



June 23rd, 2018 - Providence Park - Portland, Oregon

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, and Kerry Kendrick... a glimpse of Melissa Cannon fading to Michelle Bailey fading to Harley Hamilton... Jim Watkins battling Joe Petrow... Ron Houston using a Fade To Black on an opponent... Hannibal Carver diving off the video wall at Eternally Extreme 2... Ayako Fujiwara delivering a German Suplex to Lauryn Rage... Violence Unlimited brawling with the Lynch Brothers... Shadoe Rage jumping off the top of a massive steel cage... Jackson Hunter swinging a shovel... Derrick Williams catching Ohara with a Future Shock as Ohara dives from the top... Next Gen using a Doomsday Device on the Soldiers of Fortune... and on... and on... and on...]

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

A voiceover.]

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

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

"The recognized symbol of excellence in professional wrestling."

[Back to black for a moment...

...and then back up on a star-filled sky. So dark and so perfectly clear that it must be shot out in an empty desert somewhere. The stars are picture perfect pinpoints of illumination...

...that slowly start to pulse with the rhythm of music playing.

It's "All The Stars" from the Black Panther soundtrack by Kendrick Lamar and SZA.

Those pulsing stars burn brighter as the lyrics kick in.]

#This may be the night that my dreams might let me know#

[The pulsing stars get a little bit brighter, revealing the shape of what appears to be a constellation in the sky...]

#All the stars are closer#

[...and that constellation warps into Supernova flying through the air, about to hit someone with a Heat Wave splash...]

#All the stars are closer#

[...back to a different constellation...]

#All the stars are closer#

[...that turns into Julie Somers uncorking a moonsault onto a prone victim...]

#This may be the night that my dreams might let me know#

[Cut to a superimposed shot of both Supernova and Somers holding their respective titles aloft...]

#All the stars are closer#

[...to a shot of Next Gen turning from stars into hitting Charlie Stephens with a flying clothesline off the top of the Brig at SuperClash IX...]

#All the stars are closer#

[...to a shot of Jordan Ohara turning from stars into soaring through the air with the Phoenix Flame...]

#All the stars are closer#

[...to a shot of Odin Gunn turning from stars into a monstrous beast of a man planting a helpless foe with a devastating standing spinebuster...]

#Tell me what you gon' do to me#

[Cut to Ryan Martinez staring down Hannibal Carver from their battle at SuperClash VII....]

#Confrontation ain't nothin' new to me#

[...to Michelle Bailey barreling over Laura Davis with a Britney Spear...]

#You can bring a bullet, bring a sword, bring a morgue#

[...to Supreme Wright smashing a stiff elbowstrike into the jaw of Casey James...]

#But you can't bring the truth to me#

[...to Ricki Toughill wrapping up Kerry Kendrick's leg in a Spinning Toehold...]

#You and all your expectations#

[...to James Lynch attempting to push his brother, Jack's face into a strand of barbed wire...]

#I don't even want your congratulations#

[...to Derrick Williams snapping off a Future Shock on Martinez after WarGames...]

#I recognize your false confidence and calculated promises all in your conversation#

[...to Jackson Hunter berating the crowd while holding up the National Title he once held...]

#I hate people that feel entitled#

[...to Harley Hamilton, Cinder, Kelly Kowalski, and Casey Cash celebrating after Steal The Spotlight at SuperClash IX...]

#Look at me crazy 'cause I ain't invite you#

[...to Shadoc Rage sailing off the top of the super-sized steel cage to land a double axehandle on Torin The Titan...]

#Oh, you important?#

[...to a sneering Sid Osborne glaring into the camera...]

#You the moral to the story, you endorsing?#

[...to AJ Martinez and Cain Jackson hurling Paris Crawford over the ropes to the outside...]

#Motherfu- I don't even like you#

[...to Ayako Fujiwara hurling Trish Wallace overhead and into the turnbuckles with a suplex...]

#This may be the night that my dreams might let me know#

[...to Raphael Rhodes delivering a skin-blistering chop in the corner...]

#All the stars are closer#

[...to Max Magnum hurling a battered foe through the air with a Bombshell...]

#All the stars are closer#

[...to the Slam Sorority tossing two helpless foes to the mat with a pair of bodyslams as Laura Davis looks on approvingly...]

#All the stars are closer#

[...to Lauryn Rage driving a right hand into the jaw of an opponent...]

#This may be the night that my dreams might let me know#

[...to the American Idols delivering a double superkick on Bret Grayson... then another one on Omega before run down with a double clothesline from Curt Sawyer...]

#All the stars are closer#

[...to Victoria June getting a surprise rollup and loss at the hands of Molly Bell...]

#All the stars are closer#

[...to Atlas Armstrong applying the torture rack on a foe...]

#All the stars are closer#

[...and then back to a shot of Supernova holding the World Title aloft at the end of his title victory at SuperClash...

...and with a flash of light, we are ON! THE! AIR!

The camera whips across a sea of humanity, more than twenty-five thousand strong, packed into Providence Park - fans on their feet, screaming, chanting, waving handmade signs as the American Wrestling Alliance lights up the Portland night.

Music pounds through the open air as pyro erupts into the night sky, flames and sparks shooting upward with nowhere to be contained - the sound echoing off the stands and back into the city.]

SA: IT'S TIIIIIIIIIME FOR SATURDAY NIGHT WRESTLING!

[Another burst of pyro explodes as the camera pulls high above the ring, giving us the full scope of the scene - an open-air stadium, the lights blazing against the dark Oregon sky, the crowd rolling like a tidal wave around the ring below.

Providence Park.

No roof. No walls. Nowhere for the noise - or the violence - to go.

A royal-blue roped ring sits at the heart of it all, surrounded by steel barricades and protective mats, the massive entrance structure glowing at one end of the stadium as the fans continue to roar.]

SA: You can feel it tonight - the air, the energy, the electricity! This isn't your standard night of action... this is Saturday Night Wrestling under the open sky, in front of one of the loudest crowds the AWA has seen all year!

[The shot finds ringside where we find Salvatore Albano in a typical black suit and Colt Patterson sporting a black and red leather vest - half black, half red - with a pair of red leather pants. Despite the darkened sky, Colt's future is so bright, he's gotta wear shade - red mirrored lenses - along with his dangling earrings.]

SA: Hello again, fans! I am Salvatore Albano and for the next three hours, you're riding with us as the AWA takes over Portland, Oregon!

CP: Big Sal, this is what it's all about! Summer night, open air, and a crowd that's ready to lose its mind! When you wrestle in a place like this, there's no hiding, no slowing things down - everything hits harder and every moment feels bigger!

SA: Titles on the line... grudges ready to explode... and a tag team division on the verge of boiling over! Strap in, Portland - this one's gonna get wild!

[And with that, we fade out to the parking lot area where we find Mark Stegglet waiting.]

MS: I could hear that crowd reaction all the way out here in the parking lot, fans - it promises to be a very special night here in Rip City. For all of us here in the AWA, we want to thank the city of Portland for their hospitality over the past week for Showtime at the old IIWF Coliseum all the way to Saturday Night Wrestling here tonight at Providence Park. It's a jam-packed lineup and... hold on... this is who we're looking for right here...

[As an engine roars, a black Corvette speeds into the parking lot, coming to a quick stop. The door opens and out steps the AWA's White Knight, Ryan Martinez, to a MASSIVE ROAR from the fans inside the stadium who are watching on the video screens!]

MS: Ryan Martinez! Welcome to Portland!

RM: Thanks, Mark.

There was no way I was going to miss tonight.

Even if...

[Martinez glares.]

RM: "Someone" didn't bother to give me a match.

[Stegglet looks a little uneasy but persists.]

MS: I wanted you to be the first one on camera here tonight because after what went down at Showtime, you've gotta be on Cloud Nine having gotten your hands - FINALLY - on Supreme Wright!

[Martinez gives a nod.]

RM: Few things felt better, Mark. But you know, it's one thing to get my hands on Supreme Wright.

It's something else entirely to get him in the ring.

And that's what I'm after.

[Martinez puts his hands up like he can see a marquee.]

RM: Supreme Wright versus Ryan Martinez.

We did it in MSG. We did it at SuperClash.

How fitting would it be to give Portland fans a memory to match, or even surpass, everything else that's happened in this city?

[The crowd inside the stadium ROARS again at the idea of that. Stegglet again looks uneasy at the direction this conversation has taken.]

MS: Ryan, uh... I know you're eager to get your hands on Supreme Wright again but after what Interim President Zharkov has said in recent weeks, we all also know that the front office has-

[Martinez cuts him off.]

RM: Let me interrupt you, Mark.

Because I don't care what the front office says.

[Another big crowd roar!]

RM: I've been patient. I've tried to let other people handle this. For months, I've had to watch as Team Supreme ran roughshod over the AWA. I've sat by as they cheated... as they stole titles.

I tried to let the Lynches handle their business.

But James is a lost cause. And if he ever gave a damn, he hasn't for a long time.

And Theresa? Well, who the hell can explain what she's thinking.

As for Jack and Travis? Well, last time I checked, they're gone and no one knows when or even IF they'll be back.

[He jerks a thumb at himself.]

RM: So it falls to me. And like I said, I'm sick. Sick and tired of Team Supreme.

So tonight, I stop talking... and I start doing.

[Stegglet shrugs.]

MS: That's understandable, I think, but it's also-

[A voice rings out from off-camera.]

"It's also not going to happen."

[The crowd inside Providence Park jeers as the Interim President Maxim Zharkov steps into view, his signature clipboard gripped in hand.]

MZ: Mr. Martinez, you should really answer your calls during the week.

RM: Mr. Zharkov...

[Martinez flashes a rare smirk.]

RM: I only pick up the phone when I think its going to be good news. And I can't remember the last time you ever delivered good news to me...

...or any other Martinez.

[The crowd "ooooohs" as Zharkov gives a hint of a smile before getting serious again.]

MZ: I see. Well, if you HAD answered your phone, you would know that myself... Mr. Taylor... Mr. Michaelson... Mr. Stegglet... all had called to let you know that what happened on Showtime last weekend will NOT be happening again. You have been

made aware that the AWA has no intention of sanctioning a match between you and Mr. Wright in the near future, yes?

[Martinez nods.]

RM: Yeah, I heard something to that effect.

MZ: Good. Then we're clear. You will stay away from Supreme Wright no matter the situation, yes?

[Martinez shakes his head.][

RM: Zharkov... do you honestly think I'm going to stand down just because you told me?

I guess they didn't tell you who I was when you got hired for this job.

I'll play by the rules, as long as the rules are fair.

But I didn't kowtow to the Wise Men. I didn't bend the knee to Castillo.

And I sure as HELL am not going to do something just because you said it.

[He points a finger at the Tsar.]

RM: I told you what I want. Now, do you want to sanction it...

...or am I going to have to do this another way?

[Zharkov steps forward, closing the distance as he gets in Martinez' face.]

MZ: I'm afraid I have instructions to not allow that... and have been given ultimate authority to prevent it.

[Martinez doesn't back down, getting close enough that they're nearly touching now as the crowd inside the stadium buzzes and Mark Stegglet takes a pair of steps back from the tense showdown.]

RM: I don't know what ultimate authority is... but tell you what, Zharkov...

...I'll give you tonight.

If you give me something in return.

[Zharkov's brow furrows.]

MZ: And what is that?

RM: Team Supreme.

[Zharkov goes to respond but Martinez cuts him off with a raised hand.]

RM: You don't have to give me Wright. But give me someone else.

Give me Jackson. Give me Crawford. Give me Junior...

Hell, give them all to me!

[Zharkov grimaces.]

RM: But you give me someone on Team Supreme to fight. And I'll behave myself.

What do you say to that?

[Zharkov sighs.]

MZ: I will... think on it.

[And with that, the Russian turns to walk away, leaving Martinez in the parking lot.]

RM: While he thinks, Mark... I'm staying right here.

[Martinez stands in the parking lot, eyes peeled towards the driveway he came through as we fade back to center ring where we find Sal and Colt have taken up residence.]

SA: A tense scene out in the parking lot between Ryan Martinez and the Interim President Maxim Zharkov, Colt. Now, the question is - fresh off a victory over Takeshi Mifune on Showtime, is Ryan Martinez going to get another match with Team Supreme?

CP: I don't know about that but who the HELL does Martinez think he is trying to push around the Tsar?! That's a quick way to find yourself at home suspended, Albano.

SA: Speaking of sitting at home, we were asked to climb up in here, Colt, so that we could deliver an update on the condition of the World Heavyweight Champion Supernova after the brutal assault on him by Atlas Armstrong and the rest of the Westerly Dynasty. For those of you who don't know what we're talking about, take a look...

[Fade to black where we can hear electric guitars... and then drums, the intro to Rise Against's "The Violence" as we get an on-screen graphic of "TWO WEEKS AGO..."

Cut to the Westerly Dynasty in the ring - Veronica Westerly smirking, Nenshou lurking dangerous and at the ready, James Lynch staring down the hard came, Atlas Armstrong flexing.]

VW: You're booing because the World Title does not belong to the Westerly Dynasty.

[On-screen text flashes by and then fades out: CONTROL

Cut to the "SUPERNOVA" entrance graphic and shots of the ROARING crowd as the World Champion walks through the curtain.]

SA: The World Champion has heard enough!

[The song rips full into life now.]

#Dancing on the crumbling precipice... the rocks are coming loose just at the edge.#

[We see Supernova's bat come into view, yanked from his trenchcoat.]

#Are we laughing? Are we crying? Are we drowning? Are we dead? Or was it all a dream?#

[The lyrics are punctuated by Nova driving the bat into Lynch's midsection... then takes out Nenshou...

...and we cut to the chorus...]

#Are we not good enough? Are we not brave enough? Is the violence in our nature just the image of our maker?#

[...and Atlas Armstrong catches the swung bat in his mighty grasp, snapping it in half!]

CP: LOOK AT THE POWER!

[A flash of red text reads "UNSTOPPABLE.

As the chorus repeats, we see Supernova attempt the Heat Wave, soaring towards Armstrong who snatches him out of the sky, cinching in the bearhug as Nova weakly tries to escape...]

SA: He's starting to fade...

[The music slows and quiets, leaving a haunting echo as we see Supernova go limp, blood coming from his mouth as officials plead with Armstrong to let him go but the defiant Almighty One shakes his head, refusing to oblige...]

SA: The World Champion has passed out!

[White text appears - "NO MERCY."

And with a shot showing fans leaping to their feet, we cut to footage of Ryan Martinez tearing down the aisle towards the ring...

...but then cut to him being restrained by Lynch and Nenshou, forced to watch as Armstrong flings Supernova's lifeless body aside.]

SA: They're making him WATCH!

[Cut to shots of medics bringing a stretcher to the ring... Dr. Ponavitch kneeling next to the World Champion with Martinez hovering protectively... the stunned crowd looking on as we hear the voice of Sweet Lou Blackwell.]

SA: Supernova was taken first by stretcher... and then by ambulance...

[We see the flashing lights of said ambulance before cutting back to an empty ring, bloodstain on the canvas as the arena lights dim. We get text on screen...

"The champion is down."

...which slowly fades away, leaving a black screen before we fade back to the ring where Sal and Colt are standing.]

SA: The champion is down... but not out, fans!

[The Portland fans cheer that news!]

SA: Yes, he's hurt... he's got some busted up ribs, Colt, but you know Supernova as well as I do and you know he will NOT let this stop him.

CP: Oh, I'm sure he'll be back... and maybe even sooner than he should... but whether or not it'll stop him is another story. The Westerly Dynasty has made it clear, Big Sal... they are coming for the World Title. James Lynch didn't get the job

done at Memorial Day Mayhem but with the addition of Nenshou, this is a trio that may be too much for even Supernova to stand up against.

SA: The numbers are certainly against him but-

[Big Sal's interrupted as we hear the opening notes to "Superstar" by Andrew Lloyd Webber ring out across the PA system. Albano shakes his head as the curtain parts and Veronica Westerly leads her Dynasty into view to big jeers from the Portland crowd.

Westerly is clad in a little black dress, red heels, and a dangling gold necklace. She sneers at the jeering crowd, arms slowly spreading open as she welcomes her men to the stage.

The Silent Assassin himself, Nenshou, is the first into view, taking up a protective stance behind her in a pair of loose-fitting shiny black pants with white kanji text up the legs and the tail and torso of a green dragon that wraps around his lower body and ends with the dragon's head on the back of an open black vest that shows off his upper body. A cloth mask is on his head, split horizontally from temple to temple to show off his eyes with a slash of black paint surrounding them.

James Lynch stands in the center of the pack. Dressed in a long black leather duster over a bare chest, with black leather chaps over a pair of blue jeans. A bandana is over the lower half of his face, a skull emblazoned on the bandana. His hair is pulled back into a tight ponytail.

And finally, rightfully so, comes the Man himself, Atlas Armstrong. Six feet eight inches... three hundred and eight pounds of shredded beef and "It" factor. The suntanned uber man with the jet black beard and movie star man bun swaggers behind his smaller teammates dressed in Air Jordan 2 Melos, and light wash loose-fitting jeans. He is shirtless, letting the whole world see his shredded physique. A shark's tooth necklace dangles around his neck.

The quartet makes their way down the aisle, taunting the ringside fans as Westerly leads her crew to the ring. Westerly is the first up the steps, mic in hand as she ducks through the ropes.]

VW: That's enough, Albano. Why don't you go sit yourself down and do your job while the rest of us do ours?

[Albano shakes his head in disgust, exiting the ring as Colt Patterson nods at the now-assembled group in the ring.]

VW: We were fine back there waiting until "our turn" to come out here and speak but after that ridiculous piece of propaganda crammed down all of our throats there, how could we resist making sure that fans all over the world knew the truth? And the truth is quite simple - Supernova is broken.

[The fans boo that one quite loudly as Westerly shrugs.]

VW: The people of Portland have never been fans of the truth, I know... because the truth isn't just that Supernova is broken... it's that because Supernova is broken and unable to fulfill his duties as the standard-bearer for this company, someone else...

[She gestures to a beaming Atlas Armstrong.]

VW: ...will have to do that for him.

[Armstrong steps front and center, popping his pecs as he looks out on the jeering Portland crowd...]

AA: The Champ is here!

[He pops his pecs in rhythm with the words.]

AA: The Champ is here!

[The pecs dance.]

AA: The Champ is here!

[The boos are raining down on him as he triple flexes his biceps before planting a kiss on it...]

SA: Can anyone hear me?

CP: We can all hear you, Albano, but you should shut it because right now, the Westerly Dynasty is speaking!

[Armstrong lets loose a roar, raising his arms overhead to even more jeers.]

AA: And since the Champ is here...

[A deliberate pause to let the fans boo the proclamation of Armstrong as the champion.]

AA: ...the Champ is going to speak...

[Even more boos.]

AA: ...and later tonight, the Champ is going to go to work.

[Armstrong nods.]

SA: What's that supposed to mean? And why the heck are we letting this guy call himself the Champ?! He's not the Champ! Not at all!

[The Almighty One continues.]

AA: You all saw me put Supernova down... AGAIN.

[He beams, nodding.]

AA: You saw me put him out.

And that means that I am the REAL World Champion...

[The Portland faithful let him have it.]

AA: And that's the truth whether you people...

[He points to the fans.]

AA: ...or those people...

[He points back up the aisle towards the locker room.]

AA: ...or those people in the ivory towers of the AWA offices want to admit it or not. They don't want to give me the belt... but that doesn't mean I'm not the REAL World Champion.

And unlike that coward Supernova... the REAL World Champion is going to defend his title against anybody... and EVERYBODY!

[James Lynch has pulled the bandana down so that it sits around his throat, and can be seen muttering something to Nenshou as Westerly applauds her man's declaration.]

AA: You heard me right. I don't care if it's Derrick Williams.

[The crowd cheers the idea of that.]

AA: I don't care if it's Ryan Martinez.

[The crowd ROARS at the idea of that.]

AA: Shadoe Rage. Jackson Hunter.

[He smirks.]

AA: Supreme Wright.

[The crowd REALLY gets loud at that one.]

AA: Hell, I don't even care if it's...

[He twists his mouth distastefully as he turns.]

AA: ...Nenshou.

[The Silent Assassin's eyes flash as he glares at Armstrong, turning to face him as Veronica Westerly suddenly looks anxious, sliding an arm across Nenshou's chest to keep him in place as Armstrong stares him down...]

AA: Or even...

[He slowly turns, locking eyes with the other person in the ring.]

AA: ...you.

[The crowd buzzes with excitement as Armstrong locks his gaze on James Lynch. Lynch looks surprised...]

...and then immediately takes two big steps forward, getting right up in the face of Armstrong as an alarmed Westerly moves to get between her two cash cows.]

VW: Hang on! Hang on! We're not doing this! We are NOT doing this - you understand me?!

[Lynch jabs a finger into Armstrong's muscular chest as the crowd ROARS at the dissension in the ranks...]

AA: Have it your way, boss lady. But if my ol' buddy James here doesn't want a shot at the Champ...

[He shrugs.]

AA: I hear the tag team division is getting hot. Maybe James and Nenshou should show Team Supreme who the real Number One group in this company really is.

[Armstrong lowers the mic, backing off as Westerly continues to try and settle down James Lynch and his hot temper. Finally, after a few tense moments, Lynch gestures for the microphone.]

JL: You're the Champ, huh?

[Armstrong nods his head, all but daring Lynch to say something.]

JL: Well, you know the difference between you and me, champ?

I've actually held gold in the AWA!

[An audible "oooooh" can be heard from the crowd.]

JL: And since you're so set on winning the World Title, maybe I should do something that only other person has done in this company.

And show you - and my brother - how it's done.

[Lynch nods, turning to the crowd that cheered the mention of Jack Lynch.]

JL: It's high time that another man won tag team gold with two different partners.

[Lynch turns to Nenshou.]

JL: So, taking the big man's advice... what do you say - you and me - WE become World Tag Team champions!

[There is the barest hint of a nod from the Silent Assassin as Veronica looks on approvingly.]

JL: But of course, I'm not Ryan Martinez... and I damn sure ain't Jack Lynch.

I know that if I want something, I've got to earn it.

[He waves a hand between himself and Nenshou.]

JL: We've got to earn it.

So let's start doing that tonight.

Hell, let's start doing it right now!

[Lynch yanks off the bandana, tossing it aside.]

JL: Any tag team in the back who can hear the sound of my voice...

Get your butts out here.

And we'll make you famous!

[Lynch tosses the mic aside as he and Nenshou start to get ready for battle.]

SA: Wow! Just like that, we've got an Open Challenge from the team of James Lynch and Nenshou who came together two weeks ago to beat Ryan Martinez and Hannibal Carver in tag team action... and with the Run The Rankings coming up fast, a win here tonight could get them well on their way to a shot at tag team gold!

We've gotta find these two an opponent... and while we do, let's go backstage to Mariah Wolfe who is checking in with a rundown on the tag team scene! Mariah?

[We cut from the ring to the backstage area where we find Mariah Wolfe standing.]

MW: Thanks, Big Sal! We are backstage here in Providence Park on what promises to be an exciting night of AWA action... and we are just eleven days from the return of Opportunity Knocks! Now, we all know what that night is all about - you don't wait for an opportunity, you take it! And we also know that thanks to President Zharkov, five tag teams will get a huge opportunity that night to Run The Rankings and earn their shot at the World Tag Team Champions whomever they may be.

[Wolfe turns, pointing to a door behind her that has a sign on it that says "DO NOT DISTURB!"]

MW: Now, the Championship Committee have ALL been flown in here to Portland. They've been put behind this door... and they will be giving us updated rankings throughout the night. We've got some big tag team matches tonight that you know will impact the rankings... and I'm told we are just minutes away from the first set of rankings being issued - the starting point for all the teams of the AWA as they jockey for position. In fact, we're going to take a quick break but when we come back, we'll be announcing those first rankings so don't you dare go away!

[We fade to black...

...and we fade through black to a shot of retired AWA wrestler Eric Somers, who is dressed in a three-piece suit and wears eyeglasses. He is walking down a well-lit hallway and we can see what appear to be framed painting lining it.]

ES: In order to truly appreciate this world, you have to learn to respect your heritage... that is, what those before you have left to be appreciated by ongoing generations.

[He then stops and gestures to a painting over his shoulder.]

ES: For instance, why we should remember the Alamo.

[Indeed, the painting is of The Alamo. He then walks over to the next framed item.]

ES: Or why we should remember the importance of the men who led our great nation.

[He gestures to said item, a painting of Mount Rushmore. Somers continues to walk to the next framed item.]

ES: Or why we should appreciate the wonders of nature.

[He gestures to yet another painting, this one featuring the Grand Canyon.]

ES: Or even why we should not forget those who came before us.

[He then reaches into his pocket and pulls out a packet, which he then opens.]

ES: Especially those who have graced the rings of the AWA.

[He then pulls out trading cards from the pack and fans them. We then hear a voiceover as we cut to a sample of the cards.]

VO: It's the inaugural release of Topps Heritage AWA trading cards... cards that use the design of the 1952 Topps baseball set.

[The sample of cards does, indeed, feature that style, with the subjects including Supernova, Ryan Martinez, Supreme Wright, Michelle Bailey and Ricki Toughill.]

VO: Collect the AWA stars of today...

[The next sample of cards includes Julie Somers, James Lynch, Cinder and Atlas Armstrong.]

VO: ...and the AWA stars of the past.

[The next sample of cards includes Adam Rogers, Marcus Broussard, Mark Shaw and Ron Houston.]

VO: Plus, look for special parallels, event-used relic cards and autographed cards!

[We then get a gold parallel featuring Harley Hamilton, a black-bordered parallel featuring Sid Osborne, a relic card featuring Raphael Rhodes and an autographed card featuring Shadoe Rage.]

We cut back to Somers as he displays the trading cards in his hand.]

ES: Because nothing could be finer than a way to remember your heritage... without having to step inside an art gallery.

[He raises his eyebrows and grins as we cut to a shot of a box of Topps Heritage AWA trading cards and hear that voiceover again.]

VO: Topps Heritage AWA trading cards are available wherever trading cards are sold or you can find them at AWAShop.com!

[We fade to black...

...and then back up on the backstage area we departed moments earlier where Mariah Wolfe is still standing out the door with "DO NOT DISTURB" written on it, a card in hand.]

MW: Welcome back, fans, and here in my hand...

[She waves the card.]

MW: ...is the first set of rankings to be announced here tonight. Remember, the Top Five teams will enter the Run The Rankings at Opportunity Knocks to try and win a World Tag Team Title shot. Before we announce the list - which I can now tell you is a TOP TEN - a few notes given by the Championship Committee sealed behind that door...

[Wolfe gestures at the door.]

MW: First, since Taylor and Donovan are getting a shot later tonight, they have been EXCLUDED from this list. I'm told that whoever loses the title match later will have an opportunity to be added to the list after tonight's event.

Also, this is the first set of rankings with the current Soldiers of Fortune of Charlie Stephens and Mr. Stars and Stripes considered rather than the Flint and Stephens version.

I am also told this version of the rankings takes into full account the most recent batch of live events held throughout California and the Pacific Northwest over the past few weeks.

[Wolfe taps the card.]

MW: Alright, folks... let's see where we are as this night begins.

[A graphic comes up to reveal the teams one by one.]

MW: Leading off at Number Ten, one of the newest teams in the division but one that has certainly been turning heads with their popularity and athleticism in recent weeks... Tizona and Yoshi Fujiwara, collectively known as Fujizona! Fujizona will be in action against the American Idols a little later which could give them a huge boost up the rankings as they try to break into the Top Five positions to be a part of that tag team gauntlet at Opportunity Knocks!

[Fujizona slides into the bottom slot.]

MW: Number nine is another relatively new team to the division but one that has been on quite a roll since their debut. David Layton and Billy Givens - The Aces In The Hole are in the ninth spot!

[Aces In The Hole slide into view.]

MW: Number eight is sure to make some waves... that's going to be everyone's favorite makeshift squad of Jackson Hunter and Shadoc Rage. Those two are gunning for Team Supreme and you better believe they're going to give it everything they can to break into the Top 5 before the Run The Rankings field is set. Will they have enough time with no match scheduled here tonight? We'll find out!

[Rage and Hunter take their spot.]

MW: Speaking of allies with common goals, this is another new team to our list... and a team that really only made it based off a single victory... but it was a big one knocking off Ryan Martinez and Hannibal Carver two weeks ago. This is the Westerly Dynasty duo of James Lynch and Nenshou who will be in action in an Open Challenge in just a few moments!

[Nenshou and Lynch slide into place.]

MW: Knocking on the door of that coveted Top Five ranking is our next team up... also scheduled to be in action later tonight... Nuevo Generación Oscura! The Legado de Lucha takes the Number Six spot and hopes to climb that ladder later tonight.

[The NGO hits the list.]

MW: Alright, let's see the first of our teams currently in position to compete in Run The Rankings on the 4th of July... somewhere Bobby O'Connor is quite proud as the Blackjacks check in at Number Five... and they too will be in action later tonight looking to climb the list a little higher and improve their entry position in that gauntlet match.

[The Blackjacks appear on the graphic.]

MW: Four more to go... and the fourth team on our list... oh brother.. or in this case, oh brothers... the American Idols are Number Four... and that adds even greater importance to their match with Fujizona later tonight. A loss could send them tumbling out of the Top Five but a win could creep them closer to the top spot. Big stakes in that one.

[The Idols take their spot.]

MW: Coming in at Number Three... new members of the team or not are former World Tag Team Champion and Stampede Cup winner Charlie Stephens alongside his new partner Mr. Stars and Stripes, the Soldiers of Fortune! That's huge for this duo as Stephens looks to get back to the big, big gold!

[Cue the graphic change.]

MW: That takes us to our final two... and this one might be a bit of a surprise as a recent string of big wins on the live event circuit rockets Masks For Money to the Number Two slot! They're in action later tonight and this becomes a huge matchup for them against Legado de Lucha.

[The masked man take their position on the list.]

MW: And that means that our final team ranked... and the current Number One team on this list is going to be the incredibly popular duo of Omega and Plemos! A huge spot for them to be in... and they'll be in action later tonight trying to defend their top spot against the Blackjacks!

[The graphic disappears.]

MW: It's going to be an exciting night of tag team action here in Portland as all the teams listed... and those who didn't make the cut like the Desperadoes... like Fawcett's Family... The Band and more all try to find their way into the Top Five to get their opportunity... at Opportunity Knocks. Now, let's go to the ring for tag team action that could totally shake up the field... right now!

[We cut to the ring where we find James Lynch and Nenshou still in the ring. Veronica Westerly and Atlas Armstrong have moved out to the floor as we wait to see who will be facing this dastardly duo...]

SA: Thanks, Mariah... the tag team scene hotter than ever this summer here in the AWA and with the news that Lynch and Nenshou are at Number Seven on the list, this match takes on even greater importance. A big win here tonight could get them in the Top Five and that's all it takes to be a part of Run The Rankings in a couple of weeks at Opportunity Knocks! Who's it gonna be? Let's find out!

[Lynch huddles up with Nenshou for a moment before stomping towards the ropes with a "COME ON! LET'S DO THIS!"...]

...and when the grungy sound of Neil Young starts up as "Dirty Old Man" rocks the PA and the former World Television Champion erupts through the curtain to a huge ROAR from the Portland crowd!]

SA: SWEET SAN ANGELO! HERE WE GO!

[Jackson Hunter comes stomping into view, throwing an arm around his partner's shoulders... drawing a hard disapproving look from Rage before Hunter chuckles and slaps him on the back, pointing to the ring where James Lynch looks less than thrilled at this development!]

SA: Make an Open Challenge and it is answered! Shadoe Rage and Jackson Hunter are heading down the aisle - and listen to this crowd, Colt!

CP: I can barely hear myself, Big Sal!

SA: If you joined us on Showtime last weekend, you heard the response down the road at the IIWF Coliseum for former IIWF superstar Shadoe Rage... and that

response isn't any quieter from the over twenty-five thousand fans here in Providence Park!

[Rage is talking up a storm as they march down the aisle, Rage spinning with his arms wide, looking out on the roaring fans as Hunter points at the ring, threatening James Lynch from afar...]

SA: The fans are on their feet and what a start to the night's action this is going to be!

[Rage hops up on the apron, climbing the ropes, pointing out to the fans as Hunter ducks in and takes up a protective spot to make sure Lynch or Nenshou don't strike his partner while he salutes the fans...]

SA: In a short matter of time, Rage and Hunter have really come together into a solid duo... although quite unorthodox at times.

[As the Portland fans salute the former World Television Champion with a "SHA-DOE!" chant, the bell sounds...]

"DING! DING! DING!"

SA: The stakes are high in this one, Colt. The Numbers Seven and Eight ranked teams in the men's tag team division... and remember, that cutoff is Number Five to be a part of Run The Rankings. A win here for either team could put them on the cusp of that Top Five... and a loss could send them spinning down, down, down the list.

CP: It's a big match for two pretty new teams. We know how badly Rage and Hunter want another shot at KAMS... but they gotta earn it to get there.

SA: And as referee Koji Sakai speaks with both teams, it looks like it'll be Shadoe Rage starting things off against Nenshou... and what a contrast in style this is, Colt.

CP: Both athletic, both have those high flying skills... but very, very different in that Rage is all instinct and barely-restrained violence while Nenshou is discipline and calculation.

[After a few moments of circling, the two competitors collide center ring, tangling up with one another as they attempt to push their foe around...]

SA: You can see the intensity on the lockup alone!

[Rage's strength advantage allows him to shove the Silent Assassin back against the ropes, Sakai instantly in to call for a break...]

...and he surprisingly gets one, Rage pulling back with his fists balled up as he backpedals to center ring.]

SA: Huh. A little surprising there.

CP: That's Rage at his core though. Expect the unexpected. Who would believe these fans would cheer this lunatic after all the stuff he pulled before last summer?

SA: Everything changed though when Rage came to the aid of Ryan Martinez and the rest of the AWA against Korugun... and back to the tieup we go, fighting for position and-

[Rage jerks out of the lockup, crowning Nenshou with an overhead elbow between the eyes that knocks the former Longhorn Heritage Champion off his feet, sending

him scrambling up to a knee as the crowd cheers and Rage points to the sky, nodding his head...]

SA: Well, the first points go to Shadoe Rage off the elbows mash...

[...and Nenshou makes a lunge at Rage's oft-injured legs, trying to make a grab for it but Rage shoves him down, pulling his legs back...]

SA: ...stuffed the takedown there...

[...but Nenshou swiftly and deftly swings his entire body in a circle, reaching out with a leg to drive his heel into the back of Rage's knee, bringing him down to the mat!]

SA: ...ohh, what a kick there! Nenshou can come at you from so many different angles... and now it's Rage who scrambles away, shaking out that leg, checking for any damage...

CP: And that's the different right there, Albano. Rage wants a fight - Nenshou wants a victim.

[Rage pushes off the ropes, fists balled up as he glares at Nenshou who front rolls across the ring, popping up to his feet in a martial arts pose of his own...]

SA: So quick, so precise.

[...and Rage lunges at him, looking for a tieup but Nenshou spins away to land a kick to the outside of the knee...]

SA: Right back to the leg...

[Rage angrily lunges again but Nenshou scores with another leg kick.]

SA: ...and again!

[Rage grimaces, spinning away, making a grab at his leg but Nenshou leaves his feet, lashing out with a low dropkick right on target!]

SA: Nenshou goes to the leg again!

[This time when Rage goes down, he rolls right out...]

SA: Shadoe Rage was not expecting this flurry of attacks for his oft-injured knee... and he's going to take a breather.

CP: In the wrong part of town.

[...and finds himself face to face with Atlas Armstrong who smirks at him, his muscles all on display as he tries to intimidate the former World Television Champion.]

SA: Uh oh... referee Sakai right in there, telling these two to stay away from each other... and knowing Rage's temper, this is a volatile situation with the likes of Atlas Armstrong out here at ringside.

CP: Especially since Armstrong had Rage's name in his mouth a little earlier.

SA: Especially because of that. Shadoe Rage has never heard a challenge he didn't wish he made first.

[Rage points angrily at Armstrong who invites Rage to attack him, beckoning him forward... and now referee Koji Sakai dives outside the ring, stepping between the two, shaking his head as Veronica Westerly makes her way over to Armstrong, placing a hand gently on his arm and steering him backwards as Rage rants...

...and gets grabbed by the hair by Nenshou who pulls him up on the apron!]

SA: Rage got distracted and Nenshou's going to make him pay for-

[But Rage reaches out, hooking the hands around Nenshou's neck and drops down on his butt, snapping Nenshou's throat down across the top rope!]

"OHHHHHHHHH!"

[Nenshou goes stumbling backwards, grabbing at his throat as Rage comes back inside the ring...

...and runs the Silent Assassin down with a clothesline!]

SA: Rage takes him down!

[Rage twirls a hand in the air as he waits for Nenshou to regain his feet and steamrolls him again with a clothesline!]

SA: Shadoo Rage stringing together some offense now...

[Grabbing the rising Nenshou by the hair, Rage rushes across the ring, leaping into the air, snapping Nenshou's throat down over the top rope a second time!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[Rage lands on his feet on the outside with a grimace, shaking out his leg again as he points to the cheering crowd...

...then pauses to point a threatening finger at Atlas Armstrong before climbing up on the apron, moving to the corner turnbuckles...]

SA: Uh oh! Rage is heading up top early on in this one and...

CP: Maybe not.

[The crowd jeers as Nenshou rolls to the corner, reaching up to slap the hand of James Lynch.]

SA: Nenshou tags out and now it's time to see what James Lynch can bring to this new tag team.

[Rage grumbles as he hops through the ropes, pointing a finger at James Lynch as he marches to the corner, slapping Jackson Hunter's hand.]

SA: And now both sides have made the exchange as former National Champion Jackson Hunter tags in... and it strikes me just now that three of the four men in this match are former AWA singles champions with just James Lynch not on that list.

CP: It's just a matter of time, Albano. We all saw how close James Lynch came to the World Title at Memorial Day Mayhem. One more shot and I think we've got a new champion, Big Sal.

SA: Not if his fellow Dynasty ally Atlas Armstrong has anything to say about it.

[We cut to ringside where Atlas Armstrong is looking on with interest as Lynch steps in, swinging his arms across his torso as he gets ready to do battle with Jackson Hunter...

...who earns himself a muting from the quick-triggered censor before anything else.]

SA: Uhhh... well, as usual, we apologize for the language of Jackson Hunter.

[Hunter and James continue to exchange words as they circle around one another...

...and then James Lynch gets right up in the face of Jackson Hunter, a smirk upon his face a moment before...]

"SLAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

CP: OH! James Lynch goes upside the noggin of Jackson Hunter and he might've just slapped a few of those expletives out of his mouth, Big Sal.

SA: We can only hope.

[Hunter grimaces, reaching a hand up to lightly touch his face where he was slapped...

...and then he angrily surges forward...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

SA: Big chop by Hunter!

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

SA: Make it two!

[The Texan swings a knee up into the midsection, cutting off Hunter's offense before it can really get going. Lynch quickly hooks a front facelock, snapping Hunter over in a suplex, floating over into a pin attempt...]

SA: Quick cov- okay, not even a count at all! Hunter out BEFORE one!

[Lynch smirks as he gets back to his feet, dusting his hands off.]

SA: James Lynch has fully embraced the twisted and evil being he is now... and he likes it, Colt.

CP: It's gotten him closer to the top than any amount of high fiving and baby kissin' ever did. He was in one of the Main Events of Memorial Day Mayhem! He beat the so-called Mr. SuperClash AT SuperClash in a damn bloodbath! If this is who James Lynch was all along, it's a damn shame it took him that long to show his true colors.

[Lynch puts a boot into the gut of the rising Hunter, swinging him around to throw him down to his knees on the mat by the ropes, driving his shin into the back of the neck to choke Hunter over the middle strand!]

SA: Lynch goes right into a choke, holding it for as long as he legally can...

[Lynch backs away at four and change, leaving a gasping Hunter draped over the second rope as Lynch makes the tag.]

SA: Quick tag brings Nenshou back in... what's this now?

[Grabbing the top rope, Nenshou slingshots over the top rope into the ring... and then slingshots over the adjacent ropes to drop a leg across the back of Hunter's neck!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

SA: Wow! Innovative and spectacular offense by Nenshou who has seemingly picked right back up where he left off from his previous time in the AWA. Of course, he spent the last few years in Japan where he won championship gold in Tiger Paw Pro on multiple occasions but now he's back and looking to ride this Westerly Dynasty train back to gold here.

[With Hunter coughing and gasping on the mat, Nenshou slithers back inside the ring, crawling into a lateral press for a two count.]

SA: Two count there off the legdrop... and now Nenshou and Lynch look to establish control over their opponents here tonight.

[Westerly applauds from the floor, Armstrong silently looking on by her side as Nenshou drags Hunter off the mat, whipping him into a neutral corner...]

SA: Nenshou on the move, tumbling ACROSS... OHHH! The handspring elbow connects in the corner!

[Hunter staggers out as Nenshou hops to the middle rope, springing into the air with a spinning leg kick to the back of the head!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

SA: DOWN GOES JACKSON HUNTER!

[Nenshou quickly moves into a cover, snatching the leg in a lateral press.]

SA: He's got one! He's got two!

[Hunter kicks out, breaking free as Westerly shouts instructions from the outside. Nenshou gives a nod as he gets up, dashing to the ropes, bouncing off with momentum...]

SA: OHH! A brutally-driven elbowdrop - the point of the elbow right to the heart!

[Nenshou makes another cover.]

SA: Another two count for Nenshou - so quick in there!

[Nenshou rolls back to his feet, circling Hunter as the former manager tries to get back to a standing position.]

SA: Hunter's in trouble here, Colt.

CP: You said it, Albano - so quick! The offense comes quick and exact and-

[His knees are a little wobbly as he pushes up, Nenshou lashing out with a martial arts thrust to the throat that Hunter spins away from, hooking his arms...]

SA: Wait a second!

[...and drops to his knees, dragging Nenshou down!]

SA: BACKSLIIIIIDE!! ONNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOO! THR-

“OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

[Rage slams a hand down on the top turnbuckle at the near fall as Sakai holds up two fingers for all to see. Cut to ringside where Veronica Westerly clutches her chest and Armstrong shakes his head, a smirk on his face.]

SA: A near fall there! Close call for the Westerly Dynasty... and look at Hunter! Look at Hunter!

[With the momentary distraction, Hunter starts crawling towards his corner where Shadoe Rage is waiting...]

SA: Hunter looking for the tag annnnnnnnd...

[...but the crowd groans as Nenshou recovers, grabbing Hunter by the legs, trying to drag him back across the ring towards the Dynasty's corner!]

SA: ...Nenshou cuts him off, pulling him back... or trying to pull him back at least! Hunter's fighting it!

[The wily veteran rolls to his back, pulling his legs towards his chest, and KICKS off, sending Nenshou flying backwards, tumbling across the mat as Hunter rolls back to his knees, getting his feet under him...]

SA: TAG!

[...and slaps the hand of Shadoe Rage who slingshots over the top rope, sprinting across the ring...]

SA: ELBOW UP UNDER THE CHIN!

[...and knocks Nenshou down with a running back elbow, spinning to SMASH a right hand into James Lynch's head, knocking him down to the floor below!]

SA: Shadoe Rage like a man released for a cage!

[Rage slingshots over the top rope to the apron, quickly stepping up the turnbuckles, poised up top...]

SA: Rage in his favorite spot, looking down on the world annnnnnd...

[Rage leaps from his perch, hands clasped together!]

SA: ...DEATH FROM ABOOOOOVE!

[Rage goes to make a cover but Lynch is coming through the ropes to attack, forcing Rage to abort his pin attempt, leaping into the air to catch the incoming Lynch with a left-handed bulldog lariat, dragging him down to the canvas!]

SA: Down goes Lynch as well!

[Lynch rolls to the outside as Rage pops up, swinging around to spot Nenshou standing in the corner with the aid of the ropes. The former TV Champion barrels across the ring, burying a knee into the midsection!]

SA: KNEE TO THE GUT!

[Hanging onto the top rope, Rage lands knee after knee to the stomach of Nenshou, the crowd getting louder and louder as the referee tries to lay a count on him.]

SA: The referee is counting!

CP: Yeah, but I don't know if Rage can hear him! This place is going nuts!

[Rage boosts Nenshou up, wedging him between the ropes as he steps up on the ropes alongside him...

...and leaps up, driving his knees down into the midsection of the bridged Nenshou, forcing him down to the mat!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[Rage pops up, twirling around, pointing to the crowd as he madly talks to himself!]

SA: And this is where Shadoe Rage lives! In Rage Country! On the County line between madness and brilliance!

[At the urging of Atlas Armstrong, Lynch rolls back in, charging at Rage again...

...and Rage busts out a spin move, ending up behind Lynch, leaping up to grab the shoulders while tucking his knees into Lynch's shoulderblades!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

SA: LUNGBLOOOOOWERRRRRRR!

[Lynch bounces off the knees, again rolling under the ropes to the outside as Rage pops up, shouting to the Portland fans...]

SA: These fans have ridden by the side of Shadoe Rage for over twenty years - from his days down the road at the IIWF Coliseum... his days fighting the best in the world... and now they're solidly behind him as he and Jackson Hunter try to get themselves into position to battle for a shot at the World Tag Team Titles on the 4th of July!

[Rage storms across the ring, leaping to the outside as he starts climbing again...]

SA: And he's not done, Colt! Right back to the top rope... ready and waiting for Nenshou to get to his feet annnnnnd...

[The Sensational One leaps from the top!]

SA: ...DOWWWWWN WITH THE AXEHANDLE AGAIN!

[The crowd is MOLTEN cheering for Shadoe Rage as he gets back up, pointing at the downed Nenshou...

...and then he points to the turnbuckles again!]

SA: And don't look now but Shadoe Rage is ready to bring it all crashing down on Nenshou and the Westerly Dynasty!

[Rage walks towards the turnbuckles...

...which is when Veronica Westerly, sensing her man in serious danger, climbs up on the apron, drawing the referee's attention towards her as the crowd ROARS their disapproval of this tactic.]

SA: Westerly on the apron and... oh no, Rage gave up his climb to the top... shouting at Westerly, trying to get her down from there...

[And with the referee trying to get Westerly down off the apron, James Lynch slides back in, charging Rage from the blind side and knocking him flat with a forearm to the back of the head!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

SA: From behind! From behind!

[Lynch taunts the downed Rage as Jackson Hunter looks on from the apron, his eyes narrowing as he sees Lynch's outside interference...

...and then throws up his hands with a "THAT'S IT!" combined with something else in the middle that earned him a muting.]

SA: Uh oh... this could be a problem.

CP: For all of us!

[Hunter suddenly drops off the apron, walking over to the timekeeper's table where he requests Rebecca Ortiz' seat... her chair, you pervs.]

SA: Hunter's got a chair!

CP: He better watch himself, Big Sal.

SA: A DQ will only hurt Hunter and Rage!

[Hunter stands ringside with the chair, glaring in at James Lynch and Nenshou as Veronica Westerly and Atlas Armstrong look on with interest. The former managerial mind seems to be assessing the scene, scanning the players...

...and makes a move around the corner, moving past Westerly and Armstrong, and walking over to where James Lynch is back on the apron!]

SA: HERE WE GO! HERE WE GO!

CP: He's losing control! He's going after Lynch with the chair!

[But to the dismay of the crowd, Koji Sakai is a step quicker than the former cruiserweight, diving to the outside to jump in front of Hunter, both hands up, screaming a threat of a disqualification that gives Hunter pause!]

SA: Or maybe not! Maybe Koji Sakai is getting him to see reason!

[Hunter looks frustrated as he backs off, Sakai turning to address James Lynch who was shouting threats of his own at the former National Champion...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

SA: HE HIT ARMSTRONG! HE HIT ARMSTRONG!

CP: WHAAAAT?! What a dumb boneheaded move that was!

[Armstrong plants his palms on the apron, his back arched in pain from the sudden chairshot across the back. Westerly looks on in disbelief as Hunter backs away, still holding the chair in his hands, an anxious expression on his face as he waits...

...and Atlas throws his head back, letting loose a subhuman roar that sends a chill down the spine of any sane man...

...but Jackson Hunter may not be sane...]

SA: UH OH! HE POKED THE BEAR, COLT!

[Hunter begs off for a moment... and then throws the chair down as he breaks into a sprint away from the fuming mad Armstrong who goes tearing after him, moving his much slower body around the ring after Hunter!]

SA: Well, this footrace is not going to go the way Atlas Armstrong is hoping, Colt. Hunter's a much smaller and quicker man, rolling back into the ring now where he's safe and-

CP: You were saying?!

[The crowd ROARS as Armstrong slides into the ring after him, coming to his feet as Hunter throws a look at Koji Sakai who gets back in the ring, shouting at Armstrong...

...who FLATTENS Jackson Hunter with a pump kick!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

SA: HUNTER GETS LAID OUT AND-

"DING! DING! DING!"

[A reluctant Koji Sakai does what he must, signaling for the bell.]

SA: Oh... oh, Sweet Santa Maria! Did they just...?

[The referee points at Armstrong... then at Lynch and Nenshou...

...and waves his arms apart as he steps over to talk to Rebecca Ortiz who makes it official.]

RO: Wrestling fans, referee Koji Sakai has called for a DISQUALIFICATION after Atlas Armstrong's outside interference!

[A big cheer goes up!]

RO: Therefore, your winners of the match... the team of JACKSON HUNTER... and SHADOOOOOOOE RAAAAAAGE!

[Cut to Hunter lying on his back, a smirk on his face...]

CP: Look at Hunter! Was that his plan all along?!

SA: He took advantage of Atlas' temper and...

[But Hunter's not the only one smirking as the Almighty One turns to a shocked Lynch and Westerly with a shrug...]

SA: ...or did he? Did Atlas KNOW he was about to get his allies disqualified?!

[Armstrong plants his fists on his hips as Lynch gets up in his face, angrily shouting at him while Westerly tries to keep Nenshou from jumping in as well...]

SA: Uh oh... we've got trouble in paradise for the Westerly Dynasty, Colt...

[Armstrong takes some of Lynch's abuse for a few moments...

...and then delivers a mighty two-handed shove that sends Lynch flying into the air, crashing down on his butt to a HUUUUUGE ROAR!]

SA: OHH!

[And that brings Nenshou past Westerly, getting right up in the big man's face, shouting in Japanese at him as Westerly begs her men to calm down... to think before they act...

...unlike Shadoe Rage who has quickly climbed the turnbuckles without anyone seeing but the 25,000+ jammed into Providence Park who are going crazy!]

SA: LET'S GO CRAZY IN PORTLAND!

[Rage LEAPS into the air, CRASHING down onto Armstrong's back with a Death From Above, sending him falling down, knocking Nenshou to the mat as well to a HUGE ROAR! Rage pops up, a huge grin on his face as he stares down a shocked Westerly...

...and then Rage drops to the mat, rolling to the outside where he pulls his partner out to join him, holding him up as the fans cheer the popular duo!]

SA: That's a win for Rage and Hunter... a loss for Nenshou and Lynch and what is THAT going to do to the tag team rankings, Colt?!

CP: It's definitely going to have an impact. DQ win or not, when the rankings are THIS close, it's going to shake things up for sure.

SA: We'll find out a little later how it effects- oh, look at this now!

[Back on his feet, a fuming Armstrong shouts after Rage and Hunter...

...until he gets ripped around by his muscular arm, James Lynch shoving a finger into his face as Veronica Westerly rushes to play peacemaker!]

SA: And there is DEFINITELY trouble in paradise with the Westerly Dynasty! Fans, tag team action is the focus of the night and it's not just the men getting into it. It's the women too! Later tonight, we're going to see the Country Punks take on the Peach Pits in a Number One Contender's match... but before we do, Kayla Cristol's got a SECOND match, Colt.

CP: A dumb move for Cristol... a gutsy move but dumb.

[Sal chuckles.]

SA: Let's go backstage where our cameras have caught up with the Pistol as she gets ready for her match!

[We cut to the backstage area where we find Kayla "The Pistol" Cristol tugging at resistance bands, trying to get in a late workout before her match. She's dressed for a fight in her cowboy hat, shearling duster coat and pink halter top with a pistol

emblazoned on the chest, denim shorts and turquoise cowboy-style wrestling boots. She exhales sharply as she pulls at the bands, nodding her head confidently as she prepares to do battle...

...and the shot pulls out a little to reveal her partner and friend, Victoria June, racing up behind her. The Afro Punk is also dressed for the ring in her black leather bustier leotard, torn fishnets and thigh high Doc Martens. June certainly looks frustrated as she puts her hand on Cristol's shoulder, interrupting her pre-match workout.]

VJ: Kayla, listen to me.

[Cristol shakes her head, pulling the band again.]

VJ: Just... listen.

We've got the Peach Pits tonight.

We can be Number One Contenders!

[June grimaces.]

VJ: Tonight ain't the night to try to play superhero. We'll see Harley again when we win our shot at the tag titles!

[Cristol lets go of the band, turning towards June. She seems calm... controlled.]

KC: It's not about being a superhero. It's about fixing something that never should've happened.

[Cristol looks like she's about to walk away but June steps in front of her, forcing her partner to stop and make eye contact. June shakes her head urgently.]

VJ: Harley Hamilton WANTS you chasing her. Ah saw how she beat you in her debut. Ah get you want payback for that, but if you go at her and you're not physically ready for our tag match later tonight... you hurt us!

And Harley gets to laugh again.

[Cristol stares right into her partner's green eyes, a surprising intensity in her voice.]

KC: She didn't just beat me. She mocked me. She outwrestled me... pretty easily too.

And yeah... she laughed.

[Cristol pauses.]

KC: I hear that laugh every time I lace these boots.

[June's expression softens, just a fraction.]

VJ: Tonight's gonna make that go away?

[Cristol nods, firm in her response.]

KC: It's got to. I need to stand across from Harley Hamilton and take something back from her.

[June shakes her head, conflicted.]

VJ: And what am I supposed to do? Sit in the back and hope you've got enough left for the Pits?

[Cristol reaches out and grips June's forearm.]

KC: I need you to trust me.

Not just as your partner - as someone who knows what happens if I don't do this.

[A long pause. The tension hangs. June finally nods once, reluctantly, speaking in a low voice when she responds.]

VJ: You're asking me to let you walk out there alone.

[Cristol's response is gentle but unyielding.]

KC: No. I'm asking you to be there for me... by staying back.

Let me prove I'm not the woman Harley embarrassed.

Let me come into our match knowing I stood up for myself.

[June exhales, then straightens.]

VJ: Fine.

[She points at Cristol's chest.]

VJ: You give her Hell, but when you're beating her to a pulp don't forget about me and the Peach Pits. Ah don't care how tired you are. Be ready for that match!

[Cristol allows a small, determined smile.]

KC: Deal.

[A short embrace happens before June lets go, stepping aside to let her friend finish her preparations...

...but there's a definite look of worry... and pride... on June's face as we fade back out to the ringside area where Big Sal and Colt are seated.]

SA: A difficult situation for those two here tonight in Portland, fans. Two matches in one night and neither one of them is going to be easy.

CP: Harley Hamilton wants to win... make no mistake about it... but I wouldn't be surprised if "winning" to Hamilton tonight means making sure Kayla Cristol and Victoria June don't win that Number One Contender's match later.

SA: You could be right about that... but we're going to stop talking about tag teams for a bit here and turn our attention to one-on-one action... where we understand that Generation Lost's big man, Justin Gaines, is set to compete... against a mystery opponent. And Colt, you saw that Justin wasn't in a good mood last week.

CP: He wasn't in a good mood in the IWF Coliseum... and who can blame him... I wouldn't have been in a good mood if they made me work there either. But Justin Gaines didn't have to be in a good mood... he was in a BOLD mood, declaring that moving forward, we all oughta call him "The Baddest Thang Running."

SA: Which is, of course, his father's old moniker. You know... Gunnar Gaines... the Hall of Famer... the man once ranked the #1 wrestler in the world.

CP: Sounds like you have a point coming up.

SA: I mean no offense to Justin Gaines but... how the heck has he EARNED that particular name at this point? The name that belongs to Gunnar Gaines... a name that he once shared in a tag team with Caleb Temple... a name he once offered to Ryan Martinez who didn't feel like he could accept it! But Justin Gaines... this young kid... he's the Baddest Thang Running? He's got a collection of running buddies helping him wreak havoc - that's for sure - but that wasn't what Gunnar Gaines was all about. Say what you want about him but he was a man who stood on his own.

CP: I never knew you were such a big Gunnar Gaines fan... but Justin Gaines knows Gunnar Gaines better than anyone. He's sat at the learning tree... and I think he's learned that if he wants to be BETTER than his father... he can't just be him... he can't do what he did... he can't walk in his boots.

SA: Don't be him - just use his nickname.

CP: That's right... I mean, no! Look, Justin Gaines is a top prospect here in the AWA no matter what name you give him... and tonight, I'm sure he's going to inflict major damage and show us all why he deserves that name. He's laid down a challenge... and we've got an opponent... so let's stop all this chit chat and get down to business, Albano.

SA: You heard the man... let's go the ring!

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

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

[Ortiz shrugs at the camera with a grinning "they call 'em a mystery opponent for a reason" to the cameraman...

...and suddenly, the staccato riff opening "Welcome to the Jungle" by Guns n' Roses plays.]

SA: Hold on now... this seems familiar to me...

[Ortiz grins broader as she produces another index card.]

RO: On his way down the aisle... from Poughkeepsie, New York ... weighing in at 213 pounds... "Journeyman" Jerry Joblonsky!

[Joblonsky has a salt-and-pepper goatee, wild tufts of white hair on either side of his enormous bald spot, and a missing tooth in front. Clad in black briefs over black-and-white-striped tights and a very faded "Good Knights" T-shirt, with white boots, he arrives to the ring and rolls in.]

CP: Familiar it is. Just not welcome.

[Sal chuckles.]

SA: The wrestler that once was... smartly perhaps... known as Sir Jobs-a-Lot... now apparently called "Journeyman" Jerry Joblonsky. This IS a surprise, Colt!

CP: It's a surprise that he's still alive.

SA: Colt!

[Joblonsky hops up to the second rope and raises both arms, to the mildest of cheers. He struggles to tear-away the T-shirt and, failing, pulls it off over his head to reveal a sunken chest.]

SA: Well, Colt may not be pleased to see this guy... and the crowd may not be pleased to see this guy... and... uhh... I'm sure someone must be because this guy, Jerry Joblonsky, is one of the most accomplished journeymen competitors in the history of this business! A guy who made people look good all over the world.

CP: Just what you always dream of starting off.

SA: Colt, even you have to admit that for a brief - but brilliant - moment, Joblonsku was part of one of the most feared tag teams in the country - the Good Knights.

CP: The Good Knights... two scrawny dudes who would do anything to win.

SA: Legal or not. And come on, Colt... show some respect. This guy's still out there on the highways and byways working the towns, signing autographs, hitting the pay window...

CP: Staring at the lights.

SA: Giving it his all!

CP: Sure, but how much could he possibly have left to give? Just look at him! He didn't look good back in his so-called glory days and now?

[The PA crackles to life with a voice.]

"Slates are never clean. And respect is never assumed."

[The staccato rhythm of "All My Life" by Foo Fighters plays.]

All my life, I've been searchin' for somethin'
Somethin' never comes, never leads to nothin'
Nothin' satisfies, but I'm gettin' close
Closer to the prize at the end of the rope
All night long, I dream of the day
When it comes around, then it's taken away
Leaves me with the feelin' that I feel the most
Feel it come to life when I see your ghost

[The music kicks into overdrive as out steps Justin Gaines, clad in a black hat, his ring gear of black brief tights, black knee pads, a black leather vest personalized with his name, and black boots personalized with his initials near the ankle.]

CP: And now he's gotta face this guy!

SA: Last week on Showtime, Gaines said to watch what happens in the ring this week... and every week... by which, he intends to destroy his opponents until he reaches a higher level of competition.

[Gaines climbs in as the ring announcer says...]

RO: And representing Generation Lost... weighing in at 283 pounds from Fairbanks, Alaska...

...JUSTINNNNNNNNN GAAAAAIAAIAINES!

[Justin makes a beeline directly for Rebecca and starts yelling in her face. Exactly what, it's kind of hard to tell.]

SA: What's his problem with Rebecca?

CP: Pretty sure she forgot something... or some THANG.

SA: Oh jeez.

[You can hear the eyeroll in Sal's voice. Meanwhile, Rebecca gestures for a ringside attendant to hand the mic back through the ropes. Quickly.]

RO: AWA fans... I have been asked to do this again...

[The fans jeer as Rebecca raises the mic, Justin glaring a hole through her, his arms folded. Ortiz clears her throat.]

RO: And representing those future legends, Generation Lost...

[The crowd jeers louder as Gaines gestures for Ortiz to continue.]

RO: ...weighing in at 283 pounds... and hailing from Fairbanks, Alaska...

[She locks eyes with Gaines who raises his eyebrows, cupping a hand to his ear.]

RO: ...he is... THE BADDEST! THAAAAAAAANG! RUNNIIIIIIING!

JUSSSSSSSTINNNNNNNNNNNNN... GAAAAAAAAINESSSSSSS!

[A satisfied Gaines pounds his chest a few times, raising both arms with a roar!]

CP: Much better.

SA: Well, whether you feel he's earned that nickname or not, Justin Gaines certainly seems happy to be wearing it... and speaking of being happy, I've gotta mention that I'm VERY happy to see no sign of Jayden Jericho or the American Idols out here. Of course, the Wallaces will be in action later...

[The referee leans through the ropes to hand off something to a ringside attendant as the bell rings...]

"DING! DING! DING!"

[...and with the referee's back turned, Joblonsky rushes Gaines from behind, dropping to his knees annnd...]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

SA: LOW BLOW! LOW BLOW AT THE BELL!

CP: That one hurt to even watch, Albano! He got all of that!

[Gaines doubles over as Joblonsky hops to his feet and then jumps up on to the back, snatching a sleeperhold!]

SA: And now a sleeperhold! Joblonsky looking to end it early! Jerry Joblonsky, the durable "Journeyman," trying to get an edge on young Justin Gaines with a sleeper! He caught him off guard!

CP: That happens when you're nursing some sore-

SA: This sleeper is sunk in deep! Veteran smarts by the former Good Knight, outsmarting the inexperience of Justin Gaines.

[Gaines is immediately wobbly... his arms like spaghetti as the gap-toothed, wild-eyed Joblonsky tries to block the blood from reaching his brain.]

SA: Gaines is staggered, trying to find his footing and-

[Gaines starts to fall backwards, but catches himself.]

SA: He's going out, Colt!

CP: This'll be the biggest upset of the year if he does! Gaines trying to stay on his feet because if Joblonsky gets him down to the mat in a body scissors, with this sleeper locked in, forget about it.

