

The background image shows a street scene in Memphis, Tennessee, at night. A large, colorful neon sign for 'Memphis' is prominent at the top, with the word 'Records, Tapes & Souvenirs' written below it. To the right, there's a sign for 'MEMPHIS' and another for 'KING'S BLUES CLUB'. The scene is illuminated by various neon lights, creating a vibrant, urban atmosphere.

Saturday Night Wrestling

June 21st, 2014
In the shadow of the Mid-South Coliseum
Memphis, Tennessee

[We fade up from black on the sounds of Bachman Turner Overdrive's "You Ain't Seen Nothin' Yet" as we get shots from past AWA action:

Juan Vasquez smashing the Right Cross across the jaw of MAMMOTH Mizusawa.

Calisto Dufresne throwing a fireball in the face of City Jack.

The Dragon revealing himself as William Craven.

The Bishop Boys landing Doc Allen's Miracle Headache Elixir on a helpless foe.

Grant Stone and Bobby Taylor trading haymakers from their war in the early days of the AWA.

Marcus Broussard hitting belly-to-belly suplexes on a range of opponents over and over again.

Stevie Scott smashing the metal briefcase over the skull of Kolya Sudakov.

Alex Martinez dropping a bloodied William Craven in a Firebomb chokeslam.

Ryan Martinez and Gunnar Gaines using the Splashbuster to great effectiveness at the Stampede Cup

Dave Cooper gets a montage of spinebusters executed to perfection over the years.

Nenshou spews mist into the eyes of Jason Dane.

And more footage flashes by - Violence Unlimited, the Lynches, Kevin Slater, Raphael Rhodes, Eric Preston, The Shane Gang, Ron Houston, Tumaffi, and more... and more... and more...

Until finally, the footage is all a blur of motion, shots flying by so fast, it's almost impossible to pick out who is who - Buddy Lambert, Ricky Royal, the Rockstar Express, Gary Bright, Glenn Hudson, Alphonse Green, The Rave, The Hive...

The footage freezes on a clip of Ryan Martinez dropping Alphonse Green on his head with the Brainbuster to win the World Television Title before cutting to Skywalker Jones and Hercules Hammonds winning the World Tag Team Titles at SuperClash V as Jones leaps off the top rope, driving a double stomp down into the face of Kenny Stanton just before Hammonds throws Stanton down with the Hammonds Hammer.

And then finally to a bloodied Dave Bryant wrenching the back of Supreme Wright in the Iron Crab to capture the World Title in controversial fashion at Memorial Day Mayhem...

...and EXPLODES into a panning live shot of the makeshift arena constructed on an asphalt parking lot in the heart of Memphis, Tennessee. The lighting rigs have spotlights swirling around the outdoor "building" as the fans scream their lungs out for the live wrestling action about to come their way. The voice of Gordon Myers is heard over the footage.]

GM: It is the birthplace of Rock and Roll, the BBQ Capital of the World, and tonight, someone may leave Memphis, Tennessee singing the blues as we are LIVE in the shadow of the historic Mid-South Coliseum for another edition of Saturday Night Wrestling!

BW: And if you need further proof that we need the Wise Men to take this joint over fast, we're in a stinkin' parking lot here tonight!

GM: On the hallowed ground of one of the sport's greatest professional wrestling buildings, the AWA has thrown up some bleachers and a ring and we're gonna do this down and dirty just like this town is known for!

[As Gordon speaks, we crossfade towards another panning shot, this one going around the ringside area where the first few rows of fans are screaming and stretching, trying to break into the camera shot as they wave their homemade placards and sport the latest AWA merchandise available at AWAShop.com including a few fans waving replica title belts in the air.]

GM: We are just two weeks away from Guts & Glory which will be coming to you LIVE here on WKIK from Hammons Field in downtown Springfield, Missouri. As we left the air two weeks ago, Eric Preston made a spine-tingling challenge when he offered to meet the Wise Men's army in a five-on-five showdown on that night in Springfield. We hope to get an answer to that challenge at some point here tonight.

BW: If we don't have it before then, you better believe we'll get it on tonight's very special edition of The Call Of The Wilde featuring myself, Bucky Wilde, and the Collector of Oddities and resident Wise Man himself, Percy Childes.

GM: As well as Dave Bryant, the World Heavyweight Champion, and the AWA's intrepid reporter, Jason Dane.

BW: No one's watching for them, daddy.

GM: We'll see about that.

[A second fade gets us back to the "crane" shot to reveal that over ten thousand fans have jammed this asphalt wonderland to witness the best pro wrestling action on the planet. Steel chairs are set up all over the ringside area, surrounding the red, white, and blue roped ring that has black mats laid out at ringside and a steel barricade to keep the masses at bay. If you look a little further out, you'll see that wood and metal temporary bleachers are making up the bulk of the seating, packed with fans waving signs of all shapes and colors.]

GM: In addition to that, tonight we'll see the World Television Title defended when Ryan Martinez puts the gold on the line against strongman Tony Sunn!

BW: With Sunn involved out here, let's just hope that Shadoc Rage can keep his crazy in a box here tonight in Memphis.

GM: We'll also be learning more about who will be trying to win that slot as the new AWA President throughout the night leading up to the night's Main Event pitting the Dogs Of War against the trio of Michael Aarons, Cody Mertz, and Brian James - collectively known as Air Strike + Strike.

[There is no entrance stage on this night as the AWA is using a simple red carpet surrounding on either sides by metal barricades that lead down the aisle towards the ring. We can also spot an elevated interview platform off to the side of the entrance curtain.]

A cut down to ringside shows the timekeeper's table before the cameraman rounds the corner to find Gordon Myers and Bucky Wilde standing in front of the announce table. Myers, the Dean of professional wrestling announcing, is standing in a plain salt and pepper sportscoat, black slacks, white dress shirt, and a stars and stripes flag tie. Wilde, a former multiple time Southern Manager of the Year, is in an eye-scorching yellow sportscoat with a red t-shirt underneath, splashed with the phrase "#ScumbagTravis."]

BW: You know, Gordo, I hate to say there's something bigger on a night when I'm hosting a Call Of The Wilde but just as big? The funeral for the career of Jack Lynch!

GM: What a crying shame that is. The AWA should be embarrassed for letting Demetrius Lake pull off such a sham. But Lake had better hope

there's no sign of Bobby O'Connor here tonight because "Bunkhouse" showed up two weeks ago ready for a fight with the Black Tiger.

BW: Ain't never been an O'Connor who was any match for a man like Demetrius Lake.

GM: I beg to differ on that one. Bobby's game for any fight and his legendary father and grandfather battled the best of them - men like Terry Shane Jr. and Hamilton Graham. But all that's coming up later, fans... right now, let's head up to-

[Before Gordon can get any further though, the sounds of Johnny Cash's "Ain't No Grave" comes grumbling over the PA system to a HUGE reaction!]

GM: Wait a second! I know that music - we ALL know that music!

[The camera rests on the curtain, waiting for several moments until it parts and the former Chairman of the AWA Championship Committee, "Big" Jim Watkins strides into view to a HUUUUUUGE reaction!]

GM: Big Jim is in the building!

BW: Parking lot!

GM: But the question is why? Why is he here? With the exception of a couple of cameo appearances, we haven't seen "Big" Jim on a regular basis since SuperClash IV when he essentially gave up the role as the Chairman so that he could meet Joe Petrow head on in a Retirement Match.

BW: A Retirement Match so brutal that my sources say Petrow is STILL in a wheelchair.

