

The ESPN logo is displayed in its signature red, italicized font at the top center of the poster.

PRESENTS

AWA

SHOWTIME

***Saturday, July 7th, 2018
Globe Theatre
Saskatchewan, Regina, Canada***

Hour Two
Hour Three

[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, a pile of rotting peat, 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... a cabin deep in the woods engulfed in flames... 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"

[SIGNAL LOST]

[Instead, we cut abruptly to some mundane looking footage from the green room of the crowded backstage area of Globe Theatre – the whole building has been taken over by the production team. In amongst AWA and ESPN staff, a camera crew is following Danny King, the Blue Chip prospect in the Brass Ring group of eight.]

"Going live in ten... nine...,"

[No one in the area seems aware that they are live right now, but something odd seems to be happening. You get the feeling you shouldn't be watching this, and someone in the production team is going to be fired.]

"Mr. King, I'm with the crew here. If I could beg your indulgence for a second..."

[But is it the production team's fault? Were you meant to see this? And is that lanky member of the production team trying to get Danny King's attention supposed to be there?]

"By the way, Mr. King... pardon my manners. I haven't introduced myself."

[He extends his hand to Danny King, who accepts it tentatively. If you've paid attention and read between the lines, you've seen that scraggly hair and Frank Zappa-esque moustache, and haunted eyes before...]

"My name's Abel Lee Cady, Mr. King."

[The handshake turns into a wristlock. The wristlock turns into a standing armbar. The standing armbar turns into a Single Arm DDT.

The Single Arm DDT to the Blue Chip prospect and Brass Ring participant turns into pandemonium backstage at Showtime.]

"HAW HAW HAWWWW!"

[Abel Lee Cady cackles wildly to himself as he is dragged away from the motionless, face-down Danny King.]

"I CAME IN LIKE MARK DAVID CHAPMAN! HAW HAW HAWWWW HAW HAW! I CAME IN... LIKE MARK DAVID CHAPMAN!"

[...and there's a burst of static. The screen stays like that for several awkward seconds, making more than a few viewers wonder if they've lost the signal. But you can't stop the signal.

And we abrupt cut, the picture stuttering for a few moments as we find Sweet Lou Blackwell backstage looking puzzled alongside AWA backstage producer Tommy Fierro. They're watching a monitor where we see the aftermath of moments ago, Danny King laid out on the backstage floor, now being tended to by AWA officials screaming for medical attention...]

SLB: What in the world...?

TF: I... lemme go see what's going on, Lou. I'll see you later.

SLB: See ya, Tommy.

[Blackwell is shaking his head, still watching the monitor...

...which then cuts to show him shaking his head - the same shot we're looking at as the monitor seems to go on forever. Blackwell startles straight, looking at the monitor... then throwing a look over his shoulder at the camera responsible for the shot.]

SLB: Are we live?

[Blackwell grimaces, shoving a hand into the monitor to kill the feed before wheeling around...]

SLB: Coulda warned me. I'm not even scheduled for-

[Blackwell shakes it off like the true professional he is.]

SLB: Hello, AWA fans, and welcome to Regina, Saskatchewan! It was just about one year ago that the AWA rolled into this town and threw down one of the biggest events in Canadian wrestling history - The Battle of Saskatchewan! And now we're back... in a much different place...

[He looks around at the cramped corridors with a forced smile on his face.]

SLB: ...where... well, as so often seems to be the case - especially lately - chaos has struck here in the opening moments of Showtime with one of the Brass Ring competitors who was scheduled to be in action here tonight - former MMA great Danny King - has been brutally assaulted and... did I catch that name right? Abel Lee Cady?

[Blackwell furrows his brow.]

SLB: That... that sounds real familiar, fans... but I can't quite put my finger on it. I'm not sure I know who that guy is but... well, from the looks of things, he may have just had a major impact on the Brass Ring Tournament with that single-armed DDT on the concrete floor backstage here at the Globe Theatre... we'll have to get more news on that one, I guess, and-

[Blackwell is suddenly distracted by voices coming from off-camera.]

SLB: What the HELL is going on here now?! We're trying to do a show here, people!

[A rush of backstage workers go running past, actually cutting between Blackwell and the camera...]

SLB: Are you kidding me right now?! Are we really doing- HEY!

[The last man to dash past is AWA Interim President Maxim Zharkov who Blackwell snatches by the wrist, earning a jerk of the arm that nearly pulls the AWA's resident scoopster off his feet...]

SLB: Whoa! Easy!

[Zharkov glares HARD at Blackwell.]

SLB: Aren't you supposed to be in the ring right now?! You've got announce-

[Zharkov interrupts in a rush.]

MZ: It's Carver. It's Carver!

SLB: Huh? What is?

[Zharkov doesn't respond, rushing off with Blackwell trailing after him, the cameraman bringing up the rear... until he runs right past the rotund interviewer, keeping pace with the Tsar as they run through the backstage area. We can hear Blackwell's heavy breathing as the hard frantic steps through the Globe Theatre production area suddenly comes to a halt with... very, very loud and concerned voices...]

"Come on! Don't do this! Don't do this!"

[...and as the camera pulls back, we can see Hannibal Carver laid out on the floor of the backstage area. An open door is right behind him, leading out to what appears to be the parking lot.

And standing in the door frame is the cold and calculating face of Supreme Wright, looking down on Carver.]

"Supreme, don't do this!"

[Wright doesn't move a muscle, his gaze locked in on his Bostonian rival.]

SW: I'm not the one you should be worried about. I'm only here to confirm that a mistake is corrected.

[Wright pushes the door open, stepping through to make room as the Olympic gold medalist Bret Grayson comes walking through behind him. Grayson's dressed in his customized Team Supreme tracksuit with white stars running over two thin red stripes on the sleeves and legs to resemble the American flag. He looks down at Carver with a look of smoldering rage...

...and we see a broken piece of wood clutched in his hand. He tosses it aside in what appears to be disgust as Carver rolls over, trying to roll to a seated position, raising a defensive arm...]

HC: Yer gonna have to kill me, Wright!

[Wright's gaze bores into Carver.]

SW: Hardly. That's an honor you haven't earned.

[Supreme's words clearly have an effect on everyone within earshot, who each pause for a split second as if to ask themselves, "Did he just say that?"]

SW: But your actions have shown that your continued existence in my AWA can no longer tolerated, Mr. Carver.

[He places a hand on Grayson's shoulder.]

SW: Bret. You know what needs to be done.

[Wright gestures to Carver who lets loose a stream of profanity that earns him a moment of silence from the quick-triggered production team before Grayson lunges forward and DRIVES a kick right into Carver's mouth.]

BG: That oughta shut you up! Do you kiss your mother with that mouth?

[Wright looks at Grayson, who looks at his friend in a silent appeal,... and then gestures at Carver again, which brings a second kick to the face... and a third... and a fourth... and a fifth as officials all around try to get control of the situation. Interim President Zharkov tries to intervene, shouting at Grayson who looks at the threatening Zharkov...

...and then to Wright who silently gestures again.

And Grayson gives in, lunging at Carver with a right hand to the jaw before flipping him over by the legs, reaching down to grab at his foot...

...and CRANKS the ankle into an anklelock, causing Carver to SCREAM in pain as he pounds his fists into the concrete floor!

Zharkov twists away from Grayson, his forearm coming up across the sternum of Wright and SHOVING him back against a wall!]

MZ: CALL HIM OFF! NOW!

[But Wright doesn't say a word, looking with a curious expression at the fuming Zharkov as Grayson stays on Carver, continuing to torque the ankle in a disgusting fashion. Tommy Fierro grabs Grayson around the waist, trying to drag him off...

...but the tenacity of Grayson is unmatched, refusing to let go as he screams "SNAAAAAAP! SNAAAAAAAAP!"

Wright looks on with a nod as Zharkov pushes into him, leaning his weight into the forearm on the collarbone...]

MZ: STOP! HIM!

[...and with the sound of Carver's flesh slapping the concrete over and over and over, his screams of agony punctuating every blow...

...the decibel level grows as Carver lets loose a horrific cry when Grayson makes one final, violent twist of his ankle...

...and then falls silent, slumping unconscious to the floor!]

MZ: NO!

[Zharkov jerks away from Wright, shoving a stunned Grayson backwards, sending him crashing into the hallway wall before the Interim President falls to his knees, trying to get a response from Carver...]

MZ: What... what have you done?

[Zharkov glares up at Grayson who looks down at his own hands, seemingly in shock at his own actions as Wright looks on approvingly...]

MZ: You.

[The Interim President stabs an accusing finger at Wright.]

MZ: YOU!

[He surges to his feet, rushing forward with a "YOUUUUUUUUUU!" right before he collides flush with the chest of Wright, the two men crashing into the wall as the focus of the officials goes from the downed Carver to trying to keep their boss from attempting bloody massacre on one of the AWA's top stars. Wright does not physically respond, staring dead in the eyes of the raging Zharkov who is shouting in Russian now at him, his emotions overwhelming his language skills...

...and we see Tommy Fierro wrap an arm around Zharkov in a half nelson, trying to drag him off of Wright as Grayson looks at the wild scene in disbelief. Adam Rogers bursts into the frame, trying to get between Zharkov and Wright.]

AR: YOU'RE OUT OF HERE! BOTH OF YOU!

[Rogers jerks to point at Grayson who nods, moving to make a grab for his mentor, helping Rogers and Fierro to get Zharkov away from Wright...

...and Grayson steers Wright towards the door, pushing him through as Wright stares back at a fuming Zharkov who jerks around and SHOVES Fierro back against the wall with a "GET YOUR HANDS OFF ME!"

Zharkov stands in the middle of the chaotic scene, face buried in his hands, shaking his head in disbelief...

...and then lets loose an anguished howl as he slumps back against the wall, Adam Rogers bellowing for a doctor...

...and we cut to ringside to where the hosts of Showtime - Mariah Wolfe and Sweet Daddy Williams - are standing with shocked expressions on their faces.]

MW: I... fans, welcome to Showtime here on... on ESPN and...

SDW: I gotta... Mariah, you got this?

[Not waiting for an answer, Sweet Daddy Williams drops his mic and goes jogging the short distance towards a darkened hallway that presumably leads backstage.]

MW: Sweet Daddy Williams heading backstage... we just saw...

[Mariah throws up her hands.]

MW: What DID we just see? Two attacks in the span of mere moments and... fans, this show was slated to begin with Maxim Zharkov in this ring for some major announcements and... while Sweet Daddy and I were out here waiting to kick off the show, Zharkov got word from one of the referees and took off like a bat out of...

[She trails off, looking off-camera.]

MW: We've got Hannibal Carver down backstage - assaulted by the likes of Supreme Wright and Bret Grayson who... were admittedly humiliated by Carver a few days ago at Opportunity Knocks. Carver poured beer all over Wright and then defeated Grayson in near record time and... I guess this is payback. But you talk about the lack of a proportional response! Team Supreme has struck again here in

Regina and... this group has been on a rampage since last November, fans. You think back to SuperClash and the parking lot assault on Johnny Detson... no one's seen Detson since then. You think about the Red Wedding. The injuries to Howie Somers and Brian James and Max Magnum...

[She shakes her head in disgust.]

MW: ...and now Hannibal Carver who... can we get an update? Is he...?

[We abruptly cut again, this time showing an over-the-shoulder shot of Sweet Daddy Williams wading through a sea of officials, stomping past Maxim Zharkov who is basically being dragged away by Fierro and Rogers. A shout of "where is he?" from Williams gets a quick point and he follows the direction, moving through the scene...]

SDW: Mariah, I'm trying to find... over here?

[A quick nod of affirmation from a backstage worker whose pale face tells the story sends Williams around a corner where we see a space has been cleared for AWA medical team members to work on Hannibal Carver who has regained consciousness but is SCREAMING in pain...]

"It's broken, doc! It's broken!"

[Dr. Ponavitch grimaces, putting a comforting hand on the shoulder of Carver whose face is twisted in agony as he smashes his fist into a nearby production case with another shouted expletive that gets muted...]

SDW: Oh god. No... no, we can't be back here for-

[Williams reaches out, pushing a hand in front of the camera which blocks the shot for a moment before we abruptly cut again...]

...and this time, we end up at a small ringside announce table where Lori Dane and Ben Waterson are seated, solemn expressions on both of their faces.]

BW: Did you hear him?

LD: Ben, we're live here... we're on the air and... uhh...

BW: He said it's broken, Dane! His ankle?

LD: I... I really don't know at this point. There's a lot we don't know right now about what just happened over the past few minutes since we came on the air... we're... we're working to get more information... more details... we know that... uhh... well, we know that Danny King...

BW: Danny King?! Jesus, you're right. He's down too! What the hell is happening back there? Get some damn control of this place, Zharkov!

[Waterson angrily turns away as Dane shakes her head.]

LD: Danny King... I... well, I'm sure fans of Danny King were eagerly awaiting his AWA debut here tonight and...

[She grimaces, biting her lower lip.]

LD: Hell, I don't know, Ben.

BW: Carver just got taken out by Team Supreme! Look, I'm sorry to Danny King... his friends, his family, his fans... but Hannibal Carver is one of the biggest stars this company has and he just got TAKEN OUT by Bret Grayson and that anklelock.

LD: We don't know that, Ben.

BW: He said IT'S BROKEN, Dane! What the hell do you think that means?

LD: I.. I don't know! We don't know! That's the damn point! Let's... let's let this whole thing simmer for a minute...

[She takes a pair of deep breaths.]

LD: ...we still got a show to do, Ben. So try to focus on that.

BW: Oh, sure... we're just a bunch of circus animals, right? The show must go on! Way to carry the office's water, Dane. Your husband and his pal will be very proud.

[Dane glares at Waterson without a response.]

LD: Fans, we know the level of concern for Hannibal Carver will be off the charts here tonight and as soon... as soon as we have more details... an update of any sort... well, we're gonna get you that. We want to hear it as well, I promise you that... but... well, like it or not, we DO have a show to do here tonight.

[Dane puts a hand on Waterson's shoulder.]

LD: You okay? Can you do this?

[Waterson gives a short nod, his face giving the opposite answer.]

LD: Alright... good. Uh...uh...

[Dane grimaces as she snatches up a sheet of paper, giving it a look...]

LD: ...right, okay... well, Opportunity Knocks was just a couple of days ago now and it was certainly a... certainly a shocking night. Lots of surprise appearances... lots of debuts... and lots of surprising returns with perhaps none bigger than this one. Take a look.

[Dane exhales sharply, relieved to be throwing to a video package. She turns to talk to Waterson as we fade to black...]

...and on this black silent screen, one piano note rings out before we can hear the echoing voice of Salvatore Albano.

"Could it really be...?"

[Another beat of silence before Colt Patterson joins in.]

"WHAT THE HELL IS THIS ABOUT, ALBANO?!"

[With more slow piano, we get a montage from Opportunity Knocks in Seattle...

A kneeling Kerry Kendrick, a smiling Sandra Hayes, a telltale box held out between them only to have a referee interrupt the scene.

Kendrick screams a response.]

"WHAT DO YOU MEAN THERE'S A CHALLENGER?!"

[And as we smash cut to the curtain opening, the crowd ERUPTING, and Cody Mertz stepping onto the stage, the earworm known as "Can't Hold Us" by Macklemore begins to play over our video as Sal's excited voice breaks through.]

"IT IS! IT IS! IT ISSSSSS!"

[We cut to the crowd, fans jumping up and down, kids screaming as Cody Mertz pounds his chest on the ramp.

Kerry Kendrick is screaming. Sandra Hayes is horrified.

Cody Mertz is running, sprinting down the aisle, sliding under the ropes as we can see the referee signal for the bell.

The montage of the match follows - Mertz with a dropkick... a second dropkick... a desperate Hayes intervening and nearly catching a feint kick for her efforts...

Hayes getting involved again, grabbing Mertz' leg to stall his offense as Sal cries out.]

"Oh, come on! Hayes getting involved AGAIN!"

[Kendrick attempts a suplex over the ropes to bring Mertz back in but Mertz slips out, landing on his feet behind him...

...and immediately takes him over with a rana for a near fall!

Cut to members of the crowd in near jubilation over Mertz nearly striking gold...

...but then erupting in rage as Hayes SLAPS Mertz across the face!

The jeers turn to cheers just as quickly again as Pete "Blue Shoes" Miller lays down the law, ejecting Hayes from ringside as Colt Patterson exclaims.]

"Wait... no... she didn't do ANYTHING!"

[With Hayes out of the picture, we see Kendrick take aim with the title belt, looking to crown his surprise challenger...

...but the official strikes again, snatching the belt out of the champion's hands as Colt rages.]

"HE CAN'T DO THAT! IT'S A DAMN HANDICAP MATCH OUT HERE!"

[But with Kendrick shouting at the official, Mertz hits the ropes, using a satellite headscissors to take the champion down with an armbar as Sal and Colt makes teh call, the footage slowing to a crawl...]

SA: BROUSSARD SPECIAL! BROUSSARD SPECIAL! HE'S HOOKED IT IN!

CP: NO!

SA: THEY'RE IN THE MIDDLE OF THE RING! THERE'S NO WAY OUT!

[And with Kendrick's hand hovering over the mat... we get the tap out!]

"HE TAPPED! HE TAPPED!"

[The music cuts. Silence. A black screen again.

And then the footage comes back as Mertz surges to his feet, title belt in hand!]

"WE'VE GOT A NEW CHAMPION!"

[The montage of the celebration follows - Mertz' shocked but overjoyed face... the crowd celebrating... Mertz on the middle rope in triumph as Kendrick is devastating out on the ramp...

...and then Rebecca Ortiz makes it official.]

"...AND NEEEEEEEEEW... AWA NATIONAL CHAMPION...
COOOOOOODY MERRRRRTZZZZZ!"

[Mertz holds the title over his head, the fans celebrating with him...

...and then we fade to black.

And come back up on the ring where Megumi Sato is standing.]

MS: Tonight's opening contest is set for one fall with a fifteen minute time limit and is for the AWA NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP!

[The Regina crowd cheers!]

MS: Introducing first, he is the challenger... already in the ring at this time... he hails from Carson City, Nevada... weighing in at 263 pounds... he is "ACE HIGH"... JIMMY ACE!

[A sleazy looking man with stringy hair, questionable facial hair, and a pair of cards showing a Blackjack on the hip of his trunks and red boots that read "ACE" in white lettering down the side throws an arm in the air to jeers.]

MS: Annnnnnnnnnd his opponent...

[The crowd is already fired up... and only gets louder as Macklemore's "Can't Hold Us" begins to play over the PA system.]

MS: ...from El Paso, Texas... weighing in at 195 pounds... he is the AWA NATIONAL CHAMPIONNNNNNNNNNN...

...COOOOOOODYYYYYYYYY MERRRRRRRRRRRTZ!

[Mertz ERUPTS into view at the top of a staircase to a HUGE REACTION from the Regina crowd, the new champion hearing all the support as he thrusts the title belt into the air with a grin and a nod...

...which is a good opportunity for the camera to pull back and show off tonight's venue.

The ring is on the floor... with not a ton of room around it. We've wedged in a timekeeper's table and an announce table but you'd probably have to turn sideways to squeeze past those and the fans who are in permanent cushy stadium seating all around the ring.

In between the sections of seated are aisles that lead to an upper concourse which is where Cody Mertz emerged from, walking down the stairs and taking the time to embrace the fans - literally in some cases - as he heads down towards the ring. There are no barricades on this night as Mertz steps right out of the aisle into the ringside area, rolling under the ropes into the ring.]

LD: Cody Mertz, the new National Champion, getting up close and personal with the fans here in Regina as he makes his first appearance with the gold here in the Globe Theatre - and Ben, what an unusual venue this is for us. Canada's ONLY theatre in the round! Founded in 1966 as Saskatchewan's first professional theatre company, it's only fitting that the stars of the AWA are treading the boards here tonight!

BW: Unusual is one way to put it. You know they made me take the same walk to the ring? I had to get close to these Regina swineheads!

LD: Just over 400 fans here on hand here tonight for this special edition of Showtime On Tour here in Regina... and Ben, did you know that we're just down the road from a city called Moose Jaw?

BW: The only moose I care about right now is Mooselips... I'm gonna need a keg of that swill to get me through being here. What is that smell?!

LD: Hey, if you start talking too bad about this town, I'm guessing some members of the Saskatchewan Roughriders from the CFL will have something to say about it.

BW: Oooh, I'm so scared.

LD: Or maybe the back-to-back champions - the Regina Riot of the Western Women's Canadian Football League! They just won the championship last week, Ben!

BW: Okay, THEM I might be afraid of.

[We cut to the front row where we see a handful of women in football jerseys on their feet cheering...]

LD: We've actually got a few members of the Regina Riot here tonight, taking in the action... that's running back Mallory Starkey who had two touchdowns in the title game.

[Starkey gives a big smile and thumbs up before we cut back to the ring where Mertz has handed the title over to referee Scott Ezra and is preparing for his first title defense.]

LD: Alright... we're just about set for action after what has been a tumultuous start to this show to say the least...

"DING! DING! DING!"

[Mertz claps his hands together, moving out of the corner towards Jimmy Ace who sneers at the young fan favorite.]

LD: Ben, did you ever think you'd see Cody Mertz back in an AWA ring?

BW: Hoped is a better word. After he got ran out of town by his former partner, I hoped he'd make a living somewhere that I didn't have to see him on a regular basis.

LD: You're such a downer. The fans are overjoyed to see Cody Mertz back... just listen to them...

[A "CO-DY!" chant breaks out, bringing a smile to Mertz' face as Ace stomps around the ring, cupping his hands over his ears.]

LD: ...well, Jimmy Ace might agree with you, Ben. What do you know about Jimmy Ace?

BW: I know he's no easy out for Mertz. He's got plenty of experience in the Southwest... even out on the West Coast and Pacific Northwest. This is one of those guys looking for a big break and it doesn't get bigger than a crack at the AWA's oldest championship.

LD: Cody Mertz circling around here, looking for an opening... joining the ranks of guys like Juan Vasquez... like Travis Lynch... like our Interim President Maxim Zharkov... and yes, the man who helped him create the move he used to tap out Kerry Kendrick - Marcus Broussard.

[The two come together in a rush, tying up as Ace uses his size advantage to push Mertz right back against the ropes...]

LD: Referee calling for a break...

[...and as Ace backs off, he comes up swinging but Mertz ducks under before landing a big right hand of his own to cheers!]