SA: It's like his favorite grilled cheese sandwich - once "Journeyman" Jerry gets a hold of it, he ain't letting go.

[Gaines' arms are starting to weaken as Joblonsky hangs on for dear life, the crowd on their feet cheering for the upset!]

CP: This is exactly what he needed to do if he wanted any kind of shot at winning this match. He needed to get the drop and not allow Justin Gaines an inch to exploit his considerable athletic advantages.

SA: Keep in mind, Justin Gaines watched this guy on tape as a kid. He knows he is no one to take for granted. Or he should.

[The wobbly Gaines, with a stark raving mad Joblonsky still affixed to his back, starts to teeter backwards. He begins to fall back...]

"THUUUUUUUUUUUUUD!"

[...and lands backwards with Joblonsky still holding on for dear life!]

SA: Joblonsky takes Gaines down! But Gaines rolls through!

[Indeed, Gaines rolls backwards through the impact, breaking the sleeper and landing on one foot and one knee. He lunges forward with a knee strike to the rising Joblonsky's face!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

SA: Jerry Joblonsky had no time to react there! None!

[The knee strike floors Joblonsky, leaving him prone to some vicious stomps from a still-shaky Gaines as the crowd boos the unsportsmanlike technique.]

SA: Gaines, wasting no time to press his advantage.

CP: Ol' Joblonsky had better think of some way to turn this or it's not going to last too much longer.

[Grabbing a handful of hair, Gaines holds Joblonsky's cauliflower ear to the side of his boot as he stomps it to the mat. Joblonsky collapses face-first to the mat, bloody drool leaking from his flapping lips.]

SA: And now Joblonsky is busted open!

[Gaines measures Joblonsky for a knee drop, rolling through to a standing position as Joblonsky continues to suffer on the mat. He then hits another.]

SA: Rolling through on those kneedrops, putting himself right back in position to deliver another one... and a third connects!

[Gaines rolls through to a standing position again over Joblonsky. He taps Joblonsky's bleeding forehead, carved deep like glacial topography from years of ring action, with his boot.]

SA: Justin Gaines with his bloody and overmatched opponent at his mercy, deciding on his next course of action and- OH!

[What he decides is to grab Joblonsky by the hair and just toss him out over the top rope to the floor outside. He lands face- and chest-first on the meager padding!]

SA: A hard fall to the outside for Joblonsky courtesy of Justin Gaines... and you have to believe that Jayden Jericho and the American Idols are backstage looking on and they're loving what they're seeing.

CP: A rising tide lifts all boats and when Gaines wins, they all win.

[Showing off his athleticism, Gaines vaults over the top rope, landing outside on his feet, slamming the apron with both hands as he lands. He goes right after his bloodied opponent, hauling him off the floor, wrapping his arms around him...]

"OHHHHHHHHHHH!"

SA: Spinefirst into the ring apron! The edge of the apron jamming into the back of the veteran Joblonsky... and he does it a second time! Joblonsky howling in pain... and the referee is demanding this gets back into the ring.

[Gaines obliges, rolling Joblonsky's bloodied and broken form back inside the ring before climbing back in himself.]

CP: Gaines showing off that mean streak, Albano... and I can't say that I blame him.

SA: Why is that?

CP: Nobody's giving him what he wants. Here he is... wrestling in what is essentially his adopted hometown... and these people are booing every single thing that he does. Plus, he's demanding stiffer competition... and THIS is who the office brought his way?

SA: Well, Jerry Joblonsky might not be Ryan Martinez but...

[The camera hits a close-up of the bloodied Joblonsky grimacing as Gaines, on all fours, yells in, and slaps at, his face.]

CP: Don't get me wrong, Albano. I may not like to admit it... but I got a soft spot for a guy like this. I love what he stands for. He stands for wrestling until it's time to check out, and I don't mean a library book. He stands for pulling the hair, gouging the eyes, grabbing the tights for leverage, surreptitious biting, and sneak attacks. He stands for collecting small checks and eating Kraft dinner at home, alone, afterwards, if that's what it takes to make the next town.

SA: But we're seeing none of that kicking, gouging, biting and cheating - other than the sneak attack low blow to start the match - because he's not being allowed an inch to do it.

CP: Exactly. Justin Gaines is too fast, too strong, too young, too agile and too big to let that happen, or to let it affect him if it does happen.

[Gaines is back to his feet, grabbing a bloody wisp of Joblonsky's white hair. He's sticking a finger in his face, shouting at him again...]

SA: Enough is enough already!

[...when Joblonsky lunges suddenly at Gaines' throat, thrusting his bloody, heavily taped fingers directly at the youngster's Adam's apple, while barely attempting to conceal the would-be act of cheating! Gaines goes staggering backwards, gasping for air...]

SA: Oh!

CP: You were saying?!

SA: The illegal strike to the throat! The referee letting him hear it! Classic old school offense from Joblonsky and he opens up a window to attack!

[Looking out to the fans, he pumps his arms, getting them going again as he reaches out to grab a gasping Gaines...]

SA: One more shot for the journeyman!

[...who slaps Joblonsky's grasping hand away, grabbing him by the throat, crouching slightly before springing to his full height...]

"THUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUD!"
"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

SA: GRIZZLY SLAAAAAAAAM!

[Gaines drives Joblonsky into the mat with the legendary chokeslam-meets-uranage maneuver his father perfected.]

CP: This one's over.

SA: One... two...

[Gaines pulls Joblonsky out of the pin.]

SA: Come on! We saw that last week! It's not necessary!

[The crowd is jeering and the referee is letting Gaines have it as he climbs off the mat, shaking his head...]

"IT'S OVER WHEN I SAY IT'S OVER!"

CP: You heard that, Albano. It's over when he says it's over and... uh oh!

[Gaines pulls the unmoving Joblonsky into a standing headscissors, taking one more look around the jeering Portland crowd...]

SA: We know what's next!

[Gaines hoists him into the air, shoving him up into a crucifix powerbomb position...]

SA: Gaines sends him up, way up high for all to see...

CP: Quite the view from up there.

[...and then drops him down, snapping him down in a reverse neckbreaker!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

SA: DENALI! DEATH! DROP!

[Gaines glares at the official - "it's over" - and then takes a knee, planting a hand on the chest of the unmoving opponent...]

SA: One. Two. Three.

"DING! DING! DING!"

SA: Well, it might've been a nice sight to see an oldtimer like Jerry Joblonsky on the big stage again for some folks... but Justin Gaines makes short work of him.

CP: Joblonsky had a fighting chance... right until the bell rung.

SA: Oh, come on, Colt. He had him in trouble in that sleeper!

CP: After a low blow!

[Gaines yells abuse at Joblonsky...

...and then with the referee shouting at him and the crowd getting angry, he yanks him up by the hair...]

SA: This is too much! He's going too far!

[...and pulls him into another standing headscissors...]

SA: You already won, damn it!

[Gaines lifts the motionless Joblonsky into the air again, shoving him back into the crucifix powerbomb position...

...and brings him down in another spine-shaking neckbreaker!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

SA: Gaaaaah... we're going to need some help out here.

CP: Gaines is just trying to help this guy ease into retirement.

SA: Just doing a civic service, huh?

CP: Exactly.

SA: The fans here in Portland don't like this... and I don't either, Colt.

[Joblonsky, crumpled on the mat, twitches and drools as the referee hurriedly motions to the people in the back.]

CP: Hey, sometimes you have to establish dominance, and that's all Justin Gaines is doing. I don't blame him. I would too.

SA: I'm afraid Jerry Joblonsky may be horribly injured. They're bringing out the stretcher and backboard. Justin Gaines didn't need to prove he can do this. We already believed him. This veteran in search of one more payday has given his all to the business.

[The medical crew goes right to work on Joblonsky as Gaines looks on with a cold, uncaring expression.]

SA: Jerry Joblonsky looks quite shaken up. We've got our medical team out here and... are you sure about that?

[There's a pause before Sal sighs.]

SA: Alright, it looks like Mariah Wolfe is going to try to get a word with this guy. Good luck, Mariah.

[Justin slaps his two hands together, clearing the proverbial dust with a smug look on his face, as the crowd boos and Mariah Wolfe raises the microphone to talk.]

MW: Justin Gaines, congrats on another win here on Saturday Night Wrestling and I just wanted to ask you - last week you proclaimed yourself the New Baddest Thang Running and you demanded some competition.

[She gestures to Joblonsky who is being helped from the ring.]

MW: Do you feel like you got what you asked for?

[Gaines throws a hard glare at Wolfe.]

JG: The new what now? Get it right. I'm not the NEW Baddest Thang Running. I'm just the Baddest Thang running, period.

[The crowd begins booing at this audacity.]

JG: And no... I don't feel like I got competition from the likes of Jerry Joblonsky. Never-weres shouldn't be booked to face gonna-bes, and I just showed everyone why. They're too dumb to see it, so it looks like I'm gonna have to do this again next week, up in Seattle... at Opportunity Knocks.

MW: Do what?

JG: Well, destroy some dusty no-name that they pulled out of the back personnel files, evidently, because that's all they give me to wrestle. Nobodies. I get it. They don't like my dad here. They never did. I get it. He didn't exactly pave a road filled with rainbows, sunshine and goodwill. Fine, but I'm not him.

[The crowd seems to agree with that assessment and quickly lets him hear it.]

"YOU'RE NOT GUN-NAR!"
clap clap clapclapclap

"YOU'RE NOT GUN-NAR!"
clap clap clapclapclap

"YOU'RE NOT GUN-NAR!"
clap clap clapclapclap

[Gaines looks around at the chanting crowd.]

MW: It sounds like they agree with you.

[Gaines throws another hard glare at Wolfe before stepping away from the mic to yell directly at the fans - which of course only makes them louder. He realizes amplification is his friend and talks into the mic again.]

JG: You're damn right. I'm not Gunnar Gaines, and I don't want to be! Because if I were, I'd be complaining the jukebox at the local dive doesn't have any Bob Seger anymore, and they don't stock Early Times whiskey no more, because they need the shelf space for some crafty-wafty crap made by some trust-fund twerp with a pet ferret in a central Eastside Portland loft - which is a direct quote, by the way.

[Mariah looks puzzled at this rant.]

JG: Look, I'm my own man and I have my own family now. Generation Lost. Those are my boys and that is my gang. And I'll tell you, we will keep attacking and challenging and destroying and getting noticed.

MW: And if you don't?

JG: Get noticed? That's not an option. We'll do what it takes. Next week in Seattle, I'm gonna be there. Watch what happens, because if this company wants to do it the hard way, I'm fine with the hard way. I'm good with it. In fact, I'm better than good. I'm bad. The Baddest Thang Running.

[Wolfe pulls the mic away assuming that's it. It's not. Gaines grabs the mic, and her hand along with it, and pulls it back to himself.]

JG: I'm telling you. Seattle. Next week. Watch what happens. You're gonna see more of THIS.

[He points to Joblonsky being wheeled out on the stretcher, hopefully for precautionary reasons, as his music, "All My Life" by Foo Fighters, plays.]

SA: Justin Gaines with a dominant win here on SNW and a bad attitude to boot - one intent on destruction.

CP: It's reality, Big Sal. Break spines or have them be broken.

SA: Well, he says he wants stiffer competition... and when we're on the air on the 4th of July, he's got every opportunity to make that happen, Colt! It's Opportunity Knocks coming to you from the Key Arena in Seattle when all this young man has to do is call down the thunder and he's got it!

CP: I can't wait to see it.

SA: Fans, we'll be right back here on Saturday Night Wrestling LIVE from Portland, Oregon only on ESPN so don't you dare go away!

[We fade to black...

Cut to ringside at an unknown AWA event. Ricki Toughill is flung over the ropes by an unknown opponent and crashes into the ringside barricade. She stands upright, looking a bit frustrated, and looks at something off-camera.]

RT: Oh hey.

[The something off-camera is a fully stocked Dunkin' shop counter at ringside, complete with a friendly-looking barista.]

B: Looks like a pretty tough opponent tonight. Medium cold brew?

"ONE!"

[Ricki looks up at the ring, which is off-camera, then back at the barista.]

RT: You can make it a large. This ref always counts slow.

[The barista hands Ricki her tall, frosty cold brew. She takes a sip. Another customer seated at a ringside table with a laptop computer in front of him takes notice.]

C: Wow, she knows your order?

RT: Yeah, I spend a lot of time out here.

[Ricki is about to sit down, when she notices the empty chair beside the other customer. She picks up the folding chair and snaps it shut.]

RT: Mind if I take a seat?

[Ricki looks up into the ring with a mischievous, crooked grin—a cold brew in one hand and a steel chair in the other.]

V/O: Where there's wrestling, there's Dunkin'.

[Cut to a close-up shot of a cold brew. Another cold brew rebounds off a set of three ropes and slides into position beside it. The AWA and Dunkin' logo flash on screen.]

V/O: Cold brew for bell time. America runs on Dunkin'!

[And we fade back to footage marked "Previously Recorded" as the scene opens inside the IIWF Coliseum, long after last Saturday's show has ended. Harley Hamilton stands alone slumped against a wall in her signature metallic purple ring jacket. She's holding her phone in selfie mode, recording herself. Her expression is calm, but there's a dangerous glint in her eyes.]

HH: When I broke into this business, my daddy sat me down, looked me in the eye, and told me...

[She closes her eyes, recounting Hamilton Graham's words.]

HH: "Everything that happens in that ring is business. Never make it personal. Because the second you let it get personal, you're not fighting for a win anymore... you're fighting for your soul. And that's a path that drags you down into the depths of hell."

[She pauses, letting the words hang in the air.]

HH: He was right and I've tried to live by that rule my entire career. I've beaten women, broken them, taken titles and I always tried to do it all without letting it cross that line. Business. Clean. Efficient. No baggage.

[Her lips curl into a slow, knowing smile.]

HH: But Kayla Cristol... with you? It's been personal since day one.

[She steps closer to the camera, voice dropping to a low, venomous whisper.]

HH: You want to talk about old wounds? You want to talk about me making everything a joke? Don't you understand, silly girl?

I laugh because if I didn't, all of you would cry.

[She lets out a short laugh and then her face hardens.]

HH: You think this is about respect? You think you're going to "humble" me? Sweetheart, I've already humbled you. I've already put you on your back, made you question everything you thought you were, and watched you rebuild yourself only to come crawling back to me for more. Cristol baby, that's not respect you're asking for... that's therapy.

[She tilts her head, eyes narrowing.]

HH: And my name's not Michelle Bailey.

[She shakes her head.]

HH: You want one-on-one? No Cindy, no Casey, no numbers, no safety net? Fine. Next week on Saturday Night Wrestling, you get me. Just me. No games, no tricks, no excuses. Bell rings, doors shut, and whatever's been hanging between us since the first time I pinned you stays in that ring until one of us can't answer the count.

[She leans in, voice deadly calm.]

HH: But understand this, Kayla: I don't need to make it personal to destroy you. I can do it clean. I can do it cold. I can do it like my father taught me: business.

[She straightens, running a hand through her strawberry blonde hair.]

HH: But if you want to drag me down into the depths of hell with you? If you want to keep it personal?

[Her smile returns.]

HH: Be careful what you wish for. Because if I decide to go there... I'm not just taking you with me to hell.

I'm leaving you there.

[She holds the stare for a long beat, then lowers the phone. The screen goes black as the recording ends...

...and we fade through black back to ringside where Colt and Sal are seated.]

SA: Harley Hamilton with some strong words directed at Kayla Cristol. That's our Hour One Main Event coming up a little later and remember, it's Cristol's first match of the night as the Peach Pits await her and Victoria June in a Number One Contender's match later in the evening. But that's then, this is now, and right now, we're talking about more tag team action. Take a look...

[We cut to a wide shot of the ring where we see "Flawless" Larry Wallace and "Golden" Grant Carter on one side of the ring and the Texas Ranger, Pedro Perez, and "Curly" Bill Webb on the other side.]

SA: We're just about set for more tag team action here tonight... and Colt, I think it just goes to show the importance of the World Tag Team Titles that we're seeing unexpected teams like Larry Wallace and Grant Carter coming together for the first time to try and crack the Top 5 and get a chance to Run The Rankings in Seattle.

CP: Absolutely... but it doesn't hurt that Wallace's partner is home with a bum knee.

SA: Travis Lynch sidelined back around Memorial Day with a knee injury thanks to Bobby O'Connor and the Blackjacks - we wish Travis the best of luck on a speedy recovery but his partner has decided to try to make his way as a tag with another partner - another competitor who feels like he's been pushed to the sidelines as of late, "Golden" Grant Carter.

CP: I'm not the world's biggest GGC fan, Albano, but even I have to admit this makes for an interesting team. With Carter's guts and determination and Wallace's athleticism, they're not an easy out by any stretch of the imagination.

[Wallace and Carter share a grin as they high five, waiting for the match to begin. Across the ring though, the masked Ranger is huddled up with Pedro Perez, kneeling down to lean through the ropes to talk to "Curly" Bill Webb. The longtime veteran imparts some words of wisdom on the duo as the referee waves for them to get one in and one out.]

SA: Wallace and Carter are here to impress the Championship Committee tonight but the Desperadoes are gunnin' for a spot of their own in the Run The Rankings.

CP: If Wallace and Carter were expecting to make a name for themselves on the backs of the Desperadoes, they're in for a bad time here in Portland, jack!

"DING! DING! DING!"

[And as the bell sounds, "Golden" Grant Carter claps his hands together, moving out of the corner across the ring towards a waiting Pedro Perez, looking for a lockup but the street fighter POPS him on the jaw with a right hand!]

SA: OH!

CP: Hard haymaker by the Puerto Rican Punisher... leaves Carter with his eyes crossed after that one.

[Perez grabs the arm, whipping Carter towards the ropes but Carter reverses, sending the former Dog of War bouncing back...]

SA: Perez ducks the clothesline... but NOT the elbow! Back elbow up under the chin puts him down!

[Perez scrambles up but gets armdragged down, tossed across the ring...]

SA: Nice armdrag by perhaps the true Golden Grappler..

CP: Oh, I know someone from 'round these parts who ain't gonna like that comment, Albano.

[Sal chuckles as Perez comes up again, running towards Carter who tries to take him up and over with a hiptoss...]

...but Perez blocks it, refusing to go over until Carver pivots and FLATTENS him with a standing clothesline!]

SA: Carter with a HUGE clothesline there and-

[The crowd cheers as Carver grabs a handful of hair, pistoning his right hand into the skull of Perez several times as the referee calls for a break.]

SA: Carver lets him go for the moment... grabs the wrist as Perez gets off the mat, wrenching it around...

[But Perez SMASHES a headbutt into the face of Carter, breaking the wristlock as Carter staggers backwards as Perez falls back into the ropes, running past Carter as he leaps and drags him down in a neckbreaker!]

SA: ...ohhh! Impactful neckbreaker by Perez leaves Carter down and reeling early on in this one... and there's our first tag of the matchup, bringing in the masked and mysterious Texas Ranger and- Colt, who IS this masked man?

CP: Like I'd tell you.

SA: That means you don't know, right?

[Perez pulls Carter's arms back, holding him open as the Ranger lays in a few heavy boots to the chest as Curly Bill nods approvingly.]

SA: Get him out of there, ref!

[The official's count reaches four before Perez lets go, shoving Carter down to the mat as Larry Wallace shouts for Carter to make the tag. Perez ducks out of the ring as the Ranger stomps Carter a few times before taunting Wallace...]

SA: The Ranger pulls Carter up... and slams him down...

[The masked man makes a quick tag, bringing Pedro Perez back inside the ring.]

SA: ...and back in comes Perez, the second generation brawler out of Candelaria, Puerto Rico...

[Perez promptly leaps into the air on the run, dropping his weight across the back of Carter with a senton!]

SA: ...ohhh, 241 pounds down across the back!

[The Puerto Rican Punisher plants his knee in the small of the back, slapping the back of Carter's head repeatedly as the crowd jeers!]

SA: Disrespectful to the core - that's Pedro Perez... and I suppose it always has been, Colt.

CP: Even when you and these fans were drooling over the Dogs of War?

SA: Curly Bill has helped Perez reveal that nasty side of his personality again... and another slap! This is ridiculous!

[The referee makes Perez back off, shouting at him as he walks to the corner to make another tag...]

SA: And in comes the Ranger again. Nice teamwork by the Desperadoes so far... and I'm just glad we don't have Odin Gunn out here causing problems. Curly Bill is bad enough.

CP: If Odin Gunn was out here, I don't think Wallace and Carter would've shown up to the building.

[The Ranger grabs Carter by the hair, dragging him out towards their corner, shoving him in before throwing heavy blows to the body...]

SA: The masked man working over GGC against the buckles - referee steps in to put a stop to it and-

[The crowd ERUPTS in jeers as Pedro Perez loops the tag rope around the throat of Carter, strangling the air out of him...]

SA: -REF, HE'S CHOKING THE MAN! HE'S CHOKING HIM!

[But the official is preoccupied with shouting down the Texas Ranger who seems to be begging forgiveness as his partner does damage in the corner. Larry Wallace tries to come in to break it up...]

SA: Wallace is in! Wallace is in!

[But now the official gets in front of Wallace to boos, blocking his path as he struggles to get by...

...which is when Perez comes in, squaring up on the gasping Carter alongside his partner...]

SA: Doubleteam in the corner and-

[...but Carter is instantly on the attack, throwing big right hands to Perez... one to the masked man that sends him flying backwards, the crowd ROARING as GGC tries to fight back...]

SA: Perez trying to- OHHH!

[The crowd ROARS again as Carter upends Perez with a backdrop, tossing him over the ropes to the outside...]

SA: The path is clear! Go, go, go!

[...but with the referee still tied up, Curly Bill goes to work, hooking the ankle from outside the ring!]

SA: OH, COME ON!

CP: Haha! Brilliant move by Curly Bill, that ol' rootin' tootin' son of a pistol!

[Webb only hangs on for a moment as the referee wheels back around but it's enough of a delay to stop Carter in his tracks...

...and the Ranger blasts him with a forearm to the ear, putting him down on his knees near the corner!]

SA: Webb didn't do much there on the outside but he did enough, Colt.

CP: It's that kind of strategy that made him one of the best to ever do it, Big Sal. The Desperadoes are lucky to have him.

[The Ranger drapes Carter's throat over the middle rope, pushing with his boot down on the back of the neck as he pulls on the ropes for leverage!]

SA: These guys are breaking every rule in the book, Colt!

CP: Bending, Big Sal... bending.

[The referee's count reaches four again, the Ranger backing off with his hands raised...

...and with the back turned, Webb sneaks in a big right hand, popping Carter right on the jaw with it!]

SA: OH! Big right hand from the outside!

CP: And that's the OTHER reason he was one of the best! What a shot! Plenty of hot shot Frat boys got those knuckles upside the head in bars and saloons all over those penny ante towns up and down the Mississippi!

[Wallace comes in again, protesting loudly as the referee tries to keep him from coming any further. The Ranger pulls Carter up, kicking him in the gut a few times, putting his back against the ropes...]

SA: Big whip on the way...

[...but as the Ranger ducks his head for a backdrop, Carter comes to a screeching halt, hooking a front facelock...]

"THUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUD!"

SA: DDT! DDT! HE SPIKED THE RANGER!

[And with both men laid out on the mat, the crowd is cheering loudly, urging Carter to get across the ring and make that tag to an eager and anxious "Flawless" Larry Wallace who is pacing the apron, clapping his hands, urging the crowd to chant...]

"G! G! C!"

"G! G! C!"

"G! G! C!"

SA: The fans in Portland are on their feet! Carter's on his hands and knees, trying to crawl across this ring! Can he get there? The Ranger's down in the ring, Perez is down on the floor... Webb's out here by us trying to revive Perez and get him back in there but...

CP: He's getting close, Big Sal!

SA: Carter's just out of reeeeeeeeeaaaaach... TAG!

[The crowd ERUPTS as Larry Wallace comes through the ropes full of fire and swinging for the fences, dropping a rising Ranger with a big left uppercut...

...and a running clothesline knocks the recovering Perez off the apron before he can get inside the ring!]

SA: PEREZ GETS PUT RIGHT BACK DOWN ON THE MAT!

[As the Ranger struggles up, Wallace boots him in the gut before hitting the ropes...]

SA: OHHH! BIG RUNNING KNEE LIFT! JUST LIKE HIS OLD MAN!

[With the Ranger down, Wallace pounces, diving on top for a lateral press...]

SA: ONNNNNNE! TWOOOOOO!

[...but the Ranger kicks out at two. Wallace claps his hands together, getting right back to his feet. He grabs the masked man by the arm, going for a whip but the Ranger reverses...]

SA: The Ranger sends him instead... Wallace ducks the clothesline... off the far side...

[...and the crowd cheers as Wallace scores with a flying forearm, knocking the masked man flat!]

SA: Larry Wallace has all the momentum on his side... pulling the Ranger up...

[Setting for a belly to back suplex, Wallace lifts the masked man into the air, bringing him down across a bent knee in a backbreaker...]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

SA: THAT MIGHT DO IT! WRECKS THE BACK FOR ONNNNNNE! FOR TWOOOOOOOO! FOR-

[But a diving Pedro Perez comes crashing down on the back of Wallace, breaking up the pin!]

SA: PEREZ MAKES THE SAAAAAVE!

[As the referee puts Perez out, Wallace gets up with a grimace towards Perez. He leans down, pulling the Ranger up...

...but the masked man goes to the eyes, raking across and leaving Wallace blinded.]

SA: The Ranger with the cheapshot! Right to the eyes!

CP: Whatever it takes, jack!

SA: Shoots him into the neutral corner!

[Wallace hits the buckles as the Ranger charges in... RIGHT into a raised boot up under the chin!]

SA: OHHHH! Wallace counters, gets the leg up!

[And as the Ranger staggers backwards, Wallace charges out, bringing up the leg again...]

SA: OHHH! AND ANOTHER BIG BOOT PUTS HIM DOWN!

[Wallace is all fired up now, pumping his arms as he looks out on the roaring Portland crowd. He does a full circle around the ring, playing to the fans...]

CP: Wasting valuable time here. He's got the man down and he's trying to hype up the Keep Portland Weirdos.

[...and Wallace circles back to the Ranger as he's struggling to get up off the mat. He grabs the masked man by the arm, shooting him in...]

SA: Off the far side and... BEST DROPKICK IN THE WORRRRRRLD!

[With beautiful height and extension, Wallace WIPES OUT the Ranger with a picture perfect dropkick, leaving him prone as Wallace gathers himself, diving across, reaching back to hook a leg...]

SA: WE'VE GOT ONNNNNNNNNE! WE'VE GOT TWOOOOOO! WE'VE GOT THR-
"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

SA: THE RANGER KICKS OUT! KICKS OUT IN THE NICK OF TIME!

[Wallace climbs off the mat, a frustrated expression on his face as the referee holds up two fingers...]

SA: Just a two says the referee... and Wallace is about to level that dropkick up, I think! He's heading to the outside!

[The crowd is buzzing, on their feet as Wallace scales the ropes, climbing to the top rope as the Ranger struggles to get up off the mat...]

SA: Wallace is up top and-

[And with that, Curly Bill is up on the apron, hootin' and hollerin' and trying to get the attention of Wallace before he can go for a potentially match-ending missile dropkick...

...and the referee rushes to get Webb down, shouting at him as Wallace stands at the ready...]

SA: PEREZ!

"CLAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAANG!"
"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[...and Pedro Perez hops up on the apron, Texas bullrope in hand, and BASHES Wallace across the lower back with the cowbell, knocking him off-balance as he falls from the top, collapsing down on all fours...]

SA: Perez with the bullrope from the outside!

[...and the Ranger leaps up, dropping both legs down across the lower back of the bridged Wallace!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[On the outside, Grant Carter yanks Curly Bill down off the apron, smashing him with a right hand on the jaw...

...but on the inside, Perez is back in, climbing to the middle rope as the Ranger whips Wallace in, catching him on the rebound...]

SA: SPINEBUSTER!

[...and Perez curls his fingers into a pistol, shouting "TIME TO DIE!" before leaping from his perch, driving home a double stomp to the skull of the downed Wallace!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

SA: THE DOUBLE STOMP CONNECTS!

[Perez rolls it, tackling Carter down to the floor as the referee wheels around to find the Ranger covering Wallace...]

SA: Not like this! Come on, not like... ahhhhhh!

[The three count comes down, signaling victory for the Desperadoes. The Ranger promptly rolls out, joining Perez and Webb on the outside... and giving a few more stomps to the downed Carter for good measure.]

SA: The Desperadoes pick up the win... but there were a whole lot of shenanigans in this one.

CP: You can make all the excuses you want but it doesn't change the fact that's a big win for the Ranger and Perez. Will it be enough to get 'em on the board for the tag team rankings? We'll see about that soon enough.

[Webb claps the backs of his men, smirking up at the ring where we see Larry Wallace struggling to get off the canvas with the aid of the official. Webb tips his hat at the ring.]

SA: Wallace and Carter suffer a hard luck loss... and you have to imagine this might sink any hopes they have of making that Top Five and the Run The Rankings at Opportunity Knocks, Colt.

CP: Absolutely.

SA: We'll get those next set of rankings later tonight... but right now...

[The crowd reacts as someone comes rushing down the aisle towards the ring, diving headfirst under the bottom rope...]

SA: ...is that...?

[The man jumps to his feet, attempting to throw back a hooded sweatshirt...

...and falls down in the process.]

SA: Uhhh.

[Down on the mat, the hood goes back to reveal Dirt Dog Unique Allah sprawled across the canvas...]

SA: Oh... oh jeez...

[Allah looks up at Larry Wallace, shouting "HELP ME UP!" Wallace looks puzzled as he walks over, extending a hand to the downed former Portland great.]

SA: Larry Wallace trying to help him up. Look, Colt... it was a bad night for Dirt Dog Unique Allah last weekend in his old stomping grounds with his son betraying him, attacking him... but it's obvious he's in no condition to be out here right now.

[Allah nearly falls over again as Wallace drags him to his feet but Allah catches himself, leaning heavy against Wallace who looks annoyed now.]

"Get me... somebody get me a mic!"

CP: That seems like a bad idea.

SA: Yes, please... if anyone can hear me, can we please NOT get a mic in the hand of this man right now? In fact, can we get some help out here for-

[Allah shouts again, cutting Sal off.]

"I SAID I WANT A MUHFUH MIC! I GOT STUFF TO SAY!"

[Wallace pats Allah on the shoulder, trying to talk him down as a pair of AWA officials join them in the ring...]

SA: Maybe we just should just... do we have a commercial ready or...?

[The officials are talking to Allah now as well, trying to convince him to leave the ring.]

SA: Guys, seriously... the man is in pain and... can we get the camera off-

[An irate Allah suddenly swings a leg up, driving his knee into Larry Wallace's groin, knocking him down on the mat to an "OHHHHHHHH!" from the AWA faithful. Colt can be heard snickering as Wallace hits the mat and Allah takes up his fight with the officials who are now shoving him back towards the ropes.]

SA: This really isn't funny, Colt.

CP: It's really not... but it's a perfect example of why Odysseus was right to cut his old man out of his life. He was a massive anchor dragging him down and the kid - the whole world is opened up to him now.

SA: You might be right about that but there were other ways to do this. It didn't have to happen like it did last weekend and... okay, it looks like we're getting Dirt Dog Unique Allah out of the ring... up the aisle... good, good. Where the heck were we, Colt?

CP: Allah was about a pull or two away from spending the night in a drunk tank - I'm not sure where WE were.

SA: Colt, come on... the man is hurting and...

[The camera cuts off Allah and back to our announce team.]

SA: ...alright, well... we've been talking about opportunity all night. Run The Rankings. The rest of Opportunity Knocks. But what about the Brass Ring tournament that's been running all summer over on Showtime, Colt?

CP: Eight men, eight women... all looking for the ultimate opportunity - an AWA contract and a future shot at championship gold.

SA: We've already seen people go through and people get eliminated... and in just a moment, we're going to see one of those Brass Ring competitors in action right here on Saturday Night Wrestling. But first, let's take a look at where we're at in this big, big tournament!

[We fade to a black screen.]

A single note hums.

We get quick cuts of taped fists, a water bottle being poured over someone's head, entrance curtains being shoved aside.

A voiceover begins.]

"In the American Wrestling Alliance, your big break is never guaranteed."

[An instrumental version of Run The Jewels' "Legend Has It" begins to play.]

"Sixteen competitors. Eight men. Eight women. One prize.

An AWA contract."

[We get more quick cuts - so fast you can't even process who is on the shot: a powerbomb, a spinning backflst, a massive clothesline.]

"Four have advanced."

[Quick cuts of Catalina Lopez, Armani Avery, Amber Gold, and Gabriel Cordova with their hands raised in triumph.]

"Eight more remain.

And now... there is nowhere to hide.

June 30th.

Jo Jo Washington vs Big Boss Shinza"

[We get quick shots of both competitors in action - Washington breaking into a jig before delivering a haymaker and Shinza staring coolly out on the crowd through mirrored sunglasses.]

"Elijah Wilde vs Will Robinson."

[Robinson soaring through the air, Wilde screaming into a camera.]

"July 7th

"Diamond" Lily Driscoll vs Felicia Love"

[Driscoll posing on the midbuckle, Love using a hairpull to drag someone down to size.]

"Danny King vs Adrian Kirk."

[King mowing down an opponent with a running double leg takedown, Kirk wrapping up a foe in an airtight submission hold.

Cut to crowd shots. Near falls. Exhausted faces. Sweat dripping in slow motion from someone's head to the mat.]

"Every match matters."

[Lopez hammers her fists into a heavy bag... Amber Gold smirking at the camera...]

"Every win changes a career."

[...Avery snaps off a kip up into a standing backflip... Cordova smashes forearm after forearm down on a faceless foe.]

"And on September 1st at the Hammerstein Ballroom... the final Showtime of the summer...

One More For The Road"

[The shots get quicker - just images of faces - defiance, pain, determination.]

CP: No feeling-out process, no sportsmanship. Straight to the bullying. That's Elijah Wilde in a nutshell.

[Wilde drags Fields up by the hair and absorbs a weak chop attempt, then fires back with a knife-edge chop that echoes across the stadium, knocking Fields on his back.]

"SMMMMAAAACCCCK!"

SA: That chop sounded like a gunshot and Fields is reeling!

CP: He's toying with him. Wilde could probably end this right now if he wanted, but nah, he's gotta run his mouth first.

[Wilde laughs as Fields staggers...]

"THAT WAS PATHETIC, YOU IDIOT!"

[...and hoists him for an overhead belly-to-belly suplex. He makes a cocky pin for a two-count before getting up himself and waving it off. He gets to his feet and stomps Fields in the back of the head repeatedly as the referee warns him. Wilde shoves the official, sneering "Touch me again and see what happens!"]

"OOOOOHHHHHHH!!!"

SA: Wilde just shoved the referee! That should be a disqualification!

[Busy with the referee, Wilde doesn't notice Fields rising to his feet and charging him, hitting him with a dropkick that barely staggers the big man. He tries for a second one, only to be swatted away. Wilde then steps forward and levels Fields with a lariat as faint chants of "YOU SUCK!" directed to Wilde can be heard from the crowd. He cups his ear and then spits at the crowd.]

SA: Wilde's just too big... too mean! This is a man who's spilled blood everywhere he's gone!

CP: He's got the power and the skill, but he acts like the world's out to get him. The AWA finally gives him the spotlight, and he's proving why they've hesitated on him for all these years.

[Wilde deadlifts Fields from all fours into a released German suplex that sends him crashing near the ropes.]

"THHHUUUUUUUDD!!!"

"OOOOOHHHHHHH!!!"

SA: SWEET SAN LORENZO! What a German suplex!

[Instead of covering, Wilde walks to the corner, leans on the turnbuckle, and heckles a fan in the front row holding a "DANGER WILL ROBINSON!" sign...]

"HEY, FATBOY... TELL YOUR MOM I'LL SEE HER AFTER THE SHOW!"

[Wilde then turns back and drags Fields to the center of the ring, before hitting a standing senton backsplash for another lazy two-count before he pulls Fields up at two, grinning as the crowd roars with boos.]

SA: Oh come on! Wilde dropped all 298 pounds right across the chest of Max Fields and he broke his own pin just to keep this going!

CP: That's pure sadism right there, Sal. He had the three in the bag and pulled Fields out at two just so he could keep hurting him. Look at that grin... he's enjoying the pain he's inflicting.

[As he pulls Fields up to his feet, the Portland native suddenly fires up and strikes Wilde with chops, elbows, and an enzuigiri that finally staggers the Georgian. However, Wilde recovers fast and BITES the bridge of Fields' nose as he charges in to press his advantage.]

SA: HE BIT HIM! Elijah Wilde just clamped down like a rabid dog!

CP: That's classic Wilde. He runs into the slightest bit of adversity and he immediately responds with the dirtiest tactic he can think of. The ref didn't call for the DQ but come on, this is exactly why the AWA's stayed away for all these years.

[Wilde finally decides it's time, yelling "IT'S OVER!" as he slings Fields into the ropes and pops him up into air, catching him by the legs and levels him with a powerbomb that has Fields flopping lifelessly on the canvas.]

"THHHUUUUUUDD!!!"
"OOOOOHHHHHHH!!!"

SA: That powerbomb might've broken something... Fields is down bad!

[Not done, Wilde grabs Fields by the legs and rolls him backwards, yanking him into a standing headscissors. Transitioning seamlessly, he lifts Fields up for another powerbomb but grabs him by the tights and elevates him even higher into the air before slamming him down across his outstretched knee!]

"OOOOOHHHHHHH!!!"

SA: A HISTORY OF VIOLENCE! That looked brutal... Fields' spine might be folded in half!

CP: He could pin him right here and end it but he doesn't look like he's done.

[Wilde sits Fields up in a daze, rears back, and punts him square in the face with spiteful force as Fields collapses.]

SA: WHAT THE HELL WAS THAT!

CP: Whoa Sal, language.

SA: I don't care, Colt, that's not wrestling, that's assault!

[Smirking, Wilde drops down to one knee and places a lone finger on Fields' chest for the one, two, three.]

"DING! DING! DING!"

["Killing in the Name" kicks back on as Wilde rises slowly, as medics rush in.]

SA: That kick to the face was vicious, spiteful and unnecessary! Fields was already done after Wilde hit him with "A History of Violence" and he just had to get one last cheap shot in!

CP: That's Elijah Wilde for you. He didn't need to do any of it. But no, he had to make it ugly, had to make sure Fields went out with a possible injury. That's who he is, Sal. Brutal. Petty. And completely unapologetic.

SA: Unapologetic? That's putting it lightly! He's standing there laughing while medics check on the kid he just brutalized!

[Before Rebecca Ortiz can announce the winner, Wilde snatches the microphone from her, pacing as the boos grow louder.]

EW: HEY! Shut your mouths for one damn second!

[The boos only get louder. He smirks, unfazed, wiping sweat from his beard with the back of his hand.]

EW: You think this was impressive? This little showcase match? It wasn't even me trying. That was me warming up. This was just an appetizer. A reminder to every single one of you of what happens when Elijah Wilde steps in this ring.

[He stops pacing and stares straight into the camera.]

EW: I've waited years - YEARS - for the AWA to stop playing games and finally let me in the door. And now that I'm here? I'm not leaving until I take what's mine. The Brass Ring tournament? It's already over. I don't care who's in my bracket, who's got the hype, who thinks they're next in line. I'm walking through every last one of them. I'm breaking backs, busting heads, and collecting bodies until that contract is mine.

[He leans forward, voice dropping to a low, menacing growl.]

EW: And when I win - and I will win - I'm not gonna be some smiling idiot just happy to be here. I'm not gonna shake hands and kiss babies. I'm gonna make life miserable for everybody. Every wrestler, every ref, every fan and everyone watching at home. You'll all feel it. Every time you cheer for someone else, every time you boo me, every time you think you've seen the worst I can do... I'll prove you wrong.

[He smiles.]

EW: Because that's what I do. I ruin things. I ruin lives. I ruin people. And I enjoy every second of it!

[Wilde drops the mic to the mat with a thud, letting it bounce once before he steps on it, grinding his heel into it like he's snuffing out a cigarette. The crowd's boos grow even louder as he exits the ring, raising both arms, middle fingers extended.]

SA: Well, so much for giving this guy an opportunity, Colt.

CP: Not to lean into the hype too much, Big Sal... but give it to him or not, I think he's going to take it. And with the Brass Ring Tournament competitors being given every opportunity to get themselves booked on shows leading up to the Finals of the tournament, I shudder to think what a guy like Elijah Wilde might do in Seattle when Opportunity Knocks.

SA: You're not alone in that. Fans, we're going to take a quick break and when we come back, it'll be Main Event time here for our first hour of Saturday Night Wrestling right here on ESPN!

[Sal is all smiles as we fade to black.]

We fade up from black onto black and white footage of an empty arena - likely the Crockett Coliseum from the looks of things - with deserted chairs and a wrestling ring with no one in it.

We see Karl O'Connor walking up a set of steps with the aid of a cane, moving slowly and deliberately, putting much of his weight on the cane. He slowly takes a seat, looking down onto the ring as the camera cuts to a closeup of him and we hear his voice.]

"I can still hear the echoes chanting my name."

[A closeup on his eyes, wrinkles showing the years and the mileage on his body.

Cut to a shot of "Big" Jim Watkins standing in a locker room dressed in an old brown ring jacket, running his finger down the trim as we hear his recognizable voice.]

"Time has not silenced the crowd."

[We get a trio of old pieces of footage - Brett Bryant in his younger days with his arms raised over his head, Cameron O'Connor applying a spinning toe hold on an unknown foe, and Blackjack Lynch raising his black glove-covered hand into the air as his gravelly voice is heard.]

"I never did a moonsault..."

[Cut to a modern day closeup shot of Blackjack Lynch's eyes, a notable scar over one of them...

...and then a shot of Terry Shane Jr. in a suit looking out over the empty arena with his voiceover.]

"...or walked the top rope."

[Oliver Strickland sits on a locker room bench, his eyes drifting across the vacant room as he speaks.]

"There were no pyrotechnics..."

[And onto Ivan Kostovich who runs a hand over the links of his old Russian chain now hanging from a hook on a door as we hear his heavy accented words.]

"...no fancy, flashing lights."

[Cut to a series of modern shots of current day AWA superstars in action - Jordan Ohara diving off the top rope with a crossbody to the floor... Julie Somers using a moonsault from the top onto a standing opponent on the outside... and we hear Karl O'Connor's voice again.]

"We never flew through the air."

[Cut to O'Connor sitting in the Crockett, cane in hand as he looks at the empty ring...

...and then old footage of a defiant Blackjack Patterson shaking his head, refusing to submit to a painful hold as we hear Jim Watkins.]

"We were men of courage.."

[Closeup on Watkins' eyes in present day before cutting to Blackjack Lynch wrapping his hand around a foe's head as his voice is heard.]

"...men of steel."

[And then back to modern day shots of Juan Vasquez leaping off the top of the Woodshed, plummeting down... to Shadoe Rage hurling himself off the top of a super-sized steel cage... to a blood-covered Hannibal Carver wielding a steel chair as we hear Terry Shane Jr's voice.]

"They were men without fear."

[Cut to a shot of Blackjack Lynch standing in the ring, raising a hand in the air as if saluting the crowd as we hear his voice. We can actually see a ghost-like vision of cheering fans around him...]

"I can still hear the echoes cheering my name."

[...but when we cut to the opposite angle, we can see he's all alone in the ring.

And we cut again, this time showing the legendary Hamilton Graham standing outside the ring, a hand draped over the rope, a hungry look upon his face, wishing for one more moment of glory as we hear his familiar voice.]

"Today... I cheer for them."

[And as we fade to black, a graphic comes up promoting "AWA LEGACY" before we fade all the way out...

...and then back up on a panning shot of the Providence Park crowd, jammed into the stadium over the Portland night sky.]

SA: Welcome back to Rip City, fans, as the AWA sets up shop in the Pacific Northwest for a few weeks worth of action. We were down the road at the IIWF Coliseum last weekend for Showtime... here in Portland again tonight... next week, we've got Showtime in Seattle at Historic Washington Hall and then on the 4th of July, we'll be in the KeyArena in Seattle one more time for Opportunity Knocks before we head off to the Great White North of Canada! Tickets are still available for some upcoming dates later this summer so check Ticketmaster right now and make sure you're in the house when the AWA comes to YOUR town! And Colt, I know there's someone that we're hoping is back in the AWA house in the very near future... and I'm talking about Raphael Rhodes.

CP: We haven't seen Rhodes since Memorial Day Mayhem when he beat Juan Vasquez in the biggest match of his career... he's been all sorts of banged up according to the rumors.

SA: Rumors that only got stronger after last week on Showtime when Cassie Rhodes made what seemed like an off-hand comment about her brother's health, and it turned into a bit of a firestorm on social media, so we have asked Dana Kaiser to join us here via satellite to get to the bottom of it.

CP: And you know me, Albano, I'm not going to let her weasel out of anything, she better answer all the questions, even the tough ones.

SA: I have a hard time believing Dana Kaiser would dodge a question, Colt.

CP: Well, she's never been interrogated by me before.

[We go to a split screen, our intrepid commentary duo on the left, and Dana Kaiser on the right. Kaiser, filmed waist-up, is wearing a University of Minnesota tank top, and her blonde hair is tied back in a simple ponytail. Her biceps are looking more defined than they were previously, which causes Patterson to point towards the monitor.]

CP: She's got better biceps than you do, Albano!

SA: That was never really a secret, Colt.

[Kaiser grins at the bickering between the two.]

SA: Dana, thanks for joining us to tone down some of the rhetoric going on out there.

DK: My pleasure, Mr. Albano. I'm always glad to clear the air.

SA: Let's start with what your sister-in-law Cassie said last week on Showtime. She off-handedly mentioned that Raphael was in a dark room with his brain rattled. What we would like to know is-

CP [interrupting]: How bad is his concussion, anyway?

[Albano sighs.]

SA: In a manner of speaking.

[Kaiser calmly nods her head.]

DK: Cassandra has a passion that is unquestionable, as well as her own way in doing things. Perhaps that is what caused her to speak the way she did.

[Patterson wags his finger.]

CP: Uh uh uh. You're dodging.

[Kaiser simply smiles.]

DK: I wasn't finished, Mr. Patterson. In fact, I'm glad you chimed in. Speaking from an athlete's perspective, you can appreciate how many doctors, nurses, medical professionals throughout one's career will tell a wrestler to stop. It's true that Raph was indeed told by one doctor that he should consider stopping.

[Patterson interrupts again.]

CP: So that's it, he's done?

SA: Colt, please. Let Dana finish. Go ahead.

[Kaiser nods.]

DK: Thank you, Mr. Albano. As Mr. Patterson can attest from his injuries throughout his own in-ring career, it is important when you have received a head injury to receive opinions from a battery of qualified physicians. If you see five, and one says stop, but the other four say go ahead... what do you do, Mr. Patterson?

[Patterson flexes.]

CP: You get out there and you kick some butt, that's what.

[Kaiser smiles.]

DK: But there will always be the word that one physician said to stop, correct?

[Patterson suddenly seems to get what Kaiser is saying, pointing at his camera. Albano smirks.]

SA: So you're saying rumors are running rampant because of one doctor's word that leaked out, but Raphael has received clearances from four other doctors?

DK: Correct. And one of those doctors who has cleared Raph is Dr. Ponavitch.

[The crowd roars as they hear the audio over the arena's sound system.]

DK: That means that on July 4, in Seattle, Raphael Rhodes will be in the building, and he will be there to address the AWA.

[The fans cheer that announcement as well, bringing a smile to Dana's face. She raises a finger.]

DK: It is also my understanding that July 4 is Opportunity Knocks... and perhaps one AWA wrestler will find opportunity knocking on their door, same as Raph found against Mr. Vasquez at Memorial Day Mayhem.

[Another roar from the audience, as Albano grins.]

SA: That's wonderful news, Dana! Thank you for sharing!

DK: Thank you for having me. See you in Seattle.

[Kaiser's side of the screen drops, and we are left with Albano and Patterson.]

SA: That's really great to hear.

CP: Is it? There's an awfully big locker room who would love a piece of Raphael Rhodes after he beat Juan Vasquez in Vasquez's last match. It's bold to come back from injury and say you're going to participate in Opportunity Knocks.

SA: If we know Raphael Rhodes for anything, it's being bold, Colt. I'm sure no matter what happens that night, it will be one to remember. But Raphael Rhodes isn't the only superstar who is planning on making a special appearance in Seattle.

[Albano grins as Patterson glares at him.]

CP: You got a scoop you're holding out on?!

[Sal chuckles.]

SA: Can't let you and Lou break all the good ones. In fact, our good friend Mariah Wolfe is getting that honor. She's in the ring right now with a very special guest. Mariah?

[We cut to the ring where Mariah Wolfe is standing there with a mic. Alongside her is former AWA manager and current AWA talent relations executive Sarah Sharpe. Sarah is dressed in a gray women's sport coat over a white shirt and gray pants.]

MW: Thanks, Sal... and I'm happy to welcome somebody who has been with the AWA since nearly the beginning, Sarah Sharpe! Sarah, it's a pleasure to have you here tonight!

[There's a polite cheer that goes up for the former AWA manager-turned-executive who smiles, giving a wave to the Portland crowd.]

SS: Thank you, Mariah, and the first thing I want to say is I am so proud of how the AWA 30 for 30 presentation about the Birth of the AWA Women's Division turned out. I am so proud as well of all the women who took part and shared their

insights. Most of all, I am so proud of how far the AWA Women's Division has come, with the first-ever women's only AWA show, Girls To The Front, coming up in less than two months!

[The crowd cheers again as Mariah nods, pointing to the fans.]

MW: I know a lot of the fans are excited about Girls to the Front... and you can count me on that list!

But that's not the only major show that's coming up... in less than two weeks, on the Fourth of July, it's going to be Opportunity Knocks! I understand, Sarah, that you had something to say about that night.

[Sharpe nods.]

SS: First of all, Mariah... Seattle holds a special place in my heart, because that's where I got my start in the wrestling business, in a former promotion based in Seattle called NWCI. And I'm not the only one with AWA ties who got their start in that promotion... my husband Dave Cooper also got his start there.

[Cooper's name being mentioned gets a mixed reaction as Sharpe smiles.]

SS: The same is true for Kevin Slater, Eric Somers, Jennifer Rowe and Lori Wilson, all people who are a part of the AWA in some capacity and have each made an impact in many other promotions!

[The smile grows as she continues.]

SS: But there's another individual who got her start in Seattle and, when it came to women's wrestling, she may be the one who went on to have the biggest impact of any of us in women's wrestling.

I'm talking about Hall of Famer Stephanie Harper!

[That draws a BIG cheer from the crowd as Sharpe nods.]

SS: Now, because we are going to be in Seattle for Opportunity Knocks, I thought it would be wonderful to have Stephanie on hand to be recognized in the city where it all began for her.

Now, it did take a little coaxing, but Stephanie agreed to be there on July 4 and I'm expecting to have several representatives from NWCI on hand as well to recognize her.

[The crowd ROARS for the announcement as Sarah excitedly smiles and nods.]

SS: I just wanted to do something special for somebody who has had a major impact on women's wrestling and has influenced quite a few of the women in the AWA!

MW: Wow, that's big news! Yet another thing that our fans can look forward to on the 4th of July... Sarah, you're on a roll here... anything else you want to add?

[Sharpe chuckles.]

SS: Well, when it comes to Opportunity Knocks, I'll just say this: It's the night for the AWA roster to make the most of a challenge! And I'm looking forward to all the action as much as I'm looking to the chance to honor somebody who is not just one of the all time greats, but is a dear friend of mine!

[Another cheer goes up as Sharpe bows her head in gratitude.]

MW: Thank you so much, Sarah! Opportunity Knocks will feature a Hall of Famer on hand, making a special night even more special! And...

[Mariah grabs her earpiece, her brow furrowed...]

MW: Oh boy. Lou, you're just asking for it, pal. Take it away!

[We cut to the backstage area, just outside of the E-Girl MAX locker room, where Sweet Lou Blackwell waits.]

SLB: Thanks, Mariah! Fans, in just a few moments, we'll be seeing Kayla Cristol in action against Harley Hamilton in a long-simmering grudge match, but I was hoping to get words from another member of E-Girl MAX considering the words we JUST heard from Sarah Sharpe.

[Blackwell knocks on the door, and as it opens, the heads of a pair of twins pop out.]

MT: Hi there!

HT: What do you want?

MT: Harley's already left for her match!

HT: You're running late!

MT: Do you still use one of those pocket watches?

HT: I bet your watch needs winding!

[Sweet Lou sighs at the sight of the Thompson Sisters, Melody and Harmony, upbeat and chipper as they stare at him with wide eyes and beaming smiles.]

SLB: No, I know Harley is up next. I was actually hoping to speak with Casey Cash.

[The twins gasp at the same time, then react together.]

MT/HT: Ooooooooooooo!

MT: One moment!

HT: We'll go get her!

[And the twins pop back inside the locker room, slamming the door, as Blackwell gives a side look to the camera.]

SLB: At least they didn't ask me for a secret phrase or anything.

[The door opens once again, and a mildly annoyed "Charm City Cutie" stands in the door frame, arms folded over the white logo of her strawberry pink Under Armour hoodie. Her hair is tied in a loose side ponytail that drapes over her right shoulder. She also wears leggings in the design of a monochrome Maryland flag, along with black Under Armour sneakers. Notably missing is her customary heart-shaped sunglasses on the crown of her head.]

SLB: Casey Cash, thank you for taking a moment.

CC: As long as it's quick. We are very excited to watch Harley finally finish off Kayla Cristol, all by herself.

[Sweet Lou frowns, but nods.]

SLB: I wanted to know if you had a chance to hear what Sarah Sharpe said just a few moments ago, about our upcoming event in Seattle and Ste-

[Casey grabs Blackwell's wrist to pull the microphone near herself.]

CC: OH MY GOSH.

[Casey sighs.]

CC: Could it be any more obvious what I've been talking about? Huh? Could it be any more clear what's going on around here?

[Blackwell strokes his chin with his free hand, as Casey lets go of his microphone-holding hand.]

SLB: Perhaps you should make it more clear, Ms. Cash.

[Casey scowls, poking a finger into Sweet Lou's chest, causing obvious offense to the announcer.]

SLB: Hey!

CC: Sarah Sharpe is part of the talent relations team, right? That means if I have any issues or I have a grievance, then she's one of the ones I take it up with, right?

[Sweet Lou starts to answer, but Casey grabs his hand once more and turns towards the camera.]

CC: Consider this a public airing of a grievance, then. Why exactly is this company rolling out the red carpet once again for Stephanie Harper, huh? I issued my challenge to her, and she made it very clear she wanted none of this. I issued my challenge a second time, and there hasn't been a single word about that...

[Casey flings her free hand into the air, waving it to and fro.]

CC: But heaven forbid Stephanie Harper not get a trophy in Seattle, a place where she's not even from! We have to give her a trophy because she worked there before? Make it make sense, Lou!

SLB: I-

[Casey loudly shushes Sweet Lou, as we hear the Thompsons from behind the door.]

HT: Keep it down, old man!

MT: We want to hear what Casey has to say!

[Casey smirks at the camera.]

CC: Stephanie Harper got a taste of the spotlight back at Memorial Day Mayhem, and now she's going to keep coming around, begging for more, finding any excuse to justify why she's here. And every time she does that, she takes away from the people who are waiting for their moment in the sun!

[More chirping from behind the door.]

MT: Yeah, we want a match tooooooo!

HT: We haven't wrestled in foreverrrrrr!

[Sweet Lou holds up a hand.]

SLB: Is now a good time to point out that the Thompsons aren't on the roster as anything other than E-Girl MAX sidekicks? Not as wrestlers?

[Casey shakes her head.]

CC: Because we keep wasting money and time on backpatting the past, Lou.

[Casey looks back at the camera once more, the tone of her voice becoming chillingly serious.]

CC: Now, Sarah, how do you solve my grievance? It's simple. Call Stephanie Harper. Call her as soon as you can. Tell her not to show up to Seattle. Tell her don't come to Seattle thinking she'll be recognized. If she does?

[Casey stares intensely, with words meant right for one person.]

CC: Nobody will ever recognize her again.

[Casey slowly, dramatically, lets go of Sweet Lou's wrist, then makes a flicking motion, shooing him away as she walks back into the locker room. As she slams the door, Sweet Lou straightens his posture, grip marks on his wrist as he holds the microphone up to his mouth.]

SLB: Strong words from Casey Cash, but will Stephanie Harper listen? We'll see in Seatt-

[Suddenly the door bursts open, and Casey pops her head out.]

CC: SHE BETTER LISTEN!

[Casey goes back into the locker room with another slam of the door, causing Sweet Lou to visibly flinch.]

SLB: ...Seattle.

[Blackwell shakes his head as we fade back out to the ring where Rebecca Ortiz is standing.]

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

[There's a pause before "Blood on the Blue Grass" by the Legendary Shack Shakers plays to a big cheer!]

RO: From Fouke, Arkansas... weighing in at 138 pounds... she is "THE PISTOL"...

...KAAAAAYLAAAAA CRISTOLLLLLLLLLL!

[And Kayla "The Pistol" Cristol steps out onto stage. She throws off her shearling coat, dropping it on the stage as she marches deliberately to the ring. Cristol is focused, not shooting her finger guns and not interacting with the crowd.]

SA: Kayla Cristol is all business tonight. This is a different side of Cristol than we normally see.

CP: Well, Kayla Cristol had a great winning streak going when she first arrived in the AWA and challenged Harley Hamilton. Harley Hamilton humiliated her and dominated her in that ring. Their first encounter wasn't really competitive. Cristol got embarrassed - that's got to be playing on her mind tonight.

SA: Well, let's see if the Pistol is reloaded! Kayla Cristol went to President Zharkov seven nights ago on Showtime just down the road and told him she wanted this match! She wants Harley Hamilton!

CP: But does she want Harley Hamilton more than she wants another shot at the World Tag Team Titles, Albano? Because that's a choice she just might need to make.

SA: Cristol and her partner, Victoria June, will take on the Peach Pits in a Number One Contenders match later tonight... and we already heard the Afro Punk trying to talk Cristol out of this match but the Pistol will NOT be denied although you do have to wonder if the heart might be bigger than the strategy here.

CP: Or she's trying to prove something... which is usually when someone gets hurt.

[As Cristol hits the ring, she keeps her game face on, bouncing off the ropes a few times before impatiently waving an arm towards the entrance, summoning her opponent to the ring.]

SA: Kayla Cristol wasting no time here, she's ready for Hamilton...

CP: Or so she thinks.

[The lights drop as "Heads Will Roll" by the Yeah Yeah Yeahs blasts through the arena.]

RO: Annnnnnnnnnd her opponent... from Kansas City, Missouri... weighing in at 150 pounds... one-half of the Women's World Tag Team Champions... and the winner of the 2018 Rumble...

...HARRRRRLEYYYYYY HAMILTONNNNNNNNN!

[A sharp, high-pitched scream from a pocket of younger fans is immediately drowned out by a wall of boos as Harley Hamilton steps through the curtain.]

SA: And there she is, fans. As Rebecca said, one-half of the Women's World Tag Team Champions and the winner of the 2018 Women's Rumble... which means she has a date with destiny later this summer at Girls To The Front against the Women's World Champion Julie Somers.

CP: Put the countdown clock up because we're just a couple of months away from seeing a new World Champion and seeing Harley Hamilton and E-Girl MAX with ALL the women's gold!

SA: The Spitfire will see about that... as will Hamilton's opponent tonight - Kayla Cristol - perhaps. If the Country Punks can win that Number One Contender's match later tonight, they'll be right back at the top of the line and gunning for Seductive and Destructive, Colt.

CP: Challenge faced and defeated. Let's all move on from that.

[Hamilton pauses under the spotlight, arms spread slightly, chin lifted — every bit the entitled forest goddess she fashions herself to be. Her asymmetrical dark green halter glimmers under the lights, artificial flowers cascading across her chest in purple, blue, yellow, and white. The low-rise green belt and ragged leaf-like skirt sway as she stalks toward the ring with confident, unhurried steps.]

SA: Listen to this reaction, Colt. Harley Hamilton doesn't just walk into a building - she takes ownership of it.

CP: And she knows exactly who she's dealing with tonight. This isn't about ego - this is about strategy.

[Hamilton wipes her boots on the apron, steps between the ropes, and leans back against them, smirking as she stretches her neck and rolls her shoulders. She's loose. Comfortable. Waiting.]

"DING! DING! DING!"

[And at the sound of the bell, the Pistol unloads, sprinting across the ring towards the arrogant - and suddenly shocked - Hamilton who raises her arms to shield herself from the oncoming onslaught!]

SA: CRISTOL COMING ON STRONG AT THE BELL!

[Cristol unloads with a flurry of forearm strikes, hammering Hamilton backwards as she yields her ground, ending up against the corner turnbuckles before she can even get set to defend herself...]

SA: Hamilton's under early attack and-

[Hamilton tries to step out of the corner but Cristol piefaces her backwards, shoving her into the corner before stepping to the middle rope...]

SA: -wow! Fire and fury coming from the Pistol!

[...and Cristol starts raining down right hands, hammering away a half dozen times before Hamilton finally is able to get her arms up, shoving Cristol backwards off the ropes, falling down to the canvas...]

SA: Hamilton shoves her off!

[...but Cristol rolls through, coming back to her feet as Hamilton tries to come out and strike back, swinging high...]

SA: This is not the same Kayla Cristol we saw in their first meeting!

CP: She learned - she knows she can't let Harley dictate the pace.

[...but Cristol goes low, ducking under, throwing a knee into the midsection as Hamilton swings around. She quickly wraps the E-Girl MAX member up, bringing on a big cheer as she SNAPS Hamilton backwards to the canvas with a side Russian leg sweep!]

SA: Ohhh! Takes her down hard... quick cover!

[A two count follows before Hamilton escapes, kicking out hard...]

SA: Cristol going for the quick win - that's to her disadvantage in more way than one, Colt.

CP: Absolutely. Hamilton is an endurance MACHINE in there - the quicker you can get to her, the better it is... plus Cristol's still got ANOTHER match later tonight so the more energy she can conserve, the less damage she can take, the better for her.

[...and immediately rolls to the ropes, a surprised smirk on her face as Cristol tries to press the advantage, pulling her off a knee to her feet...]

SA: Cristol staying on her, staying focused... shoots her across...

[...and as Hamilton rebounds, Cristol lifts her up, twisting her around...]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

SA: TILT-A-WHIRL BACKBREAKER! Cristol covers again!