GM: Many believe that Watkins actually struck the first blow that led to the collapse of the unit known as Royalty on that night in Los Angeles... but the very next Saturday Night Wrestling also saw him address the fans for the last time.

[Watkins, dressed in a black sportcoat over a white polo and black slacks... along with some kickass cowboy boots, climbs the steps and moves through the ropes into the ring. He nods to a surprised Phil Watson with a smile, taking the mic with a handshake. The crowd is still roaring for the most popular executive in AWA history as he raises the mic, still grinning.]

JW: Damn, it's good to hear that.

[Another big cheer goes up!]

JW: On January 12th, 2013... you guys didn't have quite the same reaction to me. I was out here in this very ring to give away the business that has been a part of my life since I was barely able to drive - professional wrestling. I had done some stuff in that match with Joe Petrow that I wasn't

proud of... and that y'all were disgusted with. I did stuff that the AWA wasn't happy about... and I got that.

I took my punishment like a man and I walked away from this business, knowing that my old friend Karl O'Connor could take care of things.

[Watkins shakes his head.]

JW: Being in charge of the AWA is hard, hard work. In the years since the AWA was born, we've seen a few people take on that job and not a one of 'em has lasted very long. So, when I saw Karl hang 'em up, I made a phone call to Bobby Taylor, the guy who dragged me out of retirement the first time and told me that I owed it to the business to not sit on my couch for the rest of my days.

He was right then...

[Watkins grins.]

JW: ...and I was right this time when I called him and said, "Put me in, coach. I'm ready to play."

[Big cheer!]

JW: There are a lot of great men looking at becoming the AWA President... men I have past associations with. Say what you want about him but Oliver Strickland has success as a promoter and knows this business inside and out. I know Sam Owens said some things y'all didn't agree with but the man ran one of the most successful territories for decades.

But there's one thing those guys don't have when it comes to being the AWA President...

[Watkins jerks a thumb at himself.]

JW: They. Ain't. Me!

[Another big cheer!]

JW: So, tonight, as I officially announce my goal to become the AWA President - to become the man in charge one more time - I have to make some promises.

I have to promise Jon Stegklet, Bobby Taylor, and Todd Michaelson - wherever he is - that I will NEVER get physically involved with an AWA talent again.

[The cheers turn to boos. Watkins smiles but waves them off.]

JW: I know, I know. There are days I'd love nothin' more than to get that loudmouth Larry Doyle in this ring and shut him up once and for all...

[Big cheer at the idea of that!]

JW: But that ain't gonna happen. Not anymore. I promise the AWA owners that... and I promise all of you that.

But what I also promise is to bring the same roughneck attitude that I had two years ago back to the AWA. I promise to always look out for what's in the best interest of the fans. I promise to do everything in my power to make sure these so-called Wise Men don't have an ounce of nothin' to say 'bout anything!

[The Memphis fans roar at the anti-Wise Men stance!]

JW: And best of all, I promise to always... ALWAYS... be ready to hook 'em up!

[Another big roar from the fans! Watkins grins.]

JW: So, we've made it official. Y'all heard Jon Stegglet's plan last week. I'm told that by the end of this week, he plans to compile a list of all the Presidential candidates and at Guts & Glory on the 4th of July - my favorite holiday - he plans to let you, the fans, vote on who you want to see sittin' in that leather chair in the office.

Now, I think I made a pretty good pitch right there for y'all...

[The fans cheer. Watkins raises a single finger.]

JW: But I also think I can do one better.

[He reaches into his jacket pocket, pulling out an envelope.]

JW: When I gave up my job back in 2013, I also told you guys that I had signed a series of executive orders and had them sealed with instructions on when to open them. The first one, you may recall, signed Juan Vasquez to a new contract and got him out from under Percy Childes' thumb. We haven't opened a single other one since then...

...until now.

[Watkins takes a finger and rips open the sealed envelope, unfolding the paper inside.]

JW: "From the office of the Chairman of the Championship Committee... this document gives Mr. James Watkins..."

[He pauses, smiling.]

JW: That's me, you know. "...gives Mr. James Watkins the right to add a stipulation to any match of his choosing at the next supercard."

[Watkins shrugs.]

JW: The way I read it... it means that after it's all said and done tonight, I can add a stipulation to ANY match at Guts & Glory that I damn well please.

[Big cheer!]

JW: So, I'm gonna hold on to this...

[Watkins folds up the paper, stuffing it back into his pocket.]

JW: ...and I'll see y'all later tonight. Enjoy the show!

[The fans cheer loudly for Watkins again as he delivers a wave before stepping through the ropes and exiting the ring.]

GM: Wow! What a way to start off the show here in Memphis as "Big" Jim Watkins has announced himself as a candidate for the AWA Presidency... AND revealed he's got a signed statement saying he can add a stipulation to whatever match for Guts & Glory that he chooses!

BW: A two year old document that HE signed! What a sham!

GM: Sham or not, it's legally binding and we're going to find out later tonight what match he'll be adding to. But right now, we're going to go backstage where our own Mark Stegglet who is trying to get some words with one of the newest tag teams to hit the AWA, the Rowdy Reles Boyz! Mark?

[The camera cuts back to a makeshift interview area once again. Likely just an AWA banner thrown up against an outside wall. Mark Stegglet stands at the ready, facing the camera... he looks a bit irritated.]

MS: Yes, Gordon... I am back here in the locker room area where AWA newcomers, the Rowdy Reles Boyz, were scheduled to appear for their first interview but they seem to not have gotten-

[A loud crash comes from off camera, startling Stegglet, who looks to his left...then moves quickly in the opposite direction as The Rowdy Reles Boyz enter from that direction. The two wear similar gear: a pair of overall shorts with a blue tie-dyed t shirts underneath...you can tell them apart by the fact that Jim Reles is a massive man, standing over six and a half feet tall and weighing around 350 pounds, while Eddie is a more defined looking man around 100 pounds lighter... and aided by the fact that Jim is black and Eddie is white.]

MS: What in the... you can't just flip over the catering table!

ER: They were out of Mountain Dew... anyone that runs out of Mountain Dew deserves what's comin' to 'em!

[Mark has his mouth open to respond... then blinks in clear surprise, clearly not prepared for that response.]

ER: (continues, ignoring Stegglet's surprise) A man's got simple needs, Stegglet... and Big Daddy Reles made it clear that when those needs don't get met, a man's gotta take steps.

MS: Big Daddy Reles?

[Jim steps forward, looking down at Stegglet.]

JR: I don't think you're gonna be saying nothing bad about Big Daddy Reles.

[Stegglet looks up at him, more confused than intimidated.]

MS: No... I don't know... Can you TELL me about Big Daddy Reles?

ER: Everybody knows about Big Daddy Reles.

JR: (Nodding) Everybody.

MS: Can you enlighten our viewers at home?

[Eddie Reles looks a bit confused, frowning at Stegglet, then looking over at Jim.]

ER: Jim...is he makin' fun o' me?

JR: Nah, I think he's just a bit slow, not knowin' about Big Daddy Reles. See, Big Daddy Reles is a sanitation engineer up in Long Island. He had a lot of...lady friends along his route.

ER: LOTS of lady friends.

JR: (nodding) Well...a few years later, he's got so many kids kickin' around up there that everybody just calls it Relestown...he's there for all of us.

MS: How many children does he have?

[Eddie and Jim look at each other and shrug.]

ER: I don't think we ever bothered to count... but the family reunion's crowded...

MS: And would the two of you like to explain why you tossed your helpless opponents out of the ring last week? They were beaten, and the two of you--

ER: They were trash.

MS: (looking offended) Trash!?!?

