens hops up with a grin and a whoop, pumping a fist and throwing the "hook 'em horns" into the air as a confused but furious Cletus Lee turns his attention on him...

...just as David Layton comes sprinting down the aisle, anger in his eyes as he dives under the ropes, coming to his feet as Cletus Lee goes flying past a ducking Billy Givens with a wild clothesline as the referee signals for the bell!]

"DING! DING! DING!"

[Cletus Lee swings around to throw a big boot at an incoming David Layton who ducks under it, hitting the far ropes...]

LD: CLOTHESLINE!

[...and lands a stunning blow on Cletus Lee who holds his ground, growling menacingly as Layton drops back into the ropes again...]

LD: To the ropes... ANOTHER ONE!

[...and this one causes Cletus Lee to stagger backwards a step!]

BW: I know these two VERY well, Lori, and I'll tell you it's a serious point of pride for Cletus Lee at how tough he is to take off his feet!

LD: Layton's trying to chop the big man down though - to the ropes again...

[And this time on the rebound, he runs right past the staggered big man, hitting the ropes again, building up speed...]

LD: ...HERE HE COMES!

...and when David Layton lands his third clothesline of the match, he lands it with some serious oomph behind it, running right over Cletus Lee Bishop who flops down to the canvas to a HUGE ROAR! Layton throws his arms back with a roar of his own that gets the crowd even more fired up!]

LD: DAVID LAYTON IS ROCKIN' HERE IN THE A-T-L!

[Layton does a full circle around the rising and stunned Cletus Lee, wrapping his arms around his massive torso as the big man regains his feet...]

LD: You've gotta be kidding-

[...and LAUNCHES him halfway across the ring with a released Northern Lights Suplex!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[Layton comes off the mat, nodding his head confidently as he looks to the corner where his partner is now standing, a huge grin on his face...]

LD: The Aces In The Hole - I gotta say, Ben - came into this match as serious underdogs but this young duo is taking the fight to this pair of former AWA tag champions!

[...and Layton drags Cletus Lee up by the arm, whipping him to the neutral corner before slapping his partner's hand...]

LD: The tag to Givens... here comes Layton again!

[Rushing right in, Layton leaps up to smash a forearm into the jaw of Cletus Lee before dropping down to all fours, allowing his partner to use him as a launchpad to take flight, crashing into the stunned Cletus Lee with a leg lariat!]

LD: Givens and Layton are all over Cletus Lee in there!

BW: This is shocking to witness as someone who was around to see how dominant and destructive the Bishops were at one time.

[Givens gives Cletus Lee a shove out of the corner, sending him stumbling forward as Givens runs to the ropes, leaping up on the second...]

LD: Givens springs back... RANA!

[...but as Givens attempts the flashy headscissors takedown, the mountain of a man known as Cletus Lee Bishop holds his ground, blocking the maneuver...]

BW: No way, Dane! Layton might have enough muscle to get the jump on Cletus Lee but not Givens!

"THUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUD!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[...and DRIVING Givens down with a thunderous powerbomb!]

LD: And just like that - with one single, solitary move by the biggest man in the match - all the momentum swings the other way in this one - and a cover by Cletus Lee!

[The referee dives down, slapping the mat once...]

LD: HE'S GOT TWO! HE'S GOT-

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

LD: Givens' shoulder pops off the mat in tiiiiime! Big kickout there by Billy Givens and it looked over for sure right there, Ben.

BW: The kid's got heart... but if he's not careful, Cletus Lee will rip it out of his chest and show it to him.

LD: Graphic.

BW: I've seen him do it.

LD: Really?!

BW: Well, no.

[Cletus Lee climbs off the mat, a furious look on his face as he searches around for his partner...]

LD: Duane Henry's been laid out on the floor since that spinning leg lariat to the back of the head. It rang his bell something fierce and he's nowhere in sight. Cletus Lee is on his own.

BW: If it was most other men, I'd say that's a problem. For Cletus Lee, it might be even odds.

[...and then drags Givens off the mat by the hair, glaring into his eyes.]

LD: Givens is out on his feet it looks like... Cletus Lee holding him up...

[And with a big scoop and press, Cletus Lee sends Givens high overhead!]

LD: ...GORILLA PRESS!

BW: What's he gonna do with him?!

[A wiggling and wriggling Givens slips out of Cletus Lee's grasp, sliding his legs down over the shoulders and around the neck as he sits on Cletus Lee's shoulders for a moment...]

...and then whips his body backwards, dragging a shocked Cletus Lee with him...]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

LD: POISON RANNNNNAAAAA! INCREDIBLE COUNTER BY THE COWBOY CASANOVA!

BW: And I can't believe I'm saying this but Cletus Lee might be OUT after that!

LD: He got spiked right on top of his head!

[And with Cletus Lee laid out on the mat, we spot Duane Henry come off the mat, a dazed look in his eyes...]

LD: LAYTON!

[...and the rampaging Layton throws himself off the apron, smashing a flying tackle in on Duane Henry!]

“OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

LD: DOWN! GOES! DUANE HENRY BISHOP!

[Layton lets loose a roar on the outside, the crowd echoing it as a grinning Billy Givens slingshots up, landing on the top rope, turning to face the laid out Cletus Lee...]

LD: Cletus Lee is down... Billy Givens is up annnnnd...

[...and Givens comes flipping off the top, crashing down with a legdrop across the chest of the laid out Bishop big man!]

“OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

LD: THE ACES IN THE HOLE ARE ON FIRE, BEN!

BW: They're completely overwhelming the Bishops and I can't believe my eyes, Dane!

LD: Givens is up... there's the tag!

[Layton comes in, nodding his head as Givens gestures to the downed Cletus Lee, the duo working together to get the big man on his unsteady feet in the middle of the ring...]

LD: What's this now?

[...and as Givens drops back to the ropes behind Cletus Lee, Layton rushes to the ropes in front of them, both men bouncing back...]

LD: Meeting in the middle!

[...and as Givens goes low, rolling at the back of Cletus Lee's legs, Layton goes into a spin...]

“OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

LD: DISCUS LARIAAAAATOOOOOOO! GIVENS TAKES OUT THE KNEES! LAYTON COVERS!

[Layton nods along with the count as Givens stands guard, counting with the fans...]

“ONNNNNNNNNNNNNE!”

“TWOOOOOOOOOOOOOO!”

[...and as the ref slaps the mat again, Givens gives a big whoop and a fistpump!]

LD: THEY GOT 'EM!

“DING! DING! DING!”

[Givens shouts at the crowd, throwing an arm into the air as Layton gets up, showing a rare burst of excitement as he throws himself into an embrace with his partner.]

LD: Layton and Givens celebrating - what a HUGE win for the Aces In The Hole! They just knocked off former tag team champions, Ben!

BW: I... I'm in shock, Dane! HUGE win is right... HUGE upset is even more right! I had my money on the Bishops ripping these two a new one and announcing their return with authority, putting the division on notice... but after what we just saw... hell, maybe it's the Aces who just put the division on notice!

[Givens grins as he hops up on the middle rope, pointing into the crowd...

...and we cut to a shot of Daniel Harper and Howie Somers in street clothes looking on. Harper nods his head, grinning as he claps for what they just saw. Howie Somers looks a little more pensive, leaning over to his partner and pointing to something.]

LD: Hey! Did you know they were here?

BW: Not at all. The World Tag Team Champions - Next Gen - in the house... maybe doing a little scouting...

LD: They're one week away from defending those titles in a long-awaited showdown with The Gold Standard on Saturday Night Wrestling in Las Vegas - right back here on ESPN - but apparently they weren't too busy to take a night in Atlanta to check out the action here on Showtime.

[Givens hops down off the ropes, pumping a fist again as he embraces his partner and the duo exits the ring...]

LD: The Aces In The Hole may be looking for a night out on the town to celebrate that win, Ben.

BW: Atlanta's got no lack of places to celebrate.

LD: You sound like you're speaking from experience there, my friend.

[Waterson chuckles as we see Duane Henry Bishop roll into the ring, grabbing at his head.]

LD: Duane Henry back in there... and I guess it's back to the drawing board for the Bishops, Ben.

BW: This sure didn't go the way they wanted it to. Their first match back after that big return at the Anniversary Show and they... they got beat, Dane. No better way to put it than that.

[Duane Henry looks around with confusion on his face, shouting at the referee who tries to explain what happened.]

LD: Duane Henry's trying to get some things cleared up. He's not sure what happened at all in there.

BW: He spent the whole match on the floor!

LD: And from the way he's holding his head, I think he might STILL be seeing stars.

[Duane Henry marches over to his partner who is sitting on the mat, trying to shake the cobwebs loose. The much-smaller Bishop grabs him by the wrist, trying to yank him off the canvas...]

LD: He's trying to get Cletus Lee up and...

[Suddenly, a siren rings out through the Center Stage Studios!]

LD: ...wait a second! Is that...?! Could it be...?!

[And the crowd ERUPTS as the Boston Brawler himself comes marching out onto the entrance platform - not exactly dressed for work in a pair of black jeans and a black hooded sweatshirt... and of course is finishing off a can of beer before tossing it aside. The crowd is ROARING for this surprise appearance!]

LD: We haven't seen Carver in weeks! But he's here now... right here in Atlanta for this Bon Voyage edition of Showtime!

[Carver marches down the staircase, slapping a couple of kids' outstretched hands before rolling under the bottom ropes. He gets to his feet, mic in hand, looking out with a grin on the roaring crowd.]

HC: Alright... thank yeh for that. Appreciate it.

[He nods to the cheering crowd.]

HC: Damn, it's good to be back!

[Another big cheer!]

HC: I'll tell yeh... it was hard as hell to sit home the last few weeks nursing the old beat-up body but when the Doc says yeh gotta do it... yeh'd do well to listen.

[The crowd laughs.]

HC: I know, I know... Hannibal Carver listenin' to doctors now. The next thing yeh know, I'll give up drinkin'.

[The crowd boos loudly and this time, it's Carver's turn to laugh.]

HC: Alright, maybe not. But let's get down to business. Obviously...

[He gestures to himself.]

HC: ...I'm back. I'm here in Atlanta.

[The crowd cheers again!]

HC: I came here tonight to settle some business. See, I keep trying to not take things personally... but when a bunch of dumb kids gets in the way of me paying my bills, I don't have much choice. Thing is, Zharkov tells me Generation Lost ain't even here. Maybe they think-

[Back on his feet, an irate Duane Henry Bishop stomps over towards Carver, ripping the mic out of his hand...]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

LD: Uh oh...

[...and Carver doesn't give Duane Henry a moment to speak, uncoiling to snatch a three-quarter nelson and DRIVING his head down into the canvas!]

LD: BLACKOUT! HE JUST BLACKED OUT DUANE HENRY BISHOP!

[Cletus Lee Bishop comes lumbering forward, swinging for the fences...

...but the smaller and quicker Carver avoids it, leaping up to snatch the off-balance Cletus Lee...]

"THUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUD!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

LD: BLACKOUTS ALL AROUND FOR THE BISHOPS!

BW: This just ain't their night, Dane.

[Carver gets off the mat, making a show of dusting himself off before picking up the dropped mic, barely looking at the two men he's just taken out.]

HC: Maybe they think they really did something. It took all of them to do it, but maybe they think putting me on the shelf for a while means they've really made it. Really made their daddies proud. Maybe they think they're too good for this show, that they deserve only the biggest spotlight.

[Carver shakes his head.]

HC: And they wonder why they're called the dumb kids.

[The crowd cheers at this as Carver shakes his head.]

HC: They wouldn't know it, but after a while that big spotlight, having your name lit up on some marquee... it ain't just fame.

[Carver nods.]

HC: After all while, it can be a prison. It can be like a drug, making you lazy. Because I came here to stop each and every one of those wet behind the ears scumbags into the dirt... but i came for something else, too.

[Carver looks around.]

HC: I wanted... no, that ain't exactly true. I needed... to taste it. To feel it. I needed to know what kind of place can create so much anger and bitterness in a group of people that are still just starting out. And really...

[Carver pauses.]

HC: ...I needed to remember. Because just being here, just being in the back with everyone else that's trying to put their stamp on this sport, I do remember.

Because it was me.

I was that rookie, willing to do whatever it took. Travel so far from everything I ever knew that an ocean was between us. Put my body on the line and shed all the blood in my veins if it meant I made a name for myself.

[Carver nods.]

HC: It was me, just a few years ago. I had one shot to not just return to North America, but to step into an AWA ring. Even though everyone said I was some psycho garbage relic that didn't belong in what this sport has become. It was me when I proved them wrong. That I'm more than a steel chair swinging into someone's face.

[Carver rubs his head.]

HC: I needed to remember one thing more than all of that, though.

The hunger.

[Carver nods.]

HC: I'm in this building because I needed to remember the hunger that I had as a rookie. That I had when this company gave me that one last shot.

[Carver grits his teeth, pointing around finger directly at the camera.]

HC: Because that hunger is what it's gonna take to fight four guys at the same time, all by myself. Everyone I know is busy with family problems. Problems they made me promise I'd let them handle. So for that, and for what they've done to me...

[Carver nods grimly.]

HC: ...Generation Lost can bet their asses that's exactly the fight that's waiting for them in Vegas.

[Carver tosses the mic over his shoulder, dropping to the mat and rolling from the ring to massive cheers!]

LD: Oh yeah! Hannibal Carver LIVE here in Atlanta and he's going hunting for the members of Generation Lost, Ben!

BW: Him and what army?! I never would bet against the Boston Brawler, Dane, but a four on one situation? He's delusional.

LD: Fans, we'll be right back with more Showtime right here on ESPN!

[And as Carver stomps up the entrance stairs to cheers, we fade to black...

...and fade back up as the quintessential American family of four walks up and down the snack aisle of Anyplace grocery store in Anytown USA. The father wears khaki dockers and a golf shirt that would make him look like a State Farm agent if it weren't navy. The wife is in jeans and a quilted jacket. Her curly hair drops a little bit. The kids, a daughter and a son, trudge along behind them, seemingly on the verge of a meltdown tantrum. The mother searches the snack aisles, picking up chips, candies, candy bars. She sighs in exasperation.]

M: Kids, I know you're hungry. But none of this stuff is right. It so bland. It isn't

[Suddenly, the racks of candies fly apart and Shadoe Rage bursts onto the scene dressed in fuchsia and gold. He holds up two handful of jerky sticks.]

SR: Wanna feel Sensational? Tired of bland cured meats? Tear into Mr. Berkeley's Turkey Jerky!

[Rage tears a chunk of jerky from the pack in his hand. The sound reverberates through the screen. The family is suddenly transformed and energized into hip looking versions of themselves.]

SR: The signature herbs and spices! The smoky flavor! The lean turkey jerky! It's the perfect snack!

[Rage hands out the packs of jerky.]

SR: Ohhhh man, that's good. When I get my hands on Mr. Berkeley's Turkey Jerky, I feel SENSATIONAL!

[Rage tears into another bite along with the family. Everybody seems even more amped as Rage turns towards the camera.]

SR: And so will you.

So will you!

SO WILL YOU!

TEAR INTO IT!

MR. BERKELEY'S TURKEY JERKY... IT'S SENSATIONAL!

[Rage savages the remaining piece of jerky before he stares straight into the camera, smiling as we fade to black...

...and then back up on the podium where Mariah Wolfe and a grinning Sweet Daddy Williams are standing by at their interview podium.]

MW: Welcome back to Center Stage Studios and Showtime on ESPN, fans. Up next we have...

[Mariah trails off, as we hear an audible gasp from the crowd, quickly followed by a massive roar of boos.]

MW: Oh my gosh.

SDW: What the heck are you doing here!?

[We soon see the cause for concern, as Supreme Wright and KAMS make their presence known. Sweet Daddy Williams instinctively places himself between Team Supreme and Wolfe, as the quartet walk onto the stage.

Wright is dressed immaculately as always, in a 3-piece midnight blue Hawes & Curtis Herringbone tweed suit with a lavender dress shirt and a violet striped satin necktie. Standing beside him is his "weapon" Paris Crawford, wearing a black satin suit with a crisp white dress shirt, unbuttoned all the way to their navel. They also wear a white gold statement necklace, with the pendant in the design of a diamond bow, and their voluminously wavy blonde hair is styled to the left side of their head and over their shoulder, with bangs swept over one eye.

Bringing up the rear are the other two members of KAMS, AJ Martinez and Cain Jackson who tower over everyone else, dressed in matching black, tailored suits with black dress shirts sans neckties.

Stopping a few feet short of Wolfe and Williams, Wright acknowledges them with a slight nod of his head. His expression as always, is stoic and unreadable, but his mere presence radiates palpable tension as he glares at the two Showtime co-

hosts. The addition of KAMS, with Crawford's eyes fixed directly onto Williams, only adds to the sense of danger and the potential for mayhem in this scene.]

SW: Why am I here, Mr. Williams? Because I am first and foremost, a fan of professional wrestling and there is no better place to witness the absolute pinnacle of this sport, than inside an AWA ring. Tonight, we are here only as spectators and admirers of the art.

[A beat.]

SW: You have nothing to fear from me.

[He looks over his shoulder at Crawford, Jackson and Martinez, before returning his gaze towards Williams with a smirk.]

SW: Or from them.

SDW: I'd love to believe you.

SW: You have my word.

SDW: That used to mean something. Not these days.

[The smirk disappears from Wright's face, as he raises his head and hardens his stare at Williams. Trying to diffuse the situation, Mariah Wolfe steps out from behind Sweet Daddy.]

MW: Supreme Wright, you obviously came here because you have something to say. What is it?

SW: Of course, Miss Wolfe. Next week, the AWA returns to Las Vegas, Nevada. Before I was ever your "White Knight"...

[The crowd serenades Wright with boos at the mention of his stolen nickname.]

SW: ...I was known as their "Sin City Saint". And in the city where I first made my name as a professional wrestler, I'm inviting everyone to join Team Supreme in a celebration.

[Wolfe looks confused.]

MW: A "celebration"?

[Williams looks agitated.]

SDW: Of what?

[Wright looks smug.]

SW: A celebration of our reunion. A celebration of our successes achieved and of the successes yet to come. By the time we're popping bottles and sipping champagne, The Gold Standard could very well be holding the AWA World Tag Team titles.

[The crowd jeers loudly at that notion, showing their complete support for Next Gen who are looking on from the crowd, staring up at the stage where Wright locks his eyes on them with intention. AJ Martinez can be seen behind him nudging Cain Jackson, gesturing in their direction.]

SDW: I love a good party as much as the next guy, but this is one party I think I'm gonna skip.

SW: As is your prerogative, Mr. Williams. But consider this an open invitation to everyone.

[In the background, we can hear Cain Jackson remark, "That just means more champagne for us." as AJ Martinez chants "We're having a party!"]

SW: In the city that never sleeps, Team Supreme will be holding the biggest party that Saturday night.

AJM: And if we need some...

[Cue the exaggerated fingerquotes.]

AJM: "entertainment"... we can always get Theresa!

[The jovial (or jovial for him) look on Supreme Wright's face disappears as he turns and glares at Martinez.]

AJM: What? What'd I say?

SW: That's my WIFE you're talking about.