[Another two count lands before Hamilton escapes as Cristol gets to her feet, moving quickly to the corner, boosting herself up on the middle rope as she watches and waits...]

SA: Hamilton getting to her feet...

[...and Cristol leaps off the midbuckle, connecting with a double axehandle that flattens the Rumble winner, leaving her prone as Cristol dives across, hooking the leg...]

SA: Lateral press gets one! Gets two!

[But Hamilton kicks out again, spinning away from Cristol, trying to get to the outside of the ring...]

SA: Hamilton's making a run for it! She needs to regroup!

[...but Cristol blocks her, grabbing the foot to prevent the flee!]

SA: Cristol caught her! She's not about to let Hamilton get ANY kind of breather in this one!

[With a solid grip on the ankle, Cristol not only prevents the escape but leaves Hamilton in a vulnerable position as she gets back to her feet... well, foot as she bounces on the free one, looking for a way out...

...and stabs out a thumb, sticking it into the eye of Cristol!]

SA: OH! Cheap shot by Hamilton but we've come to expect that kind of thing out of her.

[Cristol staggers back blinded for the moment as Hamilton shakes out her leg to regroup, eyeballing her opponent with a slight smile on her face...

...and then swings her leg up for a telegraphed superkick that the impaired vision of Cristol barely allows her to block...

...which was the full intent as Hamilton changes levels and DRIVES her foot into the knee of Cristol!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[Cristol immediately goes down to a knee as Hamilton points to her temple obnoxiously...]

CP: A brilliant attack there by Hamilton, faking high and going low to target that knee... and she's not done there.

[Yanking Cristol to her feet, Hamilton grabs the attacked leg, falling backwards into a bridging dragon screw...]

SA: OH! Severe torque on the knee ligaments there... and look at Hamilton, keeping her grip, getting right back up...

[...and then immediately twists again in a ground dragon screw, leaving Cristol crying out in pain, clutching her knee as the ever-dangerous Hamilton goes to work.]

SA: Hamilton dragging her to the middle of the ring by that injured leg... right out to the center... positioning the legs now...

[Hamilton cranks on the leg, causing Cristol to cry out again...]

CP: ...and she calls this the Indigenous People's Leglock and she's got it cinched in tight, Albano!

SA: This is Harley Hamilton at her most dangerous!

[With Cristol down and being tormented, Hamilton can't resist slapping her across the face...]

"COME ON, PISTOL!"

[...and again...]

"THIS ALL YOU GOT?!"

[The insult to injury seems to inspire Cristol as she snarls, clawing her way across the canvas as Hamilton struggles to keep the hold applied...]

SA: Kayla Cristol with a fire in her belly here tonight... Hamilton trying to haaaaaang onnnnnnn...

[...but the crowd in Portland ROARS as Cristol inches forward the distance, wrapping her fingers around the bottom rope as the official leaps up, calling for a break!]

SA: Break the hold, Hamilton! Come on!

[Hamilton releases... slowly... just before the five count, giving the referee an exaggerated glare as she gets to her feet...]

...and then STOMPS the knee to big jeers!]

SA: Hamilton putting a bullseye on the knee, going after it here in this - our Hour One Main Event on Saturday Night Wrestling!

[Hamilton stomps the knee a second time, looking out on the jeering crowd as she leans down to grab Cristol by the hair, hauling her up as she starts to lay the badmouth on an angry ringside fan...]

SA: Hamilton letting the fans have it now as well. This is-

[...and as she pulls Cristol into position for a suplex, Cristol tucks and rolls, pulling Hamilton down into a small package!]

SA: CRADLE! CRADLE! ONNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOO! TH-

“OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

[Hamilton’s near miss has her rolling like mad for the corner, dragging herself off the mat as Cristol struggles to get to her feet...]

SA: HAMILTON ON THE MOVE!

[...and a back elbow up under the chin stuns Hamilton, sending her staggering backwards!]

SA: OH! She got her bell rung right there!

[Hamilton shakes it off though, charging again...

...but Cristol spins, grabbing hold of the E-Girl MAX member...]

“OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

[...and ROCKETS her over the ropes, throwing her down to the barely-padded ground at ringside!]

SA: CRISTOL TOSSES HER TO THE FLOOR! THE PISTOL IS HEATING UP!

[Cristol nods at the roaring crowd, stomping her foot a few times, trying to rub some blood flow into the barking knee as Hamilton struggles to get up on the outside...]

SA: Cristol sent Hamilton to the outside...

[...and as Hamilton pulls herself up with the aid of the ring apron...]

“OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

[...Cristol hobbles across the ring into a baseball slide dropkick, catching Hamilton in the face, sending her flying backwards, flopping down on the ringside mats!]

SA: SHE GOT HER GOOD RIGHT THERE!

[Using the ropes, Cristol pulls herself to her feet, again shaking out her leg as Hamilton recovers on the outside...]

SA: Kayla Cristol still struggling with her mobility after Hamilton’s earlier attacks on the leg and...

[Cristol starts to go outside after Hamilton... and then shakes her head, backing off, waving a hand...]

SA: ...oho! How about this, Colt?

CP: Well, I gotta say this is a smart move by Kayla Cristol. She’s no match for Hamilton on the floor so staying in the ring, keeping it inside the squared circle, that’s the right move for her, I think.

[Cristol paces the ring, grimacing with every step as the referee lays a ten count on the recovering Harley Hamilton outside the ring...]

SA: Kayla Cristol - could she win this by countout? And would that be satisfying enough for her? Would she feel like she'd exorcised the demons of her past with Harley Hamilton?

[Cristol winces as she sees Hamilton struggling to get up, trying to use the apron for a boost...]

CP: Look at her face, Big Sal! She can't stand this! She wants to get her hands on Hamilton and get her back in the ring so badly!

[...and as the count reaches six and Hamilton continues to struggle, Cristol moves closer to the ropes, reaching through...]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[...and gets POPPED with big forearm shot by Hamilton who follows the blow by grabbing Cristol's injured leg, yanking it out from under her, pulling her legs under the apron...]

SA: No, no... NO!

[...and the crowd echoes that as Hamilton SLAMS the back of Cristol's knee down on the edge of the apron!]

SA: Hamilton drags her to the outside...

[Hamilton tucks Cristol's leg under her, lifting her up, walking her towards the steps...]

"CLAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAANG!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

SA: ...SHINBREAKER ON THE STEEEEEEEEL!

[Cristol cries out, crumpling in a heap over the steel steps as Hamilton backs off, a confident grin on her face...]

SA: Unusual offense by Harley Hamilton puts Kayla Cristol in a bad, bad way, Colt.

CP: The pain has to be shooting through the leg right now. That could've done some serious damage.

[Hamilton sneers at the jeering fans at ringside as she walks back in on Cristol who can't even get back on her own feet yet. Hamilton grabs the Pistol in a front facelock, giving herself some room to move...]

SA: What is she...?

[...and runs up the ringsteps, kicking off, twisting through the air...]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

SA: TORNADO DDT ON THE FLOOOOOOR!

[Cristol is barely moving on the floor as Hamilton sits up on the floor, "dusting off" her shoulder as she smirks at the crowd who are buzzing over the high impact move delivered on the outside.]

CP: And you gotta think that the only thing - and I mean, the ONLY thing - that may have saved Kayla Cristol right there is that we're in an outside stadium tonight

so she took that devastating move on the padded grass here in Providence Park and NOT on solid concrete!

SA: You've got a point there. Cristol moving on the floor... trying to drag herself away from Harley Hamilton...

[Hamilton shakes her head, pulling Cristol up by the hair, tossing her back inside the ring...]

SA: And now it's Harley Hamilton putting the Pistol in... looking to finish her off perhaps.

[Climbing up on the apron, Hamilton eyeballs Cristol as she tries to push up off the mat...]

SA: What's Hamilton got in mind here?

[...and as Cristol gets off the canvas, Hamilton steps up to the middle rope, pushing off into a leap, snatching another front facelock, swinging Cristol around...]

"THUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUD!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

SA: TOR-NA-DOOOOOO! DDT CONNECTS! SHE SPIKED THE PISTOL AND THAT MIGHT BE IT!

[Hamilton sweeps her arms out in a "it's over!" gesture as she dives across, snaring a leg...]

SA: ONNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOO! THR-

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

SA: CRISTOL GETS THE SHOULDER UP!

[The crowd roars with relief as Hamilton SMASHES a hand down into the mat in frustration from her hands and knees...]

SA: She thought she had her, Colt!

CP: Can you BLAME her?! She hit Kayla Cristol with not just one... but TWO Tornado DDTs and somehow the Pistol lives! Harley can't believe it and she ain't the only one, jack!

[Hamilton gets off the mat, kicking the ropes in frustration as well as Cristol crawls away, dragging her body away from the 2018 Rumble winner.]

SA: Harley Hamilton with the win at Memorial Day Mayhem to lock in her shot at the Women's World Title on August 18th in Madison Square Garden is looking to build on that momentum... she needs to stockpile a winning streak so that when she faces Julie Somers in MSG with the entire world watching, she's got all the momentum on her side, Colt.

CP: And don't forget about the tag titles. She wants to make sure that the Country Punks go down and stay down!

[A frustrated Hamilton measures Cristol as she pulls herself to her feet in the corner, dragging herself into a leaning position against the corner...]

SA: HAMILTON ON THE MOVE!

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

SA: CRISTOL MOVES! CRISTOL MOVED AND HAMILTON MEETS THE BUCKLES!

[And with Hamilton slumped over in the corner, Kayla Cristol senses a chance, ducking through the ropes to the apron...]

SA: Wait, wait! I think we know what's coming here! She's got a shot, Colt! She's got a chance!

[Cristol grimaces, letting loose a roar of pain as she climbs to the middle rope, reaching out to grab Hamilton by the hair. She winces as she slips a foot up top, pulling Hamilton's face up against her shin and knee...]

SA: She's got it hooked! She's got it ready!

[...and she kicks off the ropes, riding Hamilton down!]

SA: BOGGY CREEK BUSSSSTERRRRRRR!

[The crowd ERUPTS as Hamilton's head SMASHES into the canvas with Cristol's weight on top of it...]

SA: SHE GOT IT! SHE GOT IT!

CP: But can she take advantage of it?!

[Cristol rolls to her back, cradling her knee, writhing on the canvas in pain, smashing a hand down into the mat as the crowd buzzes, encouraging her to make that cover!]

SA: The knee! The knee - more damage was done to the knee upon hitting the mat! She got what she was looking for - she got the Boggy Creek Buster but-

CP: But at what cost, Big Sal?!

SA: That's the real question! Hamilton's down! I think she's out! But Kayla Cristol is unable to... wait! Wait!

[Cristol grimaces, forcing herself onto her hip, scooting towards the unmoving Hamilton...

...and pushes into a lunge, throwing an arm across Hamilton's chest!]

SA: SHE GETS THE COVER! IT COULD BE!! IT MIGHT BE!! IT...

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

SA: ...NOOOOOOOO! HAMILTON LIFTS THE SHOULDER IN TIIIIIME!

CP: She had it, Albano. She had it right there... but the damage to the knee cost her the split second she needed to end this thing!

SA: And now BOTH competitors are down! Cristol is down! Hamilton is down! What a battle between these two tremendous competitors! Who's going to come out on top of this one?

CP: You know somewhere in the back, their allies are looking on. Casey Cash and Cinder on one side... Victoria June on the other... and the Afro Punk's gotta be

feeling sick to her stomach with every blow that Cristol takes, every ounce of punishment she takes that softens her up for the Peach Pits in the Number One Contender match later tonight.

SA: Cristol's trying to get up!

[Cristol pushes up onto her knees, shaking her head defiantly, trying to choke down the pain as she struggles to get off the canvas...]

SA: Kayla Cristol... the fans behind her! All of Portland behind her! Can she get the job done?

[She gets there, wincing with every step as she grabs Hamilton by the hair, hauling her to her feet, shoving her back into the corner...]

SA: Is she...? She's gonna do it again!

[...and Cristol steps through the ropes to the outside, starting her painful climb once more. Her steps are slow and labored as she forces her body to obey her commands in getting to the second rope, reaching out to grab Hamilton by the hair as Cristol steps to the top...]

SA: She's got a foot up top! Trying to get Hamilton into position! Looking for another-

[...but Hamilton reaches up, grabbing Cristol by the leg...]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[...and uses another dragon screw legwhip, this time violently ripping and tearing Cristol from the top rope, throwing her down to the canvas!]

SA: OHHH! THE KNEE! THE KNEE!

[Cristol crashes on the mat, screaming in pain as Hamilton surges back to her feet, quickly applying a standing figure four...

...twisting around, leaning back into a bridge!]

SA: WHAT?! WHAT?!

CP: Cristol's shoulders are down!

[The referee dives down, slapping the canvas...]

SA: ONNNNE! TWOOOO! THREEEEEEEEEEEEEEE!

"DING! DING! DING!"

[Hamilton releases the hold and rolls onto her back, chest heaving. She doesn't celebrate. She just lies there - exhausted, victorious.]

SA: Hamilton uncorked a brilliant pin hold right there, turning a figure four leglock into a pinning cradle and- Cristol just couldn't get out of it.

CP: The bad wheel didn't help. Hamilton worked that leg like a bulldog with a bone and left Cristol hindered when she needed all her strength the most... so not only does Hamilton get the win but she leaves Cristol FAR from one hundred percent going into that Number One Contender's match. Everything is comin' up Harley, Big Sal!

SA: I hate to agree with you but... it was a big win, more momentum on her side leading her towards Julie Somers and the World Title in a couple of months' time... and it weakens the Country Punks in their effort to gain another title shot. Harley Hamilton didn't just win this match... she engineered the rest of the night.

[A disappointed Cristol drags herself across the mat to the ropes, using them to pull herself upright, wincing with every movement as Hamilton gets up a few feet away, watching her as the fans wait to see what happens next.]

SA: This one might not be over, Colt

CP: Oh, it's over... even if Cristol doesn't know it.

[Cristol leans hard on the ropes for a few moments, processing what just happened.]

SA: Harley Hamilton picks up the win... and Kayla Cristol got what she wanted, Colt. No E-Girl MAX. No Victoria June. It was one on one and... well, Hamilton got that win with some mat wrestling that would make her father proud.

[Cristol stares down Hamilton for a few more moments... and then pushes off the ropes, wincing with every step as she hobbles towards Hamilton whose fists ball up at her sides...]

SA: What's going to happen here?

[...and Cristol extends her hand.]

CP: What in the...?

[The crowd buzzes at Cristol's offer as a shocked Hamilton stares at the offered hand.]

SA: What a show of sportsmanship out of Kayla Cristol! She gave it her all but her all wasn't quite enough... and she wants to congratulate Harley Hamilton on a great victory here tonight! I love it!

[Cristol gestures at her hand as the crowd's buzz turns to cheers... then a chant...]

"SHAKE HER HAND!"

"SHAKE HER HAND!"

"SHAKE HER HAND!"

[Hamilton looks out at the cheering fans... then back at Cristol...

...and then simply backs away, dropping to the mat and rolling out to the floor as the fans jeer.]

SA: What a poor sport Harley Hamilton is!

[Hamilton walks up the aisle without a word, never looking back as Cristol lowers her arm slowly, nodding to herself as Hamilton makes her exit.]

SA: Kayla Cristol left alone in the ring and...

CP: She's still got another fight tonight, Big Sal, and Harley Hamilton just made sure it was going to be an uphill battle.

SA: She sure did... fans, we're going to take-

[Albano cuts off abruptly, the camera still on Cristol in the ring.]

SA: What is...? Okay, fans... we've got a developing story out in the parking lot and-

[We cut without warning to the parking lot area where Mark Stegglet is standing.]

MS: -here in the parking lot of Providence Park with Ryan Martinez and... Ryan... RYAN! Don't-

[The night air is thick with engine noise, distant sirens, and the echo of the crowd buzzing inside the stadium. Red taillights glow in the background as the cameraman struggles to keep up with the man he and Mark Stegglet are quickly trying to catch up to...]

RM: HEY! I've been waiting for you all night to pick up right where we left off down the street!

[Martinez is shouting at a tinted-out Escalade as he approaches it.]

MS: Ryan Martinez, fans, believes that Supreme Wright is inside that car and he's... Ryan, I don't think this is a good idea!

[Martinez pays Stegglet no attention, stalking towards the vehicle like a man hunting prey...]

RM: GET OUT HERE, WRIGHT!

[The AWA's White Knight is within reach now, slamming a hand into the back of the vehicle before stepping towards the door, reaching out towards the handle...]

...which is when Cain Jackson comes rushing in from out of nowhere, blindsiding Martinez with a forearm shot to the side of the head, sending him flying sideways into the Escalade!]

SA: Oh my god! Team Supreme - was it a trap?!

[The cameraman nearly loses the shot as Jackson pulls Martinez off the asphalt, ramming his head into the side of the vehicle again as we spot Bret Grayson and AJ Martinez stepping into the frame, big grins on their face as Jackson shoves Martinez towards them...]

The two-time World Champion tries to fight back, throwing a right hand at Grayson, sending him staggering backwards...]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[...but a big boot from AJ Martinez to his half brother snaps Martinez' head back, sending him falling backwards into the rear of the Escalade.]

MS: Come on! That's your family, damn it!

[Stegglet goes quiet at a hard look from AJ Martinez who grabs the White Knight by the throat...]

SA: No, no... this setup from Team Supreme... they set a trap and now they've sprung it!

[Twisting away from the Escalade, the seven footer lifts his half brother into the air, throwing him down with a metal-mangling thud on the hood of a nearby car!]

“OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

SA: A chokeslam... chokeslam on the hood of that car...

CP: Martinez’ back probably feels like that hood looks!

SA: AJ Martinez throwing his own flesh and blood down on that car and...

[Cain Jackson stomps over, grabbing Ryan by the collar, hauling him up to a standing position...]

SA: We’ve got a three on one out here - no sign of Mifune or Crawford thankfully...

[Jackson SMASHES a fist between the eyes of Martinez, knocking him back down on the dented hood. He grabs him by the hair, hauling him up...

...and SLAMS his face down on the hood again!]

SA: We need to get some help out there, damn it! Enough is enough!

[Jackson backs off as Bret Grayson comes back in, angrily dragging Martinez up by the hair, pulling him into his face as he snarls at him...]

BG: You should’ve left it alone! You should’ve listened to Zharkov!

[...and DRIVES a knee up into the ribs, forcing Martinez down onto his knees on the asphalt. Grayson shoves him backwards, sending Martinez’ head into the door of the car. A lunging knee to the sternum keeps him there as Cain Jackson shouts his approval!]

SA: It’s a damn mugging in the parking lot of Providence Park!

[Jackson nods at AJ Martinez who swings open the door of the Escalade, gesturing as Grayson drags Ryan into position, putting his arm inside the door...]

SA: No, no, no! They’re going to break his arm! They’re going to break his arm!

[One word is heard from inside the car.]

“Stop.”

[Grayson continues to hold Martinez in place as the other door swings open. The camera pulls back to show Supreme Wright step out of the vehicle, taking the long walk around to the other side where his allies have his enemy in a vulnerable position. Paris Crawford slides out of the car behind Wright, walking in a protective posture as they wait for further instructions. The passenger door swings open as the Shadow Wolf emerges, a sadistic grin on his face as Martinez struggles against Grayson’s grasp.]

CP: The gang’s all there now, Albano.

SA: Where is security?! Where is-

[Wright’s footsteps echo through the parking lot as he steps closer, a few feet away now. Immaculately dressed but with an ice cold expression as he raises a hand slowly.]

SW: That's enough... for now.

[Reluctantly, Bret Grayson lets go, Martinez slumping down against the car before flopping over on the hard asphalt, breathing hard but barely moving as the Team Supreme members back off, giving Wright room as he takes another step closer.]

CP: They could've ended him right there, Big Sal. They could've done to Martinez what they did to Johnny Detson last year and left him laying in a parking lot. Detson STILL hasn't recovered from that.

[Cain Jackson looks over at Wright.]

CJ: Say the word.

[Wright inches closer, crouching down beside his former friend. He studies him for a moment, helpless on the pavement... then shakes his head.]

SW: No.

[Wright stands, adjusting his cuffs as he does.]

SW: Perhaps I've still got a soft spot for you.

[Wright turns to address his soldiers.]

SW: No one ends him but me. Is that understood?

[There are nods all around as Paris Crawford looks disappointed.]

PC: Not even me?

[Wright nods.]

SW: Not even you.

[Wright gestures towards the stadium.]

SW: Let's go.

[Team Supreme all turns and walks away, leaving Ryan Martinez alone on the cold, hard asphalt, battered and gasping for air. Mark Stegglet creeps back into the frame, taking a knee beside his friend.]

MS: Ryan... Ryan, can you hear me, man?

[He puts a hand on his friend's shoulder, shaking his head.]

MS: Go... go get help. Now!

[The cameraman reluctantly obliges, the scene abruptly cutting to black...

...and come back up on a shot of young Brass Ring competitor Armani Avery.]

AA: All I need... is an opportunity.

[The last word echoes, some voices familiar and unfamiliar repeating it...

...until we come up on Ricki Toughill.]

RT: An opportunity to be what I've always dreamed of being.

[A shot of Toughill cradling the AWA Women's World Champion...

...and then back to a closeup, this time of Sid Osborne.]

SO: An opportunity to prove everyone wrong.

[Of Betty Chang.]

BC: An opportunity to be all that I can.

[Of Wes Taylor.]

WT: An opportunity to be talked about the same way my father is.

["My father is" echoes as we get a glimpse of Tony Donovan smashing a steel chair across an opponent's back.]

TD: An opportunity to be MORE than my father ever was.

[To Lee Connors.]

LC: An opportunity to prove that size doesn't matter.

[To Donna Martinelli.]

DM: An opportunity to be better than my mentor.

[Cut to a glimpse of a rookie Martinelli being bellowed at by Laura Davis...

...who is the next closeup.]

LD: An opportunity to prove that I am the greatest wrestler on the planet.

["On the planet" echoes as we get glimpses of Supreme Wright... James Lynch... Ryan Martinez...

...and then to Shadoc Rage.]

SR: An opportunity to wear gold again.

[To Jackson Hunter.]

JH: An opportunity to forge a legacy.

[To Hannibal Carver.]

HC: An opportunity to get drunk and kick someone's ass.

[He shrugs as we fade to a closeup of Harley Hamilton.]

HH: An opportunity to endure...

[Of Cinder.]

C: ...outlast...

[Of Casey Cash.]

CC: ...rise up.

[And lastly, Jordan Ohara.]

JO: An opportunity... to soar.

[The shot fades away, leaving the words "OPPORTUNITY KNOCKS - 4th OF JULY - SEATTLE, WASHINGTON - LIVE ON ESPN" on the screen...

...and we fade through black back to the parking lot area where we can see there's quite a strong AWA official presence now. Mark Stegglet is on the periphery of the scene that we can barely see through - Ryan Martinez leaning against a car being tended to by AWA medical personnel.]

MS: Welcome back to Providence Park here in Portland where we just witnessed a shocking scene when Ryan Martinez attempted to confront his former friend Supreme Wright... only to be assaulted by Team Supreme and left laying out here in the parking lot!

[Stegglet shakes his head, craning his neck to get a look at his friend.]

MS: Shocking isn't strong enough of a word actually. It's disgusting. It's disgusting...

[He pauses, thinking about what he's about to say.]

MS: ...and it's cowardly. Supreme Wright and his band of jackals are a bunch of damn cowards!

[Stegglet is angry - fuming mad perhaps as he glares at the camera.]

MS: We've got medical personnel out here... we'll... uh, we'll give you an update whenever we can...

[The emotions are breaking now, Stegglet showing he's a little shaken at what he just said.]

MS: And... uh... we'll... do that when we can. We'll... fans, let's go over to Lou who is... he's got a guest.

[Stegglet lowers the mic, turning away abruptly from the camera to get another look at his friend as we fade...

...to elsewhere backstage, where Sweet Lou Blackwell is standing by. He's flanked on his left by Bobby O'Connor, with Dustin Sanderson and Jason Whittaker standing to his left. O'Connor has a look of serenity on his face, whereas Sanderson stares at Blackwell with intensity. Whittaker has his head bowed, seemingly in prayer, as Blackwell begins.]

SLB: Gentleman, tonight there's a big test ahead of you in your journey to championship gold. I speak of course, about your match with Omega and Polemos.

[O'Connor smiles.]

BOC: Not just a test for Zharkov to choose who deserves a shot at those championships, Blackwell. But a fight for the very soul of the AWA!

[Whittaker nods as Sanderson shouts "Amen!".]

SLB: The soul of--

[Blackwell shakes his head.]

SLB: What do you mean?

[Sanderson shakes his head, incredulously.]

DS: Ain't it obvious, Blackwell? That Omega struts around here like he's got some mystical superpower in his hands.

But he doesn't. There's only one who does.

BOC: Do you know who that one is, Blackwell?

[O'Connor and the Blackjacks simultaneously point upwards.]

BOC: Now I don't know about you, Blackwell. But from where I come from, claiming powers such as those equals one thing.

[Sanderson nods.]

DS: Blasphemy. And if you think me and Whittaker are gonna sit around while there's a legitimate blasphemer spreading his filth all over the airwaves?

[Whittaker emits a low growl, shaking his head as he scowls.]

DS: You said a mouthful, big man. And speaking of talking, if that wasn't bad enough he's got that big mouth with him.

SLB: Big mouth?

[Sanderson rolls his eyes.]

DS: He's got you fooled too, huh?

[Blackwell looks as O'Connor, visibly confused.]

BOC: Don't cover for him, Blackwell. There's nothing to be gained by it. Obviously we're referencing the one you call Polemos.

SLB: What do you call him?

[O'Connor sighs.]

BOC: That's enough. You know as well as everyone else what he's like when the cameras aren't rolling.

[Sanderson nods.]

DS: It'd be one thing if it was just that he never shuts that big fat trap of his. But when we talk about filth, we really are talking about all the disgusting things that big bag of garbage says nonstop. I mean, this is a family show, Blackwell.

SLB: I have never even heard--

BOC: I understand if you're afraid of reprisal at his hands. After tonight, you'll have nothing to fear.

[Sanderson and Whittaker nod in unison.]

DS: After tonight, that weirdo creep won't be able to pollute the minds of all the children out there. After tonight that little dirtbag won't be preaching his gospel of lies about being as powerful as the most high.

[Sanderson looks upwards as Whittaker bows his head once again in silent prayer.]

DS: Because after tonight, those two freaks are gonna be nothing but a bad memory. Tonight we not only take a step towards the gold that we've already earned in spades...

[Whittaker nods.]

DS: ... but another step in our righteous path of striking down the wicked.

[Sanderson and Whittaker now both bow their heads as O'Connor clasps his hands together.]

BOC: And now, let us prey.

[Blackwell fixes the three men with an uncomfortable glance as we cut to footage marked "EARLIER TODAY" where Omega is eagerly chatting with Polemos about their upcoming match.]

O: Think of it, Polemos! We finally have a chance to test ourselves against the legendary Blackjacks!

[Polemos tugs at his glove impatiently.]

O: Patterson and Lynch together again, one last time to challenge us, the High Council of Justice!

[Polemos glances down at Omega, like he thinks missed a meeting.]

O: I have to wonder if their combined sixty years of experience will be a match for our combine thousand-and-six years of experience though. It'll be quite a thrill for Colt Patterson to sit at ringside, and be cub reporter – like our great friend Sebastian McIntyre – watching his father compete.

[Polemos shakes his head, trying to interrupt.]

O: Think of it! The return of Blackjack Lynch, Polemos! I'm sure he'd set Theresa and James straight!

P: UHHHH...

O: But by defeating such a legendarily storied tag team, we certainly impress Citizen Zharkov and get that Number One ranking, putting us in the captain's seat for–

[Polemos silences Omega by intimidatingly putting his massive palm on Omega's shoulder. Omega seems to instantly recognize this as "shut up." Polemos leans over, and whispers in the Neptunian's ear—and even whispers from Polemos sound like loud, indistinct grunts.]

O: For real?! Another team called Blackjacks? Sanderson and Whittaker?

[Omega looks a little aghast. Polemos resumes preparing for his match, throwing his cloak of animal furs over his shoulders.]

O: You haven't been messing with parallel realities, have you? You know, I thought there was something off about this timeline... Lemme check what year it is...

[Omega takes a device from his "Kuiper Belt" that looks like it's only function is go "ding." Polemos grunts and swats it away.]

O: Okay... okay... I get it: focus on the match at hand. I keep forgetting time is linear in the AWA.

[Omega pulls his cape over his shoulders, sheepishly following him off-camera as we fade from the pre-recorded footage to a live shot of the ring where Rebecca Ortiz is waiting, a smile on her face.]

RO: The following contest is a tag team match scheduled for one fall with a twenty minute time limit. Introducing first...

[There's a pause as Ortiz lowers the mic until the opening riff of "The Fall" by Place of Skulls rumbles through the stadium's sound system.]

RO: From Dallas, Texas... weighing in at 509 pounds and being accompanied by their manager Bobby O'Connor... they are Jason Whittaker... Dustin Sanderson...

...THE BLAAAAACKJAAAAACKS!

[The curtain parts as Whittaker and Sanderson emerge in matching black gear, cowboy hats low over their eyes. Bobby O'Connor steps between them, hands clasped in mock prayer.]

SA: The Blackjacks have been on a tear lately, Colt - and Bobby O'Connor has been right in the middle of it.

CP: Trained by Blackjack Lynch but turned out better than he could've ever dreamed - thanks to Bobby O'Connor.

SA: How can you say that?!

CP: It's simple. Lynch taught 'em the basics but O'Connor taught them to be meaner, darker, and a whole lot more dangerous than ol' Penny Pincher Blackjack ever could.

[Sanderson smirks as he flashes the Claw towards the camera on their way down the aisle. Whittaker hits the ring first, rolling under the ropes. He comes to his feet, dragging a thumb across his throat as he mounts the buckles. Sanderson joins him, mounting the opposite buckles to jeers as O'Connor takes a spot mid-ring, gesturing to his charges.]

SA: O'Connor... Colt, can you believe this guy is STILL on the injured list? Most competitors who get hurt are fighting to get cleared and I get the feeling O'Connor would do just about anything to avoid getting back inside that ring.

CP: Slander. The man is legitimately injured. His health has to be the top priority in getting him back to action, Albano - not your - or anyone else's - twisted desire to see him get hurt again.

SA: I'm not saying I want him hurt... I just want to see him back up some of the stuff he's been saying since last year.

[Sanderson and Whittaker join their manager mid-ring for a final strategy session when...]

"NO EVIL CAN ESCAPE..."

"...OMEGA!"

[A flash of light hits as John Barry's "Overture" from "The Black Hole" swells to a big cheer from the Portland crowd...]

RO: Annnnnnnnd their opponents... first, from Neptune...

...OOOOOOOOMEAAAAAAAAA!

[Omega bursts from the entrance, cape flowing as he strikes his signature Omega pose at the top of the aisle to big cheers, his massive partner lurking behind him, tugging a glove into place...]

RO: ...and his tag team partner... from the Darkness... the God Of War...

...POOOOOOOOLEEEEEEEEMOOOOOOOS!

[The cheers get louder as Polemos gives his partner a somewhat-gentle shove, sending him stumbling forward...]

RO: Say what you want about Omega and Polemos, Colt - but the people believe in them.

CP: I think that says more about the people than those two freaks.

RO: Those "freaks" are currently the top contenders to the World Tag Team Titles according to the Championship Committee! They are in - as one might say - the Pole Position to be the final entrant in the ring on the 4th of July when the division Runs The Rankings.

CP: Not for long if the Blackjacks have their say.

[Omega slides into the ring, giving a wary look at the huddled Blackjacks before taking his spot on the buckles, posing heroically on the second rope as Polemos steps over the top, making sure to guard his partner's back before Whittaker and Sanderson can do anything...]

SA: The mightiest of duos some might say.

CP: Nobody who knows a thing about pro wrestling would say that.

[Sal chuckles at Colt's venom as Omega gives his partner a confident thumbs up. Polemos does not return it.]

SA: Alright, fans, we're just about set to get this one underway... Polemos and Omega conferring now as the Blackjacks did earlier. It looks like it'll be Jason Whittaker starting things off for them... and for the other side...

[There's a pretty strong insistence by Omega that he start things off for his squad.]

SA: Well, it appears as though Omega wants the big man...

CP: That's either really brave or really stupid, Albano... possibly both.

SA: Whatever it is... he's gotten his way and we're just about set for action...

"DING! DING! DING!"

[At the sound of the bell, Omega boldly rushes in to engage with the much-larger competitor, tangling up in a lockup...

...but only for a moment as Whittaker shows off his raw power, shoving Omega backwards and down to the mat!]

CP: Definitely stupid.

SA: A tossed away name for Oasis' first album from what I understand... but in the meantime, look at the arrogance on the part of Whittaker, flexing those muscles for all to see... and jeer.

CP: They're just jealous. You don't get a build like that eating avocado toast.

[Omega is back on his feet, eyeballing Whittaker as he approaches a little slower this time, luring Whittaker into an aggressive lunge that the quicker Neptunian avoids, charging hard into the ropes...]

SA: Omega on the move, using that speed to his advantage... ducks the lariat... off the far side...

[...and leaps into the air, bouncing a flying forearm off the head of Whittaker who stumbles but stays on his feet as Omega pops up, striking an Omega pose to the thrill of the fans...]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[...which is short-lived as Whittaker flips him inside out with a big boot!]

CP: So much for the speed advantage. Never strike a pose in front of a Texan, kid. Take it from me.

SA: I thought you claimed that Hollywood lifestyle these days.

CP: Once a Texan, always a Texan, Albano.

[Whittaker pulls Omega off the mat, lifting him up, holding him across his chest as he parades around the ring with him...

...and then pauses, using Omega's bodyweight as he curls him up once...]

CP: Look at the power! The Holy Spirit is with him tonight, Big Sal!

[A gleeful O'Connor shouts "YES IT IS, COLT! YES IT ISSSSSS!" before Whittaker curls him a second time...]

SA: That was for his benefit, I'm sure, but let's be careful about who we're offending with that kind of talk...

[...and O'Connor gets closer, leaning over to shout to be heard.]

"THE HEATHENS AND THE NON-BELIEVERS!"

SA: ...can you get out of here?! Can you go get yourself cleared to wrestle, for crying out loud?!

[Whittaker HURLS Omega across the ring, sending him bouncing off the canvas with a fallaway slam...]

CP: Big throw by a big, big man... and the Blackjacks are in control of this one - don't worry, Sal, I'll cover your job while you harass the talent!

SA: Talent?! This guy's been on the shelf for how long now?! We know guys like Maxim Zharkov are fighting the office every week to get back in the ring while O'Connor and Bryson Page are sitting on their duffs cashing a paycheck!

CP: The health of the talent is the top priority. When Bobby O'Connor is ready to go, believe me - he'll go!

SA: In the meantime, I wish he'd go somewhere else. Whittaker makes the tag, bringing in Dustin Sanderson.

[Sanderson is quickly through, joining his partner in a double whip...]

SA: OHHHH! Sky high backdrop by the Blackjacks! The last time Omega was that high, it was on his personal star cruiser heading back for a trip home.

CP: Don't you start with that Neptunian nonsense, Albano.

[Sanderson drops a knee down across the sternum of Omega as Whittaker departs the ring.]

SA: The Blackjacks cutting the ring in half, keeping Omega on their side of the action... up on the second rope now...

[The crowd groans as Sanderson leaps off, driving his weight down in the form of a middle rope kneedrop...]

SA: ...ohhhh! A lot of impact there - quick cover gets one... gets two... but Omega slips out in time.

[Sanderson glares at the official while O'Connor verbally harasses them from the outside about their inability to count to three.]

SA: O'Connor giving the official a hard time but that count looked good to me.

CP: If you're going to count that slow, you better make your home on Sesame Street, Albano.

[Sal chuckles as Sanderson regains his feet, hauling Omega up alongside him...

...and then wraps his hand around the skull of the masked man in a clawhold that gets HUGE jeers!]

SA: Oh, come on now... the Iron Claw-

CP: No, no... that's the Sanderson Claw, Big Sal! Whole different can of worms!

SA: The signature hold of the Lynch family, designed to mock that legendary family as Sanderson shakes Omega back and forth... and wherever Jack Lynch... Travis as well... wherever they are, I'm sure this kind of thing is driving them up the wall. Pure disrespect to their father who trained these two... hang on now!

[The crowd lights up as Omega buries a right to the midsection... and another... and a third...]

SA: Omega fighting back, Omega looking for a way out!

[...and again... and again...]

SA: The kid from Neptune is rockin' the body of Dustin Sanderson in a way that would make Justin Timberlake proud!

[Omega is able to twist his body slightly, jamming an elbow up into the gut with enough impact to break the grasp and get free.]

SA: Omega's loose! And on the move!

[But the fan favorite only gets a pair of steps towards his corner where his monster of a partner is waiting when Sanderson hooks him by the trunks, yanking him backwards and dumping him on the back of his head with a back suplex!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

SA: Sanderson puts him down, cutting off that tag... and now Omega's in a bad, bad way, Colt.

CP: It feels like this one could end at any moment.

SA: Another tag there for the Blackjacks, bringing Jason Whittaker back into the mix...

[Whittaker comes through the ropes, joining his partner in a little kicking and stomping action to the jeers of the crowd and a reprimand from the official!]

SA: Get one of 'em out of there, ref!

CP: They've got a five count to beat up Omega as much as they want... and if I were them, I'd use every second of it to pummel that punk.

SA: You really don't like him, do you?

CP: He makes a mockery of the business I sacrificed my body for, Albano... no, I don't like this guy who tells the world he's from Neptune.

SA: As opposed to someone who walked around calling himself a name out of ancient Greek and Roman mythology?

CP: You're pushing it, Albano.

[With Omega reeling, Whittaker drags him off the mat as Sanderson departs, wrapping a hand around the much-smaller competitor's throat, pulling him towards the middle of the ring...]

SA: CHOKESL-

[...but on the lift, Omega backflips out of it in an impressive show of athleticism, landing on his feet, ducking down as Whittaker swings at him, surging forwards annnnnnnnnnd...]

SA: TAG! HE GOT THE TAG!

[...and as the big man comes over the top rope, the Portland crowd is ROARING when he POPS Whittaker with a gloved uppercut!]

SA: OH! WHAT A RIGHT HAND!

[Sanderson comes in a well, throwing big forearms at Polemos' back...]

...big forearms that go unnoticed as the God O' War slowly turns around to face him. Sanderson's blows slow down as he realizes what's happening.]

SA: Uh oh... this isn't going the way Sanderson thought it would!

[Sanderson suddenly sticks a thumb in the eye of Polemos...]

CP: He felt THAT!

[...and then dashes to the ropes behind him, bouncing back towards the blinded Polemos...

...who practically boots Sanderson out of his shoes!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

SA: BIG BOOT SENDS SANDERSON TO THE DENTIST'S CHAIR!

[Whittaker comes back in, spinning Polemos around, cracking him with a right hook... and another... and another...]

SA: Whittaker firing away but I don't think it matters!

[Polemos blocks a blow, slapping it away before grabbing Whittaker by the throat with both hands, lifting him into the air as the crowd "ooooohs!"]

SA: POLEMOS GETS HIM UP!

[And a mighty toss sends Whittaker crashing into the turnbuckles...

...which brings Bobby O'Connor up on the apron for a moment before a grasping hand comes his direction, sending him back down to the floor!]

SA: O'Connor wants no part of Polemos and the God of War is cleaning house here in Providence Park, fans!

[A slowly recovering Omega tries to help his partner, leaping off the buckles to snap a dazed Sanderson down to the canvas with a somersault neckbreaker!]

SA: All four men are in now - it's breaking down here in Portland!

[Omega scrambles up, rushing towards Polemos who catches his own partner who leaps crossbody-style at him...

...and swings him around so that his feet and legs catch a stumbling Whittaker across the chest and face, putting him down on the mat...

...before Polemos presses Omega overhead, dropping him in a big splash on the Blackjacks' big man!]

SA: OHHH! WHAT A DOUBLETEAM! And Bobby O'Connor is beside himself as ringside - the World Tag Team Title chance he's been craving is slipping through their fingers!

[The referee waves off the lateral press, pointing at Polemos and Whittaker.]

SA: No, no! The ref says Polemos and Whittaker are legal!

CP: Great job by the official at being able to keep track of that in all the chaos!

[Omega claps his hands together in frustration as he moves quickly to his corner, waving for Polemos to tag him in...]

SA: Omega wants the tag now... he wants to try to end this...

[But as Polemos steps closer to the corner, Whittaker hooks his ankle...]

SA: ...but Whittaker's cutting him off!

CP: Not sure that's the best idea. If Omega wants in there, let him in!

[Sanderson gets off the mat but as the official shouts for him to exit, he makes a turn and DRIVES his shoulder into the back of Polemos' knee, chopping the big man down!]

SA: OHH! SANDERSON CLIPS THE KNEE!

[Whittaker takes advantage of the attack, landing a pair of heavy right hands as Sanderson is forced out by the official.]

SA: Whittaker... what's he doing now? Pulling Polemos up... now PICKING Polemos up which is no easy task...

[Whittaker deposits Polemos on the top rope before making the tag.]

SA: ...and with the masked man up top, Dustin Sanderson tags back in...

[Sanderson does a flex to the crowd.]

SA: ...showing off all 237 pounds there again, and he's climbing up top, Colt.

CP: Well... I don't know what he's got in mind but that's a big, big man he's up there with...

[Sanderson pulls Polemos into a front facelock...]

SA: Oh, there's no way, Colt... there's just no way! Dustin Sanderson is setting up for a superplex on the mighty Polemos... struggling to get him up though...

[With Sanderson having all sorts of problems getting the bigger man into the air, O'Connor scrambles up on the apron, the referee turning to confront him...

...which brings Whittaker back in, heading for the corner.]

SA: O'Connor distracts the referee and Jason Whittaker's in again with the illegal assist! Both men up now...

CP: I'm not sure BOTH of them can even get him up!

[With the Blackjacks trying to get Polemos into superplex position, Omega comes running down the apron, hopping up on the middle rope, scrambling up onto his partner's shoulders to sit on them...]

SA: What in the...?

[...and pushes himself forward, grabbing Sanderson...]

"THUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUD!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

SA: TITON-SET FLIP POWERBOMMMMMMMB!

[With Omega and Sanderson down, they roll from the ring as Polemos grabs a shocked Whittaker by the throat from his perch up top...]

SA: UH OH! WHITTAKER'S IN TROUBLE, COLT!

[...and SHOVES him backwards, sending him flying through the air before crashing down on the canvas!]

SA: POLEMOS SENDS HIM DOWN HARRRRRRRD!

[With the roaring crowd behind him, Polemos pushes up to stand awkwardly on the top rope, waiting for Whittaker to rise...]

SA: You gotta be kidding me!

[...and as the Blackjacks' big man stirs back to his feet, Polemos takes flight, leaping into the air and SMASHING his arm across the torso!]

SA: FLYING LARIAT OFF THE TOP BY THE GOD OF WAAAAAAR!

[The Portland crowd is absolutely ROARING now as Polemos regains his feet, throwing his arms back in a triumphant roar before turning his attention back towards Whittaker, throwing his gloved hand backwards as the crowd somehow gets louder!]

SA: And now he's looking to put the exclamation point on what would be a huge win for Omega and Polemos with that chokeslam, Colt!

CP: Bobby's gotta come up with something and FAST or this is gonna be over!

[Whittaker stirs off the mat again, stumbling towards the masked man who snaps his arm out, grabbing him by the throat!]

SA: He's got it hooked!

[Polemos seems about to plant the big man with the chokeslam when his partner drags himself back up on the apron, extending his arm...]

SA: Now Omega wants in as well!

[Polemos reluctantly looks around at the cheering crowd, urging him to make the exchange... and he does, slapping his gloved hand down on Omega's, bringing the Neptunian back into the match...]

SA: In comes Omega and... I think we know what's- YES! Omega hooks him as well! They're set for the double chokeslam in the center of the ring and-

[The crowd ROARS thunderous jeers as Bobby O'Connor pulls himself up on the apron...]

SA: O'Connor on the apron! Get him down from there!

[The referee is trying to do exactly that to no avail before Omega lets go of Whittaker, moving towards O'Connor who hangs onto the top rope, shouting at both the official and Omega...]

SA: If the referee can't do it, maybe Omega can!

[...but instead of trying to get O'Connor out of the ring area, Omega grabs the top rope, giving it a yank which somersaults O'Connor INTO the ring!]

SA: OHHH! YEAH! YEAH! GET HIM, OMEGA!

CP: So much for unbiased commentary, Albano!

SA: This guy's had it coming for MONTHS!

CP: He's an injured man! Who knows how much longer he'll be on the shelf now after that?!

[With the crowd whipped into a frenzy now, Omega drags O'Connor off the mat...

...and wraps his hand around the throat!]

SA: HE'S GOT HIM HOOKED! DO IT, OMEGA!

[An alarmed Dustin Sanderson slides back in, rushing to intervene...

...and runs right into a gooze by Polemos!]

SA: OH! Sanderson gets caught! And Polemos has a Blackjack in each hand!

[With the Portland crowd going wild, we can spy O'Connor hooking an arm around the top rope, refusing to let Omega chokeslam him...]

SA: O'Connor trying to hang on! Omega trying to pull him off!

[...and with their manager in danger, the Blackjacks reach out in tandem to GOUGE the eyes of the masked man!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[Suddenly free from his grasp, the Blackjacks grab Polemos and HURL him over the top rope to a rough landing on the outside of the ring!]

SA: POLEMOS GETS CHUCKED TO THE FLOOR AND-

[Omega spots Polemos down on the floor, whipping around as he lets go of O'Connor. He rushes at Dustin Sanderson who throws a wild clothesline that Omega ducks under, still on the move...]

SA: Ducks the clothesline and-

[...but as Omega straightens up, he gets OBLITERATED and turned inside out with a Jason Whittaker lariat, delivered with enough force to take Whittaker off his feet as well!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

SA: WHITTAKER LAYS HIM OUT!

[And with Sanderson standing guard, Whittaker crawls into a lateral press, snatching one of Omega's legs...]

SA: IT COULD BE! IT MIGHT BE! IT... ISSSSSSS!

"DING! DING! DING!"

SA: The Blackjacks steal one!

CP: What's with all this stealing nonsense? They didn't steal it, Albano, they won it fair and square!

SA: You and I have very different definitions of "fair and square," Colt Patterson. In my book, this was highway robbery on the part of the Blackjacks as they score a win - a big, important win in the chase to Run The Rankings.

[Whittaker and Sanderson exit the ring quickly, joining O'Connor on the floor to celebrate their victory as the crowd jeers and Polemos struggles to get up off the padded grass field.]

SA: And they're right on out of here. They want no part of the God Of War when he gets back on his feet, Colt.

CP: Can you blame 'em? Who knows what that maniac would do?

[Polemos slowly drags himself back inside the ring, crawling to kneel alongside his still-laid out partner...]

SA: Omega and Polemos will live to fight another day, fans, but this has gotta do serious damage to their top seeded stance in the Run The Rankings challenge. We'll find out very soon just how much damage... but these teams in the division are all circling the same prize right now... and nobody is backing down!

CP: Run The Rankings just got a whole lot crazier, Big Sal.

SA: Indeed.

[A slowly-stirring Omega pulls himself up with Polemos' aid, getting to his feet to cheers from the crowd as he looks down the aisle at a retreating Blackjacks trio... and we fade to the backstage area of Providence Park - more specifically in the concrete hallway outside of medical. The concrete is scuffed, cables taped down in hurried lines. The muffled roar of the crowd seeps through the walls like distant thunder.

Our camera shot moves inside the medical room. Fluorescent lights hum overhead. A folding table serves as an exam bed. Kayla Cristol sits on the edge, wrists taped, hair damp and stringy, eyes unfocused. Her right knee is braced loosely in the trainer's hands. An ice pack sweats into a paper towel on the tray beside her. Dr. Bob Ponavitch is hard at work.]

DBP: Hold still, Kayla. I'm checking the lateral stability.

[He rotates the knee gently. Cristol doesn't react at first. Then a delayed flinch.]

DBP: Pain here?

KC: ...Yeah. Sure.

[Her voice is flat. Somewhere else.

Victoria June paces two steps away, still in ring gear with a jacket thrown over her shoulders. Her jaw is tight, arms folded, then unfolding, then folded again.]

VJ: Is it bad?

DBP: Strain. Nothing feels blown, but that hold torqued the joint. She'll be sore. Real sore. I don't like how long it was cranked.

[Cristol grimaces, shaking her head.]

KC: She had it. I couldn't turn. Couldn't roll the hips. She just... sat on it.

[Kayla stares at the floor between her boots.]

KC: That prawn hold... that was tight. I wasn't kicking out. Not like that.

VJ: Kayla-

KC: She's better. Okay? She's just better.

[Silence. The doctor glances between them, then keeps working.]

DBP: Bend it for me. Slowly.

[Kayla obeys automatically, like he's moving someone else's leg.]

KC: I felt it when she stepped through. I knew. Still didn't tap. Just laid there. Stared at the lights.

[Beat.]

KC: And she still wouldn't shake my hand.

[She laughs once through her nose. No humor in it.

Victoria looks away. She bites back something. The unspoken thing hangs heavy - "I told you not to take that match."]

DBP: You can compete, but it'll swell. Keep it wrapped. No sudden pivots.

[Cristol throws a hard look. He shrugs.]

DBP: I know, I know... but I wouldn't be doing my job if I didn't say it.

Ice every twenty minutes.

[He steps away. June turns back immediately, seizing the opening.]

VJ: Okay. Listen to that. That's next. That's what matters now.

[Kayla doesn't look up.]

VJ: The Pits don't care that you had your feelings hurt. They don't care she twisted you into a pretzel. They care that there's three of them and two of us.

KC: I noticed.

VJ: Then get here. With me.

[June taps her own temple.]

KC: I can't plant on this leg.

VJ: Then don't. We change the plan.

[Kayla finally looks at her.]

VJ: We cut the ring in half. We keep one Pit out. Constant motion. Don't chase. Make them come to us. You stay center, not corner. Ah'll do the long runs.

KC: And when they triple-team?

"Well, I'm not a math whiz, but it sounds like a bit of losing proposition to me."

[There is a subdued cheer in the arena as Ricki Toughill wanders into the medical room.]

RT: Funny, I'm usually a regular here.

[June eyes Toughill warily as she enters. Kayla Cristol doesn't seem especially pleased to see her either. The tension speaks to the long history between the Country Punks and Mr. and Mrs. Toughill's Little Princess.]

RT: Not to worry. It's to be expected after crossing E-Girl MAX. They act like preening adolescents, but hit like half-ton trucks. The knee hurts... right, Pistol?

[Cristol nods.]

KC: Just like when you hit me.

[Ricki snaps her fingers.]

RT: Right. Yeah. The, uh... baseball bat to the ribcage two years ago...

[Ricki looks over at June.]

VJ: Mah back still hurts whenever ah see your face.

[Ricki nods.]

RT: Right. Right. The Empress Cup eighteen months ago. And everything with Cinder... that was my bad. And now look at you. Both number one in line to take out her and Harley Hamilton and strike gold.

[Cristol interrupts.]

KC: What do you want, Ricki?

[Toughill shrugs.]

RT: Well, the point is, thinking back to the Rumble, and... finding out friends weren't really friends... it's starting to feel like the sun is setting on me. And rather than dwell on it, and start feeling sorry for Poor Ricki all over again, I figured I'd go where the sun is rising.

I'm... proud of you. Both of you. Victoria. And... you too, Pistol. You're always going to be my first loss in the AWA. And since you wanted someone to shake your hand... I may not have won the Rumble like Harley Hamilton...

But... maybe I can be an acceptable substitute?

[Kayla looks flabbergasted as Ricki extends her hand to her. Victoria June nudges her.]

VJ: Well, you wanted to shake ah hand tonight. Might as well be Ricki.

[Still in stunned disbelief, Kayla Cristol shakes Ricki Toughill's hand.]

RT: You know, next week on Showtime, I have a match scheduled with one of the Peach Pits, and a win there would go a long way to getting my mojo back. I chatted around with some of the officials, and they said it would be alright if I... scouted Shannon Walsh from ringside during your match.

[June and Cristol share a glance: their luck seems to be getting better.]

RT: Of course I'd be my usual demure, well-behaved, charming self at all times

[And finally, a smile from Kayla Cristol.]

KC: I'll bet...

[Cristol eases off the table, placing one hand on Victoria June's shoulder, and – improbably – the other on Toughill's as we fade to black.

The shot opens on Jordan Ohara standing to the left of the screen. He wears a white ringer T-shirt with the words "BE A HERO" printed on it in orange lettering. On his right is a graphic of the same orange words: "BE A HERO!" In the background, Ohara's theme song plays, Nas' "Hero."]

JO: To all my fans, don't be a bully. Be a hero. Stand up for everyone and be respectful of everyone's feelings. You don't have to like everyone you meet, but you should always try to be kind and think about where they are coming from.

We all want to laugh and joke. We all like to point out each other's differences. But sometimes words hurt as much as being hit. Sometimes they make someone feel like an "other." And that isn't fair. You wouldn't like to feel left out. So why would anyone else?

Bullying can feel overwhelming, relentless and make people go to desperate lengths for it to stop. You don't want to hurt somebody for the sake of a joke, do you? I didn't think so.

So don't be a bully. Be a hero. Please.

Only together can we stop bullying in all its forms. Join me and the AWA in the 2018 Be a Hero campaign because we need heroes. Like you.

[The camera fades out on Ohara giving the viewers an encouraging nod and little clasped hand bow before he fades from view as "Hero" fades out, leaving only the orange words:

BE
A
HERO.

And with that, we fade to a flash of the ACCESS 365 logo before showing a backstage hallway in Providence Park where we find Shadoe Rage posing for photos with a pair of young fans.]

SR: Alright, yeah... that's it there... you two enjoy the show, yeah?

[The kids agree before running out of view, leaving Rage to sit alone on a rolling production case for a few moments...

...before there's suddenly a stir of activity in the hallway. Rage looks up with a puzzled expression on his face as a handful of AWA officials race past him.]

SR: What the...? HEY! What's going on?!

[Rage's question goes unanswered as more staff run past him. He hops down off the case, grabbing a staff member by the arm.]

SR: What happened?

[The staff member is alarmed... and even more alarmed when they realize who they're talking to.]

STAFF: I'm... I'm not sure, Mr. Rage. There was something in the parking lot and... and... I hear he's hurt.

SR: Who's hurt?

STAFF: Ry... Ryan Martinez.

[Rage's eyes flash as he surges forward, shoving the staff member up against the wall, a forearm tucked across his chest to pin him there.]

SR: START TALKING! FAST!

[The staff member is REALLY alarmed now.]

STAFF: Please... I... I... I... I don't really know! They just called over the radio and said they got him! They got Mr. Martinez and-

SR: WHO GOT HIM?!

[A hand reaches out to touch Rage's shoulder.]

"You already know who."

[Rage lets go of the staff member who races off, nearly stumbling as they tear down the hallway as the former Television Champion slowly turns to face his new tag team partner, Jackson Hunter.]

SR: Team Supreme.

[Rage spits it out like a curse as Hunter nods.]

JH: Yes.

[Rage slaps his partner's hand away.]

SR: I'M GONNA RIP HIS HEAD OFF!

[But this time, it's Hunter who grabs Rage by the arm to prevent his blind charge into battle...]

JH: No! You're not! I'm not letting you do this!

[Rage shoves Hunter backwards.]

SR: LETTING me?! You're not LETTING me?! Get one thing straight, man! I don't take orders from ANYONE - least of all you! You got that?

[Hunter puts up his hands, backing up...]

JH: I need you to think. You think this is a coincidence?

[Rage furrows his brow.]

JH: We embarrass them on Showtime... and you think it's a coincidence they leave the guy laying that they know you'll run through a damn wall to avenge?

[Rage glowers at Hunter who is suddenly making a lot of sense.]

JH: Think. You go do this and I might as well put Ponavitch on standby to wheel you in there next to Martinez.

[The Sensational One thinks for a moment... and then smashes a hand into the wall causing Hunter to flinch.]

SR: DAMN IT!

[He wheels around, sticking a finger in his partner's face.]

SR: They can't get away with this, Hunter.

[Hunter nods.]

JH: They won't... but we do this our way...

[Rage nods, turning away but Hunter grabs him by the shoulder, turning him back towards the former Axis leader so they can look one another in the eye.]

JH: OUR way. Understand me?

[Rage pauses... and then nods. Hunter claps him on the back as they walk out of view together...]

...and we fade from the pre-taped footage to a live shot of Sweet Lou Blackwell standing backstage at Providence Park.]

SLB: AWA fans, it's been an exciting night of action here in Portland and believe me when I tell you, the heat continues to get turned up here in the AWA as we get deeper and deeper into this summer. Memorial Day Mayhem is in the books and we continue to look ahead to events like Opportunity Knocks... like Girls To The Front... and of course, this big Showtime summer tour as well. In fact, let's talk about Showtime... let's talk about what's going to go down in Historic Washington Hall in Seattle a week from tonight.

[A graphic comes up.]

SLB: Big, big matches already announced - Trey Carson versus Robert Donovan... Ricki Toughill versus Shannon Walsh of the Peach Pits... and the other two Peach Pits taking on the Slam Sorority. The Brass Ring Tournament continues with Jo Jo Washington taking on Big Boss Shinza and Will Robinson meeting Elijah Wilde. Laura Davis will be there in action! And so much more... but right now, I want to talk about the Main Event... seven days from now in Seattle... the undefeated World Television Champion Odin Gunn taking on King Kong Hogan! Batten down the hatches, close down the Fish Market, 'cause this one's gonna be a Pier Sixer for sure! You do NOT want to miss Showtime next weekend right here on ESPN... and speaking of can't miss action, come on in here, Mr. Williams...

[The camera pulls back a bit to reveal "The Future" Derrick Williams in his ring and entrance gear, ready to go...]

SLB: Derrick, you are just moments away from facing an opponent handpicked by the AWA National Champion Kerry Kendrick and his partner-in-crime, Miss Sandra Hayes. Now, if you win against this mystery opponent, you get a future shot - no pun intended - for the gold. And with all this intrigue, I gotta know - do you have ANY idea of who you're facing tonight?

[Williams shrugs.]

DW: No clue.

I mean, we're talking about Kendrick and Miss Hayes... it could be anyone.

There's no shortage of challenges those two could throw at me to keep Kendrick's title safe.

[He turns to the camera, palms up.]

DW: I could be facing someone that'll make me overconfident and open to Kendrick's shenanigans... or somehow Hayes could have found something to bring back KING Oni or Torin for a one shot and hope they put me out for a while.

Kendrick's a snake, Lou.

[He holds up a finger.]

DW: But luckily for me, I've run with snakes so I have some idea what to look for.

[Blackwell grins.]

SLB: So it's safe to say that you're prepared for anything.

[Williams nods confidently.]

DW: Name of the game, Lou. It's tough to prepare for someone you don't know about so you just have to prepare a game plan for anything...

...and Kendrick is the kind of person that will throw ANYTHING at you.

[The Future rubs his hands together.]

DW: Lou, I've been here a few years now and I've yet to strap a piece of championship gold around my waist... and right now, Kerry Kendrick's got something I REALLY want - the oldest championship this company's got to offer. So, that means the unknown is something I'm willing and able to work with.

I did it last year... and I'll do it again.

Whatever I'm walking into, Lou... I'm ready for it.

[Blackwell seems poised to ask another question when in the background you can hear...

#Woahhhh oohhhh ohhhh...

[It's the opening of Imagine Dragons' "Radioactive" playing through the stadium's loudspeakers as Williams points to his ear.]

DW: And apparently, the world is ready for me to get this done. Excuse me, Lou...

[And as the music plays, the camera follows behind Williams, walking from the interview area across the corridor and into Chimpanzee, passing by the producers and up into the entrance area. We follow him out, focused on the back of his white ring coat with "FUTURE" scripted out in Azure Blue. We go through the entrance curtain and onto the entrance stage where he holds out his arms, the camera circling around to his front showing his ring attire of white boots with azure trim, with matching long white tights with azure and trim and designs, including "FUTURE" up the right thigh, with azure knee pads.

To the ring, he's wearing a long floor length white coat with azure trim down along the lapel folds, wrists, and coat edges, "THE FUTURE" written out in matching azure script on the back, and rounds out the outfit with a pair of silver framed round mirrored sunglasses. He makes his way to the cheers of the crowd as he walks down the aisle.

Williams speaks toward the camera, pointing at it, then as his music hits the chorus, he holds out his arms, a laser light show and from the stage starting up behind him, the drone camera taking over seamlessly and circling around, giving us a 360 view of the self-proclaimed "Future of Wrestling". As it finishes the circle, Williams continues toward the ring, nodding at fans]

RO: The following contest is scheduled for ONE FALL with a THIRTY MINUTE TIME LIMIT! Introducing first, from Brooklyn, New York... weighing in at 265 pounds... he is "THE FUTURE"...

...DERRICK WILLLLLLLLLLLIAMS!

[The cheers pick up as Williams gets closer to the ring.]

SA: It's a big night for Derrick Williams, Colt. You heard him say it himself - no championship gold since arriving here in the AWA but he's suddenly one win away from getting an opportunity to challenge for the AWA's oldest prize - the National Title.

CP: For a long time now, Williams has heard the accolades - future franchise player, future SuperClash Main Eventer, further World Champion... hell, he was even hand picked for greatest by one of the best to ever do it, Juan Vasquez. But the pressure is on tonight. Can he really live up to the hype or is he just another overrated prospect?

[As he gets to ringside, he steps up on the apron, enters the ring, and walks to the center, timing it once more as the chorus hits. He spreads his arms as the the lights in the stadium, around the ring, and the video boards in the upper deck flash out various patterns, the boards flashing "THE FUTURE" in white and azure.]

SA: Williams certainly likes a big entrance... but it's all for naught if he can't get the job done tonight.

[Williams paces the ring anxiously, looking down the aisle, waiting for the opponent that will either allow him to take his next step towards championship gold or send him back down the ladder of contention...]

SA: That's a man who is ready, Colt, to cement his shot at the National Title.

CP: That all depends on who the champ and Sandra Hayes have put in his way, Big Sal.

[Williams bounces lightly on the balls of his feet. He rolls his neck, shadowboxes once, then leans forward on the ropes, eyes locked on the entrance.]

CP: This is the carrot Kerry Kendrick dangled in front of him. Beat the opponent of the champ's choosing... and you get the shot. But there's a whole lot of dangerous men in that locker room that could be standing between the Future and HIS future.

[An impatient Williams shouts down the aisle, demanding his opponent...

...the lights shift and the distorted first chord of "Juno" by Tesseract plays throughout the stadium.]