ER: Trash. They showed they were trash, they acted like trash, so we treated 'em like trash, ain't that right, Jim.

JR: Yup. An' Big Daddy, he told us what you do with trash. You take it out...so we did.

MS: You... took out the trash?

[ER and JD both nod.]

JR: That's right. And we'll keep doin' it. AWA's got a LOT of trash.

ER: And Stegglet? It's time to take out the trash!

[The Rowdy Reles Boyz high five each other, then move off camera as Stegglet stands by, shaking his head.]

MS: The Rowdy Reles Boyz are looking to make a big impact here in the AWA's tag team division by... uhh... taking out the trash, I suppose. Gordon, Bucky... back to you at ringside!

[Crossfade over to the ring where Phil Watson is standing.]

PW: The following tag team contest has a ten minute time limit and is scheduled for one fall. Introducing first, hailing from Anderson, South Carolina and weighing in at a combined weight of 367 pounds. They are the team of Andy and Will...

THE BLUE BROTHERS!

[Mild applause from the crowd]

PW: And their opponents, hailing from Relesville, New York and weighing it at a combined weight of 610 pounds...they are

THE ROWDY RELES BOYS!

[A deep voice filled with bass rings out over the PA system.]

"GREETING... FROM RELESVILLE!"

[The voice is followed by "Bodies" from Drowning Pool blasting out over the loudspeakers as two massive men wearing matching black and blue tie dyed t shirts under pairs of faded blue overall shorts, along with black knee pads and wrestling boots. The larger of the two is an African American standing over 6 1/2 feet tall and pushing 350 pounds, while the smaller is a blond white guy standing between 6 feet and 6 1/2 feet tall and weighing in the 250 pound range. The two men pause at the entryway, their eyes locked on the ring and then stride forward, jawing at the fans in attendance... the concession guys... the security guards, and anyone else that happens to be within earshot.]

GM: These guys sure do like to run their mouths, Bucky.

BW: Hey, you want to tell 'em to shut up? They seem tough enough to me to say whatever they want to whoever they want whenever and wherever they want!

[Reaching the ring, they climb up on the apron, stepping inside the squared circle. Jim is still jawing at the fans as Eddie approaches the announcer table, pointing at Gordon Myers and Bucky Wilde with an angry "Say nice things about us!" He spins away, cackling as he gives his half brother a high five.]

GM: After the way they treated their opponents last time out, I don't know that I have much good to say.

BW: I'm not sure that I'm willing to risk them coming out here to enforce that request, so I'll just play along, Gordo.

"DING! DING! DING!"

[Eddie Reles and Will Blue both step out of the ring, leaving big Jim Reles with Andy Blue. The larger man looks down at the MUCH smaller man as they go for a collar and elbow tie up... which ends with Andy Blue being tossed almost entirely across the ring.]

GM: That's... not going to work. Jim Reles weighs nearly as much by himself as both of the Blues do put together.

BW: I've got a feeling they're going to need to change their name to black and blues after this match.

[Andy Blue charges back in once again and Jim Reles catches him with a big clubbing forearm that sends him to his knees.]

GM: Good grief! What a forearm smash! This guy is absolutely monstrous as he pulls the smaller man back up...

[Jim locks his massive arms around him and crushes for a moment for a bear hug before jerking backwards and sending Andy Blue crashing to the mat with a belly to belly suplex.]

GM: Wow! With absolutely no momentum going his way at all, Jim Reles threw a belly to belly overhead suplex!

BW: You know how much power it takes to pull off something like that?

[Jim storms across the ring to where Will Blue stands, grabbing him by the head and tossing him over the ropes into the ring!]

GM: What in the world?

BW: Seems like Jim Reles feels like one on one with one of the Blues isn't a fair fight.

GM: I'm not saying that sentiment is wrong, but I don't think that's what he had in mind.

BW: Well, looks like Eddie didn't want him to be lonesome...here he comes too!

[Referee Ricky Longfellow tries to regain some control as the Reles Boyz are both taking it to the Blues. Jim Reles has Will Blue in the corner where he's crushing him with big right hands to the forehead while Eddie has Andy in the other corner, working him over with the same.]

GM: The referee is losing control of this one early, fans.

BW: Hey, look Gordo... we're about to see a family reunion.

GM: What are you...?

[The Reles Boyz each grab their Blue and Irish whip them into the center of the ring where they collide. Will Blue staggers back towards Jim Reles, who greets him with a STIFF big boot that sends the smaller man crashing to the mat.]

GM: OHHHH!

[Andy Blue staggers towards Eddie Reles who builds a head of steam by coming off the ropes, leaping into the air to throw a corkscrewing back elbow that sends the other Blue to the mat as well!]

GM: The Blue Brothers are taking a beating in there, Bucky! The bodies are flying everywhere!

BW: Only the Blues. The Reles Boyz seem to be happy like this.

[Ricky Longfellow is checking on Will Blue while the Reles Boyz grab Andy and send him for a ride...

....then catch him with a double flapjack!]

GM: OHH! FACEFIRST DOWN TO THE MAT!!

[Jim uses the toe of his boot to roll Andy to his back as Eddie hits the ropes again, running back towards his half brother...

...who scoops him up, pressing him high up into the air...]

GM: We saw this last time!

[And DROPS Eddie down in a modified splash on the prone Andy Blue!]

"OHOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO!"

GM: WOW! WHAT A DOUBLETEAM! And the Reles Boyz are just taking the Blues apart, Bucky.

BW: The Blues may be leaving here in ziplock baggies if this keeps up.

[Longfellow is back over to chase Eddie out of the ring while Andy Blue clutches his ribs. Jim Reles takes the opportunity presented by his brother being escorted out to move back over to the recently recovered Will who is out on the apron...

...and hoist HIM up into a military press, throwing him down to the mat inside the ring!]

GM: OHH! Down goes Will Blue off the big slam and- he's not even the legal man, Bucky! Jim Reles has thrown him into the ring TWICE now!

BW: He's in the ring now, Gordo... that makes him legal, I think.

GM: He's in the ring because Jim Reles PUT him there, Bucky!

BW: I don't think the Reles Boyz sweat the details like you do, daddy.

[Longfellow hears the crash, shouting at Jim Reles who is now pressing his boot down into the throat of the smaller man. The referee gets up in Jim Reles' face, pointing at him...

...which allows Eddie Reles to slip back into the ring, pulling Andy Blue off the mat. The blond-haired Reles Boy fires Andy into the ropes, catching him on the rebound with a big clubbing clothesline that knocks Andy right up off his feet and down to the canvas!]

GM: OHH! What a clothesline!

[Jim Reles smiles at his brother's brutality, moving aside to allow Will Blue to roll out of the ring. He stalks back across the ring where Eddie pulls Andy up, throwing him towards Jim who boots him in the gut, hooking him for a powerbomb...]

GM: Uh oh! This can't be good news for the Blue brothers!

[Jim lifts Andy up for the powerbomb, holding him as Eddie slips into position, leaping up to snag Andy for a reverse neckbreaker...

...and bringing him CRASHING down to the canvas in tandem!]

GM: RELES TRACTION BOMB ON ANDY BLUE! And it didn't look any more pleasant the second time I saw it!

BW: Absolutely brutal. I'm not sure if Andy Blue is getting up... EVER!

GM: Ricky Longfellow is over for the count but it's academic.

[The referee makes the quick count, calling for the bell.]

"DING! DING! DING!"

PW: Your winners of the match... THE ROWDY RELES BOYZ!!!!

[After having their hands raised, The Reles Boyz look down at their beaten opponents, then smile at one another...]