[Paris Crawford slaps AJ in the shoulder with a disapproving look on their face. Meanwhile, Cain Jackson sighs and rolls his eyes at his tag team partner.]

CJ: Can't take you anywhere.

AJM: Wow. Didn't realize she was off-limits. Sorry.

[Supreme Wright shakes his head in disbelief, before turning his attention back to Williams and Wolfe.]

SW: As I was saying, next Saturday in Las Vegas, Team Supreme will be throwing the biggest party the AWA has ever seen! You don't want to miss it.

[And with that, Supreme Wright exits the stage, with KAMS following behind him. With Team Supreme gone, Mariah and Sweet Daddy look visibly relieved, as if a great weight had been lifted off their shoulders.]

MW: I don't know about the rest of you, but I think I'll be busy washing my hair that night.

SDW: I'm sure that party's gonna be about as enjoyable as a wake.

MW: I'm sure you're right... and in fact, I don't think I want to even talk about it any more at all so let's go back to the ring for more action.

[And with that, we fade down to the ring with a graphic reading "Masks For Money vs Ron Digger & Terry Roop".

Megumi Sato doesn't even get the chance to make introductions as the two massive mercenaries immediately start hammering the two local talents as the ref rings the bell.]

LD: And wasting no time, the Masked Men have started attacking their opponents.

BW: These two show that around here, you get paid by the win - not by the hour.

[Ultra Commando 3 tosses Terry Roop unceremoniously to the floor while the Golden Grappler hammers Ron Digger with clubbing forearms up against the ropes.]

LD: A little divide and conquer there by Masks For Money who seem to be using a similar strategy to what we saw out of the Blackjacks earlier - a blitzkrieg assault on overmatched opponents.

BW: I tell ya, Dane. This tag division is heating up. We've seen some great teams in action already tonight, all thirsting to make a name for themselves as they wait to see if Next Gen can survive against The Gold Standard next weekend in Vegas.

LD: That should be a tremendous matchup and the outcome of that will have major repercussions on what comes next in that division... and Masks For Money are hoping to be a big part of that conversation as we heard earlier when they were on the Front Page. The Grappler pounding away, big forearms down across the back...

[The veteran backs off, making a show out of measuring his man before dashing back in and sending him flying with a kneelift!]

LD: Ouch! That's going to leave a mark on Digger's face for sure... and just as the referee gets the Commando out of there, he's tagging back in.

[UC3 comes through the ropes, boosting himself up to the middle rope as the Grappler pulls Digger up by the hair, holding him in place...]

LD: A doubleteam on the way annnnd... DOWN with the flying tackle off the second rope!

BW: Nice work there from these masked menaces. If the Championship Committee is looking on - and you know they are - they've gotta be impressed.

LD: A whole lot of impressive performances here tonight in the tag team scene... the Blackjacks, Aces In The Hole, now these guys...

[The Commando rises to his feet, surveying the scene...

...and barrels across the ring to deliver a running boot to Roop before he can get settled on the apron, knocking him to the floor.]

"OHHHHHHH!"

BW: Masks For Money firmly in the driver's seat here, Dane.

LD: But they sure aren't following the rules of the road as the Commando knocks Roop off the apron... there's another quick tag, keeping the fresh man in...

[With Digger down on the mat, the Commando drags him up, tossing him into the Grappler's front facelock...]

LD: ...wait a second... is this...? Already?

[...who lifts him up, the Commando grabbing their foe's legs...]

LD: I can't believe it but-

[...and together, they twist, driving Digger down in an elevated swinging neckbreaker!]

LD: -and just like that, it's Payday for Masks For Money... one... two... and three. Short and decisive to be sure, Ben.

BW: They don't like to mess around in there, Dane. They've got an agenda and they stick to it... and heaven help whoever their paid to "deal with" next.

LD: Hopefully it's not our good friend Sweet Daddy Williams.

BW: YOUR good friend.

[Lori chuckles.]

LD: Mariah, Sweet Daddy... the floor is yours.

[We cut from the ring where Masks For Money are celebrating a job well done to our interview area.]

MW: Thanks, Lori... and Sweet Daddy, big win there for Masks For Money.

SDW: I think I'll keep my mouth shut before I get us in some trouble.

[Mariah shakes her head.]

MW: Well, we wouldn't want that, would we? But while the masked menaces are putting on a show for the Championship Committee, our next guest was putting on one heck of a show in London last weekend - ultimately coming up just a little bit short in winning the Royal Crown tournament.

[Williams nods.]

SDW: I don't have ta guess who that is, Miss Mariah... bring him on out here!

[The crowd ROARS as "Greyhound Pt. 2" by the Jon Spencer Blues Explosion plays over the PA system. A moment passes before Shadoe Rage steps through the curtain dressed in a "Shadoe Rage: BORN BY RAGE, RAISED BY RAGE, SAVED BY RAGE" faded and weathered light purple T-shirt that can be found at AWAShop.com right now in a pair of black leather pants.

Rage extends his arms to the cheering crowd, twirling in place to show off both the front and the back of the shirt before he walks over to Wolfe and Williams. He dips his head in recognition of Mariah Wolfe but stops short in front of Sweet Daddy Williams. The two men give each other a long look before Rage raises his sunglasses and then, still locking his charcoal stare on Sweet Daddy Williams, raises his hand to the proverbial Mayor of Atlanta. Williams holds for a beat before he shakes the hand, heartily. The crowd cheers wildly.]

SDW: Brother, it's good to see you... and I gotta say I'm liking what I see out of you these days. We oldtimers gotta stick together.

[Williams grins but Rage doesn't return that smile.]

SR: I'm not old. You're not old. Stop saying that. That's just marketing. Yeah, I've been around longer than most but I'm far from old and I'm far from done.

[The crowd cheers that proclamation.]

SDW: I hear ya, brother... but even you gotta admit that with your style in that ring...

[Williams shakes his head.]

SDW: ...those knees gotta be feelin' a little cranky... that neck gotta be feelin' a little cranky... the ankle... that back? I don't wanna say your back cost you the Royal Crown but it was obvious you weren't a hundred percent in there, brother.

[Rage nods.]

SR: I gotta admit I'M feeling a little cranky. Everybody seems to be thinking it's time to put ol' Shadoe Rage out to pasture when I'm thinking it's time to reclaim some gold around here. I am still the longest-reigning and greatest World Television Champion ever, but that was three years ago. It's time to move on from that. It's time to climb new mountains.

[Mariah interjects.]

MW: Well, you had a great chance to climb that mountain at Royal Crown. You just came up short against Sid Osborne.

SR: Don't say if it weren't for my back.

[Wolfe winces... and then seems to change direction.]

MW: I'll say if it weren't for the earlier attacks by KAMS, that I believe you would be standing here the Royal Crown winner.

[Wolfe raises a hand before Rage can object.]

MW: But I know you don't want to go over old history. But I do want to ask you about what went down between you and Bret Grayson...

[Rage nods with a grimace.]

SR: Like I said, it feels like everybody is trying to make a name off Shadoe Rage. Well, step up. How does the saying go, Mariah? I'll make you famous.

[Rage points to his body.]

SR: I've been cleared. I'm tougher than a two dollar steak. You can't break my body down. You can't beat me up.

So Bret Grayson, Team Supreme... you want some... COME GET SOME!

[The crowd ROARS for the challenge.]

SR: But make sure you can handle it because once I get started, I ain't stopping and that's bad news for you.

[Williams steps in.]

SDW: I gotta know, brother - is that a challenge? It's Memorial Day Mayhem season - it'll be here before you know it. You've told the world you're gunnin' for gold in 2018! Now you got business with KAMS and Grayson and...

[Rage nods, waving a hand.]

SR: Let's make it clear, Sweet Daddy... I'm-

[Rage pauses, his gaze drifting off-camera and down the entrance staircase...]

SDW: What's this now? Hey! You two had your time!

[...and Masks For Money break into view, getting right up in Shadoe Rage's personal space behind the podium.]

GG: Shut your mouth, Williams!

[The Grappler glares at Rage who isn't backing down.]

GG: We just win a match and instead of giving us time to talk, you roll out this walking shell?!

[Williams shakes his head.]

SDW: You were out here earlier! You were on the damn Front Page! Y'all had your time!

[This time, it's the Commando who responds.]

UC3: Any time we want to talk is OUR time... and right now, I think it's time for you to roll your old bones out of here, Rage, 'cause we're reclaiming our time right about now.

[Rage bristles at the "old bones" comment.]

SR: By now, people like you oughta know that Shadoe Rage doesn't back down from a challenge...

[Rage looks between the two.]

SR: ...no matter the odds. You want to take my time on the mic?

[Rage points down the aisle.]

SR: Let's move this time to the ring! Come on!

[And as the crowd cheers, Rage storms past Masks For Money, practically running down the steps before rolling under the ropes. He climbs to his feet, sweeping a hand at the masked men, challenging them to come for him...]

SDW: Now THAT's a challenge. What are you two gonna do about it?

[The Grappler looks at Williams.]

GG: We usually demand money to fight.

But this time, hell, we'll do it for free.

[The crowd ROARS at the idea of the added showdown. The Grappler slaps his partner's shoulder.]

GG: Let's go, Commando - an extra workout never hurt!

[The two masked men storm the ring after Rage.]

LD: Wow! An added attraction here on Showtime as Shadoe Rage has crossed paths with Masks For Money and-

BW: What's with all the idiots around these parts wanting to fight when they're outnumbered?! Go back and watch "Best of the Southern Syndicate Vol. 1." That's never a good idea!

[Rage waits eagerly as the masked men approach, ready for the fight to come...

...and as the Grappler rolls under the ropes, Rage rushes him, dropping to his knees to drive a double axehandle down into the back of the head to cheers!]

LD: Here we go!

[Rage comes off the mat, catching Ultra Commando 3 as he comes through the ropes with an overhead elbow that staggers the big man!]

LD: Shadoo Rage fighting off both members of Masks For Money!

BW: Yeah, but for how long?

[Rage snaps off a jab to the masked face - once, twice, three times - before grabbing the back of the hood, charging across the ring to SMASH his face into the top turnbuckle!]

LD: The former World Television Champion is doing a number on these two!

[With the Commando dazed in the corner, Rage spots the Grappler getting up off the mat. He rushes back across the ring, grabbing him by the back of the head, twirling a finger in the air...]

LD: He's got the Grappler... across the ring annnnd...

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[...and the crowd reacts as Rage leaps over the top rope, snapping the Grappler's throat down across it! Rage hits the floor, wincing as he grabs at his ankle before climbing to his feet.]

BW: Did you see that? Did you see him grab the ankle?

LD: I did indeed. Shadoo Rage might be cleared to compete but you'd be nuts to think he's at one hundred percent.

[Rage has a little bit of a grimace on his face as he climbs up on the ring apron, pointing to the crowd before he starts to climb the turnbuckles...]

LD: And Shadoo Rage is heading up to his favorite place - the top turnbuckle!

[The Grappler is coughing and choking as he struggles to get off the mat, Rage keeping his eyes on him...

...until suddenly, the ropes are being violently shaken!]

BW: The Commando strikes!

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[And Rage suddenly drops down, being crotched on the top rope by the Commando's actions!]

BW: Ha! And it'll be a night of singing the high C for Shadoo Rage!

[The Commando staggers to the corner, grabbing Rage by the hair and yanking him off the ropes, throwing him down to the mat to jeers!]

BW: And sooner or later, this is what always happens when you try to fight against superior numbers, Dane!

LD: The Commando putting the boots to him... the Grappler back up and he's doing the same... we've got a two on one beatdown by Masks For Money on Shadoe Rage and... this is NOT what this jammed house in Atlanta wanted to see tonight.

[The Grappler's bellow of "GET HIM UP!" has the Commando dragging Rage off the mat, shoving him towards his partner who hooks a front facelock...]

LD: Uh oh... this is what we just saw a few moments ago to devastating impact, Ben.

BW: This might not be a sanctioned match but Shadoe Rage is headed for a Payday!

[The Commando grabs the legs, lifting him off the mat...

...when suddenly, the crowd ROARS their approval!]

LD: What the...?!

BW: What are THEY doing here?!

[And those cheers get even louder as Brian James and Jackson Hunter in street clothes slide into the ring, rushing forward...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

LD: INSTANT KARMA ON THE GRAPPLER!

[The bicycle kneestrike from Hunter sends the Golden Grappler spilling through the ropes to the outside as Brian James lights up UC3 with a series of rounding kicks to the sternum, backing him across the ring...

...and with a three point stance, James barrels in to connect with a clothesline that flips the big man over the ropes, dumping him to the floor to a ROAR from the capacity crowd!]

LD: AND JAMES SENDS THE COMMANDO OUT AS WELL! BRIAN JAMES AND JACKSON HUNTER FROM OUT OF NOWHERE TO SAVE THE DAY FOR SHADOE RAGE!

[The crowd is cheering loudly as James smacks his arms down on the top rope, daring the masked men to get back inside the ring. Jackson Hunter has a few words of his own, earning him a momentary muting from the powers that be.]

LD: What a moment here on the Bon Voyage edition of Showtime, fans... and Ben, it was last week when Hunter and James got into a mixup with KAMS on ESPN... and we heard Hunter tell James they needed more help. Is THIS who they had in mind?

BW: It would make sense, right? Rage has had issues of his own with Team Supreme lately so... other than the fact that there's not a single Rage who doesn't have anger issues over having a partner... or maybe even a friend... hell, they might not even like their own FAMILY at this point...

[Dane chuckles as Hunter circles around to Rage, extending a hand to offer to help him up as Rage sits against the ropes, looking up at his unlikely saviors...

...and Rage abruptly rolls under the ropes, snatching the house mic off the timekeeper's table.]

SR: I know why HE'S here...

[He points to Hunter.]

SR: ...but what are YOU doing here?!

[He points to James.]

SR: WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE, BRIAN JAMES!

[Rage's eyes are wild as he stares a hole through the Engine of Destruction. For his part, the Son of the Blackheart looks straight ahead unflinching as he stares down the former World Television Champion as Hunter hands him a mic from ringside.]

BJ: You seem to be under the mistaken impression that I have to explain myself to anyone in this world, much less you, Rage.

[Both dangerous men continue to stare at one another, neither backing down, nor even blinking.]

BJ: But since you asked me without threatening me... I'll tell you. I'm here for one reason.

[James looks over his shoulder.]

BJ: Because of him...

[James points to Hunter.]

BJ: Because he's been telling me, for weeks now, that we need you on our side. Hunter says that in our war against Team Supreme, you've got exactly the kind of crazy that we need.

Me?

[James shrugs.]

BJ: I don't see it. But here's how it is, Rage. Hunter and I have never been friends, but we are partners in this war. And one thing that's always been true about me? If you're on my side...

Then I back your plays, no questions asked.

So why don't you put that finger down before you lose it, settle down and, for once in your life, listen to reason?

[Rage angrily rolls back into the ring, coming to his feet with a hot temper as he turns to Hunter, contempt written all over his face.]

SR: I don't know what your game is, but I know there's a game! For once in your stinking life, be honest with someone, man. Speak the truth!

[Hunter shakes his head.]

JH: You and I, even though our paths diverged... even though through the years, we never really crossed paths... You and I have one very, very, very important thing in common. We are still here.

[The fans in Center Stage actually cheer.]

JH: We're relics. They don't build 'em like us any more, Shadoe!

Yeah, we may have wrinkles... and I may need a quarterly cortisone shot to even move my left arm, but dammit, we're still here.

[The crowd cheers THAT as well!]

JH: And in this meat-grinder of a sport, if a guy like you can survive coming off the top of the cage and exploding his knees to stand here today... I think someone who survived that, and goes on to look across the line of fire at Supreme Wright... well, would give him and Cabbage Patch Samurai Cyber Squad something to think about.

Especially beside a very hungry Engine of Destruction, and a certain former 2-time National Champion who has elevated the act of venal revenge to an art form.

When battling Team Supreme, "annoying and petty" is the name of the game, Shadoe, and I am the MVP.

[One can overhear Brian James mutter, "you can say that again."]

JH: So... I think I've given you my credentials with Masks For Money. What do you say to pooling our resources after all these years, Shadoe?

[Hunter again extends his hand towards Rage who looks conflicted as the crowd urges him to accept the handshake. Rage pauses, looking around at the cheering crowd.]

LD: A heck of a moment here, Ben.

BW: Oh, I'm gonna be sick.

[Rage nods his head at the crowd, lifting his arm...]

SR: What do I say?

[...and then extends his hand by DECKING Hunter with it, knocking him flat on his back!]

LD: OHH!

[The crowd reacts in shock as Hunter grabs his jaw... and Shadoe Rage ducks under a rush from Brian James, slipping through the ropes to the outside of the ring. James angrily kicks at the ropes, ready to rip Rage's ungrateful head off as Rage backs towards the entrance steps.]

"I DON'T NEED YOU! I DON'T WANT YOU!"

[James points a threatening finger, ready to pursue when Hunter gets to a knee, shaking his head at his ally.]

LD: Shadoe Rage again REFUSING to accept Jackson Hunter as an ally... this has been going on for MONTHS now! You can see Hunter getting to his feet, telling James to stand down...

BW: Like I said, Dane... it's a great plan if it didn't involve having to team with a Rage.

[Rage is halfway up the entrance stairs now, shouting up at the ring.]

"I say stay out of my business! I say I don't trust you, Hunter. You haven't fooled me! I say I don't want your help, I don't need you as a partner. I'll handle my business on my own!"

[And we fade to black...

Cut to ringside at an unknown AWA event. Ricki Toughill is flung over the ropes by an unknown opponent and crashes into the ringside barricade. She stands upright, looking a bit frustrated, and looks at something off-camera.]

RT: Oh hey.

[The something off-camera is a fully stocked Dunkin' shop counter at ringside, complete with a friendly-looking barista.]

B: Looks like a pretty tough opponent tonight. Medium cold brew?

"ONE!"

[Ricki looks up at the ring, which is off-camera, then back at the barista.]

RT: You can make it a large. This ref always counts slow.

[The barista hands Ricki her tall, frosty cold brew. She takes a sip. Another customer seated at a ringside table with a laptop computer in front of him takes notice.]

C: Wow, she knows your order?

RT: Yeah, I spend a lot of time out here.

[Ricki is about to sit down, when she notices the empty chair beside the other customer. She picks up the folding chair and snaps it shut.]

RT: Mind if I take a seat?

[Ricki looks up into the ring with a mischievous, crooked grin – a cold brew in one hand and a steel chair in the other.]

V/O: Where there's wrestling, there's Dunkin'.

[Cut to a close-up shot of a cold brew. Another cold brew rebounds off a set of three ropes and slides into position beside it. The AWA and Dunkin' logo flash on screen.]

V/O: Cold brew for bell time. America runs on Dunkin'!

[And we fade through black...

...and with a flash of the ACCESS 365 logo, we cut to the backstage area - to the Chimpanzee Position actually where we can see... chaos.

On one side of the area, we can see Supreme Wright and KAMS coming through the curtain...

...and on the other, we can see Hannibal Carver standing, watching...

...with a steel chair in hand.

Interim President Zharkov is standing in front of Carver thankfully as is Kevin Slater, Tommy Fierro, John Shock, Adam Rogers, and several others, keeping him at bay.

There are a whole lot of shouts between the two sides of the ring, a fair amount muted by our censors...