LD: ...and Mertz is a little too quick for Jimmy Ace, Ben.

BW: He's definitely got a speed advantage but he's a shrimp. 195 pounds? I can curl that on a bad day in the gym.

LD: I'm guessing you haven't seen the inside of a gym in many a year.

BW: Pfft. All those places are surrounded by glass. Can see inside them real easy when you walk by.

[The two competitors circle again before locking up, this time Mertz using an armdrag to toss the larger man to the mat...]

...and greets him with a dropkick on the way back to his feet, sending Ace falling through the ropes to the floor!]

LD: Mertz has the Regina fans rocking early... all of 23 years old, he'll be 24 later this month... and he's accomplished so much at such a young age. Former two-time World Tag Team Champion. Former Stampede Cup winner. He even won gold in Japan and Mexico, Ben.

BW: The kid's got talent - no doubt... but is he better than Kerry Kendrick? Don't make me laugh.

LD: He was better than Kerry Kendrick a couple of nights ago.

BW: That was an ambush! Kerry Kendrick didn't even think he was going to be wrestling - let alone defending the title against a guy who no one's heard from in... what? A year?

[Ace climbs back up on the apron, waving Mertz back... but when the champion advances on him, Ace sticks a thumb in the eye!]

LD: Cheap shot from the outside by Ace...

[Grabbing a handful of hair, Ace runs Mertz down the ropes, smashing his head into the top turnbuckle...]

LD: ...and RAMS him straight into the corner!

[Ace ducks through the ropes, ignoring the referee's warning for the illegal tactics before he grabs Mertz by the hair, steering him around into another faceslam into the top turnbuckle.]

LD: And now Jimmy Ace creates an opening... and Ben, Cody Mertz wasted no time in getting and accepting new challengers. We saw him later that night in Seattle interrupted by two-time National Champion Jordan Ohara as well as "The Future" Derrick Williams, both looking for shots at the title... and you have to imagine Kerry Kendrick will be at the front of the line for a rematch as well.

[Grabbing the ropes, Jimmy Ace lays some heavy boots into the body of Mertz, earning jeers from the crowd...]

BW: Mertz might not have to worry about all that if he doesn't get on his game here. He might've taken this guy too lightly and doing that against ANY opponent is one big step towards an upset no one sees coming.

[Ace grabs Mertz by the arm, whipping him across the ring...

...but Mertz leaps to the middle rope on the approach, springing off and twisting around...]

LD: OHHH! CROSSBODY!

[Mertz rolls right off of Ace, coming back to his feet. Ace comes up swinging and gets taken over with another hiptoss right before Mertz leaps up, dropping his weight down in a backsplash!]

LD: And a senton for good measure! Cody Mertz building some momentum here!

[Mertz flips over, getting a two count before Ace kicks out. He gets off the mat, dragging Ace up by the arm, whipping him into the corner...]

LD: The champ shoots him in, charging in aft- OHHH!

[The crowd has a similar reaction as Mertz runs right into a raised boot under the chin!]

LD: What a counter by Jimmy Ace! Trying to get the biggest upset of his career!

[Mertz stumbles backwards from the boot... and Ace runs him down with a clothesline, falling to his knees from the impact!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHH!"

LD: Jimmy Ace with his own cover now! He gets one! Gets two!

[But Mertz escapes before three, cheers coming up from the crowd.]

LD: This one can't be going the way that Cody Mertz was looking for but the kid is a fighter. You can never count him out.

[Dragging Mertz off the mat, Ace lifts the 195 pounder with ease, throwing him down in a bodyslam. He slowly backs away, bumping up against the turnbuckles...]

LD: And is Jimmy Ace going to the ropes? Is Jimmy Ace going to fly?

BW: Ace High may not be just a clever nickname.

LD: Is it clever? Ace High is a pretty bad hand typically. Do you even play poker? Does he?

[From the middle rope, Ace looks out on the jeering crowd with a smirking sneer, pointing to the fans, taunting them...]

LD: Wasting valuable time here and...

[...and suddenly Mertz kips up off the mat, rushes the corner, leaps to the middle rope, springing into the air to snare Ace's head between his legs..]

LD: MERTZ EXPRESS!

[...and uses a rana to snap Ace over, dumping him down on the canvas to big cheers!]

LD: So much for that high risk offense... as Ace goes low.

BW: Very funny. It's not over yet, Dane.

LD: Oh no?

[Mertz gets a running start as Ace struggles off the mat, trying to get to his feet but instead staggers right into a satellite headscissors as Mertz goes round and round and round...]

BW: It's making me dizzy!

LD: Just imagine what it's doing to Jimmy Ace!

[...and then DOWN with an armbar takedown, cranking back on the limb!]

LD: The Broussard Special is on! It's sunk in deep! They're in the middle of the ring annnnnnd...

[The crowd ROARS as Ace quickly taps out!]

"DING! DING! DING!"

LD: ...that's a win for the AWA National Champion!

[Mertz immediately releases the hold, climbing to his feet with a grin on his face as the referee raises his hand...]

LD: Cody Mertz with his first successful title defense right here on Showtime and... fans, in just a few moments here, Mariah Wolfe is going to join the new champion there in the ring to get some comments... but Ben, you've gotta be impressed by what we just saw out of Cody Mertz.

BW: It's a good win... but Jimmy Ace is not Kerry Kendrick... and Mertz has yet to prove to me he can beat The Foundation when Kendrick knows who is coming for him, Dane.

LD: A shockingly valid point from my broadcast colleague... and speaking of broadcast colleagues, let's go up to Mariah Wolfe who has made her way to the ring!

[Mariah Wolfe is indeed in the ring, mic in hand.]

MW: Thanks, Lori! What a win and what a return for the man of the moment, Cody Mertz!

[The crowd cheers as Mertz nods his thanks, stepping to stand alongside Mariah with the title belt slung over his left shoulder.]

CM: Mariah Wolfe, nice to finally meet you. I'm Cody Mertz and I'm THEIR-

[Mertz points to the whole audience.]

CM: -AWA National Champion! Pleased to meet you!

[The crowd cheers again as Mariah smiles.]

MW: And pleased to meet you too, Cody. You, of course, made your shocking return to the AWA at Opportunity Knocks where you won the AWA National Title - the oldest title in the company... and while the answer may be obvious as you stand there with the gold, I gotta ask the question - what brings you back FINALLY to the AWA?

[Mertz nods with a smile before shrugging.]

CM: Well, I never left... not really. This has always been where my heart is... this is my home.

[Another big cheer rings out from the Canadian crowd!]

CM: Unfortunate circumstances took me away but I always knew that I would make it back here. It just so happens that last week, Opportunity Knocks - well, that was two-fold for me.

[Mertz laughs.]

CM: You see, I was there at Opportunity Knocks because I thought it was the perfect time for me to make my case to come back home. And the AWA? They agreed! I brought my gear and I was going to go out and maybe someone would want to face me, but to my surprise I see the monitor and Kerry Kendrick didn't have an opponent. Well, if that wasn't opportunity I don't know what is so I-

"THERE HE IS! THERE'S YOUR THIEF!"

"BUBBLEGUM! I SAID I'D HANDLE THIS."

[Pan up a few feet into the audience at the top of the steps at the Globe Theatre. Miss Sandra Hayes is pointing to Cody Mertz, trying to sic a pair of Regina Police Service officers on him to no avail. Kerry Kendrick appears just as the police officers walk away. You can almost hear Lori Dane resting her forehead in her palm in exasperation.]

LD: She didn't call the police... again... did she?

BW: Was that true? Did she really call 911 at Opportunity Knocks?

LD: Not talking about it.

[Kendrick waves a hand at the ring.]

KK: Despite all the legal mumbo jumbo, that still counts as a theft and not only have you been walking around for three days with stolen property... a belt that I earned fair and square at Memorial Day Mayhem - SHUT UP!

[Kendrick snaps at an adjacent fan in the audience, just because they're the closest one to the multitude of jeers he's facing.]

KK: As I was saying, not only did you steal my Championship, now I see you've gone and stolen my mentor's signature hold. Is it because I told the truth about you on the Think Tank last year?

[Mertz chuckles to himself, like he just remembered it himself. He holds the National belt proudly, his back a little straighter.]

KK: You weren't even on the roster last week, and I... the rightful National Champion... the one who should be picking the challengers... I didn't even have time to prepare. You owe me a rematch. Not now... in Calgary! Not in front of a podunk town like this...

[Local pride gets the better of the fans. And what's wrong with Regina exactly? Hayes looks like she's on the verge of crocodile tears.]

MSH: You... you sunuvabuhhh... YOU RUINED OUR PERFECT ENGAGEMENT! I'm... I'm gonna call the Mounties now!

KK: Gumdrop... please... I said I'd handle this!

[Kendrick turns to address the new champion again...

...but is interrupted by a voice coming from a different part of the Globe Theatre.]

"Can you two just shut up?"

[The camera finds, on the top row of the theater on the opposite side from Kendrick and Hayes, Derrick Williams holding a mic and shaking his head.]

DW: Face it, Kendrick... between me and Jordan, you weren't walking out of Seattle with that belt anyways... even if Mertz here didn't swoop in on all of us.

[Mertz grimaces at the "swoop in" reference as Williams continues.]

DW: And all this whining is just giving everyone a headache.

[The Future points at Kendrick.]

DW: You've been around long enough to realize that when you have as many people chasing a title as you did... when you lose... you're going to the back of the line.

[The crowd cheers that idea as Hayes screams "NO! NO!" off-mic as Kendrick tries to soothe his main squeeze.]

DW: And someone can correct me if I'm wrong... but I'm pretty sure I called first shot right after you started tapping.

[Williams mimes tapping out as Kendrick fumes, the crowd cheering at the reminder that Kendrick tapped away his title three nights ago.]

DW: And unlike Kerry over there, Mertz... I'll take that title match whenever you want to get it. You just defended the title so I'll give you this one off... but whenever you're ready, so am I...

[Mertz nods as the crowd cheers.]

DW: ...but that also means that my night is free. And Kendrick, your night is free. So, why don't you and I sort out some unfinished bus-

[Another voice rings out, interrupting The Future from his proposal.]

"Hold on now..."

[The camera swings toward the opposite side of the Globe Theatre, where Jordan Ohara is standing along the upper concourse with a microphone in hand. The handsome young Blasian wrestler is grinning broadly as the Regina fans immediately recognize him. He raises a hand, acknowledging the ovation before slowly making his way down the stairs.]

JO: Derrick...

[Williams looks across the theatre.]

JO: You know, I was sittin' up here listenin' to you talk ...

[Ohara chuckles.]

JO: And I thought to myself...

[He pauses, smiling.]

JO: Well, Derrick's gonna have something to say because here I go jumping the line again.

[Ohara reaches the floor and walks around the ring rather than entering.]

JO: Because if there's one thing Derrick Williams is real good at...it's tellin' somebody they're jumpin' the line.

[Ohara shrugs.]

JO: And I'm not going to argue with him. He's earned his shot.

[Williams gives a small nod.]

JO: Kerry Kendrick deserves a rematch.

[The crowd boos Kendrick as Ohara smiles.]

JO: And Cody Mertz... well, Cody's the champion. He's earned the right to stand right there with that championship.

But... so have I!

So let me step right in front of the rest of the pack and talk to you, Mr. Mertz.

[Ohara puts a foot on the ringsteps, starting to climb up into the squared circle where Mertz is waiting.]

JO: I never got the rematch I was due. Kendrick beat me for that championship by exploiting a loophole in the rules. Yeah, that was clever. Too clever.

Kendrick, you found a way to get around me. But you were so busy trying to find a way to make sure I didn't get another chance that you weren't ready for Mr. Mertz here to take the belt.

[Ohara ducks through the ropes, looking right at the new champion.]

JO: You're the champion and I appreciate that it's you not Kendrick. But I NEED my rematch for the National Championship and I'm NOT going to wait for my opportunity to come back around.

[Ohara looks back toward Kendrick.]

JO: And I'm not going to try to trick my way into it.

[The crowd begins to boo Kendrick again as Ohara looks to Williams.]

JO: And I'm not going to pout about it.

I'm going to ask you for my shot. Man-to-man. You name the time. You name the place. But I'm asking nicely now. Cody, congratulations. You earned it. And you look good with MY belt.

[Mertz raises the title slightly as Ohara nods.]

JO: Cody...

[He smiles.]

JO: I'm comin' for that championship.

[The crowd cheers, an "O-HA-RA!" chant breaking out as the Phoenix smiles broadly, soaking in the reaction. Cody Mertz looks around at the chanting crowd for a few moments before raising the mic, the chant dying off...]

CM: So, let's get this straight...

[He points to Ohara.]

CM: You want a title match.

[Then to Williams.]

CM: You want a title match.

[And then to Kendrick.]

CM: And you want a title REMATCH.

[Mertz nods, smirking at the three challengers.]

CM: Like I said right after I won this, you want a match, all you have to do is ask!

[The crowd cheers as all three challengers gesture at themselves.]

CM: You guys want ME to choose who fights me first?

[Mertz shrugs.]

CM: I say why choose?

So, in North Dakota... one of the AWA's favorite hosts... it's gonna be the three of you... and me...

[The crowd buzzes at the idea of what's coming.]

CM: ...in a four way match, sudden death rules... for the AWA NATIONAL TITLE!

[He holds up the title as the crowd goes NUTS! He lets the crowd reaction die down a little before raising the mic again...]

CM: What do you say?

[Kendrick is the first to speak.]

KK: I say it's a sham! It's a joke! It's a travesty! But if beating all THREE of you is the only way I get MY title back, I also say... you're on.

[The crowd cheers!]

KK: And since you know these two do-gooders aren't gonna back down from a challenge, I'm guessing they'd say you're on too!

[Ohara and Williams both nod as the crowd cheers.]

KK: Then I'd say we've got ourselves a title match.

[Another big cheer!]

KK: But North Dakota's not for a few more weeks... and just standing out here listening to the three of you has me reaching for the nearest trash can to vomit.

[Hayes sneers as she feigns sticking a finger down her throat.]

KK: So, I say next weekend in Calgary, we give these people a preview.

Let's put together a little tag match. It'll be me and the new champ there...

[Mertz looks agitated at the idea of teaming with Kendrick.]

KK: ...against the two friends-turned-enemies-turned frenemies down there.

[Ohara nods with a "you're on" off-mic as Williams claps his hands together with a grin. Seemingly forgotten in all the mess, Mariah Wolfe sticks her head back in.]

MW: Sounds like a challenge, champ. Whaddya say?

[Mertz glares HARD at Kendrick for a few moments before nodding his head.]

CM: Wouldn't be the first time I had to carry a tag team partner. You're on, Kendrick!

[The crowd cheers as "Can't Hold Us" begins to play again and Mertz mounts the middle rope, holding the National Title up in the air...]

LD: A tag team match next weekend in Calgary! A four way National Title match in a few weeks in North Dakota! The AWA is comin' to town and the heat is on in your hometown, fans! We'll be right back!

[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 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 backstage area where Sweet Lou Blackwell is standing.]

SLB: Welcome back to Showtime, AWA fans, where moments ago, we heard challenges issued back and forth between the four men circling the AWA National Title... and I am here to let you know that I spoke with President Zharkov briefly during the break and those matches are official! One week from tonight, it'll be Kerry Kendrick and the AWA National Champion Cody Mertz taking on Derrick Williams and Jordan Ohara in tag team action... and then two weeks after that, we'll be in one of the AWA hotbeds - the Alerus Center in Grand Forks, North Dakota -

where we'll see a four way battle for the National Title between those same four competitors under sudden death rules!

[Blackwell's hype face dims.]

SLB: What I DON'T have for you right now, fans, is an update on the condition of neither Danny King nor Hannibal Carver. King is backstage getting treatment by AWA medical... it is unknown his condition nor if he'll be able to compete in his Brass Ring battle with Adrian Kirk later tonight. Carver has been rushed to the hospital... and an update is still pending but when we get one, you'll get one. Right now, let's go back down to ringside to Lori and Ben!

[We fade from backstage to the ringside area.]

LD: Thanks, Lou... it was a shocking scene to start our night here in Regina... and I think I'm STILL shocked by what we saw. We know Supreme Wright and Bret Grayson were removed from the building after what they did to Hannibal Carver... but... well, it's Carver's condition that has us concerned.

BW: Dane, he said it as clear as day - "it's broken." He believed his ankle was broken in that moment. I know it.

LD: If it is...

[Lori trails off, shaking her head.]

LD: But when you talk about shocking moments as of late, Opportunity Knocks was a night filled with big shocks... one of which was when Raphael Rhodes returned from the injury list, only to be met by someone else returning from a state of inactivity in Jay Alana. Ben, you've been observing Raphael Rhodes for over a decade, have you ever seen him defeated in the way that Jay Alana beat him?

[There is a pause as Waterson collects his thoughts.]

BW: I think a lot of people would expect me to crow about how Raphael Rhodes was dismantled by Jay Alana, but I have to admit, even I was a little startled by how efficiently Alana took Rhodes out. I've watched the footage at least a half-dozen times since it happened, and... Dane, we knew Jay Alana was a special talent, but for him to take apart someone like Raphael Rhodes like that, it raises a lot of questions.

LD: You're not the only one, Ben. A lot of the discussion on social media has revolved around two sides of the coin; is Jay Alana that good, or was there something wrong with Raphael Rhodes? Did he come back from injury too soon?

BW: Here's one for you... did the drive to finally beat Juan Vasquez take it all out of the tank for him? You've heard of a Pyrrhic victory, right?

LD: Where the costs of the victory were so destructive, that it might as well have been a loss?

BW: Exactly.

LD: I think that's going to be a tough question to answer, especially when you have the question of Jay Alana out there. We knew he was good, and I think we have to ask, is this a case where someone overdelivers on the hype? Did we not give him enough credit?

BW: Could be. Could very well be.

[As Dane and Waterson continue to talk, we cut to footage marked with "JULY 4, 2018 - SEATTLE, WASHINGTON". Lucy St. Clair is standing inside of a KeyArena locker room beside a distraught Dana Kaiser as Raphael Rhodes can be seen in the background packing a bag, a towel over his head.]

LD: What you're seeing now is footage that was recorded by our social media team, as Lucy St. Clair was trying to get footage for Twitter and Instagram. She wanted to try and talk with Raphael Rhodes right after the match, to ask him what happened, and you can see him packing his bags.

[Kaiser can be seen motioning "not now, this isn't the time" to the young reporter, trying to guide them from the locker room.]

BW: I managed Raphael Rhodes for a year, and seeing this footage shocked me, Dane. Even when he lost the cage match to Vasquez back in 2009, the most devastating loss of his life, he didn't take it like this.

LD: You can see, fans, not only is Rhodes packing his bags...

[We cut to moments later, where St. Claire and the social media team are following Rhodes and Kaiser outside of the building, where a valet awaits with their rental car. We can hear St. Clair repeatedly asking for a comment, and Kaiser answering "not now" as Rhodes storms to the car. Once the group reaches the car, Rhodes side-arm throws his bag into the open trunk, causing it to burst open and the contents to explode throughout the inside. As Rhodes storms to the passenger seat, Kaiser holds her hand up to St. Clair's camera, saying "enough, please", before finally St. Clair backs off. Kaiser walks to the car, with the valet closing the trunk, and climbs into the driver's seat, driving away. We cut back to our announcers, Waterson shaking his head.]

LD: He left the building. No comment about the match, he didn't acknowledge Lucy St. Clair...

BW: Like I said, I've seen a lot of Raphael Rhodes post-match reactions, but nothing like that. That bordered on a tantrum.

LD: We did receive an official statement a couple of days later, but notably, it was not authored by Raphael Rhodes. It was authored by Dana Kaiser. Let's get that up on the screen. It says, and I quote...

[As Dane talks, a scroll of the statement appears on the screen.]

LD: "I wish to apologize on behalf of myself and Raphael Rhodes for our conduct immediately following Opportunity Knocks 2. The behavior we displayed to Lucy St. Clair was not acceptable, and we have reached out to her directly to apologize. With regards to the loss to Mr. Jay Alana, we have no comment at this time. We will be in Calgary in one week's time, at which point we will address the match. Thank you for your concern, Dana Kaiser."

[Waterson rolls his eyes.]

BW: As antiseptic as ever from Dana Kaiser.

LD: While I want to give her the benefit of the doubt, I actually agree with you here.

[Waterson looks shocked.]

BW: You do?!

LD: I think this needs to be addressed. With all due respect to our colleague, I don't think anyone expected a comment about Lucy St. Clair. I think people want to know just what happened with Raphael Rhodes in that match with Jay Alana, and frankly, this is a stall tactic.

[Waterson looks impressed.]

BW: Look at you, cutting through the crap for a change.

LD: Hey, I know Dana wants to protect her husband. I get it. We need a better answer than this, though. And hopefully, in Calgary, we'll get it. Up next... this is how our night was SUPPOSED to begin... and unfortunately, it went very, very differently. But right now, let's head to the ring where the Interim AWA President Maxim Zharkov is waiting for some very special announcements!

[We fade to the ring where we find Interim AWA President Maxim Zharkov standing alone, clipboard in one hand, mic in the other. He has not invited an interviewer to be with him... perhaps not wanting to answer the questions that might come.]

MZ: Attention AWA fans...

[Zharkov's face tells the tale - he's stressed, agitated, emotional... but trying to hold it all down to do his job.]

MZ: It was said I come to Regina to make big announcements... and I will make those announcements no matter what happens backstage.

[He grimaces, thinking about what HAS happened backstage already tonight.]

MZ: It is official. The AWA World Champion, Supernova, is fully cleared for competition.

[The crowd ROARS at that announcement, Zharkov giving a nod in response.]

MZ: And that means he is cleared and ready to defend the AWA World Title again.

[Another big reaction! Zharkov smiles this time, shaking off the ill effects of the evening so far.]

MZ: After much discussion with Supernova and the Championship Committee, I am here to announce... not one... but TWO title defenses for Supernova!

[The crowd buzzes at that, waiting to hear what they are.]

MZ: IF he can survive the first one.

[Zharkov smirks at that as there are a scattering of boos for the implication.]

MZ: Because next weekend on Saturday Night Wrestling in Calgary, Supernova will be in this ring, defending the World Heavyweight Title...

[Dramatic pause. Zharkov nods, waiting...]

MZ: ...against the two-time World Champion...

[...and the fans start to get louder, hoping...]

MZ: ...RYAN MARTINEZ!