GM: What are they doing?

BW: This can't be good... if you're a Blue brother at least.

[Eddie Reles looks to Jim and yells... something... and the two of them each grab one of the Blues and hoist them up in a military press over their heads...

...then toss them out over the top rope to the unforgiving thinly-padded asphalt below!]

GM: OH MY STARS! That's just despicable, Bucky! The match was over... there's no call for that sort of behavior! And what were they saying?

BW: I think that Eddie told Jim that it was time to take out the trash...and I've gotta say: The Blue Brothers can't wrestle a lick, but they sure can fly pretty far.

GM: That's not funny... they could be seriously hurt. Fans, we apologize for this... it's certainly not the way we wanted to start the show.

BW: You know, I haven't seen a Blue fail that spectacularly since Chris Blue got in the face of the Wise Men back at SuperClash.

GM: Very funny, Bucky. Another impressive victory for the two half brothers from Relesville. What was all that talk about Big Daddy Reles earlier?

BW: You've never heard of Big Daddy Reles?

GM: No, and I don't believe you have either until they said his name earlier.

BW: Don't let Eddie and Jim know that you've never heard of him. They're pretty proud of their father and his exploits up in Relesville. The man's got more kids than my idiot brother who lives out in the sticks.

GM: You've got a brother? How did I never know that?

BW: He's the black sheep of the family, Gordo. Got married, bought a farm, works all day long, and raises about a dozen idiot kids.

GM: Bucky, that's your family you're talking about!

BW: Hey, family's got just as much of a right to be a moron as a complete stranger, daddy.

[Gordon sighs.]

GM: Fans, we're going to take a quick break but when we come back, we'll have more great action here on Saturday Night Wrestling so don't you dare go away!

[Fade to black.

Fade back up on what sounds like a very passable punk cover of the Beach Boys' "Surfin' USA" with a sun-drenched beach. A voiceover begins.]

"The experts say that it promises to be the hottest summer on record."

[A shot of a pair of bikini-clad girls being baked by the sun.]

"But it's not global warming's fault."

[A shower of sand is kicked in the girls' faces, causing yelps and angry shouts. We slowly pan up from the sand to reveal a grinning Miss Sandra Hayes in a bikini of her own.]

"It's the AWA's fault"

[Cut to shots of AWA action with sunburst graphics and transitions cutting from shot to shot as the voiceover continues.]

"It's become an annual tradition when the AWA hits the road every summer, leaving their hometown of Dallas behind and going out to all the cities thirsting for the professional wrestling action that only the AWA can provide."

[A series of show dates appear on the screen, scrolling past one by one.]

"But this year, the AWA makes history by going COAST TO COAST for the very first time. So, check the tour schedule now for the show nearest you because you do NOT want to miss it when the AWA comes to your town!"

[We cut back to the bikini-clad Sandra Hayes, now with her pink branding iron slung over her shoulder.]

MSH: Can you feel the heat?

[A seductive smile and wink follows before we fade to black...

As we come up from commercial, we see Phil Watson in the ring with a lean black haired white man with a slight acne problem and large nose. He wears white gi pants and a green cloth belt. He goes barefoot, with athletic tape around his feet.]

[*DING*DING*]

PW: The following contest is set for one fall with a ten-minute time limit.

Introducing first, already in the ring... from Colorado Springs, Colorado... weighing two hundred thirty-three pounds... ALBERT SHOWENS!

[The Yonkyu rank judoka bows, and then the familiar synthesized church bells of "A New Game", composed by NFL Films' Tom Hedden, echo out over the arena in the distinctive 15/8 time signature. The fans boo as this heralds the oncoming of "First String" Frankie Farelli, who strolls on through the entrance curtain with an arrogant swagger. At his side is his head cheerleader, Chastity Chamberlain.]

BW: Well, let's see if the AWA gives Frankie Farelli the big entrance he deserves.

GM: Last time out, we saw the debut of "First String" Frankie Farelli, who was unimpressed with his reception by the AWA. He then proceeded to blast the sport of professional wrestling, saying that his beloved football is the best. Which makes me wonder why he doesn't go back.

BW: He's a kind man who thinks he's doing us a favor.

GM: He's a hypocrite who can't get a job in the NFL anymore because of his behavior. And that's saying a LOT.

[Farelli walks to the ring with an unhurried gait, pointing and mocking the fans as he goes by. Frankie Farelli is a broad-shouldered man with short blonde hair and gleaming white teeth. He's wearing a blue New England Patriots Starter jacket, blue trunks with red and silvery-white trim (with a small silvery-white number 73 in the upper right corner), white boots with the New England Patriots logo on the side, blue knee and elbow pads, white forearm pads (including a "quarterback pad" with a Velcro playlist on his left forearm) and finger tape. Most prominently, he frequently holds up his single 2004 Super Bowl ring to show the fans why he believes himself to be better than them. He has put it on his middle finger for some odd reason...

Chamberlain is wearing the blue, silvery-white, and red cheerleader outfit of a Patriots cheerleader. The buxom blonde is waving her pom-poms, trying to get the fans cheering and seemingly oblivious to the fact that they aren't. She bounces around on the balls of her feet, occasionally doing a high leg kick or jump as part of her cheer routine.

Eventually, the duo reach the ringside area. Farelli waits for Chastity to hop onto the apron and hold the ropes open before he enters the ring. Chamberlain then neatly jumps in over the top rope, and bounds all over the ring waving her pom-poms and leading cheers that are actually boos. Farelli puts his hands on his hips, as if waiting for something... about a dozen red, white, and blue balloons fall from above into the ring.]

BW: Balloons? Really?!

GM: I somehow think that someone is having some fun at Mr. Farelli's expense. He made the diva demand for a special entrance. Well, nobody in the AWA gets balloons in their entrance.

[The fans laugh as Farelli stomps the balloons angrily and snatches the microphone from Watson.]

FF: Oh, that's real funny. What a laugh. I came out here two weeks ago, I graced your presence by being the only honest-to-Lombardi Super Bowl winner, Pro Bowler, and NCAA football champion in the history of this second-tier sport, and I demanded an entrance worthy of me!

[He stomps another balloon.]

FF: Somebody's got themselves a sense of humor, I see. Well, the one who's gonna pay for this is that dumb kid in the pajama pants over there.

[Farelli points at Showens.]

FF: I heard you like them chop suey martial arts. I like arts too. I'm gonna paint an all-red version of the NFL Shield right here in the ring, and I bet you can guess where I'm gettin' the paint from. But first, my introduction. You better at least do this right.

[The cocky Farelli walks over to Phil Watson, takes his cue card out of his hand, and produces a new cue card from his jacket pocket which he gives to the ring announcer to read. The music dies down and an unhappy Watson proceeds to work off of his new material as Frankie stands menacingly by.]

PW: *ahem* Introducing first... the head cheerleader, Chastity Chamberlain!

[She does a Barani flip as her name is introduced, landing in a split as the male demographic cheers her.]

PW: She represents... from Long Island, New York... weighing in at two hun...

[Farelli interrupts by pointing at the card and intoning "READ IT ALL."]

PW: ...weighing in at a slim, trim, cut, ripped, stacked, powerpacked, unstoppable two-hundred and eighty-one and one-quarter pounds...

He is an NCAA National Football Champion and All-American. He is a Super Bowl Champion and Pro Bowler. He is the only true athlete in the sport of wrestling today, and you are all lucky that he has come here to prove it once again...

...he is the King Of Combat, the Master Of Mayhem, the Unstoppable Force And The Immovable Object, the Beast Of The East, the Baddest Man In The Building, he is...