SA: Well, we all know who that music is for... and while we weren't scheduled to see him out here right now, I suppose we shouldn't be surprised he'd want this moment in the spotlight for himself even though he's got his own title defense later tonight. And fans, I will let you know that Kerry Kendrick and Sandra Hayes have been refusing all comment for the past week. They've been radio silent about who Derrick Williams will be facing tonight.

[Kendrick emerges to a chorus of jeers from the stadium, the new, elliptical National Championship belt glistening in the evening sun of the solstice.]

CP: Kendrick's got a lot of people gunning for him: that's a sign of a great champion, Albano. Jordan Ohara, the former champ... that man in the ring right now, the Future. I'm sure Sin City Sid is still in the conversation. And at least a dozen other guys I've heard have been thinking about making a play for that belt. So what's the champ gotta do? With that many opponents, you gotta keep them off their game and stay on yours. He's playing it smart, keeping his cards close to his chest.

[Beside Kendrick, Sandra Hayes has the microphone. She purses her lips and extends her index finger to her lips, snidely "shushing" the thousands of fans in attendance.]

MSH: Derrick, you've got your chance to make a great impression. And if you win, you're the next challenger to the National Championship. And I'm sure you and your opponent will put on a great show for these people, since between the Blazers and the Timbers, Portland is used to cheering for those who put in great efforts but DON'T win championships...

[Predictably, the hometown crowd didn't like that. Kendrick and Hayes share a smirk as they exchange the microphone and the belt, which Sandra Hayes jealously cradles across her chest.]

KK: So without further ado... your opponent for the the Number One Contendership to the AWA National Title...

[Kendrick smirks as he lowers the mic...

...and we hear the opening notes to Nas' "Hero" to a HUGE - but SHOCKED - reaction from the Portland crowd!]

SA: WHAAAAT?!

CP: Haha! Brilliant move by the champion!

[Williams shakes his head in the ring, almost disappointed at himself for not seeing this move coming as Kendrick and Hayes gloat from their spot at the top of the aisle. The crowd buzzes in anticipation as the music continues to play... and play.]

CP: Where is he, Albano? Where is Ohara?

SA: I have no-

[Big Sal is cut off by the emergence of Jordan Ohara through the curtain, practically being shoved through onto the stage by AWA backstage officials. A confused Ohara looks around, still in street clothes of black slacks and a red button down silk shirt. He looks out at the fans first who cheer the former two-time champion's arrival... then to Williams who glares down the aisle at his friend-turned-enemy-turned-friend... and then finally over at the golf-clapping Sandra Hayes and the smirking Kerry Kendrick.]

SA: Well, it looks like Derrick Williams isn't the ONLY one surprised by this news, Colt! Jordan Ohara isn't even dressed to wrestle! He's not scheduled to wrestle at all here tonight!

CP: What's the saying, Big Sal? "Stay ready so you don't have to get ready!" Ohara better be ready now!

SA: This isn't right. Not at all.

[Kendrick gestures towards the ring as a resigned Ohara starts walking down the aisle, throwing a final glare at the power couple before he does.]

SA: Well, look... not a single AWA fan in the world would turn down a chance to see Derrick Williams versus Jordan Ohara. That's a given. But nobody wanted to see it go down like this, Colt.

CP: Except Kerry Kendrick and Sandra Hayes... and their opinions are the only ones that matter right now!

SA: Jordan Ohara making his way towards the ring... and if our fans at home are wondering why he's even taking this match... what's in it for him...

CP: I'd hope that's obvious. Jordan Ohara is a professional. No matter my personal feelings towards him, he's a top flight pro wrestler who wants to be a champion again in the near future. And if he wants a shot at Kerry Kendrick... if he wants a shot someday at the World Title, he needs to take every match offered to him and he needs to win! A win over Derrick Williams - no matter how it comes about - is HUGE to the Phoenix and his future goals.

[Ohara rolls under the ropes, a hand raised towards Williams as he gets to his feet. The camera catches him speaking off-mic as he gets up...]

"Look, Derrick... I had no part in this and if you don't want to-

[A conflicted Williams looks at his friend...

...and then with a gesture at the referee, he leaps, snatching a three-quarter nelson...]

"OHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[...but the Phoenix is ready enough for that, shoving his friend off and down to a knee as the referee signals for the bell.]

"DING! DING! DING!"

SA: Williams went for the Future Shock but Ohara saw it coming and-

[Williams rolls from his knee, twisting around to make a dive at the legs of Ohara but the former National Champion stuffs it, floating around into a quick waistlock...]

SA: Ohara had no time to prepare for this so he's wrestling on pure instinct...

[...but Williams uses his size advantage to drive Ohara backwards, smashing him into the turnbuckles. He snaps a back elbow to the jaw, keeping Ohara in place as he swings around...]

SA: OH! Williams rips the shirt open!

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

SA: Overhand chop - right to the chest!

[Ohara tries to cover up but Williams pulls the arms apart...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

SA: He chops him a second time! And this is a man who is focused and determined on his goal here tonight - a shot at Kerry Kendrick's National Title!

[We cut to the top of the aisle where Kendrick and Hayes are looking on with amusement, Hayes whispering something to her man who laughs loudly, gesturing at the action inside the ring...]

...where Williams has doubled over to drive a shoulder into the midsection.]

SA: Referee Scott Ezra in there, calling to get the action out of the corner...

[Williams grabs Ohara by the arm, looking to whip him across but Ohara reverses it, sending Williams crashing into the turnbuckles before ripping off the remains of his shirt to a high-pitched cheer from the crowd...]

SA: Ohara reverses the whip, Williams stumbling out... OHH! DEEP ARMDRAG BY OHARA!

[Williams is quick to scramble up but Ohara is quick to take him down, using a second armdrag to success...]

SA: Back to back armdrags and the Phoenix has him reeling...

CP: The kid is so quick, so precise on those armdrags...

[Williams comes up to his feet as Ohara grabs the wrist, cranking the arm around in a twist...]

...and Williams POPS him on the jaw with a stiff forearm!]

CP: Gotta check your dental work after that one. Williams is one of the hardest hitters on the roster and if Ohara didn't know it before, he does now.

SA: Oh, he knows it. There's a long and complicated history between these two men - this is a SuperClash rematch right here, Colt! And a lot of people believe it just might be a future SuperClash Main Event as well!

[Williams presses the advantage, scooping the dazed Ohara up, slamming him down to the mat...]

...but Ohara hangs on, dragging him down in an inside cradle!]

SA: CRADLE! CRADLE! HE MIGHT HAVE HIM!

[A two count follows before Williams kicks out in time.]

SA: Ohhh, close call there for the Future.

CP: Ohara may not have come dressed to fight but muscle memory and instinct can take you a long, long way.

[Ohara grabs the arm as Williams gets up but before he can crank it around, Williams catches him with a knee to the gut. He quickly hooks him, snapping him over in a suplex...]

SA: Williams showing he's up for a fight too. Friendship or not, Williams wants that shot at Kendrick and he's willing to get a little dirty to get it...

[Measuring his man, Williams takes aim and drops a knee across the sternum, sliding into a lateral press for just more than a one count before Ohara escapes.]

SA: Ohara out after the kneedrop... and Williams may be trying to ground him here, Colt.

CP: That's a smart move. Eliminate some of that speed. That agility. The high flying. The martial arts. Ohara's got a lot of weapons but if he's on the mat, a lot of those advantages go away.

[Williams goes after the legs of Ohara, making a grab for them but Ohara uses his leg strength to push Williams off, creating some space for him to kip up off the mat...

...but Williams has him scouted and LEVELS him with a big clothesline!]

SA: OHHH! What a shot by the Future!

[Williams turns to point at Kendrick who grins, giving a mocking clap for the action as the Future drops into another lateral press...]

SA: The big clothesline gets a two count but Ohara's not going down easy either, Colt.

CP: Both of these guys came to play and that's what we're seeing early on in this one.

[Williams drags Ohara off the mat, measuring his man as he draws his dangerous right arm back...

...and Ohara snaps off a leg kick before Williams can throw the bomb!]

SA: Oh! Williams might've taken too long right there - a pair of leg kicks by Ohara has Williams stumbling...

[Grabbing his former partner by the head, Ohara unloads with a pair of forearms before turning, dashing to the ropes...]

SA: Ohara off the far siiiiiide...

"THUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUD!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[...and runs right into a spinning spinebuster by Williams, driving the air out of the Phoenix!]

SA: SPINEBUSTER CONNECTS! ONE OF THE SIGNATURE MOVES OF DERRICK WILLIAMS!

CP: Ohara was putting together a little string of offense there but that one stopped him cold, Albano!

[But Williams doesn't try for a cover, lifting Ohara right up to his feet, drilling him with a pair of stiff elbows before twisting around into a three-quarter nelson...]

SA: FUTURE SHOCK!

[...but Ohara is ready for it, lifting, twisting...]

"THUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUD!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

SA: BOLT BUSTER! SITS OUT WITH THE POWERBOMB - COULD IT BE ENOUGH?!

[The official dives down to count...]

SA: ONNNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOO! TH-

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

SA: -KICKS OUT IN TIIIIIIIME!

[With Williams down on the mat, Ohara quickly gets up, pointing to the corner...]

CP: Are you kidding me?!

SA: Ohara looking to end it! Heading up top in a hurry... looking for the Phoenix Flame!

[But as Ohara is moving up the turnbuckles, the crowd starts to react...]

SA: Where is Kendrick going?!

[...and the Phoenix LEAPS from the top, pumping his arms and his legs...]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

SA: THE FROG SPLASH CONNECTS! THAT MIGHT DO IT!

[But as the official drops down to count, we don't even get one slap of the mat before...]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

SA: DAMN HIM! KENDRICK PULLS OUT THE REFEREE!

CP: Ohara doesn't know it! He's still got the pin on, waiting for the count!

[But hearing no count, Ohara finally gets up, spotting Kendrick and the official arguing outside the ring...]

SA: You've gotta be kidding me! Kerry Kendrick - was THIS his plan all along?! He never intended to let this be a genuine chance for Williams to earn a shot at the title! He never planned on-

[...which brings Ohara to the ropes, grabbing the top...]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[...but as he slingshots over, Kendrick steps back, pulling the referee right into Ohara's flight path!]

CP: OHH! OHARA LEVELS THE REFEREE!

SA: THANKS TO KERRY KENDRICK, THAT NO GOOD PIECE OF WORK!

[A smirking Kendrick is waiting as Ohara gets back to his feet, looking down at the referee. He leans over to check on him before rising up to look for help...]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

SA: TITLE BELT RIGHT BETWEEN THE EYES! COME ON, DAMN IT!

[The crowd groans at Ohara being laid out with the title belt before a gloating Kendrick stands over Ohara, holding the title over his head...]

SA: Kerry Kendrick... just look at him, Colt.

CP: Oh, I'm looking at him and you know what I see? The man who holds the oldest piece of gold in the entire AWA! The man who orchestrated a brilliant plan to get the title around his waist and who orchestrated another brilliant plan here tonight to make sure he keeps it...

[...and we cut to a beaming Miss Sandra Hayes at the top of the aisle.]

CP: ...with her help of course.

SA: Of course... and now- where's he going?!

[The crowd jeers as Kendrick, title belt in hand, rolls inside the ring, taking a knee and waiting as Derrick Williams - clutching his ribs - struggles to get up off the mat...]

SA: Oh no... no, no... come on!

[...and as soon as he does, he turns right into Kendrick swinging for the fences!]

CP: BOOM! DOWN GOES WILLIAMS! DOWN GOES WILLIAMS!

SA: You're enjoying this, aren't you? You find this funny?

CP: Well, it sure as hell ain't sad, Albano!

[From outside the ring, a second referee signals for the bell.]

"DING! DING! DING!"

[As AWA medical tends to Scott Ezra, Koji Sakai walks over to the ring announcer, giving her the decision...]

RO: AWA fans, referee Koji Sakai has THROWN OUT this match due to outside interference. Therefore this match is a NO CONTEST! NO CONTEST!

[The fans jeer as Kendrick grins, holding the title belt high overhead again for all to see as Hayes claps loudly from her spot on the stage.]

SA: A no contest and-

CP: Do you know what that means, Big Sal?! No title shot for Williams!

SA: That's pretty obviously what Kendrick wanted all along, Colt!

CP: And I'd wager no title shot for Ohara either!

SA: Of course-

[Kendrick smirks at the camera with a faux apologetic shrug - "Oops. No winner? No title shot!" He clutches the title belt closer to his chest as the fans jeer loudly while he exits the ring.]

SA: This was never about competition, Colt - it was about humiliation! He just robbed Williams AND Ohara and he did it with a smile!

[Ohara grimaces as he sits up on the floor, grabbing at his head as he watches Kendrick walk back up the aisle...]

SA: You can feel it though, Colt - this isn't over... not by a long shot.

[Inside the ring, we can see a disappointed Williams starting to stir, shaking his head over when went down...]

...and then we cut to a backstage shot in the Chimpanzee Position where we see a breathless Sandra Hayes burst through the curtain laughing. A moment later, the National Champion Kerry Kendrick comes through as well, smirking as he clutches the title belt to his chest...

Both come to an immediate halt at a sight off-screen...

...and we hear the slow, unmistakable sound of a golf clap.]

"Nice work, you two. Really, truly impressive."

[The camera pulls back to reveal Veronica Westerly confronting the power couple. Hayes' eyes flash at spotting Westerly, taking up a defensive spot between Westerly and her man... a move that does not go unnoticed by a smirking Westerly.]

VW: Relax, sister... I'm not here for him.

[She points a menacing finger.]

VW: I'm here for that.

[Kendrick and Hayes make an awkward grab for the National Title belt at the same time.]

MSH: I'll bet! Well, I'm once again the woman in charge of the AWA National Championship, and as long as I have any say, it stays around his waist!

[Westerly shrugs.]

VW: You should've thought of all that before you made the decision to face a challenger of MY choosing, hm? But look, I'm not here to make threats or anything like that... I'm just here to pass on a message.

KK: Bubblegum, let me handle this.

[Kendrick shoos his significant other aside to stand before the Mother of Dragons.]

KK: You can't get under my skin, Veronica. Especially when your own Dynasty seems to be at each other's throats. What's your message?

VW: Your title defense? It's next.

[Westerly grins.]

VW: See you in the ring.

[And with that, she makes her exit, leaving Kendrick and Hayes behind, looking concerned about what they've gotten themselves into.]

We fade to black.

And then back up to a shot of a darkened room, a filtered spotlight shining down in the middle of it. We can hear footsteps in the background.

Thump.

Thump.

Thump.

The steps are drawing closer it seems.

Thump.

Thump.

Thump.

And they come to a stop revealing the face of Ryan Martinez, still battle-weathered from his bloody war at SuperClash IX.]

"They call me the White Knight."

[A quick shot of Martinez delivering brutal chops to the chest of the King of the Death Match, Caleb Temple.]

"The son of a Hall of Famer."

[A shot of House Martinez - father and son - standing in the ring with Gunnar Gaines.]

"The former two-time World Champion."

[A shot of Martinez standing over Juan Vasquez with the World Title in his grasp.]

"And I am AWA."

[We get an almost identical shot in the darkened room but this time with Supreme Wright standing center stage.]

"The greatest professional wrestler on the planet."

[Cut to footage of Wright cranking on the arm of Casey James.]

"A two-time World Champion"

[Wright holds the title overhead with a defeated Dave Bryant in the background.]

"I am AWA."

[Wright is replaced by Julie Somers.]

"The Spitfire."

[A shot of Somers flipping off the top rope, crashing down on top of Kurayami with the moonsault.]

"The Women's World Champion."

[To SuperClash IX and Somers holding the title over her head.]

"The heart and soul of the Women's Division."

[Somers trading blows with Lauryn Rage inside a steel cage.]

"And I am AWA."

[Somers is replaced by Jordan Ohara, the National Title slung over his shoulder.]

"The Phoenix."

[Ohara dives off the top rope, smashing down with a Phoenix Flame splash.]

"The National Champion."

[Ohara stands on the midbuckle, holding the title up over his head.]

"A once in a millennium talent."

[A series of quick chops lighting up Juan Vasquez.]

"I am AWA."

[The champion is replaced by a grinning Michelle Bailey.]

"The Platinum Princess."

[Bailey tears across the ring, smashing home a Britney Spear on Laura Davis.]

"Former EMWC champion."

[A quick still photo comes up of Bailey holding a championship title aloft.]

"The heart and soul of the- Julie said that?! Grr!"

[A playful Bailey plants her fists on her hips, striking a pose.]

"And I am AWA."

[Bailey is replaced by the face-painted Supernova, the World Title secured around his waist.]

"The icon."

[We get footage of Supernova way back in the day, trading blows with Mark Langseth.]

"The franchise player."

[Supernova using the Heat Wave splash on Shadoe Rage.]

"The World. Heavyweight. Champion."

"And I... AM... AWA."

[We get quick shots now, individual shots...

Jack Lynch.]

"I am AWA."

[Shadoe Rage.]

"I am AWA."

[Hannibal Carver.]

"I am AWA."

[Howie Somers.]

"I am AWA."

[Daniel Harper.]

"I am AWA."

[Harley Hamilton.]

"I am AWA."

[They come quicker and quicker, all repeating the tagline - James Lynch, Victoria June, Cinder, Kerry Kendrick, Ayako Fujiwara...

...and this time, each time they say it, they stay on screen, the framed shot getting smaller as more people are added to it...

Laura Davis. Jackson Hunter. Bret Grayson. Ricki Toughill. And on. And on. And on.

And the photos all disappear, leaving just the tagline behind...]

"I am AWA."

[The graphic fades and is replaced with more text - "The American Wrestling Alliance. Every Saturday Night. ESPN."

Fade to black.

We fade through black back down to ringside where Sal and Colt are seated.]

SA: Welcome back to Portland, fans, where earlier tonight, we witnessed... well, in any other situation, you'd call it a felony.

CP: It ain't a felony if the guy deserved it, Sal. And you ask me, Ryan Martinez got exactly what he was asking for!

SA: Colt! Have you lost your mind? Ryan Martinez was definitely not asking to be assaulted in the parking lot!

CP: I dunno, Albano. He said he wanted Team Supreme... it sure looks to me like he got them!

SA: I don't even know to respond to that. Let's go backstage, to the medical area, where we hope to get an update on the AWA's White Knight.

[We go backstage, but Ryan Martinez isn't immediately visible, instead it is AWA President Maxim Zharkov, alongside Dr. Ponavitch.]

DBP: ... nothing too serious. A few scrapes and cuts, some bruises. Nothing that a few nights off won't heal up.

MZ: So you are saying, tovarishch, that it is good Supreme Wright saved him, da?

DBP: I... well, I wouldn't put it that way, but I suppose.

MZ: And the patient? How is he doing?

[Dr. Ponavitch shakes his head.]

DBP: You'd best see for yourself.

[The camera follows Zharkov further into the medical area, until he comes to Ryan Martinez. There are visible cuts and scrapes on his body, and a black mark seems to be forming on the left side of his face.]

MZ: So we have learned a valuable lesson, eh Boyar?

[Martinez glares hard at Zharkov.]

RM: Only thing I learned is what I already knew. Team Supreme is nothing but a pack of wild dogs.

And there's only one thing you can do with a pack of wild dogs.

MZ: Da, avoid them so you don't get bit.

[Martinez shakes his head.]

RM: You already know that's not going to happen.

[Zharkov shakes his head ruefully.]

MZ: Da...

RM: So the question is... are we going to keep doing this in the parking lot, or you to give me what I want in the ring?

MZ: And what do you want?

RM: KAMS.

MZ: Who in KAMS? There are three.

[Martinez doesn't miss a beat in answering.]

RM: ALL OF THEM!

[Zharkov shakes his head.]

MZ: You know I am not going to do that. You cannot fight three people at one time.

RM: Fine... then give me a tag match.

MZ: You and who else?

RM: Doesn't matter. Hell, put Mark and Big Sal in the corner, I'll do all the fighting.

MZ: Do not be silly, you know that is not going to happen. But we'll make a deal, da? You find two other men to fight with you... two other wrestlers, and at Showtime, you can have KAMS. We have a deal?

[Martinez nods his head.]

RM: Count on it!

[And on that note, we fade from the backstage area out to a live shot of Providence Park. The camera sweeps the open air stadium. The crowd is hot, loud, and restless as they wait to see what's coming next on an eventful night of action...

...which is when "Snakes" by Ol' Dirty Bastard hits.]

SA: Welcome back to Saturday Night Wrestling... and while this song once brought the people of Portland a sense of anticipation, wondering what Dirt Dog Unique Allah would bring to the table on that night... it now belongs to someone else. The man who betrayed his own father one week ago - Odysseus Allah.

[The disgusted tone of Salvatore Albano is evident as Odysseus Allah steps through the curtain in a black hoodie, hood up.]

SA: The fans here in Portland letting him have it... and Colt, we both saw what went down on Showtime down the road at the IIWF Coliseum. How could this man do such a thing... putting his own FATHER through a table! It's sickening! It's twisted and disturbing! And worst of all, this guy almost seems PROUD of it!

CP: Or he's ready to live with it.

[The son of the Dirt Dog doesn't play to the crowd. He doesn't give any expression at all. He walks like a man heading to a fight, not a speech.]

"YOU SUCK!"

"TRASH!"

"UNIQUE! UNIQUE!"

[The shouted insults from the fans gives Odysseus pause halfway down the ramp, looking around the stadium at the hostile crowd. His jaw is tight as he nods once like he expected this reaction before he continues his walk towards the ring where

he climbs in, gesturing for a mic. The music cuts out but the boos are just getting started.]

OA: I-

[But Allah is cut off by a deafening burst of boos from the crowd. He lowers the mic at the interruption, a grimace on his face, pacing the ring a bit as he rubs his mouth.]

SA: The people of Portland don't want to hear a damn thing out of this guy's mouth!

[Allah tries again, his voice raising.]

OA: You don't even-

[The boos cut him off again as the ringside mics pick up shouts of "GO HOME!" and "YOU'RE TRASH!" Allah lets it happen for a few moments before snapping his head towards the Portland audience, fire in his eyes.]

OA: SHUT UP FOR TEN DAMN SECONDS!

[That just makes the crowd boo louder as Allah breathes heavy through his nose. He sits silent for a few moments, the boos raining down before he forces himself to speak through the din. His voice is strained as he tries again.]

OA: You think you know what happened at Showtime... you think you saw some monster put his father through a table.

[The boos continue but Allah keeps speaking.]

OA: You saw a son give his father... WHAT HE DESERVED!

[It gets louder in Providence Park as Allah grabs at his head, shaking it back and forth angrily...]

OA: Unique Allah was... a man who was NEVER HOME.

[The fans aren't letting up. Allah raises his own voice to fight back.]

OA: EVERY BIRTHDAY?! ON THE ROAD!

EVERY CHRISTMAS?! ANOTHER TOWN TO MAKE!

[His voice drops, barely audible now.]

OA: Every time my mom said "he'll make it" - he didn't.

[Allah lowers the mic as Albano speaks.]

SA: No child deserves that kind of childhood but... well, Colt, you know as well as anyone... that's the business.

CP: Unfortunately, it is... but it doesn't make life any easier.

[Allah coughs out a bitter laugh.]

OS: You chant his name like he was some hero? Why? Because he acted like some buffoon for you? Because he put some other buffoon through three tables? Because he unwittingly birthed an EMPIRE?

[The crowd takes the cue - a "U-NIQUE!" chant ringout as Allah points into the crowd, furious!]

OA: YOU KNOW WHERE HE WAS WHEN I TURNED TEN?!

Drunk in a motel somewhere!

You know who he WASN'T with?!

[He slams a fist into his chest.]

OA: ME.

[Odysseus shakes his head in disbelief as the fans continue to jeer. His voice cracks with rage as he speaks again.]

OA: And let's talk about the fairytale you all loved... his manager, the Hall of Famer, yanking off her top during a match so he could win?

You CHEERED that on national TV!

But my mother was crying because that's what was happening on the road!

[Allah lowers the mic again.]

SA: What is he saying?

CP: You know what he's saying.

[Allah shouts again, his voice getting harsher.]

OA: And when Unique got too old to matter on his own? He didn't come home. He didn't try to be a dad. He became a WRESTLING ZOMBIE. Dragging his name around rings he didn't belong in anymore!

[The chants ring out again - "U-NIQUE!" - until Odysseus loses it!]

OA: STOP CHANTING HIS NAME LIKE HE WAS A GOD!

He was a COWARD!

You say I crossed a line? I did everybody a favor. That "legend" was just taking up space! Living off a name!

Living off YOU!

I ended something that should've ended years ago!

[Odysseus looks around the massive crowd still booing him... still shouting insults... He sees there is no winning this. He shrugs, resigned in the moment, a cold tone overtaking his voice.]

OA: You don't want the truth.
You want nostalgia.
You want ghosts.
Fine.

To Hell with it.
To Hell with him.

And to Hell with ALL OF YOU.

[Odysseus drops the mic with a thud... and the boos get the loudest of the moment, letting him have it as he stalks out of view.]

SA: Get him out of here!

CP: That wasn't a villain talking... that was a son who never got to be one speaking his truth and you won't listen! Proving his point!

[Odysseus exits up the ramp, looking back at the crowd with a dark look. He sniffs and nods once...

...and we fade backstage where we find Sweet Lou Blackwell standing.]

SLB: Odysseus Allah with some... disturbing words regarding his father, Dirt Dog Unique Allah - something of a local legend here in Portland... trying to shed some light on his shocking attack of his own flesh and blood last weekend down the ro-

[A shrill whistle blares out from off-camera, forcing Blackwell to cup his own ears.]

SLB: WHAT IN THE..?!

[And a cackling Marty Meekly steps into view, whistling dangling on a chair around his neck as he gets right up in Blackwell's face.]

MM: AT EASE, MAGGOT!

[Blackwell lowers his hands as a voice calls out...]

"HEY!"

[...and in walks Charlie Stephens and the hulking masked man, Mr. Stars and Stripes.]

CS: That's my line, Marty.

[Stephens smirks as Meekly begs off, backing up as Blackwell glares at Stephens.]

SLB: I don't have my format in front of me, Charlie Stephens, but I'm pretty sure you're not on it! What do you want with me?

CS: Oh, it's not what I want with you, Blackwell... it's what I want with HIM!

[He points to the door behind Blackwell with the Interim President's name written on it.]

SLB: President Zharkov? Well, I was going to talk to him about-

CS: Perfect. You've got next.

[Stephens shoves his way past Blackwell, walking through the door with his allies behind him. Blackwell throws up his hands in disbelief and then gestures for his cameraman to follow behind, entering the office where Zharkov is standing by his, pencil in hand as he jots something on his ever-present clipboard.]

CS: Yo, Maxy! You wanted to see us?

[Zharkov slowly turns, his eyes burning through the man who just referred to him as "Maxy."]

MZ: I did, yes.

[Zharkov gives Meekly and the masked man an appraising look.]

MZ: I just wanted to check to see... I'm told that you're the ONLY team that has not reached out about competing. Not tonight on Saturday Night Wrestling. Not next weekend on Showtime.

[Stephens shrugs.]

CS: The way I look at it, Maxy... we're currently ranked Number Three, right?

[Zharkov nods.]

CS: That puts us in prime position. Why risk it with a loss... no matter how unlikely that might be. Heck, I saw those masked goofballs Omega and Plemos lose earlier so we might even go UP without taking the risk!

[Zharkov glowers, a disapproving look on his face as he shakes his head.]

MZ: This division - those titles - are about competition! Beating the best in the world! Not hiding from battle!

[Stephens bristles at this, getting up in Zharkov's face.]

CS: It's called a strategy, Zharkov... and if you'd done a little more "hiding from battle," maybe you wouldn't be laid up in this office holding a clipboard and living vicariously through the rest of us... da?

[Zharkov is fuming mad now.]

MZ: I see.

[Stephens backs up a step, maybe recognizing the look on Zharkov's face.]

MZ: You should go get ready.

[Stephens looks puzzled.]

CS: For what?

[Zharkov sneers.]

MZ: Your match. Tonight. Soon.

[Stephens throws up his hands as the crowd cheers!]

CS: We don't have a match, Zharkov! You can't do this to us!

[Zharkov turns to walk away.]

CS: Who is it with?! Who are we facing?! ZHARKOV! ZHARRRRKOOOOOV!

[But Stephens gets no answer as the Interim President abandons his own office where Stephens angrily slaps a plant to the floor with a loud "DAMN IT!" as we fade through black back into the stadium where "Juno" by Tesseract is playing over the PA system as Kerry Kendrick glares down the aisle, muttering to a nearby Sandra Hayes who seems to be trying to soothe him.]

SA: We are back LIVE here on Saturday Night Wrestling... and the National Title is just about set to be on the line but no one except Veronica Westerly - and that includes Kendrick and Hayes - know who that challenger is going to be. Why would Kerry Kendrick agree to this, Colt?

CP: Kerry Kendrick is going to be the greatest National Champion this company has ever known. Forget about Travis Lynch. Forget about Stevie Scott and Juan Vasquez and Calisto Dufresne. It's this guy right here... and don't you forget it.

SA: That remains to be seen... but he's putting his reign in serious jeopardy right away!

[Kendrick grimaces before giving the top rope a quick yank, shouting "COME ON!" at no one in particular as Hayes strokes his shoulder...]

SA: Kerry Kendrick looks like a star, sounds like a star, carries himself like a star... but he thinks that he's overlooked and underhyped by the masses. A strong run with the oldest prize in the American Wrestling Alliance around his waist could go a long way to changing that.

[Kendrick turns to complain to referee Ricky Longfellow who shrugs with a "I don't know who it is either! You got yourself into this!"]

SA: The National Champion already arguing with our official... he thinks everyone is against him, that everyone is out to get him, that-

[Sal is cut off by the arrival of Veronica Westerly on the entrance stage and the ensuing jeers that follow. She is dressed immaculately, a pleased expression on her face.]

VW: Kerry... I know your reputation as a well-prepared man.

[Westerly smirks.]

VW: You are not prepared for this...

[She lets the words linger as Kendrick arches an eyebrow.]

VW: ...trust me.

[Westerly tilts her head, savoring the moment as the lights drop and a piercing two-note guitar intro slices the air and the words "BAD SEED" flash across the video wall.]

SA: Uh oh!

[Damian DeVille steps through the curtain with a dead-eyed stare - tattooed, silent, coiled like a spring. Even HE looks like he wasn't expecting this... but he's dressed to fight, jacket off his shoulders, ready.]

DeVill stalks toward the ring without ever breaking eye contact with Kendrick. Westerly watches from the stage with a pleased, almost proud expression.]

SA: Well, I think Westerly's one hundred percent right, Colt. NOBODY could have expected this! The son of Caleb Temple, Westerly's estranged husband, is her choice to compete for the National Title and... she is just RELISHING every second of the pain this is causing the King of the Death Match.

CP: And as much as you have to believe she picked DeVille to torment Caleb Temple, Big Sal, you also have to recognize she just shoved DeVille to heights he's never reached before in his career!

[Kendrick backs into the corner, jaw clenched. Hayes speaks quickly in his ear, pointing at DeVille like she's diagramming a problem.]

SA: Kendrick looks... unsettled... by this development.

CP: Because this isn't a professional wrestler for a plan to win a match... this is a fighter with a STORM inside of him!

[DeVille reaches the ring, having successfully avoided making eye contact with his wicked stepmother on his way to the ring. Westerly remains on the entrance stage, looking on as DeVille sheds his ring jacket, ready for battle as the National Champion looks on. Hayes plants a good luck kiss on his cheek before exiting the ring...]

"DING! DING! DING!"

[...and perhaps surprisingly, DeVille advances slowly at the sound of the bell, Kendrick staying planted in the corner as he watches him approach.]

SA: DeVille measuring his man... who appears to want no part of him.

[Kendrick raises a hand, shaking his head...]

SA: Kendrick... did he just offer him a bribe?! I think he just offered him money to walk away from this!

CP: Kendrick wants to slow this down, control it... that's how he wins...

[...but as Kendrick is making his offer, DeVille snaps off a kick to the thigh in response. Kendrick looks shocked, spinning away, pointing at DeVille who lands a second kick to the other thigh!]

SA: DeVille scores first, striking hard...

[Kendrick recoils backwards, again begging off with a wince on his face...

...and ends up with his back pressed against the turnbuckles. He looks alarmed as DeVille surges in on him, scoring with a brutal elbowstrike that snaps Kendrick's head back...]

SA: He's trapped in the corner!

[Kendrick tries to push his way out but DeVille lands a front kick to the chest to keep him there before hopping to the middle rope, springing into the air to snap a foot off the side of the head!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[Hayes is pounding her fists into the mat as DeVille grabs the arm, whipping the National Champion across the ring...]

SA: DeVille's got him reeling and the title is on the line, fans!

[...and DeVille comes charging out of the corner, landing a running kneestrike that sends Kendrick down to the mat where he quickly escapes, rolling to the outside!]

SA: And there goes Kendrick, running for the hills!

CP: It's a smart move, Albano. He was surprised by this - the hazards of a mystery opponent - and he needs a moment to regroup.

SA: Listen to Sandra Hayes - barking instructions like she's running a drill.

CP: Put Kerry Kendrick aside for a moment. Sandra Hayes arrived in this company in the summer of 2012. Ever since, she's been fighting to be in this spot... she's not going down without a fight.

[DeVille steps towards the ropes but before he can get to Kendrick, Hayes steps in between them. The official gets closer, barking at Hayes... and now both DeVille AND the official have words for Hayes as Kendrick slinks away...]

SA: DeVille shouting down at Hayes who is trying to get involved already and-

[...and rolls into the ring behind DeVille's back, getting a running start!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

SA: DEVILLE GETS CLIPPED!

[As DeVille hits the mat, grabbing at his knee, the National Champion pounces immediately, stomping at the limb...]

SA: And now Kendrick's going to work!

[...and holding the ankle, Kendrick drops an elbow onto the knee, cranking the leg...]

SA: Kendrick viciously going to work, torquing the knee... putting the pressure on...

[DeVille reaches out, grabbing the nearby rope, forcing a break...]

SA: The referee calls for the break, the ropes saving DeVille...

CP: For now.

SA: For now indeed.

[Kendrick drags him off the mat, pulling him into a front facelock, and promptly snapping him over in a suplex...]

SA: Nice suplex there by the champion and... well, now someone's smiling!

[Kendrick is indeed beaming after leaving DeVille down on the mat, Hayes applauding at ringside...]

CP: Kendrick's suplex is as clean and crisp as they come... and he's loving life right now. He's got the gold... he's got the girl... he's got the glory... who could ask for anything more?

[DeVille struggles to get off the mat as Kendrick grabs the kneeling challenger by the arm, twisting it around...]

...and then pulls DeVille into a jawbreaker, snapping DeVille's head back, stumbling back into the turnbuckles!]

SA: Kendrick's completely turned the momentum around in this one, Colt.

CP: That's what a champion does. One move. That's all it takes to re-establish control...

[Grabbing the top rope, Kendrick swings a big right hand into the gut of DeVille once... twice... three times...]

SA: Get him out of the corner!

[...and then whips DeVille across, sending him crashing into the turnbuckles before he stumbles back out into a boot to the midsection...]

SA: Kendrick goes downstairs on the challenger and...

[...and Kendrick rushes forward, swinging his leg up!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

SA: LIBERTY BELLRINGER! THE KNEELIFT CONNECTS!

[With DeVille sprawled out on the mat, Kendrick dives on top, grinding his forearm across DeVille's face...]

SA: ONNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOOOO!

[...but the Bad Seed gets a shoulder up before the three count comes down.]

SA: Noooo... couldn't keep him down for three!

[Kendrick is immediately up, shouting at the official...]

CP: I don't know about that, Albano. That count looked slow to me!

SA: Kendrick complaining per usual... like it's cardio for him.

[As Kendrick gives the referee an earful, DeVille struggles up to his knees, rubbing at his jaw after the impactful kneelift...]

SA: Kendrick better keep an eye on his opponent. He may be in control right now but Damian DeVille's got a lot of fight left in him.

[Kendrick turns back to DeVille who tucks his head, front rolling from his knees and swinging a leg to jam his heel into Kendrick's abdomen!]

SA: OH! What a kick!

[Still on his back, DeVille goes into a spin, catching Kendrick in the back of the knee with a kick, sweeping his legs out from under him...]

SA: Sweeps him down and-

[With both men down on the mat, DeVille swings an elbow back into Kendrick's sternum, keeping him there...]

SA: Unusual yet effective offense on the part of DeVille with those dangerous feet always a risk!

[DeVile back rolls up onto his feet, moving in as Kendrick tries to get off the mat, snatching a waistlock from behind...]

"THUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUD!"
 "OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

SA: GERMAN SUPLEX! WITH A BRIDGE!

[The referee dives down to count!]

SA: ONNNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOO! TH-

"OOHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

SA: Wow! A half count or less away from a new champion right there!

CP: That came out of nowhere, Big Sal. He mighta rung Kendrick's bell with that suplex for a near fall that close.

[DeVile comes to his feet, appraising the situation as Kendrick struggles to sit up off the mat. The martial artist sprints towards the ropes, leaping to the second, springing back...]

SA: METEORA! DRIVES HIM THROUGH THE CANVAS!

CP: And on that knee that Kendrick was working on - the kid doesn't care what it costs his body!

[Kendrick rolls over and over towards the ropes, Hayes rushing to his side to talk to him as DeVille plays to the crowd, pointing at the wounded champion...]

SA: The people of Portland can feel it! We could be looking at a title change!

[...and as DeVille seems poised to deliver The Omen, Kendrick grabs onto the ropes, trying to pull himself out of the ring again, Hayes grabbing his arm to give an illegal assist!]

SA: THE OMEN!

[But as DeVille throws himself into the flying knee, Kendrick is yanked clear by Hayes, causing him to crash into the ropes, his knee smashing into them!]

SA: OH!

[Kendrick moves quickly as Hayes yells, "NOW! NOW! NOOOOOW!", lifting DeVille up around the torso...]

"OOHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[...and drops DeVille throatfirst across the top rope!]

SA: DEVILLE GETS STUNNED, HIS THROAT ON THE ROPE!

[DeVile slumps backwards, grabbing at his throat...]

SA: Kendrick stacks him up!

[...and leans over, pushing his weight down on the legs, forcing DeVille's shoulders down on the canvas but as the official dives down to count, Kendrick's legs pop up to rest his feet on the middle rope for leverage, Hayes pushing down on the legs to keep there!]

SA: OH, COME ON!

[The referee slaps the mat once... twice...]

SA: Not like this!

[...three times!]

“DING! DING! DING!”

CP: HE GOT HIM! The champ retains, jack!

[Kendrick falls out of the cradle, rolling to the side, a smirk on his face as the official points to him...]

SA: Kerry Kendrick retains... but his feet WERE on the ropes! You saw that, right?

CP: I’m not sure what you’re talking about.

SA: Of course not... and can-

[Sal is cut off as we can hear excited screaming over his mic.]

SA: Sandra Hayes out here celebrating by us... that’s okay, I didn’t need that ear anyways... oh, brother.

[Hayes rolls into the ring, diving into a kneeling embrace with Kendrick with much PDA to turn the collective stomach of the Portland crowd!]

SA: Get a room, you two!

[Kendrick climbs off the mat, the National Title retrieved to hold it high in the air as he clings to Hayes with the other arm...]

SA: Kendrick escapes with the title... DeVille up on his feet now, arguing with the official. He’s telling the referee what happened and-

[A smirking Kendrick steps away from Hayes, striding over to where the official and DeVille are in a heated discussion. Kendrick reaches out to grab DeVille by the shoulder...]

...when a lightning quick head kick snaps up, catching Kendrick on the ear. Kendrick’s head snaps back and he folds to the mat like a collapsed building.]

“OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

SA: KENDRICK JUST GOT LAID OUT!

CP: That’s a KO kick!

[Hayes goes from shocking to screaming in a heartbeat, diving to her knees, cradling Kendrick’s head, shaking him, calling for help. She looks genuinely terrified. DeVille stands over them, breathing through his nose, eyes empty. He doesn’t pose. He doesn’t gloat. He just looks down at the wreckage like it was inevitable.]

SA: Kerry Kendrick just got FLATTENED by Damian DeVille-

CP: If only he’d done that BEFORE Kendrick beat him!

SA: Damian DeVille took Kendrick to his limit and Kendrick broke the rulebook clear in half to keep the title... but he couldn't keep from getting dropped like a bad habit.

CP: Look at Sandra... I might need to go comfort her.

SA: You stay right where you are... and while Sandra Hayes tries to revive the champion, let's go backstage to get an update on the tag team rankings just days before Opportunity Knocks and Run The Rankings! Mariah?

[We cut backstage to where Mariah Wolfe is again standing outside the conference room where the Championship Committee is meeting.]

MW: Thanks, Big Sal. So much great tag team action here tonight already... so much more still to come. But based on what we've already seen, the Championship Committee is ready to rule and issue an updated set of rankings...

[She holds up an envelope with a smile.]

MW: ...which I have right here. Let's take a look... now, remember... the American Idols will be taking on Fujizona in just a few moments here but we've already seen victories here tonight for Jackson Hunter and Shadoe Rage... for the Desperadoes... for the Blackjacks. We'll also see Masks For Money and Nueva Generación Oscura in action in Hour 3... and apparently the Soldiers of Fortune as well! But this...

[She waves the envelope again.]

MW: ...is where we stand at this moment. Let's take a look!

[She pulls open the envelope, withdrawing the paper within as we get an on-screen graphic showing the already-announced rankings.]

1. Omega and Polemos
2. Masks For Money
3. Soldiers of Fortune
4. The American Idols
5. The Blackjacks
6. Nueva Generación Oscura
7. Lynch/Nenshou
8. Hunter/Rage
9. Aces In The Hole
10. Fujizona

MW: This is where we were a moment ago and now...

[The graphic shifts as Fujizona's name disappears and is replaced by The Desperadoes.]

MW: ...wow! Big shift at the bottom already as Fujizona - set to compete in a matter of moments - slips out of the list completely and the Desperadoes - who won earlier tonight - take the Number Ten position. The Aces In The Hole stay at Number Nine.

[The graphic shifts again.]

MW: Flip 'em up! Lynch and Nenshou drop from Seven to Eight and Rage and Hunter go from Eight to Seven... so close to breaking through into the treasured Top Five positions that will go on to Run The Rankings on the 4th of July in Seattle! Nueva Generación Oscura keeps their Number Six position but they've got a shot to break into the Top Five as well when they meet Masks For Money in Hour 3.

[Another shift.]

MW: The American Idols clinging to their spot in the Top Five now... which puts even MORE pressure on them in this match with Fujizona coming up in a few moments. A loss to Fujizona would likely knock the Generation Lost duo out of the mix heading into Showtime. The Soldiers of Fortune also come down a notch, checking in at Number Four... and they'll be in action later tonight. But speaking of falling down the rankings... Omega and Pemos with a controversial loss to the Blackjacks earlier tonight sends them from Number One down to Number Three!

[And another.]

MW: And The Blackjacks with Bobby O'Connor by their side jump up to the two position! The loss from Omega and Pemos also means we've got a new Number One! Masks For Money takes the top spot... which puts them in prime position for Run The Rankings... IF they can hang onto it! Now, we're just about set for more tag team action that will DEFINITELY have an impact on this countdown!

[The words "ACCESS 365" flash across the screen as the camera opens on Tizona pacing around writing on a notepad. Yoshi Fujiwara sits on the bench, arms crossed, staring at the floor in quiet contemplation. Katrina Coleman sits cross-legged while wearing a black and white checkered hoodie along with what appears to be a pair of light blue scrub pants with clouds throughout. She's leaning against a locker, arms folded, already looking mildly annoyed.]

T: Okay, Yo-man, here's what I've come up with... Plan A: smoke bomb in the Wallaces' locker room: blind 'em, double superkick the both of 'em while they're coughing. Clean, poetic.

YF: No.

[Tizona shakes his head and reads off the notepad.]

T: Plan B: bribe one of the ring crew to loosen a turnbuckle pad. I distract the ref with a fake injury and you whip one of Chet or Chaz into it. They hit exposed steel, you lock in the Fujiwara Armbar. Snapping his arm in half? Optional but preferred.

YF: Seriously? No.

T: Man, really?

YF: Really.

[Tizona makes a quick swipe with his pen across the notepad.]

T: Okay, Plan C: Katrina dresses up disguised as a ringside doctor, she slips me a rag soaked in ether - I put Chaz or Chet to sleep and you get rid of the evidence.

[Katrina frowns as she points to her pants.]

KC: Is that why you said I should wear these?

[Yoshi sighs.]

YF: Tizona. No.

T: C'mon, Yo-man! They jumped us! Called us "losers"! Jumped us like cowards after we made a statement win! We gotta get payback!

[Yoshi rubs his temples.]

YF: We pay them back by beating them. Clean. In the ring. They want to take cheap shots? We'll give them the beating they earned. But we don't need tricks. We're better. That's the message.

KC: I still don't get why they jumped you two. I don't think you've even talked to the Wallaces before. What set 'em off?

[Tizona shrugs.]

T: Jealousy, probably. Saw the Salpicadura and realized their synchronized flippy crap can't touch my greatness. Or..

[The door opens. Betty Chang enters first, quiet, hesitant, refusing to make direct eye contact. Charity Rockwell storms in right behind her, already glaring at Tizona. Katrina straightens up slightly, giving Charity a subtle "here we go" look.]

T: Charity! My favorite ray of sunshine... you just can't stay away from me, can you?

CR: I came to make sure Betty doesn't get dragged into whatever scam you're cooking up this week.

[Betty's eyes flicker to Yoshi then quickly away.]

BC: I just... wanted to say good luck tonight. I know the Wallaces are jerks. Be careful.

YF: Thank you, Betty. We'll be fine.

[Tizona starts rapidly snapping his fingers and pointing frantically.]

T: Wait wait wait-hold everything! This is it. This is why we got jumped!

HER!

[He points dramatically at Betty.]

BC: M-me!?

YF: What?

T: Think about it, Yo-man! The Wallaces tried to hit on Betty a while back- smooth-talkin', then turnin' mean when she shut 'em down. Betty's got that whole "quiet, mysterious, untouchable" thing goin' on. They couldn't handle the rejection. So who do they blame? The guy who's clearly got her attention.

YF: Who?

[Tizona face palms.]

T: You, dummy!

[Betty's face turns a nice shade of red, as Katrina and Charity share a knowing glance.]

BC: That's not... I didn't-

T: And you, Yo-man... you're the strong, silent type.

YF: I am!?

T: Every time you're in the same room, she gets all fidgety, and you turn on the charm...

YF: I do!?

T: They see that spark, they get jealous, they jump us to send a message. Classic "doesn't get any women" behavior!

BC: There's no- I mean, we're just-

T: Look at her! She's literally turning the same color as my old mask! And you... just said "thank you, Betty" in that really manly voice you never use for anybody else! The Wallaces are jealous and can't stand it!

BC: I'm just... being nice! That's all!

YF: Knock it off, Tizona ... Betty's a good person and a good friend. That's it.

[Betty looks like she wants to say something but shrinks down instead.]

BC: Uh... yeah. That's it.

T: Pfft... That's what they all say! C'mon, Yo-man, admit it... you light up a little when she walks in. And Betty, c'mon, you've been stealing glances at him since you got here. Don't think I don't notice!

[Just then, Charity whaps Tizona in the head with the long rope of pearls around her neck, as Katrina covers her mouth to stifle a giggle.]

T: Ow!

CR: That's enough out of you, crumb bum. Betty, let's get out of here.

[Charity starts to pull her toward the door as she steals one last glance at Yoshi.]

BC: Good luck. Really. Be safe.

YF: Thank you. Again.

[Betty freezes for half a second at the softness in his tone, then hurries out with Charity. The door closes. Tizona turns back to Yoshi with a huge grin.]

T: You did the voice again!

[Katrina rolls her eyes.]

KC: You're impossible, T.

YF: We beat the Wallaces tonight. No tricks. No ether-soaked rags. No... whatever that was.

[Yoshi walks out of the room, leaving Tizona back to his notepad while Katrina shakes her head.]

T: Plan D: Katrina fakes a love confession mid-match.

KC: Hey!

T: Work with me here, okay? Now that'll really throw 'em off... and...

[We fade from one part of backstage to another where we find quite the giddy quartet... and Sweet Lou Blackwell who looks like he'd rather be just about anywhere else in the world.]

SLB: Fujizona set for action in just a few moments, fans, when they will be taking on two of the men joining me at this time - the American Idols. Gentlemen, the stakes are high in this one.

[The Wallace twins are flanking Sweet Lou now, dressed for ring action as we also spy the already-victorious Justin Gaines standing in the background, his arms crossed as he glares at the camera. Jayden Jericho is off to the side a little, a huge grin on his face as he looks at the scene through mirrored sunglasses.]

CHAZ: The stakes are only high because the front office continues to disrespect us! They continue to disrespect what we've done... what we CAN do... and what we're gonna do, Sweet Lou.

SLB: How is that?

CHET: It's pretty clear, Near Beer. We're the most recognized international duo in the tag team division and instead of just handing over a shot at the World Tag Team Titles, they're making us play some game where we have to...

[He gets a disgusted look on his face.]

CHET: ...EARN a spot in the Run The Rankings match at Opportunity Knocks. Preposterous, I say, Lou Blackwell! A sham!

SLB: I see. Well, whether that's true or not, the fact is you DO have to earn that spot and tonight, Fujizona will be looking to take you down.

[Chaz snickers.]

CHAZ: Ooooo... we're shakin', Lou. See, according to that foxy lil' Wolfe, we're ALREADY in the Top Five... and that means we just have to hold serve against two curtain jerkers who became a tag team about...

[He checks a watch that isn't there.]

CHAZ: ...oh, five minutes ago. Whereas my brother and I...

[He gestures to Chet.]

CHAZ: ...we've been tag team partners since I took the hot tag and chugged down that sweet umbilical cord juice!

[It's Lou's turn to look disgusted at that.]

CHET: That's right. We were born to do this... and that's what we're gonna do. We're going to do the thing... we're gonna get that win... we're going to show the world why the American Idols are STILL the team to beat in this division... and we're going to send Fujizona and their little girlfriends all the way to the back of the line while we're going straight to the top, baby!

[Lou nods, turning to Justin Gaines.]

SLB: Big man, you had a nice win tonight... although I have GOT to take issue with what you did to that man after the match. You already had him-

[Jayden Jericho extends an arm, cutting Lou off.]

JJ: Careful there, Lou... you wouldn't want to end up in the hospital bed next to that old man, would you?

[Lou recoils in horror as Gaines glares down at him.]

JJ: That's what I thought.

Jericho smirks, adjusting his sunglasses, clearly enjoying himself as Lou looks rattled.]

JJ: See, Lou, guys like Connors? They talk real tough when there's cameras on. But when the lights hit and that bell rings? That's when GL handles business. We didn't take care of him - we ENDED his night. That's the difference between men who BELONG at the top... and guys who get carried out.

[He gestures back toward Gaines.]

JJ: And that right there? That's the future of this whole damn company. Tag division, singles division, don't matter. Gold's going where WE say it goes and when we say-

[Jericho is cut off by an abrupt-]

"CRAAAAAAASH!"

[Something slams into a stack of production crates just off-camera. Everyone jumps. A half-toppled road case rolls into view... followed by a staggering, wild-eyed, sweating, furious Dirt Dog Unique Allah wearing a stained undershirt, one boot unlaced, hair a mess and clutching his ribs.]

SLB: Oh no... no, no, not this...

[Two officials rush in behind him, trying to grab his arms.]

DDUA: NAH NAH NAH - getcho muhfuh hands off me! I'mma let y'all finish - I'MMA LET Y'ALL FINISH -

[He points wildly at the American Idols, then at Jericho and Gaines, then at absolutely no one.]

DDUA: - but first off, ALL you muhfuhs back here talkin' bout rankings, titles, opportunity knocks - opportunity KNOCKED MY ASS THROUGH A TABLE!

[He grabs his lower back, wincing, then immediately puffs his chest back out.]

DDUA: My OWN SON... my own flesh an' blood Odysseus put his daddy through a TABLE like I'm some regular old muhfuh!

[Officials try to guide him away. He shrugs one off.]

DDUA: A FATHER IS A FATHER - yeah - but a MAN STILL A MAN, muhfuh! You don't punk a man out like that! Not your own flesh and blood!

[He leans into the lens, eyes glassy, intense.]

DDUA: I made that ungrateful muhfuh. And now I'mma UNMAKE him.

SLB: Unique, you're not scheduled to be—

DDUA: SCHEDULED?! SCHEDULED?! I ain't scheduled to go through no muhfuh table, neither, MUHFUH!!!

[He tries to take a step, winces hard, but keeps going.]

DDUA: I don't give a DAMN which one of you pretty-boy muhfuhs time I'm using. I WANT MY SON! And if it pisses you off, Idols, Jericho, big angry statue dude back there-

[Gaines slowly uncrosses his arms, staring daggers.]

DDUA: I don't care! That boy gonna learn you don't put your daddy through a table and walk away smilin'!

[Officials finally get a solid grip on him.]

OFFICIAL: That's enough, let's go!

DDUA: I AIN'T DONE - I AIN'T - OW, careful with the ribs, muhfuh-

[He's dragged backward, still shouting.]

DDUA: ODYSSEUS! YOU HEAR ME?! YOUR DADDY COMIN' FOR YOU, BOY!

[He disappears down the hallway, still yelling faintly. The camera cuts back to Jericho, who looks thoroughly annoyed now...

...and we quickly cut back to the ring as the crowd buzzes with anticipation.]

SA: I... uhh... can an announcer give a no comment about what we just saw?

CP: Maybe just change the subject.

SA: Good idea! All night long - ever since President Zharkov announced Run The Rankings really - we've been seeing this tag team division set to boil over at any given moment... and it's time for more tag team action that could have a major impact on Run The Rankings, Colt.

CP: Or expose a couple of overhyped kids who think flips and flash beat experience, Big Sal.

SA: Let's go up to Rebecca!

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

RO: The following tag team contest is set for one fall with a twenty minute time limit! Introducing first... weighing in at a combined total of 378 pounds... from Fujinomiya, Japan... and Savannah, Georgia...

...YOSHI FUJIWAAAAAARA... AND TIIIIIIIZOOOOOONAAAAAA!

[A metal cover of "Bloody Tears" from the Castlevania video game series begins to play, as the crowd erupts with applause and cheers. Yoshi Fujiwara steps out from behind the curtains, pumping his fists in the air as the crowd's cheers grow louder.

Fujiwara is dressed in a sukajan bomber jacket embroidered with golden dragons over his wrestling gear. He wears a pair of wrestling tights with one red leg and one white leg, with matching boots. He has a chiseled physique with well-defined

muscles. Despite his impressive physique, Yoshi is still growing into his body, giving him a thin, almost lanky look.

Alongside Fujiwara is Tizona, the Southern-fried luchador wearing unorthodox attire, with a sleeveless black T-shirt featuring an airbrushed Kimmy Bailey crushing an opponent with a LARIATO!, along with faded jean shorts frayed at the hem, black kneepads, and black boots. His mask is half his usual black mask with a white faceplate and blue and purple kabuki-esque swirls, and the other half is now red with a white faceplate and a golden dragon roaring along his head.]

SA: And for all the high-flying abilities of the American Idols, this is a team that can match them step for step!

CP: Are you sure about that, Albano? Tizona seems like he's been spending more time with his eyes on the Women's Division and tryin' to take shortcuts here in the Tag Team scene.

SA: Well, Tizona is well known for being a top level luchador, Colt. I don't know what's got into him lately, although I thought you were just fine with wrestlers cheating if they didn't get caught.

CP: A goody-goody like him is too sloppy not to get caught, especially with his partner ready to tattle on him because of family honor.

[As the pair enter the ring, leaping over the top rope in synchronicity, they are met by the referee who asks to check both for weapons. Fujiwara accepts, offering no resistance, while Tizona sighs, turning and holding the top rope as though he were preparing to be frisked by a police officer.]

SA: You think maybe he's been on the wrong side of the law before?

CP: Probably why he wears that mask, maybe he's on the lam. He has been spending the last few years of his life in Mexico.

[The referee checks over Tizona, coming up empty, and Tizona gives the stinkeye to the official as Fujiwara tells his teammate not to be so rude.]

RO: Annnnnnnnd their opponents...

[The sounds of Calvin Harris' "This Is What You Came For" rings out over the PA system as the house lights start to flash in rhythm to the music creating a dance party atmosphere.]

RO: From the Shibuya area of Tokyo, Japan... at a total combined weight of 342 pounds... representing Generation Lost...

Chaz and Chet Wallace...

THE AMERRRRRRRICAN IIIIIIDOLLLLLLS!

[The Wallaces spring through the curtain, trading a leaping high five. They start walking towards the ring before coming to a halt... chewing gum, mock-bowing, flashing cocky grins.]

SA: And here come the American Idols - wrestling royalty and... well, maybe not so proud of it.

CP: They may be Wallaces by blood but they've got a new family now, Albano. They also happen to be heads and shoulders the best tag team in this match and they know it.

SA: Perhaps... perhaps. But there's a reason they wrestle the matches, Colt... anyone can win and anyone can lose on any given night. And if these two don't think Tizona and Yoshi Fujiwara can prove that true tonight, they're sadly mistaken.

[The Idols hop to the apron, wipe their boots exaggeratedly, and enter the ring to loud boos.]

SA: This should be fast-paced, high octane offense on the parts of these two young, athletic duos.

CP: Buckle your seatbelts for this one.

[After a few final words in both corners, we see Yoshi Fujiwara urging his partner to the apron as Chet Wallace slingshots over the ropes.]

SA: Fujiwara on one side, Chaz Wallace on the other... both men's families have quite the legacy in this business and-

"DING! DING! DING!"

SA: We're off and running in this one!

[Chaz Wallace jogs in place a little, hopping out to mid-ring...

...and extends his hand to Yoshi Fujiwara.]

SA: A handshake? I don't like the looks of this.

CP: You're so mistrusting. It's a nice show of sportsmanship - isn't that what you usually claim?

SA: Not when it's Chaz Wallace involved.

[Chaz sticks his hand out insistently towards Fujiwara who looks around at the crowd imploring him to turn it down...]

SA: The people of Portland are letting Yoshi know it's a mistake.

[Fujiwara shrugs, extending his hand... and Chaz jerks his hand back with a smirk, wagging a finger at Fujiwara as the fans jeer.]

SA: Well, that could've gone worse. At least it was just Chaz Wallace being an immature jerk.

CP: Sheesh, name calling too? These Idols are really under your skin.

[Wallace chuckles a bit, walking around the ring as Fujiwara stares at him, hands on his hips... and then Chaz walks back towards him...]

"For realises this time... come on, junior..."

[...and extends his hand a second time. The fans boo loudly again as Fujiwara looks around at the crowd again.]

SA: Oh, come on... you're not really considering this?

[Fujiwara shrugs again, reaching out...

...and then surges forward, grabbing Chaz by the arm, tossing him down with a lightning-fast arm drag!]

SA: OH!

[Both men scramble quickly to their feet as Fujiwara grabs the arm, tossing Chaz Wallace down to the canvas a second time...]

SA: Fujiwara's a blur of motion in there, wasting no time to get this thing going and... to the ropes now!

[Coming back quickly, Fujiwara ducks under a backhand chop attempt by Wallace, rebounding again...]

SA: UP...

[...scissoring his legs around the head and neck of Wallace...]

SA: ...AROUND...

[...and flips him over to the mat to big cheers from the Portland crowd!]

SA: ...AND DOWWWWWWN WITH THE HEADSCISSORS!

[Fujiwara kips up off the canvas, giving a quick fist pump before rushing to the ropes again as Wallace struggles up off the mat, running right past him, leaping to the middle rope...]

SA: SPRINGBACK DROPKICK! DOWN GOES CHAZ WALLACE!

[And Chaz goes scrambling to his corner, an alarmed look on his as Fujiwara regains his feet, ready to keep fighting...]

CP: Cute, real cute... all that fancy flipping and flying... we'll see where it gets him when someone punches him in the mouth.

[Chaz gets off the mat, grimacing as he slaps his twin brother's hand.]

SA: The tag is made, Chet Wallace in for the first time.

[The Wallaces trade a quick word and then rush Fujiwara, hammering away with rights and lefts before grabbing the arms, sending him into the ropes...]

SA: The Idols shoot him in... OH! BIG TACKLE!

[A double shoulder tackle sends Fujiwara falling back into the ropes, bouncing back towards a double clothesline that he ducks under, tumbling into the ropes with a handspring, using the ropes to propel himself backwards...]

SA: OHHH! HANDSPRING DOUBLE ELBOOOOOW!

[Having put the Idols down on the mat, Fujiwara dives across Chet's chest, hooking a leg tightly...]

SA: COVER! HE'S GOT-

[...but barely a one count lands before Chet kicks out.]

SA: Quick kickout by Chet Wallace but the Idols are SHOOK, Colt!

CP: Things aren't going their way... not yet.

SA: Fujiwara is on fire and... there's another tag!

[Chaz slingshots back in, making a grab for Fujiwara but Fujiwara stuns him with a palm strike to the jaw. He grabs the arm, looking to whip Wallace across but Chaz reverses it...]

SA: Reversal and-

[Chet, still in the ring, strikes...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[...and lashes out with a superkick under the chin of Fujiwara, causing his eyelids to flutter as Chet drops back...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[...and a DOUBLE superkick drops Fujiwara where he's standing!]

SA: The American Idols using that signature teamwork and-

[Tizona's seen enough of the doubleteaming, leaping to the top rope, springing off...]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[...and the springboard crossbody wipes out both Idols to a HUGE ROAR!]

SA: WOW! The high flying skills of Tizona takes 'em BOTH down!

[The referee throws up his hands, shouting at Tizona... shouting at Chet Wallace... and when Tizona makes a lunge at the Idols, the referee blocks his path, trying to get him out of the ring...]

SA: Our official is trying to get Tizona out of the ring...

[But with the official's back turned, Chaz and Chet grab Fujiwara, pressing him overhead together...

...and DROPS him chestfirst on the canvas!

And then immediately go to the sky, Chaz breaking out a standing somersault legdrop as Chet hits a somersault senton across the back of the legs!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

SA: Wow! What a combination - an illegal one, I might add - by the American Idols!

[Tizona is shouting from the apron, complaining loudly as the Idols pull Fujiwara up, tossing him into their corner as Chet runs in with a dropkick to the jaw before rolling out to the apron when Chaz hits a dropkick of his own!]

CP: Ain't no party like a Dropkick Party!

[Chaz pushes up, slapping the hand of his brother...]

SA: Tag!