[...and they ERUPT that it's the AWA's White Knight getting the shot at the big gold and not the OTHER active two-time AWA World Champion! Zharkov nods again, grinning at the people's reaction for his proclamation.]

MZ: AND...

[The crowd quiets down, waiting to hear the other announcement.]

MZ: ...the winner of that matchup will move on the July 28th in the AWA's annual stop in North Dakota to defend the AWA World Title against...

[Another dramatic pause.]

MZ: ...ATLAS ARMSTRONG!

[The cheers are not as strong for that one... but there are some mixed in the overwhelming jeers. Zharkov chuckles at the difference in reaction with a shrug.]

MZ: It is so ordered.

[But as Zharkov prepares to lower the mic to the mat, the lights go down, then we hear a collection of horns playing -- the horns that open the Van Halen song "Runnin' With the Devil." Then you hear the strums of the guitar, with a red light blinking in time with them.

The crowd goes nuts as a single spotlight hits the top of an aisle and there we see, the AWA World Heavyweight Champion, Supernova.]

LD: The World Champion is here in Regina!

BW: And I might say he's lucky to still be the World Champion and not be back in a hospital bed somewhere!

[Supernova is dressed in a black trenchcoat, with the image of a yellow and orange, exploding star on the back, over a black singlet with the same image on the front, plus black tights and black wrestling boots. His brown hair hangs just past his ears and he wears a pair of shades. The AWA World Heavyweight Title belt is strapped around his waist.]

LD: You might say that, but the fact is, he survived a lot that Atlas Armstrong threw at him, even had him down for the count when the referee was down, when they met up in Seattle at Opportunity Knocks.

BW: Oh, come on, Dane, you know Atlas wasn't going to expend energy kicking out when the official was down! That's just good strategy!

[Supernova makes his way down the aisle, slapping the fans' hands as he walks the staircase towards the ring, retrieving a microphone from the ringside table, before ascending the steps and ducking between the ropes.]

LD: I'm not going to debate with you about strategy right now, Ben, because I want to hear what Supernova has to say, as much as I'm sure these fans do!

BW: Yes, but does our Interim AWA President want to hear what he has to say?

[Supernova walks toward Zharkov and raises the mic to his lips, but first, the fans speak up.]

"SU-PER-NO-VA!" *clap, clap, clap-clap-clap*

"SU-PER-NO-VA!" *clap, clap, clap-clap-clap*

"SU-PER-NO-VA!" *clap, clap, clap-clap-clap*

[Supernova pauses for a moment, turning toward the fans, a grin on his face. He then turns back to Zharkov, his expression a bit more serious.]

S: Let me start by saying that when it comes to your announcement about what will happen in Calgary.... I approve!

[The fans cheer and Zharkov nods.]

S: I do thank you for allowing me to finally face Ryan Martinez in a match that the fans want to see and, regardless of what I might think about certain decisions you have made, I do appreciate you not letting whatever issues you may have with Martinez get in the way of such a decision!

[The fans cheer again, though this time, Zharkov is stoic, as if not sure how to react.]

S: And should I walk out with the AWA World Title, nothing will please me more than to get another shot at Atlas Armstrong and prove, once and for all, who really is the better man and who deserves to be the champion!

[More cheers from the fans as Zharkov nods again.]

S: But there's just one thing... I've been away from the ring for too long. I'm not one to ignore the advice of the doctors, but what I hated more than anything was having to rest up, knowing that I wouldn't be defending the title belt that I earned back at SuperClash IX!

And as much as I appreciate what you have done, President Zharkov, in setting up title defenses that the people want to see... title defenses that I am more than prepared to make... but the thing is, I don't believe we need to make the people wait a week to see the title defended!

[The fans are buzzing, likely anticipating what's to come next, as Supernova gestures to the crowd.]

S: Regina, let me hear it from you... who wants to see me defend this belt... TONIGHT!

[And that gets the crowd to go wild... though Zharkov is now shaking his head vigorously.]

MZ: NO! I will not take a risk in jeopardizing the title defense signed for Calgary!

[And those cheers quickly turn to boos... and Supernova now turns back to Zharkov.]

S: Didn't we go through this already a week ago in Seattle? I've been gone for too long and I'm not about to wait to get back in the ring... and furthermore, I'm not about to wait to defend the title this time around!

[Nova nods as the crowd cheers.]

S: In fact, I'll make it simple for you... you can put a bunch of names in a hat... you can put the name of EVERY SINGLE MAN in this building... on this show tonight... draw one out... and I'll defend the title against that man in the Main Event!

[The fans are cheering, though Zharkov is gesturing with his hand, making it clear he does not approve. As the crowd dies down, Zharkov shakes his head.]

MZ: I made title match for you... nyet, I made TWO!

[Zharkov glares at the champion.]

MZ: And still not enough?

[He shakes his head.]

MZ: A random opponent? Do you realize what you're risking?!

[Supernova removes his shades at that point and locks eyes with Zharkov.]

S: What I realize is that I'm a fighting champion, a champion of all these people out here, and that they want to see me defend the title!

[He then turns to the crowd and gestures with his arm.]

S: LET HIM KNOW WHAT YOU WANT!

[And that the fans do.]

"MAKE THE MATCH!"

"MAKE THE MATCH!"

"MAKE THE MATCH!"

"MAKE THE MATCH!"

[Zharkov looks quite frustrated... and takes a very long time to make a decision, listening to the crowd, glaring at Supernova...

...and then in a burst of that same frustration, he throws up his hands.]

MZ: You may bury yourself, Supernova.

[Zharkov stares HARD at the World Champion.]

MZ: And I don't care.

Have your match.

[Zharkov throws down the mic, turning to stomp out of the ring as Supernova excitedly pumps a fist as the crowd ROARS!]

LD: We've got a World Title defense in Regina! TONIGHT!

BW: Against a randomly-drawn challenger? Are you sure Opportunity Knocks is over, Dane? This is almost like it's still going on in Regina!

LD: It certainly feels that way, Ben! Supernova asking our president to pick an opponent and random for a title defense! Who could it possibly be getting that opportunity?! Every single man we see out here tonight - their name could be going into that drawing!

[Supernova holds up the title for all to see as the voice of Mariah Wolfe pops in.]

MW: Wow! Massive announcements all the way around, Sweet Daddy! We've got not one... not two... but THREE World Title matches announced right there!

SDW: Including right here tonight! Supernova says he's gonna give a shot to a name drawn at random... and EVERY MAN IN THE BUILDING has got a shot at it!

MW: A huge opportunity here in Regina... but if the champion survives that, he's got the two-time champ - the White Knight himself, Ryan Martinez - waiting for him in what's gotta be a dream match for fans!

SDW: I know it's a dream match for me to see those two fightin' it out for the big, big gold... oh yeah!

MW: And then... North Dakota, look out... it's always one of the most exciting nights of the year for AWA fans and this promises to be no different with Atlas Armstrong getting his shot at the gold on July 28th!

SDW: I don't know what it is about North Dakota but it's always a special night and with TWO title matches already announced for that show, it's lookin' to be another hot one!

MW: I can't wait for that... but fans, I also came into tonight thinking I couldn't wait to see this grudge match tonight pitting former friends and partners Skylar Swift and Trish Wallace against one another. Swift made her return to action during the Memorial Day Rumble and these two have been on a collision course ever since. Unfortunately, that big showdown will NOT be happening here tonight after Swift suffered an injury during her match with Lauryn Rage at Opportunity Knocks.

SDW: That was a rough night at the office for the Dream Girl so I'm not surprised she's out of action for a couple of weeks.

MW: But President Zharkov's been hard at work finding a replacement and he's done it as Shannon Walsh from the Peach Pits has volunteered to step up to the plate and take on T-Bone Trish from the Slam Sorority. Let's go to some pre-recorded comments from both of these ruggedly tough competitors!

[We fade to the aforementioned pre-recorded comments to find Shannon Walsh ready for action. She's lost the peach-colored gear (mostly) for this night and has gone with royal purple MMA style shorts and a matching sports bra... but she DOES have a peach-colored hairtie holding her tight ponytail in place. With taped hands, she waves at the camera aggressively.]

SW: There are days when nothing seems to go your way. They get your lunch order wrong. You get a flat tire. It rains and you left your umbrella at home. Nothing but bad luck.

But none of that compares to the bad luck you've got tonight, Trish Wallace. You've got nothing but bad luck because instead of the pampered little magazine cover girl Skylar Swift, you've got me.

[Walsh smacks a taped fist into her open hand.]

SW: I'm not bringing lipstick, I'm bringing leglocks. I'm not bringing blush, I'm bringing a stone cold striking rush. And the only social media you're gonna get with me is your ass going viral when I knock you out or tap you out with the whole world watching on ESPN.

[Walsh sneers.]

SW: Your boss lady Laura Davis made a mistake... a BIG mistake... when she stuck her nose in Peach Pits business. So, tonight... I'm going to return the favor with her Slam Sorority.

But it's not my nose I'm sticking in... it's this fist.

[She holds up the taped right hand and throws a big punch towards the camera lens...

...and we fade to Trish Wallace, wide arms folded, in her orange and pink paint-spattered singlet. Carolina Colton snickers behind her.]

TW: Peach Pits, we meet...

[A deep, rueful sigh from both Starkiller and T-Bone.]

TW: ...again. As soon as I heard my injury-prone former partner was on the shelf and you were being replaced, Carolina suggested a new training program.

CC: Ohyeahnowforsure... I got her an aluminum trash can and filled it with a hundred and forty pounds of garbage.

TW: That's right, and--

[Colton, clearly amused enough with her metaphor, forgets it's not her match.]

CC: 'Cause that's what you are, Walsh.

[Trish Wallace glares over her shoulder at her partner.]

CC: [grinning] What's goin' on?

[Wallace doesn't say anything and keeps glaring. Colton gets the message, stops grinning, and pushes her mirrored aviators back over her eyes.]

TW: Anyway, as I was saying, if the Peach Pits are so hell bent on being the divisional rivals of Slam Sorority... if you want to cut in line in front of us to be the first challengers to the Country Punks... I'll be more than happy to give you a reason to really hate us when you see us on your schedule.

CC: Fricken' right, T-Bone. Ya know, there's not a lot of entertainment in Regina; Shannon, maybe we can set ya up with something special: if I see Donna Martinelli or Kelly Taylor come anywhere near that ring... Trish and I can arrange for a night in the hospital like we did to Swifty-poops earlier this year. You can sample Canada's health care system for yourself.

TW: That's the name of the game, Shannon. Slam, Sister, Slam.

[Colton snickers again and claps Trish Wallace on the back and we fade from the pre-recorded footage out to the ring where we find Shannon Walsh is already standing, rolling her shoulders loose in the corner, bouncing lightly from foot to foot...]

MS: AWA fans, the following contest is set for one fall with a FIFTEEN minute time limit in the AWA Women's Division! Introducing first... already in the ring at this time... from Beverly Hills, California... weighing in at 127 pounds... from the Peach Pits... SHANNNNNONNNNNNN WALLLLLLLLLLSH!

[Walsh earns some strong cheers from the Canadian crowd.]

LD: Shannon Walsh set for singles action here tonight in Regina as a substitution for the injured Skylar Swift who was set to take on her former partner here tonight, Ben.

BW: Stepping in on short notice to take on Trish Wallace? That's either very brave or very stupid and I'm leaning towards the latter, Dane.

LD: Walsh is definitely coming into this one as the underdog, giving up nearly forty pounds to Trish Wallace so she's need to find a way to put those former Mixed Martial Arts skills to good use if she wants to win this one.

[As the sounds of Carly Rae Jepsen fade away, they are replaced by "Another Brick In The Wall" by Fury Weekend as Trish Wallace steps into view, flanked by her team partner...]

MS: Annnnnnnnd her opponent... being accompanied down the aisle by her Slam Sorority partner Carolina Colton... from Minneapolis, Minnesota... weighing in at 166 pounds... "T-BONE"... TRISH... WALLLLLLLLLLLAAAAAAACE!

[As Megumi Sato ducks out, Wallace comes marching down the staircase towards the ring, ignoring the jeering fans surrounding her and her Slam Sorority partner-in-crime...]

LD: And right away, we see Trish Wallace take another step towards putting the odds on her side. Carolina Colton is apparently going to be camped out in the corner of her partner while Shannon Walsh goes it alone.

BW: If I know Walsh, Dane, that's exactly how she wants it... and if Walsh wants to look on the bright side, just be happy Laura Davis isn't out here as well.

LD: Thank heavens for that.

[The stocky powerhouse reaches ringside, staring straight through Walsh before rolling under the ropes to join in...]

BW: Look at ol' T-Bone there. She doesn't care who they found to face her. Skylar Swift, Shannon Walsh, Shirley Temple...

LD: Who I don't think is available tonight.

BW: If she was, Trish would toss her around too.

LD: You can see Shari Miranda immediately stepping in, making sure this one starts off on even footing... and I'd like to take a quick moment to send a get well soon to Rebecca Daniels who is recovering from some facial burns after what went down in Seattle.

BW: You mean Miranda is working solo tonight?

LD: Indeed she is.

BW: You think she gets a pay bump for that?

[A smirking Wallace backs away from Walsh, nodding as she waits for the referee to signal...]

"DING! DING! DING!"

[...and then comes rushing forward at Walsh who is on the move and ready for her...]

"THWACK!"

LD: Oh! Sharp kick to the outer thigh!

[Wallace walks into a second one, recoiling back with a grimace as Walsh beckons her forward...]

LD: A second kick to the leg lands as well... and-

[Wallace obliges with a lunge but Walsh is quicker, ducking under, pivoting and ROCKING Wallace with a short forearm on the jaw followed by a front kick to the chest on the stunned Wallace, knocking her backwards into the ropes...]

LD: Walsh knows she can't stand there and match power with T-Bone!

[With Walsh pushing her torso into the ropes, Wallace swings a clubbing forearm down across the back, straightening up Walsh and sending her stumbling away...]

LD: Heavy shot right there by the second generation star! A member of the Wallace clan... Battlin' Burt Wallace the patriarch of four wrestling kids - all competing right here in the AWA.

[Wallace winds up as she steps off the ropes, swinging for the fences but Walsh ducks down again, coming up with a waistlock...]

LD: Walsh with the go-behind!

[...but Wallace plants her feet!]

BW: Uh oh!

[Walsh tries again but Wallace is going nowhere.]

BW: You might wanna think this over, Walsh!

[The mighty Wallace simply reaches out to grab the clasping hands, wrenching them apart with relative ease... and then with a grip on the arm, swings Walsh around and down onto the mat!]

LD: The power of Trish Wallace is nothing to mess with!

[Wallace surges towards the rising Walsh who ducks under, sending Wallace into the ropes, rebounding back...]

"WHAAAAAAAACK!"

LD: OHHH! SPINNING BACK ELBOW CONNECTS!

[Wallace's eyelids flutter, stumbling weakly backwards as Carolina Colton smashes her arms down on the apron, shouting angrily at her partner...]

LD: Wallace is out on her feet!

BW: That's that MMA background paying dividends - I should know a thing or two about that!

[Walsh swoops behind, looking for another rear waistlock but this time Wallace lunges forward, shaking her head as she grabs hold of the ropes...]

LD: Ohhhh! And just when it looked like Walsh might get that German Suplex, Trish Wallace finds sanctuary in the ropes... and as the referee forces a break, Wallace is-

[A swinging back elbow by Wallace is also ducked by Walsh, spinning her around to bury a kick into the midsection...]

LD: OH!

[...a second and third follow, sending Wallace falling back against the turnbuckles!]

LD: And this is NOT where Trish Wallace wants to be, Ben!

BW: She's in the wrong part of town against someone with the striking skills of Shannon Walsh!

[Wallace immediately tries to cover up as Walsh moves in, fists at the ready, but Walsh instead grabs the middle rope for leverage, driving her shoulder into the midsection once... twice... three times...

...and with a scream of exertion, she muscles Wallace up into the air over a shoulder, swinging her out of the corner and driving her down with a slam!]

LD: WHOA! GROUND...

[Walsh transitions effortlessly into the mount, driving her forearm down into the head of Wallace...]

LD: ...AND POUND! OVER AND OVER! WALSH UNLOADING!

[Carolina Colton shouts at Walsh, causing enough separation for the referee to step in, calling for a break...

...which Walsh grants, getting up with a word aimed at Colton before dragging Wallace off the mat.]

LD: Shoots her to the corner!

[But as Wallace hits the buckles, she comes rushing back out, running THROUGH Walsh with a shoulderblock, sending her flying through the air before crashing down on the mat!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

LD: CALL MISSION CONTROL 'CAUSE SHANNON WALSH JUST ENTERED ORBIT!

[Wallace grimaces as she looks down at Walsh, adding a few words of her own as Colton smirks on the outside, nodding with approval...]

BW: Trish Wallace just used her size, her strength and showed Shannon Walsh she's in the WRONG part of town to tangle with T-Bone!

[Wallace circles the downed Walsh before a double handful of hair hauls her upright to be scooped into mighty arms...]

LD: What's this now? Over the shoulder in-

BW: A Canadian backbreaker? Also known here as a backbreaker.

[Lori sighs as Wallace rushes forward...]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[...and DRIVES Walsh torso-first into the turnbuckles before she lets her crumple down to the canvas!]

BW: After those last two blows, Walsh has gotta be looking for the license plate on the big rig truck that just wiped her out, Dane.

LD: Shannon Walsh gets physically overwhelmed by Wallace... and just like that, this completely turns around.

[Wallace goes to her knees, flipping Walsh over for a lateral press, getting a two count before Walsh escapes...]

LD: Two count and Walsh slips right out the back door... she's not done yet. The Peach Pits have shown a lot of heart this year, Ben.

BW: They have. We've seen them overcome the odds on more than one occasion, going all the way back to the Women's World Tag Team Title tournament earlier this year... so Walsh isn't going down without a fight - that's for sure.

[Wallace wastes no time in bringing Walsh back up... and then bringing her up some more, hoisting the smaller woman vertically into the air...]

LD: The power on display... holding her there... and holding her... wow!

BW: Anyone got a stopwatch?

LD: Trish Wallace with so much power - you'd think she could hold her up there until tomorrow!

[...and just to rub salt in the wounds, Wallace bends her knees into a squat!]

BW: She's gonna get a little workout in too!

[Wallace squats a second time, earning some jeers now from the Regina crowd...]

LD: Trish Wallace just toying with the opposition here and wasting valuable- OH!

[The crowd reacts as Walsh fires a knee down into the crown of Wallace's skull from her upside down position...]

LD: Walsh fighting back! A second knee! Now a third!

[Wallace's grip loosens as Walsh wriggles out, dropping down behind the Slam Sorority powerhouse...]

LD: Walsh slips out - ohh! Thrust kick to the back of the knee!

[A second one lands in the same spot, causing Wallace to drop to one knee...]

LD: Breaks her down onto the mat and-

[...and the crowd ROARS as Walsh wraps an arm around the neck of Wallace, dropping backwards and wrapping her legs around Wallace's torso!]

LD: REAR NAKED CHOKE! LOCKS IT IN!

BW: She's got it in deep! Got those hooks in as well! Wallace is in trouble - she's trapped!

[The powerhouse immediately claws at the arm across her throat as the fans surge to their feet, anticipating an upset...]

LD: Wallace is caught in the middle of the ring! Carolina Colton hammering a fist down into the mat, trying to get her to break it...

[...but Walsh cranks back, teeth clenched as Wallace's face starts to turn red!]

LD: Wallace is in SERIOUS trouble, trying to get to the ropes but she's too far away!

[Colton grabs the rope, pushing it as far into the ring as she can as Shari Miranda warns her against the illegal assist but Wallace can't get to that rope either!]

BW: She's gotta find a way out fast, Dane, or this one's over!

[Wallace rolls to her side, ending up facefirst on the mat for a moment before pushing off the canvas to her knees...]

LD: Wallace trying to find a way out of it, rolling through but Walsh keeps the hold locked in!

[...and reaches towards the ropes with no success again!]

BW: Still can't get there! She's gotta find another way out!

[With her legs underneath her, Wallace grabs the legs of Walsh...

...and starts to rise!]

LD: Look at this! Look at this!

[Walsh's eyes widen as Wallace powers all the way to her feet with Shannon hanging off her back!]

LD: WALLACE ON HER FEET!

[Still holding the legs, Wallace LUNGES backwards!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

LD: CRUSHED against the turnbuckles!

[Walsh hangs on though, shaking her head defiantly as Wallace stumbles forward again, sets up...]

LD: A SECOND TIME IN THE CORNER!

[...and this time, Walsh's grip breaks down, freeing Trish Wallace!]

LD: Wallace breaks free! Shannon Walsh gave it her best shot right there but Trish Wallace is still standing!

[Wallace staggers out of the corner, rubbing at her neck...]

LD: FROM BEHIND!

[...and a charging Shannon Walsh comes barreling out of the corner, leaping up and DRIVING a forearm into the base of the neck!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

LD: WALSH PUTS HER DOWN! WALSH FLIPS HER OVER! ONNNNNNNNNNE!
TWOOOOOOOOO! TH-

“OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

[Wallace’s shoulder comes FLYING off the canvas at the last moment, Carolina Colton throwing her hands in the air at the near fall as the crowd buzzes for how close they came to seeing an upset.]

LD: We were so close right there, Ben. SO close!

BW: Trish Wallace hanging on by the skin of her teeth to this one... Colton over there giving her words of encouragement or advice maybe...

“I’D NEVER LET THIS HAPPEN TO ME!”

LD: Or not.

[Colton’s bellow seems to light a fire under Wallace though as Walsh sits up on the mat, frustration on her face. Wallace pushes up off the mat, fighting to her feet...]

LD: Both women coming up off the mat and-

[As Walsh makes a grab for her, Wallace shoves her off, leaving her feet...]

“OHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

[...and DRIVES both feet into the knee of Walsh with a low dropkick, folding her leg underneath her!]

LD: Dropkick Down-Her! And Walsh is hurt after that!

[Walsh grabs at her knee, rolling back and forth on the mat, grimacing in pain as Wallace gets up, still breathing heavily from the punishment she's absorbed.]

BW: Trish Wallace strikes hard in an unexpected way, Dane. I don’t think anyone expected her to leave her feet right there and she did major damage to the leg of Walsh... and you know the old proverb - if a man - or woman - can’t stand, they can’t fight.

LD: Wallace bringing her up by the hair, hauling her to her feet... Walsh can’t even put weight on that knee right now...