...and with that flash of the ACCESS logo again, we go back to Lori Dane and Ben Waterson at the announce desk.]

LD: A tense scene earlier tonight as Hannibal Carver encounters Team Supreme backstage. We heard Carver mention again that his friends are fighting fights they've asked him to stay out of... but maybe the proximity of Team Supreme tonight to him was too much for him to stand.

BW: Now he wants to fight Generation Lost AND Team Supreme?! This guy is a lunatic, Dane!

LD: Luckily, we're told that AWA officials were able to get that under control by getting Supreme Wright and KAMS out of the building.

BW: And hopefully out of Atlanta because if Carver goes looking for them, he might burn the whole city down to find them... again.

[Dane sighs.]

LD: On that note, let's head back to the ring.

[We fade to the ring where Megumi Sato is standing.]

MS: The following contest is set for one fall with a ten minute time limit! Introducing first, already in the ring, from Puerto Rico and weighing 260 pounds, this is... CARLOS ENCARNACION!

[A muscular man with light brown skin and black hair, dressed in a red singlet, kneepads and wrestling boots, smiles and flexes his arms.]

LD: You're looking at one of Puerto Rico's strongest wrestlers, who is getting a tryout match tonight.

BW: He may be strong, but he's going to need every bit of strength he's got, considering who he's facing tonight!

[As Waterson finishes, "The Man" by The Killers starts up over the PA system and, on the video wall, we see a red Ford Mustang convertible driving down a street. As it comes closer, we see the driver's face, it freezes, the song kicks in full and the shot is replaced with these words in white lettering:

"BIG MAN ON CAMPUS"]

MS: And his opponen... accompanied to the ring by his manager, "The Professional" Dave Cooper, from Ann Arbor, Michigan, and weighing 325 pounds, he is the man called "THE BIG MAN ON CAMPUS"...

...TREEEEYYYY CAAARRRSOOONNN!

[The crowd jeers that announcement!]

LD: And you're not kidding, Ben, as we're about to see Trey Carson, who is undefeated in singles competition!

[Dave Cooper is first to come out, dressed in a navy blue button-down shirt and a pair of black slacks. Right behind him comes Trey Carson, the same man you saw driving the Mustang. Carson has dark brown hair cut into a flat top and a goatee. He wears a black singlet with the words "BIG MAN ON CAMPUS" in white lettering, black tights and wrestling boots. He also wears black, fingerless gloves on both hands. Carson also wears sunglasses.]

BW: Look at The Big Man on Campus! Have you ever seen a more imposing individual, Dane?

LD: I can only think of a handful of competitors who match up with Carson in terms of size and strength... but in the future, he just might be facing one of those men who can match up!

[Cooper leads Carson down the aisle, the two taking a methodical pace. When the duo reaches the ring, Cooper ascends the ring steps and ducks between the ropes, while Carson grabs the top rope and uses it to pull himself up to the apron. He keeps his grasp on the top rope and steps over it.]

BW: Why, Dane, don't keep us in suspense! Might it be this man who will face Max Magnum next? Or maybe Atlas Armstrong wants to lay down a challenge?

LD: I'm talking about Robert Donovan, who eliminated Carson in the Last Chance Battle Royal two weeks ago!

BW: What?! You have got to be kidding me! Robert Donovan is the one who can step up to face The Big Man?

[Carson walks to the center of the ring and raises his right hand, curls into a fist, and extends his pointer, letting the crowd know who is number one. Cooper applauds Carson, who lowers his arm and turns to face his manager, then the two men bump fists. Carson then removes his sunglasses.]

LD: You sound like you're selling Robert Donovan short, Ben. Let's not forget Donovan has the size and strength to match up with Carson.

BW: Well, that is true, but let's not forget that Donovan has been around the business for a long time. And while that experience can be an asset, the longer you've been in the ring, the more toll it takes on your body! How is that going to come into play against a younger man like Carson in a one-on-one matchup?

[The bell rings and Carson and Encarnacion circle each other, then lock up.]

LD: I still think you're not giving enough credit to Donovan, whose experience has been an asset and then some many times before.

BW: Well, if I'm Donovan, I'm watching this match closely! Look at how Carson has an advantage over who you called one of the strongest wrestlers in Puerto Rico!

[Carson nudges Encarnacion back a few steps, though Encarnacion manages to hold his ground.]

LD: Carson does have a slight advantage, but Encarnacion is holding on... and now Carson backs away!

[Encarnacion stares at Carson, then smiles and shakes his head. Carson grunts and stiffens his jaw. Outside the ring, we hear Cooper.

"GO AFTER HIM! SHOW HIM WHO'S THE BIG MAN!"]

LD: And it sounds like Cooper wants Carson to lock up again... and they do!

[But this time, Carson raises up his knee.]

LD: OH! And Carson with a knee to the midsection!

BW: And that's smarts right there! Now look at how Carson easily gets Encarnacion back into the corner!

[Carson backs his opponent up, delivers a pair of kicks to the midsection, then stretches his boot up and into Encarnacion's face.]

LD: And Carson has Encarnacion trapped! The referee has got to break this up!

BW: He's got a count of five, Lori. Have patience!

[The referee count to four before Carson pulls his foot away, then delivers another knee to the midsection.]

LD: I have no patience for those who want to bend the rules like Carson... and I imagine Robert Donovan will have no patience, either.

BW: You sound like you can't wait for Donovan to get in the ring with The Big Man on Campus. Why do you want to wish a beating like that upon Donovan?

LD: Like I said, Ben, you appear to be selling Donovan short. There's no doubt in my mind when Donovan gets his hands on Carson, the so-called Big Man is going to have his hands full.

[Meanwhile, Carson has dragged Encarnacion out of the corner and goes to pick him up.]

LD: And right now, Carson is looking for a slam, perhaps... but no, it's blocked!

[Encarnacion resists the attempt, then fires off a pair of hard shots that rock Carson.]

LD: Encarnacion taking the fight to Carson! Now he runs into the ropes!

[Encarnacion bounces off and drives his shoulder into Carson, staggering the bigger wrestler.]

LD: Hard shoulder tackle! Encarnacion building some momentum!

[The Puerto Rican wrestler comes off the ropes and hits Carson harder, sending The Big Man on Campus back several steps.]

LD: He's got him teetering! Encarnacion going into the ropes again!

[But this time, as Encarnacion comes off the ropes, Carson raises up his leg.]

LD: OH! Big boot right to the face!

BW: And THAT'S how you put an end to momentum!

[Encarnacion falls to the canvas as, outside the ring, Cooper claps his hands and shouts another order to Carson.

"SHOW HIM WHY YOU'RE THE BIG MAN!"

LD: Cooper obviously likes what he sees... and Carson now dragging Encarnacion to his feet... shoves him into the corner!

[While Encarnacion is slumped in the corner, Carson glares at him and spreads his arms, then shouts:

"YOU WANNA MESS WITH THE BIG MAN ON CAMPUS? HUH?"

And then Carson delivers a hard slap right across the face.]

LD: Come on! There's no call for that!

BW: Hey, that's just Carson giving Encarnacion a wake-up call! He looks out on his feet right now!

[Carson then drives a knee to the midsection again, before pulling Encarnacion forward, bending him over and grabbing him by the waist.]

LD: Carson lifting Encarnacion up... gutwrench suplex! What power!

BW: Encarnacion weighs 265 pounds and Carson just threw him not like a sack of flour, but like an empty sack!

[Carson then runs into the ropes and leaps into the air.]

LD: Big legdrop! Right across the chest!

BW: Tell me again why you think Robert Donovan has a chance against a man like this, Dane!

[Carson rises to his feet, then raising his right hand, extending his pointer and smirking, the fans booing in response.]

LD: Carson is tough, but Donovan is one of the toughest men in the AWA and he has the size, strength and experience to match him!

BW: Face it, Dane, as tough as Donovan is, the man you are watching right now is simply dominating the competition! You may think Donovan has plenty in the tank, but if he faces Carson, he could find himself running on empty!

[Encarnacion sits up on the mat as Carson drags him up to his feet, then grabs him under the waist and lifts him up, Encarnacion's body now parallel to the mat.]

LD: And now Carson has Encarnacion up...

[Carson then drops down to the side.]

LD: MASSIVE SIDE SLAM!

BW: Look at how the ring shook! No, it's not fracking causing tremors in Atlanta, it's caused by The Big Man on Campus as he dominates another opponent!

[Outside the ring, Cooper smiles, nods and shouts at his charge.

"HE'S DONE, BIG MAN! FINISH HIM OFF!"

LD: And Cooper wants this match to end!

BW: And the bottom line is he'll get his wish!

[Indeed, Carson drags Encarnacion up from the canvas, then grabs him around the throat.]

LD: Carson with both hands over the throat! He lifts him up...

[And as Carson does, he suddenly releases him into a bearhug, then falls forward to slam Encarnacion into the canvas.]

LD: IT IS INDEED THE BOTTOM LINE !

BW: It is indeed over, Dane!

[Carson plants a hand over Encarnacion's chest as the referee delivers the three count.]

LD: There's the count of three! An impressive win for Carson, for sure! Let's get the official word!

[Carson gets to his feet, smiles and extends his arm, then his index finger, the fans booing.]

MS: The winner of the match.... "THE BIG MAN ON CAMPUS" TREEEYYY
CAAARRRRSOOONNN!

[Cooper stands outside the ring, applauding his charge, then directs him toward the ramp. Carson walks to the side of the ring and steps over the ropes.]

BW: After that dominating performance, Dane, do you still think Robert Donovan could stand up to The Big Man?

LD: Carson was in control tonight, but against Robert Donovan, I believe it will be a different story. Let's go to Mariah and Sweet Daddy to see if we can get a few words!

[We cut to the stage where Mariah Wolfe and Sweet Daddy Williams are standing.]

MW: Another win for Trey Carson, who remains unbeaten in singles action! And here comes the man himself and his manager, Dave Cooper!

[Cooper strides over to Wolfe and Williams, taking a position to their left. Carson enters the picture, standing by his manager, a smirk on his face.]

MW: It was just two weeks ago that Trey Carson was tearing through the competition in the Last Chance Battle Royale, until Robert Donovan put a stop to it. But then, after what went down next, it appears Carson may have his biggest test yet!

[Cooper shakes his head.]

DC: What are you talking about, Mariah?

MW: Dave Cooper, do you really think Trey Carson could have his way with Robert Donovan, the way he had his way with Carlos Encarnacion moments ago?

DC: Look, I'm gonna give Donovan his due, he's had a great career, he's seen it all and he's done a lot in wrestling! But right now, I'd say he's a little bit distracted with some family matters, and maybe not in a good way!

SDW: What are you talking about, Dave Cooper?

DC: I'm talking about Robert Donovan's helicopter parenting with his own son!

SDW: Helicopter parenting? Have you no respect for a father-son relationship? There's no more relationship important than that, baby!

DC: Let me spell it out for you, Sweet Daddy. When I was 25, 30 years old, my father was still trying to tell me what I needed to do, but I told him this: I love you, Dad, but I'm a grown man and I will make my own decisions!

And you look at Tony Donovan and what he has done... he's a former World Tag Team Champion! He's not somebody who needs his father telling him what to do... Tony can make his own decisions! And he's not just working with a great man... he's working with a wrestling legend in Tiger Claw!

Yet it seems, everywhere Tony goes, there's his father hovering over him like the helicopter parent that he is, trying to make decisions for him! But he's so worried about what his son is doing, he can't keep himself focused on anything else... just like he couldn't keep himself focused against the likes of Jordan Ohara and Sid Osborne!

[Cooper then gestures to Carson.]

DC: And if he can't keep himself focused there... imagine what's gonna happen when The Big Man on Campus sees him next time! Let 'em know, Big Man!

[Carson then grins and curls his right hand into a fist.]

TC: Robert Donovan, you better spend less time worrying about your son and more time worrying about me! Because the next time we meet, when I'm done with you, you won't be walking out under your own power!

[As he finishes, he smacks his fist into his open left palm. Cooper chuckles.]

DC: You heard him, Mariah and Sweet Daddy! And that is the end of the discussion!

[Cooper gestures toward Carson, who follows his manager in leaving the stage and heading to the back.]

MW: It sure sounds like a challenge from Trey Carson to Robert Donovan, Sweet Daddy!

SDW: I'll tell you what, Trey Carson better be careful what he wishes for, because he'll get it from Robert Donovan, all right!

MW: Absolutely. Fans, in just a few moments, we're going to be checking out more action from the AWA Women's Division... but before we do, let's take a look at another special clip from the upcoming 30 For 30 on the birth of that division. Roll it!

[We cut to footage marked "30 For 30: The Birth of the AWA's Women's Division - coming soon to ESPN!" And in this particular footage, we see Todd Michaelson sitting for a talking head shot.]

TM: When we opened the doors, if you had asked me when we'd see a Women's Division, I think the answer would have been...

[Michaelson trails off as we get a shot of Lori Dane...]

LD: Ha!

[...Michelle Bailey...]

MB: Probably never.

[...Bobby Taylor...]

BT: Not gonna happen.

[...Jon Stegglet...]

JS: The odds are pretty slim sadly.

[...Julie Somers...]

JS: I mean... never say never, right?

[...and then back to Todd Michaelson who shrugs.]

TM: Never. It just didn't seem likely. Me, Bobby, Steggs... even Blue... we had seen the issues that other places had trying to promote women's wrestling. Women in wrestling in general were in a pretty bad place at that point. Hell, my own wife couldn't get booked most places... Melissa was struggling to get anywhere.

[He shakes his head.]

TM: It just didn't seem like it was in the cards. If you had asked me then, I would've said "never."

[Michaelson slowly smiles.]

TM: I'm not wrong often, people... but boy, am I glad I was wrong that time.

[We fade to a graphic promoting the premiere of said special on Saturday and Sunday night of Memorial Day Weekend...]

...and then back up to a grinning Lori Dane.]

LD: I can't wait for that, Ben. And you folks at home read it right - the demand for this special is off the charts and the people at ESPN and the AWA have a plan to meet that demand. Previously scheduled to premiere on Sunday night, we're happy to announce that with Memorial Day Mayhem taking place on Monday... we're going to keep our usual time slot on Saturday night with a special night of AWA action. It'll be a one hour edition of Saturday Night Wrestling right on Hollywood Boulevard outside the El Capitan Theatre - right on the street, Ben!

BW: Free admission to the public... it'll be an electric atmosphere for sure.

LD: A special preview for Memorial Day Mayhem if you will as well... and then immediately after the one hour SNW, we'll be heading into the El Cap for the red carpet premiere of the 30 For 30 which will be airing live on ESPN right after SNW. It's going to be a great night of AWA action - a great weekend of AWA programming in fact...

BW: Heck, we're gonna be in Reseda the Saturday before to kick off our summer tour so let's call it a great WEEK of AWA programming, Dane!

LD: Alright, let's do it! And speaking of the Women's Division, we've got tag team action up next in the hottest division in professional wrestling!

BW: Don't you shout their name, Dane.

LD: I think I won't need to, considering how popular they've become as a team. Let's go to the ring!

[We cut to Megumi Sato, standing in the center of the ring, with two women standing behind her as well as referee Shari Miranda.]

MS: Our next match is a tag team bout in the Women's Division, set for one fall with a ten minute time limit! Introducing first, already in the ring, at a total combined weight of 274 pounds, from Crystal River, Florida and North Charleston, South Carolina respectively...

KATRINA COLEMAN AND MIRABELLE CROSS!

[Katrina Coleman, with her deep tan, sun-bleached hair, and white singlet with a manatee jumping out of the water along with white boots, pumps her fist and shouts "LET'S GO BABY!" Meanwhile, Mirabelle Cross, with voluminously curly red hair and a peach set of sports bra and shorts along with black boots, nervously fidgets in the corner.]

BW: Bit of a disparity between these two, don't you think?

LD: We've seen both of these women before, although it's been a few months since we've seen Ms. Cross. I think she's had time to mentally prepare for who their opponents are, but nothing seems to break Ms. Coleman's stride.

BW: That stride's about to be tested for sure.

[Sato continues.]

MS: Aaaaaaand their opponents! From Pinehurst, North Carolina and Fujinomiya, Japan respectively, they weigh in at a combined weight of 358 pounds...

KIMMY BAILEY!

AYAKO FUJIWARA!

[Megumi takes a deep breath, enough time for the fans to shout the following along with her.]

MS: ...THE LAAAARRRRRIIIIIIAAAAAAAAATTTTTTOOOOOS!!!

[With a shout of "LARIATOS!" from the crowd, "The Last Dancer" by Armin van Buuren vs Shapov pulses throughout Center Stage, as the crowd gets an unexpected treat when Molly Bell pokes her little kitty head out of the entrance, her eyes alight with innocent glee. As the crowd cheers their favorite feline, she nudges her way out the entrance, with Ayako Fujiwara and Kimmy Bailey walking behind her.

Fujiwara has on a ripped, oversized hooded denim jacket over her wrestling attire. Underneath, she has on a sleek, black and red asymmetrical strap crop top with a corset-like front tied together with crisscrossing red and black string. Her abdomen is fully exposed and she wears middle waist black motorcycle pants with rivets running up and down the legs with short wrestling boots. She turns her back to the camera and points a thumb to the words on the back of her jacket:

"THIS MACHINE SUPLEXES FASCISTS"

...before spinning back around and throwing a fist into the air and giving a roaring yell of enthusiasm at the crowd, who respond in kind. Bailey, meanwhile, wears a black Adidas sports bra along with black dolphin shorts with white trim and the word "santé" in white text across the seat. She also has black kneepads and Adidas wrestling shoes with three white stripes on the arch, her two-toned eyes have a black eyeliner on them, and her hair is tied up with a ribboned ponytail. Bell is in a tuxedo cat kigurumi, and her catface makeup is a little more ornate than usual, considering she isn't wrestling today and it won't sweat off as easily.]

BW: I can deal with everybody shouting the team name BARELY but I'm asking for hazard pay if that cat comes near me.

LD: I don't know what you have against Molly Bell, Ben, but these fans just love her. We got so many comments on Twitter asking where she was last week at the Royal Crown.

BW: Probably overdue for her flea treatment.

LD: Be nice. She wasn't able to make the trip, but don't worry, everyone - Yoshi Fujiwara was watching her.

BW: Not like he could have done anything if someone tried to take that cat, considering how many times we've seen him get beaten to a pulp.

[We hear Lori sigh as The Lariatos approach the ring, with Fujiwara giving her cat a hearty scratch behind the ear. Bell nods as Bailey gives her a scratch behind the other ear, causing Bell's eyes to roll back in pure bliss. Fujiwara removes her jacket as Bailey bounds up the ring steps and into the ring.]

BW: I've got a question, Dane. How do you think these two are gonna get along?

LD: What do you mean?

BW: Well Baby Bailey there saw her mother toss her tag team partner out of the ring and eliminate her last week, then Fujiwara saw her tag team partner celebrate with the woman who beat her.

[We hear Lori stammer in frustration.]

LD: I-I can't believe you'd try to plant a seed like that! Are you seriously suggesting that Kimmy Bailey should choose between her mother and her mentor?