[Phil shoots a withering glance at Farelli, as if to say "really?" Farelli waves him on.]

PW: ...accepting applications for his cheerleader squad.

[Chastity nods to verify that this is true. She shouts out "I need lackeys!"]

PW: He is my personal favorite wrestler... *sigh*... here is "FIRST STRING" FRANKIE FARELLI!

[Farelli steps to the corner and raises his Super Bowl ring in the air as the fans boo and Chastity jumps around like a loon.]

GM: Between this man and Demetrius Lake, we've got far too much abuse of the ring announcer going on.

BW: Jump. Jump. Jump.

GM: Bucky, stop staring at the cheerleader.

BW: She has a name, Gordo, don't objectify her! Her name is, uh...

GM: Chastity.

BW: Lordy, I hope not.

[Chamberlain gathers Farelli's jacket, and makes a big show of taking off his ring. Frankie seems nervous about the procedure, saying "careful... easy... don't smudge the finish..." The fans boo this ridiculous behavior. After that, she hops over the top rope, and Farelli beelines right for Showens as the bell rings.]

[*DING*DING*DING*]

GM: Farelli going for a collar-and-elbow, but Showens evades him. And... oh, goodness. Frankie Farelli is already bent out of shape.

BW: He's screaming at Showens to fight like a man. Football players aren't used to people running away from them unless they have the ball. I think Frankie just said that he doesn't think Showens has one of those.

GM: That is what he said. Collar-and-elbow... Showens evades again, and this time takes a side headlock takeover as a frustrated Farelli tries to track his movements.

BW: That bad entrance shook him up and made him angry. Farelli is getting sloppy. But don't worry.

GM: Why would I worry?

BW: If Farelli loses here, the Call Of The Wilde could definitely expand to incorporate a cheerleader, so Charlene here won't be out of work long.

GM: Her name is Chastity, now focus on the match. Farelli is far too strong for Showens to keep down and... oh, brother.

[Farelli stands up, gathers Showens in his arms like a sack of flour, and shot-puts him across the ring to break the side headlock. The judoka uses breakfall and immediately gets back to his feet in a ready stance... but this show of power has completely returned Farelli to a level state of mind. The arrogant ex-football star waggles a finger at Showens, telling him that he's too weak to stand a chance.]

BW: Yikes. Not hard to figure who has a power advantage.

GM: True, but throwing around a judo practitioner won't get you far. You need to use moves that drive a man down with your strength or weight behind it... Showens rolled with that and was not hurt where most men would have been.

BW: Or at least hit them first so that they ain't got the focus to do that. Wrestlers learn that stuff too, Gordo. That's why you usually can't just go out and use finishing moves right away.

GM: Collar-and-elbow... sacrifice throw by Showens! He threw himself down to get the momentum to take down Farelli as well, and he is trying to roll this into some kind of judo armbar. Possibly a cross armbreaker!

BW: Too early for a move like that! Farelli is already up on his feet!

[Showens has the arm scissored, but Farelli has it tucked so that the Colorado native can't straighten it out. Farelli plants his feet, lifts, and then sits out to drive Showens into the mat!]

GM: Ouch! Almost a modified powerbomb there, but I do not believe there was any technique involved. He just used his power to bash Showens into the mat. Albert Showens is stunned, and Frankie Farelli stands... brings down the elbow to the chin! A forward elbow drop, coming down like an axe.

BW: Well, Frankie's match is already longer than it was last week, so there's a small victory for Showens.

GM: "First String" Frankie Farelli picks up Showens, and drives him across the knee with a backbreaker! And holding it!

[Using one hand cupped on the chin and the other on a thigh, Farelli presses down, yelling in exertion as he tries to break Showens over his knee. As he does, Chamberlain starts a crowd cheer.]

CC: GIMME AN F!

About thirty fans: F!

CC: GIMME AN R!

About thirty-four fans: R!

CC: GIMME AN A!

About forty fans: A!

CC: GIMME A K... NO, WAIT, AN N... WAIT, LEMME CHECK!

[She consults a cheat sheet.]

CC: GIMME AN N!

[The fans laugh at her, so Farelli throws Showens off of his knee and goes over to point and threaten the crowd on that side of the ring. This earns him more boos.]

GM: I believe that Chastity Chamberlain is going to be as much or more of a distraction for Farelli as she will be for his opponents.

BW: Yeah, but when you get to take that distraction home with you, who cares?

GM: Showens is up, and Farelli gets into a three-point stance... BRUTAL SPEAR TACKLE! Farelli slammed into Albert Showens' ribcage and drove him back a good five feet!

BW: And that three-point stance isn't just for show. Pushing off the mat gives you extra momentum for lunging moves.

GM: The Long Islander picking up Showens and depositing him to the floor through the ropes! Now going out after him, and I question what the First Stringer is thinking about here.

BW: He said he was gonna make Albert Showens pay for how they embarrassed him with his entrance.

GM: It is not the place of a wrestler, especially a rookie, to make demands of our technical staff! Farelli with one of those balloons, and pressing it against Showens' face until it pops... he's trying to stuff that balloon down his throat! Disgusting!

BW: I'll say! That thing's been sitting out here on the ground! And there are few things in life more disgusting than a Memphis parking lot. Have you seen some of these people in the crowd? More hair under their arms than on their heads... and that's the women!

GM: Would you stop?! Frankie Farelli pulling up Showens, and hammering his sternum into the apron! And again!

[The crowd boos the unnecessary roughness, so to speak. Chamberlain bounds by, and shakes her pom-poms in Showens' face before skipping off to lead some more cheers. Farelli rolls Showens up onto the apron, pulls his head and neck so that they're hanging over the edge of the apron, backs up, and drives an elbow down into the chin and neck!]

BW: Last week, we saw that Farelli could use his explosiveness to beat someone quick. This week, we're seeing that he can work a man down until there's nothing left of him.

GM: A second elbow to the exposed jaw and neck! Get him back in the ring, referee!

BW: Good luck with that. You know, if football players even breathe on refs wrong, they get kicked out and fined thousands of dollars. Refs aren't so tightly protected here.

GM: They should be! They would be if I had a say in it!

BW: Gordo! Are you runnin' for President too?!

GM: No, but I have thought- what do you mean 'too'?

BW: ANYWAY. Farelli's got Showens up...

[The ex-Patriot lifts the judoka overhead in a press, but Showens drops down behind and gives him a legsweep to send the big guy crashing down to the canvas!]

GM: Showens still has some fight in him! A knee to the head of "First String" Frankie Farelli! He's grabbed the arm... going for some kind of hold!

[Specifically, he's trying to apply a triangle strangle, scissoring the head and one arm to use his legs in a judo chokeout. Frankie rolls away before Showens can get it hooked, stands up, runs at him, and plasters him across the face with a running open-palm strike that lays him out!]

BW: ZONE BLOCK!

GM: Is that what he calls that?!

BW: It is. And I think we're about to see a Blitz!

GM: Farelli with Showens in a bear hug... rushes into the corner and smashes him to the turnbuckles! Overhead belly-to-belly suplex with the momentum out of the corner! We saw that on the last Saturday Night Wrestling!

BW: That's the Blitz, and now that Showens has turned it over, you can expect Farelli to score a Touchdown!

GM: Farelli up on the second turnbuckle on the inside. He has both hands up in the touchdown sign, as does Chamberlain. We saw this last time as well, that violent front elbow to the jaw!

[*WHACK!*

BW: TOUCHDOWN!