[But Walsh is still full of fight, throwing a quick forearm on the jaw!]

LD: Oh! She caught her good there! Walsh refusing to stay down!

[A second forearm lands... then a third, sending Wallace back on her heels...]

LD: Walsh is fighting with all she’s got, trying to score this upset win and show that the Peach Pits are a force in AND out of the tag team division...

[With some space between them, Walsh sets her feet with a grimace, swinging her injured leg up...

...right into the powerful grasp of T-Bone Trish!]

LD: OH! SHE CAUGHT THE LEG! SHE CAUGHT THE LEG!

[Wallace promptly YANKS Walsh towards her, tossing her effortlessly across the ring...]

LD: T! BONE! SUPLEX!

[Walsh crashes down hard as Wallace pursues, diving into a lateral press, wrapping up a leg...]

LD: Could THAT be enough? We've got one! We've got two! We've got-

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

LD: And this time, it's Walsh who sneaks the shoulder up in tiiiiime!

[Wallace pushes off to her knees, glaring at Shari Miranda who holds up two fingers...]

BW: Wallace doesn't like the count and I don't blame her, Dane. That looked slow to me!

LD: You'd be... well, almost alone in that, I'm sure. The Slam Sorority might agree with you but-

[Wallace pounds the canvas with her fists a few times before climbing to her feet.]

LD: Frustration on full display on the part of T-Bone Trish, pulling Walsh up with her again... perhaps starting to lose her patience... AND her cool.

[A clubbing forearm comes down hard across the shoulderblades, knocking Walsh down onto her hands and knees where she smashes home a second... and a third...]

LD: Wallace hammering her down like a nail into the canvas!

[Wallace ignores the referee's cries to let Walsh up as she uses a grip on the back of the shorts to lift Walsh right up off the mat, pulling her straight up into a back suplex...]

LD: OHHHH! She drives her down HARD with that suplex... and this one might be over, Ben.

[...but Wallace isn't done yet, wagging a finger at the crowd as Carolina Colton encourages her to "PLANT HER DOWN!" while pointing at the canvas.]

LD: Trish Wallace not going for another pin attempt right there... looking to do more damage, maybe send a message to the locker room... we know that Wallace and Colton have their eyes set on the new Women's World Tag Team Champions - the Country Punks - after Victoria June and Kayla Cristol struck gold at Opportunity Knocks.

[Wallace does a full lap around the ring, taunting the fans, badmouthing a struggling Walsh who is using the ropes to try to pull herself to her feet...]

LD: Walsh trying to get back up, trying to get into a defensive posture as Wallace swoops in on her...

[...and Wallace drags her the rest of the way up to her feet, pulling her away from the ropes before scooping her up over the shoulder.]

LD: Uh oh.

BW: Here comes trouble for the Peach Pit!

LD: Wallace walking her into the corner, getting set for that running powerslam and if she hits that, it's all over!

[Wallace takes aim on the center of the ring before charging out of the corner...

...but before she reaches her target, Walsh manages to slip out behind her, falling to her knees where she promptly grabs Wallace's ankles, jerking her legs out from under her!]

LD: OH! What a counter!

[Walsh snatches one of the legs, twisting the ankle as the crowd ROARS!]

LD: ANKLELOCK!

[But the anklelock is short-lived as Walsh uses Wallace's pain-filled position to grab the leg, falling back to the mat...]

LD: AND INTO THE HEEL HOOK!

BW: You talk about sending a message! Shannon Walsh locks in the signature submission hold of the leader of the Slam Sorority right here! Cranking back on that leg...

LD: Wallace is howling in pain! She's in trouble, fans!

[Carolina Colton gets right in Wallace's eyeline, pounding the mat, shouting insults at her...]

"YOU'RE PATHETIC! I'D NEVER TAP OUT TO HER!"

LD: So much for a pep talk.

BW: This is their love language, Dane.

[Wallace is pounding her own fist into the mat, pain evident on her face as Walsh tries to wrench a submission out of her...]

LD: Shannon Walsh has her trapped! Wallace trying and failing to get to the ropes! They're in the middle of the ring!

BW: She might actually do it!

LD: Wallace trying to fight it! Trying to hang on!

[Wallace suddenly rolls to her side, rolling onto her back as Walsh struggles to keep the grip applied...

...and lashes out with her free leg, kicking Walsh squarely in the face!]

LD: OH!

[A second kick lands, Walsh still refusing to let go!]

LD: Wallace trying to kick her way free!

[A third kick does the damage, breaking the hold as Walsh falls backwards, grabbing at her face...]

LD: Ohhhh...and you can feel the excitement in this crowd die out in an instant as Trish Wallace breaks the heel hook!

[There's a scramble on the mat, both women rushing to get to their feet first...]

LD: Wallace is up but Walsh is right behind her!

[A lunge from Walsh is cut short as she cries out, grabbing at her knee that just buckled for an instant...]

LD: OH! The damaged knee gave way and-

[...and Wallace jerks the hobbled Walsh off the mat, powering her straight up into the air in a vertical suplex position...]

LD: WHOA! PURE POWER!

[Walsh is kicking her legs, desperately twisting her body in the hunt for an escape...]

LD: Walsh trying to slip free again-

[...and manages to get halfway out before Wallace jerks her back into position!]

BW: Not so fast!

[With Walsh back straight up and down, Wallace promptly twists her body and DRIVES her down in a thunderous powerslam!]

"THUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUD!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

LD: BACKSMASHER DRIVES HER DOWWWWWN!

[Wallace promptly snatches a leg in a cover, nodding along with the count...]

"ONNNNNNNNNNE!"

"TWOOOOOOOOOO!"

"THREEEEEEEEEEEE!"

"DING! DING! DING!"

LD: Wow! What a fight, Ben!

BW: Shannon Walsh took her right up to the limit, Dane, but the record book says it's a DUB for Trish Wallace!

[Wallace shoves the leg down aggressively, sneering at Shannon Walsh as a golf-clapping Carolina Colton rolls in to join her partner's celebration.]

"Took ya long enough."

[Wallace throws a glare at her partner as the referee moves over to raise her hand.]

MS: Here is your winner... TRISH WALLLLLLLLLLAAAAAAACE!

[The jeers are loud for the Slam Sorority as Wallace nods at the proclamation, jerking a thumb at herself...]

"Here's the winner! The only winner!"

[Wallace sneers at the booing fans, waving a dismissive hand in their direction as she looks down at Walsh who is still laid out on the canvas.]

BW: You see, Dane? It didn't matter if it was Skylar Swift, Shannon Walsh, or-

LD: Shirley Temple?

BW: Hell, make it CALEB Temple. It just don't matter because the Slam Sorority rules the school!

LD: Oh brother.

[Wallace rubs at her neck, shaking her head at the now-propped on an elbow Walsh before Colton bumps her, waving for them to exit...]

LD: Love 'em or hate 'em, that's a win for Trish Wallace and the Slam Sorority... and I'm sure Laura Davis is very proud of her right now.

[Wallace and Colton make their exit, leaving Walsh down on the canvas. As "Another Brick In The Wall" continues to play, the Slam Sorority head backstage... and as the music fades, Walsh pushes up to a sitting position as the fans' cheers pick up.]

LD: The fans letting Shannon Walsh hear their support. You can't undersell what she did here tonight, Ben. Giving up nearly forty pounds, stepping into this match on short notice, and there were at least two occasions where I thought she had this won. She's got NOTHING to be ashamed of.

BW: It was a great match - a strong effort... but Trish Wallace and the Slam Sorority are in a league of their own... something that menace to society Lauryn Rage will find out firsthand if she ever has the guts to face Laura Davis one-on-one.

LD: That match is coming, Ben... there's just still some debate over where and when and under what rules but... right now... here comes Donna Martinelli and Kelly Taylor now. The rest of the Peach Pits coming out to show their support.

BW: Oh, great... like Bailey running around backstage with her psychobabble isn't enough. Now we're starting support groups for losers in the middle of the ring. Back in my day...

LD: Oh, knock it off. Walsh's friends out her for her, showing the love... Taylor helping her up to her feet here and-

[Suddenly, Walsh lashes out and SHOVES her friend and partner off her feet, knocking her down to a shocked reaction from the Regina crowd!]

LD: What the-?!

[Walsh glowers down at a stunned Taylor for a few moments, still obviously frustrated at coming up short in her singles match...]

LD: Shannon Walsh just shoved Kelly Taylor down and- I don't get this, Ben.

BW: Me neither but I love it! Martinelli's right there, get her too!

[Donna Martinelli instantly puts herself between Shannon Walsh and Kelly Taylor, shaking her head as she puts a comforting hand on Walsh's shoulder... and immediately has it slapped away by the hot-headed Walsh!]

BW: Yeah! Knock her down! Lay her out!

LD: Ben, come on! These ladies are partners! They're friends!

BW: They don't look like friends right now!

[Martinelli stays between her friends, talking to Walsh, trying to cool her off as Walsh glowers at them both...

...and then lets loose a sigh, shaking her head as the anger seems to fade. She raises a hand of her own, patting Martinelli on the shoulder before stepping around her, reaching the same hand down to Kelly Taylor.]

LD: It looks like emotions got the better of her... and we can all certainly understand that.

BW: This is ridiculous. Hit her!

LD: I don't think Shannon even realized what she was doing.

BW: Sure she did.

[Walsh shakes her head and says something quietly to Donna and Kelly who hesitates another moment or two before reaching up to take the offered hand to cheers from the AWA faithful...]

LD: There we go. That's more like it.

[Walsh pulls her back to her feet, immediately apologizing as Kelly nods, still looking confused.

LD: Apologies all around... and that's how friends get past something like that. Shannon Walsh was frustrated at the loss and... well, she took it out on someone who was just there to try and help her get through that frustration.

BW: Losing does funny things to people, Dane.

LD: I suppose that's true...

[Walsh again gives her apologies, giving a "let's get out of here" gesture to her friends as they exit the ring to cheers from the Canadian crowd.]

LD: Well, for now at least, it appears all is well with the Peach Pits... and fans, when we come back, the action will continue right here on ESPN... right here... on Showtime! Don't go away!

[With the Peach Pits exiting together to cheers, we fade to black.

Fade up on a shot of AWA fans at ringside for an event, cheering on whoever happens to be in the ring.

Then cut to a shot of a close-up on AWA fans, who are pumping their fists, clearly enjoying the action.

Then these words flash on the screen.]

"MAKE IT HOT"

[Then we cut to a shot of a wrestler in the ring... and this would be "The All-Around Athlete" Laura Davis. She is shown taking over an opponent with a quick snap suplex.]

Then cut to another shot of Davis in the ring, hooking her thumbs toward herself, a smirk on her face.

Then these words flash on the screen.]

"MAKE IT GREAT"

[Then we cut to a shot of Davis walking up the aisle, her hands raised in victory.]

And then to what would be her private dressing room, in which she enters, and wouldn't you know it, there happens to be a footlong Black Forest ham sandwich and a drink in a Subway cup sitting on a table there.

Davis approaches the table, looks at the camera and grins.]

LD: Make it mine!

[We then cut to a shot of the Black Forest ham sandwich on a counter and then we hear Davis' voiceover.]

LD: The Black Forest ham footlong at Subway... it's a sandwich made for greatness!

[We then cut back to Davis, who is sitting down with the sandwich in her hand.]

LD: But they'll still make it for anyone... even Michael Phelps.

[She chuckles, and then we cut to a few more words on the screen.]

"MAKE IT WHAT YOU WANT"

[And then we cut to the Subway logo, with the helpful reminder that they deliver.]

And we crossfade from the commercial to the backstage area of the Globe Theatre where we find Lucy St. Clair standing alongside Donna Martinelli of the Peach Pits. Donna's in street clothes... I guess. She's wearing peach colored yoga pants with a bedazzled sports bra to match and a matching midriff-baring hooded jacket over that.]

LSC: Back here live on Showtime on ESPN with Laura Davis for Subway reminding us to "make it what you want..." and Donna Martinelli, I think I know what you want...

[Donna smiles.]

DM: It's pretty obvs, isn't it? I want another shot at the Women's World Tag Team Titles and with new champions, I think we're at the top of the list to get it.

[Lucy throws a look around.]

LSC: We? I can't help noticing you're on your own here, Donna.

[Martinelli arches an eyebrow at the interviewer.]

DM: Don't you start that now. I'm sure you saw what went down before the break. I just thought it was best to let people cool off a little. I sent Kelly for a walk... have you seen the outside of this place?!

[Lucy looks puzzled.]

LSC: Of course. How do you think I got here?

[Donna shrugs.]

DM: Totally Insta worthy. Kelly's out there scouting locations for a little Peach Pits photo shoot later tonight.

LSC: And Shannon?

DM: Shannon's not in the best mood after...

[She throws a look around before an exaggerated stage whisper.]

DM: ...LOSING... to Trish Wallace. I don't know why. It was a good match. She put up a good fight. Losing to Trish Wallace is nothing to be embarrassed about.

[St. Clair interjects.]

LSC: Donna, do you think part of the reason she's upset is because Trish Wallace is a member of the Slam Sorority and... well, your history with Laura Davis is no secret and really seems to upset Shannon.

[Donna waves a dismissive hand.]

DM: Oh, we're SO over that! Look, I told the world that I'm ride or die with my girls... and as much as I appreciate everything Laura did for me to get me to this point, I'm a Peach Pit for life... and...

[Donna trails off as Laura Davis walks into view. Davis is dressed in her Indiana State University letterman's jacket over her red, white and blue track suit.]

LD: I am glad to hear that you appreciate everything I have done for you, Donna... but the fact is, if Shannon Walsh has such a problem with the Slam Sorority, then you should be asking yourself how much she really is part of that sisterhood.

[A frustrated Donna goes to respond but gets a hand held up in her face.]

LD: Donna, I'm not finished. The fact is, if Shannon is going to get so upset about losing a match that she can't keep her focus, and Kelly is too busy trying to calm her down, then what makes you think either one of them is the right person to team with to go after the Women's Tag Team Titles?

[Donna bites her lip, almost like she wants to respond but is hesitant to criticize her mentor.]

LD: Because the way I see it, things are not going well with the Peach Pits at the moment and, if you were honest with yourself, you would realize that you should be back by the side of your mentor... by the side of the Slam Sorority.

And if you were honest with yourself, you wouldn't be wasting time trying to smooth things over with the people you think are your friends and take up that offer of mine that remains on the table and...

[Now it's Laura's turn for her voice to trail off as Shannon Walsh interrupts.]

SW: I'M SICK OF THIS!

[Walsh angrily kicks a nearby production case, sending it rolling aside as Davis looks... amused?]

SW: Donna's told you exactly how she feels about the Slam Sorority and your little offer... and no matter how many times you try to change her mind, it's not working!

[Donna nods in agreement as Walsh steps closer to Davis.]

SW: And if you can't stay out of Peach Pit business... then maybe I'm going to have to KNOCK YOU OUT of Peach Pit business. How about you and me... in that ring... next week in Calgary!

[Davis chuckles as the fans watching inside the Globe Theatre cheer.]

LD: You want to wrestle me? Trish Wallace just ran circles around you and now you want to test the All Around Athlete? Do you realize who you are challenging? I have beaten the best women in the world and proven exactly why I am the greatest women's athlete in the world today!

[Davis then gets closer to Walsh and points a finger in her direction.]

LD: Were it up to me, you'd be going back to Combat Corner for more seasoning!

[Walsh turns away, shaking her head...]

...and then lunges forward in a full body tieup that quickly turns into a double leg as Walsh sweeps Davis' legs out from under her, putting her down on the Globe Theatre's concrete floor!]

LSC: OH!

[St. Clair's exclamation is joined by her rushing out of the way as Walsh and Davis tussle on the floor. Donna Martinelli stands nearby, a shocked look on her face as her partner is swinging now at Davis...]

...which only lasts a few moments before a rush of Lori Wilson, John Shock, and Kevin Slater appear. Wilson grabs Walsh around the torso, pulling her up off of Davis as Walsh spits angry words down on Davis!]

KS: Get her out of here! Donna, go with her!

[Martinelli throws a concerned look at Davis... and then joins Lori Wilson in steering Walsh down the hallway. John Shock extends a hand, helping Davis to her feet but she promptly slaps the hand away, reaching up to rub a hand across her now-bleeding mouth...]

JS: Laura... come on, let's get you to medical.... you're bleedin', Laura.

[Davis glares off after Walsh, muttering to herself...]

...and who should choose that moment to walk past on her way to the ring?

None other than Lauryn Rage.

The Haligonian Hooligan side eyes Laura Davis and her busted lip.]

LR: See, when I tell you to shut your bloody mouth... you better listen.

[She snickers to herself before walking off as a barely-restrained Davis glares at her back, John Shock keeping her from attacking Rage...

...and we fade inside the Globe Theatre where the lights have dropped and Kendrick Lamar's "DNA" hits as the crowd ERUPTS in cheers!

A few moments pass before Lauryn Rage steps into view atop a set of stairs in a scandalously revealing fuchsia onesie. Her fuchsia leather weightlifter's glove covers her right hand, while a brand-new freshly-released pair of Nike Air Jordan 1 Retro High OG "Hyper Royal" sneakers gleam on her feet. She's wearing her knee brace so you know se means business.

Lauryn stops at the top of the short flight of stairs and looks around at the Canadian crowd. She raises both arms as the response gets even louder. She points at the crowd and mouths, "I hear you!" before turning toward the ring.]

LD: The very first woman to wear championship gold here in the AWA, Lauryn Rage has arrived in her home country of Canada to a tremendous reaction, Ben!

BW: All seems to be forgiven for what she did to the Canadian Dream Girl at Opportunity Knocks... for now at least.

[Rage slaps some hands as she walks down the stairs, shouting something towards a group of supporters as she emerges out onto the ringside area, climbing up on the apron where she steps through the ropes and immediately asks for and receives a microphone.]

LD: I think Da Kid's got something to say to the people of Regina as well as the people watching at home on ESPN.

[Rage takes center ring, soaking it all in as she looks around at the Globe Theatre crowd, nodding appreciatively before raising the mic as the music fades out.]

LR: Regina!

[The Canadian crowd ERUPTS.]

LR: Damn! I ain't even gotta say nothing yet and y'all already know what's up!

[The cheers ring out again as she points around the crowd.]

LR: That's what I'm talkin' about! That's what I'm talkin' about! Home sweet damn home!

[Another hometown crowd cheer goes up!]

LR: And lemme tell y'all somethin' right now. I have spent the last few days thinkin' about what Ricki Toughill said the other night at Opportunity Knocks.

[Lauryn nods.]

LR: Oh, I heard you, Ricki. I heard every damn word. And I've spent a lot of time thinkin' about it. Thinkin' about you standin' there, playing in my face, talkin' about my family. Talkin' about where everybody is. Talkin' about whether I was ever your friend. Talkin' about how Lauryn Rage thinks the whole world revolves around Lauryn Rage.

[She pauses.]

LR: Oh hell naw! Absolutely not!

[Rage starts pacing now, speaking while walking.]

LR: You know what? You're damn right, Ricki. I DO think the world revolves around Lauryn Rage and that's 'cause it do!

[The cheers are loud and proud for the fellow Canadian as she nods.]

LR: Because somebody's gotta make this about Lauryn Rage! Somebody's gotta remember who the Hell I am!

[She pounds a fist into her chest.]

LR: I'm a former World Champion! I'm a Rage! I came from a family that helped built championships instead of beggin' for opportunities. See, I don't sit around waiting for somebody to decide I'm good enough. I don't wait for the office to throw me a bone.

[She throws her arms wide.]

LR: I TAKE what belongs to me!

[The crowd approves as Rage nods.]

LR: That's right... but see, Ricki got me heated... so let's talk about this right quick. You wanna talk about me like I'm some spoiled little princess who can't handle somebody else getting the attention?

[Rage laughs.]

LR: You, Ricki? You wanna talk about how you praise the people who've earned it? You told everybody that you raised the arm of three of the last four World Champions... including me, the first champion. That's true... that's true...

...but where's YOUR belt, Ricki?

[The crowd lets loose an "ohhhhhhhh!" as Rage cups her ear.]

LR: HUH?! WHERE'S YOUR BELT, RICKI?!

You wanna stand there and talk about championships. You wanna talk about who deserves the praise. Baby, you ain't gotta give me mine. I already GOT mine. I EARNED mine.

[Lauryn's expression turns more serious.]

LR: And don't you dare use my family's name as a damn weapon against me. You don't get to stand there and talk about where everybody is like you're the one who gets to decide what the Rage family means.

[Lauryn starts pacing again, her anger returning.]

LR: But that's not even what pisses me off the most.

What pisses me off is that you stood there and talked all that mess like you wasn't scared. Like I was somebody to steal on. You actually thought you could talk to me like that.

[Lauryn nods slowly.]

LR: Aight. Bet. You wanna know if you were ever my friend? Hell yeah, you were my friend. Hell yeah, I was happy for you.

But you gone call me out my name? Now you done made this personal.

You wanna know if I was jealous?

[She shrugs.]

LR: Hell yeah, I was jealous! What, you want me to lie? I'm human. I'm Lauryn damn Rage!

And sometimes I'm petty! Sometimes I'm jealous! Sometimes I'm a jackass!

[The crowd is cheering, laughter mixed in now.]

LR: But at least I'm an honest jackass.

So being a petty jackass, here's what we're gonna do...

I'm in Canada...

[Big cheer!]

LR: I'm in Regina...

[Bigger cheer!]

LR: The place that rhymes with fun.

[More laughs from the crowd.]

LR: So, we gone have some fun.

I want Ricki Toughill in this ring...

...TONIGHT!

[The crowd ROARS at that idea.]

LR: I got time today. And Ricki, I'm gonna give you EXACTLY what you asked for.

An ass whooping of biblical proportions.

[Another big cheer!]

LR: You feel me? You wanted Lauryn Rage?

[She pounds her chest again.]

LR: I'M RIGHT HERE! LOOK AROUND! I GOT A WHOLE DAMN COUNTRY STANDING BEHIND ME!

[And that gets the Globe Theatre crowd on their feet ROARING once more. Rage feeds into it, shouting along with them...]

LR: YEAH! RICKI! IT'S RAGE 24/7! I'M GONNA WEAR DAT ASS OUT!

And it's like that...

[She tosses the microphone aside, shouting off-mic with many in the crowd joining her in...]

“Cause that’s the way it is!”

[Rage mounts the middle buckle, raising her fist to the Regina crowd as we wait to see what happens next...]