[Chaz lifts Fujiwara up, walking out of the corner holding him for a side slam as Chet measures him from the apron...

...and snaps off a slingshot somersault legdrop, the leg crashing down across Fujiwara's torso as Chaz brings Yoshi down with the side slam!]

SA: THE IDOLS CONTINUE TO IMPRESS! BRINGING THE ACTION IN THIS ONE!

[It's a quick cover by Chet Wallace, earning a two count before Fujiwara slips out, crawling across the ring... but to the wrong side of town.]

SA: Fujiwara's shaken up by that double team offense and he's in the wrong corner, Colt!

CP: Tizona can't believe it! He's beside himself over there! Hah! I love it, Albano!

[Taking advantage of the location, Chet plants a boot on the throat, choking Fujiwara to a four count before letting up...

...and makes the tag.]

SA: Another tag! The Idols are high speed, high impact offense...

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[The crowd reacts as Chaz slingshots over, hanging onto the corner ropes, almost pausing in mid-air before swinging his feet down into a high impact wrecking ball dropkick to the sternum!]

CP: That'll knock the wind right outta ya!

[Chaz rolls back to his feet, smirking at the jeering crowd...]

"WE'RE THE BEST IN THE WORLD AND YOU ALL KNOW IT!"

[The boos get louder as Chaz turns towards Tizona, balling up his fists and inviting the masked man into a fight...]

SA: Tizona's gonna take him up on that!

[The referee dives in again, blocking Tizona's path.]

CP: The last student of Billy Classon? He's not backing down from a fight for sure.

[Tizona loudly complains about being cut off as Chet steps in, slapping his hands together over his head...]

CP: There's the tag.

SA: What?! No! There was no tag there at all!

CP: I heard one - didn't you?

[Chaz pulls Fujiwara up, hooking him for a belly to back suplex, lifting him into the air...]

SA: Belly to baaaa- OHHHH!

[The crowd echoes the reaction as Chaz flips him all the way over, sending him falling facefirst as Chet hooks him in a wheelbarrow...

...and sits out in a facefirst powerbomb!]

SA: WOW! INNOVATIVE OFFENSE BY THE IDOLS!

[Chet rolls over, sitting back in a double leg cradle!]

SA: ONNNNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOOO! TH-

[But a diving Tizona comes flying in from off-camera, crashing into Chet Wallace and breaking up the pin!]

SA: TIZONA MAKES THE SAVE!

[Chaz is back in... or he is until the official cuts him off!]

SA: And now it's Chaz who can't get past the referee!

[Tizona yanks Chet off the mat, tossing him into the neutral corner, charging in after him...

...and runs right up the buckles before SNAPPING a boot into the back of Chet's head!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

SA: ENZUIGIRI IN THE CORNER!

[Tizona rolls out before the referee turns around, looking puzzled as to how Chet Wallace is down on the mat while Yoshi Fujiwara is using the ropes in the neutral corner to try to pull himself up to his feet...]

SA: Fujiwara trying to-

[Chaz makes a grab at him from the outside, catching a back elbow to the jaw... and another... and another...]

SA: He's fighting back!

[Chet drags himself off the mat, trying to intervene... but gets a bicycle kick to the chest that sends him rolling backwards across the ring!]

SA: He's got a path! He's got a clear path to his partner!

[Fujiwara is on his hands and knees, crawling towards the corner where Tizona is waiting with a hand outstretched...]

SA: Can he get there in time? Can he make that tag?

[...Chaz Wallace looks alarmed, shouting at his brother...]

SA: Chaz trying to get Chet to cut him off! To block the tag but Chet can't get up in time! Fujiwara's gonna do it! He's going to get there! He's going to-

[...and with no other options, Chaz slingshots over the top rope, moving quickly towards the crawling Fujiwara...

...but the official lunges in front of Chaz Wallace again, blocking his path!]

SA: No, no! He couldn't get to Fujiwara annnnnd... TAG!

[The crowd ERUPTS as Tizona tags in, slingshotting over the top rope with a fist pump. He pulls Chet off the mat, hammering him with short forearms before burying a back kick into the midsection.]

SA: Tizona's taking control of this one!

[Running to the ropes, Tizona looks to strike...

...but the referee cuts HIM off!]

SA: WHAT?!

[The crowd ERUPTS in boos as the official points to the corner, waving his hands...]

CP: Hah! What a brilliant move by Chaz Wallace! You all thought he was trying to get to Fujiwara but all he ACTUALLY had to do was get the referee to look at him and miss the tag!

SA: The referee didn't see the tag and he's putting Tizona back out on the apron!

[Chaz comes back in, pulling Fujiwara off the mat before he can get out, whipping him to the ropes as Chet rises...]

"THUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUD!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

SA: FLAPJACK CONNECTS!

[Chaz bails out as Chet wraps up Fujiwara!]

SA: IT COULD BE! IT MIGHT BE! IT...

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

SA: HE KICKS OUT! HE KICKS OUT!

CP: But he's still in there with the Idols, Albano. He missed his one shot to make that tag and get out of there!

[Climbing back on the apron, Chaz slaps his brother's hand.]

SA: Another tag by the Idols... Chaz is telling Chet something...

CP: They're gonna do it again!

[A double whip sends Fujiwara into the ropes, lifting him in tandem...]

SA: FLAAAAAPJAAAA-

[...but this time, Fujiwara manages to hook both men by the heads...]

"THUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUD!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

SA: DOUBLE DDT! HE SPIKED THEM BOTH!

[The crowd is ROARING now as Fujiwara rolls onto his stomach, dragging himself across the canvas as both Idols are laid out from the high impact counter!]

SA: Fujiwara is crawling! Tizona is waiting! Can he get there this time? Can heeeee... YES! TAG!

[The Portland crowd gets ROWDY as Tizona pumps a fist, running down the apron, grabbing the top rope with both hands before leaping to the top, springing off...]

SA: DOUBLE CLOTHESLINE AS THE IDOLS GET TO THEIR FEET!

[Tizona pumps a fist, pulling Chaz up...]

SA: Tizona's got the legal man in there, hammering him back to the neutral corner with palm strikes...

[...and dips low to POP Chaz with a shotay uppercut, lifting the Idol off his feet before he slumps back against the turnbuckles!]

SA: What a shot! Tizona's got Chaz in a daze now!

[Tizona boosts Chaz up to a seated position on the top turnbuckle before climbing up as well...]

SA: Tizona... it looks like a flying rana perhaps!

[But a struggling Chaz manages to shove him off, sending him flipping through the air, landing on his feet with a nice backflip...]

SA: OH! Chaz fought free but Tizona's still standing!

[Chaz leaps off the top with a leapfrog, clearing Tizona to land on his feet behind him...]

...but Tizona turns quickly, leaping into the air, hooking the head with his legs...]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[...and SPIKES Chaz Wallace with a poison rana that brings the crowd to their feet!]

SA: TIZONA JUST LIT THIS PLACE UP, COLT PATTERSON!

CP: It's impressive for sure... but it ain't over yet, Albano!

[Seeing his brother in trouble, Chet charges in, avoiding the referee...]

...and runs right into a question mark kick from the masked man!]

SA: OHH!

[Tizona twists, running up the turnbuckles...]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

SA: MOONSAULT WIPES OUT CHET WALLACE!

[Tizona attempts a cover on Chet only to have it waved off by the official who points to Chaz who is trying to get to his feet in the neutral corner...]

SA: Wrong man to cover!

CP: Could be a costly mistake, Big Sal!

[Tizona pounds a fist into the mat in frustration before climbing to his feet, rushing towards Chaz Wallace...

...who ducks down, muscling Tizona up and over to a landing spot on the apron. But Tizona catches Chaz with a pair of forearms from the apron...

...and Chaz bails clear as Chet rushes in, throwing a dropkick that knocks Tizona down to the floor!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[The referee throws up his hands, shouting at the Idols who quickly embrace, going into a spin...]

SA: What is...?

CP: The ref can't tell them apart now! They're identical twins and I hear their own father can't tell 'em apart!

SA: Highly unlikely but... you're right. It seems like the official is having a hard time telling who to put out and who to keep in and...

[The camera cuts to ringside...]

SA: ...where did Tizona go?!

CP: Huh?

SA: Tizona! He got knocked off the apron to the floor and... where is he, Colt?

CP: How the hell should I know, Albano?! Maybe he went running back to Mexico!

SA: You know he's from Savannah, Georgia, right?

CP: WHAT?!

[With the referee suitably confused, one of the Wallaces moves towards the ropes where Tizona flew off the apron while the other sprints across the ring to deck Yoshi Fujiwara, knocking him down on the apron! The referee follows Wallace #2, shouting him back across the ring as Fujiwara tries to recover on the outside...]

SA: Is that Chet looking for Tizona? I think it is.

CP: I'm going with Chaz.

SA: Why?

CP: Because the odds are in favor of you being wrong.

[Whichever Wallace it is, he leans through the ropes looking for Tizona...]

SA: Oh, there he is. Tizona back over there and-

[But as the Wallace reaches out to grab him by the mask, we catch a glint on his hand...]

SA: Wait a sec-

[...but before Sal can finish, Tizona pivots and DRIVES his right hand into Wallace's head, sending him flying backwards!]

CP: WHAT THE HELL WAS THAT?!

[The staggering Wallace stumbles all the way back towards Fujiwara who has crawled into the ring...

...and instinctively drags Wallace down in a schoolboy!]

SA: ROLLUP! ROLLUP!

CP: HE'S NOT LEGAL!

SA: ONNNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOO! THREEEEEEEEEEEEE!

"DING! DING! DING!"

CP: Ahhhhhh! What a ripoff!

[The ring announcer makes it official as the crowd cheers!]

SA: Wow! Now, that's an upset, Colt - and it totally changes the Run The Rankings field!

CP: It's an upset? It makes ME upset! Tizona, that little freak, he just cost the Wallaces the win! He did something illegal and YOU know it, Albano!

[Fujiwara rolls from the ring, a confused expression on his face as he hears their music playing. Tizona rushes to his side, stuffing something into the back of his tights before raising Fujiwara's arm in victory...]

SA: A hard fought match there but Fujizona comes out on top-

CP: Thanks to... he hit him with something, Albano! Did you see him stuff something into his tights there?

SA: I'm not sure what you're talking about.

CP: Are you... you're Mr. Eagle Eye over there taking every single wrestler to task who you don't like for every single questionably legal thing they do in that ring. But this guy... you missed it?! I don't buy that for a second, Albano!

SA: I don't know what you think you saw... but frankly, I'm shocked that you're this upset about it. Even if he did something against the rules, you're usually fully in favor of that.

CP: That's... that's besides the point, Albano.

SA: I'm sure it is. The point is that Fujizona has won... and I can't wait to see the next round of rankings now!

[The downed Idol sits up on the mat with the aid of his brother, rubbing his cheekbone in shock and pain...]

SA: We'll be right back with more Saturday Night Wrestling right HERE 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 fade back up on a black screen.]

V/O: "The last Dog of War, Wade Walker"

[Fade up on Wade Walker, backlit, his impressive physique outlined by bright light, as "Whatever It Takes" by Imagine Dragons plays. The voiceovers carry over cinematic footage of his in-ring career over the past few months.]

SA: "Wade Walker's one of those rare athletes that has... everything."

[Salvatore Albano's voice carries over a quick cut succession of slow motion spears...]

SA: "Powerful... Ferocious... and most importantly: legit."

[Cut to Wade Walker speaking from earlier in the year...]

WW: "...I've been across the ring from Brian James, Team Supreme, Alex Martinez... the baddest, the toughest, the meanest. I know a thing or two about what it's like between those ropes. And if just hitting me hard with all you've got was enough to get the job done, well..."

[He chuckles to himself.]

WW: "...Sure to god it woulda worked by now, wouldn't it?"

[Wade Walker levels Odin Gunn with a double axehandle Mjolnir, and a half-a-dozen more to other opponents.]

V/O: "Wade Walker was a force at tight end at Oklahoma University."

[Cut to footage of college aged Wade Walker from 2011.]

V/O: "...a two-time all league choice in the Big 12."

[The shot of Wade Walker at Owen Field cross-fades to Wade Walker squaring off with the then-KAMS in under the wide open sky at Mosaic Stadium.]

V/O: "Now, he unleashes his calculated fury in the ring."

[Cut to Marcus Brossard in a sit-down interview.]

MB: "You want to talk about the amount of energy he can unleash, and the ring suddenly becomes very small when he's in there with you..."

[Another series of cinematic bone-breaking slow-motion spears to opponents. Voiceover from Lori Dane...]

LD: "He'll spear anybody out of their boots.... Just an undeniable force and presence..."

[Cut to an epically framed shot of Wade Walker, alone and powerful, walking down the aisle at Saturday Night Wrestling. Albano again...]

SA: "He has the physique, the ability, the attitude..."

[Fade to Wade Walker standing on the turnbuckles, facing out to fans...]

SA: "...and there is no stopping Wade Walker."

CAPTION: "Wade Walker returns – Opportunity Knocks II."

[Fade to black...]

...and then we fade up on the backstage area where Sweet Lou Blackwell is standing alongside a man who looks... happier... than we've ever seen him before - Damian DeVille.]

SLB: Welcome back to Saturday Night Wrestling, fans, and the man beside me right now came within a whisker of becoming the National Champion earlier tonight - Damian DeVille. Damian, not only did you almost win the title but you LAID OUT the champion after the match with one of those devastating kicks of yours. But before we can talk about any of that, I gotta know... Veronica Westerly was responsible for picking Kerry Kendrick's opponent tonight and she chose YOU!

[DeVille nods.]

SLB: Tell me about that please. I was under the impression that things were... strained to say the least... between you and your... stepmother.

[DeVille grimaces at that word being used.]

DD: My "stepmother" likes to play chess with people. She moves them around a ring like they're pieces on her board. And now she's decided I'm the next square to stand on.

But the funny thing is, I know exactly what game she's playing.

[DeVille nods.]

DD: She doesn't want me in her precious Dynasty.

She wants the little, shiny point she gets to score against the man she couldn't finish breaking.

My father.

[DeVille exhales sharply.]

DD: A master of mind games.

A professional psycho with a smile sharp enough to hide a knife behind.

And even though we don't exactly sit around swapping Christmas cards, don't confuse distance with ignorance. Because I grew up close enough to watch how monsters are made.

[He sweeps out an arm.]

DD: She thinks this is about legacy. Like bloodlines are destiny and last names are contracts already signed. But here's the part she keeps getting wrong.

I'm not running from him. And I'm definitely not running to her.

She's not offering me family. I see it every time she says my name and looks past me, straight down the camera, straight through the curtain, straight into his shadow.

[The Bad Seed waves a dismissive hand.]

DD: That's not care.

That's target practice.

She doesn't need me. She needs the reaction. She needs him watching at home, jaw tight, wondering if he finally lost something he can't take back with a chair shot and a "Trust Me."

And I won't lie to you.

[He nods.]

DD: It's clever.

It's cruel.

It's very... Veronica.

[DeVille looks focused, cold.]

DD: But here's what she didn't plan for. I don't need her approval. I don't need her "guidance." And I sure as hell don't need to be collected like a medal from somebody else's war.

She doesn't mean a damn thing to me. Not her brand. Not her promises. Not the little empire she's building out of other people's bruises and borrowed loyalty.

[He gestures to Blackwell.]

DD: I didn't come here to inherit anyone's throne. I came here to earn my own scars. I'll walk my own road. I'll pick my own fights. And when I fall, I won't have a stable behind me to soften the landing. That part matters to me.

But I'd be lying if I said I learned nothing from the man she's trying so desperately to hurt. Because he taught me one real lesson. Just one.

In this business, you don't waste a situation.

You read it. You measure it.

You let everyone else think they're pulling the strings... while you quietly decide when to cut them.

[He shakes his head.]

DD: So, no. I'm not joining her.

But if her little mind games shake the board...

If her point-scoring opens doors...

If her obsession creates opportunities...

Then I'll take them. Gladly.

[He turns towards the camera.]

DD: Not for her.

Not for him.

For me.

Because this isn't her story. And it's not my father's either.

It's mine.

[He nods confidently.]

DD: And the only legacy I'm interested in is who I become when the noise stops and that bell finally...

[DeVile trails off as he spots someone incoming from off-camera. Blackwell's eyebrows raise as Veronica Westerly saunters seductively into view. She grins at the reaction of both men.]

VW: Impressive work out there, young man.

[DeVile is unresponsive.]

VW: We'll get 'em next time.

[DeVile's eyebrows raise at that as Blackwell interjects.]

SLB: What do you mean "next time?" What's going on here?

[Westerly turns her focus on Blackwell.]

VW: Isn't it obvious? In one night, Blackwell, I did for this young man what his father hasn't been able to do his whole life!

[The crowd "ooooohs" at that - DeVile winces at the reality of it all.]

VW: In one night, I brought him a heartbeat away from being a champion. From being a star. From being more than just Caleb Temple's son.

[Westerly nods, turning her gaze back onto DeVille.]

VW: We can do it, Damian. We can do it together.

I can make you a star.

[She nods.]

VW: I can make you a champion.

[Her eyes shine in the spotlight, baiting the hook.]

VW: All you need to do is...

[She extends a hand.]

VW: ...join the Westerly Dynasty.

[Blackwell's jaw drops and the crowd in the stadium reacts big as Westerly makes Damian DeVille an offer he might not be able to refuse. DeVille looks down at the offered hand.]

VW: Shake my hand, Damian.

[DeVille looks up at her, his eyes boring into his stepmother.]

VW: Won't you shake a poor sinner's hand?

[DeVille jerks away, turning his back on a grinning Westerly as he stalks away off-camera. Westerly shifts her hand over onto Blackwell's chest. Her well-manicured fingers tap Blackwell's chest as he shifts uncomfortably.]

VW: All in good time.

[We fade to black...

...and then come back on footage marked with "four days ago", as we see Kimmy Bailey standing at Kansai Airport Station, spinning her rolling suitcase by the handle with her right hand as she has a gym bag slung over her shoulder. The rookie looks no worse for wear after her long flight to Osaka, wearing a beaten up grey Pinecrest Patriots lacrosse T-shirt and black dolphin shorts with white trim, along with black Adidas sneakers with three white stripes. Her hair is tied back in a loose bun, and she has a pair of sunglasses on the top of her head. From behind the iPhone recording, we hear a calm, soft voice speak in Japanese, subtitled for the American audience.]

"(You're not tired?)"

[Kimmy shakes her head, then speaks herself...]

KB: (I slept the whole flight. I knew that when I landed, I wouldn't get much rest.)

[... in fluent Japanese. Kimmy smiles and reaches out to the phone, speaking now in English.]

KB: Lemme show 'em your pretty face.

[Kimmy grabs the phone, turning it towards a cherubic Japanese woman, wearing a BATTLE♡DREAM tracksuit and keeping her long black hair tied back in a loose ponytail.]

KB: This is Chiaki Ishikawa. She's Misaki Ishikawa's niece. Say hi to America, Chiaki!

CI: (Oh? America?!)

[Chiaki's cheeks look flushed as waves to the camera.]

CI: (I thought you were just recording for a momento!)

KB: (No. I need everyone to see what happens on this trip.)

[The usually gregarious Kimmy's voice drops to a hush.]

KB: (Just in case things go wrong in a few days.)

[As Chiaki's face grows nervous, the recording cuts and shifts to a B-roll shot from a train window, as we hear Kimmy in voiceover.]

KB: The flight from Portland to Osaka was about 14 hours, and then after Chiaki and I boarded the Haruka to get to Osaka City, it was another hour and 15 minutes. Once we get to Osaka City, it's another 15 minutes to walk to the BATTLE♡DREAM dojo. I coulda flown right to Tokyo for this match... but it wouldn't have been right.

[There's more B-roll of Kimmy pointing the camera at Chiaki again, the young Ishikawa looking bashful and encouraging her to turn it around. Kimmy turns the camera to herself, a smirk on her face, as she switches back to recording the cityscapes of Osaka Prefecture.]

KB: I remember takin' this trip, back in September of last year, as a nervous new wrestler with just a handful of matches under my belt. Just after Laura Davis did what she did to me. Seems like I take this trip when I got problems to solve.

[With Chiaki behind the camera, we see Kimmy exit the train, wheeling her suitcase beside her, and the voiceover continues.]

KB: And Kurayami's as big of a problem as I ever faced. 250 pounds, mean, nasty. She's in firm control of every step she takes, everything she does. I've been hit by some awful hard shots, but nothin' knocked the breath out of me like when Kurayami hit me. She was comin' for Ayako, not me, not even Bets. I was surplus goods to her, I didn't mean nothin' as long as she hurt Ayako. Now that I got her attention, I know it's goin' to hurt even worse.

[There is silence as we see Kimmy walking down the sidewalk, but she points to a school in the distance. The voiceover continues.]

KB: When I was livin' at the dojo last year, every day we'd run for a few miles, passin' this elementary school, and a bunch of kids would come to cheer us on. They got a big kick out of me, the big American livin' at the dojo and workin' out with everyone else.

[And live audio.]

KB: (Do you think they remember me?)

CI: (The school kids? They ask about you every now and then.)

KB: (That's cute!)

[The two walk past the school, the grounds empty, before we cut to the outside of the BATTLE♥DREAM dojo. There is a sign that says "the Cosmic Space Empress is", with a shingle hung underneath that says "not here, come see Miyuki later!". The dojo is located in a quiet, unassuming neighborhood, in a converted storage facility, with a vending machine in front offering sodas, juices, water, and cold coffee. We see Kimmy look at Chiaki, holding the iPhone.]

KB: (You sure Kyoko said it was okay?)

CI: (Only your session. Nobody else's training can be recorded.)

[Kimmy nods to herself, then crosses her chest a couple of times.]

KB: Let's go.

[Kimmy opens the door, walking into the entry hallway and down the corridor towards the ring, followed by Chiaki. Leaning against the ring are several women, all marked with name graphics to identify them. Furthest from Kimmy, with electric blue hair, an E-Girl MAX shirt, and black gym pants, stands 19-year-old Junko Yamasaki. Next to her is an older woman, with chestnut brown hair and of similar size to Kimmy but with much less muscle definition. Dressed in a simple black T-shirt and blue shorts with kneepads and wrestling shoes, she is identified as Tomoko Shimoda. The last are similarly looking and sized wrestlers, wearing matching attire of T-shirts sporting a fox on the front and black shorts, with Miyako Hikari standing just a mere quarter-inch taller than her sister, the year older Sachiko Hikari, as the way to tell them apart. Finally, closest to Kimmy stands a woman just slightly smaller than her, but exuding a significant air of authority. Her name graphic reads Kyoko Yoshioka, and she merely nods her head upon seeing the American's arrival.]

KY: (Well? What are you here for?)

[Kimmy looks at Kyoko, giving her the respect and dignity she deserves as she bows.]

KB: (I am ready to train, teacher.)

[The four women beside Kyoko climb into the ring, as Kyoko motions towards Kimmy.]

KY: (Then let the students take your bags to your room, and let's train.)

[Kimmy hands her suitcase and gym bag to a timid-looking student, then calls out to Kyoko.]

KB: (Is Miyuki here today? I was hoping to thank her.)

[Kyoko looks at Kimmy with a slight frown.]

KY: (She said if you survive Kurayami, her presence will be a reward for you.)

KB: ...dang.

[With that ominous note, we cut to highlights of the next three days' worth of training, set to "The Elemental Dive" by Vincenzo Salvia & PJ D'atri.

Kyoko supervises as Kimmy, the Hikaris, Junko, and Tomoko go through morning workout drills, with situps, pushups, squats, and weight training.

In the ring, Kimmy tries to take control of Tomoko Shimoda, standing in for Kurayami, only to be immediately attacked by Sachiko Hikari. We hear Kyoko's voice shout out, subtitled.]

KY: (She has a gang here! This isn't who you saw last year! Hit hard and keep your eyes open!)

[A new highlight, with Kimmy slamming Tomoko, then immediately turning around into a punch from Miyako Hikari.]

KY: (Keep your eyes on her!)

[Moments later, Tomoko scores with a standing avalanche, sending Kimmy to the mat, then immediately drops an elbow. As Kimmy gasps for breath, Junko runs into the ring and drops her own elbow onto Kimmy. Kimmy looks at Takako Ishikawa as she slowly gets to her feet, Chiaki's sister wearing a referee shirt, but Takako shrugs.]

KY: (The referee can't help you! You have to do it yourself!)

[Little by little, Kimmy improves, but each step forward is met with a setback.

Suplexing Tomoko and slamming Miyako onto her leaves Kimmy wide open for a Sachiko missile dropkick.

Throwing a lariat at Tomoko and power bombing Sachiko results in Junko clipping the back of Kimmy's knee.

Finally, Kimmy starts to catch on, whipping Tomoko into Junko, then catching both Miyako and Sachiko in a double chokeslam, but...]

"CRAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

[... Tomoko grabbed a bokken from the outside of the ring and smashed it against Kimmy's ribs! We cut to moments later, as Kimmy, frustrated, looks to Kyoko outside the ring as the music fades.]

KB: (How can I stop four wrestlers at once? Especially when there's a weapon?)

KY: (It could be even more than four, Bailey-chan.)

[Kimmy puts her hands on her hips and sighs deeply, causing Kyoko to explode with anger.]

KY: (You asked for this! You wanted Kurayami! You said you'd do anything to get her! Now you get frustrated because the odds are against you?!)

[Kyoko climbs into the ring, poking a finger into Kimmy's chest.]

KY: (You want revenge for Ayako, but you have no idea what it means to fight Kurayami! Miyuki and I can only help you so much, Bailey-chan! How can you make things right for Ayako when you can't even stand up here?!)

[Kyoko lifts Kimmy's chin so Kimmy can't look down.]

KY: (If you fight like this at Korakuen, Kurayami will kill you. She will grind your bones into meal and fertilize her garden with it. She won't even give it a second thought.)

[Kimmy's eyes start to water...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

[...only to be met with a hard, ear-ringing slap from Kyoko. Kimmy jerks her head back, her face flushed, her eyes practically glowing with an incandescent anger. Kyoko merely stares back.]

KY: (Now avenge Ayako.)

[There is a growl emitting from deep within Kimmy's throat, as Tomoko approaches with the bokken raised overhead. As Tomoko swings downward, Kimmy turns...]

"CRAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

[...taking a step to the side and throwing a lariat so hard that the bokken splinters and fragments, flying out of Tomoko's hands. As a massive welt immediately begins to form on Kimmy's bicep, she charges at Junko, picking her up as she protests and throwing her at the Hikaris. As Kimmy's rage continues, our view drops back, as Chiaki Ishikawa can be heard talking, with the subtitles providing context.]

CI: (...I should get the students to calm her down...)

[We next cut to footage marked with "the next day", as the Hikaris, Junko, Tomoko, and Kimmy are jogging down the sidewalk. They begin to approach the elementary school between the train station and the dojo, and this time, there are children milling about outside. As everyone jogs towards the school, we hear voices of recognition.]

"(Is that...)"

"(It's Bailey-chan!)"

"(I heard she was here this week!)"

"(My dad said she was fighting Kurayami tomorrow in Tokyo!)"

"(No way!)"

[And as the five, four Japanese and one American, make it to the school, we hear a chant from the kids ring out.]

"GANBARE! GANBARE! GANBARE! BAILEY-CHAN!"

[As Kimmy keeps jogging with her training partners, she gives a wave to the kids, who continue to cheer her on as we fade...

The dim glow of paper lanterns flicker across the cracked stone courtyard behind an old dojo somewhere in Asakusa, Tokyo. Kurayami stands motionless in the center of the open space. She wears black hakama pants and a sleeveless uwagi stained with years of use. In her right hand she holds a worn bokken, chipped from countless strikes against flesh and wood. The weapon rests loosely against her shoulder like an old friend. Her voice is low and deliberate as subtitles crawl along the bottom of the screen when she begins to speak in her native Japanese.]

K: (Kimmy Bailey...)

[She taps the bokken against the stone, a sharp crack echoing off the walls.]

K: (You crossed half the world for this. You came all this way. Crossed oceans. Left your soft little world behind. For what? Revenge? Justice?)

[She shifts her weight, the bokken sliding down until the tip rests lightly on a cracked tile.]

K: (You were raised in ease. Warm lights. Cheering crowds that clap for effort, not survival. Trophies handed to you for showing up. Safety nets everywhere. Your world taught you that pain is temporary, that heart can overcome anything.)

[A beat.]

K: (My world taught me different.)

(I learned in dojos where the mats were stained and the teachers hit harder than any opponent. I learned when the money stopped coming and the only way to eat was to keep standing after the bell. I learned when my friends became enemies and when trust became a luxury I could no longer afford. Every scar on this body is a lesson in corruption... the slow rot of ambition, the poison of wanting more than you deserve, the darkness that creeps in when the soul trades pieces of itself for power.)

[She lifts her head and inhales deeply, before exhaling through her nostrils.]

K: (Ayako Fujiwara understood the price and she paid it in full. Olympic gold means nothing when the lights go out and it's just two bodies trying to destroy each other. She fought with honor. She fought until there was nothing left. And I took that from her. Not out of hate. Out of necessity. Because this world - the real one - does not reward the pure. It devours them.)

[She stares into the camera with contempt.]

K: (Kimmy Bailey... you are still pure. Soft. Untested in the places that matter. You chase me like a puppy chasing a shadow, barking about vengeance, thinking anger and rage is enough. These emotions are cheap. Everyone has them. What you lack is the understanding that comes after... when the rage fades and you're left staring at the monster you've become to win.)

[A smirk.]

K: (You will step through that curtain at Korakuen Hall, hear the crowd chant your name like you're some hero from a storybook, and you will believe it. Then I will meet you in the center of the ring. I will look into your eyes and see the fear you pretend isn't there. I will feel your strikes - strong, yes - but without the weight of true despair behind them.)

(You are not ready.)

[She raises the bokken slowly, two-handed now, point leveled toward an invisible opponent at chest height.]

K: (I have carried this piece of wood almost as long as you've been alive. It has tasted blood in places no camera ever followed. It has taught me what your world never will: that softness is not virtue. Softness is preparation for burial.)

[She steps forward, boots crunching the gravel beneath them. She swings the bokken in a slow, controlled arc and then returns it to ready position.]

K: (And when I break you - and I WILL break you - it won't be because I'm stronger. It will be because you never learned what strength costs. You never paid the price. You never let the world corrupt you enough to survive it. You were never allowed to lose everything.)

[She lowers the bokken until the tip touches the ground again, leaning slightly on it like a cane.]

K: (The ring... this life... it belongs to those who have already lost everything and kept walking. By the time I was your age, I had lost everything. Family. Name. Mercy. What was left, I sold piece by piece until even the darkness grew tired of taking from me. That is what stands in front of you now... not strength, not size... just what remains after the world finishes chewing.)

[She lifts her chin, cold eyes catching the lantern light.]

K: (You still have something left to lose...)

[She raises the bokken again, as if measuring an executioner's strike.]

K: (... and I will take it from you.)

[She brings the bokken down in a single, vicious diagonal cut, stopping it an inch above the stone with perfect control.]

K: (I do not hate you, child. Hate is for equals. I will simply... finish what your softness began.)

[She exhales once, slowly, letting the bokken drop to hang loose at her side.]

K: (When you go back to America, little strongwoman, tell them Kurayami sent you back with a message:

Some mountains are not meant to be climbed.

Some storms do not pass.)

[She turns half away, profile silhouetted against the glowing light in the distance.]

K: (And some girls should have stayed home.)

[She taps the bokken once more against the stone, a final punctuation. The camera lingers as she walks into shadow, bokken trailing behind her like a broken wing. And we fade...

A closeup of the ring bell being struck three times in a methodical fashion is shown, as the crowd roars in anticipation, then falls to a hush. The camera shot switches to the ring, in darkness, as a spotlight hits BATTLE♡DREAM ring announcer Yuka Ryusaki, dressed in a fanciful princess gown, as she stands in the neutral corner.]

YR: Mein ibento wa sanjuppun ipponshōbu! Referee wa Uchiyama Chiyo!

[There is a loud call of "CHIYO!" from the regulars at Korakuen, as the diminutive official, standing approximately 4'10", stands beside Ryusaki with a stern look on her face.]

YR: Ao kōnā, Amerikagasshūkoku Nōsukaroraina-shū Painhāsuto shusshin, taijū 87-kiroguramu...

KIMMMMMMMMMYYYYYYYYYYYYYYYYYYY
BAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAIIIIILEEEEEEEYYYYYYYYY!

[The spotlight swiftly moves away from Ryusaki, and almost immediately...]

Stand on the bar, stomp your feet, start clappin' #
Got a real good feelin' somethin' bad about to happen

["Somethin' Bad" by Miranda Lambert & Carrie Underwood plays through Korakuen Hall, audience clapping along with the beat, multi-color lights swirling through the building and a spotlight on the entrance curtain. After a few moments of waiting, a nervous-looking Kimmy Bailey walks through the curtain, being immediately greeted with a familiar, albeit modified, chant, accented by claps with each syllable.]

"GANBARE! GANBARE! GANBARE! BAILEY-CHAN!"

[As the rookie blushes with the recognition, she looks out to the crowd, soaking in the admiration. She is dressed in a sleeveless cropped T-shirt with the words "BATTLE[heart]DREAM" and a chibi Miyuki Ozaki next to a word balloon that says "you're not supposed to say the heart!" in kanji underneath. Just underneath the shirt, we see a black Adidas sports bra. She also has on jeans that have burst at the seams near the hips, and have a few rips and holes throughout, along with a pair of pink kneepads overtop. To complete the ensemble, she has black and pink cowgirl boots with flat soles, and her hair is tied up in two space buns, with fringe framing her face.]

MO: (Listen to the crowd! They know she's here for Ayako! My number one student, our Olympic gold medalist... Kurayami attacked her, Kyoko! They put her on a stretcher! And now Bailey's here to make it right!)

KY: (She's carrying a huge weight of expectations tonight. Kurayami doesn't care about that. She only cares about breaking people.)

MO: (There's no point for me to be neutral... Kurayami, you're gonna pay tonight!)

[Kimmy walks to the ring, walking up the steps in front of the apron, where she is greeted by six BATTLE♥DREAM wrestlers, captained by Toko Momohime and Taiga Isamu closest to Kimmy. Toko says something that the microphone doesn't pick up, but Taiga...]

"ROARRRRRRRRRRRR!"

[...that was picked up. Following Taiga's mighty roar, all six BATTLE♥DREAM wrestlers sit on the rope, holding it open for their gaijin friend, as Kimmy walks through and raises her arm, screaming not her usual "LARIATOS!", but instead...]

"AYAKOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO!"

[The lights drop again. A single red spotlight hits the ring bell - three more strikes. Spotlight shifts back to Yuka Ryusaki.]

YR: Kuroi kōnā, Nihon Tōkyō-to shusshin, taijū 113-kiroguramu...

[Before she finishes, a figure slides under the bottom rope. It is Runa Kuroda, one of Kurayami's underlings. She has wild black hair and wears red face paint. She snatches the microphone from Yuka's hand.]

RK: HELLO YOU BASTARDS!

[The crowd roars with half cheers and half boos at the interruption. used to Runa's antics. However, from the announce table, a water bottle rockets through the air - SMACK! - and hits Runa square in the head. We hear Miyuki's broken English echo throughout Korakuen.]

MO: NO, RUNA! THIS MY SHOW! SHUT UP AND GET ON WITH IT!!!

[Runa staggers, clutching her head, eyes wide in fear as she looks toward Miyuki. The hall erupts in laughter and cheers. Intimidated, her voice cracks as she screams out the name of her mistress.]

RK: ... K-KURAYAMIIIIIIIII!!!

["Demonizer" by Judas Priest explodes through Korakuen Hall as red lights fill the venue. Kurayami then emerges, 5'11", 250 pounds of terror in a spiked leather jacket worn open over a sleeveless black uwagi top and black hakama-style pants. In her right hand, she carries a bokken, gripped like a katana.

Behind her, three underlings follow. Leading them is the infamous Miss Akuji, in a torn wedding dress stained with dirt and fake blood, veil half-ripped, dragging a heavy black duffel bag that clanks ominously. The other two flank her, carrying chains and kendo sticks.]

MO: (Look at her! Strutting in with her little cult, after what she did to Ayako! My student! Our national hero! Kurayami, you're a disgrace to professional wrestling!)

KY: (She brought an army. But Kimmy Bailey came here alone and she came here for war.)

[Kurayami steps through the ropes with deliberate slowness. Miss Akuji drops the duffel in the corner and unzips it just enough to show glints of steel. Kurayami hands the bokken to Akuji, removes her jacket and screams "SHI-NE!!!" as the lights snap up full. The bell rings and Korakuen Hall explodes with cheers!]

"DING!"

MO: (Here we go!)

[Kimmy Bailey charges like a missile across the ring. She ducks under a wild swing from Kurayami's massive arm and unloads six rapid machine-gun forearms straight to Kurayami's jaw, each blow snapping the giant's head back violently.]

MO: (BAILEY'S BRINGING THE THUNDER RIGHT OUT THE GATE!)

KY: (Kurayami felt every single one!)

[With Kurayami stunned, Kimmy hits the near ropes, rockets back, and slams a lariat into Kurayami's chest... it barely budes the 250 pound monster.]

MO: (I can't believe it... that lariat that Bailey-chan is so proud of didn't even move the monster!)

KY: (Don't just stare at her, Bailey... keep going!)

[Kimmy backs up, charges again and slams into Kurayami with a second lariat! This one rocks Kurayami back a step.]

MO: (She's moving her! Bailey's actually moving the She-Wolf!)

[A furious Kurayami lunges at Bailey, swinging a wild lariat. Bailey ducks under it at the last second and sprints to the far ropes, building momentum, as she explodes off the ropes with a third running lariat.]

"SMAAACCK!"

[Both women collide and Kurayami staggers... and finally drops to one knee as the hall erupts into a deafening roar!]

MO: (SHE DROPPED HER! BAILEY DROPPED KURAYAMI TO ONE KNEE!)

KY: (Kurayami wasn't ready for that kind of fire!)

[Kimmy Bailey backs into the far corner, eyes locked on Kurayami. She takes a deep breath and slaps her own chest twice, then explodes forward. She launches herself with a Britney Spear attempt, but Kurayami's massive hand shoots out and clamps around Kimmy's throat!]

KY: (Kurayami caught her in mid-air!)

MO: (NO! SHE'S GOT HER! SHE'S GOT BAILEY!)

[With a roar, Kurayami lifts Kimmy clean off the mat with one arm. The crowd gasps as Kurayami roars and drives downward with ferocious force, spiking Bailey into the canvas with a reverse choke slam!]

"OOOOHHHHHH!!!"

[Kimmy bounces violently off the canvas and rolls on her back, both hands flying to her chest as she gasps and writhes.]

MO: (BAILEY, NO! GET UP, BABY GIRL! YOU'RE NOT DONE YET!)

KY: (Come on, Bailey. Fight through it. You've taken worse. Get up.)

[Kimmy rolls to her side, coughing, clutching her neck, but she forces herself to one knee.]

MO: (SHE'S STILL IN THIS! FIGHT FOR AYAKO, BAILEY! FIGHT FOR EVERYTHING!)

[Kurayami looms over her, laughing as she waits for Kimmy to rise. She drags Kimmy up by the ponytail and yanks her head back, eyes wide in pain. The Bloody She-Wolf of Tokyo leans in close, face inches from Kimmy's. She screams directly into Kimmy's face - voice guttural and raw.]

Kurayami: SHI-NE!!!

[The scream echoes through Korakuen Hall as Kurayami rears her right arm back and unleashes a Kokuto overhead chop.]

"CRACK!"

[The sound is a sickening bone-on-bone impact as Kimmy's forehead splits open instantly, a deep gash opening across the hairline. Blood immediately begins to flow, covering Kimmy in a crimson mask.]

MO: (SHE OPENED HER UP! THAT MONSTER JUST SPLIT HER FOREHEAD OPEN!)

KY: (That was surgical. She aimed for the skull and cut her wide open with the Black Blade. Kimmy's hurt bad.)

[Kurayami holds the pose for a moment, Kimmy's blood dripping down the edge of her hand. She slowly reaches down and drags her hand across the canvas, smearing the BATTLE♥DREAM logo on the mat with Bailey's blood. Kurayami turns her glare to Miyuki Ozaki and laughs, her voice echoing through the Hall.]

K: Gisei ni natte kurete arigatō, Miyuki-chan!

MO: (YOU SICK FREAK! YOU'RE LAUGHING?! YOU TRIED TO END AYAKO AND NOW YOU'RE PLAYING WITH BAILEY'S BLOOD?! I HOPE SHE MAKES YOU CHOKE ON IT!)

KY: (Settle down, Miyuki. Your reaction is what she wants. She's taunting us. She wants us to know she enjoys this.)

[Kimmy clutches her forehead, blood pouring through her fingers, staining her face and chest. The camera catches her with a look of despair, asking, "How did Ayako beat this?" to herself.]

MO: (Come on, Bailey! You're stronger than this! You're fighting for Ayako... don't let her break you! Get up! GET UP!)

[Kimmy forces herself to her feet-swaying, blood dripping onto the mat, but standing. The crowd chants "GANBARE! BAILEY-CHAN!" louder than ever. An annoyed Kurayami yanks Kimmy up onto her shoulders in a fireman's carry, Kimmy's body draped across the giant's back like a ragdoll.]

MO: (NO! THIS IS BAD, BAILEY! FIGHT OUT! FIGHT OUT!)

KY: (This is going to be ugly.)

[Kurayami roars and throws Kimmy's body off her shoulders into a vertical suplex position before driving downward with every ounce of her 250-pound frame with a powerslam!]

KY: KUDAKERO!

[The ring visibly shakes as Kurayami and Kimmy bounces violently off the mat upon impact!]

MO: (OH MY GOSH! SHE CRUSHED HER!)

[Kurayami hooks both legs deep for the cover as Referee Chiyo Uchiyama drops down to make the count...]

Chiyo: "One!"

"Two!"

[Kurayami leans back, smirking, pressing her forearm across Kimmy's throat for extra leverage.]

Chiyo: Thr-

[Kimmy's shoulder shoots off the mat at the absolute last possible millisecond.]

MO: (SHE KICKED OUT! BAILEY KICKED OUT! KORAKUEN IS ON ITS FEET!)

KY: (That Kudakero would've ended almost any wrestler, but Kimmy Bailey just refused to stay down. She's finding unbelievable resilience inside herself that she probably didn't know she had.)

[Kimmy rolls to her side, gasping, but still alive. Kurayami sits up slowly, expression shifting from amusement to visible anger.]

MO: (Look at her face! She's mad! Kurayami's actually mad that Bailey won't stay down! COME ON, BAILEY! YOU'RE HURTING HER PRIDE!)

[Kurayami stands, staring down at Kimmy with cold fury. Kimmy forces herself to one knee, blood dripping from her forehead, ribs heaving, but eyes locked on Kurayami.]

KY: (She's still in this... barely. But she's still in it.)

MO: (That's my girl! Keep fighting, Bailey! KEEP FIGHTING!)

[Kurayami, grabs a fistful of Kimmy's hair and yanks her violently to her feet. Kimmy staggers, legs buckling, but Kurayami doesn't give her a second to recover. She scoops Kimmy up in a gorilla press and, then hurls her with terrifying force toward the ropes. Kimmy flies over the top rope and a collective gasp rolls through Korakuen Hall as she hits the floor.]

MO: (OH NO! SHE LANDED RIGHT ON THE FLOOR!)

KY: (Bailey's barely moving.)

[Kurayami vaults over the top rope with surprising agility for her size, landing on the floor beside Kimmy. She reaches down to drag Kimmy up by the hair, but Kimmy explodes upward with a sudden burst of adrenaline. She hooks Kurayami's arm, spins behind her, and uses the giant's own momentum to hurl her shoulder-first into the steel ring post!]

"CLANG!"

[Kurayami's massive frame rebounds off the post, staggering backward, clutching her shoulder in rare surprise.]

MO: (YES! BAILEY JUST SENT THE MONSTER INTO THE POST! FIGHT BACK! FIGHT BACK!)

KY: (That was smart, using Kurayami's size against her. That shoulder might be compromised now.)

[The crowd erupts as Kimmy staggers but stays on her feet, chest heaving, eyes wild with defiance. But before she can charge forward, a new figure appears from behind...]

MO: (It's Miss Akuji!)

[Akuji has Kurayami's bokken raised high in both hands like an executioner. She charges, swinging the wooden sword, aiming it straight for Kimmy's skull, but the southern belle ducks at the last millisecond as the bokken whistles over her head and cracks against the apron. Kimmy spins on her heel, plants her feet, and explodes forward with a thunderous shoulder tackle.]

"OOOOOOOOHHHHHHHHHHHH!!!"

MO and KY: AHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!

MO: (AKUJI JUST FLEW INTO THE CROWD!)

KY: (Where did she go!?)

[Miss Akuji's feet leave the ground as she's launched backward into the air, crashing into the front row of standing fans. Bodies scatter, chairs topple, and fans scream in shock and excitement as Miss Akuji disappears into the sea of people, the bokken clattering to the floor.]

KY: (That was vicious. Akuji won't be getting up anytime soon.)

MO: (Serves her right!)

[Two more of Kurayami's underlings rush from opposite sides, trying to flank Kimmy. The crowd roars louder, sensing the chaos. Kimmy doesn't hesitate. She meets the first one head-on, ducks her wild grab, hooks her arm, and hurls her full-force into the ring steps.]

"CRASH!"

[The second underling lunges from behind, arms outstretched to grab her, but Kimmy spins, grabs her by the waist, and drives her forward with every ounce of remaining strength. Her face meets the ring post with a sickening crunch as she falls, out cold.]

MO: (BAILEY IS CLEANING HOUSE!)

KY: (She's turning Kurayami's numbers advantage into a liability. But look... Kurayami's back up.)

[Kurayami has risen from the earlier post shot, stepping over the crumpled bodies of her fallen underlings without a glance. Kimmy snatches a steel chair from ringside. She grips it tight and charges.]

MO: (A CHAIR! BAILEY'S GOT A CHAIR! SWING FOR THE FENCES!)

[Kimmy swings hard and the chair cracks across Kurayami's back.]

"CRAAAACCK!"

[Kurayami staggers forward one step. Kimmy rears back again...]

"CRAAAACCK!"

[She takes one more swing...]

"CRAAAACCK!"

[...the third shot bending the chair noticeably. But Kurayami straightens up, rolling her shoulders. No grunt. No wince. Just cold, unyielding menace as she turns to face Kimmy.]

MO: (Three shots! She hit her three times and Kurayami's still standing like it's nothing!)

[Before Kurayami can grab her, Kimmy pivots and hurls the bent chair straight at the giant's head. The steel connects flush with Kurayami's skull...]

"CLAAAAANNNG!"

[... and the Lady of Pain staggers sideways, momentarily stunned as the crowd explodes!]

MO: (YES! SHE STUNNED THE MONSTER! KURAYAMI'S ROCKED!)

KY: (That headshot bought Bailey a window.)

[Kimmy presses forward, fists clenched, but from the blind side, Runa Kuroda launches herself at Kimmy with a dropkick! Both boots slam into Kimmy's chest and

send her flying backward, crashing hard into the timekeeper's area. The table buckles but doesn't break, as she sprawls across monitors and cables that scatter everywhere.]

MO: (DAMN YOU RUNA! SHE CAME OUT OF NOWHERE!)

[Runa smirks under her face paint and advances for more, reaching down to grab Kimmy. But Kimmy explodes upward on pure instinct and fires a short-range lariat, her forearm smashing across Runa's throat and chest. Runa's head snaps back as her body goes limp and she collapses face-first to the floor in a heap, out cold.]

MO: (LARIATOOOOOOOOO! SHE TOOK RUNA'S HEAD OFF! THAT WAS SHORT-RANGE HOMICIDE!)

KY: (Well, she did learn from the best.)

MO: (Don't get cocky, kid.)

KY: Teehee.

[Kimmy staggers to her feet amid the wreckage, one arm wrapped protectively across her ribs, the other wiping fresh blood from her face. However, she's suddenly snatched around the throat by a length of chain in one brutal motion!]

MO: (A CHAIN! BAILEY'S GOT A CHAIN AROUND HER NECK! KURAYAMI'S DRAGGING HER UP THE STEPS LIKE A DOG!)

KY: (This is sadistic. Kurayami's using that chain to cut off Bailey's air and blood flow.)

[Kimmy's hands claw at the links, but Kurayami hauls her upward step by step. Kimmy's feet drag, then lift completely as Kurayami reaches the top landing near the main crowd entranceway. The She-Wolf hoists Kimmy up by the chain, dangling her over the railing. The crowd screams in collective horror as phones flash everywhere, capturing the moment.]

MO: (NO! NO! SHE'S GOING TO THROW HER! BAILEY'S TURNING PURPLE! I NEED TO HELP HER!)

KY: (You stay right here, Miyuki. I know this is hard to watch, but this isn't your fight.)

MO: (This isn't a fight anymore, Kyoko... this is attempted murder!)

[Kimmy's survival instinct suddenly fires and with one last surge, she drives both thumbs deep into Kurayami's eyes. Kurayami roars in pain, grip loosening instantly. Kimmy drops to the landing with a thud, gasping huge, ragged breaths, chain clattering loose around her neck.]

MO: (BAILEY BROKE FREE! SHE'S ALIVE-SHE'S STILL ALIVE!)

[Kurayami staggers backward down a few steps, one hand clamped over her eyes, roaring curses in Japanese. Kimmy doesn't waste time, climbing the railing framework of the entranceway arch like a woman possessed.]

KY: (Bailey's going high-risk off the entranceway. If she misses, she could break her neck.)

MO: (OR SHE CAN FINISH OFF KURAYAMI! COME ON, BAILEY! YOU'VE GOT THIS! TAKE HER DOWN! TAKE HER DOWN WITH YOU!)

Chiyo: "ONE!"

"TWO!"

[Kurayami's shoulder rockets off the mat right before the three, but Kimmy transitions instantly, sliding behind the giantess and crossing her arms under the chin into her version of a straightjacket choke: "Slash Friction".]

MO: (SLASH FRICTION! SHE'S GOT THE GOKURAKU GATAME! CHOKE HER OUT, BAILEY!)

[Kurayami roars and plants both hands on the mat. Impossibly, she begins to power to her feet with Kimmy still seated on her back.]

KY: (Kurayami's standing with the hold still cinched! Kurayami refuses to go down!)

[Kimmy tightens her grip, teeth gritted. Kurayami staggers... and then drops backward with crushing force, driving all 250 pounds down onto Bailey's already-battered back and ribs.]

MO: (NO! SHE CRUSHED HER! KURAYAMI JUST DROPPED FULL FORCE ON BAILEY! SHE'S NOT MOVING!)

[Bailey rolls away immediately, curling into a ball near the ropes, both hands clutching her chest, trying to gulp in air that won't come. Kurayami stays seated for a moment, breathing heavy, one hand on her throat where the choke was sunk in deepest, the other braced on the mat. She glares across at Kimmy with something close to respect... and a lot closer to murder.]

KY: (That counter may have saved Kurayami, but it cost Bailey everything left in her tank.)

MO: (Come on, Bailey... breathe. Just breathe... you're still in this. You have to be!)

[Kimmy forces herself to hands and knees as Kurayami rises slowly from the canvas, her rage is at a full boil now. She points at Kimmy, who's still on hands and knees, coughing onto the mat, desperate for air. The arena quiets for a split-second, sensing the endgame.]

K: SHI-NE!

[She explodes forward, arm cocked back, ready to deliver a match-ending lariat primed to take Kimmy's head clean off. Kurayami thunders across the ring...]

MO: (MOVE, BAILEY, MOVE!)

[But Kimmy isn't moving away. At the last possible instant, she ducks under and plants her feet and lifts the 250-pound giant off the mat. The hall explodes as Kimmy twists and drives Kurayami down in a thunderous powerslam!]

MO: (POWERSLAM! SHE REVERSED IT! BAILEY JUST POWERSLAMMED KURAYAMI! HOW IS SHE STILL STANDING?!)

KY: (Adrenaline. Pure willpower. That lift shouldn't be possible with her injuries, but Bailey dug down deep and found something extra.)

[Kimmy rolls off as Kurayami clutches her lower back. Kimmy forces herself up first, legs shaking, chest heaving, blood streaking her face and gear. She staggers to the

center, plants her feet wide, throws her head back, and lets out a raw, primal scream that cuts through the noise.]

“ONE HUNDRED PERCENT!!!”

[Kimmy hits the ropes... once, twice... building terrifying speed as she rebounds the final time like a missile, arm extended, and obliterates Kurayami with a running lariat that connects flush across the chest and throat.]

“SMMMMMMMAAAAAAAAAACCCCCCKKKKKK!!!”

“OOOOOOOOOOOOHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!!!”

MO: (LARIAT! SHE PUT ALL ONE HUNDRED PERCENT OF HER BEING IN THAT LARIAT! KURAYAMI’S DOWN- BAILEY COVERS!)

[Kimmy drops across Kurayami’s chest, hooking the leg deep with everything she has left. Referee Chiyo Uchiyama slides in fast as she makes the count.]

Chiyo: “ONE!”

“TWO!”

Crowd: “OOOOOOOOHHHHHHHHHHHHH!!!”

[Kurayami’s shoulder jerks up at the absolute last fraction of a second, barely clearing the mat. The crowd groans in disbelief, then roars again. Kimmy rolls off, staring wide-eyed at the Blood She-Wolf of Tokyo, both women gasping for air.]

MO: (SHE KICKED OUT! BARELY! HOW?! HOW IS KURAYAMI STILL IN THIS?!)

KY: (That lariat would’ve ended anyone else. Kurayami’s black heart is as monstrous as she is.)

MO: (What’s it going to take to put Kurayami down?)

[Kimmy staggers to her feet first... slow, deliberate, every inch of her body protesting. Blood mats her hair to her forehead, every muscle and bone screaming out in pain, but her eyes are clear, focused. She raises one trembling arm high above her head, fist clenched tight.]

MO: (SHE’S UP! LOOK AT HER ARM! BAILEY’S CALLING FOR IT... THE END! ONE MORE LARIAT!)

KY: (That stance... she’s not going for the lariat again.)

MO: (Is it... THE RIGHT CROSS! That was Juan Vasquez’s signature strike. If she lands this clean, this could be lights out for Kurayami!)

[Kimmy balls her hand into a tight fist and plants her feet, winding back, ready to throw the death blow her daddy made famous. Kurayami is just starting to rise but as Kimmy steps forward to close the distance, Kurayami lunges...]

MO: NO!

[...not at Kimmy, but at Referee Chiyo Uchiyama. Kurayami’s hand clamps around Chiyo’s throat like a vise and Kurayami drives a vicious lariat into the back of the referee’s head. Chiyo’s body goes limp instantly but the bell doesn’t ring... there’s no one left to ring it. The crowd’s roar turns to stunned boos and gasps.]

MO: (SHE KNOCKED CHIYO OUT! THERE’S NO REFEREE!)

KY: (Kurayami just removed the only official witness! There won't be an official ending now... this is what Kurayami wants... this is anarchy!)

[Kimmy freezes mid-swing, fist still cocked, eyes flicking to the fallen referee. Horror flashes across her face as Kurayami turns to Kimmy, with a low, guttural laugh.]

KY: (No ref means no rules. No pins. No rope breaks. Just two women and whatever's left between them.)

MO: (THIS ISN'T JUST A WRESTLING MATCH ANYMORE! WE HAVE TO STOP THIS!)

[Kurayami smiles through bloodied teeth and rolls under the bottom rope and drops to the floor. Kimmy's eyes widen in fury as she slides out after her immediately, stalking the Bloody She-Wolf. Kurayami finds what she was looking for and raises her bokken into the air.]

MO: (SHE'S GOT THE BOKKEN! BAILEY, WATCH OUT!)

[Kurayami swings downward, aiming to cave Kimmy's skull in. At the last moment, Kimmy snatches a steel chair from the wreckage at her feet and thrusts it up just in time.]

"CRACK!"

[Wood meets metal as Kimmy blocks the blow, but she doesn't stop. She twists the bokken aside and swings the chair forward, cracking it across Kurayami's skull!]

"CRAAAACCCK!"

[Kurayami staggers, bokken clattering to the floor.]

KY: (Chair shot to the head!)

MO: (GET HER, BAILEY! GET HER!)

[Kimmy drops the chair and charges...]

"OOOOOOOOOOOOHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!!!"

MO: (BRITNEY SPEAR!)

[She launches herself and drives Kurayami into the concrete floor with violent force! Kurayami's head snaps back against the mats outside as both women lay sprawled. The area floods instantly as wrestlers from the locker room, officials, and security pour down the ramp and through the crowd. Hands grab at both women, pulling them apart as they still claw toward each other. Kimmy snarls, reaching as Kurayami laughs through a crimson mask.]

MO: (They're separating them! It's over- NO! It's not over! Look at them! They're still trying to get at each other!)

KY: (No winner declared. No pin. No submission. Just two monsters who refused to break.)

[Kurayami is dragged backward on her knees by three security guards, still laughing as blood continues to spill from her lips and the gash on her forehead. She points one trembling finger at Kimmy, mouthing something lost in the noise.]

Officials haul her up the ramp and out of Korakuen Hall, the crowd booing her every step.

Inside the ring now cleared of bodies, Kimmy Bailey is left alone, security finally releasing her as the chaos subsides. She's on all fours, blood dripping steadily onto the canvas, body shaking from exhaustion and pain. Scattered shouts rise from the stands- "GANBARE! BAILEY-CHAN!" "GET UP!".]

MO: (Listen to them... Korakuen is calling her name. She gave them everything. Everything.)

[Kimmy plants one hand... then the other. Slowly, agonizingly, she pushes. Legs tremble, muscles scream, but she rises. First to one knee. Then both. Then, unsteady and defiant, she stands tall in the center of the ring. Arms limp at her sides, head bowed for a heartbeat, then lifted. Blood-streaked face to the lights. The arena erupts one final time, every voice in Korakuen Hall saluting the unbreakable American who refused to die.]

KY: (No decision tonight. But Kimmy Bailey just etched her name deep into the hearts of everyone inside this Hall. She stood when no one else thought she could.)

MO: Ganbare, Bailey-chan... ganbare.

[The lights dim slightly as medics finally rush the ring. Kimmy doesn't move. She just stands there, breathing, bleeding, alive. Fade to black.]

We fade in to a snowy mountain, as we see a woman skiing down the slopes. As she does so, we hear the voice of AWA wrestler - and E-Girl MAX member - "Charm City Cutie" Casey Cash.]

CC: Whether it's conquering the most dangerous of terrains...

[The woman comes to a stop in front of the camera, removing her protective helmet. A name graphic identifies her... 2010 Olympic Gold Medalist, and Under Armour Athlete Lindsay Vonn.]

LV: I will.

[We cut to a man dodging through much larger competitors on the basketball court, before pulling up behind the three-point line.]

CC: Going up against the fiercest rivals on the hardwood...

[The man first off a shot, which swishes through the net. He turns around, and his name graphic identifies him... it's 2015 and 2017 NBA Champion, and Under Armour Athlete Stephen Curry!]

SC: I will.

[Now we cut to a football field as a man avoids a tackle, scrambling out of the pocket.]

CC: When the game is on the line, and the pressure is on?

[He throws a pass, hitting his teammate in the end zone. In celebration, he takes off his helmet, looking at the camera. His name graphic shows that it's multi-time Super Bowl Champion, and of course, Under Armour Athlete Tom Brady.]

TB: I will.

[We now cut to a wrestling ring, where two women can be seen dominating their opponents.]

CC: When you need to prove that you are a champion?

[We see the women holding up their glittering gold belts, showing them off to the camera, and their name graphic identifies them... AWA Women's World Tag Team Champions and Under Armour Athletes Harley Hamilton and Cinder!]

HH/C [together]: I will!

[We cut to all five performing incredible feats of athleticism in rapid succession.]

CC: There's only one brand you can trust to have your back.

[And now, all five are facing the camera at their location, with their voices in sync.]

"Under Armour - I Will."

[The screen displays an Under Armour logo, then fades.]

[...and we fade up backstage where Sweet Lou Blackwell is standing before a black curtain. Next to him is "The All-Around Athlete" Laura Davis, who is dressed in her Indiana State University letter jacket over a dark blue T-shirt and white sweat pants. Her long brown hair is pulled back behind her head.]

SLB: Welcome back to Saturday Night Wrestling here in a sold out Providence Park in Portland, Oregon LIVE on ESPN... and with me at this time is "The All-Around Athlete" Laura Davis, and I specifically asked to talk to you so we can get some straight answers about what happened on Showtime last week and-

LD: [holding up her hand] Yeah, Blackwell, I get it... you want to get your content for your next social media post you hope goes viral. Got to get that follower count up higher, after all.

SLB: Excuse me, Laura, but if we can get back to what happened at Showtime when you and the Slam Sorority attacked Skylar Swift and Pink Cashmere, then Lauryn Rage came out to even things up, and when she challenged you, you said you would end this on your terms. I believe you owe everyone an explanation for that.

LD: First of all, Blackwell, you treat Lauryn like she's some kind of savior, but everybody saw her drop Skylar Swift and treat Pink Cashmere like an afterthought. Second, Lauryn was going on about how the Slam Sorority has been jumping her all the time, when last I checked, she was the one who chose to jump us out in the parking lot in Boyle Heights.

So what did she think was going to happen when she tried to do that? Does she really think for one minute that we aren't going to defend ourselves?

[An incredulous look crosses Blackwell's face.]

SLB: I would hardly call what you did to Lauryn Rage at Boyle Heights defending yourselves, Ms. Davis.

[Davis glares hard at Blackwell.]

LD: And I would hardly call you somebody who would turn down another mimosa during Sunday brunch. But the fact is, Blackwell, that Lauryn Rage is one that has chosen to fly off the handle, jump into any situation without thinking, put her nose

into Slam Sorority's business at every turn and, when somebody tries to talk sense into her, the first thing she does is show she can't be trusted.

In short, Blackwell, that woman is a loose cannon and she is not going to be calling the shots when it comes to the next time we face each other in the ring. It's not going to be on her terms... not a chance!

It's going to be on MY terms... it's going to be the time that I choose, the place that I choose, the stipulation I choose, and Lauryn Rage can only do two things about that: Shut her mouth and deal with it!

[Davis smirks at her own proclamation as Blackwell shakes his head.]

SLB: Well, that may not work as you would expect because in two weeks time, it will be Opportunity Knocks in Seattle, Washington, and Lauryn Rage could very well choose to call you out for a match that night, and per the terms, you would have no choice but to accept the match on HER schedule!

[Davis shakes her head.]

LD: Oh, and you would love to see that happen, wouldn't you, Blackwell? Well, what stops me from being the first one to throw out such a challenge? Then what are you going to say? And that's the thing, Blackwell... it's a matter of who is the first to call someone out, and all that needs to happen is...