GM: Brutal! But a perfectly legal maneuver. Farelli with the cover, and Showens may have just been knocked out. As any normal man would be.

[*DING*DING*DING*]

BW: You gotta admit, Gordo. This guy is for real.

GM: But he's really trashing our sport. I'm amazed that he hasn't been accosted in the locker room, or lashed out against as Joshua Dusscher was.

BW: No, there's a big difference. Farelli's putting up. You don't gotta shut up if you put up. That's the mentality of the locker room. If anybody wants a piece, they can sign a contract and get it. It's when non-wrestlers talk about it and then don't put up that gets people hot back there.

GM: I suppose. Let's get the official word.

PW: Here is your winner... "FIRST STRING" FRANKIE FARELLI!

[Boos ring down as Chastity leaps into the ring and hops all around wagging her pom-poms. Farelli raises a fist up to the sky, and then wipes his sweat off to fling it on his fallen opponent. "A New Game" restarts, drawing more anger as Chastity reapplies the Super Bowl ring onto Frankie's finger.]

GM: We shall see how far this man's attitude gets him in the future. To be frank, I think he's going to learn the very, very hard way how tough professional wrestlers really are.

BW: He is one now, daddy. So it ain't like he's gonna be a sitting duck. If anybody wants some, Farelli won't be hard to find.

GM: Victory for "First String" Frankie Farelli and he's quickly becoming someone to watch here in the AWA, fans. Let's go backstage where Jason Dane is standing by!

[We cut to the makeshift interview area backstage where Jason Dane is standing between two individuals who could not be more different.

On one side, we see the bizarre creature known as the Lost Boy. His long black hair is tied off in a top knot with the sides shaved completely. His face is sort-of painted - smeared red circles around his eyes and a smear of green on his tongue as it lolls out of his mouth. His eyes have a vacant gaze on them, looking off at nothing as he stands in a pair of blue jeans. His

torso is bare, something we notice as he repeatedly slaps his chest, leaving a red welt behind.

On the other side is the gorgeous piece of work known as Sunshine. Her long blonde hair has been tied back into a ponytail. Her makeup appears to have been professionally applied and her clothing continues to get better week after week. This week, she's sporting a black leather mini-skirt with matching high heels. Above the waist is her standard #ScumbagTravis t-shirt that is tied off to reveal a bare midriff and cut low to reveal ample cleavage. Over it, we see a matching black leather vest with gold trim.]

JD: Thanks, Gordon. As the world can see, I've been joined by Sunshine and her Lost Boy. Sunshine, I've got to know what in the world you were thinking two weeks ago when you had the Lost Boy attempt to HANG Travis Lynch!

[Sunshine smiles... it doesn't seem to be very genuine.]

S: What was I thinking...? Hmm.

[She taps a well-manicured fingernail against her temple.]

S: I was thinking that a world minus one Lynch is a better world to live in.

[Dane's jaw drops at the statement.]

S: You look surprised, Jason. Did you honestly think I was the shrinking flower around here? The AWA is filled with powerful women. Myself, Miss Sandra Hayes, Radiant Raven... even that Amazon, Marissa Monet... yet we constantly take a backseat to the men.

These idiot fans shed tears for James Lynch when the Beale Street Bullies put him permanently on the shelf...

[She bats her eyelashes.]

S: ...thanks to me, of course.

[And then gets a steely look again.]

S: But when my career was nearly ENDED by Scumbag Travis himself, not a single tear was shed. There was no breaking news update from you about MY condition, was there?

[Dane looks uneasily at Sunshine.]

JD: But you fell. It wasn't serious. It wasn't-

S: Tread carefully on what you say, Jason. There may be a lot of people in this company afraid of what your sister and brother-in-law could do to them but I can assure you that the man on your right is not one of them.

[Sunshine snaps her fingers in front of the Lost Boy's eyes to no reaction.]

S: Half the time, I'm not even sure he's mentally here. But he WILL be here when I need him. He WILL be here if you go too far with me, Jason. And he WILL be there when I get the occasion to end Travis Lynch once and for all.

JD: Hell hath no fury like a woman scorned.

[Sunshine nods gleefully.]

S: Truer words were never spoken. Travis Lynch had his chance to make things right with me. We could have been friends, Travis. Allies.

[She looks seductively into the camera.]

S: Partners.

[She blows a kiss at the lens.]

S: But you thought you were too good for me. Just like your old man thought Jimmy was too good for me. Look where that got Jimmy.

And if we'd had just a little bit longer two weeks ago, you might've been right there with him, Trav... just where you've always wanted to be, at your big brother's side.

But there will come a time, Travis. There will come a place where they won't be there to help you. Jack won't be there to help you. Your father won't be there to help you. And Jimmy... Jimmy certainly won't be there to help you.

[She smiles again - an evil smile if there ever was one.]

JD: I've got one more question for you, Sunshine. As of late, we've really seen a change in your attire. Gone are the jeans and t-shirts. Well, we've still got the t-shirts-

S: Still available on ScumbagTravis.com. Buy yours now. Most of the proceeds go to a battered woman.

JD: Meaning you?

[She smiles again, batting her eyelashes.]

JD: Incredible. My question is - between your new attire and being able to hire The Lost Boy, there have been rumors that you have a... benefactor of sorts. That someone might be footing the bills for you these days. Any comments?

S: This is just what I'm talking about, Jason. A woman enjoys some success. Gets some new clothing. Makes a better life for herself...

...and the rumors spread that some MAN is paying her way through life.

[Sunshine glares at Jason.]

S: You see this shirt?

[She gestures to her chest... which gets Jason's attention. He stares a bit too long before looking up embarrassed.]

S: Product placement at its finest. This is what Travis Lynch has forced me into, Jason. He has forced me into WHORING... my merchandise out here to pay my bills. But #ScumbagTravis isn't just a clever phrase to put on a t-shirt.

It's my salvation... and that's all you need to know about my finances.

[Dane nods.]

S: Good day, sir.

[Sunshine wheels around, grabbing The Lost Boy by the arm and dragging him out of view.]

JD: Let's go back to the ring.

[Dane is still shaking his head as we crossfade back to the ring where Phil Watson is standing with two wrestlers. One of them has a decent build, a military style buzzcut and a square jaw. He wears camouflage trunks, black knee pads and black boots. The other has a leather jacket, light brown (receding) hair and mustache, black thigh-length tights and black sneakers.]

GM: Two weeks ago, we saw the Surfer Dudes in action, and they laid out a challenge to the Longhorn Riders, Bucky. The Riders are about to make their stateside reappearance after a Japanese tour.

BW: And they don't duck challenges. I heard THEY were man enough to fight Violence Unlimited. Unlike some of these other tag teams. Like all of them.

GM: They fell short, which is certainly no shame. But I agree, in all likelihood, they're going to accept the challenge of Trampus Kennedy and Vance Ricks, resulting from an alleged injury dealt to Ricks before the Stampede Cup. Let's go up to Phil Watson.

[*DING*DING*DING*]

PW: The following tag team contest is set for one fall and a twenty minute time limit!

Introducing first, already in the ring... from Watertown, New York and Dallas, Texas respectively... at a total combined weight of four hundred seventy-nine pounds... the team of CHARLIE STEPHENS and BRUCE "WILD AND CRAZY" GUY!

[The fans give some tepid cheers as Stephens salutes them while Guy hops on the second rope and slicks back his hair. And then the driving guitar beat of Joe Satriani's "Ride" plays over the PA, and immediately two men stride from the back. Clad in white dusters (over black Harley Davidson T-Shirts), blue jeans, brown leather cowboy boots, brown leather cutoff gloves, and black motorcycle helmets with a red "Longhorn Riders" logo airbrushed on each side, this is "Texas" Pete Colt and "Slim" Jim Colt... the brothers known as the Longhorn Riders. They are side-by-side and almost in step as they power-walk straight to the ring. The fans boo them loudly.]