LD: I’d call that one HECK of a challenge from a fired-up Lauryn Rage, Ben.

BW: There’s no place like home and she’s feelin’ it here tonight in Regina.

LD: And now, we wait to see if-

[We don’t have to wait long as the PA erupts with...]

“ALL MY LIFE I WANTED TO BE SOMEBODY, AND HERE I AM!”

[Ricki Toughill emerges above one of the stairways in front of Lauryn Rage. She is wearing a red and white throwback “Mister “Your Daddy” Maple Leaf” Eddie “VAN” Gibson’ t-shirt with the sleeves ripped off, and her tattered kilt, ripped fishnet stockings and Converse sneakers. That’s her ring gear, such as it is, so she anticipated this would happen. Toughill has a mic in hand, raising it as the music fades and she starts to walk down the staircase.]

RT: Obviously, the powers that be here gave us the green light and the time we need to sort this out between us... because that’s what adults do in this business...

[You can almost sense the passive aggressive lightning bolts Lauryn Rage and Ricki Toughill are shooting each other with the way they joylessly smirk at one another.]

RT: I got a few things to say before you and I... Experience Regina...

[Those two words draw a surprisingly large reaction from the fans in the Globe as Toughill reaches ringside. Ricki does a short EVG strut around the ring before flashing a crooked-toothed grin and cheesy ‘thumbs up’ to the ringside fans.]

LD: I don’t get this “Experience Regina” gag.

BW: The Saskatchewan tourist board would like to have a word.

[Toughill continues.]

RT: You and I could have waited until “Girls to the Front,” Lauryn. You and I... we’re two of the Original Seven who founded this division: me... you... Charisma Knight... Melissa Cannon... Ayako... The Pistol... The Spitfire...!

[The fans applaud at the names.]

RT: But it’s not working out that way is it? We made a promise a couple of years ago, that when SuperClash was announced for Toronto, you’d get that belt back, and I’d stay on that contender’s list so we could finally have that one on one encounter we’d been dreaming of. Obviously that never happened. The Year From Hell had other plans for both of us, didn’t it?

[Rage nods.]

LD: 2017 was not a good year for either of these women, Lauryn Rage on the shelf was a severe injury... Ricki Toughill without a job...

[Toughill gestures at the ring.]

RT: So I understand your need for urgency. And I want everyone to understand that what I'm about to do tonight does not come from a place of hatred or bitterness like so many other times.

I love Lauryn Rage...

[Ricki pauses, letting that sink in.]

RT: Lauryn Rage has been a friend in a cutthroat business, and one of the only ones I could depend upon. I'm doing this with love.

[Ricki climbs through the ropes, but there's a moment of hesitation.]

RT: And believe me, I know about love. I had a pet in my house and I loved her. And she loved me right back; improbably, she loved me too. But I didn't know what she was fighting.

[Ricki's jaw quivers slightly.]

RT: They try to hide it. They don't want to show weakness, but there came a day where what she was fighting suddenly caught up to her. She was shrieking... lashing out at everything... I could see it in her eyes and hear the panic in her breath.

[Lauryn Rage scowls, knowing exactly where the story is going.]

RT: You can't just leave her. You bundle her up... you take her to the vet... you watch the needle with tears in your eyes... and stay until you're all alone in that room.

Like I said... I love you, Lauryn.

[Toughill drops the microphone, snuffles, and snarls 'ring the bell, already' to the match official...]

LD: An unexpected treat for the fans here in Regina as they get to see fellow Canadian, Lauryn Rage, taking on her... I think you have to say "former friend" at this point, Ben.

BW: There's been a lot of speculation about what caused the falling out between these two... but no one cares why it happened tonight. They just cared that it happened because I got a feeling this is gonna be a knockdown, drag 'em out fight!

[The bell sounds...

...and neither woman moves.]

LD: Well... that's a little surprising considering the usual attack-attack-attack strategy of both these women.

[The first AWA Women's World Champion Lauryn Rage stands in one corner, rolling her neck. Across the ring, Ricki Toughill chomps her gum and rocks from heel to toe.]

LD: Lauryn Rage called Ricki Toughill out for this... she wanted this match specifically...

BW: Which tells you something is wrong in the head with that woman.

LD: They go back a few years now - traveling together, working out together, fighting alongside each other...

BW: And now they've spent some time wanting to strangle each other.

LD: I mean... isn't that just friendship in general when it comes to the Rage family?

[And now Rage steps forward, Ricki matching her pace as they stride from their respective corners, coming together in the middle of the ring, staring each other down...]

LD: A tense scene here... trading words now and-

"SLAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

[Rage goes upside her former friend's head with a fierce slap that sends Toughill's head spinning away...]

LD: She slapped her right across the face!

BW: So much for old pals.

[Toughill slowly turns her head back, grinning at Rage...

...and then POPS her with a right hand right in the mouth!]

LD: HERE WE GO!

[A second haymaker lands... and a third, sending Rage stumbling backwards...

...but then she fires back, landing a right of her own!]

LD: The slugfest in Regina is on!

[The duo trade shots in the middle, rocking one another with heavy fists as the crowd rises!]

LD: Let's do this!

[The former friends abandon any pretense of wrestling, hammering one another with punches in the middle of the ring!]

LD: Rage and Toughill, toe to toe in the middle!

[Rage tires of the back and forth, swinging a knee up into the midsection, doubling her over...]

LD: Rage goes downstairs... grabs the wrist...

[She yanks Ricki into a second knee to the midsection, leaving her bent at the waist before snatching a single underhook, flipping Toughill up and over to the canvas with a quick suplex!]

LD: ...and a nice suplex by the former World Champion who-

[Toughill immediately sits up on the mat, trying to get back on her feet...]

"SLAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[...but Rage pops her with a second slap across the face, knocking Toughill back down on the canvas!]

BW: Toughill won't be able to even taste her morning Dunkin' Donuts if this keeps up!

LD: I'm sure Lauryn would tell her to hit up Tim Horton's instead.

[Rage backs off, trashtalking Toughill who pushes back to a seated position, touching her cheek as she looks back up at Rage who is being held back by Shari Miranda...]

...but as Toughill gets to a knee, Rage slips past the official, looking to strike!]

LD: Here she- OHH! TOUGHILL WITH A BIG TACKLE, TAKES HER DOWN!

[Toughill lands on top of Rage, hammering her hand down into whatever she can get as Rage tries to roll away...]

...and ends up rolling right on top of Toughill, landing some big shots of her own before Toughill hooks her around the body, rolling her over again...]

LD: Back and forth they go down on the mat!

[Shari Miranda again calls for a break and somehow gets one, Toughill and Rage splitting apart, coming back to their feet in a hurry...]

BW: No feeling out process in this one - they know each other REAL well!

[...and Rage is on the move right away, leaping and twisting to drive her hind quarters up into the chest and chin of Toughill, sending her CRASHING backwards into the turnbuckles!]

LD: Ohh! Flying hip attack by Rage and that one shakes up Ricki for sure!

[Rage swaggers out of the corner, shouting at the fans as Toughill reels, hanging onto the ropes to stay on her feet...]

BW: Oh, she's REAL proud of that one, Dane.

LD: She sure is! No lack of ego in Lauryn Rage for sure. She gets it from-

BW: Every member of her family no doubt.

[Dane chuckles as Rage turns sideways, giving her hip a little pat as the crowd cheers.]

LD: Lauryn Rage having a good time in her home country here tonight, Ben.

BW: She sure is... but she's better keep her focus on her opponent because Ricki Toughill didn't come out here to be a part of some kind of homecoming. She's here to fight!

[Rage reaches the far corner, turning back to face her opponent before charging across the ring...]

LD: ALL THE WAY ACROSS!

[...and leaps up for a second flying hip attack before VIOLENTLY slamming into the turnbuckles as Toughill pulls herself clear in time!]

“OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

[Rage grimaces, grabbing at her lower back as Toughill stomps across to the far corner, delivering three emphatic slaps to her own backside...]

LD: Oho! Turnabout is fairrrrrr....

[...and then barrels across, SMASHING her entire body buttfirst into a reeling Rage!]

“OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

LD: ...PLAAAAAAY! A running hip attack of her own out of Ricki Toughill and that’ll shake Lauryn Rage from head to toe!

[Toughill walks away with a chuckle as Rage stumbles out of the corner, grabbing at her ribcage this time before slumping down to a knee. As Toughill turns back towards her, she chomps her gum a few more times before blowing a large pink bubble...

...as Rage surges angrily to her feet, rearing back...]

“SLAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!”

“OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

[...and SLAPS the gum right out of her former friend’s mouth, sending the pink wad flying across the ring before splatting down on the mat!]

LD: HEY!

[Toughill looks down at her gum... then up at Rage with a glower as Da Kid smirks at her, laying the badmouth on her...]

LD: Look at the smirk on the face of Lauryn Ra-

[...and Toughill STRIKES, lashing out with another big right hand to the mouth of the former World Champion!]

LD: OH! Well, blink and you missed it `cause Ricki Toughill just punched that smirk right off her face!

[A few more haymakers follow, putting Rage on her heels as she falls back into the ropes where Ricki promptly shoots her across...]

LD: Whips her in... up on the shoulder annnnd... DOWWWWWWN!

[After delivering a running Samoan Drop, Toughill spins over into a lateral press, hooking the leg...]

LD: ONNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOO! No, that’s all! The first ever Women’s World Champion’s not done yet, Ben.

BW: Absolutely not. You’re talking about someone who went toe to toe with the likes of Kurayami... she’s not going down without a fight.

LD: And of course, both of these women are looking ahead to MSG and Girls To The Front... the site of Rage’s greatest triumph, the win in the big Rumble to crown the

first champion. You know she wants to be back in the house next month in a big, big matchup. A win here tonight in Regina might put her on that path...

[As Toughill sits up on the mat, Rage slips in behind her to jam a knee in between the shoulderblades, yanking back on the chin to wrench the torso of her former friend...]

LD: Toughill slowing things down here, grinding her down with this chinlock... and that knee jammed into the back can't feel good.

[Toughill pulls back on the chin as Rage grimaces, wincing in pain but refusing to give in...]

...which is Ricki's cue to get back up, jamming a knee in again... and again, leaving Rage hunched over on the mat as Toughill turns to charge the ropes.]

LD: Toughill off the ropes and-

[But a recovering Rage spins to a knee, ready for the rebound...]

LD: Ohhh! Big right hand downstairs! She caught her coming in and the boxing skills of Lauryn Rage are well-known, Ben.

BW: During her recovery from injury last year, she spent a whole lot of time training those skills. I've heard it said that if Rage wasn't a pro wrestler, she could make a good living for herself as a boxer at this point - that's how good she's gotten with those fists.

[A second and third shot to the ribs lands as well, sending Toughill staggering back, clutching the body as she bumps against the buckles, Rage coming back to her feet. She gets a warning from the official for the closed fists but doesn't seem to care as she lunges in, popping her former friend with a fierce uppercut that snaps Toughill's head back!]

LD: OH! WHAT A RIGHT HAND!

BW: Someone give Toughill the standing eight count - she might be out!

LD: Ricki Toughill is definitely seeing stars right now, hanging onto the ropes for dear life as Rage grabs her, lifting her up now...

[Slinging her partner over her shoulder, Rage steps back and throws down, smashing the spine of Toughill against the turnbuckles in what looks like a spinebuster slam!]

LD: OHHH! BUCKLE BUSTER BY THE FORMER CHAMPION!

[Toughill collapses out of the corner as Rage rolls her over, applying her own press...]

LD: And this time, it's Rage who gets one! Who gets two! Who gets- noooo! Toughill's out at two! These tremendous competitors are trading shots, trading pin attempts - so evenly matched so far right here in this special impromptu matchup here in Regina!

BW: Toughill is notorious for being what you might call a damage sponge, Dane... meaning she can take a lickin' and keep on tickin' and that's what we're gonna see here tonight. Lauryn Rage's got her work cut out for her to keep her ol' pal down here on Showtime.

[Rage sits up on the mat beside her former friend, nodding her head.]

BW: Don't sit there and admire her, Rage. Hit her again!

LD: Perhaps a glimmer of that former respect shining through for her "ol' pal" as you put it, Ben.

[Rage climbs off the mat, bringing Toughill up with her as she shoots her into the ropes...]

LD: Off the far side and-

[Toughill bounces back into Rage's waiting arms, getting lifted into the air for a belly to back suplex...]

LD: Gets her up and- no!

[...but Toughill cuts it off, first with a hard right hand to the forehead... then with a series of elbows to the back of the neck as the two women are down on their feet...]

LD: Toughill fighting her way out of this suplex attempt!

[Breaking the grasp, Toughill makes a dash...

...but Rage is ready for her, snatching the back of the gear, yanking her backwards into the suplex grip again, lifting her skyward...]

LD: She's got her up and-

[...and with a pivot, Rage **THROWS** her over the top rope, sending her crashing down hard on the floor below!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

LD: **ATOMIC THROW TO THE FLOOOOOOOR!**

[The referee gives Rage an earful as she leans over the top rope, breathing hard as the fans buzz over the dangerous toss to the outside...]

BW: So much for that "glimmer of respect," Dane. That was a deliberate attempt to do major damage to her former friend... and it might've worked too because Toughill **BOUNCED** off the floor right there!

LD: Solid impact down on the hip, the back, maybe the arm as well as she's grabbing at her elbow. Ricki Toughill can take a beating for sure but something like that levels up the game for certain.

[With Toughill writhing in pain, checking her body for serious damage, on the outside, Rage slips through the ropes as the referee orders her back in, measuring Toughill as she struggles to her knees on the outside...]

BW: I can't even believe she's getting up already, Dane. Ricki Toughill is beyond description at times.

LD: You think back to that Falls Count Anywhere match two years ago at SuperClash with Julie Somers and there's no doubt that's true, Ben. She is a woman beyond words... but not beyond the reach of Lauryn Rage who is on the apron, measuring her up...

BW: Is THAT what she's doing? Because to me, it looks like she's playing to these idiot Regina fans and wasting valuable time.

[Rage is indeed talking to the fans, ignoring Toughill as she tries to fight up off the floor...]

LD: She DOES seem a little distracted and-

[...and Toughill throws herself forward, grabbing Rage by the legs and YANKING them out from under her, causing Rage to CRASH down on her back on the ring apron!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

LD: -AND IT COSTS HER! RICKI TOUGHILL RETURNS THE FAVOR WITH A BRUTAL SWEEP OF THE LEGS ON THE APRON!

BW: Rage takes a hard fall onto her back of her own... and Toughill somehow keeps on comin'!

[Toughill swings Rage around so that her lower half is under the ropes and inside the ring and her upper torso is dangling limply...

...and DRIVES her elbow down across the shoulderblades once... twice...]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[...and then ROCKS Rage with a brutal kneelift that causes her to slump again, sliding under the ropes before falling to the floor!]

LD: What a shot that was! And somehow, I think Ricki Toughill has regained the edge in this hard-hitting battle between two old friends!

[Toughill grimaces in pain as she pulls her former friend off the floor by the hair, laying a little badmouth of her own on Rage...]

"CLAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAANG!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[...and DRIVES her shoulder-first into the ringpost!]

LD: My goodness! Rage gets BOUNCED off that solid steel post... and now she's hugging it with both arms, trying to stay on her feet...

BW: Rage should be hightailing back inside the ring right now, Dane... this is a place where Ricki Toughill is right at home - on the outside.

LD: This is NOT where you want to tangle with Ricki Toughill for sure.

[Pulling Rage off the post as Shari Miranda's count continues, Toughill yanks the hair as she measures her with a big right hand between the eyes, knocking Rage up against the ring apron...]

LD: Another hard shot by Toughill!

BW: She might not have the boxing prowess of Rage but she knows how to throw a right hand. It wasn't polished in a gym, it was learned and perfected in the dirtiest, nastiest rings on the indy scene as Toughill paid her dues to get to where she stands today.

[But as Toughill measures her again, Rage responds with a back elbow to the chin, snapping her head back!]

LD: OH! But Rage caught her good there!

[Toughill falls backwards, eyelids fluttering as the ringside fans put their hands up to block her from falling into them...]

LD: Dangerous spot out here, the fans up close and personal to the action tonight in the Globe Theatre!

[...but Toughill bounces off their supporting hands, landing another hard right hand that sends Rage pitching back, slumping over the apron!]

LD: Trading shots on the outside and-

BW: They're gonna get counted out!

LD: The referee's count is at seven... now eight!

[Rage and Toughill are squared off, fists at the ready...

...and then with a look up at the official, both women make a dive under the ropes, saving the match from an abrupt ending!]

LD: And they beat the count in time!

[The crowd gives a relieved cheer as Miranda waves for the match to continue as both women scramble up off the mat...]

LD: And here we go again!

[...and pick up right where they left off as Rage lands a big haymaker on Toughill who responds in kind!]

BW: They're right back at it!

[But this time, it's a lightning-quick flurry of jabbing fists from Rage, stinging her former friend and sending her stumbling backwards...

...a stumble that becomes more pronounced when Rage switches to body blows, raining right hands in the ribcage, doubling her over!]

LD: Look at those heavy haymakers, rocking the body of Ricki Toughill!

[Rage seizes the chance to dash to the ropes, rebounding back, leaping into the air and using a clothesline to drag her down to the mat!]

LD: OHHH! BULLDOG LARIAT! Taking a page out of her brother Shadoc's playbook!

BW: Who knows - maybe that's an ol' Adrian Rage special that's been passed down to all his rugrat kids over the years.

[Dane chuckles as Rage scrambles into a cover, hooking a leg...]

LD: Rage gets her down! Is it enough?!

[...but Toughill is again out at two and change!]

LD: Two and a half right there but still not enough for Rage! She couldn't keep her down for three...

[Rage kneels on the canvas, a hint of annoyance on her face before snatching a handful of Ricki's wild hair, hauling her to her feet...]

BW: This is what Ricki Toughill does. You hit her and hit her and hit her, and eventually you start wondering what in the hell it's going to take.

[...and grabs her around the waist in a gutwrench...]

LD: What's this now?

[...but Toughill immediately starts to battle out, fists flying at the exposed ribs of the first Women's World Champion!]

LD: Ricki's fighting it! Trying to break free!

[But Rage persists, muscling Toughill up in a gutwrench all the way over into a side slam position, driving her down with spine-shaking impact!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[Rage stays on her, leaning back with a leg cradled!]

LD: ONNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOO!

[But again, Toughill kicks out before the three count falls to cheers from the AWA faithful as Rage slaps a hand down on the canvas, shaking her head as she pushes back up to her knees, glaring up at Shari Miranda who holds up two fingers.]

LD: Two count only, the referee letting her know... and now Rage shaking her head... she's gotta be starting to wonder...

BW: Told you.

[Rage pushes off the mat, hands on her hips as Toughill starts crawling across the mat towards the ropes...]

LD: Rage following after her, not letting up, staying on her opponent...

[...and as Toughill uses the ropes to drag herself to her feet, Rage grabs her by the shoulder, swinging her around...]

LD: OH! Hard right hand!

[Toughill falls back again, hanging onto the top rope with her arm, trying to stay on her feet as Rage draws back her gloved fist again...]

LD: PERFECT PUNCH!

[...but Toughill ducks down, avoiding what could've been a knockout punch, swinging around!]

LD: Boots her downstairs!

[Toughill grabs Rage, yanking her into a standing headscissors...]

LD: Wait a second! Wait a second!

[...and snatches one arm... and then the other...]

LD: EVG DRIV-

[...but Rage drops down to her knees, blocking Toughill's attempt to finish the match in turn!]

LD: Rage counters it! Rage is-

[Toughill yanks her back up, trying to get her down...

...but Rage straightens up!]

LD: SHE BACKDROPS HER OVER!

[Rage stumbles towards mid-ring as Toughill grimaces, trying to get back off the mat to her feet...]

LD: Toughill's up and-

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"OHOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO!"

[...and gets POPPED with the Perfect Punch, putting her flat on her back as Rage collapses to her knees from the effort!]

LD: SHE GOT IT! SHE GOT IT! RIGHT ON THE JAW!

BW: Yeah, but she's gotta cover!

LD: Rage down on her hands and knees... Toughill's out! She's out!

[Rage shakes her cobwebs, pushing up on her knees, looking around the ring...

...and then DIVES across Toughill, pulling a leg up tightly!]

LD: ONNNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOOO! THRE-

"OHOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO!"

LD: TOUGHILL KICKS OUUUUUUUUT!

BW: There was a few seconds there where Rage couldn't get the cover and they cost her everything! If she'd covered right after the Perfect Punch, I think it would be over right now, Dane.

LD: You could be right about that and...

[Rage rolls off of Toughill, staring at the ceiling.]

LD: ...that punch has put away some of the best in the world!

[Toughill and Rage are lying side by side on the mat, the crowd roaring for the encounter they've seen so far...]

LD: What a battle we're seeing here in Regina between these two former friends... the Perfect Punch scored but couldn't get the job done.

[Rage slowly gets up to her feet, looking down at Toughill before letting loose a little incredulous laugh.]

LD: What's going through her mind right now?

BW: She oughta be thinking about hitting her again! Pull her up and do it again! What's she doing, Dane?!

LD: It looks like she's doing exactly that, Ben! Dragging her off the mat...

[But as she gets Ricki to her feet, Rage buries a boot in the midsection, twisting around to make a grab at Ricki's head...]

LD: SNAKEBITE!

[...but Toughill shoves her off into the ropes where she rebounds back towards Toughill who boots her downstairs, twisting her into a side waistlock...]

"THUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUD!"
"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

LD: BACK! DROP! DRIIIIVERRRRRRRRR!

[But the exertion of the move leaves Toughill wiped out alongside the former World Champion, both women laid out on the mat as the referee goes to check on them both to see if they can continue...]

...and with the crowd buzzing, Shari Miranda starts a double down count on both competitors!]

LD: Uh oh. They're both down, neither woman is moving... and we've got a ten count that may end this one right here, Ben.

BW: Man, I hope not. This has been a good one and I wanna see a winner.

LD: Shari Miranda, the official for this one, has got the count running... three... four...

[Toughill rolls over onto her stomach, pulling her arms underneath her...]

LD: Up to five...

[...and then grimaces with a grunt of exertion, pushing up to her knee as the count rings out again.]

LD: ...and now six as Toughill grabs the ropes, trying to get off the mat...

[Across the ring, we can see Rage doing the same thing, dragging herself up off the mat with the aid of the ropes...]