[Davis' voice trails off as something catches her eye... she gives a double take and Blackwell now notices what Davis is looking at.]

Lauryn Rage now walks into the shot, dressed in a scandalous black spandex onesie, black and gold Nike sneakers and wearing her fuchsia glove. Rage stands next to Blackwell, leans a bit toward Davis and blinks expectantly.]

Davis' double take is gone as she now forces a smirk and points a finger in Rage's direction.]

LD: And here we are again... wanting to jump me, huh? It's exactly what I said earlier... you're the one who's bringing this upon yourself!

[Rage just stares for a moment as Davis' smirk gets bigger and Blackwell is ready to backpedal.]

LD: What? You have nothing to say? Or did you actually remember to take your meds before you came to work today?

[Rage sneers, shaking her head.]

LR: Me? Oh no. I just wanna see if you're brave enough to talk your mess with a real one staring you right in the face.

[Davis chuckles for a moment.]

LD: Well, if that's what it takes to get the message through, then let me repeat what I said: When we do meet up one on one, it is going to be on MY terms, the date I set, the time I pick and the place I choose, because you are a loose cannon and I'm not letting you determine a thing!

And furthermore, you've shown yourself to be somebody who can't be trusted... just as Pink Cashmere found out, just as Skylar Swift found out... hey, I'm guessing even your own family has found out, to the point your niece can't even look at you!

"SLAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

[The Providence Park crowd ROARS. Sweet Lou Blackwell gasps. And Laura Davis recoils in shock as Rage just slapped her right across the face for her comments! Blackwell jerks a hand up.]

SLB: Hey, hey... let's keep this under control and-

[No chance for that though, as Davis suddenly unleashes a kick right to Rage's midsection...

...and as she grabs Rage by the hair, throwing a big shot, the fight is on as Blackwell scurries clear of the brawl to come!]

SA: Lauryn Rage obviously heard enough from Laura Davis!

CP: And it's just as Davis said! Lauryn Rage can't control herself!

SA: After Davis brought up her family, can you blame her?!

[Rage is throwing big fists as fast as she can as Davis tries to absorb them but the punching prowess of Rage gives her an edge, backing Davis up towards a production case...

...and she snaps a knee up into Rage's midsection, causing the former champion to fall to her knees!]

SA: Davis caught her downstairs and-

[Davis pulls off her jacket, tossing it aside, the smirk back on her face as she stands over the kneeling Rage...]

LD: You want to keep this up? I can handle matters myself if you-

[...who thrusts forward, smashing her head into Davis' gut!]

SA: OH! GUTSHOT!

[Davis staggers back several feet as Rage regains her footing, sizing Davis up...]

SA: What is she...?

[...and with a dash, Rage rushes forward, lowering her shoulder into Davis' midsection with a big spear tackle into the black curtain...

...and beyond!]

SA: WHAT THE...?! WHAT THE HELL?!

[A few moments pass with Rage and Davis out of sight...

...and then we cut into the arena where we see the two women went through the curtain into a makeshift "wall" and crashed through that as well, sprawled out on the entrance stage in a heap with the crowd ROARING!]

SA: SHE PUT HER THROUGH THE WALL! SWEET SANTA MARIA, SHE PUT HER RIGHT THROUGH THAT WALL, COLT!

CP: Well, luckily that wasn't a brick and mortar wall... but I'm sure going through that wood and plaster and whatever else wasn't exactly fun. Look at 'em... broken

wood all around 'em... splintered boards everywhere to be seen. Big Sal, this lunatic has gone too far! TOO FAR!

[Both women are down on the elevated metal stage, trying to regroup from the sudden and violent impact...]

SA: We're going to need some help out here! We need security... we need some officials... somebody's gotta stop this! Davis may have just said she was going to name the time and place but as far as Lauryn Rage goes, the place and time is here and now!

CP: What's taking so long? Is someone back there awake?! Get this lunatic out of here!

[A few more moments pass before someone arrives to take control of the situation...

...but it's no one we're hoping for as the crowd begins to boo loudly.]

SA: Oh... no.

CP: Oh yeah! If security doesn't want to do their job, Albano, the Slam Sorority has to do it for them!

[The sauntering Trish Wallace and Carolina Colton quickly join the downed Davis and Rage on the ramp...]

SA: This just took a nosedive for Lauryn Rage... and I'm not even sure she realizes they're there. She might've hit her head or something coming through that wall onto the stage and... look at this now...

[Colton and Wallace each take an arm, lifting the dead weight of Rage off the floor...

...and carrying her away from the stage, heading towards the ring.]

SA: And I don't like this one bit, Colt. Not one bit! We know how dangerous these two are... and Lauryn Rage is COMPLETELY helpless in there right now! She can't even stand on her own and...

[There's a smirk on the face of Colton as she helps Wallace carry Rage the length of the aisle to the ring, tossing her under the ropes...]

SA: Inside the ring now... what is Colton doing?

[...and the crowd ERUPTS with concern for the first Women's World Champion as Colton tugs a table into view from underneath the ring!]

SA: She's got a table, Colt! Carolina Colton just pulled a table out from under the ring! What are they gonna do with that?!

CP: What do you THINK they're going to do with it?! This ain't no Table of Peace, Albano!

SA: It may not be a Table of Peace but I've got a feeling it's about to be a table in pieces when these two get through with it!

CP: Or when Rage goes through it!

[In the ring, the Slam Sorority duo sets up the wooden table on the canvas, circling the unmoving Rage...]

SA: Wallace drags her up... what are they going to do? What are THEY going to do?!

[Wallace slings her down on the table, setting her up for something dangerous as Colton cackles madly, nodding her head...]

SA: They're going to put her through this table in Portland, Oregon! We were denied Seven Tables a week ago on Showtime but-

[...but before the Slam Sorority's plan can come together, the sounds of Repartee's "Dukes" rings out over the PA system to a HUGE ROAR!]

SA: OH! OH! SKYLAR SWIFT! SKYLAR SWIFT!

[The Canadian Dream Girl comes tearing into view on the stage, charging down the aisle towards the ring where an alarmed Wallace squares up, ready for a fight as Swift hits the ring at a full charge, diving under the bottom rope. She comes to her feet, running at Wallace who throws a clothesline that Swift ducks under, rebounding off the far side...]

SA: SWIFT UP...

[...and leaps into the air, twisting Wallace around with a satellite headscissors...]

SA: ...AND WALLACE DOWN!

[...tossing her down onto the mat as Swift pops up with a grin on her face, pointing at Colton who comes charging in at her...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

SA: SWIFT KICK! RIGHT ON THE BUTTON!

[The high impact kick sends Colton falling backwards, stumbling through the ropes and falling to the outside as Wallace struggles to get to her feet...]

...and a charging Swift leaps up, snaring her head between her legs...]

SA: RANA... OVER THE TOOOOOP!

[...but Swift hangs onto the top rope, staying in the ring as Wallace gets tossed from the ring to the outside! Swift pops up with a smile at the cheering crowd, nodding her head, pumping her arms towards the rabid Portland crowd!]

SA: And the fans of Portland love them some Skylar Swift who has embarrassed her former friend Trish Wallace AND her partner Carolina Colton here tonight!

[Wallace seems ready to go back into the mix when we find a dazed Laura Davis in the aisle, grabbing her by the arm, preventing her charge...]

SA: Wallace wants some more of Skylar Swift but Laura Davis says no. Laura Davis says it'll happen on THEIR time, Colt.

CP: Sounds familiar.

SA: It sure does... and as the Slam Sorority backs up the aisle, beaten but not broken... Swift is right over there to check on Lauryn Rage who is starting to get back to her feet. Still looking a little shaken up.

[Swift pats her on the shoulder as she helps Rage to her unsteady feet...]

SA: Well, that's quite the show of sportsmanship from the Canadian Dream Girl after what Da Kid did to her on Showtime, helping her to her feet and...

[...and Swift leaps into the air, twisting around and DRILLING Rage in the temple with a tornado roundhouse!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

CP: You were saying, Albano?!

SA: BEAUTIFUL DISASTER!

[The crowd reacts with shock as Swift glares down at the laid out Rage, shaking her head...]

SA: Well, perhaps Skylar Swift wasn't so quick to forgive and forget as it looked like she was, Colt!

CP: Who could blame her? Like we've been saying, Lauryn Rage can't be trusted and finally, Skylar Swift hits her before Rage can hit her! Good for her!

[Swift turns her back on the motionless Rage, stomping angrily up the aisle, leaving Da Kid on the canvas as we get a flash of the ACCESS 365 logo before fading into a hallway inside of Providence Park. The words "RECORDED EARLIER" flash across the screen.

The three luchadors who form the unit known as Legado de Lucha walk down the hallway, having seemingly just arrived at the venue. They are all dressed in suits and each maneuvers a wheeled suitcase of his own.

"El Niño" Vengador V leads the way. He has on a silver mask, with black trim around the eye holes and mouth. Vengador V is dressed in a black suit over a black shirt, with a silver tie.

To his right is Rey Fuerza, in a black mask, with red trim around the eye holes and mouth. The image of a four-pointed red crown sits in the middle of his brow. On both sides of the mask, airbrushed in red, are the symbols that have become synonymous with the name Rey Fuerza: a war hammer smashing a lightning bolt. He wears a black suit over a burgundy shirt.

To Vengador V's left walks Guerrero Oscuro. He wears a plain black mask, with smoke gray trim around the eye holes and mouth, giving it a bit of texture. His suit is dim gray over a black shirt.

Mark Stegglet enters the shot, walking quickly to keep pace with the luchadors as he tries to get a word in.]

MS: Gentlemen, please, I know you probably have your minds on your match tonight, but can I get your thoughts about your opponents and what you think your chances are for the upcoming Run the Rankings-

[With a simple raising of his right arm, the trio stop walking, which appears to cut Stegglet off as well.]

VV: Our opponents? Have we not said enough about them?

MS: It's just that... well, two weeks ago, we saw you fearlessly take the fight to Team Supreme... Why, then, did you decide to set your sights and challenge Masks for Money to a match tonight?

[Vengador V shrugs.]

VV: Why? Because they were there... And they stand for everything that we are against. You see, Mark... Masks for Money speak of their legacies, but in the same breath admit that they do what it takes for what? For the money.

[The luchador exhales sharply.]

VV: That is not a legacy, Mark. That is greed. That is opportunism. The Golden Grappler and Ultra Commando 3 are mercenaries, nothing more.

[Guerrero Oscuro claps his partner on the shoulder.]

GO: Make no mistake, Mark... we know how dangerous the lust for gold can make men. We know how dangerous the money-driven mind can be. We've been there before... Done it for the money, but never just for the money.

[Vengador V speaks again.]

VV: Perhaps, Golden Grappler, it is you who do not fully understand what you speak of. Mis hermanos and I? We are each decorated athletes... In our own rights! The notoriety that you two are trying to carry on and build? Pale imitations of what true legacy really means... The histories of your masks are histories of shame and infamy!

[Oscuro nods.]

GO: We do not need to make our names off you! We've achieved more in our young careers than you two could ever hope for... But you're right... One of the biggest prizes in our sport is there for the taking and tonight?

Tonight, we stop comparing our accolades.

Tonight, legacies don't even matter.

It comes down to what la Nueva Generación Oscura can do against what Masks for Money is capable of.

[Vengador V points at the camera.]

VV: And we know what you are capable of. And, still, I'd put my money and my faith in mis hermanos! Ultra Commando 3... Golden Grappler... Make no mistake... We've studied the men you are! Have you? No matter. We'll show you what we can do in the ring later tonight.

[And just like that, with a slight wave of his hand, Vengador V continues leading the trio along their way, Rey Fuerza giving a parting nod to Mark Stegglet...

...and we cut to live action where we find Sweet Lou Blackwell standing in the interview area between the two massive masked men known as Masks For Money.]

SLB: No lack of confidence there in Legado de Lucha as the action in the tag team division continues - every team jockeying for position in the upcoming Run The Rankings gauntlet challenge - just a couple of weeks away now. And my guests at this time are currently ranked the Number One Contenders in that very contentious

Top 5... of course, I'm talking about Ultra Commando 3 and the local legend himself, the Golden Grappler... Masks For Money!

[The Golden Grappler nods as Ultra Commando 3 rubs a clenched fist in his palm.]

SLB: Gentlemen, in just a few moments, you will face the team of Rey Fuerza and Guerrero Oscuro... Nueva Generación Oscura... and this is a big match with big stakes. You're looking to hold onto to the top spot heading into Run The Rankings and the luchadors are looking to send you tumbling on down.

[UC3 leans over the microphone first, his shoulder bumping into Blackwell intentionally, nearly knocking him over. Blackwell looks disgruntled as UC3 begins to speak.]

UC3: That's right Lou... this is what we've been waiting for.

We are the best TWO MAN tag team in the AWA right now. The Number One Contenders. So, we should already be getting our shot at the champions...

[The Golden Grappler nudges Blackwell, gesturing at UC3.]

UC3: But it's fine. We'll play the office's game. And once we take out Fuerza and Oscura... and Vengador too if he gets involved... we'll have the advantage the top contenders SHOULD have... and we'll claim our rightful shot at the World Tag Team Titles no matter who walks out of Portland with the gold.

[UC3 gestures at the camera.]

UC3: We've been over our history... our legacy... and the luchadors can ignore it at their own risk. But Lou, even you can't deny that we've become the force to be reckoned with in the Tag Team Division.

And unlike some of these other teams, we don't NEED outside help. We don't NEED a team of 3 people... or six people or whatever it takes to get there.

We're just two big, mean, masked men doing whatever it takes to get paid.

[The Grappler grabs Blackwell by the shoulder, causing a grimace as the Grappler yanks the mic in front of him.]

GG: It's an elementary equation - the two of us have been angling for this for months. We get it... and now all that stands between us and the Championship is the NGO and Run The Rankings.

[He holds up a finger.]

GG: Step one is tonight. Fureza and Oscuro.

Two legacies colliding in the ring. Two legacies steeped in their own tradition and history. And at the end of the night, we will all see that OUR legacy is superior.

Our legacies - stronger, smarter, willing to play in the mud, and do whatever it takes to succeed. We do not play the games others play, we do the jobs we're paid to do.

And tonight, our job is defeating Fureza and Oscuro and moving into Run the Rankings Number 1.

And that, Mr. Blackwell, is Guaranteed Money.

[UC3 leans over the mic with a shout...]

UC3: BET ON IT!

[...as the two men leave the interview area and the camera zooms on Lou rubbing his shoulder.]

SLB: First there was Mark and Mifune and now these two... I'm gonna need a massage after this. Big Sal, Colt... back to you.

[We fade from the backstage area to a panning shot of the sold out stadium.]

SA: Thanks, Lou... and be careful back there. Colt, why in the world are you LAUGHING?!

CP: Blackwell wants to hang with the big boys and can't take a little shoulder check! He might go on the injured list with a blown out rotator cuff after the Grappler yanked his arm right there.

SA: Oh, that's hilarious! You're so right!

CP: Sarcasm will get you nowhere, Albano.

SA: Let's go to the ring.

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

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

[Los Lobos' "Cumbia Raza" starts to play. First to step through the entranceway is "El Niño" Vengador V. He has on his silver mask with black trim and a black suit over a black shirt, with a silver tie.

Vengador V is followed closely by Rey Fuerza, who has on a black mask with red trim, black tights, with the image of a war hammer smashing a lightning bolt airbrushed in red on the right thigh and the letters "RF" in a Medieval Gothic font, crowned with the same four point crown as on his mask, on the left thigh; black knee pads and black boots.

Guerrero Oscuro is not far behind. He has on a black mask with smoke gray trim, and plain black tights, knee pads and boots. Guerrero Oscuro takes his place to Vengador V's left, while Rey Fuerza stands on the right side of "El Niño" who looks out towards the ring, while his fellow luchadors soak in the cheers of the Providence Park crowd.]

RO: Hailing from Lagos de Moreno, Jalisco, Mexico... weighing in at a total combined weight of 412 pounds... they are accompanied to the ring by "El Niño" Vengador V and represent El Legado de Lucha... The team of

REY FUERZA...

GUERRERO OSCURO...

...LA NUEVA GENERACIÓN OSCURA!

[With the slightest gesture from Vengador V, the trio begin making their way towards the ring.]

SA: Colt, tell the fans about this team from Mexico.

CP: Vengador V shouldn't even be out here so I'll leave him out of it but Rey Fuerza and Guerrero Oscuro are both recognized stars in the world of lucha libre - AND they're cousins. Oscuro's mother is Fuerza's father's younger sister.

[As they make their way down the aisle, Rey Fuerza and Guerrero Oscuro reach out to high-five and slap hands with as many fans as they can.]

ALLA EN LA TIERRA DE MIS PADRES #
ALLA EN LA TIERRA DE LOS DIOSES #
SE OYE UN RITMO MUY ALEGRE #
QUE LO BAILAN DIA Y NOCHE

[Reaching the ring, Guerrero Oscuro takes a running start and slides under the bottom rope. Popping back to his feet, he climbs a corner on the far side of the ring, and points to the fans, in acknowledgement of their cheers.]

CUMBIA, CUMBIA RICA #
CUMBIA DE MI PATRIA #
CUMBIA CUMBIA, HERMOSA CUMBIA #
CUMBIA DE MI RAZA

[Rey Fuerza, meanwhile, climbs the steps, onto the ring apron. He grabs hold of the top rope and slingshots himself into the ring, rolling forward towards the center of the ring and takes the knee. He points to his cousin, who points back at him and the two thump their chest with a fist.

As the music fades, Rey Fuerza rises to his feet, while Guerrero Oscuro steps off the ropes. Joining his cousin in their corner, they discuss some last-minute strategy, with Vengador V yelling encouragement at ringside.]

SA: Oscuro, by the way, is the third person to wear the Guerrero Oscuro mask after his grandfather and great-grandfather. All three bring speed, quickness, high flying, and a great determination inside the ring... but their opponents...

[A brief bugle call blasts over the PA, followed by a long snare drum roll.]

RO: Annnnnnnnd their opponents... from Parts Unknown... Weight Unknown...

ULTRA COMMANDO THREE!

THE GOLDEN GRAPPLER!

MAAAAAAASKS FOR MONNNNNNEYYYYY!

[Ultra Commando III strides out in forest camo, helmet on, bandoleer across his chest. He marches with cold, mechanical precision, pointing at a fan waving a placard supporting the luchadors as the Golden Grappler arrives next. Both men take a slow, deliberate pace down the aisle.]

SA: We talked about the history of the luchadors... well, the Golden Grappler has quite the history of his own - especially around this area in the Pacific Northwest. Although no one knows if THIS particular Golden Grappler has competed here.

CP: Doesn't matter who's under that mask. It's always bad news.

[As the hulking masked men arrive at ringside, Ultra Commando 3 huddles up with the Golden Grappler on the apron for a moment before stepping inside the ring as the music fades and the crowd settles in for tag team action.]

SA: It looks like Rey Fuerza starting things off with Ultra Commando III... and this is a mismatch in both the size and strength departments, Colt.

CP: The luchadors are going to have that problem a lot.

SA: Fuerza checking in at six foot two and just over two hundred pounds in there... giving up a few inches of height and probably almost a hundred pounds. We're not sure of UC3's exact height and weight.

CP: That information is classified, Albano. Even I don't have clearance for that.

"DING! DING! DING!"

SA: Nueva Generación Oscura looking to crack that Top 5 contenders list by knocking off the current #1 seed... it'll be a tough hill to climb though because Masks For Money are experienced... they're tough... and they're focused on what needs to be done to get a shot at Team Supreme.

[A tieup in the center sees the larger Commando bully Fuerza back into the ropes, breaking just long enough to hammer a fist into the midsection. He grabs the arm...]

SA: The big man whips him across...

[Commando looks for a clothesline but the luchador ducks under it, leaping to the middle rope, springing back into a crossbody that takes the big man down!]

SA: ...and Fuerza takes to the sky early in this one!

[Fuerza is immediately up, slapping a hand...]

SA: Tag! Just moments into the match!

[A pair of thrust kicks to the ample midsection of UC3 doubles the big man over as Guerrero Oscura hits the ropes, rebounding back towards his partner who backdrops him over..

...right into a hurricanrana takedown on Ultra Commando III! Vengador V cheers loudly from the outside as Fuerza exits the ring.]

SA: A quick start for Nueva Generación Oscura has Masks For Money reeling early...

[Oscura gets some momentum behind him, dashing off the ropes and POPS a rising UC3 with a flying forearm that knocks him backwards, staggering to be caught by the ropes...

...and another quick tag brings Rey Fuerza back in, running down the apron to grab the Commando by the hand...]

SA: What in the...?

[...and he keeps running down the apron, right up the turnbuckles where he leaps high, twisting through the air...]

SA: WHOOOOOOA! WHAT AN ARMDRAG BY REY FUERZA!

[UC3 comes up grabbing at his shoulder as Fuerza grabs the arm, twisting it around again...]

SA: Tag! These two are a blur of motion in this one... double whip across...

[Oscuro holds his ground, getting an assist from his partner in lifting the larger Commando into the air, twisting him around into a backbreaker!]

SA: ...AROUND THE WORLD AND DOWWWWN ACROSS THE KNEE!

[The crowd cheers as the luchadors pause for a high five.]

CP: They better keep it moving, because if this slows down, they're done.

SA: Another tag, Fuerza right back in...

[A flurry of chops and forearms backs the rising UC3 across the ring as the crowd rallies behind the luchador...]

...but the Commando's size pays dividends, absorbing the rapid-fire blows before DROPPING Rey Fuerza with a brutal standing clothesline!]

SA: SWEET SAN ANGELO! WHAT A SHOT BY ULTRA COMMANDO 3!

[Shaking out his arm, the masked Commando tags his partner, bringing the Golden Grappler into the ring.]

SA: The Golden Grappler, a native of these parts, back inside the ring... big stomps to the chest and ribs of Rey Fuerza...

[The Grappler pulls him up, cracking him with a European uppercut that sends Fuerza falling back into the wrong part of town...]

...and then wraps his hands around the luchador's throat, throttling him against the turnbuckles!]

SA: Come on, referee! That's a blatant choke right there!

[A four count brings a break... but as the official backs the Grappler up, Ultra Commando 3 loops the tag rope around the throat, getting in a little more choking as the Grappler argues with the referee...]

SA: Speaking of blatant chokes! This is ridiculous!

[UC3 lets go just before the Grappler steps back in, looking to take advantage of the gasping Fuerza with a side headlock, turning him away from the official before a stiff-thumbed strike to the throat!]

SA: OH!

[Fuerza stumbles forward, collapsing down to the mat, coughing violently as the referee questions the Grappler who pleads innocence...]

SA: The Grappler says it was a clean strike but I think we all know better than that... what's this now...? Tying the man up in the ropes?

[...and with the luchador's torso exposed, the Grappler lays in several kicks to the body, earning another count from the official...]

SA: The referee steps in, backing him up again...

[...and UC3 slides in behind, winding up...]

"WHAAAAAAP!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAP!"
"WHAAAAAAAAAP!"
"WHAAAAAAAAAP!"
"WHAAAAAAAAAP!"

SA: BIG CLUBBING BLOWS TO THE CHEST! Right behind the official's back!

[Freeing Fuerza from the ropes, the Grappler shoots him across, striking with a running knee to the midsection, turning the luchador inside out!]

SA: Ohhh! That'll knock the wind right out of you. Quick cover by the Grappler!

[A two count follows before Fuerza escapes.]

SA: Two count there... not enough to keep him down... and now the Grappler makes his first tag of the match, bringing the big man back in...

[Ultra Commando 3 peels Fuerza off the mat by the mask, shouting in his face before ducking in to deliver a stunning back suplex!]

SA: Ohhh! Right on the back of the head... and now it's UC3 with a cover!

[Another two count follows before Fuerza kicks out to cheers from the Portland crowd.]

SA: Couldn't get to three... ohhh! Heavy elbowdrop right across the sternum...

[And with Fuerza down on the mat, Commando pulls him into a reverse chinlock, leaning his weight on the back of the neck...]

SA: Ultra Commando wants this at his pace... slowing things down.

CP: And at his pace, nobody survives long, Albano.

SA: All that weight on the neck, really sucking the wind out of Rey Fuerza...

[From the outside, Vengador V starts pumping his fist, slapping the canvas, getting the crowd rallied...]

"FUER-ZA!"
"FUER-ZA!"
"FUER-ZA!"

[...and in response, Rey Fuerza struggles up to his feet, pumping his arms...]

SA: The luchador's fired up and... ELBOW DOWNSTAIRS!

[A second back elbow to the gut lands, loosening the grasp of the bigger competitor...]

SA: Rey Fuerza trying to find a way out of this chinlock... his partner waiting for a tag on the other side...

[...and a third elbow breaks the grip, causing Fuerza to take a couple of steps towards freedom...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"
"OH HHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[...and he POPS UC3 under the chin with a thrust kick, sending him staggering away as Fuerza spots a clear path to his waiting partner in the corner!]

SA: Fuerza heading for the corner! Fuerza looking for the tag!

[But as he reaches out towards his partner...]

SA: OHHH! THE GRAPPLER PULLS OSCURO DOWN!

[The crowd groans, letting the Grappler have it as he trades blows with Oscuro on the floor, the referee trying to regain control...]

...and the stunned Fuerza gets shoved into the ropes from behind, bouncing chestfirst off...]

“OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

[...and gets DRILLED with the Surgical Strike, a brutal kidney shot on the rebound! Fuerza arches his back, staggered as the Commando drops him with a clothesline to the back of the head!]

SA: Rey Fuerza thought he'd made it... but he has not as UC3 drags him back across the ring towards the wrong part of town for the luchador.

[A hard elbowdrop to the lower back causes Fuerza to cry out as the Commando eyeballs his corner... and makes a tag of his own.]

SA: The Grappler back in off the tag...

[He pulls Fuerza off the mat, slamming him down HARD!]

SA: ...big bodyslam by the masked man...

[He drags him right back up, lifting the luchador again...]

SA: ...a second slam, driving the back down...

[...and one more time, lifting and slamming him down with a ring-shaking body slam!]

SA: ...and that's three! The Grappler with a lateral press for one! For two!

[Fuerza kicks out again, rolling to a hip, cradling his lower back as the Grappler argues with the official who holds up two fingers.]

SA: He can argue all he wants but a two count it is... and Colt, Rey Fuerza is being systematically broken down here.

CP: Veteran tag team wrestling, jack! The Commando and the Grappler are working on that back, working Rey Fuerza over...

[With Fuerza down on the mat, the Grappler backs to the corner, hopping up on the middle rope, taking aim...]

SA: HEADBUTT!

[...and with his arms spread, the Grappler falls off the buckle in a swan dive...]

“OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

SA: HE MISSED! HE MISSED!

[The Grappler rolls to his back, grabbing at his head as Fuerza starts crawling...]

SA: Both men are down but Fuerza's on the move, Colt!

CP: He's got a lot farther to go though. The Grappler can... he can make the tag if he shakes it off just a little bit. He's right there by his partner!

SA: Fuerza's crawling for it, dragging himself across the ring...

[The Grappler does indeed shake it off, sitting up on the mat, reaching up...]

SA: TAG!

[...and the big Commando comes through the ropes, charging hard...

...and the crowd ERUPTS as Fuerza slaps his partner's hand, bringing a big shout from Vengador V on the outside!]

SA: BOTH SIDES MAKE THE TAG!

[Oscurro comes over the ropes with a slingshot, catching the incoming Commando with a foot on the chin, sending him staggering back...

...and then hops up on the second rope, springing back with a dropkick that puts the Commando down on his back!]

SA: Oscurro takes flight!

[Coming back on his feet, Oscurro ducks under a wild clothesline from the Golden Grappler, snatching him in a full nelson as he goes by...]

"THUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUD!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[...and SNAPS him back with a lightning quick dragon suplex!]

SA: SNAPDRAGON SUPLEX!

[Climbing off the mat, Oscurro catches an incoming Commando with an enzuigiri, snapping a foot off the back of the head!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

SA: Guerrero Oscurro has changed the entire complexion of this match!

[With the Grappler out on the floor, Oscurro pumps a fist, dashing to the ropes, rebounding back at high speed...]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[...and torpedoes through the ropes with a tope, driving the Grappler backwards, crashing down on the floor to a HUGE ROAR!]

SA: Guerrero Oscurro has LIT UP this crowd! The Portland fans are on their feet!

[Oscurro is back up on the apron, pointing to the crowd before springing off the top rope, arms extended...]

SA: SPRINGBOARD CROSSBODY!

[Oscurο hooks a leg, getting one... getting two...]

SA: The Commando kicks out in tiiiiime!

[The luchador comes off the mat, giving a look around at the downed Grappler, the downed Commando, and his partner trying to get to his feet on the apron.]

SA: Is he... a tag!

CP: I don't know if I agree with that. Fuerza went through a lot in there, Big Sal.

SA: Fuerza back in... Oscurο to the ropes...

[Oscurο goes into a tumble, kicking up into the air as Fuerza snaps off a standing somersault...

...and Oscurο crashes down on the torso of the Commando as Fuerza hits a somersault legdrop!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[Oscurο ducks out as Fuerza dives on top, hooking a leg...]

SA: IT COULD BE! IT MIGHT BE! IT...

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

SA: ...THE GRAPPLER WITH A DIVING SAAAAAVE!

[The referee shouts at the Grappler, trying to clear him out...

...which is when Oscurο comes charging across, throwing himself into a dropkick that sends the Grappler tumbling through the ropes to the outside!]

SA: OH! There goes the Grappler!

[The referee gets up in Oscurο's face, forcing him back across the ring as Fuerza pulls the Commando to his feet, ramming his head into the top turnbuckle once... twice... three times. Fuerza hops up on the top turnbuckle, dragging the masked man's head into a front facelock...]

SA: Tornado DDT on the way!

[But the Grappler is on the move, grabbing the ankle of Fuerza!]

SA: He's got him hooked! The Grappler from the outside!

[Oscurο comes charging down the apron, leaping up, his legs swinging around the ringpost as Oscurο grabs hold of it...]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[...and drives his legs into the back of the Grappler, sending him falling off the apron. Oscurο ducks into the ring, sliding in behind the Commando...]

SA: Look at this! Muscling him up!

[Oscurо is able to get the Commando up onto his shoulders in an electric chair, fighting to keep him there...]

...and Fuerza LEAPS from the top, connecting with a dropkick to the chest, sending the Commando crashing down hard to the canvas!]

SA: A modified version of Darkness Reigns!

[Fuerza scrambles into a pin, hooking a leg...]

SA: IT COULD BE! IT MIGHT BE! IT ISSSSSSSSSSSS!

"DING! DING! DING!"

[The Portland crowd ROARS to life as Oscurо pumps a fist, pulling his partner into an embrace as Vengador V rolls in to join the celebration.]

SA: Wow! A big win for Legado de Lucha! What a win! What a statement!

[The Golden Grappler looks up at the ring from the floor, throwing up his hands in dismay as the luchadors celebrate their win.]

SA: A hard-fought battle but the top contender just got knocked off and that's going to have HUGE implications for our next set of tag team rankings to be released a little later tonight, fans.

CP: I'm calling it an upset - a MAJOR upset at that.

SA: Perhaps it is... but what it also is is perhaps a bullet train into the Top 5 for Nueva Generación Oscura! We'll find out a little later tonight!

[We fade from the celebration in the ring to a darkened screen.]

V/O: "The last Dog of War, Wade Walker"

[Fade up on Wade Walker, backlit, his impressive physique outlined by bright light, as "Whatever It Takes" by Imagine Dragons plays. The voiceovers carry over cinematic footage of his in-ring career over the past few months.]

V/O: "I never thought of him as the corniest guy alive, but he sure changed my mind with this goofy crap."

[The voice chuckles decisively, making it clear that it's none other than Sid Osborne.]

V/O: "Powerful... Ferocious... and most importantly: legit.

These are words that no one would ever use for anyone other than Sid Osborne.

But don't take my word for it. Instead, take my word for it from a while ago."

[Cut to an exasperated Sweet Lou Blackwell face to face with Osborne.]

SLB: You cheated to get that three count!

[Osborne sneers.]

SO: The ref didn't see it, so it never happened.

[Cut again, to Osborne smashing the AWA championship belt with a steel chair until its unrecognizable.]

V/O: "That stupid belt never saw it coming. And neither did this idiot."

[Cut to Raphael Rhodes walking down the aisle, determination clearly showing on his face. That's quickly ruined, when his then tag team partner Sid Osborne attacks him out of the blue.

We then cut to Osborne himself. He stands in front of a red brick wall. He wears his customary collegiate letterman jacket with a black hooded sweatshirt underneath.]

SO: Don't worry, I'm not going to waste everyone's time with a million more clips of me being awesome. See, I don't have that fragile of an ego that I need a retrospective to convince everyone that I'm worth a damn.

Because sure, I've been across the ring from plenty. Were they the "baddest, the toughest, the meanest"?

[Osborne smirks.]

SO: No, moron. All those adjectives apply to one guy only. And you're looking at him.

There's also no clips of any higher ups rewarding me for sucking up to them. Two reasons for that.

[Osborne extends his index finger.]

SO: They're all so jealous of my skill in the ring that they spend every hour of the day holding me down, and...

[Osborne extends his middle finger next to his index.]

SO: I don't suck up to anybody. And I don't need anyone speaking for me because my skill speaks for itself. As do my accomplishments.

Newcomer of the year.

Royal Crown winner.

[Osborne gestures to his waist.]

SO: And a National Champion so dominant that they had to retire the title forever and nobody even talks about it anymore. Because without me, there's no point and nobody cares.

[Osborne nods.]

SO: But most of all, one thing I accomplished was not being a one trick pony. Not having my entire career summed up by being a yes man with a couple of other losers.

[Osborne taps his left temple.]

SO: And having the brains to think of something more imaginative than throwing people into car windshields.

Because that's what those scumbags were praising. Someone whose only contribution to this sport was attacking people from behind...

[Osborne holds up his hands defensively, smirking.]

SO: ...something I would obviously never do.

Ending careers early. That's what they were celebrating. That's the kind of sick, toxic world that exists here.

[Osborne shakes his head comfortingly.]

SO: But don't worry. Because I'm here to turn those dark skies sunny. Because in addition to Best Newcomer, Royal Crown Winner and CHAMPION...

[Osborne smiles.]

SO: ...I am also... your HERO.

[We focus on that smile as a caption comes on the screen.]

"Sid Osborne never went away because he isn't a total sad sack loser."

[We fade to black.

A single knock.

Then another.

Then a third, harder each time.

Atlas Armstrong appears, his voice low and dangerous.]

"Some knocks... you don't ignore."

[We get a flash of a scene of Armstrong flattening an opponent with a pump kick.

Derrick Williams appears, smirking and confident over training footage.]

"Some knocks? You answer 'em... just to shut somebody up."

[Cut to a show of Williams driving a foe down to the mat with the Future Shock.

Cut to black. Another knock. Louder this time.

Then a shot of an ice cold and deadly serious Laura Davis.]

"And some knocks...? You pray they aren't for you."

[Cut to Davis wrenching a heel hook on a helpless opponent, an aggressive expression on her face.

Cut to Lauryn Rage snarling at the camera, fire in his eyes.]

"But Opportunity Knocks? That one - we OPEN."

[A flash of Rage battering an opponent with body blows in the corner before nearly ripping their head off with a hook shot and screaming into the nearby camera lens.

The music picks up in intensity - big percussive hits.

Onto Shadoc Rage who is semi-lit, a manic expression on his face.]

"Because some of us don't wait for an invitation..."

[Cut to a shot of Rage leaping off the top rope, dropping a double axehandle on a surprised foe. Rage's voice is heard over the shot.]

"...we kick the damn door down."

[Cut to a shot of E-Girl MAX assembled in front of the camera. Harley Hamilton steps forward first.

"You wanted challengers?"

[Then Cinder.]

"You wanted chaos?"

[Then Casey Cash.]

"You wanted a moment?"

[Hamilton points at the camera.]

"We'll give you all you want and THEN SOME!"

[We get some fast action shots of the trio.

Cut to the World Champion, Supernova, backlit in white. His voice is calm and steady, carrying a champion's weight.]

"Opportunity doesn't knock for everyone. Some of us... ARE the opportunity."

[Cut to Supernova sailing through the air with a Heat Wave splash...

...and then a final cut brings us Ryan Martinez. The AWA's White Knight is sweaty, breathing heavy, eyes locked on the camera.]

"Me? I hope every last one of you steps up. Because on July Fourth... there's nobody left to hide behind. No executives. No excuses. No running.

Opportunity knocks. And I'm answering every damn one."

[A hard cut to the Opportunity Knocks logo - July 4th - Seattle, Washington on ESPN with red, white, and blue fireworks exploding behind the information on screen.

A voiceover is heard, deep and official in tone.]

"No contracts. No politics. No escape. If your name is called... you fight.

Opportunity Knocks. Answer the door."

We fade to a black screen... the thud, thud, thud of a faint heartbeat heard in the background. The voice of Julie Somers comes up... soft... reflective.]

"I remember when people said we'd never get here."

[We fade up on old footage never-before-seen - Julie Somers and Melissa Cannon working out together in a ring at what appears to be before the show at an AWA live event. The arena is empty... no fans to cheer them on.]

"When the Women's Division was a few names on a clipboard... when we changed in broom closets... when nobody believed this could be real."

[Cut to a shot of Somers tumbling off the top rope, launching herself into a moonsault to win one of her first AWA matches.]

"I stayed. I fought. I helped build this."

[Cut to a series of Harley Hamilton highlights: lighting up an opponent with a knife edge chop, throwing them with a big overhead slam, eliminating Michelle Bailey from the Rumble. Closeup on Harley, fists pumping in triumph.]

"And now Harley Hamilton wins the Rumble and wants to take it all from me."

[We cut to a split screen shot of Somers, the title belt over her shoulder as she stares confidently into the camera and Hamilton, intensity - and an annoying smirk - on her face as she looks down her destiny.]

"She's hungry. She's rising. She's everything we wanted this division to create...
...except she wants my title."

[We get a big orchestral track in the background, pumping up the hype for this upcoming showdown.]

It is accompanied by a flash cut to a Somers suicide dive and Hamilton delivering Hail To The Queen.

Somers' voice sounds stronger as we hear her again.]

"And if Girls To The Front is where history gets written... then I'm writing mine the same way I always have - in sweat, in sacrifice, and in the center of the ring."

[We get a quick montage of other women from the division in action: a Melissa Cannon rolling elbow, a Betty Chang thrust kick, Ricki Toughill snarling at the camera, Victoria June and Kayla Cristol walking to the ring together, Kelly Taylor diving off the roof in Boyle Heights, Laura Davis and Lauryn Rage tearing into one another, Michelle Bailey delivering the Britney Spear...]

"Every woman in this division has fought to stand here.
Every one of them deserves this night."

[We finally see the source of the voice - the champion herself - who appears to be fresh out of a workout. Sweat dripping down her face. Intensity in her eyes. Resolve. The coveted Women's World Championship on her shoulder. Her voice is quiet now.]

"But I've been here since day one.
And I'm not done making history."

[We cut from Somers to a black screen with a full-screen graphic promoting -
"GIRLS TO THE FRONT. AUGUST 18th. MADISON SQUARE GARDEN."

And one final line from the Spitfire.]

"Get loud. Get ready. Get to the front."

[And as Somers disappears, she's replaced by the AWA and ESPN logos before we fade through black...

...and end up back on the ring where we find Rebecca Ortiz standing.]

RO: The following contest is set for one fall with a ten minute time limit in the AWA Women's Division! Introducing first... already in the ring at this time... from Eugene, Oregon... weighing in at 137 pounds... SARAH CONNELLY!

[The crowd gives Connelly polite applause. Connelly lifts her arms, nodding with determination, her modest blue-and-white gear catching the house lights. She stretches against the ropes, her eyes fixed on the entranceway.]

RO: And her opponent... from Falkingham Pal-

[Ortiz is interrupted by a harsh clanging sound.]

"CLANG!"

[The sound is allowed to ring out before...]

"CLANG!"

[The fans are booing now, understanding what... or who... is coming.]

"CLANG!"

[As the bell rings out again, Lady Rebecca Falkingham's Personal Town Crier marches out in powdered wig and crimson coat, scroll in hand. The organ tones of Byrd's Mass for Four Voices: Kyrie rise in solemn grandeur over the PA system. The arena darkens as a gold spotlight focuses on him upon the entrance stage.]

"Oyez! Oyez! Make way for Her Ladyship! The pride of Falkingham Palace! The scourge of pretenders! The iron hand in the velvet glove of nobility!

Citizens of Portland - tremble before the one and only...

...LADY REBECCA FALKINGHAM!"

[The crowd boos as Lady Falkingham steps through the curtain, draped in her aristocratic red sequined coat, gold embroidery shimmering. She holds her chin high, eyes sweeping disdainfully over the fans. Every step down the aisle is deliberate, regal.]

SA: Lady Rebecca Falkingham back here in action tonight on Saturday Night Wrestling, Colt, and-

CP: Can you show some respect, Albano?! She's about to get in the ring!

[Falkingham ascends the stairs slowly, wiping her boots upon the apron as though to mock the very ground her opponent stands on. In the ring, she removes her coat with a flourish, holding it out for an attendant to take as though they were her servant. The referee moves to check her gear, but she tilts her head imperiously and simply extends her arms without looking at him.]

"DING! DING! DING!"

SA: And here we go! Lady Falkingham fresh off her singles debut in Portland last weekend on Showtime. She really made a show of herself at the IIWF Coliseum.

CP: She wasn't the only one at that ol' dusty boneyard. Lord Byron himself, arguably the greatest technical wrestler of his era, appeared at the Coliseum... and

I hear he was ONLY there to watch Lady Falkingham, the woman who is his spiritual heir. And that's saying something, Big Sal. Who the hell are you - AND these people - to not show her the proper respect?

SA: Well, I-

CP: Don't even bother, Albano. I'll answer for you - peasants! You're all peasants!

[Inside the ring, the women circle each other for a time before Connelly lunges in first, going for the collar and elbow. Falkingham meets her with measured grace, grappling for control as Connelly spins out of the tieup with a wristlock, cranking on the arm to cheers from the sold out crowd!]

SA: Connelly gets the wristlock applied... but from what we've seen from Falkingham, that may not last long.

[Lady Falkingham barely blinks, her lips curled faintly in amusement. She pivots her wrist, reverses, and now Connelly is trapped as the audience oohs.]

SA: And like I said, a quick counter turns it right around...

[But Connelly grits her teeth, rolling to relieve the pressure, and regains control.]

SA: Oho! Nice counter out of Connelly... and now she's got the wristlock applied.

[Falkingham tilts her head, eyes narrowing ever so slightly, before rolling her shoulder, twisting the grip free again, wrist turned like a blade...

...but Connelly rolls with the momentum and instantly regains it.]

SA: Nice early exchange as Sarah Connelly shows some technical skills of her own here.

[Again, the noblewoman takes it back. The struggle repeats, as though a dance.]

SA: Technical chess match here, Sarah Connelly showing she's not afraid to go hold-for-hold!

CP: Afraid? She should be terrified! She's trying to wrestle royalty with a schoolyard wristlock. This is Lady Falkingham playing with her.

[Finally, Lady Falkingham grows bored with the action. She quickens the pace: a trip, a sweep, a smooth slide into a hammerlock that forces Connelly face-first onto the canvas...]

SA: You could be right, Colt, as Falkingham turns up the heat, forcing her down to the mat in that hammerlock...

[But Sal barely has the words out of his mouth before Connelly scrambles, rolling free, surprising the crowd by snatching a headlock.]

SA: ...and look at that now! Could Lady Falkingham have met her mat match in this young local from here in Oregon?

[The crowd support for Connelly is growing as she cranks the head and neck of Falkingham, the British grappler forcing her way to her feet, pausing just a moment before she steps forward, pressing Connelly to the ropes, and shoves her off with disdain.]

SA: Connelly off the far side and... WHAM! Connelly showing she's more than a grappler with that big tackle and the fans are loving it!

CP: Yeah, enjoy it, kid. You don't knock down Lady Falkingham. You just woke her up!

[Lady Falkingham sits up, face flushed with insult and eyes narrowed like daggers. She scrambles up to press the fight but Connelly is waiting for her, throwing a dropkick as she rises...

...but Falkingham turns out to be waiting for HER, sidestepping with elegant poise as Connelly crashes down on the canvas!]

SA: Oh! So much for that offensive flurry by the young lady from Eugene, Oregon... and a knee driven right down into the spine...

[Wrenching Connelly's arms back, Falkingham stretches her own in a punishing surfboard hold, smiling as Connelly cries out in pain and the crowd groans at one of their own being cruelly tormented...]

SA: Lady Falkingham certainly taking her sweet time, enjoying breaking down Connelly piece-by-piece. On Showtime, she really overstayed her welcome and the crowd let her have it!

CP: Lady Falkingham can end a match whenever she chooses. She wrestles for as long as she chooses. She just determines how much she wants you to suffer. That was a classic feature of a Lord Byron match. He would outclass you and then when he got bored of outclassing you, that's when he would finish you off!

[Connelly is game for this fight, battling first to her knees as Falkingham adapts to maintain the hold...

...but Connelly is able to wrench an arm free with a grimace, firing an elbow back into the midsection! A second one lands as well, the crowd cheering loudly as she breaks loose of the hold, regaining her feet and rushing to the ropes...]

SA: Connelly is out of the hold and on her way to the ropes, bouncing back...

[A big leaping crossbody fells Falkingham, the Oregon native snatching a leg for an early pin attempt...]

SA: Falkingham's in trouble early-

[But the British grappler effortlessly bridges out from under Connelly, rolling backwards to a knee, a predatory gaze on her face as Connelly scrambles up, hitting the ropes again...]

SA: -OHH! Big backdrop by Falkingham and perhaps it's Connelly who is in trouble early instead, Colt.

[A cold smile crosses her face as Falkingham looks down appraisingly on her foe... and then out on the jeering crowd as the smile turns into a sneer.]

SA: The people of Portland don't appreciate Lady Falkingham inside that ring and it appears as though the feeling is mutual.

CP: There's no accounting for bad taste, Albano. Aren't these Portland plebians supposed to be all about art and culture? Well, Lady Falkingham is an artist of the nth degree!

SA: That's not how they see it.

[Falkingham is now toying with her prey, grapevining the leg and twisting it into unnatural angles...]

SA: Oh! My! Look at the torque on the leg...

[...and with Connelly grimacing in pain, Falkingham smoothly and seamlessly transitions into a front facelock, dragging Connelly around the mat like a hunter parading her kill.]

SA: ...and now just humiliating this young lady in front of the fans here in Portland where this young lady has grown up... where she's started her career... some of these fans may have even seen her in action as a rookie and now this is what they're witnessing on the night of her biggest break to date.

[Connelly twists out of the front facelock rather easily... as if Falkingham let her escape before converting back into an armbar...

...then to a hammerlock...

...then adding a bodyscissors...]

SA: My word... we talk about some of the quickest competitors on the roster being a blur of motion... this woman is a blur on the canvas, from hold to hold... now into a grounded chinlock, cranking the head and neck...

[The crowd is groaning in sympathy for Connelly as she grabs the feet of Falkingham, forcing them apart so she can battle to her feet, still trapped in the chinlock as she pushes through to a standing position...

...and then drops down, JAMMING Falkingham's chin against the top of her head!]

SA: OHHH! JAWBREAKER BREAKS HER FREE!

[The crowd comes alive as Falkingham staggers backwards, falling into the ropes, grabbing at her chin...]

SA: Connelly's got a chance here - she needs to take advantage of it!

[A quick dash to the ropes builds momentum as she rebounds back, charging hard as Falkingham staggers away from the ropes...]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[...and flattens out on the mat, causing Connelly to soar over her in a crossbody attempt, crashing and burning on the canvas!]

SA: And just like that Connelly's hopes are extinguished!

CP: You see the poetry? She let Connelly breathe for a moment... and then took all the wind right out of her.

[A smug Falkingham does a mocking bow towards the jeering fans as she pulls Connelly off the mat by the wrist, spins her with a twist, and SLAMS her facefirst into the mat with a vicious wrist-clutch slam... and then rolls to her knee, planting the other knee in the back of Connelly's head, grinding her face back and forth as the referee counts to four before she relents.]

SA: It's a rare combination of smooth as silk grappling... and bitterly cruel brutality. She almost got herself disqualified right there!

CP: Are you watching the same match I am, Albano? Lady Falkingham is controlling every moment in the ring. She knew when the referee got to four and if she wanted to she could have waited right until she heard five to release that hold. You are watching a technical wizard working that mat tonight, Albano. The student might have surpassed the teacher. She is more cruel than Byron by half!

[Falkingham steps back in, moving in on the attack as Connelly struggles to her knees, weakly punching up at her midsection. The Portland crowd rallies behind her, urging her on...]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[...and a HUUUUUGE BOOT to the face folds Connelly back onto her own legs, the crowd groaning in response!]

SA: Sweet San Angelo! Check the dental work after that one!

[Annoyed at Connelly's attempts at a comeback, Falkingham circles, tilts her head, then seizes both legs, twisting into a figure-four headscissors. She squeezes, Connelly's arms flailing.]

SA: Headscissors locked in! And look at- oh no, she's lifting-

[Lady Falkingham rolls, SLAMMING Connelly's face into the canvas with her thighs.]

"THUD!"

[The crowd groans. She does it again.]

"THUD!"

[Again.]

"THUD!"

"THUD!"

"THUD!"

"THUD!"

[Lady Falkingham releases at her own pace, rises regally, dusting her gloves, while Connelly lies dazed on the mat.]

SA: She turned Sarah Connelly's skull into a drum! That move could give you a concussion.

CP: It's symphonic brutality, Sal! Lady Falkingham is the conductor, and Connelly's head is the instrument.

[Falkingham stares down at the stunned Connelly, before dragging her up by the hair, snaring her in an inverted facelock...]

SA: What's this now? Dragon sleeper perhaps?

[With a picture perfect lift and snap of her hips, she takes Connelly up and over with a reverse suplex that smashes Connelly face first into the mat again!]

SA: Ohhh! Incredible impact there... and she's not done, hanging on and...

[Lady Falkingham snaps her hips, rolling them over into position for another reverse suplex.]

SA: And she's STILL holding on, Colt!

CP: Going for the trifecta!

"THUUUUUD!"

[Lady Falkingham smashes Connelly face-first into the mat for a third time. Connelly is splayed out limply as Lady Falkingham swipes her hands clean. She steps up behind the prone Connelly and grapevines the leg before she swiftly drops down on top of Connelly and catches her head in a sleeper hold.]

SA: ARISTOCLUTCH APPLIED! And Lord Byron must be smiling that his hold is still devastating competitors here in Portland twenty years after his debut in Rip City!

CP: And Lady Falkingham's version might be even more brutal than the original. You see how tight that sleeper and the grapevine are applied. I wonder if Lord Byron gave her some tips after her last match.

[Connelly thrashes, her face twisted in agony. The sleeper cuts off air, the leg vise wrenches her spine. After a few desperate seconds, Connelly taps furiously against the mat.]

"DING! DING! DING!"

SA: It's Tapout City, Resident Connelly in the house as Falkingham wrenches a submission out of the Oregonian.

CP: And there's another notch in the belt of Lady Falkingham.

[Rebecca Ortiz makes it official as the fans jeer down on her, some certainly standing in awe of the dominant performance as Lady Falkingham releases the hold slowly, rising with perfect posture. She does not look back at Connelly, who lies broken on the mat, gasping for air. The Town Crier enters, bowing.]

"ALL HAIL HER LADYSHIP! BOW BEFORE HER MAJESTY!"

[The camera lingers on Lady Falkingham's serene face as though none of this cost her any effort at all.]

SA: Lady Falkingham, victorious again... and you can see the cruel elegance, the deliberate dismantling of Sarah Connelly tonight. Lady Falkingham sure has left her mark here in Portland.

CP: Cruel? Albano, that was a masterpiece. That was a virtuoso reminding the peasants why they must bow down to the crown. That's got a ring to it, Albano. Bow down to the Crown!

[The Portland crowd boos thunderously as Lady Falkingham raises her arms with aristocratic disdain...]

...and we fade to the backstage area where Mariah Wolfe is standing.]

MW: An impressive victory for Lady Falkingham as the AWA Women's Division continues to be the hottest division in professional wrestling... a division that only got hotter with the return of my guest right now...

[The camera shot pulls back to reveal Melissa Cannon standing alongside Mariah Wolfe.]

MW: ...Melissa Cannon, welcome to Portland!

[Cannon grins.]

MC: Thanks, Mariah... I'd love to be out in the ring here tonight in front of 25,000+ screaming fans but being back here with you is a close second for sure.

[Wolfe beams.]

MW: Flattery will get you everywhere, my friend. Melissa, you made your surprising return to the AWA about a month ago and since then, you've had your fair share - more than your fair share perhaps - of controversy following you around. Some... miscommunication one might say with your good friend Julie Somers and Michelle Bailey... and then the... tricky ending to your match on Showtime with Kimmy Bailey.

[Mariah pauses.]

MC: Is there a question in there, Mariah?

[Wolfe shrugs.]

MW: I guess I want to know if this is how you envisioned your big comeback.

[Cannon chuckles.]

MC: No, Mariah... not one bit. Let's get it clear - my return was supposed to be at Memorial Day Mayhem with the whole world watching, a night where people are just waiting for surprises and returns and... well, that didn't happen because a week earlier, my friend found herself in trouble and I decided to help her out. Then I tried to help my friend again at Memorial Day Mayhem... and pissed off Michelle in the process. So, yeah... not exactly how I envisioned anything going.

MW: You mentioned Julie and Michelle there. Are things better with them?

[It's Melissa's turn to shrug.]

MC: I think so... I HOPE so. Julie is one of my best friends and in my heart, I think she knows I'll always be there for her and I hope she'll always be there for me. I understand she wants to do things her own way though and... well, I respect that. So, I'm going to try to stay out of her business unless she asks for my help... key word there, Mariah? Try.

[Cannon grins.]

MC: And Michelle... well, we've had some conversations and I think we're getting back on the same page. Now her daughter... that Red Hot Rookie... Kimmy Bailey. Look, I get she wants to defend her mom... and I have all the respect in the world for her after being in the ring with her and seeing her go head to head with Kurayami this week and... I get she wants to make a name for herself... but she's not going to do it on my name, Mariah.

[Wolfe's eyebrows raise.]

MW: You DID get the win over her on Showtime but-

[Cannon interrupts.]

MC: But nothing. She doesn't like how it went down? We've got that in common. I saw the tape back. I know what happened. And yeah, it sucks. But hey, I'm gonna take the W and whenever Kimmy finishes her business with Kurayami, she knows I'm always ready for another fight.

[Wolfe nods.]

MW: Let's shift gears here and talk about one of the reasons you're back, I'm sure... and that's Girls To The Front. August 18th. Madison Square Garden. It's Ladies' Night and I'm sure you're aching to be a part of it.

[Cannon nods.]

MC: Absolutely. Anyone who watched the 30 For 30 knows that I've been a part of a lot of historic moments for women's wrestling and this company... but I've been left out of a couple as well. And Mariah, I promise you that I will NOT be left out of Girls To The Front. Julie's got her hands full that night with Harley Hamilton. That's fine. There's a whole division's worth of competitors that I'm more than happy to line up against. I want to make history again... and that's the target right now. I'm GOING to be in a featured spot that night or...

[She pauses, shaking her head.]

MC: No, no... there's no alternative. It's going to happen, Mariah. Believe that.

[And with that, Cannon stalks out of sight, maybe a little more determined than she was moments ago...]

MW: There you have it, fans. Melissa Cannon determined to make her mark at Girls To The Front in two months' time! Now, let's go back down to the ring for taaaaag teeeeeeam action!

[We fade to the ring where we see Charlie Stephens, Mr. Stars and Stripes, and Marty Meekly have taken over the ring - the latter of which is getting big boos from the Portland crowd as he repeatedly blows his whistle.]

SA: Welcome back to ringside here in Providence Park, fans... and as you can see, we've been joined by the Soldiers of Fortune who were forced into action here earlier tonight by President Zharkov after Charlie Stephens got under his skin.

CP: Hey, Stephens had a perfectly sound strategy and just because Zharkov can't get in the ring, he forced Stephens to instead! Abuse of power if you ask me.

SA: Well, I'm guessing the Tsar isn't asking you, Colt... but the question we're ALL asking is who in the world is going to be facing the Soldiers here tonight. The Soldiers trying to hang onto a spot in the Top 5 to earn themselves a spot in Run The Rankings.

CP: I can't even believe they're being forced into this. They're former Stampede Cup winners! Former World Tag Team Champions!

SA: Yeah, but they're not, Colt. This is an entirely different Soldiers of Fortune... and I think President Zharkov has made it clear. If Joe Flint wants to come back and team with Stephens, he's happy to give them a shot at the titles. But until then, these new Soldiers? They gotta earn it... and they gotta start earning it right here and right now. But who are...?

[Big Sal trails off as the grungy sound of Neil Young starts up as "Dirty Old Man" rocks the PA...]

SA: Huh? Again?!

[...and after a few moments, the Portland crowd ROARS to life at sight of Jackson Hunter walking out onto the entrance stage, a confident smirk on his face.]

SA: Well, I suppose there's a sense of double duty in the air here tonight. Kayla Cristol competing in two matches in one night and now the team of Shadoe Rage and Jackson Hunter are as well?!

CP: This might turn out as good for Hunter and Rage as it has for Cristol so far. Rage and Hunter - look, I know they're desperately trying to get a shot at Team Supreme and the World Tag Team Titles but I'm not sure taking on two matches in the same night is the way to do it, Big Sal.

SA: I'm not sure either... and... huh.

CP: What's wrong?

SA: Well... I see Jackson Hunter but... there's no sign of Shadoe Rage at all.

[Indeed he's right as Hunter walks solo down the ramp towards the ring.]

CP: Maybe they're not accepting the challenge after all. Hunter's obviously the brains of that operation - maybe he's out here to scout whoever they DO face.

[From inside the ring, Charlie Stephens points an accusing finger, looking on in confusion as Marty Meekly and Mr. Stars and Stripes stand behind him.]

SA: Hunter's headed out here but... I don't think any of us have a clue what's going on right now.

[Reaching ringside, a smirking Hunter looks up at the belligerent Stephens who is shouting "WHAT DO YOU WANT?! WHY ARE YOU OUT HERE?!" at Hunter before inviting him in the ring...]

SA: Oh yeah, I bet Stephens would LOVE that - to get Jackson Hunter in the ring by himself for a handicap match.

CP: Hunter's got a few words aimed back at Stephens now. A war of words so to speak and-

[Stephens suddenly has heard enough, shouting at his masked ally who steps towards the ropes, reaching over...]

...and as Hunter barks "RING THE BELL!," he snakes an arm under the ropes, grabbing the ankle of the masked man...]

SA: OH!

"DING! DING! DING!"

[The official starts the match officially as Hunter drags Mr. Stars and Stripes to the outside, twisting him around to SMASH his face into the ring apron...]

...and with the masked man stunned, Hunter reaches behind, dipping into his tights...]

SA: What's he...? He's got HANDCUFFS! HANDCUFFS!

[Hunter quickly snaps the bracelet on one wrist before hooking the other one on the bottom rope!]

SA: He's cuffed him to the ropes, Colt!

CP: What kind of a trick is THIS, Albano?! The referee should stop this match right now!

[The crowd cheers the sudden predicament for the masked man as Hunter starts pounding away on him...

...and the crowd gets louder as Stephens goes to complain to the official, pointing to the outside...]

SA: Charlie Stephens getting into it now with the referee and-

CP: FROM BEHIND! FROM BEHIND!

[Out of the crowd and onto the top turnbuckle, Shadoe Rage stands tall...]

CP: Where the HELL did HE come from?!

[...and leaps off, crashing down onto Stephens' back with a Death From Above!]

SA: THE AXEHANDLE CONNECTS! RAGE ON THE MOVE THOUGH!

[Rage pops up, racing to the corner, dispatching of Marty Meekly with a big right hand before hopping out to the apron, scaling the turnbuckles again...]

SA: He's going up top again annnnnd...

[...and a leaping Rage BURIES his elbow into the heart of Stephens, flipping over to hook the leg!]

SA: ...ELBOW CONNECTS! IT COULD BE! IT MIGHT BE! IT... ISSSSSSSSSS!

"DING! DING! DING!"

[The crowd ERUPTS as Rage leaps to his feet, shoving a muscular arm into the air, pointing to the sky as a cackling Hunter rolls in to join him!]

SA: What in the world did we just see, Colt?!

CP: Well, I said Hunter was the brains of this operation and this little plan of theirs has Hunter's stank all over it! They cuffed Stars and Stripes on the outside, he couldn't help... Stephens was distracted... and Rage took advantage of it... and don't look now, Big Sal, but Hunter and Rage may have just taken a HUGE step towards the World Tag Team Titles!

[Rage is all grins as he climbs the midbuckle, pointing at the loyal Portland crowd as Hunter looks on with a smirk and a shake of his head...]

SA: A big moment here in Portland for Jackson Hunter and for one of Portland's favorite wrestlers for going on twenty years now, the "Sensational" Shadoe Rage! Fans, we'll be right back on ESPN! Don't go away!

[We fade to black on Rage celebrating as Hunter applauds in the background...

...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...]

The screen opens in soft, golden light on a quiet Hawaiian beach at dusk. Waves roll gently as we see the legendary Hawaiian megastar, Kai Alana standing barefoot in the sand.]

KA: I built my name on sacrifice, on blood, sweat, and broken bones. It made me a legend, but my son, Jai... Jay Alana? He's taken that same fire and turned it into something unstoppable. Taller than I ever was, faster, meaner. He's not just my legacy... he's surpassed it.

[A pause, as we hear the soft sound of rolling waves hitting the shore.]

KA: He's become the storm I always knew he could be.

[The scene then transitions into a cover of "Misirlou" by Dick Dale, slowed slightly for menace and grandeur. We cut to the endless black abyss of a studio, where we see Paris Crawford seated.]

PC: You wish to know what I think of Jay Alana?

[They tilt their head, biting their lower lip with a sly, knowing smile.]

PC: He is dangerous. He walks into a room like he already owns you. He is capable of breaking your heart and your spine with the same casual grace.

[Cut to Elijah Wilde, who was Alana's stablemate in The Dead Man's Party.]

EW: Look, I ran with Jay in Japan and I can tell you with 100% certainty... the guy's a [bleep]!

[His sneer softens into reluctant admiration.]

EW: And believe me, if anybody knows about being a [bleep], it's me. But damn if he hasn't earned the right to be. I'm not saying he's better than me, but he's damn sure better than most of you!