BW: If you want to make it in this business, you're gonna have to do things that are unsavory. If I was Ayako, I'd be a little ticked off that my student ditched me for the woman who eliminated me.

LD: Again, it was her mother. Also, if you were Ayako, you might have actually won some matches considering your grappling skill.

BW: Hey!

[Shari Miranda checks over Bailey, who gives the ref a wink and smile. Fujiwara similarly passes inspection, then slaps Bailey on the shoulder and steps out of the ring. On the other side, Mirabelle Cross steps out, leaving the bouncing Katrina Coleman across from the bulging biceps of Kimmy Bailey as Miranda calls for the bell.]

BW: Hey, here's a question.

LD: Oh lord.

BW [ignoring her]: How come Baby Bailey here isn't teaming with either of her partners next week? She's a week away from a huge trios match against the Slam Sorority, and neither Lauryn Rage or Pink Cashmere are teaming with her.

LD: I'd imagine that Ayako Fujiwara wants to keep Kimmy Bailey focused, considering the goals the Lariatos have in becoming Tag Team Champions.

BW: She already disobeyed Fujiwara once by taking the match. Maybe it'd be worth disobeying her again considering Laura Davis is going to have her group functioning like a well-oiled machine, not the clunker that will come about when two headstrong goofs like Rage and Bailey mix like oil and water.

LD: I hate to say it, but you may have a point there. Lauryn Rage and Pink Cashmere lost their only straight up match as a team, and Kimmy Bailey has never teamed with either before. They're going to have to rely on pure skill.

BW: Yeah, two rookies and a doofus aren't going to have much to rely on against a team like the Slam Sorority.

[As her skills are being denigrated, Kimmy Bailey was met with an attempt at a top wristlock by Katrina Coleman, but even with both arms, Coleman is unable to budge the second generation star. Coleman continues to try and push forward, but Bailey looks out to the audience with a grin and a flex with her free hand.]

LD: Looks like raw power might do a lot, though.

BW: There's a difference between throwing around weight and throwing around bodies.

[Almost as if it was on cue, Bailey surges her wrist forward, sending Coleman flying halfway across the ring, tumbling backward as she hits the mat.]

LD: You were saying?

[There is a brief, uncomfortable silence.]

BW [mumbling]: I'd like to see her do that to Trish Wallace.

LD: You'll get your chance next week in Las Vegas! Kimmy Bailey now offering a hand up to Katrina Coleman... and Coleman accepts?

[Bailey yanks Coleman up to her feet and a standing position, then puts her arm up to her head, shouting out...]

"WANNA TRY IT AGAIN?"

[The crowd laughs at Bailey's earnestness as Coleman doesn't look the gift horse in the mouth, grabbing Bailey by the wrist and trying again. This time, Bailey doesn't let her push back on the arm, instead yanking her towards the ropes...]

LD: Call air traffic control!

[... catching her on the rebound with a back body drop that sends the Floridian high into the air..]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAM!"

[... and crashing into the mat! Bailey hops as though the reverberations of the landing caused a shockwave, then grabs Coleman by the head and brings her into the corner and the waiting hand of Ayako Fujiwara.]

LD: A quick tag out to Miss Germany, and if you think Kimmy Bailey can throw some weight around, just wait until Ayako Fujiwara gets a shot!

[Fujiwara quickly ducks around Coleman, grabbing her by the waist and hoisting her into the air. With a quick thud, Fujiwara brings her down, flattening her out and switching into a sprawl, elevating her hips to give Coleman nothing to grab onto and regain position.]

LD: And there's elite level wrestling by Ayako Fujiwara!

BW: I'll give her credit, the positioning she has right now means she can effectively smother Katrina Coleman if she wants to. If she slipped a guillotine on, I bet she could get a submission.

LD: And take a look in the corner at Mirabelle Cross. She wasn't too excited to get into the ring before, now she looks petrified.

[We have a cut to Mirabelle Cross, practically hugging the ringpost, making no effort to get a tag to Katrina Coleman.]

BW: I don't know if she should be out here if that's the approach she's going to take.

[We cut back to Fujiwara, who appears to be talking, and her young partner is nodding her head intently.]

LD: Looks like Ayako's giving Kimmy a lesson in mat wrestling here, using poor Katrina Coleman as a practice dummy.

[Coleman tries to reach forward and grab Fujiwara's leg, but Fujiwara quickly switches to side control, grabbing Coleman around the waist. In one swift motion, Fujiwara pops her hips and gets into a standing position, then lifts Coleman into the air...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAM!"

[... and down on the mat!]

LD: Gutwrench suplex by Fujiwara, and notice she's still got that waistlock!

[Fujiwara gets to her feet again, hands still firmly grasped around Coleman's waist, only to break as she gets into her corner and tag her young partner.]

LD: Kimmy Bailey now back in...

[Bailey takes control from the other side, wrapping her arms around Coleman's waist and, with a quick twist, pulling Coleman towards the center of the ring and with a gutwrench suplex of her own! She maintains the grip, looking up at Fujiwara, shouting "LIKE THAT?", with Fujiwara giving a nod.]

BW: There's a lot of ego in these two, Dane, to use this as basically a sparring session.

LD: So far, that's exactly what it's been!

[Bailey attempts to switch to side control, but quickly gives up her grip after Mirabelle Cross runs into the ring and boots her in the head. Shari Miranda gets Cross out of the ring, as Bailey looks down at Coleman, lip readers detecting "Well, ain't your partner just precious..."]

LD: I think Mirabelle Cross, in her fear of what was happening to her partner, just made things a whole lot worse.

[Bailey grabs Coleman by the arm, yanking her back up once again, then hoisting her up into the air with a military press. She looks at Cross, shouting "THIS ONE'S FOR YOU, BLESS YOUR SWEET HEART!", then looks over to the corner where Fujiwara has entered the ring, dropping to one knee with the other available.]

BW: What are they going to do to this poor woman?

LD: Whatever it is, I bet it's going to hurt.

[Bailey presses Coleman a couple of times as Coleman shrieks in fear, then Bailey returns her to a front horizontal grab...]

BW: You've got to be kidding me.

[... and slams her down onto Fujiwara's knee! As Miranda counts, Bailey does a bicep curl, lifting Coleman up and slamming her onto Fujiwara's knee once more!]

BW: Get Fujiwara out of the ring, Shari! This is uncalled for!

LD: Kimmy Bailey doing her double curls here with Ayako Fujiwara providing a backbreaking assist, and Ben, you said it was different with live bodies?

BW: What do you want me to say here? That I was wrong? This is plainly illegal!

[Fujiwara leaves the ring after Bailey drives Coleman's weight into Fujiwara's knee once more. Once Fujiwara is out of the ring, Bailey curls Coleman once again, driving her this time into her own knee. Dropping into a kneeling position as Coleman struggles, Bailey reaches out and tags Fujiwara, who enters the ring and grabs Coleman into the same position.]

BW: Seriously?! How many backbreakers is this kid supposed to endure?

[Fujiwara hoists Coleman back up into the horizontal lift, slamming her with another backbreaker as Coleman cries out in pain. Fujiwara curls Coleman back up, then turns her within her grip into a rear waistlock, with Coleman still not touching the ground.]

LD: Fans, I don't think Katrina Coleman's feet have been on the ground in the last 30 seconds, Kimmy Bailey and Ayako Fujiwara are keeping Coleman in the air with unadulterated strength!

[Fujiwara holds a whimpering Coleman up in an elevated rear waistlock position as Bailey enters the ring, hitting the ropes before running back...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAM!"

"LARIATOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO!"

[... driving a lariat into Coleman's upper torso and neck as Coleman is thrown back by Fujiwara with a German suplex!]

LD: WHAAAAMMO!! Katrina Coleman just got hit with a vicious combination of a lariat and a German suplex!

[We see Cross with her jaw dropped in the corner.]

LD: And that's who's responsible! This was a friendly sparring session until Mirabelle Cross booted Kimmy Bailey in the head for no reason!

[Bailey stomps over to the corner, grabbing Cross by the wrist and pulling her arm into the ring. Fujiwara lifts Coleman up, bringing her to the corner, and lifts Coleman's limp arm so she has to tag Cross.]

BW: Is that a legal tag? Is that seriously going to be allowed?!

LD: Shari Miranda says it is, and Mirabelle Cross is legal...

[With one mighty pull from the rookie-slash-"Muscle Mommy", Mirabelle Cross is brought into the ring, and with a terrified look on her face looks up from the feet of Ayako Fujiwara.]

LD: ...and I bet she wishes she isn't!

BW: Miranda's got to get some control here, it's two on one!

[Miranda warns Bailey, who steps out of the ring and reaches down to give a grateful Molly Bell a head scratch. Fujiwara looks at Cross with an expectant look in her eye, and Cross throws a weak punch...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAM!"

[Which Miss Germany swiftly dodges, grabbing Mirabelle Cross with a rear waistlock and throwing her over with a German suplex!]

LD: And look at this, Fujiwara retaining the grip on that rear waistlock!

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAM!"

LD: Rolling over into another German suplex!

[Fujiwara, still holding onto Cross' waist, scrambles up to her feet, then lifts and pops the hips out.]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAM!"

LD: A third German suplex!

BW: Look at this kid's eyes, she's barely conscious. I don't think a boot to the head merits this kind of response!

[Fujiwara hoists Cross back up to her feet, lifting her into the air once again. She walks over to her corner, where Bailey reaches out and slaps Fujiwara's wrist, with Miranda shouting "TAG!" to acknowledge the switch.]

BW: Hey, that wasn't hand to hand! The ref shouldn't have allowed that!

LD: I doubt it matters, Ben, it's not like Mirabelle Cross is going anywhere!

[Bailey quickly ducks around Fujiwara as Cross is still lifted into the air. She stands back to back with her mentor as Fujiwara hoists Cross up a little higher, then Bailey reaches back.]

BW: Oh jeez, what are they going to do to her now?

LD: The Lariatos have some innovative and hard-hitting offense, and I understand Kimmy Bailey's been working on this one while in practice!

[Bailey grabs Cross by the armpits, hoisting Cross even higher into the air as Fujiwara lets go of Cross. Bailey walks over to the center of the ring, holding Cross in the air in a standing crucifix, then has the crowd shout out along with her.]

"LARIATOOOOOOOOOS!"

[And then Bailey throws Cross over her shoulder, pulling her down, then sitting out to the mat with a resounding crash!]

LD: And Mirabelle Cross just took a tumble off of Death Mountain!

BW: Is that what it's called? Death Mountain?

LD: It sure is! And she landed in a seated position, Shari Miranda down to count! We've got one... two... three!

BW: Three German suplexes and a crucifix powerbomb? All because this greenhorn booted Baby Bailey in the head?!

[The bell sounds as Ayako Fujiwara and Molly Bell join Kimmy Bailey in the ring, with Bell miming kicking litter over the fallen Mirabelle Cross.]

LD: Well, the Lariatos were hoping for more of an opportunity to gain some experience as a team, but a kick to the head has a funny way of changing your perspective.

BW: And I still don't get how that's supposed to help Bailey next week! Fujiwara won't be there to team with her and get her out of the jam she put herself in!

LD: That's next week, as the Slam Sorority of Laura Davis, Trish Wallace, and Carolina Colton will go against the team of Lauryn Rage, Kimmy Bailey, and Pink Cashmere on Saturday Night Wrestling!

BW: You've got to think Laura Davis is licking her lips thinking about how the Slam Sorority is going to take those three out.

LD: We'll see how that turns out. Standing by right now is Mariah Wolfe, ready to speak to the Lariatos after another strong performance.

[We hear "LARIATOOOOOOOOOS!" in the background, the crowd eagerly cheering on the hard-hitting team as we cut to Mariah Wolfe.]

MW: A very efficient win there by The Lariatos...

"LARIATOS!"

MW: ...punishing Katrina Coleman and Mirabelle Cross en route to another win.

[Ayako Fujiwara, with Molly Bell in tow riding on her cat mom's back, enters the frame with Kimmy Bailey.]

MW: Ayako, Kimmy...

[Molly playfully swipes at Mariah's microphone.]

MW: And of course, Molly, hi kitty! Ayako, Kimmy, the Lar-

[Mariah stops herself before the crowd can shout "Lariatos" once more.]

MW: -you two have racked up another impressive win, and my colleague Ben Waterson seemed surprised at your teamwork together.

[Ayako frowns and Kimmy looks puzzled. She looks off-screen and shouts "HOW COME, BENNY?!" before Ayako redirects her young partner back to Mariah.]

MW: It's my understanding that he thinks the two of you weren't going to get along after how Ayako lost in the Royal Crown finals, being last eliminated by your mother, Kimmy.

[Ayako's frown deepens as Kimmy gets a look of confusion on her face.]

Ayako: Well, that's certainly a strange way of thinking. How could I be upset at her for celebrating with her mother? Her mother who I have known for almost a decade.

KB: Right? You and Mama go way back. And yeah, it was a real hard hittin' match. Either of ya coulda won it. Mama just happened to be the one that did.

Ayako: Hai. There is no disgrace in losing to a fierce opponent like Michelle Bailey and there should not be any resentment because a daughter is happy for her mother. Our partnership is not so weak that it would be broken by something as insignificant as that. We know it is strong enough to endure anything.

KB: Ya' got that right!

MW: Well, you're getting another test of that next week, Ayako. You specifically told Kimmy not to get involved with Lauryn Rage, but she's scheduled to team with her next week with Pink Cashmere against The Slam Sorority.

[Kimmy rolls her eyes as Ayako's narrow.]

Ayako: While I may not be pleased with her choice, Kimmy is a grown woman who is free to make her own decisions. I have made my feelings on Lauryn Rage clear to her.

KB: VERY clear. I never thought I'd hear some of those words that came outta your mouth!

[Ayako shrugs.]

Ayako: Disdain and disrespect towards Lauryn Rage is a subject I feel very passionate about.

[She sighs.]

Ayako: But while I do not believe she has a single ounce of honor nor do I believe she can ever be trusted, this may be a hard lesson that you have to experience on your own.

[Kimmy holds up a hand.]

KB: Hey, I ain't exactly thrilled about it either, but Mama and Daddy told me that sometimes you gotta do things you don't like in wrestlin' to get your hands on people that deserve it. Laura Davis deserves to get her tail whipped.

Ayako: That much I can agree on.

[Kimmy points a finger to herself.]

KB: And I'm the one that's gonna do it. That woman dropped me on my head back in September and tried to end my career. She deserves whatever I can dish out to her. As far as Lauryn Rage goes?

[A shrug.]

KB: There ain't a pot too crooked that a lid won't fit. She wants Laura Davis as bad as I do? Then she better keep her eyes open and her head up, and we can get it done together.

[Ayako pats Kimmy's back, Molly flopping over to try and rest her head on Kimmy's shoulder.]

Ayako: Just be careful, and remember what I told you.

[Kimmy nods her head at Ayako.]

KB: You betcha.

[The Lariatos, happy cat in tow, walk off as Mariah looks towards the camera at the audience at home.]

MW: Fans, that trios match is next week, you won't want to miss it! Stick around because after the break, we've got even MORE tag team action in the Women's Division with the Rhodes Dynasty in action!

[We fade to black...

We cut to a gym, where we see Harley Hamilton, Cinder, Kelly Kowalski, and Casey Cash walking side by side through the premises. Their names are displayed underneath their persons, and the term "professional wrestlers" briefly takes over the whole screen. All four are dressed in Under Armour workout attire. We hear Casey on the voiceover as the scene transitions to Cinder scrambling up a rock wall.]

CC: People say Cinder is crazy.

[Cinder makes it up the wall, sitting on top with a big grin on her face, shouting down to a smiling Harley below, as Casey gives a double thumbs up and Kelly stretches out.]

CC: But those who know Cinder know she thrives on not having to live up to the expectations of society.

[Cut to Kelly Kowalski, working over a heavy bag held by Harley and Casey with hard punches.]

CC: They say all Kelly Kowalski can do is brawl.

[Kelly suddenly grabs the bag, throwing knees into the side as Harley and Casey give each other a look, impressed with their friend's power.]

CC: Those who know Kelly Kowalski know that she has plenty of cards left in the deck, waiting for the right moment to play them.

[Cut to Harley Hamilton, giving Casey advice before a sparring session.]

CC: They say Harley Hamilton is selfish, spoiled, arrogant...

[Transition to archive footage of Harley from her time on St. Bonaventure's women's basketball team, with a new voiceover... "fifteen assists for Harley! A new single game record for the Bonnies!"... then back to Harley guiding Casey and Casey's voiceover.]

CC: But anyone who knows Harley knows the real truth about her loyalty.

[Cut to Casey just before her sparring session, taking a deep breath.]

CC: They say I'm just an airheaded rookie, a ditz, a hanger-on...

[And now to Casey taking down her sparring partners with quick armdrags and hip tosses.]

CC: I'll show you what's to come, with some help from my friends.

[We see the four assembling after their workout, drinking from steel Under Armour water bottles.]

CC: They say we're a disgrace to professional wrestling.

[Harley looks up at the camera, ending Casey's voiceover by speaking aloud.]

HH: We say we're changing the sport for the better.

[And with a grin from Kelly and a shouted "YEAHHHH!" from Cinder, we cut to the Under Armour logo, with the words "we will" underneath. Fade to black...

...and then come back up on Mariah Wolfe and Sweet Daddy Williams at the interview area.]

MW: Welcome back, AWA fans, to another edition of Showtime on ESPN. It's been a great night of action here as we say goodbye to Atlanta for a few months, big guy.

SDW: You said it, Miss Mariah! Bon Voyage it may be but us Southern folk like to think of it as "catch y'all later."

MW: We've got more still to come including the Rhodes Dynasty in action in just a few moments but before we go to the ring, let's take a look ahead a couple of weeks at what's coming our way when we'll be coming to you LIVE from the American Legion Hall in Reseda, California... one of independent wrestling's greatest venues... for our special edition of Showtime On Tour!

[A graphic promoting the show appears.]

MW: We've seen these two going at it back and forth for weeks now and finally, it comes to a head as Betty Chang takes on Casey Cash one-on-one!

[The graphic shifts.]

MW: We heard this one announced earlier tonight - it'll be "Cannonball" Lee Connors taking on Odysseus Allah!

[And again.]

MW: And in a big piece of breaking news, fans, we have just learned that it will be Juan Vasquez Night in Reseda!

[The crowd ROARS as Mariah grins.]

MW: That's right. The former World Champion and Hall of Famer himself will be the special host for the night and we're told he's been given some special powers for that night as well. He'll be helping to influence the additional matches added to this big kickoff to our summer tour just nine nights before he climbs into the ring with Raphael Rhodes at Memorial Day Mayhem... big news, Ess-Dee-Dub!

SDW: Absolutely. My ol' amigo Juan and I go back a long time and believe me when I tell ya that if he's callin' the shots, there just ain't no tellin' what we might see go down in Reseda, baby!

MW: But that's next week and this week - well, it's not over yet! Megumi, take it away!

[We cut to Megumi Sato standing in the middle of the ring, with two tag teams in their respective corners - one member of the team on Megumi's right not looking too thrilled about it.]

MS: Our next match is a tag team bout in the Women's Division scheduled for one fall with a ten minute time limit! Introducing first, on my left, at a total combined weight of 337 pounds... from King of Prussia, Pennsylvania and Fort Lauderdale, Florida, respectively...