LD: We've got seven... and they're up! They're both up!

[Toughill reaches up, swiping a hand across the face as we can spy a split lip on the brawler...]

LD: Ricki Toughill's been busted open, fans. The lip busted open... probably from that Perfect Punch... and neither of these women are willing to give an inch, Ben.

BW: There's too much at stake with Girls To The Front on the horizon, Dane. Every year, we talk about SuperClash and the chase to make the lineup of the biggest show of the year. For the Women's Division and every female competitor around the world, this is just as big if not bigger. The very FIRST all-women's show in AWA

history... Madison Square Garden... the entire world watching on Pay Per View... if you don't make it, the impact on your career could be devastating.

[Toughill looks at the blood on her pasty white flesh with a grin.]

BW: She's nuts, Dane.

LD: I'm not sure even she'd disagree with that.

[Rage sees the grin, shaking her head... and then charges in on her former friend, running right into a haymaker!]

LD: OH! Ricki caught her good!

[Rage stumbles but does not fall, responding in kind...]

LD: Rage returns the favor!

[...and then Toughill lands another...

And so it goes, back and forth... back and forth, the two men battling it out in the middle of the ring...]

LD: HERE WE GO! HERE WE GO!

[Stronger. Faster. More oomph with every shot thrown.]

LD: LISTEN TO THIS CROWD!

[But Rage throws a particularly hard shot, stunning Toughill... and lands a second in quick combination, leaving Toughill staggered. Rage grabs her for another Snakebite attempt...

...but Toughill spins out, grabbing Rage by the hair, and YANKING her backwards into the turnbuckles!]

"OHHHHH!"

LD: HITS THE CORNER!

[Toughill stomps across the ring, turning to take aim...]

LD: CHARGING IN!

[...and CRASHES into Rage with a running hip attack!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[Toughill backs off, waiting for Rage to come stumbling towards her before burying a boot into the gut...]

LD: Hooks one arm...

[...but Rage spins out of it, twisting around with a fist drawn back...]

LD: PERFECT PUNCH!

[...but Toughill ducks under to avoid it, coming up with a kick to the gut!]

LD: HOOKS ONE ARM! HOOKS THE OTHER!

[The crowd ROARS in recognition as Toughill leaps up, DRIVING Rage facefirst into the canvas with a split-legged face driver that once had an infamous name but is now known as...]

LD: EVG DRIVER! EVG DRIVER!

[Toughill flips her over, diving across, hooking a leg...]

LD: ONNNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOO! THREEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEE!

"DING! DING! DING!"

LD: RICKI WINS! RICKI WINS!

[As her music kicks in, a weary Toughill rolls onto her back, chest heaving as Megumi Sato makes it official...]

BW: Lauryn Rage asked for this match... and I guess be careful what you ask for, huh?

LD: She wanted competition tonight and she got every bit she could handle and then some. What a fight between these two we just saw... and as we look ahead to Girls To The Front, you gotta think both of these women are at the front of the line to make that show.

[Toughill slowly gets to her feet. Her lip is bloody, her hair is somehow even more disheveled than usual.]

BW: Look at Toughill, Dane. She looks like she's been dragged behind a truck.

[Dane chuckles as Toughill cracks a smile.]

LD: A smile on the face of the victor..

[Lauryn Rage sits up on the mat, a scowl on her face.]

LD: ...but not on the loser. You know this one hurts.

[Toughill walks towards her defeated former friend, Rage looking up at her.]

BW: This one might not be over yet, Dane.

LD: I have a feeling...

[Ricki extends her hand to Rage who stares at her, no hint of her intentions on her face as the crowd cheers the moment...]

BW: Don't do it, Lauryn. Pull her into a Perfect Punch!

LD: Stop it.

[Rage looks from the hand to Ricki's smiling face...

...but before Rage or Toughill can make another move, The Slam Sorority walks out into view.]

LD: Talk about spoiling a nice moment potentially. The Slam Sorority has arrived.

[Laura Davis, mic in hand, suddenly stops and, as Carolina Colton and Trish Wallace start to advance, Davis holds out her arms, indicating for them to stay put. Davis smirks and then raises the mic to her lips.]

LD: Very good, you two. Now, I'm sure you're expecting us to come down there and take care of some unfinished business with you, Rage, but I figured I'd give you a break this time around.

[She then glances over to Colton.]

LD: And that's particularly because Carolina here deserves to be a part of Saturday Night Wrestling in Calgary next week...

[Colton nods, striking a double bicep pose to jeers.]

LD: ...and what better way for it to take place than her teaming with Trish to prove to the world what duo should be next in line for a shot at the new Women's World Tag Team Champions at Girls To The Front. I don't know about you, Lauryn, but I think the gold would look pretty good on the Slam Sorority.

[Rage has pulled herself off the mat now, ignoring Ricki Toughill as she glares up at Davis, waving her down to the ring...]

LD: So, I had a little visit with our esteemed interim President Zharkov, who agreed that Carolina deserved such a match... that it should be with her and Trish... and that, yes, such a match would be important in determining a future challenger for the tag titles.

And then I suggested... what better opponents for them than Lauryn Rage...

[Davis smirks.]

LD: ...and a partner of her choosing.

[Cut to the ring, where Rage is now glaring at Davis, shaking her head.]

LD: I know, I know... you don't exactly play well with others. Just ask Pink Cashmere... Skylar Swift... and well, just about anyone in the locker room including the woman who just pinned you one-two-three in there...

[Rage throws a hard look at Toughill who holds up her hands defensively.]

LD: Zharkov said the same thing. He wondered why in the world you'd ever agree to such a match.

I told him the answer was simple.

Because not only would such a match be important to deciding who may be next in line for the Women's Tag Team Titles...

[Davis baits the hook.]

LD: ...but also to determine the time, the place, AND the stipulations of when you and I meet to setting this issue between you and I once and for all!

[Rage bites at her lower lip as the crowd buzzes at the offer.]

LD: In other words, if Carolina and Trish win... and I have no doubt they will...

..._I_ will be determining those conditions for our final encounter, Lauryn.

[She chuckles.]

LD: But if you and your partner... assuming you can even find one... if you win... then you get to decide the conditions.

[Rage pauses, thoughts running through her head rapidly.]

LD: Come on. I don't have all night. I'm a busy woman, Rage. What's it gonna be? You've wanted this final showdown for me for a long, long time now... and now you've got your chance to get it.

[Davis sneers at Rage who is looking out on the crowd.]

LD: What's the problem, Rage?

[She snaps her fingers, a mocking smirk on her face.]

LD: Oh... I get it. Given the way you've treated so many partners in the past... who would possibly be willing to team with you?

[Before Lauryn Rage can react or respond, Ricki Toughill steps in front of her, mic in hand...]

RT: I'm sure that after what you just saw... I can answer that for you, Davis.

'Da Kid' does not need a partner.

[The fans in the Globe groan like the air has been sucked out of the room.]

RT: 'Da Kid' does not need someone who will watch her back.

[Colton snickers her mocking snicker. Wallace folds her arms and smirks, leaning coolly against a wall like a high school bully.]

RT: What Lauryn Rage needs...

[Toughill turns to face her fallen opponent.]

RT: ...is her best friend.

[Ricki gestures for a handshake. Lauryn considers it for a second...

...then they both break into a grin and hug it out in the ring.

Meanwhile, back by the entranceway, Davis now has a scowl on her face, and is about to take a step toward the ring, only this time, it's Colton and Wallace holding up their arms and Wallace can be heard saying "we got this, coach."]

LD: Wow! And I suppose you can say THAT'S official as well! One week from tonight in Calgary, the Slam Sorority vs Lauryn Rage and Ricki Toughill... and the winner gets to set the stage for Davis vs Rage: The Final Encounter!

BW: Correction - the Slam Sorority versus two people who just beat the hell out of each other who haven't gotten along in ages! Lauryn Rage just signed her own death warrant, Dane.

LD: We'll see about that. We'll see what happens next week in Calgary!

[Rage and Toughill continue to embrace, playing to the fans in the Globe Theatre...

...and with a flash of the ACCESS 365 logo, we find ourselves on footage marked "OPPORTUNITY KNOCKS. SEATTLE." where we've got a shot of the backstage area - presumably the Chimpanzee Position as we can see the backside of the entrance curtain. The crowd is boisterous beyond the curtain...

...and after a moment, Sid Osborne comes hobbling through it, clutching his ribcage in pain. He grimaces, leaning hard on a production case as Adam Rogers stands nearby watching.]

AR: You alright, kid?

[Osborne leans harder on the case, pounding a fist down into it.]

AR: Kid?

[He suddenly straightens up.]

SO: Do I look alright, old man?

[Rogers bristles at that.]

SO: Were you alright when you were CLEARLY the better wrestler and Blue kept shoving Chris Courtade down everyone's throat instead? Huh?

[Rogers smirks, shaking his head.]

AR: Guess not.

[Osborne nods.]

SO: Then consider us in the same boat, Natural. That guy...

[He gestures to the curtain.]

SO: ...isn't fit to lace my boots. He's not fit to carry my bag. He's not fit to wash my jock! The only thing he's fit to do is score the AWA points on SportsCenter because he's "legit"... he's "real."

[Osborne shakes his head.]

SO: When the reality of the situation is that I'm more real than some jacked up football player who couldn't cut it on the field will ever be!

[Rogers sighs, turning to walk away.]

SO: Yet another member of the office who can't handle the truth? I got your number, Rogers! You're just like the rest of them! Stegglet, Michaelson, Taylor... they all think that I'm just some punk kid off the indies who can't be on the cover of the program... who can't be on the Jimmy Kimmel Show... who isn't best for business.

I'm not just best for business... I'm the best in the whole damn world.

[Osborne nods to himself, grimacing as he grabs his ribs.]

SO: Golden Grapple. Royal Crown. Uncrowned National Champion. Check, check, check.

[Osborne pauses, nodding again.]

SO: North Dakota? The place I made my AWA debut?

Let's add "Guy Who Shattered The Myth Of Wade Walker" to the list.

[He stumbles off, wincing as he grabs his ribs and lets loose a silenced expletive 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 toehold 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 fade back up on a shot of the Globe Theatre's exterior, the Regina night sky hanging over it as we can hear the voice of Sweet Lou Blackwell.]

SLB: Matches being made left and right here tonight, fans! Calgary! North Dakota! Even right here tonight... and fans, during the break, I got word from the office of the Interim President that Supernova's World Title challenge here tonight is OFFICIAL! That means that every man you see on this program tonight in the building... whether they wrestle or not... is eligible for that drawing. So, in this first hour of action alone, just think of who we could see challenge for the World Title! National Champion Cody Mertz! Kerry Kendrick! Ohara and Williams! And that's just the beginning! It's gonna be an exciting night here in Regina and we're just getting started, fans!

[We fade from backstage to a live shot inside the Globe Theatre where we get a panning shot of the enthusiastic crowd...

...which gets even more excited as the wild bluegrass rhythms of "Blood On The Bluegrass" blares over the PA system!]

LD: Well, we promised all of the new AWA champions crowned at Opportunity Knocks would be appearing here tonight... and here come the brand new AWA Women's World Tag Team Champions!

[The cheers get louder as Victoria June and Kayla "The Pistol" Cristol step into view, smiles on their faces and the titles held aloft.]

LD: There they are, Ben! What a moment for these two!

BW: You heard Ricki Toughill mention Kayla Cristol as one of the women that helped build this division - the hottest division in wrestling - and I think there might be some so-called experts who never expected she'd hold championship gold in this company. She's on top of the world and lovin' it.

LD: Amen to that. By the way, you're one of those experts, right?

BW: No comment.

[June and Cristol make their way through the crowd, slapping every hand offered to them as they head towards the ring.]

June is dressed like June, her nearly albino skin blazing nearly white beneath the arena lights and covered in a spray of freckles, her Liberty-spiked hair making her look even more gloriously unhinged as she bangs her head and throws up the Devil horns with one hand while clutching her championship in the other. The spider tattoo over her chest is visible above her leather bustier and torn denim shorts, while the sleeve covering her right arm crawls from shoulder to wrist with spiders, webs, and upside-down broken hearts.

Beside her, Cristol is the calmer half of the picture, brunette hair beneath a cowboy hat, a tan suede duster hanging open over her street clothes and turquoise cowboy boots planted firmly beneath her. She has one championship raised overhead and the other arm wrapped around June's waist, laughing as June bounces beside her like she has been plugged directly into an electrical socket. Cristol looks toward the crowd and shakes her head, smiling with the quiet disbelief of somebody who knows she is witnessing something she'll never quite be able to explain to anybody who wasn't here.]

"COUNT-RY PUNKS!"

"COUNT-RY PUNKS!"

"COUNT-RY PUNKS!"

[Cristol smiles at the chant, nodding her head as the champions climb the ringsteps, ducking into the ring as the fans keep cheering and chanting. Inside the ring, both women raise their titles overhead again...]

LD: These two have been FLOATING for three days now. I spoke to them both backstage a little earlier and Kayla says it's like a walking dream right now. Everything she ever wanted.

[June finally lowers her championship and looks at Cristol. Cristol looks back. Neither woman says anything. June's chest is heaving, her face flushed beneath the freckles, her Liberty spikes somehow still standing despite everything she has done to herself during the celebration. She looks out over the crowd, then back at Cristol, and the sheer enormity of the moment finally catches her as she raises a mic, the music fading out.]

VJ: Y'all...

[The crowd answers immediately.]

VJ: Y'all...

[June laughs, wipes underneath one eye, then immediately looks annoyed at herself for doing it.]

VJ: Ah can't even talk! Y'all are gonna have t'give me a minute.

[The crowd cheers in support, getting louder again as June covers her heart with her left hand, her fingers briefly crossing the spider tattoo over her chest. Cristol stands beside her, firing her finger pistols into the crowd from beneath the brim of her cowboy hat as the chant continues. June looks at her partner, then back at the audience.]

VJ: Oh, Lawd... Good thing mah mascara ain't built fer this.

[The crowd laughs and cheers.]

VJ: But...

[June looks around the arena, then down at the championship in her hand.]

VJ: Ah'm gonna try.

[June takes a long breath and looks down at the championship in her hands. She slaps the faceplate, her expression changing as the wild celebration gives way to a more personal expression. Cristol stands beside her in her tan suede duster and turquoise cowboy boots, one hand resting against her own championship while the other settles briefly on June's shoulder.]

VJ: Ah've been dreamin' about this a long time.

Not just havin' one of these...

[She lifts the championship just a little higher.]

VJ: ...but havin' one of these with her.

[June turns toward Cristol.]

VJ: That's mah girl right there.

[The crowd cheers. Cristol smiles, tipping the brim of her cowboy hat toward June.]

VJ: An' we had t'go through Hell t'get 'em. We ain't gonna pretend we didn't.

[June's smile fades slightly.]

VJ: Seductive an' Destructive took us places Ah didn't know we could go.

They hurt us. They embarrassed us. They made this whole division look like somethin' ugly.

An' Ah'm not talkin' about losin'.

[June shakes her head.]

VJ: Losin' ain't ugly.

You get your ass beat? That's wrestling. You come up short? That's wrestling. You get knocked down and have t'figure out how t'stand back up?

Honey, that's practically the job description.

[The crowd laughs.]

VJ: What embarrassed this division was takin' somethin' that oughta mean everything... an' turnin' it into somethin' that was only ever about them.

Their ego. Their attention. Their need t'prove they were better than everybody else.

[She lowers the championship and looks down at it.]

VJ: These ain't supposed t'make you bigger than the division. These are supposed t'make the division bigger.

[The crowd cheers as Cristol slowly nods beside her.]

KC: That's the thing.

[Cristol takes the microphone, speaking softly enough that the crowd has to settle down to hear her.]

KC: We ain't lookin' at these belts and thinkin' we're better than everybody else now.

[She looks down at her championship.]

KC: We're lookin' at 'em and thinkin' we've got a whole lot more to prove.

KC: Every woman in that locker room oughta look at these and think... That's somethin' I can have. Not... That's somethin' I gotta beg somebody for. Not that's somethin' I gotta become somebody else to earn. And certainly not that's somethin' I gotta tear everybody around me down to hold.

[Cristol looks toward the audience.]

KC: You work. You fight. You get back up. And if you're good enough...

[She raises the championship.]

KC: One day you're standin' right here.

[The crowd applauds.]

KC: That's what I want our reign to mean.

[June looks at Cristol, then nods.]

KC: I want somebody watchin' us wrestle to think they wanna do this. I want somebody watchin' us get beat up to think...

[She smiles.]

KC: Well, maybe Ah can take a little bit more than those two.

[The audience laughs.]

KC: Ah want somebody watchin' us lose a match and see how we handle it. Because we're gonna lose somethin'.

[The crowd quiets.]

KC: Maybe a match or two. Maybe someday these belts.

[Cristol shrugs.]

KC: That's this business.

[She raises her championship.]

KC: But nobody's gonna look at us and see two women who don't respect what this means.

[The crowd cheers as June steps closer, her wild grin slowly returning.]

VJ: Oh, Ah respect the hell outta these things. Especially after what we went through t'get 'em!

Harley Hamilton was tryin' t'rip mah partner's leg off! Cinder was throwin' everything she had at us! Kayla was hurtin' so bad she could barely stand...

[June looks toward Cristol.]

VJ: ...and she still wouldn't stay down.

[The crowd cheers.]

VJ: An' then Ah got opened up!

[June touches her forehead.]

VJ: Y'all saw that?

[The audience roars.]

VJ: Ah'm bleedin' all over the place...

[She gestures wildly.]

VJ: Kayla's knee is halfway to hell...

KC: It was visitin'.

VJ: It was MOVIN' IN!

[Cristol laughs and shakes her head.]

VJ: And then you and that damn leg of yours...

[June points toward Cristol's knee.]

VJ: You remember what you did?

KC: I remember what you did.

VJ: What'd Ah do?

KC: You got up.

[June pauses as Cristol looks at her. Her smile fades into something more emotional.]

VJ: And so did you. You and that damned leg got up and kicked Harley Hamilton's ass!

[The crowd erupts as June suddenly grabs Cristol and pulls her into a fierce hug. Cristol laughs and wraps both arms around her. The audience applauds as June bangs her head against Cristol's shoulder, her Liberty spikes bouncing wildly.]

VJ: Damn you. You made me cry again.

KC: That's my fault?

VJ: Everything's your fault.

KC: Fair enough.

[They separate, both smiling.]

VJ: But that's what this reign's gonna be.

[June turns back toward the audience.]

VJ: Us fightin' for each other and fightin' for this division. An' fightin' for anybody that wants t'come take these from us.

Because Ah don't want somebody handin' us a list of contenders. Ah don't want some committee sittin' around decidin' who deserves a shot.

[June points to the back.]

VJ: Ah wanna know who's hungry. Ah wanna know who's been sittin' backstage watchin' us celebrate and thinkin'...

[June adopts a mock-serious expression.]

VJ: Ah could beat them.

[The crowd laughs.]

VJ: Well...

[June spreads her arms.]

VJ: Come on out.

[June lowers the mic, turning to her partner...

...when a voice rings out over the PA system.]

"Congratulations!"

[All eyes sweep across the Globe Theatre, looking for the source...

...and then finding that tall drink of Texas water, Margarita Flores, standing at the top of an aisleway, a folded-over length of bullrope draped across the back of her neck. She is also dressed in a beige cowboy hat, a black bustier top, matching shorts under a pair of blue denim chaps and black boots. Flores has a mic in her right hand as she looks down on June and Cristol.]

MF: I mean it. Really. It's always a good thing when a couple of Southern gals make good.

[Flores grins.]

MF: Especially against the likes of Cinder and Harley Hamilton. So give it up for the Country Punks, y'all!

[Flores pumps her left fist in the air along to the crowd's chanting.]

"COUN-TRY PUNKS!"

"COUN-TRY PUNKS!"

"COUN-TRY PUNKS!"

[Flores nods along with them, waiting for the chant to die down.]

MF: Someone had to do it... Stand up to E-Girl MAX and put Seductive and Destructive IN THEIR PLACE!

[The crowd roars in approval. Flores nods in agreement.]

MF: You see, I've had my share of problems with Cindy and Harley... And, if I remember correctly, I came up on top of when I took on Hamilton Graham's little princess.

[There are some cheers for Flores' victory many months ago.]

MF: But, somehow, along the way, the powers that be seem to have lost my dance card. My name seems to have been forgotten when it came time to tangle with that nest of vipers for the actual prizes.

[There are some boos for that as Flores nods, lowering the mic so we barely catch her say, "You're darn right to boo." As the crowd quiets, she raises the mic again.]

MF: I know. I know!

You're going to say, "But, Margie, Opportunity Knocks just passed. You could have made your own challenge on July fourth! Heck, you could have answered Julie Somers' open challenge for the Women's World championship!"

[Flores shrugs.]

MF: But, you see, much as this company wants to tout that event as ANYONE can lay down a challenge...

As much as the AWA wants to celebrate ALL of the women under their employ at Girls to the Front...

There's always been a pecking order... one I always seem to be at the bottom of, especially when the powers that be have their darlings that they would rather see grab that brass ring and steal the spotlight!

[Flores' sneering tone is met by a smattering of boos from the crowd that has otherwise grown quiet.]

MF: It goes back all the way to the Combat Corner and CCW, with Blackjack constantly getting on my case: "You hit hard, Margie, but you need to move faster and watch that conditioning."

Being told to cut down on the drinking and the nights out, while girls like Harley Hamilton got to keep the partying lifestyle part of their whole... Personality.

[Flores sneers.]

MF: All I've done for the rest of the girls... Standing up to Seductive and Destructive... Standing up to the likes of Kurayami...

You'd think that'd get me... Opportunities.

[Flores' voice falters for a moment as she tries to find the right words.]

MF: But do you think I wouldn't have been stopped right before those curtains were I to even CONSIDER answering the Spitfire's challenge?

[A section of Flores' fans try to start a "NO!" chant going, but the crowd remains largely silent.]

MF: If it weren't Michelle, they'd probably have queued up the golden girl herself, Melissa Cannon, or Michelle's kid, or her pal – the returning Ayako Fujiwara, before they'd see ME challenge for the Women's World Title!

[Each of those names get their share of cheers, much to Flores' chagrin.]

MF: Fortunately, the dynamic duo of Rogers and Fierro were nowhere to be found, or I probably would have been stopped from coming out here tonight!

Which brings us to tonight's order of business...