[There is then a quick cut to Supreme Wright in that same endless black of the studio. The greatest technical wrestler alive stands motionless, arms crossed, voice low and deliberate, making sure the audience is able to carry the weight of his words.]

SW: In this sport, most spend their lives chasing greatness. A few walk beside it. Jay Alana doesn't knock on the door to that realm, he steps through like he's always belonged. You look at him and you recognize it immediately.

[A beat.]

SW: Greatness.

[Finally, we cut back to Kai Alana on the beach. Night has now fallen and the stars reflect on the water. He stares out at the horizon, voice steady and final.]

KA: AWA, you're his ocean now. Jay Alana is the tide...

... and the tide spares no one.

[The camera pans to a shot of the waves crashing against the shore one last time as we fade to black.]

We fade up on the backstage area where we find Atlas Armstrong getting ready to do battle, his well-oiled up physique on display as he pulls on resistance bands, showing off the guns as Veronica Westerly approaches.]

VW: Atlas, we need to talk.

[Armstrong nods, still pulling the bands.]

AA: So, talk.

[Westerly grimaces, not pleased with the brusque dismissal.]

VW: What happened earlier tonight... in the tag match... you know James thinks you did that intentionally. That you cost them the match intentionally.

[A hint of a smirk crosses Armstrong's tanned face.]

VW: Atlas?

[Armstrong stops flexing, holding the bands down around his waist as he turns towards Westerly.]

AA: If your boy has a problem with what I did tonight, tell him to come tell me to my fa-

[Armstrong is cut off by a loud shout.]

"I've been looking all over this place for you!"

[Enter James Lynch with Nenshou close behind, the former's face red with anger as Nenshou sidesteps every so slightly to be a little behind Armstrong who gives him a quick look as Westerly looks anxious at the tension in the air.]

JL: For a big, big man, you sure are able to hide yourself well.

[Armstrong turns to Lynch, stepping closer.]

AA: The Almighty don't hide from no one. You'd better remember that.

[Nenshou slides closer.]

AA: You got a problem what went down tonight? Go blame the guy REALLY responsible for losing... the man in the mirror.

[Lynch throws up his hands.]

JL: Me?! You think it was MY fault we lost that match?! I'm trying to get Nenshou and I into that Run The Rankings and you're out there getting us disqualified because Jackson Hunter lured your pea brain into a trap!

[He thwaps his index finger into Armstrong's forehead, causing the big man to surge forward before Westerly intervenes.]

VW: ENOUGH! We've all got goals - championship goals - and none of us are going to get them if we're not on the same page. Understand me?

[There's a lot of grumbling all around.]

AA: Speak for yourself, Veronica. I'm the REAL World Champion.

[Lynch snorts loudly.]

JL: You delusional overgrown-

[Westerly cuts him off with a hand on the chest, shaking her head.]

VW: Atlas, you've got a match...

[Armstrong raises a finger.]

AA: A title defense.

[Lynch can visibly be seen rolling his eyes, turning to mutter something to Nenshou.]

VW: Right. A title defense. It's up now so... get to it. Do us proud.

[Armstrong nods, giving one final glare at Lynch... and a much longer one at Nenshou... before striding out of view. Westerly takes a deep breath and turns towards Lynch and Nenshou.]

VW: Now, I'm going to go talk to Zharkov and see if I can get you two another match on Showtime... see if we can find a way to get you into the Top 5 for Opportunity Knocks.

[She points a finger at James Lynch.]

VW: No funny business out there. I don't want to see you two near that ring during that match. Got me?

[Lynch throws up a mock salute.]

JL: Your wish is our command, boss lady.

[Westerly sighs again, shaking her head as she walks out of sight, leaving Lynch to nudge his silent partner.]

JL: Let's go find ourselves a monitor... just in case the big man needs our help.

[And we fade to a live shot of the ring where we can hear the music from Andrew Lloyd Webber's Jesus Christ Superstar leading Atlas Armstrong to the ring.]

SA: A tense scene backstage between the Westerly Dynasty, Colt.

CP: It's just a bunch of alphas butting heads a little. As long as they've got Veronica there to keep them cool, it's all going to be just fine.

SA: Uh huh... we'll see about that. But right now, Atlas Armstrong is headed to the ring.. and Colt, I have to say, I think this is a downright shame that he's being allowed to do this.

CP: What? Wrestle?

SA: You know what I mean! He says he's defending the World Title!

CP: Well, who says he ain't?!

SA: The AWA! The front office! President Zharkov! This man is NOT the World Champion!

CP: Maybe he oughta be, Albano, 'cause he left Supernova laying in a hospital bed! He took out the World Champion and now he says he IS the World Champion... and who is gonna tell him he's not? You?

SA: Not me... but I understand he told President Zharkov he wants a stiff "challenge" here tonight.

CP: Only the best for the champ.

SA: Give me a... let's go up to Rebecca!

[Cut to the ring where Rebecca Ortiz is standing.]

RO: Annnnnnnnd his opponent...

[Ortiz lowers the mic, waiting...

...and as the opening notes of Joe "Bean" Esposito's "You're The Best" rings out over the Providence Park PA system, the Portland crowd goes WILD!]

SA: Oh yeah! "Cannonball" Lee Connors is gonna fight!

[Ortiz grins as she raises the mic, Armstrong sneering down the aisle.]

RO: ...from Winnipeg, Canada... weighing in at 177 pounds...

..."CANNONBAAAAAAAALL" LEEEEEEEEEE CONNNNNNNORRRRRRS!

[Connors BURSTS through the curtain to big cheers from the AWA faithful as he pumps his fists, looking out on the massive crowd. He grins, nodding his head in appreciation as he stands in a white gi with a red belt and headband. He points a finger down the aisle at Armstrong who waves him forward.]

CP: I don't know if Lee Connors understands what he signed up for, Big Sal. You don't poke the Almighty and expect mercy. What did Ortiz say there - 177 pounds? This guy's like a toothpick to someone the size of Atlas!

SA: Armstrong wanted a challenge and he's about to get one! You know the saying, Colt. It's not the size of the dog in the fight, it's the size of the fight in the dog.

CP: The size of the fight in the dog is still 177 pounds. Armstrong's gonna clean this guy's clock, Albano.

[Armstrong strikes a double bicep pose, showing off the cut physique as Connors quickly reaches ringside, scrambling up on the apron. He pulls off his headband, wheeling to toss it into the crowd. He removes the belt, shrugging out of the gi to reveal a pair of black trunks with a burning red sun on the back along with red boots.]

SA: This is - without a doubt - the biggest test in the young career of "Cannonball" Lee Connors who I heard was looking for a match here tonight after being deprived of that big featured Seven Tables match last weekend against Odysseus Allah, Colt.

CP: Lemme get this straight. He's upset he didn't get to go through a bunch of tables last weekend so he signed on to fight someone twice his size? In a world filled with dumb kids, this guy might be the dumbest. You call it the biggest test of his career? I call it the shortest.

[Connors slingshots over the top rope in a full flip, landing on his feet as he stares across at an anxious Armstrong who seems poised to attack at the sound of the bell. Referee Pete "Blue Shoes" Miller has words for both competitors as the music fades...]

"DING! DING! DING!"

SA: There's the bell and this unexpected matchup is underway!

[Armstrong slumps back, wagging a finger at Connors who strikes a martial arts pose right away...

...and then slowly raises a powerful arm to the sky.]

SA: Oh, come on... calling for a test of strength here... I think we ALL know who gets the better of that one, Colt.

CP: We do... but let's see if Connors is really looking for the toughest test or if that's all talk...

[Connors looks up reluctantly at the extended hand... hesitating long enough for Armstrong to barrel into him, locking him up, and powering him all the way back to the corner without pause...]

SA: Goodness. Look at the strength on the part of Armstrong - like Connors is barely even there...

[...and with Miller counting already, Armstrong lets go... and obnoxiously ruffles Connors' hair.]

CP: That's psychological warfare.

SA: It's trying to humiliate the man is what is-

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"OHOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO!"

SA: BIG CHOP!

[The crowd cheers as Connors lights up the massive target that is Armstrong's chest with a flurry of knife edge chops, driving him out of the corner back out towards the middle of the ring...]

SA: That'll wake you up!

[On his heels, Armstrong's grin fades as Connors' brutal chops find their target repeatedly and relentlessly...

...and he reaches out, tying up Connors again, swinging him around to push him back towards the ropes but before they get there, Connors slips out, moving into a rear waistlock...]

SA: Connors using his speed to his favor...

[...and when Armstrong goes for a heavy back elbow to free himself, Connors ducks under it, allowing Armstrong to spin around to where Connors leaps up, striking at the knee with a single legged kick!]

SA: OH! Kicked him right in the knee... Atlas is stumbling!

CP: Go after the legs. Smart strategy by Connors and we know he's got the educated feet to get the job done in chopping the big Redwood down to size!

[Connors scrambles up, going after the knee with low kicks to both inside and outside...

...and Connors ducks under a big swing by the off-balance Armstrong, rushing to the ropes, leaping to the middle...]

SA: SPRINGS BACK!

[...and bounces off to catch Armstrong on the chin with a dropkick, leaving him staggering even more!]

SA: Connors is starting off fast and he's got this crowd behind him!

[Connors scrambles up again, landing two more kicks to the leg before he has to avoid a haymaker from Armstrong, spinning as he does to connect with a roundhouse that smashes his heel into the upper back of Armstrong, sending him pitching forward into the ropes...]

SA: The kicks are flying in Rip City!

[...and as Connors advances on him, grabbing him by the arm for a whip, Atlas slaps the hand away, snatching him by the throat with both hands!]

SA: OH! DOUBLE CHOKE!

[He powers Connors up into the air with ease but Connors is ready for it, lashing out with a kick at the top of the lift, the toe of his boot smashing into Armstrong's chin which causes Armstrong to instantly let him go!]

SA: Desperation escape by Connors!

CP: You call it desperate, I call it survival!

[Connors runs to the corner, running right up the turnbuckles...]

SA: MOONSAULT!

[...and flips backwards, toppling Armstrong down to the canvas as Connors stays on him in a North-South position, grasping for a mighty leg to cradle!]

SA: ONNNNNNE! TWOOOOOO!

[But Armstrong is too strong, powering out of the pin attempt with ease as the crowd buzzes over the early two count...]

CP: It might not have been enough to get the three count but Connors is making Armstrong work and when you're that big, it takes a whole lot of oxygen to feed all those muscles. Connors is trying to wear him down early on.

SA: It's a good strategy but can he keep it up?

[Connors scrambles up, catching the rising Armstrong with a side kick to the midsection... then a front kick to the face, snapping Armstrong's head back, his eyes wide and wild as he reaches out again, grabbing Connors by the head...]

...but Connors slaps the hand away, driving right and left-handed palm strikes into the chest capped off by a leaping palm strike uppercut!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

SA: TIIIIIGERRRR UPPERCUT!

[Connors points to the fans, running towards the ropes again, leaping into the air to spring off the middle rope...]

SA: TWISTING CROSS BOD-

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[...and the crowd reacts as Armstrong SURGES forward, driving his shoulder into the middle of the flying Connors' chest, spinning him around before "Cannonball" wipes out on the canvas!]

SA: ARMSTRONG TAKES HIM OUT OF THE SKYYYYY!

[Armstrong looks out on the crowd buzzing over the impressive display of physicality, shouting "THAT'S RIGHT! THAT'S THE CHAMP! YOUR CHAMP!" which draws some boos from the Portland crowd.]

SA: Atlas Armstrong continues to tell the people of the Portland that he's THEIR World Champion... and nobody believes it!

CP: Look at him, Albano! Seeing is believing!

[Armstrong glares at the jeering crowd, stomping around the ring, his hands swiping at his waist as he tells them he should be wearing the strap.]

SA: Atlas Armstrong believes he should be the World Champion and I believe I should be the Wrestling Watcher Weekly Announcer of the Year.

CP: Better make a few burner accounts and get your vote in.

[Armstrong turns, watching as Connors slowly gets up off the canvas, and then sprints towards the Canadian, connecting with a massive clothesline that FLIPS Connors inside out in a bad way!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

SA: This one might be over right there, Colt!

CP: Connors nearly lost his boots... and his head... on that one.

SA: Nearly decapitated by the Almighty One and Lee Connors, who started this match with so much fire and energy, just had it all taken away with a pair of mighty shots from the man who believes he's the uncrowned World Champion.

[The fans are jeering as Armstrong slowly walks away the downed Connors, shouting "UP!" at the much-smaller competitor.]

SA: Connors - the kid's got fight in him, Colt! He's trying to get back to his feet!

CP: He might think he's in the middle of a match on Showtime 'cause Atlas just knocked him into the middle of next week!

[Armstrong gives Connors an assist, dragging him to his feet within the unfriendly confines of a side headlock, giving a little jump as he wrenches the hold, showing off for the Portland crowd...]

SA: Atlas bearing down on that headlock, working the head and neck of Connors...

[Connors throws a back elbow to the gut of Armstrong, drawing some cheers!]

SA: ...and Connors is trying to fight his way out of it! No quit in this kid!

[A second elbow lands... and a third before Armstrong lets go of the hold, watching as Connors drops back into the ropes for momentum...]

SA: Connors battling back into this!

[...but as he rebounds, Armstrong doubles over and LAUNCHES Connors through the air with a backdrop, sending him CRASHING down on the canvas!]

SA: HOLY...

CP: Someone check with Air Traffic Control 'cause Connors might've taken out the 767 out of LAX!

[Connors writhes in pain on the canvas as Armstrong stands over him, staring down on him before dropping to his knees, planting his fists in the chest for a pin count...]

SA: Out at two! Connors slips out the back door on an arrogant cover by Armstrong!

[Armstrong looks irritated at the official with a "you want him to suffer more?" The official holds up two fingers as the Almighty One climbs off the canvas, moving towards Connors who is trying to crawl away from him...]

SA: Armstrong stalking his prey...

[Grabbing the waistband of Connors' trunks, Armstrong lifts him off the canvas to his feet, promptly lifting him up on his arm...]

SA: Side slam on the way...

[...and makes a show of putting Connors under just one arm, lifting the other to flex...]

SA: ...with ONE arm!

[...and DROPS Connors down in a side slam, staying in position with an elbow on the chest, his temple resting on his fist.]

SA: Another arrogant cover... and another kickout! Connors out at two again! Refusing to stay down!

[Armstrong sits up, glaring at the official who holds up two fingers again. He shakes his head, climbing to his feet as the crowd starts cheering for Connors again, rooting him on...]

SA: The fans of Portland are behind "Cannonball" Lee Connors, looking for an upset in Rip City!

[The Westerly Dynasty muscle pulls Connors off the mat, slinging him over his shoulder...]

SA: Uh oh! Up for a powerslam! Looking to plant Connors into the mat!

[But as Armstrong tries to ram him into the corner, Connors slips off the shoulder, leaping up to land a dropkick to get a little extra "oomph" as Armstrong crashes into the turnbuckles!]

SA: CONNORS IS LOOSE!

[Connors slingshots over the ropes, running up the turnbuckles as Armstrong staggers backwards out of the corner...

...and leaps off, connecting with a missile dropkick!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[The flying kick knocks Armstrong down on the canvas as Connors crawls across the mat, diving across, hooking a leg...]

SA: ONNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOO! TH-

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

SA: ARMSTRONG KICKS OUT!

CP: That was closer than I thought it would be. Armstrong must've been shaken up by that dropkick off the top...

SA: And this is Connors' moment! He's gotta go now!

[Coming to his feet, Connors plays off the crowd, pumping his fists repeatedly as Armstrong struggles up to a knee...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

[...and gets ROCKED with a kick to the chest!]

SA: OH!

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

[A second one has Armstrong struggling to keep his balance as Connors lets loose a shout...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

[...and Connors steps back, taking aim...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[...and DROPS Armstrong with a kick to the head!]

SA: DOWN HE GOES! CONNORS ON TOP! HOOKS THE LEG! IT COULD BE! IT MIGHT BE! IT...

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

SA: ...NOOOOOO! OUT IN TIIIIIME!

[Connors buries his face in his hands, scrambling up off the canvas...]

SA: Connors on the move! Connors working quickly, trying to take advantage!

[...and on his feet, he stands with his back to the downed Armstrong...]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[...and busts out the moonsault double kneedrop, flattening Armstrong as he reaches back to hook a leg!]

SA: ONNNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOOOO! THR-

“OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

SA: And now it’s Armstrong who refuses to stay down, Colt!

CP: What a back and forth battle this is, Albano! Lee Connors giving the Almighty One a much tougher night at the office than I’m sure Atlas Armstrong even DREAMED was possible!

SA: Connors now, pulling Armstrong to his feet...

CP: I don’t like that idea. You had him down... KEEP him down.

[Connors lands a rounding kick to the midsection, sending Armstrong falling backwards into the corner. The martial artist stays on him, forcing him back...]

SA: Lee Connors with a long history of getting the upset on much larger competitors than him and... kicks to the body now, rocking the ribcage over and over and over...

[...and to punctuate the series of kicks, Connors leaps into the air, twisting around to jam his foot back up under the chin of Armstrong, snapping his head back!]

SA: OH, WHAT A SHOT!

CP: Armstrong might be seeing stars after that!

[Armstrong, clinging to the top rope for support, staggers out of the corner along the ropes towards the middle as Connors points to the crowd, dashing to the ropes, bouncing off with speed and momentum...]

SA: HERE HE-

[...but as he leaps into the air, Armstrong drops down, pulling the top rope with him, a move that sends Connors OVER the ropes, getting tangled up and taking a HARD fall onto the apron before slumping off to the floor!]

“OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

SA: A big and timely counter by Atlas Armstrong just turned this thing 180 degrees back around, Colt!

CP: He pulled the ropes down and Connors - did he hit his back on the apron?

SA: He sure did! And that’s going to do serious damage to the chances of this young man... especially with Armstrong rolling out after him. This is NOT where Lee Connors wants to be right now!

[Armstrong grabs the hurting Connors, easily muscling him up to his feet before wrapping his massive arms around the karate kid’s torso...]

“OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

SA: HE RAMS HIS SPINE INTO THE APRON!

[A determined Armstrong wraps an arm under the armpit of Connors, reaching up to grab him around the head as well...]

“CLAAAAAAAAAAAAAANG!”

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[...and HURLS Connors high and hard into the air, sending him sailing across the ringside entry, bouncing HARD off the steel ramp!]

SA: SWEET SANTA MARIA! ARMSTRONG TRYING TO CAVE IN THE SPINE OF LEE CONNORS!

[Armstrong throws back his arms, letting loose a roar at ringside as the fans look on in awe at the show of strength...]

SA: Atlas Armstrong has put himself squarely in the driver's seat of this one, dragging Connors off the ramp... putting him back in...

CP: Cover him, big man!

[Armstrong crawls through the ropes, moving in... but Connors is rolling for his life, trying to get away from him before he can make a pin attempt!]

SA: Look at the survival instincts of Lee Connors, trying to create some space...

[On his feet, Armstrong catches Connors before he can escape, yanking him right up. He grabs him under the armpits, hurling him into the air and tossing him into the turnbuckles...]

SA: Wow! Tossing him like a small child!

[...and squares up, hammering the ribs of Connors with heavy lefts and rights to the body of the much-smaller competitor...

...and then doubles over, grabbing the ropes while driving his shoulder into the torso over and over, the referee frantically counting...]

SA: He's gonna get himself disqualified!

[...but Armstrong relents at four and change, backing off to boos from the sold out Providence Park crowd. Armstrong grabs the arm, winging Connors across the ring to SLAM into the far turnbuckles!]

SA: Another shot to the back... and Armstrong barreling in on him!

[But as he draws near, Armstrong catches a thrust kick to the midsection by Connors!]

SA: OH! He goes downstairs, doubling him up and...

[Connors leaps to the middle rope, springing and twisting, grabbing Armstrong by the shoulders as he sails over, planting his knees into Armstrong's back...]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

SA: LUNGBLOWER! DRIVING THE WIND OUT OF THE BIG MAN'S SAILS!

CP: We might have a new champion, Albano!

SA: Would you... knock it off, Colt! This man is NOT the World Champion!

[Connors pushes up off the mat as Armstrong kneels on the mat, grabbing at his lower back. The Winnipeg native hops up to the middle rope again, leaping into the air, hooking his legs under Armstrong's massive arms...]

"THUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUD!"
"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

SA: OHHH! HIGH SPEED SUNSET FLIP DRIVES HIM DOWN!

[Connors hangs onto the legs as the official dives down to count.]

SA: IT COULD BE! IT MIGHT BE! IT...

[But Armstrong's shoulder pops clear of the mat before three!]

SA: ...NOOOOOOOO! ARMSTRONG KICKS OUT IN TIIIIIME! How close was that, Colt?!

CP: It don't get any closer! A heartbeat away from a new champion.

SA: We're not going there. We're not doing that.

[Connors gets up off the mat, making sure Armstrong is still down as he ducks through the ropes and quickly starts climbing...]

SA: CONNORS ON THE MOVE! CONNORS HEADING UP TOP!

CP: The man is surgical from up there - lethal!

SA: Armstrong's in trouble, still down on the mat as Connors reaches the top!

[He holds his arms over his head, bringing the Portland crowd to their feet before clapping his hands in front of him almost as if in silent prayer...]

...and then LEAPS into the air, tucking his head and flipping in high speed over and over...]

SA: 1080 OFF THE TOP!

[It's a blinding blur of motion, rapidly whipping him down towards his prone foe...]

...so when Armstrong rolls aside at the last moment, Connors' body SLAMS violently into the canvas with alarming impact!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

SA: ARMSTRONG MOVED! ARMSTRONG SAVES HIMSELF!

[The bulky beast of a man climbs to his feet, the crowd still awed at the hard fall by Connors - unable to bring themselves to jeer as Armstrong peels an unmoving Connors off the canvas...]

...and hoists him right up into a bearhug!]

SA: And there it is! The hold that put the World Champion in the hospital! The massive arms squeezing Connors' battered torso, pulling it into that massive chest - making it IMPOSSIBLE to get a full breath... Connors trying to hang on... refusing to give in...

[Connors fires off a quick palm strike to the temple...]

SA: ...fighting back...

[...and another...]

CP: The kid's got heart!

[...but then Armstrong lets loose a roar, tightening his grip as Connors' strength fades, his arms dropping down...

...and the referee wheels around to signal for the bell!]

SA: That's it! It's over!

[Armstrong FLINGS Connors down to the canvas, standing over him as the jeers quickly return. The big man ignores them, looking down on Connors with a different expression than what he's worn for most of the match... this one shows a little... respect?]

SA: Victory is in the hands of the Almighty One... what a battle it was though, Colt.

CP: You can see from the look on Armstrong's face, Big Sal... that match was much harder than he expected. Connors gave him one heck of a fight and things could've easily gone the other way if Armstrong hadn't rolled clear of that 1080 senton.

SA: Armstrong posing now, these fans letting him hear their displeasure... and if Supernova is watching - and you know he is - I bet he's booing right alongside them.

[Armstrong looks out on the crowd with a sneer... and then back down on Connors.]

CP: He might not be done, Big Sal.

SA: Oh, I sure hope he is. This kid's been through enough, Colt.

[Armstrong reaches down, ignoring the referee's shouts...

...and pulls Connors up to his feet, steadying him with a big hand on the chest.]

SA: What in the...?

[Armstrong gives Connors an appraising look...

...and then extends his hand.]

SA: I can't believe what I'm seeing here.

CP: Add me to that. Atlas Armstrong is offering to shake the hand of Lee Connors after a brutal, physical battle and-

SA: This just isn't something we see out of Armstrong. His arrogance... his attitude just doesn't allow for it. But here it is in Portland, Oregon as Armstrong want to shake the hand of Connors...

[A weakened Connors gives a look, trying to assess if it's a trap...

...and then accepts the hand, giving it a quick shake before Armstrong lets go, turning to exit as Connors collapses backwards against the ropes.]

SA: Wow! What a moment here in Portland! And a victorious Armstrong leaves the ring to Connors, letting the kid have his moment as these fans show their support for the effort he gave here tonight.

[Connors leans hard on the ropes, watching Armstrong depart the ringside area as the official checks on Connors who is hanging onto his ribs, a grimace on his face.]

SA: A game effort for this young man but-

CP: But the REAL World Champion was too much for him. The kid's lucky to be standing at this point and not in a meat wagon headed to visit Supernova, Albano.

SA: I don't know about-

CP: Uh oh! The kid's luck may have just run around!

[The boos pick up as suddenly James Lynch and Nenshou are in the ring...]

SA: Where the hell did THEY come from?!

CP: I think they came through the crowd! Right in there and-

[Nenshou immediately sinks Connors with a spinning back kick BURIED into the injured ribs, causing "Cannonball" to collapse onto the canvas. James Lynch cackles as he stands on the apron, grabbing the top rope as he waves Nenshou to pick the young man up...

...and the camera cuts to the aisle where Atlas Armstrong has turned back towards the ring, hands on his hips as he watches his allies decimate the man whose hand he shook moments ago.]

SA: Atlas Armstrong looking on... and from the look on his face, Colt, I'd say he had no idea this was coming.

CP: Maybe not but it's come! And Connors is-

[The crowd groans as Lynch slingshots himself into a somersault, obliterating Connors with a lariat!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

CP: -in serious trouble!

[With Connors laid out on the mat, Nenshou starts putting the boots to him, the jeers getting louder as some fans start to implore Atlas Armstrong to help the downed Connors. Armstrong grimaces, looking around at the crowd as a very slight "AT-LAS!" chant starts up in some areas of Providence Park, urging Armstrong to do the right thing...]

SA: Can you believe this? The fans are BEGGING Atlas Armstrong to do something! Anything! Come on!

[Lynch turns to look at Armstrong, not failing to notice the chants. His eyes bore in on the big man, almost daring him to play the role of hero...

...but with a shrug, Armstrong turns and walks back up the aisle, leaving Connors to even more punishment by Nenshou but a smirking Lynch pulls him up into a front facelock, turning him over...]

SA: NECKBREAKER! DRIVES HIM DOWN!

[...and with Connors laid out, Nenshou approaches the corner, reaching the top in two big strides...]

SA: Get him down from there! Get him-

“OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

SA: MOONSAULT CONNECTS!

[The flying body press onto the already-damaged ribs leaves Connors motionless on the mat as Nenshou takes a knee, Lynch stepping in behind him and draping around his neck, taunting the fans by way of the camera pointed right at them...]

“The Westerly Dynasty is THE top force in this business - and don’t you forget it!”

[Lynch laughs again as he spins away from Nenshou, giving another stomp to the ribs of Connors before the referee jumps in front of him, quickly joined by Kevin Slater and John Shock as they force Lynch backwards...]

SA: Get those two out of there for crying out loud! This is ridiculous, Colt!

CP: Connors is left in a heap by Lynch and Nenshou... with an assist from Atlas Armstrong... and he may be right, Albano. The Westerly Dynasty really might be the top force in this business.

SA: Disgusting. I’m sick of this. Let’s go back to Mariah.

[We fade from the chaos in the ring to the backstage area where Mariah Wolfe is standing by.]

MW: Thanks, Sal... a tough scene to watch out there for sure. Alright, AWA fans... it’s time for an updated set of tag team rankings as all eyes are on Opportunity Knocks where we’ll see the Top 5 contenders to the titles Run The Rankings to crown a new top challenger to Team Supreme and the World Tag Team Titles. We’ve seen a couple more tag team matches since our last set of rankings - Neva Generación Oscura defeating our top ranked team Masks For Money, Fujizona with the shocker over the American Idols, and Shadoc Rage and Jackson Hunter scoring what many are calling an upset win over the Soldiers of Fortune. What will that mean for our rankings? Let’s take a look!

[A graphic comes up to reveal the new list.]

MW: At Number 10 on the list, “Curly” Bill’s Desperadoes! They’ll have some work to do on Showtime if they want to break into that Top 5 before it locks and the Run The Rankings lineup is made official.

[The graphic changes.]

MW: At Number 9, fresh off their upset win over the American Idols, the young duo of Fujizona is back on the list. They definitely have some momentum on their side but do they have enough to get into the Top 5? We’ll see.

[Another shift.]

MW: The Westerly Dynasty duo of Nenshou and James Lynch come in at Number 8 after their loss earlier tonight hurt their chances of making it to Run The Rankings.

[The graphic changes.]

MW: The American Idols hanging onto hope at Number 7 - close enough that a win on Showtime could slot them back into position.

[And again.]

MW: How about this one? The Soldiers of Fortune get KNOCKED OUT of position with their big loss to Jackson Hunter and Shadoe Rage. So much for Charlie Stephens' strategy to just hold their ground. Now they've gotta win on Showtime if they want to have a chance of getting back into the mix.

[The graphic shifts.]

MW: And now the teams currently in place to compete at Opportunity Knocks. First, at Number 5... Nueva Generación Oscura! They got a bit of a surprise win earlier against Masks For Money and that puts them in a prime spot to get a shot at the titles currently held by Team Supreme.

[And again.]

MW: At Number 4, a team having one heck of a night here in Portland - TWO big wins in the same night puts the duo of Shadoe Rage and Jackson Hunter at Number 4 with just days to go until the rankings are locked in for Opportunity Knocks... and we know that Rage and Hunter are willing to stop at nothing to get their shot at the champions of the world.

[The graphic changes.]

MW: Masks For Money lose the top spot but stick in the Top 5 as they land at Number 3. Still in it for now but they may need to be in action on Showtime if they want a chance to stay there.

[Another shift.]

MW: Omega and Polemos lost the top spot earlier tonight but they're still at Number 2 which would put them in a prime position on the 4th of July.

[And finally...]

MW: And at Number 1, Bobby O'Connor's Blackjacks are in position to be in the top spot on Showtime... and if they can hang onto it, it means they'll be the last team into that gauntlet match and be the odds-on favorite to win the whole thing and earn the shot at the World Tag Team Titles. It's all about the Run The Rankings and you do NOT want to miss Showtime one week from tonight when we get the final answer - who will be in that gauntlet match at Opportunity Knocks with a shot at the World Tag Team Titles on the line?

[Mariah grins as we get a flash of the ACCESS 365 logo, coming up on a locker room somewhere in Providence Park where we find a jubilant Shadoe Rage and a grinning Jackson Hunter sitting on a wooden bench talking, obviously in the middle of a conversation as we join them...]

JH: ...nah, but Rhoni and me? Totally a thing for a few months back in...

[It is at this moment that the door opens, and in steps Ryan Martinez. The AWA's White Knight stands in front of both men. And all three eye each other warily.]

RM: I assume you've been paying attention tonight.

[Rage leaps to his feet, concern on his face... and anger, always a little bit of anger.]

SR: Are you all right? I saw what those jackals did to you and they need to pay!

JH: I know what you're going to say before you say it.

[Martinez exhales slowly.]

RM: Listen, between the three of us, there's no love lost, I know that. Shadoe... you and I have tangled in the past.

And Hunter? Don't think I've forgotten, that I'll ever forget, the part you played in my father's retirement...

[Hunter can't help but crack the slightest of slight smirks.]

RM: But, you two have proven with Brian James that when it comes to common enemies, you can work to a common cause.

And the fact of the matter is, we DO have a common enemy...

...and I need partners.

[There is a tense moment of silence as the three continue to size each other up.]

RM: Zharkov said I could have KAMS at Showtime, but only if I had partners. And I've seen what you two have done to them.

You may not like me. But you can trust that I won't stab you in the back, and you can trust that I'll fight tooth and nail to take them down.

And I may not trust either of you...

[Rage almost looks offended causing a slight smirk from Martinez as he claps him on the shoulder.]

RM: ...completely at least.

[He gets serious again.]

RM: But I DO trust that you two are in this war for the long haul, and that both of you are smart enough to take an opportunity when it presents itself.

So what do you say?

[Shadoe Rage is the first to speak.]

SR: It pissed me off what KAMS did to you. Ryan Martinez, we may have had our issues but you trusted me at SuperClash and you can trust me now. The past is the past. This is the now. And now KAMS has to pay. KAMS has to pay. KAMS has to pay!

[Hunter shakes his head at his overly-enthusiastic ally before turning to look at the man whose life he helped haunt for almost a year.]

JH: I won't patronize you, Martinez, with talk about 'trust' or 'valor,' because I've not been bothered to court either. Rest assured Zharkov himself dislikes me even more than you do and he would gladly see me hacked to bits by Supreme Wright's avocado toast-eating hangers-on.

What you're asking is for us to step in from the World Tag Team Rankings into the World Singles Rankings... Dangerous undercurrents to be sure.

And fighting KAMS is like chewing ceramic tiles: dental work is pretty much assured in the future. On the other hand...

[Hunter pics up his trusty shovel, looking lovingly at the initials etched onto it.]

JH: ...I love watching Team Supreme Wile E. Coyote itself off a cliff. So for Showtime, I'm up for ten to fifteen minutes of slapstick... dropping banana peels, tripwires, et cetera, and wrapping it all up with a swift shot with a shovel upside the back of their heads. All we'd need is Catherine O'Hara to come in and give a big hug like it's Christmas morning. And since Supreme likes to fetishize his weapon, I'll even let you in on what mine is if we come up winners.

[Martinez arches an eyebrow.]

RM: Then it's settled.

[All three men nod...

...and with a flash of the ACCESS logo, we're out of the backstage area and into commercial.

Cut to ringside at an unknown AWA event. Ricki Toughill is flung over the ropes by an unknown opponent and crashes into the ringside barricade. She stands upright, looking a bit frustrated, and looks at something off-camera.]

RT: Oh hey.

[The something off-camera is a fully stocked Dunkin' shop counter at ringside, complete with a friendly-looking barista.]

B: Looks like a pretty tough opponent tonight. Medium cold brew?

"ONE!"

[Ricki looks up at the ring, which is off-camera, then back at the barista.]

RT: You can make it a large. This ref always counts slow.

[The barista hands Ricki her tall, frosty cold brew. She takes a sip. Another customer seated at a ringside table with a laptop computer in front of him takes notice.]

C: Wow, she knows your order?

RT: Yeah, I spend a lot of time out here.

[Ricki is about to sit down, when she notices the empty chair beside the other customer. She picks up the folding chair and snaps it shut.]

RT: Mind if I take a seat?

[Ricki looks up into the ring with a mischievous, crooked grin—a cold brew in one hand and a steel chair in the other.]

V/O: Where there's wrestling, there's Dunkin'.

[Cut to a close-up shot of a cold brew. Another cold brew rebounds off a set of three ropes and slides into position beside it. The AWA and Dunkin' logo flash on screen.]

V/O: Cold brew for bell time. America runs on Dunkin'!

[And we fade back to the backstage area where we find Mariah Wolfe has tracked down one-half of the teams in the Women's Tag Team Title Number One Contender match - the Peach Pits.

On this night, Donna Martinelli and Kelly Taylor have opted for pink and green respectively in their ring gear and entrance jackets. They are all smiles as the camera comes on them.

And then there's Shannon Walsh in black from head to toe with a sneer that could curdle milk.

Good luck, Mariah.]

MW: AWA fans, welcome back to Saturday Night Wrestling... and as you can see, the Peach Pits are in Portland all smiles...

[She looks at Walsh who almost growls at her.]

MW: ...well, almost... and ladies, you have GOT to be excited about this opportunity tonight because a win here would rocket you back into another shot at the tag team champions - Harley Hamilton and Cinder.

[Kelly Taylor surprisingly takes the lead.]

KT: Mariah, Miss Mariah... this place is a buzz! Everyone's talking about tag teams! They're talking about Run The Rankings for the boys but for us women, it's all about the Women's World Tag Team Titles. We're looking ahead... we're looking at Opportunity Knocks... we're looking at Girls To The Front... and we're thinking about how oh-so-sweet it would be to walk into Madison Square Garden as the Women's World Tag Team Champions.

MW: You're lucky to be walking at all after that big dive a few weeks ago in Boyle Heights, Kelly!

[Taylor shrugs with a grin aimed at her partner.]

KT: As someone told me lately, everyone deserves a chance to fly.

[Taylor and Martinelli giggle as Walsh glares.]

MW: Alright, Donna... many fans have said we've seen a big change in you since you returned to action back at Memorial Day Mayhem. A more serious, a more focused Donna Martinelli. With all the stuff with Laura Davis and the Slam Sorority going on, are you able to focus on tonight's big showdown with the Peach Pits?

[Martinelli throws a smile at Taylor.]

DM: Something has changed within me... something is not the same... I'm through with playing by the rules of someone else's game.

[Taylor snatches her friend into an embrace, giggles all around when a voice throws cold water on the joyous scene.]

SW: Enough!

[Walsh steps in front of the mic.]

SW: This is the problem... with BOTH of you. We've got a shot to become the Number One Contenders to the tag team titles... a shot to stake our claim to being

the heir apparent to those titles... against a weakened team no less and you're back here joking around, trading song lyrics to some damn movie!

[Kelly raises a hand.]

KT: It's a Broadway show.

[Donna leans closer to her friend.]

DM: But someday maybe!

[The two "squee" together as Walsh shakes her head.]

SW: You should be out here talking about Kayla Cristol's made the biggest mistake of her career thinking she can take us on at less than one hundred percent. You should be talking about how you're going to put Laura Davis' heel hook to good use, rip Cristol's leg into pieces, and how we're going to win that top contender spot and use it to put an end to Hamilton and Cinder once and for all.

You should be talking about becoming the next World Tag Team Champions... not fangirling over...

[She waves a hand in disgust.]

SW: ...whatever. So, knock it off... get your sh...

[She pauses with a grimace.]

SW: Get your stuff together... and I'll see you out there to take care of business.

[She glares hard at Martinelli.]

SW: Are we clear?

[She doesn't wait for an answer, Martinelli's stunned expression perhaps being answer enough as Walsh stomps angrily out of view. Taylor nudges Martinelli, walking the opposite direction with her as a shocked Mariah looks on...

...and we fade out to the ring where Rebecca Ortiz is standing.]

RO: The following contest is a tag team contest set for one fall with a thirty minute time limit and it is a NUMBER ONE CONTENDERS MATCH!

Introducing first...

[We can hear the sounds of Carly Rae Jepsen's "Cut To The Feeling" crank up over the Providence Park PA system to a big cheer...]

RO: From Beverly Hills 90210... weighing in at 272 pounds... being accompanied by Kelly Taylor...

SHANNON WALSH...

DONNA MARTINELLI...

...THE PEEEEEEACH PIIIIIIITS!

[...and we cut to a shot of the ramp where we can see The Peach Pits emerge from the backstage area. Much like in their interview time, we can see the matching smiles on the faces of Martinelli and Taylor, heading down the aisle side by side...

and then the surly Shannon Walsh who walks several steps behind, her eyes burning with frustration and anger.]

SA: The Peach Pits heading to the ring for this big, big match... and if I'm a fan of the Pits, I'm starting to get concerned about the tension between Shannon Walsh and Donna Martinelli, Colt.

CP: You know what builds team chemistry? Winning. If they can get the win tonight, I think all will be forgiven... for now.

SA: We shall see after this one's said and done... but Colt, I gotta think the Peach Pits are the favorites in this one after what Kayla Cristol went through earlier tonight.

CP: There's no doubt about it. We know she's coming in at less than one hundred percent... and that's a bad sign for the Peach Pits AND their fans.

[The Peach Pits reach the ring, two of the three saluting the fans as Walsh shadowboxes in the corner...]

RO: Annnnnnnnd their opponents...

[Suddenly, the speakers growl to life.

"Blood on the Bluegrass" by Legendary Shack Shakers explodes from the PA, all stomping bass, slide guitar, and manic hillbilly menace.

The crowd ROARS at the impending arrival!]

RO: ...at a total combined weight of 310 pounds...

"THE PISTOL" KAYLA CRISTOL...

"THE AFRO PUNK" VICTORIA JUNE...

...THE COUNTRYYYYYYYYYY PUNNNNNNNNNNKS!

[Kayla Cristol is the first one through the curtain, her knee HEAVILY wrapped as she limps into view with a grimace and a grin on her face, saluting the Portland fans for the second time of the evening. Victoria June follows behind, a concerned expression on her face as she watches her partner struggle to put weight on the injured knee upon the stage.]

SA: Earlier tonight, Kayla Cristol went through a war with Harley Hamilton... and now she has to do this?

CP: That's bad management, brother. You don't fight Harley Hamilton and then expect to win a Number One Contenders match the same night.

SA: Chances like this don't come around every day though, Colt. Cristol is making the decision she believes she HAS to make in taking this opportunity here tonight.

[Cristol turns towards her partner, wagging a finger when she sees the expression on June's face...]

"None of that. You ready for this?"

[June nods as Cristol grins.]

"Then let's get it done, sister."

[Cristol pulls June into an embrace before the duo starts down the aisle to HUGE CHEERS from the Portland crowd!]

SA: That's pride walking down that aisle.

CP: That's stubbornness... and even if it's not, pride can end up putting you down too. Kayla Cristol is putting her career on the line tonight... and I hope she knows what she's doing.

[Approaching the ring, Cristol and June shed their entrance attire, looking up at the ring where Shannon Walsh is bullying her partners out of the ring.]

SA: It looks like Shannon Walsh has made a command decision. She WILL start this match here tonight, Colt.

"DING! DING! DING!"

[The camera shows Kayla Cristol and Victoria June having a... spirited discussion... in their corner.]

SA: Am I hearing this right? Is Kayla Cristol saying she wants to start this match off against Shannon Walsh?

CP: That's as crazy as it sounds, right? Cristol's already wrestled once tonight - she's got the banged up knee... you might even say she shouldn't even be wrestling in this match... but she wants to START?!

SA: A lot of guts on the part of Kayla Cristol... but the Afro Punk is holding her ground, insisting that she starts this match... and that's the smart move for the Country Punks' chances of becoming the Number One Contenders here tonight, Colt.

CP: Without a doubt.

[Cristol reluctantly steps out, leaving June and Walsh in the ring together as the referee waves for action...

...and June obliges, charging out hard, leaping into the air...]

SA: FIERRO PRESS! TAKES HER DOWN!

[A shocked Walsh is pinned down as June grabs her by the shoulders, ramming her back back into the canvas over and over to the cheers of the Portland crowd!]

SA: Victoria June starting things off in a hurry!

[June peels up off the mat, wheeling around...]

SA: OH! Big right hand sends Martinelli flying as well! June's got Walsh all alone in there and...

[She grabs the rising Walsh, lifting her up across her torso...]

SA: She's looking for the front slam! Trying to end it early!

[...but Walsh snaps an elbow into the side of the head, breaking free and being placed back down on the mat where Walsh shoves June into the ropes. June rebounds back, dropping into a slide to avoid a big swinging forearm smash...]

SA: June ducks under... hooks her...

[...and June sends her flying with a released Northern Lights Suplex, bouncing her off the canvas to more cheers!]

SA: ...and there goes Shannon Walsh!

[Outside the ring, Kelly Taylor shouts encouragement to her allies as June throws a threatening look in her direction...]

SA: Once again, the Country Punks face a numerical disadvantage... or they would if it wasn't for Ricki Toughill standing right out here in the corner tonight, making sure that Kelly Taylor stays out of the picture.

[June grins at Toughill shouting down Taylor who slinks away, wanting no part of Ricki...]

...which is when Walsh rushes her, locking her up, shoving her back into the neutral corner with a tieup that she quickly abandons to swing a knee up into the midsection once... twice... three times.]

SA: Walsh working June over in the corner...

[She switches to overhead elbows, hammering the back of June's head and neck as the crowd jeers and the referee calls for a break...]

SA: Walsh trying to take advantage of the situation and- OHH!

[...and Walsh obliges with a stiff right hook that snaps June's head to the side as she falls to her knees in the corner!]

SA: What a right hand that was by the former MMA fighter!

CP: June nearly got her head removed from her body with that one!

[Ignoring the referee's cries to back off, Walsh grabs the ropes and slams a pair of knees into the ribcage of the kneeling June...]

...and one more knee, this time to the temple, drives June partially through the ropes.]

SA: Shannon Walsh is beating the heck out of June down in the corner... and the referee is letting her have it! She's risking disqualification out there, Colt, and DQ or not, the winner of this is the new Number One Contenders to Harley Hamilton and Cinder's World Tag Team Titles.

[Walsh backs off, hands raised as Martinelli and Taylor look on, a hint of surprise on their faces at Walsh's ferocity in the early moments of the match. Walsh stomps towards her corner...]

"What's that look for?"

[...and slaps Martinelli's hand with some force, causing Martinelli to wince as she steps through the ropes.]

SA: Well, we've got our first tag and let's see if Donna Martinelli picks up where Shannon Walsh left off. Remember, fans... these Peach Pits - notable Walsh and Martinelli - shocked many fans throughout the world when they advanced to the Finals of the tournament to crowd the first Women's Tag Team Champions... and

ever since, they've had the fans solidly behind them as they look to become the second team to wear that crown.

[Martinelli pulls June off the mat, pushing her back into the corner, lighting her up with a pair of overhand chops to the chest. Cristol can be heard shouting to her partner, urging her to make the tag as Martinelli pulls her out in a front facelock before taking her over with a vertical suplex!]

SA: Nice suplex by Martinelli!

CP: Laura Davis taught her well, Big Sal.

SA: Oh, come on. Martinelli trained at the Combat Corner long before she ever got involved with Laura Davis. We can't give Davis credit for EVERYTHING having to do with Martinelli.

CP: Without Laura Davis, Martinelli would still be down in CCW, Big Sal. She owes everything to the leader of the Slam Sorority and she knows it.

[Martinelli drags June across the ring towards the Peach Pits' corner, trying to keep her isolated. Walsh gives a shout, calling for a tag back in...]

SA: Well, that was quick. Another tag is made.

[Walsh steps in, taking aim, and drops a knee across the sternum as Martinelli shrugs to Taylor, ducking back out to the apron.]

SA: Walsh with the cover... one... two... but that's all.

[Walsh gets to her feet and as June rolls to her stomach, Walsh grabs both arms, pulling her up into a surfboard...]

CP: You don't see this one too often anymore. Foot perfectly placed, arms being pulled back... stretching out the arms, the back, the pectorals. A lot of punishment in a hold like that.

[...and June's cries of pain echo that as Cristol slaps the top turnbuckle, calling for her partner to escape. Ricki Toughill also looks on, watching as Walsh puts the hurt on the Afro Punk.]

SA: We've got Ricki Toughill taking on Shannon Walsh one week from tonight on Showtime... so she's got a great interest in what's going on in there. All of these women, Colt, are talking about Girls To The Front and what they can do to make sure they're a part of history on that night in Madison Square Garden.

CP: We know Julie Somers is defending the World Title that night against Harley Hamilton... but the line of women looking to take part in that show is going to be down the block outside the AWA offices. It's going to be a tough fight to be a part of that night so every win counts.

[With June refusing to give in, Walsh releases the hold, slapping her partner's hand again before dragging June up, holding her arms behind her as Martinelli mounts the middle rope...]

SA: DOUBLE AXEHANDLE CONNECTS!

[Taylor cheers loudly as Walsh departs, leaving Martinelli hanging on a high five before Martinelli makes her first pin attempt of the match, earning a two count before June kicks out.]

SA: Two count off the doubleteam... the Peach Pits doing well so far but there is some obvious tension between them. We heard it in their pre-match interview and we know the friendship between Laura Davis and Donna Martinelli has been a recent point of contention as well, Colt.

CP: Friendship? Davis offered Martinelli a spot in the Slam Sorority! How COULDN'T that create an issue for Shannon Walsh? She wants to know where her partner's loyalties live and right now, Martinelli hasn't done a thing to prove it to Walsh.

[Martinelli pulls June off the mat and starts to pull her into a front facelock before Walsh shouts something in her direction. The former pop one hit wonder freezes, looking puzzled at Walsh...]

SA: Again, some dysfunction on display and-

[...and the brief opening gives June a chance to bury a right hand into the midsection...]

SA: The Afro Punk goes downstairs!

[...and another...]

SA: She's fighting back! June's trying to get back on track!

[...and a third has Martinelli stumbling backwards as June throws a look towards her corner where an anxious Cristol has her arm outstretched.]

SA: Cristol wants the tag annnnnd...

[June abruptly turns back towards Martinelli...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"
"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[...and gets caught with a thrust kick up under the chin, sending her falling back into the ropes.]

SA: Oh! What a shot by Martinelli! June might be seeing stars after that one... and Colt, you saw the hesitation there... the reluctance to tag in the Pistol with the banged-up knee...

CP: I saw it... and Victoria June can NOT win this match if it's a Handicap Match, Albano. Period.

SA: On that, we agree for sure.

[Walsh says something to Kelly Taylor which gets Taylor to run alongside the ring, climbing up on the apron...]

SA: Taylor up on the apron, the referee confronting her, trying to get her down...

[...and the distraction allows Walsh to HAMMER an elbow into the back of June's head from the apron, sending her staggering towards Martinelli who FLATTENS June with a spinning back kick that catches her FLUSH on the chin!]

SA: Ohhh! Big kick on the money - Martinelli covers again!

[But the quick cover gets no count at first as the referee is now dealing with Taylor and Toughill trading words on the outside. Walsh is shouting at the official as well but Martinelli's pin goes uncounted!]

SA: There's no referee! The Peach Pits might've outsmarted themselves right there.

[Martinelli yanks the referee around, pointing at the downed June, but the official points at Taylor, insisting "SHE STARTED IT!" In a huff, Martinelli turns around, stomping towards her downed opponent...

...but as she reaches down...]

SA: SMALL PACKAGE! SMALL PACKAGE! ONNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOO! TH-
"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

SA: The Country Punks were a half count away from earning the Number One Contender's spot! So close right there!

[Martinelli comes up in shock, gasping for air, clutching her chest as the official holds up two fingers...]

SA: Two count only there... and Walsh is ordering Martinelli to tag her in.

[Martinelli obliges, setting up for double team action as Walsh joins her, each throwing a boot into the gut of the held up June before whipping the Afro Punk into the ropes...

...and they send her flying, flipping through the air, and crashing down HARD with a double backdrop!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

SA: And that'll take the wind out of Victoria June's sails for the moments... Kayla Cristol totally dejected there in the corner... Ricki Toughill cheering her former adversary on from the outside...

CP: How can you support someone who caused you to have your head shaved? I'll never get that.

SA: Ricki Toughill has changed a lot from those days as Cinder's "fairy godmother" - that's for sure. She's out here tonight, watching their backs, cheering them on...

CP: And getting an up close view at her opponent for next weekend.

SA: That too.

[Walsh pulls June up by the hair, holding on tight in a Muay Thai clinch...]

SA: KNEES TO THE BODY! DRIVING HER BACK!

[The repeated knees put June up against the turnbuckles in the neutral corner again before a well-placed knee strike to the face has June grasping the ropes to stay on her feet...]

SA: What a knee that was - June got her bell rung by that, I think...

[A whip across sends June into the opposite corner as Walsh charges in, stepping up on the middle rope...]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

SA: RUNNING KNEE! SNAPS HER HEAD BACK!

[Grabbing the head in a side headlock, Walsh leaps off the middle rope, driving June's face into the canvas with a bulldog!]

SA: Ohhh! And the bulldog as well! Could that be enough?!

[Another two count follows before June escapes in time!]

SA: Two count! Just a two again! Victoria June showing a ton of heart and resilience as she battles to stay in this thing. We're about eight minutes into this match, Colt, and she's been in the ring all alone the entire time.

CP: Like it or not, she HAS to make a tag at some point. She HAS to.

[Walsh pulls her off the mat, steadying her as she prepares to unload!]

SA: Rights and lefts, hammering away on June!

[But June lashes out, desperately striking hard!]

SA: HEADBUTT! She put her whole body behind that and that one stunned Walsh!

[June falls back into the ropes, getting some momentum...]

SA: FLYING FOREARM FINDS THE MARK! BOTH WOMEN DOWN!

[And with both women down, both women turn towards their corner, looking for an escape as the crowd surges to life, cheering on their favorites...]

SA: The Country Punks are the fan favorites here in Portland, Colt, but it's obvious that the Peach Pits have more than their fair share of supporters as well. Both women hearing the cheers from this sold out crowd in Providence Park, looking for a way out of this one...

[...and with June dragging herself across the mat towards her corner, Walsh is shaking the cobwebs, sitting up on the canvas as Taylor and Martinelli shout their encouragement!]

SA: Both women looking for the tag! Who is gonna get there first?

[June is scooting closer and closer as Cristol stretches out as far as humanly possible...]

SA: Walsh is on a knee, looking towards her corner... and there's the tag for the Peach Pits...

[...and the crowd ROARS as June makes a lunge just ahead of a scrambling Martinelli!]

SA: ...AND JUNE MAKES THE TAG AS WELL!

[Rushing in off adrenaline, Cristol shows no sign of a hobble as she unloads with forearms on Martinelli, driving her back towards the middle of the ring...]

SA: Cristol's all over her! The Pistol firing like crazy!

[A frantic Martinelli throws a wild right that Cristol ducks under, tying her up, and snapping her back with a side Russian legsweep!]

SA: CRISTOL TAKES HER DOWN!

[The Pistol rises to her feet, giving a whoop as she pulls Martinelli up by the long, flowing hair, tossing her back into the corner..]

...and with a clenched fist raised, she climbs to the middle rope.]

"ONE!"

"TWO!"

"THREE!"

"FOUR!"

"FIVE!"

"SIX!"

"SEVEN!"

"EIGHT!"

"NINE!"

"TEN!"

SA: TEN BIG SHOTS TO THE DOME OF MARTINELLI!

[Hopping down, Cristol gives a wince before whipping Martinelli from corner to corner, sending her crashing into the neutral corner's turnbuckles!]

SA: Martinelli hits hard and... HERE COMES CRISTOL!

[Fighting down the pain from her knee, she rushes across, flinging herself into a flying back elbow that rocks the Peach Pit!]

SA: CRISTOL'S GOT THE FEVER, PEOPLE!

[With Martinelli dazed in the corner, Cristol slaps a hand down on the top turnbuckle, clapping her hands together as she shoves Martinelli against the buckles before ducking out and starting to climb...]

SA: Wait a second! The Pistol on the rise! Heading to the top... and we know what comes next!

[Cristol has a grimace on her face as she slowly works her way up the turnbuckles...]

...and again, we see Kelly Taylor abruptly on the apron... and again, we see Ricki Toughill rushing to confront her as the referee shouts at them both...

...and Cristol slips!]

SA: OH!

[She catches herself but not before banging her knee on the top turnbuckle!]

SA: She almost fell! The leg gave away and she almost fell!

[With Cristol barely hanging on to her balance, Martinelli reaches up...]

SA: Wait a...

"THUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUD!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

SA: ...SLAM OFF THE TOOOOOOOOP!

[Martinelli stumbles from the corner, collapsing on top of Cristol in a lateral press!]

SA: Could she get it here?! ONNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOO! TH-

[But Cristol's shoulder POPS clear from the canvas, breaking the pin attempt!]

SA: CRISTOL KICKS OUT IN TIIIIIME!

[Martinelli pushes up to her knees, grimacing at the downed Cristol as Walsh shouts at her partner, sticking out her hand...]

SA: Martinelli's up... and there's another tag for the Peach Pits!

[Walsh rushes in, brushing past her partner to dive onto Cristol before she can get to her feet, pounding her fist down onto the knee over and over and over...]

CP: Walsh smells blood in the water! Going right after the knee!

[Walsh gets up, wrenching the knee, twisting it violently as Cristol cries out in pain on the canvas...]

SA: Shannon Walsh is yanking and twisting and bending that leg in directions it was never meant to go!

CP: This was the risk the Peach Pits were taking with this match, Albano. The whole world knew Cristol's knee was in trouble and Shannon Walsh is better at taking advantage of that than almost ANYONE else.

[Walsh pulls Cristol off the mat, using a dragon screw to RIP at the knee, putting Cristol back down on the mat...]

SA: Walsh is unleashed in there, ripping and tearing at the injured leg...

[...and twists the leg around, jerking her over onto her stomach!]

SA: ...and the half Boston Crab is locked in!

[Walsh screams at Cristol to quit as she pulls back on the trapped limb.]

SA: Walsh shouting at the Pistol, trying to get that submission to make the Peach Pits the Number One Contenders as we cross the ten minute mark in this time limit - twenty minutes to go.

CP: Plenty of time to turn that knee into shredded wheat.

SA: Oh, come on, Colt!

[Walsh cranks the leg again with a loud "TAAAAAAP!" aimed at a defiant Cristol who pounds her fists into the mat, shaking her head...]

SA: And somewhere here in Portland, Harley Hamilton has to be LOVING every second of this. She did damage to that knee earlier tonight and it's paying dividends for the Peach Pits right now.

[Cristol is refusing to give up as Walsh cranks the leg again...]

SA: Kayla Cristol's got so much heart - that intangible we call fighting spirit - refusing to give up her team's chance here tonight in Portland!

[Martinelli and Taylor are looking on as Walsh is so focused on ripping apart Kayla Cristol's knee...

...and Walsh abruptly breaks the hold, stomping to her corner and slapping Martinelli's hand. She points at Cristol and shouts "SHOW THE WORLD WHAT DAVIS TAUGHT YOU!"

SA: Oho... you heard that, Colt.

CP: We all heard it, Albano... and we all know what it means. She wants Martinelli to apply Laura Davis' signature hold - the Heel Hook - on Kayla Cristol and end this thing.

[Martinelli steps through the ropes, giving her partner a glance... and then locks her eyes on Cristol. She steps over to her, grabbing the leg, pulling her to the middle of the ring...]

SA: Victoria June starting to stir in the corner, realizing the danger that her partner is in...

[June kneels on the apron, locking eyes with Cristol before Martinelli yanks her into position...]

SA: ...and there it is! The Heel Hook is locked in!

[Cristol cries out, screaming in pain, grabbing at her leg as Martinelli cinches it in!]

CP: This thing affects multiple joints, Big Sal... torque on the ankle which transfers torque to the knee. It's so dangerous with a high rate of injury - especially to all those knee ligaments. A lot of grapplers refuse to even teach this hold... and at times, it's been BANNED in many forms of martial arts!

[June throws a look at Ricki Toughill who gives a nod, hopping up on the ring apron...]

CP: What's this about?!

[...which brings Kelly Taylor up to confront and the referee over to... well, play referee.]

SA: Why is Toughill on the... oh, there it is!

[And with the official's back turned, Victoria June steps through the ropes, throwing herself into the air...]

SA: OHHH! BIG SPLASH ON MARTINELLI! That's one way to break the hold, Colt!

CP: A blatantly ILLEGAL way! They should be disqualified for that! And Toughill should be fined for facilitating it!

SA: I call it turnabout is fair play! How many times did Kelly Taylor distract the referee and now it's Ricki who-

[The referee wheels around, having realized what just happened...]

SA: Uh oh.

[...and with a point at Taylor with a "YOU!"... and one to Ricki with a "YOU!", referee Shari Miranda points to the locker room with a "YOU'RE OUTTA HERE!"

SA: Ricki Toughill and Kelly Taylor have just been EJECTED from ringside! Well, I can't say I blame Shari for that call, Colt.

CP: She didn't go far enough! Stop the match! Ring the bell! Peach Pits win!

[June gets an earful from the referee as she exits, leaving Cristol and Martinelli both down on the mat, trying to get to their respective corners as Shannon Walsh is screaming bloody murder at both the official AND Ricki Toughill.]

SA: Walsh is beside herself!

CP: Can you blame her?! The Peach Pits had this thing won!

[Cristol is crawling, dragging her bad leg behind her as Martinelli grabs at her ribs, doubled over on her knees...]

SA: Walsh is SCREAMING at Martinelli! She wants that tag before-

[...and as Martinelli pushes up, she makes a diving tag.]

SA: Tag to Walsh, coming in strong!

[Walsh rushes across, flattening Victoria June off the apron with a running forearm!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[Walsh swings around, pulling Cristol to her feet into the Muay Thai clinch again, slamming her knee up into the body...]

SA: BACKFIST!

[...but the spinning backfist whiffs as Cristol ducks under it, putting her shoulder into the torso of Walsh, driving her off-balance and backwards...]

SA: TAG!

[June comes through the ropes in a hurry, hammering three quick haymakers into the skull of Walsh before LAUNCHING her out of the corner with a hiptoss throw as Cristol collapses to the mat, rolling to the outside...]

SA: June sends her flying, Walsh right back up though!

[...and the Afro Punk runs Walsh right down with a clothesline!]

SA: CLOTHESLINE ON WALSH!

[Martinelli comes in, running into a second clothesline!]

SA: Down goes Martinelli as well!

[June is fired up, giving a shout, head-bangin' her way around the ring as catches a rising Walsh with a thrust kick to the midsection. She grabs her by the hair, walking her towards the rising Martinelli...]

SA: OHHHH! A MEETING OF THE MINDS IN PROVIDENCE PARK!

[Martinelli staggers away, falling through the ropes to the apron as June turns her focus back to Walsh, tossing her across the ring into the corner...]

SA: JUNE ON THE MOVE! MOSH SPLAAAAAASH!

[The big running leaping splash has Walsh staggered as June stands her ground in the corner...]

SA: STANDING CLOTHESLINE!

[...and she keeps on swinging!]

SA: A SECOND!

[A final blow lands, Walsh barely keeping her feet!]

SA: THREE!

[June backs off, beckoning Walsh towards her as Walsh staggers out, getting lifted up across the torso...]

SA: JUNE'S GOT HER UP! SETTING FOR THAT FRONT SLAM! OUT TO THE MIDDLE!

[...but before she can drive her down, Martinelli rushes back in, throwing a dropkick at the back of June, knocking her off-balance forward as Walsh pulls down!]

SA: WHOA! WHOA! ROLLUP IN THE MIDDLE!

[The referee dives down, the crowd counting along...]

"ONNNNNNNNNNNNNNE!"

"TWOOOOOOOOOOOOO!"

"THREEEEEEEEE-"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

SA: CRISTOL WITH A DIVING SAAAAAAVE!

[Cristol immediately grabs at her knee as Martinelli yanks her up, tossing her into the corner...]

SA: All four women inside the ring! It's breaking down in Portland!

[Martinelli hammers her into the turnbuckles a few times before wheeling around and HURLING Cristol out of the ring!]

SA: OH! She lands HARD on the outside!

"FIFTEEN MINUTES! FIFTEEN MINUTES! FIFTEEN MINUTES GONE BYYYYYY!"

SA: Fifteen minutes left in the time limit - halfway home in this thrilling battle to be the Number One Contenders!

[Martinelli ignores the referee's cries to exit the ring, turning her focus to June with a knee to the kidneys as Walsh regains her feet as well...]

SA: It's a two on one on the Afro Punk!

[Each woman grabs an arm, twisting them around before a short kick to the back of the knee puts June down on her knees on the canvas...]