DANIELLE GRAVES! ANGEL SANTIAGO! The team of... VETERAAAAAAAAN PRESENCE!

[There is a respectful round of applause for the team just introduced, two women in their mid- to late-30s wearing black singlets over black sports bras and black boots. They acknowledge the crowd with a simple raise of their arm, then continue to discuss strategy.]

BW: No frills from these two, huh?

LD: No, Ben, but these two are as tough as it comes. The larger of the two, Danielle Graves, debuted in 2003 and spent the first ten years of her career exclusively in Japan because she felt the competition in the United States was - and I don't blame her for saying this - "non-existent".

BW: And we've seen Santiago before, right?

LD: We have. She's a Shane Destiny trainee, and she started in 2005. She was actually here last year and held her own against Shannon Walsh and Kelly Taylor, without much help from her partner at the time, Donna Martinelli. That match was actually the impetus for these two veterans to team up, as Danielle Graves said that Angel was humiliated by quote "inferior talent" unquote.

BW: And you were telling me that Graves had a good series of scraps against Kelly Kowalski in P*WIN, right?

LD: She did. She'll need that experience considering the opponents here tonight. Back to Megumi for their introduction!

[We cut to the other side of the ring, where referee Andy Dawson is trying to keep the elder member of the opposing team in the corner, with the help of the younger member.]

MS: Their opponents! At a total combined weight of 271 pounds, both from Ashton-in-Makerfield in the borough of Wigan, England...

"THE WIGAN WILDCAT" CASSIE RHODES!

"THE SNAKEPIT SWEETHEART" SOPHIE RHODES!

They are... THE RHOOOOOOOOOOODES DYYYYYYYYYYNASTY!

[The crowd gives a mixed reaction as Cassie Rhodes points across the ring, fire in her eyes, and shouts threats at Veteran Presence. Her daughter, Sophie Rhodes, can be seen talking to the referee, warning him that he should stay out of Cassie's way once the bell rings. The two are in matching attire, patterned in alternating blue and white chevron, with Cassie in a sports bra and leg-length tights, and Sophie in a sports bra and shorts. Cassie wears well-worn black boots and kneepads, and Sophie has black shinpads over blue boots, along with black kneepads.]

BW: I never thought I'd see the day where Raphael Rhodes was the more well-adjusted member of his family.

LD: That is his older sister Cassie Rhodes, and his niece Sophie Rhodes, who made their official debut with the AWA last week in what can be best termed as a destruction of Saoirse Star and Katie G.

BW [uneasily]: Is she missing a tooth?

LD: Yes, before she officially became part of the AWA, her eyetooth got knocked out in quite a brawl in Germany. She didn't even flinch, though; she finished the match.

BW: Where on earth has the Rhodes family been hiding this maniac?

LD: Cassie was actually on the verge of becoming a star around the world in 1998 and 1999 - she was someone I had my eye on as a potential opponent for the EMWC Women's Division, if we ever got off the ground - but she became pregnant with Sophie Rhodes, who was born on Christmas Day in 1999. She's been out of the scene ever since, raising her daughter, only coming back once Sophie decided she wanted to wrestle.

BW: Ah. Well, as you well know, parenthood has a way of warping your mind.

[We hear Lori half-sigh half-laugh as Andy Dawson tries to get one out for each team...]

LD: Look out!

[... but Cassie Rhodes won't let Veteran Presence make the choice, darting across the ring and clotheslining Angel Santiago out of the ring, then grabbing a fistful of Danielle Graves' hair and smashing her with a headbutt! Sophie Rhodes, back in the Rhodes Dynasty corner, shakes her head and steps out.]

LD: Cassie Rhodes forcing the issue and starting the match off for the Rhodes Dynasty, and forcing Danielle Graves to start for Veteran Presence! Andy Dawson is calling for the bell to start the match, and Graves is covering right up!

BW: I can't say I blame her, Mama Rhodes is throwing some pretty heavy shots!

LD: The Rhodes family has always been a hard-hitting family, and it's no surprise that Cassie hits just as hard as her brother.

BW: I bet she knows all the dirty tricks that baby brother Raph knows, too.

[The crowd shrieks as Cassie digs a finger into Graves' mouth, jerking Graves away from her teammate by the corner of her mouth and getting her into the center of the ring.]

BW: See? Look familiar?

LD: Cassie Rhodes with a fishhook of Danielle Graves and she's going to get warned by Andy Dawson for that blatant move.

BW: The first thing you learn as a fighter, where the head goes, the body follows! If your opponent won't go where you want, just give 'em a good fishhook and drag them to where you want instead.

[As they reach the middle of the ring, Graves throws a punch into Cassie's stomach, causing Cassie to gasp for breath, then Graves pushes Cassie by the sternum and sends her flying into her corner. As she lands, she immediately throws a hand up, and Sophie Rhodes tags in.]

LD: A good show of strength by Danielle Graves, sending Cassie Rhodes into her corner!

BW: Yeah, but look how quickly Sophie Rhodes swapped in!

LD: Graves is coming into this with a major size advantage, as she's 5'9" and 191 pounds, so she's going to have to use that size to control these smaller, but vicious, Wiganers!

[Sophie wastes no time getting into the ring, throwing a kick into Graves' quadriceps muscle with a sickening thwack. Graves flinches, then throws a punch at Sophie's head, which Sophie ducks under and drives a knee into Graves' midsection.]

BW: I don't think the size is going to be that much of a factor, considering how quick these two throw shots.

LD: Graves staggers back into her corner, where her partner is waiting for the tag! Angel Santiago climbing into the ring...

[Sophie quickly turns her attention to Santiago, throwing a shin kick at Santiago's head, a kick that doesn't succeed!]

LD: ... caught! Sophie tried to catch Santiago by surprise climbing into the ring, and Santiago snared Sophie's foot!

[Santiago steps in towards Sophie, who is hopping on one foot. With a swift motion, Santiago pulls the leg in, grabbing Sophie's collarbone, and quickly throws Sophie to the mat!

LD: And there's an Exploder suplex! That's the Shane Destiny influence there, Ben!

BW: You don't say that when Casey Cash throws a suplex, and she was trained by the same guy.

LD: When she throws one as crisply as that, I'll consider it.

BW: Look at this, though. Santiago is keeping close to Sophie, as she landed she immediately grabbed onto Sophie's wrist to try and chain into something. That's the mark of a good grappler.

LD: It looks like she's trying to maneuver Sophie into a quick armbar here... we've seen Sophie function primarily as a striker, but I understand she does have grappling skill.

BW: The whole damn family does, Dane. When most members of the Rhodes family are born, they put the doctor that delivered them into a wristlock.

[Sophie quickly gets her legs underneath her as she links hands with the arm currently in Santiago's grasp.]

BW: And this is smart positioning by Sophie Rhodes. If Santiago can't flatten her out on the mat or get sole control of that arm, she can't get the leverage needed to get that armbar.

[Sophie measures up Santiago, then attempts to stomp Santiago's head, but Santiago releases the hold. Sophie quickly follows up by throwing a soccer kick at Santiago's head, which doesn't connect flush and instead catches Santiago's shoulder.]

LD: And there's that striking ability from the fifth-generation Sophie Rhodes.

BW: It wasn't a clean kick, but that's some good skill to get out of the armbar from someone her age.

LD: Sophie is all of 18 years old, but due to Europe and Japan being a bit more lax in their regulations, she's been a pro for a couple of years now.

[Sophie throws another kick at Santiago, who opts to take the brunt of the strike, diving at the free leg. Sophie sprawls out, putting her hand on the back of Santiago's head.]

LD: And while we haven't seen Angel Santiago much on AWA TV, she's been a well-regarded independent grappler for over a decade. To be able to hold her off from a takedown is a big deal.

[Sophie pushes off of Santiago's head after wriggling her leg free from Santiago's grasp, then reaches back and tags in her mother, who immediately darts into the ring and kicks Santiago in the mouth.]

LD: Goodness gracious! Cassie Rhodes gets the tag and wastes no time making an impact on Angel Santiago's face!

[Cassie quickly grabs Santiago by the jaw, twisting her around and into a hangman's neckbreaker position. With a scream to the crowd, she drops down to her hip, cracking the back of Santiago's neck against her shoulder!]

BW: Dane, when was the last time you've seen a neckbreaker like that?

LD: It's been a while, especially one with that kind of snap.

BW: Snap sure is right. I'm not fond of this family as a whole, but I have to admit, Cassie and Sophie are effective.

[Cassie cackles to herself as she reaches her hand out, with daughter Sophie leaning over the ropes and tagging back in.]

LD: And they're efficient in tagging in and out. I've noticed that neither is really in the ring for more than 30-45 seconds before tagging back out.

BW: That's just effective tag team wrestling, Dane. You've really got to hope you can control one of them, and as quickly as they move and swap out, you have to be prepared for either.

[Santiago rolls to her knees as Cassie runs across the ring, throwing a forearm smash to Danielle Graves that knocks her off the apron. Cassie climbs out of the ring as Sophie throws a hellacious buzzsaw kick to the side of Santiago's head!]

LD: Oh my gosh! What a kick by Sophie Rhodes! She nearly decapitated Angel Santiago with that one!

BW: And look at the fans around ringside scatter! Cassie Rhodes is taking it to Danielle Graves on the floor, and there's nothing there to keep the fans safe from those two!

[Sophie goes to approach the downed Santiago, but Andy Dawson looks at Santiago and backs Sophie off.]

LD: And look at this, Ben. Andy Dawson just backed Sophie off and he's checking Santiago over.

[Dawson takes a quick look in the half-closed eyes of Santiago, then signals for the bell. After doing so, he makes an "X" symbol with his arms, then motions for Sophie to back off again. Sophie pumps a fist and raises her other arm in celebration.]

LD: He's stopped it, Ben! I don't know what the official ruling is going to be, but this match is over!

[As the bell sounds, Sophie calls out to her mother, who slams Danielle Graves into the ringside steps, then climbs back into the ring. Dawson positions himself over Santiago, who is now being checked out by Dr. Ponavitch. Dawson can be seen talking to a nodding Megumi Sato, as Cassie shouts "YOU BETTER STAY DOWN" across the ring. A replay of the buzzsaw kick starts, as Ben Waterson narrates.]

BW: You can see right here, Dane... the shin of Sophie Rhodes connected across Angel Santiago's temple. That's a knockout shot there, the human head cannot take that kind of impact, and it wasn't the first time in this match that Santiago got cracked in the head.

LD: I understand Megumi Sato has the decision at ringside. Megumi?

[We hear the voice of Megumi Sato filtering through the sound.]

MS: Referee Andy Dawson has stopped the bout, ruling that Angel Santiago has been knocked out and cannot defend herself. Your winners, the team of Cassie Rhodes and Sophie Rhodes...

THE RHOOOOOOOOOOODES DYYYYYYYYYYNASTY!

[The crowd boos as we cut from a replay to a shot of the fans returning to their ringside seats.]

LD: We're not going to show Angel Santiago being tended to by Dr. Ponavitch and his medical team, fans, but she is conscious and conferring with the staff.

BW: That shows you how dangerous the Rhodes Dynasty is, Dane. A good quality independent team like Veteran Presence didn't even get out of the blocks against them, and you saw how quickly they can end it if they decide they want to.

LD: That buzzsaw kick was absolutely lethal, you're right. Let's take it over to Mariah Wolfe, who has the winners standing by.

[We cut over to Mariah Wolfe, standing next to a seething Cassie Rhodes and a preening Sophie Rhodes, with Sophie with her hands under her chin in a grace face.]

MW: We were anticipating a closely fought encounter between a strong team like the Rhodes Dynasty and the experienced duo of Veteran Presence, but it's clear to see that Cassie and Sophie Rhodes had other plans.

[Cassie Rhodes growls, startling Mariah Wolfe. Sophie Rhodes breaks from her grace face, her eyes narrowing as she addresses Mariah.]

SR: Were we supposed to play around with 'em? Hmm? Supposed to go out and have us a bloody good exhibition?

MW: I think we're all just a little surprised at how fast that went.

[Cassie stands behind her daughter, shoulders rising and falling with each breath she takes, staring at Mariah. Sophie shrugs.]

SR: We don't care how long it took, love. Our pay packet's goin' to have the same amount in it, no matter how long it takes us to win. We ain't the type to let an opportunity sit on the shelf.

MW: I can see that clearly. The two of you have already made your intentions clear, that you want the Women's World Tag Team Titles, but you haven't earned a spot in the rankings just yet.

[Sophie laughs a haughty little laugh, holding the back of her hand under her chin.]

SR: Yet, love. Just wait. We may not seem like we're much for patience, but if they want to take their time movin' us up the ladder, it just means more chances to duff up more teams.

[Cassie turns her glare to the camera, grinning what would be a toothsome grin, if not for the missing canine tooth in her mouth.]

SR: Let this be a lesson to the other teams out there. We ain't afraid to put in an honest day's work. If you fancy a punch-up?

[Sophie and Cassie, in unison, raise a fist.]

SR: We'll be waitin'.

[And with that, mother and daughter leave the frame, with Mariah Wolfe shaking her head.]

MW: Undoubtedly the Rhodes Dynasty has no issue with climbing the ladder the old-fashioned way. We'll see who Interim President Zharkov sends them next and see how quickly that ascent will be. And speaking of "sending next," there has been a lot of speculation recently as to who will be next up to face the AWA World Champion, Supernova, for his title. He's had issues as of late with the Westerly Dynasty but there are a lot of top contenders out there including former champions Supreme Wright and Ryan Martinez... and with Memorial Day Mayhem around the corner, I was given the opportunity earlier this week to sit down with the champ and find out what's on his mind these days. Let's take a look...

[We cut to an interview set, in which Lori Dane is seated to the left and Supernova to the right. Supernova is dressed in a pair of blue jeans, a black button-down shirt, white sneakers and a pair of shades. The AWA World Title belt is draped over his shoulder.]

LD: Supernova, thank you for visiting with me. You are coming off a successful title defense against Juan Vasquez. What are your thoughts about how that match went?

[Supernova nods.]

S: Lori, Juan gave me everything I could have asked for... he gave me everything I expected. It took everything I had and then some to come away with the win. But that doesn't surprise me, because Juan is always the type to give you his best when there's a championship belt on the line. I had to earn that win and I wish Juan all the best as he finishes his retirement tour and prepares to face Raphael Rhodes at Memorial Day Mayhem.

[Lori smiles.]

LD: I do want to talk to you about Memorial Day Mayhem, but let's get to what happened after the Battle of London. Atlas Armstrong attacked you after the match. He already holds a win over you, though it was a non-title match and did happen after James Lynch got involved. What do you have to say about Armstrong and his actions as of late?

[The champion's expression changes darkly.]

S: I figured you'd bring that up, Lori. I will say that Atlas caught me with my guard down at The Battle of London. And I'm still smarting about that non-title loss, when I had him beat. But what bothers me the most about Atlas is that, while he's a talented wrestler, he's a bully more than anything else. He believes that his muscles and physique entitle him to everything and he thinks he can intimidate everyone into getting what he wants. But I will tell you this, Lori -- that isn't going to work on me. I've seen others like him, I've faced them in the ring and I've taken them down. I have no doubt the next time we meet, Atlas will go down!

[Dane nods.]

LD: It's not just Atlas Armstrong you've had to deal with, Supernova. James Lynch has also been after you -- in fact, it was he who made off with the World Title belt in the first place and kept it away from you for nearly a month. What do you have to say about James Lynch and his involvement in this?

[Supernova shakes his head.]

S: I already mentioned that Atlas is a bully, but you know what you usually notice about bullies? There's always some kid who's hanging around him because he thinks the bully offers him protection, but when it comes down to it, that kid can't handle the fight himself. James Lynch is that kid. We've seen how he hides behind Atlas, how he throws Atlas out there to take the lumps while he runs away, how he was going to lay claim to the World Title belt when it was Atlas who took my best shots. Not that it legitimized Atlas' claim to anything, but at least he can say he took my best, while James just scampered off with his ill-gotten gains!

LD: It's clear that you have issues with both members of the Westerly Dynasty, Supernova. But let's get back to Memorial Day Mayhem. The question is this: Who are you going to defend the AWA World title against on May 28 at Dodger Stadium?

[Supernova tilts his head back for a minute. He then looks toward the camera and pulls off his shades, revealing his eyes with the flames painted around them.]

S: There's only one man it could be...

...and that's James Lynch.

[Dane nods.]

S: Allow me to explain why.

[He raises his left hand and holds up one finger.]

S: Number one, I still haven't forgotten how James spent several months impersonating me, dragging my name through the mud, harming my reputation by making people think I sold out the AWA. I will never forgive you for that, James Lynch, and I certainly will never forget it!

[He then extends another finger on his left hand.]

S: Number two, maybe Jack Lynch has said he's not gonna fight you any longer. Maybe Travis Lynch has decided it's not his fight. But if anyone can do right for the Lynch family and hold you accountable for the hell you put them through, I'm the man who CAN do it and I'm the man who WILL do it!

[He then extends one more finger.]

S: And number three, it's you who started this whole thing with stealing the World Title belt when I was down, who hid behind the muscleman, who just sent him to take the beating at my hands while you ran off like the coward that you are. But by getting you in the ring, Lynch, there will be no more running away and there will be no more hiding behind the muscleman!

[He lowers his hand.]

S: And that's why I want James Lynch in the ring at Memorial Day Mayhem for the World Title. Because that's the man who has a lot to answer for, well beyond just stealing a match from me. Believe me, Atlas will get what's coming to him, but first, James Lynch will get that and it's as simple as this, Lori.

[He raises his hand again and points his finger to the camera, his eyes wide.]

S: BURN!

[Supernova then lowers his hand, grabs his shades and puts them back on.]

LD: Thank you, Supernova. I'm sure fans will look to Memorial Day Mayhem, no matter who you face.

S: [slight nod] Thanks, Lori.

[And we fade to black.]

We fade up on a dark but starlit Los Angeles sky, our focus on the stars themselves before slowly panning down to reveal we're in the middle of a completely empty Dodger Stadium... almost. The camera shot shows row upon row of empty seats with the stadium lights glowing down on them...

...and then slowly zooms in on the top deck, the cheapest seats in the ballpark to where someone is seated.

We cut to that "someone" to reveal the man once known as El Cholo... Los Angeles' native son, Juan Vasquez, sitting in a seat with a wistful smile on his face.]

"This... this is where it all began."

[Vasquez looks out on the field as the camera follows his gaze.]

"Right here. So many nights as a kid. Watching Gods walk among men."

[We can hear an echo of the immortal voice of Vin Scully on the call - "High fly ball into right field... sheeeee isssss GONE!" Vasquez smiles, nodding his head.]

"This is where it started for me. The rush. The roar of the crowd."

[He points down towards the field.]

"I knew I would never be like them. I wouldn't be Hershiser or Fernando..."

[The voice again - "if you have a sombrero, throw it to the sky!"]

"...Gibson or Guerrero... that wasn't my destiny. But this is where I heard the cheers of the fans for those men and knew my destiny was to one day hear them for me."

[Vasquez nods, closing his eyes, leaning back in his seat...]

"Can't think of any place I'd rather be when it ends."