Kayla... Vicky... You ladies laid down the challenge and I'm out here to answer.

[There are some cheers for that. Victoria June nods her head approvingly as Cristol drapes an arm over her partner's shoulders, whispering to her.]

MF: And just like you said, Vicky, I know... "Ah could beat them."

[There's a hard look in Flores' eyes as she looks down at June and Cristol...

...and then waves a dismissive hand.]

MF: Yeah, yeah, I know I'm going to need a partner - why don't you let me worry about that, alright?

I'll see you two in that ring later tonight.

[And with a tip of her hat, Margarita Flores turns around and disappears from sight as the crowd buzzes at the surprise challenge.]

LD: That's big news right there, Ben! Women's World Tag Team Titles will be on the line TONIGHT when Margarita Flores teams with a partner of her choice against the new champions, the Country Punks!

BW: This is a big opportunity for Flores who has been kind of stuck in neutral for months now. Ever since Fright Night and the match with Harley Hamilton, Flores hasn't seemed to know if she's coming or going... but tonight could change all that in one shot.

LD: But the question is... who is she going to find to be her partner? That's a story to keep track of here tonight... and speaking of stories to watch... fans, as we came on the air tonight, we saw two brutal attacks backstage that we wanted to update you on. First of all, Hannibal Carver - who was assaulted by Team Supreme's Bret Grayson at what appeared to be the order of Supreme Wright - has been taken to a

local hospital. He is currently undergoing X-rays and while we do not have it official yet, it is believed to be very likely that he has a broken ankle, Ben.

BW: I'm a fan of Team Supreme. I'm a fan of Bret Grayson. I'm NOT a fan of jumping someone in a parking lot or locker room and trying to end their career.

LD: I'm sure we've got plenty of fans online right now decrying your Southern Syndicate days as proving otherwise but that's an argument for another time. Right now, I want to talk about the OTHER attack that went down earlier tonight and that was the attack on Brass Ring competitor Danny King by... what was his name again?

BW: Abel Lee Cady.

LD: Why does that name sound familiar?

BW: You know him quite well... just... maybe not under that name.

[Dane looks puzzled.]

LD: You're going to have to give me more than that, Ben... but right now, we are able to announce that Danny King has been forced to WITHDRAW from the Brass Ring Tournament after the attack by Mr. Cady. It's a huge blow to this tournament as Danny King is a huge name... and many fans were greatly anticipating seeing what he could do. A lot of people thought he was the favorite to win the whole thing, Ben.

BW: Not anymore.

LD: Absolutely not. I'm told that President Zharkov is urgently trying to find a replacement... someone else who can face Adrian Kirk later tonight in that Brass Ring showdown later tonight. But right now, let's get back to the ring and more women's tag team action!

[We fade back to the ring where Megumi Sato is standing.]

MS: The following contest is a TAG TEAM match scheduled for one fall with a ten minute time limit in the AWA WOMEN'S DIVISION!

[The house lights dim, leaving the ornate interior of the Globe Theatre in shadow as golden-red light gathers. Deep, resonant African drums begin rolling through, their rhythm reverberating through the old building.]

MS: First, from Rwanda... at a total combined weight of 350 pounds...

ASKARI... NUBIA... THE AGOJIEEEEEEEEEEEEEEE!

[Askari steps into view first, pausing with her gaze sweeping across the audience. Her crimson-trimmed gear catches the stage lighting as Nubia emerges behind her, powerful in black and gold, rolling her shoulders as she joins her partner.]

LD: The Agojie back in action here tonight, undefeated since arriving here in the AWA on Showtime... and coming off some impressive victories over teams like the Velvet Vixens and the Sunshine Sisters, Ben.

BW: Every time we see these two step into the ring, Dane, they seem more comfortable, more confident, and more dangerous... and that's saying something since they've seemed pretty dangerous since Day 1.

[Askari begins walking down the short stairway between the theatre seats towards the ring while Nubia follows close behind, slapping hands with the fans along the way. Askari remains focused, acknowledging the cheers with small nods as the two women approach the ring. Nubia climbs onto the apron first as Askari follows, both stepping through the ropes as the drums continue for another beat before cutting out sharply.]

LD: The fans have been supportive of this duo so far, Ben, although no one really knows much about them other than how impressive they've been in the ring and maybe that's enough.

[Sato continues.]

MS: And their opponents... already in the ring at this time... the duo of Kendra Desrosiers and Mac Sutherland... the Prairie Technicals!

[With Askari and Nubia standing together in their corner, Kendra "K.D." Desrosiers of Winnipeg, Manitoba, and Mackenzie "Mac" Sutherland of Saskatoon, Saskatchewan are across the ring dressed in standard wrestling gear, stretching against the ropes...]

BW: The Prairie Technicals. Did I hear that right?

LD: You did indeed.

BW: Hmm. Well, if they somehow manage to win this match, with their payday, they oughta hire a marketing team. That name is atrocious.

LD: Forget about the name - tell us about the competitors because I know them as two Canadian grapplers who've made their reputation through technical wrestling over brute force.

BW: Desrosiers is the compact technician, Sutherland is the rangier submission specialist, and their entire game is built around leverage, positioning and making an opponent work harder than they do.

LD: Which sounds like a sensible strategy against the Agojie.

BW: It does, Dane, right up until you remember that Askari is an exceptional technical wrestler herself, and Nubia is strong enough to make leverage almost irrelevant.

[Referee Scott Ezra steps to the middle of the ring, addressing both teams.]

LD: Scott Ezra drawing the assignment for this one... I guess someone decided Shari couldn't referee EVERY women's match in this hour with Rebecca Daniels on the shelf.

[Ezra signals for the bell.]

"DING! DING! DING!"

[As the bell sounds, Askari and Desrosiers step from their corners, circling cautiously before they come together in a tieup...

...but Desrosiers immediately slips out, changing levels to grab the leg...]

LD: The Canadian looking for a takedown!

[...but Askari sprawls out, driving her weight down and pushing the Canadian towards the mat...]

LD: Askari trying to stuff it though, showing off her own technical prowess...

[Desrosiers abandons the leg, shifting into an attempt to grab a waistlock but Askari turns with her, catching her around the waist, and rolls her across the mat before she can establish control.]

LD: Askari saw the takedown coming and managed to avoid it.

BW: That's the difference right there. Desrosiers is technically good, but Askari is reading her before she gets to the second part of the sequence.

[Both women scramble up to their feet, Desrosiers looking for another tieup but Askari catches the wrist, turning underneath to send her flying with an armdrag...]

LD: Beautifully done by Askari, and Desrosiers is finding out very quickly that she isn't going to out-wrestle this woman.

[Back on her feet, the Canadian tries again, wrapping Askari up in a waistlock but Askari again reverses, tossing her down to the mat before backing off and allowing the Canadian to rise.]

BW: Askari is making this look easy right now.

[The Canadians make the exchange, Sutherland tagging in as Askari mirrors the move and tags in Nubia...]

BW: Look at the size of this one.

[The size difference is immediately apparent as Sutherland circles once, shooting in low for the leg...]

LD: She's got the leg, trying to take her down!

[But Nubia catches herself, lifting her up across the chest, holding her there long enough for the audience to appreciate the absurd difference in strength before driving her down with a crushing powerslam.]

LD: Ohhh! Big slam by Nubia!

BW: That's the problem with technical wrestling against Nubia. You can have the perfect position, but eventually you have to deal with the woman's power.

[Nubia pulls Sutherland off the mat, driving her back into the neutral corner...]

"WHAAAAAACK!"

"WHAAAAAACK!"

"WHAAAAAACK!"

[...and starts hammering her with heavy chops before grabbing the wrist, whipping her across the ring where Sutherland hits the turnbuckles hard, stumbling out of the corner...]

"OHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[...and walks right into a standing clothesline that sends her sprawling to the mat!]

LD: Incredible impact right there, laying out Sutherland... and the Agojie continues to be a force every time they step inside the ring.

[Nubia grabs Sutherland by the wrist, dragging her towards their corner...

...but Sutherland rolls back, slipping the grip, and then front rolls abck the other way towards her own corner!]

LD: Tag right there by the Canadians...

[Desrosiers comes charging in, ducking a wild swing by Nubia, snatching the leg on the way by, forcing the larger competitor down to a knee...]

LD: ...and they continue to try and bring Nubia down to the mat...

[...but that's as far as she goes as Nubia snatches her off the mat, lifting her overhead into a powerbomb position...

...but Desrosiers slips out, landing on her feet behind Nubia!]

LD: Nice escape there, waistlock!

[But Nubia lands a well-placed elbow to break the hold, dashing to the ropes and running Desrosiers right down with a tackle!]

LD: Nubia's just too much physically for this duo, I think, Ben.

BW: She might be too much physically for most duos.

[Snatching the wrist again, she yanks Desrosiers right up off the mat into her waiting arms, twisting and driving her down with a devastating belly to belly suplex!]

LD: WOW! Hit the replay on that one 'cause I wanna see that again!

[As Nubia rises back to her feet, we do indeed get the split screen showing Nubia muscling Desrosiers off the mat with a simple grasp of the wrist, catching and driving her down...]

LD: Incredible strength on the part of Nubia... and there's the tag to Askari.

[Askari goes right to work on the arm, stomping the shoulder once before snatching a wristlock of her own. She uses the hold to pull Desrosiers back up, cranking the arm again...]

LD: Desrosiers looking for an escape, front rolls out of-

[But Askari snatches a waistlock mid-roll, powering her up and down with a released back suplex!]

LD: Ohh! That'll shake you from eyebrow to toenail!

BW: The Canadians came into this thinking they could make Askari wrestle their style of match... but Askari's showing them she can wrestle their style better than they can so far.

[Askari stands and watches as Desrosiers rolls to her corner, making the tag again...]

LD: Another exchange for the Canadians... although I'm not sure it's going to help them.

[Askari catches the incoming Sutherland with an armdrag... then a second...]

LD: The armdrags are crisp and well-executed.

[...and as Sutherland rushes in towards a third, she shifts direction to avoid it, causing Askari to mirror the movement, using a hiptoss to take her over instead. Sutherland comes up swinging a desperation haymaker...

...only to get caught in a waistlock!]

LD: Ohhh! Up and over with a German Suplex!

[Askari hangs on, rolling back up to her feet, still in control of the waistlock...]

LD: And make it a pair, dumping Sutherland down on the back of her head a second time! And Askari is just taking these women apart at this point, Ben.

BW: The Agojie is doing major damage against every team they've been in there with so far. We'll see how they fare against stiffer competition, Dane.

LD: We will indeed... and now it's Nubia back inside the squared circle.

[Cornering Sutherland, Nubia hammers big forearms down across the sternum in the neutral corner...]

LD: Shoots her across, much like we saw earlier...

[...and goes charging in, lunging at Sutherland with a devastating clothesline that flips her inside out!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

LD: ...and a whole lotta oomph behind that running clothesline! Sutherland got flipped upside down and inside out and now she's helpless in there against the undefeated Agojie who look moments away from scrawling another mark in their win column.

[Nubia stands over Sutherland, looking out to Askari and gesturing towards the ropes.]

LD: And we've seen this before, Ben.

[Askari steps in, moving to the ropes while Nubia drags Sutherland towards the center of the ring where Sutherland struggles up onto a knee, clearly dazed...]

LD: Sutherland's having trouble getting back to her feet...

BW: That's probably a good thing since-

[...but as she does, Askari goes running off the ropes, launching herself into the air, twisting through the sky...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[...and CONNECTS with a spinning kick to the head that sends her pitching forward as Nubia bounces off the far ropes...]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

LD: The Maliza Yeye RIGHT into the spear from Nubia and... wow. That's it.

[Nubia kneels, planting fists in the chest of Sutherland as Askari stands sentry and the referee delivers the three count.]

"DING! DING! DING!"

LD: Another impressive - some might say dominating - win for the Agojie as they keep that winning streak intact. Still undefeated since arriving here in the AWA.

BW: And tonight, they didn't just beat the... what did these two call themselves? The Prairie Dogs?

LD: Prairie Technicals.

BW: Even worse. They didn't just beat 'em... they completely dismantled their game plan and they completely dominated them to boot!

LD: The Canadians came in wanting to wrestle and gave it their best effort but Askari was simply too technically sound for them and Nubia's power game made it almost an impossible task.

[With the crowd cheering and the music playing anew, Askari raises one fist while Nubia raises hers beside her...]

LD: And if I'm a part of the new Women's World Tag Team Champions, I'm watching these two with great caution. Fans, let's go backstage to Lucy St. Clair! Lucy?

[We fade from the ring to the backstage area where we find Lucy St. Clair standing.]

LSC: Thanks, Lori! Another impressive victory for The Agojie... and you have to imagine that at this point in the calendar in early July, the eyes of every woman on the roster - and many who aren't - are on Madison Square Garden on August 18th for Girls To The Front. It's going to be a historic night for the hottest division in wrestling and believe me, there's not a single woman on the roster who doesn't want to be on that show.

[St. Clair smiles.]

LSC: But that lineup got flipped upside down earlier this week in Seattle. Since Memorial Day Mayhem, we've known that Harley Hamilton - the winner of this year's Rumble - would be taking on the AWA Women's World Champion in the Main Event of Girls To The Front... it's a lock! On the other side of that, I think most people assumed that it would be Julie Somers defending the title. I mean, there were commercials hyping it for crying out loud!

[She shakes her head.]

LSC: But all that hype came crashing down a few days ago when Julie Somers issued a challenge to the 2018 Royal Crown winner, Michelle Bailey, for an Opportunity Knocks title match... and Bailey scored the victory, capturing her first piece of AWA gold!

[St. Clair grins broadly, unable to hide her emotions on that win.]

LSC: It was a very special moment for Michelle Bailey, her family and friends... and of course, her fans all over the world who wondered if that day would ever come. But with the new champion crowned, that meant Girls To The Front had been shaken to the core... as it'll now be Michelle Bailey defending the World Title against Harley Hamilton in a match that is VERY personal. These two have a relationship... they have a history... and I, for one, am intrigued by what happens in MSG. Later tonight though, we're going to hear from the new champion... and I'm sure she's got plenty to say towards her challenger on that upcoming historic night of action - a night that I'm sure our next two competitors are looking ahead to, wondering if a win tonight puts them on the show! Let's go back down to ringside to Lori and Ben!

[We fade back to the ringside area.]

LD: Thanks, Lucy. Our next match of the evening is going to be interesting. Just a few days ago at Opportunity Knocks 2, Charity Rockwell of the Flapperdoodles called out Sophie Rhodes of the Rhodes Dynasty. That callout resulted in what should quite frankly have been a humbling of Sophie Rhodes via defeat by Charity Rockwell, but instead, the teammates are going to go at it this week.

BW: You're really pushing the limit of what you can get away with, Dane.

LD: Pardon me for pointing out that when put in the ring with wrestlers of equal skill, the Rhodes Dynasty folds like tents.

BW: You think that, huh? Well, in just a few moments, Cassie Rhodes will square up against Betty Chang, and I think you'll be eating those words tout de suite.

LD: What makes you so sure of that, Ben?

BW: You think when I had Raphael Rhodes as part of the Southern Syndicate, I didn't know exactly who the talent of the Rhodes family was? Please. All these years of scouting, and Cassie's always been the one who was the standout amongst the 4th generation of the Rhodes family tree. It's just because she chose to walk away from the ring and raise Sophie that she doesn't get the credit for it. And you, Dane, of all people, you should respect her for that!

LD: Be that as it may, Ben, her tactics since returning to the ring have been deplorable, and the way she's raised her daughter don't give me a lot of hope for a late career resurgence in good clean wrestling.

[Waterson scoffs as Dane shakes her head.]

LD: Fortunately, Betty Chang is always up to the challenge. Let's go up to Megumi Sato to see if Betty can take the "Wigan Wildcat" down a peg.

[We cut down to the ring where Megumi Sato stands.]

MS: Our next match is set for one fall with a ten minute time limit! Introducing first, from Ashton-in-Makerfield in the borough of Wigan in England, weighing 134 pounds...

"THE WIGAN WILDCAT"

CASSSSSSSIEEEEEEEEEEEEEEE RHOOOOOOOOOOODESSSSSSSSSSS!

WE WILL DISTURB THE FALSE PEACE!

[The crowd loudly boos to the sounds of "False Peace" by Petrol Girls as Cassie Rhodes walks from the narrow entranceway, her hands placed behind her back as though she were being perp walked. She casually strides down the path, a towel

covering her head as she walks towards the ring, dressed in a royal blue high-necked singlet with a white stripe down each leg, along with well-worn white boots. Behind her, taunting the crowd as she keeps pace with her mother, is the "Snakepit Sweetheart" Sophie Rhodes. The younger Rhodes is dressed in a black motorcycle jacket, a white crop top featuring a smiley face with hearts for eyes across the breast, a black and white houndstooth miniskirt, and a pair of black combat boots.]

LD: Hold on just a moment. This is supposed to be a singles match! Nobody said Sophie Rhodes could be out here!

BW: Do you really think Zharkov didn't give the okay on this? Furthermore, who's going to stop her? You?

LD: Ben, look at the boots she's wearing! You think she doesn't have some steel toes in those combat boots?

BW: Oh, I know for a fact she does. It's a Rhodes family tradition, Dane.

[As mother and daughter make it to ringside, Cassie gets in the way of referee Pete "Blue Shoes" Miller as he tries to talk to Sophie, but Sophie makes a big show of setting up two chairs at ringside - one to sit in, one to put her feet up on. As Cassie whips the towel from her head, she holds a boot out for Miller to inspect, twirling her toe around before the official finally does so.]

BW: See? Sophie's just here to watch.

LD: Sure she is. Let's just hope that Charity Rockwell isn't that far behind Betty Chang, fans.

["Blue Water Blue Sky" by Daisuke Ishiwatari, from the Guilty Gear X2 soundtrack, begins to play over as Betty Chang makes her way to the ring. The young martial artist is dressed in a white martial arts gi jacket over her wrestling attire bright pink transparent shirt with multi-colored neon triangle designs, a black sport bra underneath, a black mini skirt with pink trim, black shorts underneath and black and pink wrestling sneakers with matching laces. Her hair is styled in two high pigtails that cascade down slightly past her shoulders.

She is accompanied to the ring by Charity Rockwell, who wears a short, form-fitting, red fringe dress adorned with sparkling beads and sequins. A feather boa hangs around her neck, along with several glass bead necklaces. Around her head, she wears a red, sequined headband with a red plume sticking straight into the air. As they pose at the front of the entrance, Charity removes her headband and places it on Betty's head, much to the young martial artist's amusement.]

MS: Annnnnnnnnnd her opponent... from Seattle, Washington... weighing in at 112 pounds...

...BETTTYYYYYY CHAAAAAAAAAAAAANNNNGGG!

[Chang reaches ringside, smiling and waving at the cheering fans as she jogs up the ring steps to the apron, grabbing the top rope and slingshots over in a somersault, landing on her feet with a loud "YAAAAAA!" as she strikes a martial arts pose!]

LD: Betty Chang looks ready for action!

BW: She can look however she wants but all that matters is if she wins.

[As Chang is checked over by referee Pete Miller, Cassie Rhodes remains stationary in the corner, her eyes fixed on her opponent, a grin showing off her missing canine tooth across her face as she peers through her bangs.]

LD: I can't help but notice a more... restrained Cassie Rhodes here.

BW: How so?

LD: Usually she's stomping around and causing a scene. Here she's calm. I don't know if that's a good thing or not.

[The bell sounds, as Rhodes walks to the center of the ring, her right hand raised with her fingers wiggling. Chang cautiously approaches the elder of the Rhodes Dynasty with her left hand raised, an uncertain look in her eyes as the crowd urges her to be careful.]

LD: Betty Chang not sure how to take this approach from Cassie Rhodes, and rightfully so.

BW: I don't know why, it's just a simple test of strength.

[Chang and Rhodes lace fingers, and as Chang raises her right hand for the other side of the knucklelock...]

"WHACK!"

[She is punched directly in the face by a left jab from Rhodes.]

LD: A cheap shot by Cassie Rhodes!

BW: An effective shot, you mean!

[Chang releases her grip from the knucklelock, stumbling backwards and holding her chin as Rhodes simply grins at her.]

LD: Cassie Rhodes is listed as being right-handed, Ben, how does she have that much power in her left?

BW: Where did you get that bad data from, Dane? Rhodes is ambidextrous. It shouldn't be a surprise that she can pop that runt Betty Chang just as hard with the left as she can with the right.

[Chang, still rubbing her jaw, looks back towards Rhodes with fire in her eyes, erupting forward and driving her leg into the back of Rhodes' thighs, pushing against Rhodes' shoulders with an osoto guruma!]

LD: Ah ha! Look at that judo throw by the martial arts master, Betty Chang!

[Rhodes looks to get to her feet, and as she does, Chang grabs Rhodes' wrist, pulling Rhodes over her shoulder and throwing her to the mat with a hane goshi! Rhodes rolls away from Chang's grasp, her momentum carrying her to the ropes, where the referee steps in between the two and calls for a break.]

LD: The crowd is going wild, as Betty Chang is showing off those judo skills! She had no problem sending Casey Cash running weeks ago, and Cassie Rhodes is getting a dose of the same medicine!

BW: This isn't the judo mats, Dane, and Chang isn't going to win with a clean ippon. She's gotta beat Cassie Rhodes or make her quit, and I don't see her doing that any time soon.

[We cut to a camera angle as Chang protests to Pete Miller, insisting that she be allowed to continue her momentum, while Rhodes stays at the ropes with one foot outside, her grin not leaving.]

BW: And you can clearly see Chang doesn't know proper wrestling technique. The more she's keeping "Blue Shoes" tied up, the longer Cassie Rhodes can keep her foot out of bounds and grind that momentum to a halt.

LD: What is going on with Rhodes today, anyway? I've never seen her so calm, it's unsettling.

BW: Human beings have layers, imagine that.

[With Sophie Rhodes shouting sing-songy taunts from the floor, Cassie Rhodes puts her foot back inside the ropes, and just as the referee steps out of the way...]

LD: Oh my goodness! Listen to that yelp from Betty Chang!

[... Rhodes dives shoulder-first into the top of Chang's knee, causing Chang to shriek out in pain and collapse to the mat.]

LD: Another cheap shot by Cassie Rhodes!

BW: What's cheap about that, Dane? It was a clean, legal shot to the knee!

LD: It was a chop block, Ben! Plenty of professional sports have banned the chop block!