SA: IT'S MURDER ON THE DANCE FLOOR!

[...and the duo each swing a devastating kneestrike up, sandwiching the kneeling June's head between their knees!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

SA: THAT'S IT! THAT'S IT!

[Walsh dives on top, Martinelli taking up a protective stance as the referee dives down again...]

SA: ONNNNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOOO! THRE-

[...when at the last possible second, Kayla Cristol throws herself at Martinelli with just enough force to knock her backwards, both women falling on top of Walsh to break up the pin!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

SA: CRISTOL SAVES THE MATCH FOR THE COUNTRY PUNKS! WHAT A DIVING SAVE BY THE PISTOL!

[Martinelli is the first one up, dragging the hurting Cristol up, driving her back with a flurry of fists into the corner. She jams a hard back elbow up under the chin, leaving Cristol barely able to stand in the corner as Walsh gets up, dragging June up with her...]

SA: Waistlock on June...

[...and Martinelli comes charging in, looking to deliver a running boot!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

SA: JUNE MOVED! WALSH GETS ROCKED!

[The impact of the big kick sends Walsh flying backwards, sailing through the ropes to the outside as a shocked Martinelli looks on! June grabs her, swinging her around, lifting her up across her torso...]

SA: SHE'S GOT HER UP! SHE'S GOT HER UP!

[...and June gives a look at a hurting Cristol who forces her body up onto the middle rope, nodding at her friend as June deliberately turns her back on her partner...]

SA: What are they...?

[...and Cristol leaps off the middle rope, hitting a crossbody on her own partner's back as June DRIVES Martinelli down in a front slam, the Peach Pit being crushed under the weight of BOTH Country Punks!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[Cristol rolls aside as June stays on top, wrapping up a leg!]

SA: ONNNNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOOO! THREEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEE!

"DING! DING! DING!"

SA: THEY GOT 'EM! THEY GOT 'EM! THE PUNKS WIN!

[June pops off, diving to embrace her injured partner whose smile lights up the Portland skies over the hard-fought victory!]

SA: What a win for the Country Punks! And the path is now clear - they're in line for another shot at Harley Hamilton, Cinder, and the Women's World Tag Team Titles!

[June helps Cristol to her feet, hands raised in the air as the Portland fans salute the gutsy performance...

...and we cut backstage to Sweet Lou Blackwell, smiling as he holds his microphone in hand.]

SLB: The Country Punks victorious here in Portland! Fans, earlier tonight, we saw one heck of a battle from Japan between Kimmy Bailey and Kurayami, and one woman who was watching that match with great interest is the mother of one of the participants. I'd like to bring in the "Platinum Princess" herself, Michelle Bailey, and get her thoughts!

[Michelle Bailey steps into frame as we hear a loud cheer from the fans of Providence Park watching on the big screen. Michelle's two-toned eyes are covered by a pair of glasses with cat's-eye frames, and she has her blonde hair tied back in a low ponytail, with the crown of her head covered with a beanie that has the logo of Portland's Blue Star Donuts chain stitched on the cuff. She also wears a simple navy flannel shirt over a white scoop neck tank, denim cutoffs, and beaten up blue Converse Chuck Taylor sneakers. She smiles as Sweet Lou tilts his head.]

SLB: A different look for you tonight, Michelle.

MB: I wanted to fit in with the locals.

[Sweet Lou nods his head.]

SLB: I will say, your knee seems to be healing up rather well.

[Michelle looks down at her leg with a grin, lifting it into camera view and bending her knee.]

MB: It is! It pays to listen to your doctors. Doctor Ponavitch gave me a clean bill of health, so I'll be back in action next week on Showtime. Interim President Zharkov was kind enough to listen to an idea that I had, and he said he'll try to accommodate me.

[Michelle winks at Sweet Lou.]

MB: Remember how I promised the next time I had a scoop, it'll go to you?

[Sweet Lou holds up his pinky.]

SLB: Didn't even need one of these.

[Michelle nods vigorously as Sweet Lou lowers his hand.]

SLB: Speaking of doctors, I'm sure you're also quite proud of the effort turned in by your not-so-little one earlier today, even though she'll need to visit a doctor after her encounter with Kurayami.

[Michelle nods.]

MB: I'm always proud of my baby Bailey, Lou, but what she did against Kurayami, well... I don't feel just like a proud mom. As a fellow wrestler, I was quite happy to see what she was able to accomplish, especially in such a short time into her career. Kurayami is a challenge for even the best wrestlers in the world, and for my daughter to have gone over to Japan and wrestle her that closely, it did me good deep down in the heart.

[Sweet Lou smiles through the response, although his expression darkens as he prepares to ask his next question.]

SLB: That said, Michelle, I had an ulterior motive to bring you here. The last couple of weeks, you've been a bit of a hot topic with your decision not to ask for another title shot against Julie Somers, and even my colleague Colt Patterson took you to task for it, something that quite a few fans on social media have echoed. You mentioned that relationships within the division are important to you, and you showed that last week when you met up with Melissa Cannon. Would you care to discuss how that went?

[Michelle's demeanor remains surprisingly chipper.]

MB: Oh, I don't mind. I'll answer your question about Melissa first, because I would like to comment on the first part of what you said.

[Sweet Lou's brow raises.]

MB: I can only speak for myself, of course, but I think Melissa and I came to a good understanding of how each other is thinking, and what our goals are. You know, Lou, she came out of the gates eager to make an impact after being away from the AWA for so long. Things can change rapidly in our sport, in terms of attitudes and alliances, and you can only understand things from an outside perspective so much. Time unveils everything within a heart and a head.

[Michelle nods her head once more.]

MB: I can't fault Melissa for feeling the way she did when she came back, and I'm glad we talked. I'm sure our paths will cross again, and when they do, we'll have a better mutual understanding of each other.

SLB: Well, speaking of mutual understanding, you did say you wanted to discuss what happened two weeks ago, and why you declined another shot at Julie Somers.

[Michelle folds her arms across her chest, frowning.]

MB: I don't recall me declining, Lou. I recall Mariah Wolfe's question being whether or not I was asking for another shot, and my answer was that I wasn't going to ask for one because I didn't feel I had earned another one, not that I didn't want another one. Considering how Harley Hamilton had earned a shot by winning the Rumble, and Cinder still has her Steal the Spotlight contract, I'm probably not in the forefront of people's minds for opportunities. I lost at Memorial Day Mayhem, and that probably knocked me down a few pegs.

[Sweet Lou points a finger at Michelle.]

SLB: Now wait a second, you then said that you had concerns about your relationships, and you specifically said that people like you don't get to leave legacies very often.

[Michelle unfolds her arms, putting her hands on her hips.]

MB: That's true. My relationship with Melissa was damaged by me going for the title, and how my match with Julie ended. My relationship with Julie might have been damaged too - we haven't spoken in almost a month. With how the Rumble ended, I likely made an enemy out of Harley Hamilton, someone I respect. In the process, I upset Ricki Toughill because of how things were unfolding. But let me ask you, Lou, if you said the name "Michelle Bailey" up until 2016 in the United States, what was the response you'd get most of the time?

[Sweet Lou hesitates.]

MB: Go ahead. I'm proud of my time in Japan, but practically nobody knew it happened. I know how people saw me here in the United States. You can say it.

[Sweet Lou sighs.]

SLB: I don't want to, Michelle, but...

MB: Say it.

[A wince from the premiere interviewer.]

SLB: ...a joke.

[Michelle sighs.]

MB: Right. I retired at the start of 2011, the very first week of the year, and spent years trying to forget that my legacy to this sport was as a punchline. There were people that looked up to me, sure, but that doesn't erase what my reality was. And let's not forget, for years, the Women's Division was a punchline too. You could look all around wrestling, and all you saw was a joke aside from a handful of folks dedicated to doing it right. If you told someone in 2008 what was happening in 2018, they'd say it was stacking a punchline on top of a punchline. Just watch the 30 For 30 on me, or on the Women's Division, if you don't believe me. It's on the ESPN app.

[Michelle smirks.]

MB: But you know how wrong they were, and it's because of the people who refused to stop believing that what we now know as reality was possible. I care not just about me, but about the division as a whole. We're finally getting our just due - not just me, but all of us - and we're showing the world that we're worth the time and the effort. And people say because I'm not calling Zharkov every night, saying "give me a title shot", I should quit?

[Michelle spreads her arms out.]

MB: My work's not done yet, buster.

[Michelle points at the camera.]

MB: Because I refuse to let anyone tell a little girl her life is a punchline anymore. I lived that life for far too long, I know what it's like to be past it, and I won't let anyone else be made to feel the same. I'm going to do my level best to make this world a better place, the Women's Division a better place, by being a part of it. Being a World Champion is great. A lot of people I care about deeply have been a World Champion, and I hope to be one someday too.

[Michelle's smile breaks through again.]

MB: But until that happens, making the world a better place outweighs ten pounds of gold.

[From off-camera, we hear a familiar voice say...]

"That's exactly what I've been saying!"

[Michelle and Sweet Lou look off-screen, with Michelle's smile growing wider as Julie Somers enters the frame. Somers is dressed in a pair of jeans with tears and slits in them and a bright red T-shirt with the words "LIVE THE DREAM" across it in big white lettering. The AWA Women's World Title belt is slung over her shoulder.]

JS: Michelle, I know how much you care for the rest of us, and that's a big reason why I encourage people to Live the Dream. I know we haven't talked since Memorial Day Mayhem – I understand you get busy and I have a full schedule as well, but the things that I wanted to say, I didn't want to say those things until I got a chance to meet you face to face.

[Michelle bashfully scratches the back of her head.]

MB: I'm sorry I kept you waiting for so long. I'm all ears.

[Julie takes a deep breath, finally able to speak on some things that have been obviously bothering her for weeks.]

JS: First of all, I didn't know what happened at the end of our title match at Memorial Day Mayhem, not until I watched the footage. I had no idea what Cinder was doing down at ringside and I certainly had no idea what Melissa was doing at ringside. Most of all, I had no idea that you had gotten hit with the title belt.

Now, I know you said that win or lose, you would shake my hand no matter what happened. I appreciate you being a woman of your word. You have shown everyone the last couple of years who you are, that you bring a lot of class, sportsmanship and honor to this business.

And don't get me wrong... to get a win over you is certainly an accomplishment, especially with the way you pushed me to my limits. But the way it happened... the way the outcome got determined, that win over you just feels a little... hollow.

[The crowd cheers and chants for both Julie and Michelle, as we can see Michelle mouthing to Julie that "it's okay, things happen".]

JS: And I get that you believe that you've had your chance... that it's time for other people to get their chance now, like I gave to Betty Chang last week. Like there are others out there who are waiting to get their opportunity at the title I wear. But the fact is, Cinder hasn't even bothered to cash in that Steal the Spotlight contract ever since things didn't go as planned for her in Reseda. And as for Harley Hamilton, she has her guaranteed shot at this title at Girls To The Front.

So the way I see it, there's two months until Girls To The Front takes place, I don't intend to go two months without another title defense, and I still believe that you deserve to have your name on that list of contenders, especially because the way things went down at Memorial Day Mayhem, it may have been a victory for me, but it's not what I would call a true victory.

[The crowd, listening in to the audio, roars at Julie's comment as Michelle can be seen blushing.]

JS: But Michelle, I'm only going to say this once... I understood you might have been caught off guard when I offered you the shot the last time, especially as I

wanted it to be a surprise. This time, though, there's no surprise here.. the offer is right here in front of you and all I'm asking you is that you don't keep me waiting. Because while I have all the respect in the world for you, I will make it clear... the shot is yours and all you have to do is take it!

[There's silence for a moment, then Michelle motions for Julie to come closer, and Julie does so. As Michelle leans in to talk into Julie's ear, she places her hand on Sweet Lou's microphone and pushes it down, causing a "HEY!" from the scoopmeister. There are a few moments of whispering between colleagues, and Sweet Lou's eyes get wider as the two talk. Michelle backs away and winks at Julie, who smiles. Sweet Lou casts a look back and forth at the champion and her former challenger.]

SLB: If that was what it sounded like...

[Michelle and Julie both hold fingers up to their lips, saying "shhhh", then walk away in separate directions.]

SLB: ...it's times like this I wish I still had the 900 line, folks. I'd make a mint.

[Blackwell shakes his head in disbelief as we fade to black.

And then back up to a shot of a darkened room, a filtered spotlight shining down in the middle of it. We can hear footsteps in the background.

Thump.

Thump.

Thump.

The steps are drawing closer it seems.

Thump.

Thump.

Thump.

And they come to a stop revealing the face of Ryan Martinez, still battle-weathered from his bloody war at SuperClash IX.]

"They call me the White Knight."

[A quick shot of Martinez delivering brutal chops to the chest of the King of the Death Match, Caleb Temple.]

"The son of a Hall of Famer."

[A shot of House Martinez - father and son - standing in the ring with Gunnar Gaines.]

"The former two-time World Champion."

[A shot of Martinez standing over Juan Vasquez with the World Title in his grasp.]

"And I am AWA."

[We get an almost identical shot in the darkened room but this time with Supreme Wright standing center stage.]

"The greatest professional wrestler on the planet."

[Cut to footage of Wright cranking on the arm of Casey James.]

"A two-time World Champion"

[Wright holds the title overhead with a defeated Dave Bryant in the background.]

"I am AWA."

[Wright is replaced by Julie Somers.]

"The Spitfire."

[A shot of Somers flipping off the top rope, crashing down on top of Kurayami with the moonsault.]

"The Women's World Champion."

[To SuperClash IX and Somers holding the title over her head.]

"The heart and soul of the Women's Division."

[Somers trading blows with Lauryn Rage inside a steel cage.]

"And I am AWA."

[Somers is replaced by Jordan Ohara, the National Title slung over his shoulder.]

"The Phoenix."

[Ohara dives off the top rope, smashing down with a Phoenix Flame splash.]

"The National Champion."

[Ohara stands on the midbuckle, holding the title up over his head.]

"A once in a millennium talent."

[A series of quick chops lighting up Juan Vasquez.]

"I am AWA."

[The champion is replaced by a grinning Michelle Bailey.]

"The Platinum Princess."

[Bailey tears across the ring, smashing home a Britney Spear on Laura Davis.]

"Former EMWC champion."

[A quick still photo comes up of Bailey holding a championship title aloft.]

"The heart and soul of the- Julie said that?! Grr!"

[A playful Bailey plants her fists on her hips, striking a pose.]

"And I am AWA."

[Bailey is replaced by the face-painted Supernova, the World Title secured around his waist.]

"The icon."

[We get footage of Supernova way back in the day, trading blows with Mark Langseth.]

"The franchise player."

[Supernova using the Heat Wave splash on Shadoe Rage.]

"The World. Heavyweight. Champion."

"And I... AM... AWA."

[We get quick shots now, individual shots...

Jack Lynch.]

"I am AWA."

[Shadoe Rage.]

"I am AWA."

[Hannibal Carver.]

"I am AWA."

[Howie Somers.]

"I am AWA."

[Daniel Harper.]

"I am AWA."

[Harley Hamilton.]

"I am AWA."

[They come quicker and quicker, all repeating the tagline - James Lynch, Victoria June, Cinder, Kerry Kendrick, Ayako Fujiwara...

...and this time, each time they say it, they stay on screen, the framed shot getting smaller as more people are added to it...

Laura Davis. Jackson Hunter. Bret Grayson. Ricki Toughill. And on. And on. And on.

And the photos all disappear, leaving just the tagline behind...]

"I am AWA."

[The graphic fades and is replaced with more text - "The American Wrestling Alliance. Every Saturday Night. ESPN."

Fade to black.

[We fade back to a shot of the Providence Park crowd.]

SA: Welcome back, fans, to Saturday Night Wrestling where we are just moments away from our Main Event... but before we go backstage for what Team Supreme has billed as their official tag title defense announcement... a quick note. As a result of what happened to him on Showtime - when Takeshi Mifune dragged him out in that vicious Japanese Stranglehold - Mark Stegglet has officially refused to conduct any more interviews with Team Supreme. He says he's done. And honestly? I don't blame him one bit.

CP: Oh, come on, Sal. It doesn't matter anyway. Word is Team Supreme's got their own permanent interviewer now. Someone very well qualified for the job.

SA: Qualified? Colt, that has nothing to do with it... this whole situation stinks! This is just another instance of Team Supreme rewriting the rules to suit themselves. First they pervert the lineage of the Tag Team Titles and now they've got their own mouthpiece! Give me a break. Let's just get this over with and go to the back...

[The camera opens backstage, where we see Theresa Lynch holding the microphone with practiced elegance. We then see Paris Crawford lean in close, whispering something that draws a soft, shared giggle from both. Their heads are nearly touching, the moment intimate and conspiratorial.]

Ahem

[The camera zooms out where we see Supreme Wright clearing his throat with a forceful tone. Paris snaps to perfect posture, face smoothing into cool composure. Theresa straightens, her smile sharpening into coy formality.]

TL: Good evening, Mister Wright. It's so nice to make your acquaintance again.

[Supreme takes her hand and gently kisses it.]

SW: Miss Lynch.

[Theresa giggles once again before finding her composure.]

TL: Mifune-san.

[Mifune grunts and tilts his head the barest fraction possible in acknowledgement.]

TL: Mx. Crawford.

PC: Mademoiselle.

TL: Mister Grayson.

[Bret Grayson blinks, then frowns, looking annoyed.]

BG: Hey! Why are you being so formal, Theresa? It's just us.

PC: Il est important d'être formel lorsque tu travailles, chéri.

[Bret turns to Paris, confused, as Theresa ignores Bret entirely, sweeping her gaze across the group.]

TL: Where are Cain and AJ this evening?

SW: Around. They are providing... protection.

[Paris holds out their hand, admiring their nails.]

PC: Others find it justifiable to blame their anger at failure on our superiority.

BG: Yeah, that's right! We're better than them!

[Paris shoots Bret a side-eye look of wordless bemusement. Mifune exhales through his nose, making a low, contemptuous sound.]

TL: Very well. Let's cut to the matter at hand: Which members of Team Supreme will defend the AWA World Tag Team Titles against Tony Donovan and Wes Taylor, tonight?

[Supreme steps forward.]

SW: The titles will be defended by The Gold Standard: Takeshi Mifune and Bret Grayson.

[Mifune's lips peel back in something too ugly and cruel to be called a smile as Bret grins and cracks his knuckles.]

TL: That should be an exciting match. Two of the greatest grapplers in the world and... whatever Donovan and Taylor are good at.

BG: LOSING! ... To us! That's what they're good at!

[Bret turns to Supreme and Mifune with a grin, as if he just cracked the wittiest one-liner in recorded human history. Their stone cold expressions suggest otherwise.]

SW: Tony Donovan was once one of us. He wore the colors. He stood in my shadow. And when he chose to leave, I respected the decision. Sentiment, however... does not equate to mercy.

[Mifune snarls.]

TM: Donovan. Soft. Weak. He ran away because he realized that he was a failure! I will remind him that failure does not grow stronger... it rots!

I will break him slowly and make him beg. I will enjoy this.

[He chuckles menacingly, but Theresa merely smiles whereas others may recoil from the Japanese psychopath. Bret Grayson shrugs his shoulders.]

BG: What can I say? Donovan's a quitter. He left Team Supreme because he couldn't cut it. Not then, and sure as heck not now. And Taylor? Well, I have to admit he's twice the man his father was.

[Grayson is silent for a brief moment, but suddenly his face lights up and he grins big.]

BG: Twice as ugly, twice as slow... and twice as stupid! We're gonna stretch'em, blow'em up and give them two options: TAP OR SNAP! Their choice.

[Paris watches Grayson with the sort of fascination one might reserve for a poorly trained dog. Mifune simply nods once, satisfied at Bret's words.]

TL: And we should note, gentlemen, that Donovan and Taylor are not merely chasing gold. They want revenge for what Team Supreme did to Johnny Detson, their former teammate.

[Crawford smiles and bites their finger, as they replay the beating in their head.]

PC: The cool, crisp November air, la façon dont la vie a quitté le corps de Detson lorsque j'ai marché sur sa gorge, the delicious saffron rice... it was a wonderful evening.

[Supreme as usual, is cold and unsympathetic.]

SW: Miss Lynch, that is irrelevant. It's emotion-fueled nostalgia for a man no one else cares to mourn. Invoking a dead man's name does not change the mathematics of the ring. Detson was careless and as a result... Detson was broken. End of equation.

TM: He got what weak things deserve. Elimination by something stronger. Donovan and Taylor want to cry for him?

[Mifune shakes his head grimly.]

TM: They will cry for themselves soon enough.

BG: Who gives a crap about Detson? Guy was a scumbag anyway! Honestly, why should anyone mourn him? He deserved it!

[Theresa makes a small, knowing nod.]

SW: Donovan and Taylor cling to sentiment, grudges, and the comforting lie of "loyalty." These are relics of the old AWA, beautiful only in their decay. In the brave new world we are constructing, Tony Donovan and Wes Taylor must prove their right to exist.

[A beat.]

SW: They must earn the air they breathe.

[There's a look of excitement in Theresa's eyes as she watches her man preaches his gospel.]

SW: Tonight, in MY ring, Donovan and Taylor will be weighed. They will be measured. They will be judged.

And they will be found wanting.

[He turns slightly toward Theresa.]

SW: Miss Lynch... thank you for your time.

[Theresa gives him a small, knowing smile.]

TL: Always a pleasure, Mister Wright.

[Supreme offers his arm and Theresa takes it without hesitation. The five of them - Mifune, Grayson, Crawford, and the happy couple - turn and walk down the corridor in perfect formation. As they do, the massive, hulking figures of Cain Jackson and AJ Martinez seemingly appear from out of nowhere. They follow the five, walking closely behind as we fade...

...to another part of the backstage area where we find Mark Stegglet standing.]

MS: Team Supreme making it official with...

[Stegglet consults his watch.]

MS: ...a few minutes to spare that the Gold Standard will be the champions tonight, defending the titles on behalf of Team Supreme against my guests at this time - the two-time former World Tag Team Champions Wes Taylor and Tony Donovan. Gentlemen, come on in here...

[Taylor and Donovan stride into view, dressed for action as Donovan puts a hand roughly down on Stegglet's shoulder, causing the longtime interviewer to visibly jump.]

TD: Relax, Mark... I'm not about to pull a Mifune and try to choke you out.

[Stegglet musters a weak smile.]

MS: Gentlemen, I've got to know - just how badly of a disadvantage does this put you in, not knowing who your opponents would be tonight? You had to prepare for every single member of Team Supreme - including Supreme Wright himself!

[Taylor cracks a grin.]

WT: Well, not that one at least. We knew there was no way Mr. Wright was going to sully himself by getting down in the streets to do his own dirty work. That's why he's got Team Flunky, right? Oh, no offense, Tony.

[Donovan shakes his head.]

WT: See, Tony used to be a part of Team Flunky way back when the first time Supreme Wright tried to pull this power play on the AWA... but back then, it was Wright and a bunch of wet-behind-the-ears rookies. This time, he's upgraded... oh, sorry, Tony.

[Donovan glares at his partner.]

WT: He's got one of Japan's finest tag teams in Martinez and Jackson. He's got his little weapon there in the flagbearer Crawford. But none of them got the call tonight. They all got stuffed aside in favor of his chosen champions for the night - Takeshi Mifune and Bret Grayson.

[Taylor exhales thoughtfully.]

WT: Must be nice to have an Olympic Gold medalist and a cold blooded killer on standby. Right, Tony?

[Donovan nods.]

TD: It must be REAL nice. Bret Grayson likes to strut around and talk about being a gold medalist - well, welcome to reality, Grayson. And reality says that while you might be really good at rolling some German or Filipino onto their shoulders for a one count - after all this time, we STILL don't really know what you're capable of inside a ring with the likes of Wes and myself. You've spent all this time under contract... hiding behind Mifune... hiding behind Wright... and now you're hiding behind the rest of Team Supreme... but do you have what it takes when the lights are brightest and the pressure is on? You're a champion who never struck gold.

[Taylor interrupts.]

WT: And then there's Mifune - the creature that goes bump in the night. The stuff of nightmares. You've got half the damn locker room that thanks the maker they

ain't wearin' white when they see their name on the card against this guy and the other half shakin' in their boots remembering what he did to them in Japan. Even Martinez gets weak in the knees at the mention of the Shadow Wolf.

[Taylor chuckles.]

WT: When I was a kid... real little... sometimes I'd have nightmares. I'd wake up screaming in a cold sweat... and my dad... well, he'd be on the road so it'd be up to my Mom to calm me down. And she'd come in... and she'd turn on the light... and she'd sit with me and talk to me and tell me it was all going to be okay. She'd tell me that no matter how dark the monster was... it went away when you turned on the light. Mifune, you bring all the chills and thrills you got like the damn Cryptkeeper... because when Tony and I turn on the brightest of spotlights when the pressure is on, we'll see just how scary you are.

[Taylor pauses.]

WT: I didn't intend to come out here tonight and talk about nightmares... I wanted to talk about dreams.

[He exhales slowly.]

WT: 419 days, Mark.

[Stegglet frowns.]

WT: It's been 419 days since Castillo ripped those titles off our waists in the biggest damn screwjob around these parts since Westwego. 419 days of recovering from injury. From having to stand on the sidelines and watch our friends and families fight our battles. 419 days of seeing our own legacy tossed aside while people talked about other tag teams. 419 days of seeing us set on the sidelines while the Kings of Wrestling fell apart. 419 days.

Johnny in a hospital.

419 days.

Brian framed. Suspended. Set up. Beat up. Left for dead.

[Taylor is seething mad.]

WT: You're damn right we're out for payback, Wright. And Tony, Tony's got a soft spot for you still. He knows what you did for his career. Hell, I know what you did for his career and we're both grateful for it.

But that doesn't wash out the blood on your hands.

It doesn't wash out the part you played in Johnny Detson having to fake a smile at his kids and tell 'em Dad's going to be okay.

It doesn't wash out all the CRAP you pulled in trying to take Brian off the chessboard because you KNOW he'll take you out.

[Taylor shakes his head.]

WT: 419 days since we've been without OUR titles... and with the whole world watching, Grayson's gonna crack... Mifune's going to turn from Wolf to Pup... and Wright is going to be left wondering where it all went wrong.

Wonder no more, Supreme.

It went wrong in Toronto. It went wrong when you crossed the Kings.

You fired first.

Remember that.

[An angry Taylor storms out of view, Donovan trailing behind him with a smirk on his face as we fade to the ring.]

With Rebecca Ortiz standing center ring, the lights dim and gold spotlights hit the stage and the squared circle...]

RO: It is now time for our MAIN EVENT of the evening!

It is set for one fall with a thirty minute time limit and it is for the AWA WORRRRRRRRLD TAG TEEEEEEEEAM CHAMPIONSHIP!

[The crowd ROAAAAAARS at the announcement!]

RO: Introducing first... they are the challengers...

[The sounds of ZZ Top's "Beer Drinkers & Hell Raisers" begins to rumble in over the PA system to a big Rip City response!]

RO: At a total combined weight of 503 pounds... they are the TWO TIME AWA WORLD TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS...

TONYYYYYY DONOVAAAAAN AND WESSSSSS TAAAAAAAYLORRRRRR!

[The former two-time tag champions step into view - focused, no flash. They are both intensely focused on the ring without even glancing at the cheering 25,000+ on hand in Providence Park. There are no theatrics. No wasted movement. Just a hard determination as Taylor gives Donovan a slap to the chest and the duo heads down the aisle.]

SA: The music says it all - these men are beer drinkers... they are hell raisers... and together, they are two-time former World Tag Team Champions. Let's break it down, Colt.

CP: Two title reigns for a total of 361 days... which I believe makes them the team to hold those titles the longest. One of only three teams to wear the World Tag Team Titles on two occasions... and tonight, they look to make history by becoming not just the first three-time World Tag Team Champions but the first three-time AWA champion ever! But they've got a tall mountain to climb here tonight.

[They hit the ring, Taylor rolling under the ropes as Donovan climbs the ringsteps before ducking through. The duo salute the fans for the first and only time since appearing on stage... and then shed their ring entrance vests as they get ready for the championship fight to come. The gold lighting returns as Ortiz raises the mic.]

RO: Annnnnnnnd their opponents...

[Ortiz waits as the opening notes of Europe's "The Final Countdown" rings out...

...and waits until the intro is complete, the lyrics set to begin as Grayson and Mifune emerge alone on stage.]

RO: ...representing Team Supreme... at a total combined weight of 478 pounds... they are part of the AWA WORRRRRRRRLD TAG TEAM CHAMPIONNNNNNNSSSSS...

...BRET GRAYSON... TAKESHI MIFUNE...

...THE GOLLLLLLLLLLLLD STANNNNNNDARRRRRRD!

[The smug Grayson is the first to emerge, walking through a cloud of stage smoke to take his place on the ramp, bouncing from foot to foot, his Olympic gold medal bouncing in rhythm as he holds the World Tag Team Title belt overhead with both arms shouting "YEAH, BABY!" at the Portland crowd.]

The Shadow Wolf is beside him, every bit the intimidating sight you've heard about. The title hangs over his shoulder as he stares down the ramp at the waiting challengers who have dared to insult him - not just with their words but with the very act of daring to challenge for HIS title.]

SA: Grayson may be an Olympic gold medalist... but Mifune may be the most dangerous man in professional wrestling.

CP: This is dominance. Period.

SA: The Gold Standard... it's tough for me to even say this because it's so ridiculous. Fans, you'll remember earlier this year when AJ Martinez and Cain Jackson defeated Next Gen to become the World Tag Team Champions through nefarious means when it was Grayson and Mifune who were scheduled for the match. Through some contractual shenanigans, Team Supreme were declared the tag team champions - ALL OF THEM - and - for now at least - AWA legal has said that any two members of the group can defend the titles when called upon. Tonight, it's Grayson and Mifune...

[The duo enter the ring, Mifune tossing his title belt at the feet of the official who glares at him... just for a moment... while Grayson bounces around the ring, showing the title belt off to the AWA fans.]

SA: What a contrast in personality between these two...

CP: But when the bell rings, they're a very dangerous unit as Taylor and Donovan are about to learn the hard way.

SA: Remember, fans... the loser of this match will be immediately put into consideration for the Top 5 rankings so the result of this match could have an impact on that as well. After tonight, we've got one more week of action until the final Top 5 is frozen on Showtime and the Run The Rankings field is made official. But who will the Run The Rankings winner be facing? We're about to find out here in Portland!

"DING! DING! DING!"

CP: What did Taylor and Donovan say? 419 days?

SA: 419 days since the two-time champions were ROBBED of their titles by outside interference... and 419 days they've been waiting to get those titles back. Tonight could be the night, Colt.

CP: Looks like it'll be Bret Grayson starting off for Team Supreme... and Tony Donovan for his team. And that's one heck of a way to start things off, Big Sal.

SA: For newer fans, let's set the stage here - Bret Grayson is an Olympic gold medalist. Period. But Tony Donovan is no slouch on the canvas, Colt.

CP: Absolutely not. This guy trained under the learning tree with Supreme Wright in the first version of Team Supreme. He can go - no doubt - but he ain't an Olympic gold medalist.

[The two men circle at the outset, the crowd clapping in rhythm, urging them to get things going as they close the distance, wrapping one another up in a collar and elbow...]

SA: Here we go! One fall, thirty minute time limit for the big, big gold!

[They jockey for position for a few moments before Grayson slips out, securing a rear waistlock and hanging on for dear life as Donovan starts searching for a way out...]

CP: You don't want to give Grayson control for long, Albano. So many ways he can hurt you from even this position. The German... the-

[...but Donovan reverses the hold, taking Grayson's position in the rear waistlock to cheers.]

SA: Oho! A quick standing switch by Tony Donovan on the Olympic gold medalist...

[Grayson looks annoyed but still in control as he ponders his next move...

...and uses a drop toehold to break loose, bringing Donovan down to the mat on his chest. Grayson spins across the back of Donovan, ending up with a front facelock applied.]

SA: Nice counter to the counter by Grayson... and now he's in control with that front facelock, cranking up on the head and neck of Tony Donovan...

[But as Grayson goes to pull Donovan off the mat in the hold, Donovan spins out of the hold and reverses it, securing a front facelock of his own to cheers again!]

SA: Bret Grayson gets a hold, Donovan reverses! And that's impressive for the third generation superstar, Colt.

CP: The son of Robert, the grandson of "Tough" Tony - his namesake... he's got uncles in this business as well. This is all in the family for Tony Donovan as he looks to show Bret Grayson that he can hang with him on the mat.

SA: As we mentioned, Tony Donovan trained under Supreme Wright. He's not intimidated by Grayson's credentials.

CP: He should be.

[With Tony Donovan hanging onto the front facelock, Grayson battles his way up to his feet, wrapping his arms around Donovan's torso, lifting him into the air...

...and Donovan, fearing what comes next, breaks free, backing away from Grayson with his hands raised and ready!]

SA: Whooooa... close call there. We've seen what Grayson can do from that bodylock. A belly to belly... maybe an overhead belly to belly...

[Donovan and Grayson stare one another down for a few moments, not trading words - just silent aggression...]

SA: The crowd letting them hear it! They want to see it again! Come on, let's do this!

[Donovan makes a lunge at Grayson who is ready for him, grabbing the arm to toss him down to the canvas...]

SA: Nice armdrag by Grayson!

[...where Donovan comes right back up, meeting an incoming Grayson with an armdrag of his own!]

SA: Donovan returns the favor, hanging onto the limb... and into a hammerlock!

[Grayson flails a bit as Donovan grounds him with the hammerlock, cranking the arm up as Grayson is pinned chestfirst to the canvas. The Olympian reaches for the ropes...

...and grabs it, forcing the referee to call for a break.]

SA: Donovan lets go of the hammerlock... and that's gotta be a bit of a victory for him in this one, Colt.

CP: Why's that?

SA: He forced Grayson to grab the ropes to break it. He couldn't do it himself!

CP: Who cares? He took the easy - and smart - way to break it!

[Grayson gets up off the canvas, glaring at Donovan again...

...and then reaches over to slap the hand of his partner.]

SA: Uh oh. The tag is made... and the mood is about to change in this one as the Shadow Wolf, Takeshi Mifune tags into the match for the first time.

CP: And if you think of Bret Grayson as perhaps the best mat wrestler in the world, you have to think of Takeshi Mifune as perhaps the most brutal and sadistic wrestling in the world.

[Donovan eyeballs Mifune as he comes through the ropes, a sneer on his face as he waves Donovan towards him...]

SA: Mifune's ready to turn this up a notch, I'm sure. He's seen some clean mat wrestling but that's not really his game.

[...and Taylor offers his hand to his partner, ready to take on the Shadow Wolf. Donovan slaps the hand, nodding to his brother-in-arms as Taylor ducks into the ring, staring across at Mifune.]

SA: The son of the Outlaw steps in... and if Mifune's looking for a fight, you know Wes Taylor will be happy to oblige.

[The two men are circling... less like grapplers looking for an opening as gunfighters looking for their moment to strike.]

SA: You can feel the tension in the air in this one. Taylor and Mifune - who goes first?

[As the distance closes, Mifune answers that question.]

"SLAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

SA: BIG SLAP! RIGHT IN THE MOUTH!

[Taylor recoils in shock, grabbing at the side of his face as Mifune sneers at the referee who warns him to keep his hands open...

...and as Mifune steps towards Taylor, Taylor snaps off a right hook to the jaw that sends Mifune stumbling backwards!]

SA: OH!

[Mifune rubs his jaw... a sadistic smile on his face as he nods his head, wiping his hands across his chest as he steps to the middle, waving for Taylor to come at him, bro. Taylor acknowledges the request, winding up again...]

SA: BIG RIGHT HAND!

[Mifune drops back a step then lunges forward...]

"SLAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

SA: OH! Mifune fires back!

[Taylor shakes off the slap's impact, winding up again...]

"OHHHH!"

[...and Mifune returns fire!]

"SLAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[Taylor shakes it off again.]

"OHHHH!"

[Mifune.]

"SLAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[And a fired up Taylor grabs Mifune by the hair, unloading with short right hands to the head as the crowd goes wild!]

SA: It's breaking down into a fight already!

[But Mifune slaps the grasping hand away, grabbing Taylor's hair as he pounds him with short forearms to the jaw...]

"OHHHH!"

"OHHHH!"

"OHHHH!"

"OHHHH!"

"OHHHH!"

[Taylor's knees start to buckle as Mifune lets go, laying the badmouth on him in Japanese...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

“OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

[...until Taylor POPS him with an uppercut that shuts Mifune up in a hurry, sending him falling back a few steps before he spits a wad of crimson on the canvas!]

SA: The challengers have come to fight and if Team Supreme was expecting an easy night at the office, they've badly underestimated what Taylor and Donovan are bringing to the table. They're looking to become the very first three time champions in AWA history and if they keep this up, they've got a chance to do exactly that!

[Mifune wipes a hand across his mouth, a trickle of blood dripping down his chin as he smiles at Taylor who steps in at him...]

“WHAAAAAACK!”

[...and gets drilled in the upper leg with a low kick!]

SA: Mifune shifting his strategy, going for the leg now...

“WHAAAAAACK!”

[Taylor staggers backwards, grabbing at his leg as Mifune moves in...]

“WHAAAAAACK!”

[...and that one forces Taylor down to a knee as Mifune snatches a front facelock, lifting Taylor up to his feet and into the air...]

SA: Snap suplex by Mifune! Rattling the spine of Taylor!

[Hanging on, Mifune rolls through the suplex, ending up dragging Taylor into a seated position where...]

“OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

[...Mifune FLATTENS him with a brutal lunging kneestrike to the sternum!]

SA: What a shot! The big knee to the chest might've just knocked the wind right out of Taylor!

[Back on his feet, Mifune walks across the ring, slapping his partner's hand. He barks something in Japanese, pointing to Taylor as Grayson gives a nod on his way inside the ring.]

SA: The tag is made, the Gold Standard making the exchange...

CP: And you notice no double team there. These two have been partners for a long time now and it's almost like Mifune is STILL making Grayson prove himself to him, show that he can get it done by himself.

[Grayson muscles Taylor up off the mat, wrapping his arms around the torso and driving him back into the turnbuckles...]

SA: Grayson driving the shoulder into the body... working him over...

[Straightening up, Grayson buries two quick but heavy blows into the body as the referee steps closer, calling for a clean break...]

...and Grayson steps back, hands raised...]

SA: Huh. Clean break there and-

[...and then BURIES a boot into the exposed midsection!]

CP: Haha! You were saying, Albano?

SA: Never mind. Grayson grabs the arm, big whip coming up...

[Taylor crashes into the turnbuckles before staggering out into a sky high backdrop, sending Taylor bouncing off the canvas!]

SA: The backdrop puts him down... and there's another tag.

[Mifune comes back in, dropping a knee into the exposed ribs... and again... and again...]

SA: Working the body... and another tag.

[Grayson is right back in, kicking the gut of Taylor as Mifune holds the arms back... and then slaps him across the back of the head on his way out.]

SA: The World Tag Team Champions... or at least the duo representing the tag team champions... are working over Wes Taylor here in Portland in this Main Event title challenge.

[With Taylor collapsing into the ropes, grabbing at his torso, Grayson unloads with two hooking right hands into the ribcage before a stiff knee puts Taylor down on a knee. Grayson paintbrushes him across the back of the head as Mifune did moments ago, causing Taylor to pitch forward over the middle rope...

...and Grayson plants his shin on the back of the throat, choking Taylor as the referee swiftly starts a five count!]

SA: The referee right in there, trying to force a break...

[Grayson backs off at four, stepping clear as the referee shouts at him...

...which leaves the gasping Taylor in Mifune's gunsights as the Shadow Wolf charges down the apron to deliver a running knee to the temple, knocking Taylor flat on the canvas!]

SA: SWEET SAN ANGELO! A running knee right to the side of the head behind the referee's back and Takeshi Mifune might've just turned Wes Taylor's lights out right there!

[Donovan cringes in the corner, grabbing his own head in sympathy pain as a gloating Grayson applies a lateral press...]

SA: We've got one! We've got two! We've got- noooo, Taylor's out at two and change!

[Now it's Grayson's turn to grimace as he slaps his hands together quickly three times with a "COME ON, REF!" The official confirms the two count as Grayson gets off the mat, circling his prey like a vulture...]

CP: That looks like a man looking for the kill.

[Grayson grabs the hair of the slowly-rising Taylor, tossing him down on all fours before snatching a gutwrench...]

SA: Uh oh... what's this now?

[...lifting Taylor off the mat and bringing him down with a thud!]

SA: Gutwrench suplex by Grayson! And he's hanging onto it! He's not done yet!

[Grayson rolls to his feet, lifting Taylor into the air a second time...]

SA: A second one, bringing Taylor down onto his back again... and Grayson is STILL hanging on!

[The Olympic gold medalist rolls up to his feet again, lifting, holding, and then powering Taylor over, throwing him down onto the canvas with a crash!]

SA: Three rolling gutwrench suplexes by the Olympic gold medalist! And Wes Taylor is laid out on the mat... no cover... but there's a tag!

CP: And if Grayson looked like he was looking for the kill, that's Takeshi Mifune's default expression - Resting Homicide Face.

[Mifune comes tearing into the ring, diving into a high impact knee to the ribcage that rocks Taylor from head to toe before the Shadow Wolf covers, hooking a leg, jamming his forearm into the cheekbone...]

SA: ONNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOO! THR-

[The crowd cheers as Taylor slips out of the pinning predicament, breaking loose in time!]

SA: Taylor hangs on! He hangs on and keeps his team's title chances alive!

CP: For now.

SA: For now for sure. He's GOT to turn this thing around quickly or this one's going to be over. Mifune dragging him up, tossing him back into the Gold Standard's corner...

[Grabbing the top rope, Mifune swings a knee up into the ribs - once, twice, thrice, rocking the body of Taylor as the referee insists that he needs to get out of the corner. Mifune obliges as the official starts a count, a sneer on his face...

...and then charges in, driving the knee home again, doubling over Taylor who collapses down to all fours as Donovan can be heard shouting encouragement to his partner.]

SA: Mifune is relentless in there - brutally efficient, sadistic in his every movement - and Wes Taylor is in serious trouble, fans, as we close in on the ten minute mark of this thirty minute time limit.

CP: Another tag... and we're seeing championship-level teamwork on the part of the Gold Standard, Albano.

SA: Grayson in and... what's this now...?

[Grayson takes a knee as Mifune muscled Taylor up in a suplex...

...and DROPS him gutfirst across the bent knee of his partner!]

SA: OHHH! What a doubleteam! That might be enough!

[Grayson rolls him off the knee into a lateral press, hooking a leg as Donovan screams to his partner... and Taylor again escapes just before the three count falls!]

SA: Wes Taylor continues to kick out, showing a lot of guts in this one as they try to erase the pain from the 419 days they've spent without the titles!

[Grayson pushes Taylor over onto his chest, pinning him down as he swings a knee into the ribcage...]

SA: OH!

[...and another...]

SA: OHHHH!

[...and another...]

SA: OHHHHHHHHH!

[He shoves Taylor back onto his back, diving across again...]

SA: IT COULD BE! IT MIGHT BE! IT... NOOOOO! TAYLOR KICKS OUT AGAIN!

[Grayson is getting upset now, shouting at the official as the Portland crowd cheers the knockout. The Olympic gold medalist gets to his feet, stomping the ribs a few times before he hauls Taylor up, tossing him into the Gold Standard's corner again...]

SA: There's the tag and-

[Cornering Taylor, Grayson and Mifune take turns kicking the body as the referee and the fans let them have it...]

SA: Come on! Get Grayson out of there!

[...and as the official does exactly that, Taylor slumps down onto his hands and knees again, cradling his torso as Mifune stands over him.]

CP: Simple but effective... and Wes Taylor's moments in this title challenge are numbered, Big Sal.

SA: He needs to get out of there and make that tag to Tony Donovan who has been out of the match for the past several minutes now.

[Donovan implores his partner to do just that as Mifune hauls Taylor to his feet by the hair, getting right in his face and berating him in Japanese before lifting Taylor up in a fireman's carry...]

SA: What is he...?

[...and then he shoves Taylor overhead, dropping onto his back with his knees raised!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

SA: FAT TUESDAY! MIFUNE TAKING A PAGE OUT OF SUPREME WRIGHT'S PLAYBOOK!

CP: Incredible impact to those injured ribs across the knees and this one's gotta be over after that!

[Mifune wraps up Taylor, pinning him down as the referee drops down to count.]

SA: ONNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOOOO! THR-

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

SA: WOW! LOOK AT THE RESILIENCY OF WES TAYLOR, CONTINUING TO KICK OUT TO SAVE THEIR CHANCE AT THE TITLES!

[Donovan breathes a sigh of relief in the corner, halfway through the ropes to intervene on the pin attempt. He ducks back in, stomping his foot, shouting "LET'S GO, WES!" Mifune rises off the mat, flashing a middle finger at Tony Donovan to jeers from the Portland crowd as he pulls Taylor off the mat, using a snapmare to flip him into a seated position...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

SA: BOOT TO THE SPINE!

[Mifune spins around the grimacing Taylor, winding up...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

SA: AND ANOTHER OPEN HAND SLAP ACROSS THE EAR!

[Taylor collapses down on the mat as Mifune mockingly stomps his foot and shouts "LET'S GO, WES!" to get under Donovan's skin...]

...and it works as the third generation wrestler comes through the ropes again, Mifune shouting angrily at him in Japanese as Donovan tries to get at him, the referee getting wedged between...]

SA: Uh oh... the referee struggling to keep control of this one.

[...which brings Bret Grayson back into the ring, pulling Taylor to his feet, locking him up, and HURLING him overhead, sending him bouncing off the mat with an overhead belly-to-belly!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

SA: COME ON, REFEREE!

CP: Hey, Donovan is the reason the referee missed all of that! You can't blame Grayson for taking advantage of it!

SA: I can't?!

[Grayson smirks as he ducks out, leaving Mifune to stalk his prey once more as the referee puts a protesting Donovan out on the apron. Mifune hauls Taylor up by the hair, yanking it back to expose the throat of Taylor...]

...but before he can strike, Taylor connects with a desperation right hand on the jaw of the Shadow Wolf!]

SA: Taylor fighting back!

[A second blow lands... then a third, creating some space between Taylor and Mifune...

...but Grayson reaches over the ropes, grabbing Taylor by the hair and pulling him back into the Gold Standard's corner to big jeers from the Providence Park crowd!]

SA: Grayson pulls him by the hair, keeping him in the ring... ohhh! Another running knee to the ribs by Mifune!

[A tag brings Grayson back in as Mifune steers Taylor away from the corner, whipping him across as Grayson comes in to join him...]

SA: FLAPJA-

[...but upon the double lift, Taylor snatches both men, somehow getting his momentum going back the other way...]

"THUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUD!"
"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[...and the crowd ERUPTS as Taylor SPIKES the two Team Supreme members with a double DDT! Donovan excitedly pumps a fist, slapping the turnbuckle, getting the crowd to clap in rhythm as a brutalized Taylor starts crawling across the ring!]

SA: Taylor with the biggest counter of the match, turning this thing around in an instant!

CP: He spiked 'em both and Grayson and Mifune may have just cracked a window for Taylor who is crawling for his damn life, Big Sal!

SA: Taylor dragging himself across the mat, the crowd solidly behind him! Cheering this kid on as he tries to get to his corner... get to his partner who is ready and waiting to go!

[Taylor gets closer and closer, the crowd getting louder and louder as Mifune rolls from the ring, leaving Grayson to try to push up to his knees, stars in his eyes as Taylor stretches, reaching... then lunges!]

SA: TAG!

[And the crowd EXPLODES as Tony Donovan makes the exchange, coming in hot as Grayson regains his feet, rocking the Olympic gold medalist with a series of short forearms on the jaw...]

SA: Grayson's gets caught!

[...and then ducks under, muscling him up into a released Northern Lights throw!]

SA: OHHH! Donovan showing Grayson he's not the only one with a suplex in his arsenal!

[Donovan pulls Grayson off the mat, whipping him across the ring...]

SA: Donovan shoots him in, Grayson ducks the clothesline, off the far SIDE!

[...and Donovan lifts, spins, and PLANTS Grayson with a beautiful spinning spinebuster that has the crowd on their feet!]

SA: SPINE MEETS PINE! DONOVAN DRIVES HIM DOWN! A COV-

[But before Donovan can make the cover, Mifune comes charging back in, bloody murder in his eyes...

...but Donovan ducks under, lifting him up and driving him back in a Samoan Drop!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

SA: TONY DONOVAN'S TAKING ON BOTH MEMBERS OF THE GOLD STANDARD!

[Donovan is on his feet, shouting down at Mifune as Grayson struggles to his feet, snatching a rear waistlock from behind...]

SA: Uh oh! Grayson hooks him!

[...but Donovan drives backwards, smashing Grayson back against the turnbuckles! He grabs the arm, whipping Grayson across where he smashes chestfirst into the corner!]

SA: Ohhh! Grayson hits hard...

[And as he stumbles backwards, Donovan swoops in behind, snatching a waistlock of his own...]

"THUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUD!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[...and PLANTS the Olympic gold medalist with a bridging German Suplex, holding on tight as the referee dives down to count!]

SA: ONNNNNNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOOOOO!

[But - still inside the ring - Mifune makes a dive, smashing a knee into Donovan's ribcage, breaking the bridge down and ending the pin count!]

SA: MIFUNE MAKES THE SAAAAAAVE!

CP: Whoa! Close call right there - we were a half count away from new tag team champions, Big Sal!

SA: Mifune just BARELY got there in time... and look at him now, pummeling Donovan down on the mat!

[A weary and battered Taylor comes in, yanking Mifune up by the hair, smashing a right hand into his jaw... and again... and again... and again... and then pivots to HURL Mifune through the ropes to the outside!]

SA: TAYLOR SENDS MIFUNE OUT! We've got Grayson still inside - he and Donovan are the legal men!

[With Mifune out of the picture, Donovan regains his feet, grabbing Grayson as he starts to get up, using a waistlock to bring him up and set him down facefirst on the mat, shifting his grip to a wheelbarrow...]

SA: Wait a second!

[...and with the Portland crowd ROARING, Donovan muscles Grayson up into position for Taylor to step forward, grabbing a front facelock...]

SA: TAYLOR'S GOT HIM HOOKED!

[...but before Taylor can DRIVE Grayson down with the elevated DDT, Mifune hooks his ankle from the outside, dragging him to the outside!]

SA: MIFUNE SAVES GRAYSON!

[Donovan drops Grayson back down to the mat, looking out with alarm as Mifune snatches Taylor by the hair...]

"CLAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAANG!"

"OHOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO!"

SA: MIFUNE PUTS TAYLOR INTO THE POST!

[Donovan shouts at Mifune from the inside, starting to go out after him when he suddenly finds himself waistlocked...]

SA: HOOKED!

[...and taken up and over with a German Suplex...]

"THOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO!"

"OHOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO!"

[...and rolls right back up, bringing Donovan with him...]

"THOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO!"

"OHOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO!"

SA: ROLLING GERMANS BY THE OLYMPIAN!

[But as Grayson goes for a third, Donovan snaps an elbow back into the side of the face, breaking Grayson's grip as Donovan swings around, hooks him, and drags him down!]

SA: SMALL PACKAGE! RIGHT IN THE MIDDLE! ONNNNNNNNNNNE!
TWOOOOOOOOOO! THREEEEEEEEEE-

"OHOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO!"

SA: GRAYSON KICKS OUT IN TIIIIIIIME!

"FIFTEEN MINUTES! FIFTEEN MINUTES! FIFTEEN MINUTES GONE BYYYYY!"

[Both men are slow to stir this time, coming to their feet at the same time as Grayson unloads with a big right hand... and another... and another, knocking Donovan back several steps...]

[...but as Grayson falls back, spitting in his hand for a big ol' soup bone, Donovan steps forward, leaping into the air...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"OHOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO!"

[...and BURIES a boot up under the chin of Grayson, snapping his head back!]

SA: THE TEAM SUPREME SPECIAL! DONOVAN CONNECTS FLUSH!

[Donovan steps back, throwing his arms back in celebration...]

...when Mifune strikes from the blind side!]

SA: STRANGLEHOLD! THE JAPANESE STRANGLEHOLD APPLIED FROM THE APRON!

[Donovan starts flailing about, trying to get loose as Mifune cranks the head and neck, trying to send Donovan into unconsciousness!]

SA: We've seen many competitors fall at this hold over the years - whether it's at the hands of Mifune, Supreme Wright, Prince Izumi, and so many others... once it's locked in, it's almost always over!

[Which is why Donovan strikes just before it's fully locked in, cupping his hands around Mifune's head...

...and DROPS to his butt, snapping Mifune's throat down over the top rope, sending him bouncing off to the floor!]

SA: OHHH! WHAT A COUNTER BY DONOVAN!

[Donovan collapses to a knee, rubbing at his throat on the mat as Mifune is left on the floor gasping for air. He pushes up to his feet, glaring at the ring...

...totally oblivious to a charging Wes Taylor who SPEARS Mifune right off his feet to a HUGE ROAR!]

SA: TAYLOR ON THE OUTSIDE! HAMMERING AWAY!

[Taylor is pounding Mifune into the floor, the referee sliding out to try and gain control, when suddenly the crowd starts buzzing at the arrival of someone at ringside...]

SA: What the...?!

[...and the camera cuts to reveal Tiger Claw in an impeccably stylish suit stands at ringside, a thoughtful expression on his face.]

SA: Tiger Claw is here?! I thought he was in Bangkok... or Bangladesh... or... I don't even know where! I damn sure didn't think he was in PORTLAND, Colt!

CP: Never let it be said that Tiger Claw is predictable, Big Sal! But the real question is... what's he doing out here?! The last time we saw him in the same place with Taylor and Donovan, they made it clear they wanted nothing to do with him! They took this match against his wishes!

[Donovan has spotted Claw now, kneeling next to the ropes with his eyes locked on their former advisor...]

SA: Mifune and Taylor are fighting on the outside! Right over here by us... and the referee is out here trying to get things under control but-

[Mifune smashes a stiff-fingered strike into the throat of Taylor, sending him falling backwards towards the ring apron...

...where the referee has scrambled back up, heading back into the ring after spotting Tiger Claw at ringside...]

SA: Get back in there, ref!

[...and as Mifune surges towards Taylor, Taylor lifts him around the torso, falling backwards with him...

...where he sends him CRASHING into the back of the official's knee, knocking the referee down off the apron!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

SA: OH! THE REFEREE GOES DOWN! That was an accident, I'm sure, but nevertheless, the referee is down... and I don't like this one bit. We could get the rest of Team Supreme out here at any moment and-

[We cut back to Tiger Claw who gives the scene an assessing glance...

...and then snatches up a steel chair from the timekeeper's table!]

SA: He's got a chair! Tiger Claw's got a chair!

CP: For what?!

SA: I don't... OHHH! TAYLOR INTO THE BARRICADE!

[With Taylor down on the floor again, Claw grabs the chair by the legs...

...and extends it towards a surprised Donovan!]

SA: WHAT?!

CP: He's offering it to Donovan! He offered these two his guidance... his advice... his expertise... and now he's offering them his direct help in becoming the very first three-time AWA champions! They can make history if they just... take it!

SA: The chair?! The guidance, the advice, the chair... all of it! Just take it!

[Donovan looks conflicted... at first... and then leans through the ropes, making a grab for the chair...]

SA: DONOVAN'S GOT THE CHAIR! HE'S GOT THE CHAIR!

[...but as Donovan goes to pull it towards him, he faces resistance.]

SA: What's he...?

[Donovan gives another tug but quickly realizes that Tiger Claw is holding onto the chair, a sadistic grin on his face as Donovan tries to get the chair out of his hands...]

SA: They're trying to-

[...when out of nowhere, Takeshi Mifune comes flying into the camera's shot, running down the ring apron...]

"CLAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAANG!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[...and Mifune PUNT KICKS the steel chair into Donovan's face, causing the third generation wrestler to collapse forward, slumping over the ropes!]

SA: MIFUNE OUT OF NOWHERE! HE KICKED THE CHAIR RIGHT INTO DONOVAN'S FACE!

CP: Donovan's out! He's out cold!

[Claw rips the chair away, throwing it down to the canvas as Mifune shoves Donovan back through the ropes towards a waiting Grayson who reaches down, securing a waistlock on the downed and unconscious Donovan...

...and DEADLIFTS HIM UP!]

SA: LOOK AT THE POWER!

[Grayson DRIVES Donovan down on the back of his head and neck, holding the bridge...

...and Mifune rushes around to the other side of the ring, shoving the injured referee through the ropes, standing guard to make sure Taylor can't get into the ring to make the save!]

SA: The ref's in... thanks to Mifune!

[The injured official crawls across the ring, spotting the pin attempt...]

SA: No, no, no!

[...slapping the mat once...]

SA: Come on! Not like this!

[...twice... Taylor makes a lunge towards the ring but Mifune ties him up, yanking his hair back, forcing him to watch as...

...the mat is slapped a final time.]

"DING! DING! DING!"

[Mifune shoves Taylor away, letting him crawl into the ring after the bell sounds. A smirking Mifune nods at the victory, reaching in to pull Grayson by the boot to safety before Taylor can assault him...

...and then throwing a look over at Tiger Claw who looks in on Taylor and a now-bloody Donovan with an unreadable expression.]

SA: The World Tag Team Champions retain the titles... I should say, Team Supreme keeps the gold here tonight in Portland after a tremendous Main Event... Grayson and Mifune have the gold, heading back up the aisle... but Colt, I have to wonder what happens here tonight - who walks out with the gold - if not for the actions of Tiger Claw.

CP: We'll never know the answer to that one, Albano, but we know that Mifune and Donovan keep the gold... they get the job done... they take advantage of the circumstances that presented themselves to them as winners and champions do.

SA: Somewhere in the back of this sold out stadium, I'm sure Supreme Wright is very pleased as Team Supreme can not sit back and get ready to face the winners of Run The Rankings two weeks from now in Seattle... but someone who is NOT happy is Wes Taylor!

[We cut back to the ring where Taylor is angrily shouting at Tiger Claw who is still out on the floor. Taylor kneels down, wiping the blood off his partner's face before shouting again, pointing a bloody finger...]

"YOU DID THIS!"

[...and the crowd noise elevates as Claw steps towards the ringsteps, climbing up them and stepping through the rope to confront his former charges.]

SA: We've got a situation here, Colt. Wes Taylor is hot under the collar... Donovan's a damn bloody mess from getting that chair kicked into his face and... well, then there's Tiger Claw who I can't tell one bit what he's thinking right now.

CP: If Wes Taylor doesn't shut his hole, I'm guessing we're about to find out in a hard way what's on Claw's mind.

SA: That looked like a setup out here to me, Colt! Claw set them up!

CP: Oh, come on... Donovan took the chair!

SA: He tried to! Claw wouldn't let go of it and just happened to be holding it in perfect position for Mifune to kick it right into Donovan's face!

[Claw is standing silent... stoic in Portland of all places... staring down at the kneeling Taylor as he tends to Donovan...

...and then Taylor gets up, stomping towards Claw and delivering an impulsive shove to the chest, drawing an "OHHHHH!" from the crowd and a hard glare from a surprised Claw as he goes flying back into the turnbuckles!]

SA: Uh oh.

CP: I'm not sure that was Taylor's brightest idea, Albano!

[Taylor shouts at Claw again, gesturing angrily...

...but Claw shrugs his shoulders.]

"It was a lesson you both needed to learn."

[Taylor gets even hotter at that, advancing strongly on Claw who is ready for him this time...]

"OHHHHH!"

[...lashing out with a short kick to the side of the leg...]

"OHHHHHHHHH!"

[...and then a sweeping roundhouse high up into the sternum, knocking Taylor off his feet!]

SA: WOW! That's the Tiger Claw we all remember!

[Claw coldly glares down at Taylor.]

"That was a warning shot."

SA: A warning shot?! Did he say it was a "warning shot?!"

CP: It was! How many people have we seen Tiger Claw knock out COLD with that shin kick?! That one was to the chest just to settle Taylor down!

[Donovan comes up off the mat, blood streaming down his face...

...and spots Claw standing over his partner, cold rage in his eyes.]

SA: Donovan is up and-

[Tony Donovan stomps across the ring, shoving Claw back away from Taylor to another "OHHHHHHH!" from the crowd. Claw looks on the verge of being unable to be restrained as he stares the bloodied Donovan in the eye...]

"I warned you."

[...and with Donovan looking on in confusion, the crowd starts to react and react BIG.]

SA: WHAT THE-?! WHAT THE-?!

CP: LOOK AT THE SIZE OF THAT MAN!

[In what appears to be a monster of a man from out of a viking movie, a tall and improbably muscular is on the ring apron. With long blond hair undercut on the back and sides and kept in a braid... with a long, full beard with a braid on his chin... with full length pants that appear to be fashioned from a variety of animals... with all exposed skin covered in tattoos of viking runes... yes, even his face...

...he steps over the top ropes with ease, nearly seven feet tall and well over three hundred pounds.

The crowd is ROARING a warning to Tony Donovan that does not land as this viking berserker throws back his head with a roar as he pounds his bare fists into his massive chest...]

"BJORRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRN!"

[...which gets Donovan to whip around, his eyes going wide with alarm as he rushes forward to attack...]

SA: NO!

[...and gets a massive paw wrapped around his throat, dragged out to center ring for all to see as Claw looks on with amusement. The monster of a man hoists Donovan effortlessly into the air...]

"THUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUD!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

SA: CHOKESLAAAAAAAAAAAAAM!

[With all the air let out of the fired-up Donovan's sails, the big man powerwalks around the ring, the crowd buzzing at what they're witnessing until he reaches a shocked Wes Taylor who throws three big right hands...

...to no effect!]

SA: WHO THE HELL IS THIS GUY?!

[Taylor hits the ropes, rebounding back towards the near seven footer...

...and nearly has his head removed from his shoulders with a massive big boot!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[Claw stands over Taylor, staring down at him...

...and then locks eyes with this massive man, slowly dragging his thumb across his throat.]

SA: What the hell does THAT mean?!

[The big man certainly seems to know, reaching down to palm Taylor by the head...

...and DEADLIFTS him off the mat, lifting him onto his feet where the monster lifts him with ease, holding him in atomic drop position for the world to see...

...spins around once... twice... three times...

...and LAUNCHES Taylor into the air, sending him spinning and CRASHING down onto the canvas!]

“OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

[Tiger Claw shows rare excitement, pumping a fist in celebration...

...and then stomps towards his man, grabbing him by the wrist, and lifting his arm into the air as they stand over the broken bodies of Wes Taylor and Tony Donovan!]

SA: What in the world have we just witnessed?

[With the crowd roaring awed jeers down on the dastardly duo...

...we fade to black.]