[...and as we hold on Vasquez' face, serene... at peace... happy...

...the shot fades back up to the night sky where the Memorial Day Mayhem graphic appears with all the show info and the words "23 DAYS REMAIN."

Fade to black...

...and then back up to Sweet Lou Blackwell standing backstage.]

SLB: 23 days away, indeed, fans... and as you heard before the break, Supernova has made it quite clear that he hopes to defend his crown against the black sheep of one of wrestling's most famous families, James Lynch, in the City of Angels at Memorial Day Mayhem... but what you didn't hear is that I got an advance scoop on that challenge... and when I reached out to Veronica Westerly, she said that they're going to give their answer to that challenge coming up next weekend in Las Vegas! You heard it here first!

[Blackwell pauses.]

SLB: Now, all night long, we've been talking about the Showtime summer tour kicking off two weeks from tonight in one of independent wrestling's most famous venues - the American Legion Hall in Reseda, California. It promises to be one heck of a night... and to sweeten the pot a little bit, it's also the official kickoff of the Brass Ring Tournament! We've been meeting the field of sixteen all night long, fans, so let's get ourselves acquainted with the final four... and then I've got a very special announcement to deliver.

[Blackwell winks to the camera as we fade to the Brass Ring Tournament graphic one more time...

...and then up to a shot with someone striding through the many hallways backstage at the Crockett Coliseum. The chyron introduces this man as "Bodhi Li" and his broad, barrel-like torso and thick arms are covered with the sheen of perspiration, suggesting, perhaps, that we are catching the Kiwi Kingpin just after he has been competing in the ring. Beads of sweat flow down his forehead. The sides and back of Li's head are clean-shaven, but the hair on top of his head is long enough to be tied in a topknot. He has a thick, bushy beard, in stark contrast to his neatly-trimmed mustache. Across the front of Bodhi Li's singlet is airbrushed an illustration of a Chinese junk cresting a massive wave, while a great white shark leaps towards it, mouth wide open.

Li is fully aware of the camera, as he approaches it and comes to a stop in front of it, looking directly at it as he begins to speak. Despite his mixed Eurasian facial features, his accent is unmistakably Kiwi.]

BL: Welcome back to the Crockett Coliseum. For some of you, it's probably been a while since you last looked into what's going on at the Combat Corner.

Well... during that time, a bigger fish has come to dominate these waters...

Bodhi Li...

The Kiwi Kingpin has made his way to CCW...

[Li rolls his neck, nodding his head.]

BL: But CCW will not be where he stays. No... I did not wrestle all over my home country and Australia just to be at the top of the Combat Corner pecking order. I did not travel across Europe and the British isles just to sit atop the CCW food chain.

They call me the king of Shipwreck Bay, but I've made my way beyond Shipwreck Bay, across the Pacific and the Indian Ocean and the Atlantic and I've done my share of raiding and plundering and CONQUERING...

And I've travelled half the world away from home to end up HERE!

[Li gestures broadly at his surroundings.]

BL: Big fish... big pond... But an even bigger body of water lies yonder... There for the plundering...

This Brass Ring tournament, I'm going to sail right through... I'm going to DOMINATE every single opponent set in front of me...

Just like I've been doing in CCW.

[He comes to an abrupt halt, jerking a thumb at his broad chest.]

BL: And when I win the tournament, the king of Shipwreck Bay will be on his way to becoming the king of the AWA.

[He reaches out with a meaty hand, engulfing the camera lens in darkness...

...and we cut to a small woman who has wavy brown hair that touches her shoulders and has several blonde streaks in it. The woman is dressed in a gold and purple singlet, along with white kneepads and wrestling boots and the chyron helpfully introduces her as "Lily Driscoll."]

"Who remembers SuperClash VI? Who remembers the battle royal for the first spot in the Brass Ring Tournament? Who remembers the man who won it -- "Diamond" Rob Driscoll?"

[A chuckle.]

"Ah, memories. Memories of my brother starting his storied career in the AWA, in which he not only won the battle royal, but went on to win not only the Brass Ring, but the AWA National title."

"If only he had stuck around, though, instead of taking the money to go somewhere else. Not that there's anything wrong with taking the money, but if he had just waited a few years, we could have made something special."

[She shakes her head.]

"We could have been the most dominant brother-sister tandem that the AWA has ever seen. But I get it... it's all about the dollar bills, you know."

"The thing is, I always wondered how seriously my own brother, my own flesh and blood, took my desire to prove that I was destined to be the best woman to ever grace a wrestling ring."

"But he made his decision and I made mine. I made my decision to make my mark in the AWA and what better way than to do that, by doing exactly what my brother did three years ago -- and that's win the Brass Ring!"

"So get ready as I, Lily Driscoll..."

[She pauses, then smirks and raises a finger.]

"Slight correction... that's "Diamond" Lily Driscoll."

[Another chuckle.]

"Yeah, Rob, I love you, but I'm going to show exactly why it's my destiny to be the best the AWA has ever seen, that I am worthy of the Diamond name... and maybe even make you, my brother, wonder if you should have taken me a little more seriously!"

[She folds her arms, the smirk still present.]

"It could have been the two of us, my brother. But don't worry, because I'll gladly settle for being the best on my own!"

[We fade away from "Diamond" Lily Driscoll...

...and then back up on a panoramic view of the Detroit skyline from the Windsor side. As the shot moves over the water to the tall downtown buildings, a female voice speaks in an unmistakable Detroit accent.

In the background, Aretha Franklin's "Rock Steady" plays over the montage as the shot changes to a Baptist church.]

"What up doe, my babies. It's your girl Jo Jo Washington."

MUSIC: What it is. What it is.

[The shot opens up on an attractive African-American woman with high cheekbones and a slightly curved nose that juts away from her face. The chyron introduces her

as “Jo Jo Washington” and she is dressed in a tied up white shirt unbuttoned to show exaggerated cleavage above and a chubby belly below. Jo Jo Washington has long straightened hair parted in the middle and tucked under a cowboy hat. A Native American bone choker is wrapped around her fleshy neck.]

JJW: Baby, ever since I was a little girl, I would be up in my Daddy’s church dancing with the choir and hootin’ and hollerin’ with all 200 people in the pews.

[As Aretha’s “Rock Steady continues to play, the shot fades from Jo Jo Washington to shots of a choir singing and churchgoers dancing. The shot switches back to Jo Jo.]

JJW: That choir would get to singin’ and my daddy would get to preachin’ and my soul would just get wide open! I’d just run and down on that stage dancin’ and hollerin’ my lungs out. And my Mama would try to chase me back to my seat but I was too fast for her back then. We’d be running through that church every Sunday like Tom and Jerry. And everybody would laugh. And my daddy would look down on me from his pulpit and shake his head and wipe his brow and call out to my mother, saying: “Gennese, you won’t catch her. The Lord gave her too much soul!”

[Jo Jo tips her hat back and laughs at the memory.]

JJW: I still have too much soul. I’ve got America’s soul in me and I’m bringing that soul to the Brass Ring tournament because that’s what my daddy would have wanted me to do!

So look out because “America’s Soul” Jo Jo Washington is coming to win that Brass Ring and show ‘em what I can do on the big stage, baby!

[Washington points directly at the camera as Aretha sings.]

Music: It’s a funky and low down feelin’ (What it is)
In my hips from left to right (What it is)
What it is is I might be doin’ (What it is)
This funky dance all night
Oh!

[Washington does a little jig.]

JJW: I was born for the light! And when you all get in the ring with me, Baby, I promise you will be looking up at those lights!

And you will be looking up at me, the winner, Jo Jo Washington!

Oh, it’s on the floor!

[The music starts to fade.]

Music: Rock steady, baby. Rock steady... woo! Rock Steady!

[And we fade out...

...and up once more to the Combat Corner. A dimly lit wrestling ring stands in the center of a cavernous, empty warehouse filled with training equipment. The only sound is the heavy breathing from Gabriel Cordova, as he leans over the top rope in exhaustion. Dressed only in a pair of black gym shorts, he’s drenched in sweat, panting heavily from a grueling workout.

Cordova has changed much in the two years since the last Brass Ring Tournament. Gone is the faded buzzcut, now replaced by a thick mane of dark, wavy hair. Physically, his body has transformed from its once sinewy build. He has packed on muscle, his body a testament to the relentless training he has done in the last two years. He stares into the camera, his eyes hardened with an intensity that hadn't been there when we last saw him.]

GC: Two years.

[He stops and takes in gulps of air, calming his breathing.]

GC: It's been two years, since I came so close to grabbing the brass ring...

...and I failed.

[He bows his head in disappointment for a brief moment, before looking back up.]

GC: I was supposed to be the future. I was supposed to be the next big thing. I was called "wrestling's best kept secret", but the funny thing about secrets is that if you keep them hidden for too long, they get forgotten.

[He glances around the empty room, before raising his hand into the air.]

GC: Show of hands, class... how many of you remember me?

[A long pause, as if waiting for someone to respond, but the silence only deepens. Gabriel scoffs, a bitter smirk crossing his face.]

GC: They say hard times build strong men. That is the absolute truth. The Gabriel Cordova you knew was soft. Weak. Arrogant. He had it way too easy.

[He pauses again, running a hand through his wet hair, looking down at the canvas with regret.]

GC: Everyone knows the story, right? Juan Vasquez—the greatest of all-time— that man gave me his blessing, and I laughed in his face. He saw something special in me, but what I didn't understand, was greatness isn't guaranteed... it's earned, and an entitled brat like me hadn't even begun to walk the same roads that he did.

[He shakes his head slowly, regret flashing across his features as he leans back against the ropes, pressing his hands into them to support his weight.]

GC: But that was then. This is now.

[His posture straightens, and he lifts his chin with defiance.]

GC: For two years, I've heard the whispers. I've seen the doubt. But here I am, still standing, still breathing, still fighting, still pushing forward. People think they've already seen the best of Gabriel Cordova. But they're wrong. _Dead wrong._

[He steps forward, walking with purpose.]

GC: The Brass Ring Tournament. Another chance. Another opportunity. A chance to prove to the world, to prove to myself, that I'm not just a failure of the past.

[He stops in the center of the ring.]

GC: I am the future.

[His voice deepens, more forceful.]

GC: I am the present.

[He leans forward, his voice dropping into a dangerous whisper.]

GC: I am the damn NOW.

[He stands tall in the middle of the ring, chest rising and falling with each breath. His eyes burning with an intensity that could melt steel.]

GC: The Brass Ring Tournament won't just be my redemption.

[A beat.]

GC: It's my coronation.

[He lets the words linger, then turns on his heel and walks off.]

And with one last shot of the Brass Ring graphic, we fade back to Sweet Lou backstage.]

SLB: The Brass Ring Tournament is upon us! Sixteen of the best men and women in the world just looking for an opportunity and that opportunity is upon THEM starting two weeks from now in Reseda... but before we get to Reseda, the AWA has sent me out here to announce that - in conjunction with our friends at Disney - there will be a special Hulu exclusive show coming your way starting THIS week. It's Brass Ring Roundup hosted by yours truly along with a panel of experts as we hear from the Brass Ring competitors, break down all the information you need to know about them, and when the tournament begins, we'll be discussing the matches, the bracket, the full nine. Brass Ring Roundup coming this Wednesday on Hulu and every two weeks during the tournament! I promise you do NOT want to miss this week's premiere episode!

[Blackwell grins.]

SLB: And speaking of "can't miss television," we're about to see it with the AWA's oldest prize - the National Title - on the line. It's Ohara! It's Rhodes! It's coming up next! Earlier tonight, we heard from the challenger... so now, moments before the opening bell, let's hear from the champion!

[We fade from backstage to what seems to be a backyard mountain spring jacuzzi. The hiss of steam and the constant wash of running water over the rock teases the senses. Candles adorn the larger rocks, just out of reach of the water.]

The camera pans to Jordan Ohara kneeling by the water, dressed in a black yukata robe. His hair is tied up in the ronin samurai top knot and his Van Dyke beard is pointed perfection. Ohara runs a hand through the running water, drawing in deep breaths before he turns his attention to the camera. When he speaks his voice is forced into a tenuous composure.]

JO: Mr. Rhodes, I intended no disrespect when I demanded to face Sid Osborne immediately. I was not looking past you or diminishing you. But in that moment my blood was boiling and I wanted nothing more than to wrap my hands around Osborne's neck. You know that feeling all too well.

In fact, I suppose I have you to thank for Osborne and what he's become. But we'll set that aside for the moment.

Interim President Zharkov is making me wait to get to Osborne and so I must turn all my attention to you.

[He pauses, considering his words.]

JO: Mr. Rhodes, I am very impressed by you. Not many men can withstand the fury of Takeshi Mifune-sensei and tell the tale - let alone wrestle mere days later. You are an opponent not to be taken lightly at all. While I have yet to have the pleasure of facing Mifune-sensei in an American ring as an equal, I know firsthand of his ferocity when I was a young tiger in Japan.

There were three of us at the top of our class. Me, Jun Maeda and Hachiro Kinoshita.

[Ohara looks down from the camera, smiling and chuckling ruefully at the memories.]

JO: We thought we were the best. We thought we were the strongest. We thought we were the toughest. And then we were sent to train with Mifune-sensei and we were shown that there was another level of viciousness, another level of toughness... another level period.

He would beat us unmercifully. Maeda-san would have tears in his eyes each time Mifune-sensei would slap him across the jaw as he tried to stay upright.

Kinoshita was the toughest of the three of us and even he would sway against the power of Mifune-sensei's right hand.

[Ohara shrugs.]

JO: Me? I was the stranger in the midst... the haifu from America. And Mifune-sensei would punish me the worst because he believed that I would be the first to quit. He believed that I would run back to America. He believed I would run back to my mother.

He was wrong. I can still feel the heavy, hot imprint of his hand on my cheek. I would hear the meaty thwack against my flesh and the world would flash white and fall away from under my feet. And I had to endure it and ask for more. One of those slaps could tear the muscles of a man's neck. He tried to tear my neck. But he only succeeded in making me stronger and more resilient. He made me better even though I believed he was unbeatable.

[Ohara rubs his jaw and stretches it, feeling the phantom pain of hundreds of heavy-handed slaps.]

JO: And then you beat him, Mr. Rhodes. You knocked out the monster that terrorized us in Japan. You stopped him convincingly.

Now I have to wonder... how good am I compared to you?

[Ohara looks steadily into the camera. He slowly rises from his knees, drawing himself to full height as the camera tilts up with him so he is looking down towards the viewer.]

JO: I mean, you are the man Juan Vasquez hand selected to have a final match with. I've wrestled Vasquez. It is an incredible experience. He pushes you to your limit. And if you are to be his last match then he must consider you his equal. And that means you may push me to my limit. You may push me PAST my limit.

You may be the greatest opponent I ever face in the AWA.

[Ohara nods.]

JO: And I have not forgotten your secret weapon and your inspiration in Dana Kaiser. Having your wife by your side may inspire you to even greater heights. It would be an amazing story for you to walk into that matchup with Juan Vasquez having triumphed over me.

I say may because you may be looking past me to send a message to Juan Vasquez. You may be too singularly focused on him. _DO NOT_ look past me. I am not looking past you.

You are the reason Sid Osborne has lost his way. You broke him. You drove him to destroy my National Title and he spat on the prestige and history of that title. You drove him to this darkness.

[Ohara draws in a sharp breath and it hisses out between his lips as he struggles to contain his anger. The camera has moved level with his eyes now. You can see that the National Champion is furious as much as tries to maintain a cool façade.]

JO: I will be the light in his darkness. Sid Osborne has done nothing but disrespect me and disrespect the AWA. I rescued the National Title once from Zharkov when he terrorized the AWA. I rescued the National Title again from the clutches of Jackson Hunter. And now I will rescue it again from the disrespect of your twisted progeny.

This Phoenix is on fire and I am going to burn away everyone in my path.

Starting with you, Mr. Rhodes, just so that Sid Osborne knows that as dangerous as he is ...

_I _ am not weak.

I am not soft.

I am the ether that will burn his soul.

And _I_ am what I say I am... the Once in a Millennium Talent who is here to be the champion this National Title and the AWA Galaxy deserves.

[The shot fades out on Ohara's deadly serious expression. Maybe for the first time ever, the viewer has got a glimpse of the killer behind the smiling face...

...and we fade to the squared circle where Megumi Sato awaits.]

MS: The following contest is your MAAAAAAIN EVENT of the evening!

[A BIG ROAR goes up from the crowd!]

MS: It is set for one fall with TV time remaining... and it is for the AWA NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIIIIIIIP!

[Another roar rings out!]

MS: Introducing first... he is the challenger... he is accompanied to the ring by his trainer and advisor, Dana Kaiser... weighing 222 pounds and currently residing in Minneapolis, Minnesota...

...RAPHAELLLLLLLLLL RHOOOOOOOOODESSSSSSSSS!

[The crowd roars for the British mauler, and then...]

OHHHHHHHHHHH COME ON!

[As Ronnie James Dio's voice screams throughout Center Stage via "The Mob Rules" by Black Sabbath, Raphael Rhodes steps through the entrance, accompanied by Dana Kaiser. Rhodes' hair is tied back in a ponytail and his beard is unkempt, appearing not to have shaved since leaving England. He sports a bandage on his forehead, covering the cut opened by Takeshi Mifune just one week prior. He sports an all-royal blue look with the exception of his Team England hoodie, sporting royal blue trunks, kneepads, shinpads, and wrestling shoes, with the exception being a logo of three lions' paws grasping arrows on the right kneepad, and the Union Jack across the seat of his trunks.

Dana Kaiser matches her husband, in a royal blue pullover hoodie and faded jeans with a hole ripped in the right knee, along with her ever-present white towel over her shoulder and sneakers. She carries with her a bottle of water.]

LD: He may be a little worse for wear, fans, but Raphael Rhodes looks as determined as ever in his first-ever shot at the National Title!

BW: Ahem. Second.

LD: Are you seriously still defending that sham that happened a couple of weeks after his cage match against Juan Vasquez? It's been almost a decade since you and Stevie Scott pulled that stunt.

BW: Hey, it was a title match, so what if he wasn't there because he was suspended for it? That wasn't our fault!

LD: Okay, so first shot that he is actually in the building to claim.

BW: That's better.

[With the short distance from entrance to ring, Rhodes is at ringside quickly, glaring up at the ring from the steps. Kaiser removes Rhodes' mouthguard from the case she carries in her kangaroo pocket, squirting the interior with her water. She hands it to Rhodes, who pops it into his mouth, then stomps up the stairs and into the ring. His music fades as he warms up by bouncing on his feet, presenting his hands for inspection from the referee.]

LD: Rhodes still has his stitches in from last week's brutal encounter with Takeshi Mifune, though I understand he's scheduled to have them removed tomorrow.

BW: He's always been a quick healer, so it's a testament to how nasty that cut was that Mifune gave him.

LD: No excuses out of him, though, he's here and ready to fight.

BW: Yeah, and it's too bad his opponent tonight won't have the guts to try and take those stitches out the hard way. We could really see the blood spill here.

LD: You're a horrible man. Let's go up to Megumi to introduce the Champion.

[Sato continues.]

MS: Annnnnnnnnnd his opponent...

[The opening sounds of Nas' "Hero" begins to play to a HUUUUUGE reaction from the Atlanta crowd!]