PW: Coming down the aisle... from Gun Barrel City, Texas... at a total combined weight of five hundred forty two pounds...

..."Texas" Pete Colt and "Slim" Jim Colt...

...THE LONGHORN RIDERS!

[The cowboy bikers reach the ring at the same time and go straight in to the boos of the crowd. Though the Colts have different builds, they do have similar facial features and the same reddish-brown haircolor. Pete is the bulkier of the two; he's barrel-chested, with thick muscles up top and a bit of a beer gut down below. His hair is shorter, but is wavy in style; he sports a thick horseshoe mustache. Jim is taller, and is quite lanky. His hair is a straight mullet; he sports a thin horseshoe mustache. Both men go to center ring and lift their arms to the fans, as if declaring that this is their turf.]

BW: Alright, Kennedy and Ricks... if this is really what you want, I hope you're ready for lightning to strike twice.

GM: The music is down and we're ready to...

[The moment they ditch their helmets and jackets, they turn and dash across the ring to attack. Stephens and Guy cover up as Pete and Jim barrel into them swinging.]

GM: Of course. As usual, the Longhorn Riders attack before the bell.

BW: Hey, their opponents know what they're coming to the ring to do. This is a fight, not a walkabout.

GM: Pete Colt sends Bruce Guy flying over the top rope! Jim Colt choking Charlie Stephens on the top rope! Both Colts now whaling away on Stephens. The former army man is in trouble.

BW: He was in trouble when he signed on for this.

GM: Davis Warren forcing Jim out of the ring. Warren is going to have his hands full for sure. "Texas" Pete sends Tommy Stephens off the ropes, and crashes into him with a sideways elbow. Using his bulk to just run Stephens over.

BW: And now he's choking him out with the T-Shirt! The Riders'll use anything not nailed down and some things that are.

GM: A fact that I am certain the Surfer Dudes know all too well. Davis Warren applying the count, when he does have at his discretion the ability to disqualify Pete for this.

BW: Pete has at his discretion the ability to cripple Davis Warren, so I think discretion will be shown on the ref's part.

GM: I doubt that Pete Colt would do that, seeing how his wrestling career would be over. Hard body slam on Stephens, and a tag to Jim Colt.

BW: Okay, but Jim would. Gordo, you ever looked into Jim Colt's eyes? You ever heard him talk? That man ain't right. He's probably got a shiv on him right now because he never knows when he feels like he'll need one.

GM: Jim Colt does tend to behave like the entire world is a prison yard, yes. The lankier Colt applies the boot to the ribs of Stephens as Pete holds him wide open. Pete Colt picking up Stephens and slams him down over the knee of Jim! Double team backbreaker, and the upstate New Yorker is in trouble!

BW: That's the second time you've said that. He must be in double trouble.

GM: There aren't that many ways to say it... Stephens has got to clear some space from the Longhorn Riders corner. Jim Colt plants another kick to the ribs. This man's leg strength and kicking power are off the charts, and he's one Boot Hill away from ending any match he's in.

[Jim snapmares Stephens over into a seated position before planting a knee to the base of the neck. He straightens up, twisting the neck of his victim in a neck wrench.]

GM: Combination wrestling by the second generation wrestler out of Gun Barrel City.

BW: And you know Sam Colt raised his kids to be mean. He was one-half of one of the best tag teams of the late eighties and early-mid nineties... his kids still have a ways to go to get there. But they're on the way. And the Surfer Dudes just don't understand that. If they think they mean something more to these guys than being a cobblestone on the street, then they deserve to get stepped on.

GM: We can certainly find out. Let's hear these pre-recorded comments from the Longhorn Riders!

[Why, yes, it's the picture-in-picture interview screen! Just as the Surfer Dudes did last week, the Longhorn Riders appear in the upper right hand corner in a segment taped earlier in the day. Both Riders are already in their to-ring gear, with their helmets cradled under their arms. Pete Colt speaks

first, his voice a loud gruff eruption; a man who sounds like he's shouting when he's speaking.]

PC: SURFER PUNKS! You challenge us?! NO! We challenge you! We done heard you call us out 'cause yer sore about what happened in Japan! You think we did that on purpose?!

[Jim, who was looking down at his feet, slowly lifts his eyes to the camera. He is in stark contrast to his brother in that his voice is very quiet. However, there is more than a little edge to it. He sounds menacing, as if every word is a deadly threat.]

JC: Let's be real, real clear. 'Course we did it on purpose.

PC: You punks lucked into the Stampede Cup by a cheap DQ! That shoulda been our spot! We got fast-counted by a damn Yankee ref at SuperClash, and then we got robbed again in the elimination! You two purty boys was in between us and a cool million, and if the AWA done what they shoulda done and put us in, we'd be countin' that money right now!

JC: Ah, well. Leastaways we got somethin' else ta count. Days. Days until the end of the line for you boys. Just like a man in a cell marks up a wall to mark the days till he gets hung, we're gonna mark the days until the two of you swing in the breeze.

[Jim turns to face his brother with an unsettling sneer.]

JC: How we gonna count them days, Pete?

PC: They'll just hafta watch an' see!

[We cut back to live action, and Pete Colt has just tagged in. Jim still has the neck wrench clamped on, and is twisting Stephens' neck almost sideways. Pete steps up, planting a foot on the side of Stephens' head to make the hold that much worse.]

GM: There you have it from the horse's mouth! The Longhorn Riders were jealous of the Surfer Dudes' Stampede Cup berth, so they ended it in the most heartbreaking way possible!

BW: That wasn't jealousy, that was business. You heard Pete. They were trying to get in as the Surfer Dudes' replacements, and you gotta admit... it's awful sad how an AWA team got replaced by two Tiger Paw singles wrestlers.

GM: Why would the AWA reward behavior like the Riders'?

BW: Pragmatic behavior gets rewarded all the time. By winning.

[As Bucky and Gordon discuss, Pete presses Stephens overhead, and chucks him across the ring. Tommy rolls all the way to his corner, where he tags in

Bruce Guy. Guy pauses for a moment to consider his approach, then steps in the ring, goes up to Pete, and extends a hand for a shake.]

GM: I don't know what Bruce Guy is thinking, but it's already a terrible idea.

BW: We do agree on things sometimes, I guess.

[Laughing, Pete takes his hand, and Guy slugs him with a haymaker. Pete does take a half-step back as he reels from the punch, but keeps hold of the handshake. Guy hits him with a few jabs before stopping, and going to his knees. His pain is visible and audible as Pete berates him. "This is Texas sportsmanship, boy!"]

GM: "Texas" Pete Colt is crushing the hand of Bruce Guy! He took Guy's punches just to show him up in this way. And a shortarm clothesline plasters the man into the canvas.

BW: At least Bruce tried to come up with something out of the box. I actually ride with this nut sometimes; I kinda like him. He never went to wrestling school; just showed up one night and lied to the promoters about having experience, which I don't recommend anyone do, ever. You gotta say, after surviving three years in the AWA, at least Bruce Guy is tough. I hope the Colts don't destroy him.

GM: Pete is slamming Guy's face into the top turnbuckle. All the gumption in the world won't help him here. Seven turnbuckle smashes, and a tag to Jim Colt. Jim coming in, and Pete sending Bruce Guy off the ropes. Double hip toss!