BW: Professional wrestling hasn't, which makes it clean as freshly washed laundry!

[Rhodes grabs Chang's ankle, then drives a knee into the side of Chang's weakened knee. The Wiganer points to Charity Rockwell at ringside and can be heard shouting "for you, love!" before dropping an elbow onto Chang's knee. Rockwell rolls her eyes and fans herself as Rhodes grabs Chang's ankle, yanking her leg at a 45 degree angle.]

BW: And look at the torque on this, Dane. Cassie Rhodes is more known in the AWA for her brawling, but she's got one heck of a grappling background.

LD: And you have to think that this is taking Betty Chang by surprise, because the only Cassie Rhodes she's seen has been the out of control brawler.

BW: Is it Cassie Rhodes' fault that Betty Chang didn't do her homework? Did she think a Rhodes wasn't going to have some serious chops on the mat?

[Rhodes drops another elbow onto Chang's knee, as her daughter Sophie can be heard shouting "AGAIN, MUM! DO IT AGAIN!" from ringside while Chang desperately reaches for the ropes.]

LD: And listen to that brat Sophie Rhodes out there at ringside, shouting for her mother to continue the punishment.

BW: It's a good idea, Dane. Most of Betty Chang's offense requires a strong standing base, whether it's judo or karate, no matter the martial art she needs to stand to do it. Cassie going after the knee is taking away practically everything from Chang's arsenal.

LD: I hope for Betty's sake that you're wrong.

[Rockwell watches as Rhodes grasps Chang by the ankle and drives a knee into the hamstring, causing Chang to scream out in pain.]

BW: Even if I'm not, Chang's not going to be able to take this kind of punishment to the knee for much longer.

[Cassie stands at Chang's feet, holding onto the wounded leg, as again she looks out to Rockwell. As Sophie cheers at ringside, Chang quickly turns over to her stomach, then pushes up...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[...connecting with a mule kick to Cassie's jaw!]

LD: Oh yeah! So much for nothing left in Chang's arsenal!

[As Rhodes gets to her feet, Chang rises as well, lunging towards Rhodes and catching her with a one-footed dropkick!]

BW: Yeah, but look at how the mobility is cut down! Just one foot on that dropkick, it doesn't have nearly the snap of her usual kicks!

[Chang hobbles back to her feet where she sees a standing Rhodes, the smirk with the missing tooth back on her face as she sees Chang struggling to stand. Rhodes takes a step back, motioning for Chang to come towards her.]

BW: How's that for gamesmanship, huh?

LD: She'd better watch her step, Betty Chang's more dangerous than I think Cassie Rhodes is giving her credit for.

[As she closes in on Rhodes, Betty Chang goes for her signature Dragon Flash question mark kick, feigning low before aiming high at Cassie Rhodes' head. But Cassie deftly steps back and leans just out of range of the kick as it whistles harmlessly past her. Betty's eyes widen in pure shock.]

LD: Cassie just avoided the Dragon Flash! With ease! That was almost effortless!

BW: Of course she did, Dane! Her daughter Sophie uses that exact same question mark kick! Cassie has seen that move a million times in the gym and in the ring. This is exactly how Charity Rockwell was able to counter Sophie's version of it at Opportunity Knocks!

[Seizing the opening, Cassie immediately counters. As Betty is still off-balance from the missed kick, Cassie leaps over a desperate diving sweep attempt at her legs. The moment her feet hit the mat, she snaps a vicious kick to the side of Betty's head, sending Chang crashing down to the canvas.]

[

LD: A big kick to the head! Rhodes now going to Chang's leg, grabbing her by the ankle, lifting her hiiiiigh into the air...

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAM!"

LD: ...and DOWN to the canvas!

BW: This is almost surgical precision, Dane. Rhodes is ripping that leg apart.

[Rhodes grabs Chang by the ankle and quickly twists around, wrenching Chang's leg around hers and causing Chang to scream out in pain once more!]

LD: A spinning toehold!

BW: And look at how Cassie Rhodes drives her weight down as she wrenches Chang's leg! She's not staying in a standing position, she's twisting that leg and using the weight and velocity as torque to wrench that knee!

LD: And she's doing it again! Rhodes with another twist of the spinning toehold!

[Chang cries out in pain, reaching for the ropes as her partner Rockwell stands on the other side. From the opposite side of the ring, Sophie Rhodes can be heard screaming and cheering, encouraging her mother to keep attacking.]

BW: Pay attention to what she's doing, Dane. As she twists that leg, she jerks the ankle up! If Chang doesn't give it up, a couple more of these could easily snap her leg!

LD: She's going to do it again! She's going to wrench that knee again!

[The fans scream for the elder Rhodes to stop, and she mouths "one more?" with her sadistic grin. There is a roar of boos, and Rhodes responds in kind with another quick, violence wrenching of Chang's knee, and then...]

LD: There's the bell...

BW: Ha! I knew it! I knew Chang couldn't hold on!

LD: Betty Chang has tapped out after that third twist of the spinning toehold, and referee Pete "Blue Shoes" Miller is wasting no time trying to get this broken up.

[As Sophie Rhodes hops into the ring, gleefully taunting the fallen Betty Chang, a hush falls over the crowd as the referee tells Cassie Rhodes to break the hold. Surprisingly, Cassie does so, turning and glaring at Charity Rockwell on the floor.]

BW: And look at Cassie Rhodes, daring Charity Rockwell to do something here. Charity might've thought she was doing something big a few days ago at Opportunity Knocks by trying to humiliate Sophie Rhodes-

LD: Humiliate?! She challenged Sophie Rhodes to a match! A one-on-one match!

BW: And you think that little dance she did at the end was really necessary? Cassie Rhodes just taught that punk flapper that if you mess with a Rhodes, you get paid back in full.

[Cassie continues to stare down at Charity, the tension between the two filling the air, as a member of the medical team enters the ring to check on Betty Chang behind the Rhodes Dynasty. Finally, Cassie pats Sophie on the shoulder, and we can hear "the lesson's been taught, poppet" from mother to daughter as she guides Sophie from the ring. After the two leave, Charity immediately slides in to check on Betty.]

BW: And look at that coward Charity Rockwell, waiting until the Rhodes Dynasty hits the bricks before going to help her friend.

LD: I don't think that has a thing to do with it. Charity Rockwell is as cool as they come, Ben. If she had gotten into a fight with the Rhodes Dynasty, not only would it have not gotten Betty Chang the medical attention she needed, but it would have put the medic and the referee in danger.

BW: Uh huh. Sure.

LD: Call it a win for Cassie Rhodes here tonight in Regina as yet another woman in the hottest division in wrestling makes her mark with all roads leading to MSG and Girls To The Front! Fans, we'll be right back with more AWA action right here on Showtime on ESPN!

[We fade to black...

We open to a plain white room, and a smiling Michelle Bailey, who has changed out her glasses for safety goggles. She is identified with a graphic, reading "Michelle Bailey - Expert Consultant".]

MB: Hello, and welcome to the AWA Technologies testing lab! When the team here, in collaboration with 2K Games, asked me to tell you at home about the upcoming AWA 2K18, I was faced with a dilemma. I hardly know anything about video games!

[We cut to Michelle holding a Sega Genesis controller, surrounded by smart-looking people in labcoats, with the sounds of ToeJam and Earl playing in the background. She looks up with a shrug, saying "this is the only game I know how to play". We then cut back to Michelle in the white room with a slight frown.]

MB: So obviously, we needed to call in a pro to help me.

[We pan back to see Kimmy Bailey holding a controller. She is identified with a graphic as well, reading "Kimmy Bailey - Video Game Genius".]

KB: Mama, you ain't gonna believe what they've done with this game! I thought last year's was somethin'...

[Kimmy lets out a low whistle.]

KB: But take a look at this!

[Kimmy presses a button, and the room transforms into a digital representation of the Saturday Night Wrestling arena packed with fans, with the mother and daughter standing inside of a ring, Michelle looking around in confusion.]

KB: Have you ever wanted to play through the storied career of Juan Vasquez?

[Michelle tilts her head.]

MB: But I was there for most of it...

[Kimmy ignores her mother.]

KB: With the new Showcase mode, you can!

[Kimmy presses a button, and her outfit changes to a replica of Juan Vasquez's, along with an AWA 2K18 T-shirt. Michelle looks on in surprise as Kimmy flexes.]

KB: You can take on practically everyone my daddy's faced! You can even play as the West Memphis Assassin!

[Kimmy presses another button, and the West Memphis Assassin's mask covers her face. We hear snarling in the background, as the camera pans to see digital representations of all the big opponents in Juan Vasquez's past - among them, Stevie Scott, Calisto Dufresne, Luke Kinsey, Shane Destiny, and Ryan Martinez - with a digital version of Raphael Rhodes standing in front of them. Michelle gets a worried look in her eyes.]

MB: You have to face all of them?!

[Suddenly, from the side, Juan Vasquez steps beside Kimmy, shaking his head.]

JV: I think you better let me handle this one. Hold down the left trigger and hit X.

KB: Sure thing, Daddy!

[Kimmy does so and Juan transforms into a digital version of himself, charging into a fight against all his famed foes. Michelle looks on in amazement as Kimmy holds up the controller.]

KB: That ain't all! If you want to be in control of the AWA, just put yourself in Maxim Zharkov's shoes with the new Galaxy Mode!

[Kimmy presses another button, and her outfit turns into a button down and slacks, pencil behind her ear, holding a clipboard in one hand and the controller in the other. The arena also repeatedly transforms, from Showtime, to Memorial Day Mayhem, to Power Hour, to the Crockett Coliseum, to SuperClash.]

MB: You mean I can make the matches?

KB: Of course, Mama! There's over 150 stars from the AWA's past and present, plus more than 25 different arenas to choose from, with over 20 different match types from your basic singles match to War Games! You can even make E-Girl MAX fight themselves!

[We pan to the other side, where Harley Hamilton, Cinder, and Casey Cash stand, glaring.]

HH: That'll never happen!

KB: Oh yeah?

[Kimmy holds down the right trigger and presses B, and all three turn into digital representations of themselves, with digital Casey wearing a referee shirt.]

KB: Oh, and there's a new special referee mode, too! Now get to work, you three!

[As the digital versions of EGM loudly complain, we see Maxim Zharkov himself enter the frame.]

MZ: I think you might want to let me handle this.

KB: Oh! Sure, Interim Boss!

[Kimmy hands Zharkov the pencil and clipboard, and he turns into a digital representation of himself, walking towards the fussing digital EGM as we close back in to Michelle and Kimmy.]

KB: And if that many stars ain't enough for you, they beefed up the creation suite to make as many as your hard drive can hold, or even modify the existing roster!

MB: Baby, don't...

[Kimmy holds down the left and right bumpers, pressing A, and turns Michelle into a digital version of herself. The camera whips around to see a seven foot tall version of Ayako Fujiwara, eyes glowing with a heavenly light, as Molly Bell happily purrs beside her. The digital Michelle looks across the ring in horror.]

MB: Reset the game right now, young lady!

[Kimmy pouts.]

KB: All right, fine. Sheesh. She was on your side.

[Kimmy presses the home button, as Michelle turns back to normal, and we're back in the white room. Michelle puts her hand to her chest, gasping.]

KB: And you can even take AWA action with you on the go!

[A Nintendo Switch is thrown into the frame, as Kimmy catches it without looking.]

KB: We got a version of AWA 2K18 on the Switch!

[And an iPhone gets thrown into the frame, again with Kimmy catching the device without effort.]

KB: Plus exclusive iOS and iPadOS versions!

[Michelle puts her hands on her hips with a sigh.]

MB: I'm really glad I asked you.

KB: Sure thing, Mama! That's AWA 2K18, coming this fall to practically everywhere! PlayStation, Xbox, Switch, Apple mobile devices, Windows, and Mac!

[Kimmy narrows her eyes.]

KB: But not Android, bless their hearts.

[We cut to the AWA 2K18 logo, and logos of the platforms underneath...

...and then up on the backstage area where Sweet Lou Blackwell is standing, a solemn expression on his face.]

SLB: Welcome back to Showtime right here on ESPN, fans... and unfortunately, I have the responsibility of letting you all know that we have received an update on the condition of Hannibal Carver and... it is as we feared.

[Blackwell swallows.]

SLB: Hannibal Carver has suffered a fractured ankle at the hands of Bret Grayson on the order of Supreme Wright. He is still receiving treatment at a nearby hospital but we can confirm again, Hannibal Carver has a broken ankle as was feared. Preliminary estimates say it is too early to say if he'll require surgery, fans, but if he does... he'll be out of action for an indefinite period of time.

In other words...

[The scoopster's expression hardens.]

SLB: ...Team Supreme strikes again. If we get any more news, we'll be right here to give it you... but for now, let's go to the ring...

[And on that, we cut out to the ring where we find "Ten Ton Hammer" blasting across the PA system as Tiger Claw is standing in the ring. Claw is dressed in what has become his signature black suit, holding a mic in one hand and a small gym bag in the other.

By his side is an unknown man geared up and ready to wrestle. He's roughly the same size as Claw but with a softer build. If one had to describe the gear he's wearing with one word, that word would definitely be "Bandanas". He's got a bandana tied around his bleached blonde mullet, a bandana tied around his neck, bandanas tied around each wrist, bicep, thigh, and calf. His imitation cowboy wrestling boots have bandanas tied around the ankles. On the back of his tights, he's got a bandana hanging out of a back pocket made of bandana. Two things are clear looking at this guy: he likes bandanas, and that he has strong positive opinions about music that came out in the 80s.]

TC: At Opportunity Knocks, you all got to see the debut of my wrestler, BJORN...

[Several in the crowd roar "BJOOOOOOORRRRRNNNN" in return. Only seasoned Claw fans notice the slightest hint of a smirk on his face.]

TC: We saw him dominate two opponents and come out with the win. Sounds amazing, right? Unfortunately, because of BJORN's performance, people are hesitant to face him in a match. I totally understand. BJORN is a career ender. Who would want to step in the ring with him? There's not much incentive for a professional to go to work against a man that could very well end their career. So, I've had to change our approach.

[Claw raises the bag]

TC: In this bag is ten thousand dollars. I am willing to pay ten thousand dollars to any person who can last three minutes in the ring with BJORN. You don't even have to beat him. One on one, you last three minutes in the ring with BJORN, and you're ten thousand dollars richer.

[The crowd cheers, knowing that surely, there's someone on the roster who can win the prize.]

LD: That's a nice payday, Ben.

BW: It might not be "change your life" money, but it could definitely make a lot of problems go away! I wonder if my gear is in my car.

LD: Oh, I'd LOVE to see that!

[Claw turns to the wrestler in the ring with him]

TC: Our first man to take on the challenge is right here beside me. Tell them your name, kid.

RW: I'm Rik Wikkid! Let's rock and roll!

[A graphic comes up on the screen displaying the wrestler's name, confirming that yes, it is in fact spelled that way.]

TC: Rik Wikkid... Amazing. You think you can last 3 minutes in the ring with The Berserker and win 10k?

RW: I'm gonna give it my best! Rock on!

TC: [Raises an eyebrow] Rock on indeed. Alright, then, let's get this started. Best of luck, young Rik, against the Viking Giant, BJOOOOOOOOORRRRRRRNNNNNNNNN!

[“Twilight of the Thunder God” by Amon Amarth plays over the PA, accented by the trademark roar of “BJOOOOOOOOOOORRRRRRRNNNN”]

BJORN bursts out into view at the top of a stairway and immediately walks with purpose down the aisle, not stopping to pose or interact with fans. He just stares at Rik Wikkid, who looks like he may be regretting some of his choices recently.]

LD: Seven feet tall and well over 300 pounds... Look at this guy. Even without the crazy tattoos and that mad look in his eyes, he's a terrifying individual.

BW: With them, he's the stuff of nightmares and underwear badly in need of a change.

LD: Lovely.

[BJORN enters the ring over the top rope, throwing his arms up with another "BJOOOOORRRRRRRRRRN!" that some in the crowd echo. Claw takes a moment to say a few words to him before exiting. In response, BJORN nods slightly, never taking his eyes off Rik Wikkid across the ring from him.]

LD: Well, Tiger Claw steps out... and that means judgment day has arrived for Rik Wikkid and... he gets ten thousand dollars if he survives three minutes... what does he get if he doesn't?

BW: A trip to the hospital? Well, no... he probably gets that no matter what.

LD: Referee Koji Sakai checking in... maybe making sure he really wants to do this and-

[Sakai suddenly swings around to wave for the bell.]

"DING! DING! DING!"

LD: -there's the bell and start the clock!

[BJORN just stands there, waiting for his opponent to act...]

LD: Tick tock, boys.

BW: I'm pretty sure BJORN's not worried about wasting a few seconds.

LD: Rik Wikkid not rushing in either... the more time that comes off the clock, the better for him...

BW: Plus, he probably saw what happened to BJORN's last opponent who came charging in.

[As BJORN stands near the middle of the ring, Rik Wikkid cautiously moves around the giant, staying light on his feet...]

LD: Wikkid trying not to get too close..

[He feints in before quickly retreating, shaking his head...]

LD: BJORN's acting like he barely notices he's there. Like he's an annoying fly or something.

[Wikkid steps in again... and quickly retreats, wagging a finger...]

LD: Well, I certainly wouldn't toy with the giant. If you're going to make a move, make one...

[He continues to circle the viking, looking for an angle of attack, feinting and moving...]

BW: I gotta be a little impressed with his footwork there, Dane.

LD: Wikkid looking to take advantage of a potential agility advantage...

BW: I don't know about that. I think BJORN is just letting him-

"SMAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"OHOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO!"

LD: GOOD HEAVENS! He got a little too close and BJORN just swatted him with that giant bear paw, spinning him around!

BW: Look at the big grin on the viking's face!

[With Wikkid barely able to stand, BJORN leans over, putting him in position for a back drop...]

LD: Wait! Surely he's not going for-

[...and then hoists him up, spinning like a top...]

LD: We've seen this before!

[...and after the third spin, he LAUNCHES Wikkid into the air!]

LD: RAGNAROK JUST SECONDS INTO THE MATCH!

[Rik Wikkid hits the mat with a hard THUD after having spun in the air a few times. BJORN calmly plants a foot on Wikkid's chest...]

BW: This has to be done already. That wasn't even thirty seconds!

LD: And there's the cover... One... Two... THREE! BJORN takes it, and I don't think this youngster got anywhere close to winning that ten thousand dollars.

BW: Even if Claw was going to make partial payments, which he won't, I don't think Wikkid even earned a buck fifty there. BJORN wasted no time in destroying that kid!

[...and BJORN takes his foot off the chest, throwing up his arms in triumph as the referee tries to roll Wikkid out of the ring before BJORN gets other ideas. Tiger Claw smugly joins his charge, pointing at him as BJORN celebrates his victory.]

LD: Tiger Claw is over the moon with his charge here, Ben.

BW: Can you blame him? And Rik Wikkid might've gone over the moon with that Ragnarok too!

LD: BJORN victorious here on Showtime and-

[The crowd starts to buzz.]

LD: Wait! Wait a second!

[The buzz gets louder as someone slides under the bottom rope, coming to their feet with a steel chair gripped in hand...]

LD: TAYLOR! IT'S WES TAYLOR!

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[...and CRACKS BJORN across the back with the chair, sending him a step forward as Tiger Claw spins to the side, turning back in shock towards BJORN's attacker!]

LD: My... my god, Ben!

BW: He gave that chair his best swing, he gave that monster his best shot... and BJORN DOES NOT FALL!

[Taylor looks alarmed, still holding the chair as BJORN slowly turns to face him, a curious expression on his face...]

LD: And now Taylor's gotta deal with BJORN!

[Taylor shakes his head as Claw sneers in his direction, pointing the big man towards him...]

LD: Wes Taylor took his best shot at BJORN and-

[But as Taylor eyeballs the Viking Monster, the crowd begins to buzz again...]

LD: FROM BEHIND! FROM BEHIND!

[...as Tony Donovan starts climbing to the top rope, a chair of his own in hand! Claw spots him, pointing him out to BJORN!]

LD: DONOVAN FROM THE TOOOOOP!

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[And as Donovan leaps from his perch, chair reared back overhead as he aims for the skull of the Viking, BJORN swings his own mighty blow, catching Donovan in the sternum with an overhead chop that DROPS Donovan out of the sky to a shocked response from the Regina crowd!]

LD: OHHH! DOWN GOES DONOVAN!

[BJORN stands over Donovan, looking down on him as Claw stands nearby, nodding his head approvingly...]

"BREAK! HIM!"

[...and BJORN gives a nod as he reaches down, snatching Donovan by the throat, yanking him off the mat to his feet!]

LD: He's got him by the throat! BJORN's got Donovan in the middle of the ring and-

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[This time, when Wes Taylor swings the chair, he aims at the back of BJORN's knee, striking hard and causing BJORN to stagger as Donovan slips out of his grip!]

LD: Taylor trying to chop the big man down!

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"
"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[A second blow to the back of the knee lands, taking BJORN down onto one knee as Taylor sweeps around to the other side, ignoring a loudly protesting Tiger Claw who has bailed out to the floor now, shouting from ringside!]

LD: What's Taylor doing here?

[Taylor puts the chair in front of BJORN's face, practically touching as Donovan steadies himself...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"
"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[...and FLINGS himself into a leaping superkick, smashing his foot into the chair which sends the steel into the face of BJORN, a blow that knocks the Viking Monster down to the canvas!]

LD: It took several shots with that steel chair but finally... FINALLY... BJORN goes down!

[Taylor jerks the chair away, smashing it into the mat, waving Tiger Claw into the ring to join them as the crowd goes NUTS!]

LD: Taylor and Donovan are back... and they're here for Tiger Claw! Claw betrayed them a few weeks ago and now they're looking for payback!

[Claw is seething mad on the outside, pacing ringside angrily as Taylor waves him into the ring again. Tony Donovan stands behind his partner, smiling as Taylor shouts down at Claw...]

...and in a scene out of a horror movie, BJORN! GETS! UP!]

BW: WHOA!

[With great fury, BJORN turns his focus onto the chair-wielding Taylor as Tony Donovan grabs his partner by the shoulder, trying to steer him back as Tiger Claw slides in, throwing himself in front of BJORN, trying to keep him from running into a two-on-one trap...]

LD: We've got ourselves a standoff!

[Taylor slaps the chair against the mat again, trying to get at BJORN as Claw tries to keep BJORN under control... and we fade to black...]

<TO BE CONTINUED!>