Chain gleaming, switching lanes, two-seating
Hate him or love him for the same reason
Can't leave it, the game needs him
Plus the people need someone to believe in
So in God's Son we trust
'Cause they know I'ma give 'em what they want
They looking for a hero
I guess that makes me a hero#

[With that chorus, Jordan Ohara steps through the curtains. He stands on the entranceway, looking out over the arena and his fans. He extends his arms out as he throws his head back and takes a deep breath before walking towards the ring.]

MS: ...from Charlotte, North Carolina... weighing in at 230 pounds... he is the AWA NAAAAATIONAL CHAMMMMMPIONNNNNN...

...THE PHOENIX...

...JORRRRRRRRDAAAAAAN OOOOOOOOOHAAAAAARAAAAAAA!

[The young muscular Blasian man slaps hands with every fan within reach. He has grown his hair into a top knot and now sports a closely-cropped beard. He wears an elaborate caped bolero-style ring jacket designed to emulate the wings of a Phoenix and display his abdomen on top and below he wears calf-length shiny metallic Carolina blue tights with a white and gold trimmed Phoenix emblem divided between the legs and custom low top white and Carolina blue Air Jordan 11s with black soles.]

LD: One of the most popular men in the AWA locker room, Jordan Ohara has arrived here on Showtime for this matchup which would be a Main Event anywhere in the world, Ben, and it's DEFINITELY the Main Event here tonight!

BW: It's always a big night when gold is on the line and when the AWA's oldest prize is at stake, the whole world stops to watch. Jordan Ohara versus Raphael Rhodes would sell out any building on the planet if you ask me but we get it right here tonight on Showtime, baby!

[Ohara climbs the ropes, a foot on the top as he looks out over the crowd, soaking up their support as he nods his head gratefully. He tugs off his ring jacket, tossing it down to a ringside attendant before hopping down to the mat, keeping his eyes on his challenger...]

LD: Jordan Ohara has had a few weeks to recover after his brutal encounter with Sid Osborne and... hopefully he's coming into this one at the top of his game because you know Raphael Rhodes - as Ohara said - is going to push him TO or maybe PAST his limit.

[Ohara submits to the referee's inspection as he leans in the corner, still staring across at an eager Rhodes as the crowd cheers the battle they're about to see.]

LD: The fans in Atlanta are fired up - they've been waiting all week for this one and if there's one match that just might hold them over until we're back in the building later this year, it's this one, Ben.

BW: They're fired up, you're fired up, I'm fired up! Let's do this!

[The referee pauses, giving final instructions from center ring to both champion and challenger and then...]

"DING! DING! DING!"

[As the bell sounds, champion and challenger edge out of their respective corners warily... neither eager to make the first mistake against their formidable opponent.]

LD: The Main Event of this Bon Voyage Showtime is underway, fans, with the AWA's oldest prize - the National Title - on the line. Jordan Ohara has held that title for 164 days - his second reign as champion...

BW: The first one could be measured in minutes... maybe even seconds!

LD: ...and he hopes to continue this one here tonight as he continues to look towards a possible title showdown with Sid Osborne. Ben, as this match gets underway here, what do you think of the front office's refusal to book that championship match that the Phoenix asked for?

BW: I can't believe you, Dane! Raphael Rhodes just got done tonight talking about Ohara looking past him towards Osborne and now you're out here doing the exact same thing!

LD: I don't think anyone - myself included - is looking past Raphael Rhodes, Ben. We all know what a dangerous competitor he is and what a serious threat to the National Title he is as well... into a tieup they go... Rhodes showing his tremendous mat wrestling skill here, spinning out into a hammerlock...

[Ohara grimaces, looking for an exit as Rhodes cranks the arm but before the champion can find one, Rhodes ducks down to trip up Ohara, putting him down on his chest on the mat...]

LD: ...rear trip by Rhodes and-

"SLAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"
"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[...and the crowd reacts to the challenger BLASTING Ohara in the back of the head with an open-handed slap!]

BW: Ohooo! A little paintbrush job there by the challenger!

LD: That's not gonna sit well with the very proud champion.

[The crowd grumbles as Ohara rolls to a hip, looking up with a glare at a sneering Ohara...]

...and with a quick cut to Dana Kaiser at ringside, we see an arched eyebrow on Rhodes' manager.]

LD: Dana Kaiser looking on. Raphael Rhodes has certainly shown a little glimpse of the old him in recent weeks, Ben.

BW: Maybe all those old feelings are getting stirred up as he gets ready to face Juan Vasquez one more time.

LD: That big Memorial Day Mayhem matchup will be here very soon... and you know Rhodes is looking to build even more momentum after that big win in London as he heads into the showdown for Juan's final match.

[Rhodes beckons the National Champion back to his feet and Ohara obliges, angrily rushing forward into another lockup...]

LD: Ohara throwing caution aside... and he ends up trapped in an overhand wristlock, pushing down on him...

[...but the leverage on the hold shoves Ohara backwards, putting him into the ropes...]

LD: Referee calling for a break here...

[...but Rhodes ignores the official, cranking harder on the arm...]

LD: Count at three... four...

[...and before we can find out if Rhodes would have broken the hold, Ohara grabs the top rope with his off hand, using it to catapult himself backwards in a somersault out of the pressure, using his newly-gained momentum to armdrag Rhodes down to the mat to cheers!]

LD: ...nice counter by the Phoenix!

[Both men scramble up, a flush of anger at being out-maneuvered on Rhodes' face as he charges back in...

...and gets taken down a second time with an armdrag that sends him sprawling!]

LD: Rhodes goes down a second time! Right back up though...

[A third armdrag lands, sending an agitated Rhodes rolling under the ropes to the outside.]

LD: ...and right back down with the armdag, and Rhodes is out of there, Ben!

BW: Gotta take a second to-

[Rhodes angrily smashes his arms down on the ring apron as Dana Kaiser moves quickly to his side to help him regroup.]

BW: Whoa! Rhodes is hot under the collar tonight!

[Rhodes grimaces, shaking out his arm as he paces the ringside area. Kaiser tries to keep pace, talking quickly to Rhodes who continues to glare up at Ohara who takes his own turn at beckoning Rhodes back inside...]

LD: I think when this match became official, most of us expected a clean, sportmans-like battle for the National Title but this... this is something else, Ben.

BW: In another time and another place, that might be what you get... but both of these men have a lot going on outside of this match right now. Yes, the National Title hanging in the balance of this one is the priority but Sid Osborne can't be far from Ohara's mind and you know Juan Vasquez is NEVER far from Rhodes'.

LD: This one might come down to who can stay focused long enough to win the match and... look at Ohara now, shouting at Rhodes to get back in there... he's fired up!

[Ohara steps out to the apron, getting halfway through the ropes before the referee cuts him off, pulling him by the arm back inside the ring...]

LD: Referee Ricky Longfellow making sure Ohara keeps it in the ring... for now at least.

BW: And that's a little more fire in the belly than we're used to seeing out of Ohara. The attack by Osborne on National Wrestling Night. The destruction of Ohara's National Title belt. Plus the fight in the parking lot. All of that's gotta be weighing heavy on him... and now you toss in Zharkov refusing to sanction a rematch with Osborne so Ohara get his hands on him again. The kid's ready to boil over and this might be the night for Raphael Rhodes to take advantage of it and win the title he's had his eyes on for nearly a decade, Dane.

[As Ohara gets backed to the middle of the ring, Rhodes slowly pulls himself up on the apron, eyeing the champion warily as he continues to angrily pace the middle of the ring...]

LD: The Phoenix may be the one who gets burned if he keeps this up. Raphael Rhodes is a well-established, wily veteran at this point and he'd find a way to take advantage of a blown fuse, right?

BW: Without a doubt.

[Ohara makes another lunge towards him but the official cuts him off again, wrapping his arms around the torso, trying to steer him away from Rhodes...]

BW: And I don't agree with this, Dane. The referee should never put his hands on a competitor.

LD: He's trying to keep this inside the ring and-

BW: I don't care what he's doing. He can warn, he can count, but when he grabs hold of someone like that, he's begging for trouble.

[...and as the official actually pulls Ohara in a half circle from Rhodes, the challenger seizes the moment by slipping through the ropes to bury a knee into the kidneys of the National Champion to some grumbles and groans from the sold out Center Stage Studios crowd!]

LD: Ohhhh! Rhodes lands the knee from behind!

BW: A move he NEVER would've had a chance to deliver if Longfellow wouldn't have been hanging onto Ohara! Terrible call by the official!

[And the aggressive challenger sinks his fingers into the corner of Ohara's mouth, ripping and tearing his flesh as he yanks him backwards, twisting him around...]

LD: Fishhooked by the challenger!

BW: Haha! Now THAT'S old school Raphael Rhodes, Dane! And you know, a lot of these so-called Internet fans are probably rapidly Tweeting away right now about why doesn't Ohara just bite the fingers... and I'll answer it right now to save them the embarrassment. The answer is - you can't! You keep the fingers away from the teeth, dig into the side of the mouth and pull the skin away from the jaw!

LD: We saw some similar fishhooking earlier with the Rhodes Dynasty.

BW: Yeah... probably the whole lot of 'em are malcontents.

[Lori chuckles as Rhodes uses the illegal grip to pull Ohara around, twisting his neck as he drags him into a stiff forearm shot to the jaw that knocks the champion back into the corner...]

LD: Ohara trapped in the corner now...

[Grabbing the ropes, Rhodes lays in some heavy boots to the body, leaving Ohara gasping for air in the corner...]

LD: ...he's gotta get out of there though because Rhodes is doing heavy damage early on in this one.

BW: He's trying to take the wind out of Ohara. Ohara's known for having a pretty big gas tank and... well, part of me wonders if Rhodes is recovered from that British Rounds match a week ago, Dane.

LD: We know he's got some stitches in his head but Takeshi Mifune - the Shadow Wolf - took him deep in that one as well. Rhodes could very well be suffering some ill effects from that victory that earned him this title chance over Mifune last week in London.

[...and as the referee's count nears five, Rhodes breaks off the attack to grab the wrist, whipping Ohara furiously across the ring...]

LD: Big whip shoots him in... OHARA!

[...but the National Champion leaps up, landing on the middle rope, springing back...]

LD: CROSSBODY!

[...and Rhodes nonchalantly walks away from the flying attack, leaving Ohara to crash chestfirst into the mat to disappointment from the fans.]

LD: Ohara took a shot there and it didn't pay off... and Rhodes is right on him, tucking the feet...

[Rhodes tucks his feet under the armpits, rolling Ohara into a pinning predicament...]

LD: ...oh, a little bit of that Japanese style on display from someone who did their time in the Land of the Rising Sun... gets two on the cradle but Ohara's out in time.

BW: And I don't want to get ahead of ourselves, Dane, but can you imagine - I mean, can you imagine what it looks like if Raphael Rhodes finds a way to take that title off Jordan Ohara tonight and turns his major featured match in Dodger Stadium into what would have to be considered the biggest National Title match in YEARS... maybe even EVER! Juan Vasquez' final match in professional wrestling fighting for the AWA National Title that was his heart's desire almost a decade ago? That's how I like my poetry inside the squared circle, Dane.

LD: There's been a lot of speculation about what that might look like since we learned that Rhodes would be battling for this title opportunity... and you know Rhodes wants to make that speculation a reality as he meets the rising Oha- OHH! What a forearm shot! Right on the jaw again!

[Grabbing the back of Ohara's head, Rhodes lays in a brutal European-style uppercut that sends Ohara stumbling backwards, falling into the corner again...]

LD: Raphael Rhodes is widely-regarded as one of the AWA's hardest hitting competitors and Jordan Ohara is learning that the hard way in this one, hanging onto the ropes after that uppercut... and Rhodes looking to shoot him across again...

[This time, the whip sends Ohara out...]

...but he hangs on, managing to reverse the powerful throw...]

LD: ...REVERSED...

[...sending Rhodes flying across, leaving his feet, tumbling over the ropes and crashing down HARD on the outside!]

“OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

LD: ...AND TO THE FLOOR GOES RHODES! My goodness, what a throw that was by the National Champion, just looking to save himself but doing major damage to his challenger in the meantime!

[On the outside, Rhodes grimaces in pain, holding onto his lower back as Dana Kaiser takes a knee by his side, checking his condition as the referee begins a very slow count, waiting for Rhodes and Kaiser to assess his ability to continue.]

LD: A tremendously hard fall to the floor there, Ben, and that could drastically have an impact on the outcome of this one.

BW: It could. We talked about Rhodes taking this on while still trying to recover from his British Rounds match a week ago... well, a fall like could easily set back that recovery and give Ohara the chance he needs to finish this.

LD: The National Champion coming across the ring, looking out on Rhodes as Dana Kaiser tries to get her man back on his feet and-

[Without breaking stride, Ohara grabs the top rope with both hands, catapulting himself up, over, and down onto the rising Rhodes as Kaiser bails clear!]

“OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

LD: -AND THE HIGH FLYING PHOENIX LIFTS OFF AND TAKES DOWN THE CHALLENGER HERE TONIGHT!

[The fans are cheering for the popular (and determined) Ohara as he regains his feet, nodding his head to the roaring Atlanta crowd.]

LD: Jordan Ohara is one of the most popular competitors in the AWA locker room, Ben, and you can really hear this crowd come alive for him when they're trying to urge him on.

BW: He's a popular competitor for sure... but what's that get ya? Squat!

LD: Always a man of the people, folks - Ben Waterson right there.

[Dana Kaiser stands a few feet away, looking anxious as Ohara pulls Rhodes off the ringside mats by the arm, drilling him with a pair of forearm shots that has Rhodes reeling... and then switches to a pair of big haymakers that earns him a shouted warning from the official...]

BW: Ohara losing his cool out here, throwing those closed fists...

[...and Dana Kaiser quickly joins in, shouting at Ohara who shakes his head at her before dragging Rhodes towards the ring...]

LD: OHHHH! Face first off the ring apron! And you may be right, Ben - Jordan Ohara is showing us a different - perhaps darker - side of his personality here tonight after what went down with Sid Osborne lately.

BW: We've seen flashes of that darkness in his career before, Dane... but this is fully exposed and on display for all his precious fans to see.

LD: It's certainly more aggression than we're used to seeing from him.

BW: Getting beaten up in a parking lot by the man who destroyed your title belt will do that to ya, Dane.

[Ohara shoves Rhodes under the bottom rope back inside the ring as the Phoenix pulls himself up on the apron, pointing to the corner...]

LD: And this is more the Jordan Ohara we've come to know and love, looking for one of those dazzling high flying maneuvers that thrills the crowd... calling his shot as he heads down the apron to the corner...

[...but as Ohara starts to scale the ropes, a downed and kneeling Raphael Rhodes reaches out and grabs the official, pulling him closer...]

LD: What in the...?

[...and seems to be steering the official in a specific direction, moving him to stand as a human shield between Rhodes and Ohara.]

BW: Oh, I see it! It's a brilliant move by Rhodes, using the official to screen himself from Ohara! Ohara can't come off the top rope if Rhodes has the referee in that position. Absolutely masterful strategy!

[Rhodes uses his grip on the protesting official to pull himself to his feet, making sure that the referee is still between he and the shouting Ohara...]

LD: Ohara is complaining to the referee but-

[...and suddenly, Rhodes shoves the referee aside, sprinting towards the corner to smash a right hand into the midsection of the National Champion as Dana Kaiser is shown again, looking on with concern as Rhodes lands a second shot to the gut!]

LD: Rhodes uses that moment of Ohara having to freeze to get a couple shots in... and now it's the challenger climbing the ropes...

BW: We've seen Rhodes use a superplex to great effect in the past, Dane.

LD: If he hits it here, we might be looking at a new champion!

[Standing on the middle rope, Rhodes hooks a front facelock, slinging Ohara's arm over his neck...]

LD: And that's exactly what he's looking for! Can he get it? Rhodes looking to go from Number One Contender to the National Title to the eighteenth champion in that illustrious title's history!

[...but as Rhodes goes to lift, Ohara reaches down with the free hand to grab the top rope, letting loose a grunt of effort as he blocks!]

LD: No, no! Ohara hanging on! Ohara fighting it! He knows what's coming and he knows what it might mean to his title reign!

[Rhodes gives a determined second attempt as Ohara lets loose a louder shout, continuing to block the lift...]

LD: Ohara fighting to stay in position... and oh! Short right hand to the ribs! Again! Again!

[...and the British grappler lowers his arms, letting loose the front facelock as Ohara winds up...]

LD: OVERHEAD CHOP!

[...and BLASTS Rhodes between the eyes with a Tomahawk chop that sends him flopping backwards off the buckles, crashing down on the canvas to cheers!]

LD: And Ohara fights his way free! Rhodes goes down... and Ohara's going back up again, standing up top!

[As Rhodes struggles up off the mat, Ohara stands tall, arms raised overhead...]

LD: OFF THE ROPES!

[...and leaps off, crashing into the chest of Rhodes with a crossbody!]

LD: PHOENIX FLAME!

BW: RHODES ROLLS THROUGH IT!

[Rolling Ohara onto his own shoulders, Rhodes hooks the leg tightly as the referee dives to the canvas...]

LD: ONNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOO! THREEEEEEEE-

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

LD: OHARA ESCAPES! OHARA SLIPS OUT IN TIME!

BW: Just barely! We were a fraction of a second away from a new champion, Dane!

[Cut to Dana Kaiser on the mat looking pained, slapping a hand on the mat and shouting to Rhodes...]

LD: I think Dana Kaiser thought they had it won right there and it was incredibly close, Ben. INCREDIBLY close!

[Ohara is up off the mat in a flash, shaking off the near fall to go after the also-rising Rhodes, winding up...]

...but Rhodes cuts him off with a short knee to the midsection, doubling the champion over!]

LD: Rhodes caught him downstairs... ohh! What a headbutt!

BW: The kind of headbutt that is staggered everyone from Vasquez to Mizusawa over the years! And he caught all of that on Ohara. Ohara can barely even stand up, Dane, hanging onto the ropes like he's about to faceplant down.

[With Ohara leaning against the ropes, Rhodes closes the distance, shifting his footing...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

LD: Knife edge chop on target, splashing across the chest of the Phoenix!

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"
"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"
"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"
"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[Red welts are already starting to form on the chest of the National Champion when Rhodes clasps the wrist, shooting Ohara across the ring...]

LD: Off the ropes and... downwwwwwn with a running knee to the gut!

BW: He tossed everything AND the kitchen sink at him right there!

[...and with Ohara down on the mat clutching his midsection, Rhodes measures him up...]

"OHHHHH!"

[...and drops a knee down into the ribs, getting right back up...]

"OHHHHH!"
"OHHHHH!"
"OHHHHH!"

[The series of kneedrops targeting the ribs have Ohara writhing in pain on the mat as Rhodes takes aim, leaping high...]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

LD: DOUBLE KNEEDROP TO THE BODY!

[Ohara is full on twitching on the mat as Rhodes wraps up the legs in another pin attempt!]

LD: We've got one! We've got two! We've got a new- nooooo, Ohara kicks out at two again!

[Rhodes angrily slaps the mat, glaring at the official for a moment before quickly coming back to his feet, looking down at the champion...]

LD: We've over ten minutes into this National Title Main Event here on the Bon Voyage edition of Showtime LIVE from Atlanta on ESPN as these two warriors battle it out over the AWA's oldest prize.

[...and then dragging Ohara off the canvas by the hair, ducking low to boost Ohara up into a fireman's carry, walking out towards the center of the ring...]

LD: He's got him up... out to the middle...

[...and he muscles Ohara up and over, dumping him gutfirst across a bent knee!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

LD: ...GUTBUSTER! COVER!

BW: Is it enough?!

[The one count comes down... the two follows...]

LD: OUT! AT! TWO! Jordan Ohara kicks out to hang onto that National Title just a little bit longer at least!

BW: And right now, I bet Ohara doesn't have the slightest thought about Sid Osborne in his head because right now, he's fighting for his damn life, Dane. He's facing the Raphael Rhodes I saw so much potential in back in the day when I made him a part of the Southern Syndicate. He was destined for championship gold back then... and right now, he may be about to reach his destiny, Dane.

LD: Ohara's in bad shape, clutching those ribs, crawling across the canvas to get some distance from Rhodes...

BW: No such thing when Raphael Rhodes is in killer mode.

[As Ohara reaches the corner, Rhodes is right there to greet him, dragging him to his feet to shove him back against the buckles...]

"OHHHHH!"

[...and drives his shoulder into the midsection...]

"OHHHHH!"

"OHHHHH!"

"OHHHHH!"

"OHHHHH!"

"OHHHHH!"

[...over and over, leaving Ohara gasping for air in the turnbuckles as Dana Kaiser applauds.]

LD: We've talked about the added aggression in this one out of Rhodes but right now, Dana Kaiser seems... okay at least... with what she's seeing.

BW: Sometimes as a manager, you gotta let your charge off the leash to get the job done and with just weeks until Memorial Day Mayhem and the final battle with Vasquez, Rhodes might need that extra edge.

[Another whip shoots Ohara across, Rhodes sinking to a knee from the effort behind it as the champion SLAMS into the turnbuckles before collapsing down to a knee...]

LD: Wham! Hard into the corner! Ohara can't even stand right now and he's gotta feel like the National Title might be slipping away from him!

BW: What's left of it.

LD: Oh, knock it off!

[Rhodes strides across, snatching a handful of hair to pull Ohara off a knee and boosts him up into the fireman's carry again...]

LD: Another gutbuster?!

[...but this time, as the challenger moves to center ring, Ohara manages to scissor his arm between the Phoenix's legs...]

LD: Maybe not!

[...and drags Rhodes down into a crucifix cradle!]

LD: OHARA PULLS HIM DOWN FOR ONNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOO! TH-

[But Rhodes kicks hard, breaking free in time!]

LD: -NOOOOOO! OUT IN TIME!

[Ohara immediately grabs at his ribs, struggling to get up off the mat, trying to beat the rising Rhodes to his feet...]

LD: Both men trying to get- ohhh! Rhodes gets there first and goes right back downstairs with the knee to the body!

[Rhodes snatches the front facelock again, slinging the arm over his neck...]

LD: What is...?

[...and as he lifts Ohara into the air, he lunges forward...]

“OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

[...and the crowd reacts as Rhodes drops Ohara gutfirst across the top rope, bouncing him off the ropes and down to the floor!]

LD: HE HANGS HIM OUT TO DRYYYYY! And the National Champion goes all the way to the outside after yet another devastating shot to the body, Ben.

BW: Ohara's in trouble. The National Title is in trouble. And somewhere in the world, that weasel Vasquez is thinking he's gonna get one more chance to go out as a champion.

LD: That really bothers you, doesn't it?

BW: Makes me sick to my damn stomach, Dane.

[With Ohara down on the outside, Rhodes drops to the mat, rolling under the ropes to the floor to join him...]

LD: Uh oh - the challenger heading to the outside as well, right here in Center Stage as the fans get a closeup view at perhaps history being made. Could the Bon Voyage edition of Showtime end with a title changing hands?

BW: It'd be a hell of a way to kick off summer.

LD: Rhodes dragging Ohara off the floor... what's this now?

[Hauling Ohara across the ringside area, they end up near the entryway when Rhodes pulls the champion into a front facelock...]

LD: Uh oh... I don't like this one bit, Ben!

BW: He's gonna hang him out to dry ON THE STEPS!

LD: And we just upgraded from a potential match-ending move to one that could shorten a man's career!

[...but when Rhodes looks to make the lift in front of the buzzing crowd, Ohara blocks it, his leg slipping between Rhodes'.]

LD: Blocked! Ohara blocks the front layout on the steps!

[Dana Kaiser looks on, concern on her face as Rhodes goes for it again...

...and Ohara blocks it again!]

LD: He blocks it again and-

[And the concern on Kaiser's face only grows as the Phoenix lets loose a roar of pain and effort, boosting Rhodes up into the air before bringing him CRASHING down on the barely-padded studio concrete floor!]

"THUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUD!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[Now it's Rhodes crying out in pain, grabbing at his lower back as Kaiser holds onto the ringpost, preventing herself from rushing to his side as both competitors lie sprawled out on the floor..]

LD: Ohara with a suplex of his own... and that COMPLETELY turns this one around! Ohara's down! Rhodes is down! Both men are hurt as we're over fifteen minutes into this battle for the National Title!

BW: Still plenty of time left in the TV time remaining limit, Dane.

LD: But after that suplex, how much does Raphael Rhodes have left? We've been wondering if Ohara had enough left for the last few minutes but now I've gotta wonder about the challenger!

[Dragging himself to his feet, holding his ribs in pain, Ohara pulls an anguished Rhodes off the mat, shoving him into the ring...]

LD: Ohara not wanting to settle for a countout, the fighting champion he is... he puts Rhodes back in...

[...and Ohara leans hard against the apron for several more moments, breathing heavily before pulling himself up.]

LD: ...and again, it looks like Jordan Ohara is looking to go high risk!

BW: The last time he tried this, it nearly cost him the title, Dane!

LD: The Phoenix is climbing, Rhodes still down this time... the official wisely staying out of reach... Dana Kaiser screaming a warning to the challenger!

[And as Rhodes reaches his feet, Ohara is standing up top, poised and ready...]

LD: FROM THE TOP!

[...and The Phoenix takes flight, soaring high and far through the air, arm extended over his head!]

LD: TOMAHAWK CHOP CONNECTS! OHARA WITH THE COVER!

[The official dives to the mat to count, the crowd counting along...]

"ONNNNNNNNNNNNNE!"

"TWOOOOOOOOOOOOO!"

"THREEEEEE--"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

LD: SHOULDER UP IN TIIIIIME! RHODES IS STILL IN THIS THING!

BW: The high risk paid off this time, Dane... but Ohara's still hurting. Immediately grabbing the ribs and if I'm Dana Kaiser, I'm looking for a way to give him a little jab in the ribs when the referee isn't looking!

LD: BEN!

BW: What?! Oh, what... it's against the rules?! Who cares?! The National Title is on the line - you know all the shady stuff I've done to help my client when the title is on the line?!

LD: I sure do... and luckily for all of us, Dana Kaiser is made of better stuff than that!

BW: I'm sure Rhodes will be so grateful for that if all his momentum comes to a screeching halt at the hands of this baby-kissing Boy Scout!

[Ohara cradles the ribs, kneeling on the mat as he looks across at Rhodes who has rolled several feet away, trying to recover as Dana Kaiser pounds a fist into the mat, shouting to her man...]

LD: Kaiser trying to make sure Rhodes knows where Ohara is... what he's doing... THAT'S how a manager helps their client, Ben!

BW: Un huh... you keep telling yourself that.

[Rhodes plants his fists in the mat, pushing up off the canvas as Ohara gets to a knee...]

LD: Both men trying to get up, trying to get the edge in this exciting National Title showdown... and yes, both of these men have to be thinking ahead to Memorial Day Mayhem somewhere in the corner of their minds. We know what Raphael Rhodes will be doing in Los Angeles but what about Ohara, Ben?

BW: Probably depends a lot on if he's still the champion.

[On their feet, champion and challenger stumble towards one another...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[...and Rhodes strikes first, landing a brutal knife edge chop that bounces off the ribcage of Ohara, causing him to cry out and cradle his torso in pain.]

LD: What a shot by Rhodes! Ohara's ribs taking an absolute pounding in this one at the hands of the man from the United Kingdom...

[Rhodes winds up, ready to deliver another one...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[...and Ohara responds with an overhand chop, slapping down on the chest of Rhodes who recoils back in pain...]

LD: And the Phoenix returns fire! Ohara and Rhodes, battering one another with those skin-blistering chops in the middle of Center Stage Studios and these fans are absolutely loving it, Ben!

BW: I love watching these punks get beat up too... especially when they're doing it to each other.

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"
"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[Rhodes rebounds back with another one, sending Ohara spinning away towards the ropes where he leans against them, using the spring to bounce back...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"
"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

LD: OHARA RETURNS FIRE!

[This one is a knife edge chop, splashing across the pectorals and sending Rhodes a pair of steps backwards as Ohara winds up again...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"
"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[...and again...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"
"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[...and again, battering Rhodes back with each blow...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"
"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"
"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"
"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[...and finally putting the challenger up against the ropes, his arms tucked over it to stay on his feet as the National Champion, fury on his face, winds up again...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"
"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[...and delivers the mother of all knife edge chops that connects firmly, sending Rhodes toppling backwards over the ropes but the ropes themselves and his arms wrapped around them end up depositing him on the ring apron!]

LD: OHARA CHOPPED HIM OVER BUT RHODES HANGS ON!

[The Atlanta crowd is in a frenzy as the champion reaches over the ropes, snatching a handful of hair and drawing the challenger to his feet inside of a front facelock...]

LD: Ohara looks like he's going to bring him right back in, Ben, but he's gonna do it the hard way!

BW: Rhodes is trying to hang onto the ropes, Dana Kaiser shouting him to block it...

[And block it he does, slipping a leg between the ropes to block Ohara's lift...

...and then SMASHING his balled up free hand into the exposed ribcage, causing Ohara to cry out, stumbling away in a circle...]

LD: Rhodes caught him flush in the injured ribs and... AHHHHH!

[Lori's horrified cry is echoed by the crowd as Rhodes reaches out, hooking his fingers in the nostrils of Ohara before he can stagger out of reach...]

LD: WHAT'S HE... NO, NO, NOOOO!

[...and uses that grip to rip and tear at the nose, pulling Ohara backwards towards the ropes, leaning him back over the ropes before SMASHING the point of his elbow down across the sternum!]

LD: OHH!

BW: That one was almost in the throat! It's getting nasty in there now!

LD: Just the way you like it, huh?

BW: You got that right!

LD: We are creeping towards the twenty minute mark in this battle... remember, TV time remaining in this one and we've got... what? Five minutes left? Maybe a little more? We'll try to get an answer on that one as-

[Rhodes pulls Ohara's arms back, hooking them behind the top rope to completely expose his torso as Rhodes yanks his head back by the chin...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

[...and proceeds to absolutely PUMMEL the chest of Ohara with clubbing forearm blows...]

LD: HE'S ALL OVER OHARA!

[...and with one final shot with plenty of mustard on it, Ohara is flipped OVER the top rope to land out on the ring apron alongside his challenger!]

LD: WOW!

BW: This is NOT a good place for them to keep fighting, Dane. A whole lot of dangerous things can happen just above the floor like that on that narrow piece of canvas!

[Rhodes yanks Ohara off his knees by the ear, smashing a forearm into the jaw... then throws an open-handed slap across the side of the head!]

LD: Rhodes continuing to pound away on Ohara who is out on- maybe not!

[The crowd cheers as Ohara responds with a short forearm and a blistering overhand chop!]

LD: Ohara fighting back!

[Ohara shifts his footing slightly...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAP!"

[...and scores with a roundhouse kick into the ribcage of Rhodes, causing the British grappler to stumble back, grabbing the ropes to stay on the apron.]

BW: I think that kick wrapped around enough to catch him in the back a little, Dane.

LD: Sure looked like it the way Rhodes reacted to it.

[Ohara steps closer but Rhodes has some room to move, leaning back and throwing a front kick into the midsection...]

LD: Ohh! And now it's Rhodes who lands another blow, the kick to the body...

"SLAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"OHMMMMMMMMMMMM!"

LD: ...WHAT A SLAP! NEARLY RIPPED OHARA'S HEAD OFF HIS SHOULDERS!

[Ohara whips around in a circle, barely catching hold of the ropes before falling off the apron to the floor...]

...which is when Rhodes reaches around to sink his fingers into the nostrils again, yanking back hard!]

LD: AHH! Back to the nose, ripping and tearing and yanking and-

[The nostril pull twists the neck of Ohara, pulling him back towards Rhodes who reaches out the other arm in the hunt of a sleeperhold!]

LD: -HOOKED!

[But before he can fully secure the hold, Rhodes finds himself being driven backwards by Ohara who pushes off the mat hard and fast...]

"CLAAAAAAAAAAAAAANG!"

"OHMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMM!"

[...and SMASHES into the ringpost at high impact!]

LD: OH! OH NO! I think he hit his head, Ben!

BW: It sure SOUNDED like it!

[Rhodes looks dazed as he leans hard against the post, barely able to keep his footing as Ohara slowly turns to face him, moving a few steps away, giving himself a few moments to catch his breath...]

LD: Ohara sizing him up and...

[...and then charges in, jumping up to land with his feet on Rhodes' upper thighs..]

LD: ...YOU GOTTA BE...

[...and uses a monkey flip to TOSS Rhodes into the air, sending him flipping over...]

LD: ...KIDDING MEEEEEEEE!

"THUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUD!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[...and CRASHING down backfirst on the barely-padded floor!]

LD: JORDAN OHARA - THE NATIONAL CHAMPION - JUST MONKEY FLIPPED RAPHAEL RHODES OFF THE APRON ONTO THE UNFORGIVING FLOOR HERE IN CENTER STAAAAAAGE!

[Ohara is down on his back on the apron, slowly rolling under the ropes into the ring as the crowd is ROARING for what they just saw!]

LD: Ohara puts Rhodes down... Rhodes is still on the outside... and now the question becomes - can he get up in time? Can he get back to his feet and beat the count?

BW: That was a hard fall onto his back and his back had taken a decent amount of punishment to begin with.

[Dana Kaiser is nearby, giving support to her charge as he tries to get up off the floor...]

LD: Dana Kaiser trying to urge her man... inspire her man perhaps to his feet so he can continue this battle... the referee starting his ten count now. If Rhodes can't get back in, Ohara will retain by countout... and you know that's not how Ohara wants to win.

BW: At this point, he should take the W anyway he can get it, Dane!

[The referee's count is quickly up to three as Rhodes struggles to roll to a hip, Kaiser still urging him up...]

LD: You can hear Dana Kaiser telling him the count... making sure he knows what he needs to do... Ohara's on his feet in the ring, leaning on the ropes...

[...the referee's count goes to four... then to five as Rhodes lets loose a grunt, sitting up on the floor as Kaiser claps quickly, urgently telling him "GET UP! GET UP! YOU GOTTA GET UP!"

LD: The official's count is at six and... he's up! Rhodes is on his feet! He's gonna beat-

[The crowd reacts suddenly, loudly, and negatively...]

LD: -WHAT THE...?!

[...and then the boos REALLY ring out as Rhodes finds himself assaulted from behind by Takeshi Mifune and Bret Grayson!]

LD: OHH!

[Grayson RAMS Rhodes shoulderfirst into the steel ringpost as Dana Kaiser cries out and the referee signals for the bell...]

“DING! DING! DING!”

LD: And just like that... damn it, Ben! Just like that, this classic showdown for the National Title comes to an abrupt halt!

BW: Well, Ohara’s gonna keep the title but...

[Mifune grabs the arms of Rhodes, hooking them around the post as he holds him in place for Grayson to pummel the exposed back and ribs of Rhodes!]

LD: Oh, come on! What the heck is this all about?!

BW: Are you kidding me?! It’s about London! This is all about what happened in London!

[Grayson and Mifune switch places with the Olympic gold medalist holding the arms as Mifune jams repeatedly short forearms into the lower back!]

LD: Mifune just pummeling the injured back!

[Mifune mutters something into the ear of Rhodes before peeling away, chasing off the timekeeper to snatch up his chair...]

LD: Oh... oh no... somebody stop this!

[Mifune folds up the chair, slapping it down on the apron a few times as he takes aim...]

LD: Somebody needs to-

“OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

[...and the crowd ERUPTS as Ohara slingshots over the top, wiping out Takeshi Mifune on the outside!]

LD: OHARA WIPES OUT MIFUNE ON THE OUTSIDE!

[With Mifune laid out, Grayson lets go of Rhodes, rushing to assault Ohara as he gets up...

...but Ohara blocks a big right hand, hitting one of his own before tossing Grayson under the ropes into the ring!]

LD: Ohara puts Grayson in! He came to the aid of Raphael Rhodes and-

BW: Now the National Champion’s fighting for his life!

[In the corner, Grayson is getting hammered by repeated right hands from Ohara to the thrill of the Atlanta crowd!]

LD: Jordan Ohara getting some payback for the Gold Standard ruining this tremendous matchup... whips him acr-

[But Grayson reverses the whip, sending the weary Ohara CRASHING chestfirst into the turnbuckles, staggering backwards...]

“OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

[...and gets LAUNCHED overhead, thrown down to the canvas with a ring-shaking German Suplex!]

LD: GRAYSON HURLS HIM ACROSS!

[Grayson kips up off the mat, grinning madly with his arms outstretched, taking a loud jeering from the Atlanta crowd as he points at the downed Ohara...]

"NOW I'M GONNA BREAK HIS FREAKIN' ANKLE!"

[...and as Grayson goes for the leg, a back-on-his-feet Mifune tosses Rhodes inside the ring, gesturing to him instead...]

LD: Ohara gets a momentary reprieve... and Grayson putting the boots to Rhodes now...

[Mifune slides the dropped chair under the ropes as Grayson pulls Rhodes up off the mat...]

"SLAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[...and nearly gets the side of his head caved in with an open-handed slap to the ear!]

LD: OH!

[Grayson staggers backwards, screaming something that earns him a momentary muting as he grabs at his ear. Rhodes sneers, winding up again...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[...but gets dropped with a Mifune steel chair blow across the back!]

LD: RHODES GETS DROPPED BY THE SHADOW WOLF!

[Mifune winds up again...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[...and smashes Rhodes a second time, the crowd starting to get louder as he does.]

LD: A second shot across the back... and now Mifune's looking at Ohara, maybe looking to-

[The fans ERUPT as two more figures come in from the crowd in street clothes, rushing to intercept...]

LD: HARPER! SOMERS! THE CHAMPS ARE IN THE RING!

[...and Somers catches a hastily-swung chair by Mifune, jerking it easily out of his hands as Harper tackles Rhodes down to the mat, pummeling him with right hands as the fans ROAR!]

LD: NEXT GEN AND THE GOLD STANDARD!

BW: WE'RE GETTING A PREVIEW OF VEGAS!

LD: WE'RE OUT OF TIME! WE'VE GOTTA GO! WE'LL SEE YOU-

[And we abruptly cut to black as the time runs out.]