[After the double hiptoss, Jim runs off the ropes, right at his brother. Jim leaps on Pete as if he's trying to bulldog him, and Pete tosses him straight up. Jim comes crashing down with a legdrop from WAY up in the air, and the crowd is suitably impressed (though they boo again after reacting).]

BW: Ho-HO! Jim Colt came down from about, what, ten feet in the air?!

GM: He probably could have gotten the pin, but he kept the leg over the neck to choke Guy on the canvas! Which is uncalled for!

BW: Nobody calls for anything. The Riders do whatever they want.

GM: Charlie Stephens in to break up the chokehold, as Jim Colt denies to Warren that he's choking.

[Jim rolls to his feet, goes at Stephens, and lifts his left foot as if going for a kick. Stephens moves to block, but the left foot swings down to power into a brutal hopping kick with the right foot that gets past the block and drops Stephens! As Warren is trying to break that all up, Pete Colt enters and chokes Guy with both hands.]

GM: FLOAT KICK! Jim Colt with that nasty jumping switchblade-like kick, and Davis Warren is in danger of losing control of the match.

BW: He never had it. The Longhorn Riders control their own matches; the referees rarely have any say in them.

GM: Unfortunately, that is often true. Warren sees Pete and is running him out, allowing Jim to choke Bruce Guy now! He's choking with his right and throwing punches to the temple with the left!

BW: Is this what you wanted, Surfer Dudes? You wanted these guys? Who the heck would WANT to fight these guys?

GM: Finally, Davis Warren applies a count, which Jim breaks at four and eleven twelfths! Now he tags out to Pete, and climbs the ropes. Uh, oh! I think we all know what's coming next!

BW: Elevator up!

[The fans stand as they indeed know what is next. Pete Colt ducks down under Bruce's legs and stands up, putting Bruce on his shoulders in a seated position facing forward. Jim then uses that massive leg strength to leap high off the top rope, and come down with the flying clothesline to Bruce Guy that sends him flipping head-over-heels off of Pete, all the way to his face! Pete falls back to cover as Jim assaults Stephens.]

BW: Elevator down!

GM: __COLT REVOLVER__! And nobody, but nobody, is getting up from that!

[*DING*DING*DING*]

BW: You wanna talk about a "wipe out"? If a surfer took a fall like that, the sharks would feel too bad for them to even eat the body.

GM: Jim Colt is using the tag rope to choke Charlie Stephens! The match is over!

BW: The referee decides when the match is over. The Riders decide when the fight is over.

GM: Colt throws him to the ropes...

[*WHACK!*

GM: _BOOT HILL_! HE ABOUT KICKED STEPHENS' HEAD OFF!

[The violent running Yakuza Kick sends Stephens down and rolling under the bottom rope to the floor. Pete Colt slides out under the bottom rope, picks up Stephens' limp body, and hurls it over the railing into the crowd! In the meanwhile, we see Jim kneeling over Guy's fallen unconscious body.]

BW: The world could only be so lucky. What... what's Jim doing? Did he just go for that shiv?!

GM: I thought you were exaggerating, Bucky!

BW: So... did... I.

GM: Jim Colt has produced some kind of object, and has just written a single tally mark in his opponent's forehead! That must be what he means by 'marking down the days'! That is sick!

BW: He ain't right, Gordo. Bruce is bleeding, but it looks shallow. Thank goodness for that.

PW: The winners of this contest... THE LONGHORN RIDERS!

["Ride" begins anew as the fans boo. Pete goes up to the camera, points at Guy, and shouts "We're countin' the days, Surfer Punks! We're gonna ride a wave of bodies right over you!" The Colts head out triumphantly thereafter.]

GM: As Bucky said, it doesn't look like a severe wound. But you still cannot cut an opponent after a match! The Colts need to be stopped, and the Surfer Dudes have all the motivation to do just that.

BW: Ability to stop them, however, remains to be seen.

GM: We'll be back after this!

[Fade to a shot of an American flag blowing in the breeze. A voiceover begins.]

"America is the land of opportunity."

[A shot of a bald eagle breaks through.]

"The land where the most humble of men can become the greatest of individuals."

[Hey, that's the White House!]

"The country where dreams can come true and the impossible can become possible."

[We fade from the White House to show the man known as MISTER Oliver Strickland is standing in front of a US flag.]

MOS: Make my dream come true. Make me the next President... of the American Wrestling Alliance.

[Strickland gives a big thumbs up to the camera as a quiet voiceover comes up.]

"The preceding message was paid for by Kingsley Online Entertainment."

[Fade out.]

And back up from black on a shot of the sun shining on a hot summer day over a beautiful white sand beach.]

"It's summer. The time of the year when all minds turn to one thing..."

[The camera drifts over a beach volleyball game with some well-toned bodies.]

"Wrestling!"

[The shot shakes and then breaks apart to reveal AWA action inside the ring.]

"The summer is that one time every year where the AWA goes on the road, bringing all the hottest action to the town near you. And this year, for the very first time, we're going COAST... TO... COAST!"

[The shot fades to show a graphic over top of it.]

"Tomorrow afternoon, we'll be in Little Rock, Arkansas for a live event featuring Skywalker Jones and Hercules Hammonds in action!"

[The graphic changes.]

"Friday, June 27th, we'll be in Fayetteville, Arkansas for an All-Star show with William Craven, Bobby O'Connor, and Hannibal Carver taking on the Dogs Of War in the Main Event!

Saturday, June 28th, we're coming to Kansas City, Missouri with Demetrius Lake taking on Travis Lynch in a Lumberjack Match!"

[It evolves again.]

"Sunday, June 29th, the AWA arrives in St. Louis with Dave Bryant, Supreme Wright, and Eric Preston on the card!"

[The graphic changes to read "GUTS & GLORY."]

"This all leads up to Friday, July 4th in Springfield, Missouri at Hammons Field for Guts & Glory! The World Title will be on the line under the stars featuring a special concert with rock and roll band Styx and a fireworks show after the matches! Bring the family out for a fun-filled night in Springfield!"

[The graphic fades, leaving the AWA logo.]

"It's the major league of professional wrestling coming all summer long to a town near you as we go COAST TO COAST!"

[The AWA logo fades to black...

...and then back up on the backstage area where Jason Dane is standing with the entirety of Doyle Enterprises.]

JD: Welcome back, fans. With me right here is none other than Larry Doyle, along with-

LD: I'll take that, thank you.

[Doyle snatches the microphone from Jason and sneers, and then nods toward him.]

LD: Jason, you've got more pressing issues that need to be taken care of, what with your appearance on my good friend Buckthorne Beauregard Wilde's talk show. So lemme handle this.

[Dane shrugs and just walks away, as Doyle smooths the lapel of his new looking grey suit. Over one shoulder is the Russian War Machine, Kolya Sudakov, also curiously decked out in a sharp black suit, with a hammer and sickle button on the lapel. Over the other shoulder stands Brad Jacobs, arms crossed, clad simply in his wrestling trunks and breathing so hard in silent rage that his nostrils might explode. Behind them all, in his customary black suit, sun glasses and hat, is Van Alston.]

LD: People always ask me, Larry, you're a good looking son of a gun, all the chicks dig you, all the guys fear you and want to be you at the same time, you smell like fresh morning dew after a fallen rain, and you dress like a Hollywood fashionplate with Old West pizzazz. And we don't mean that homeless lady with bride of frankenstein hair who hangs out with whichever reject from the ol' Portland territory we give food stamps to this week.

But c'mon, ya know, I mean, c'mon now, let's be serious here.

Yeah? No?

[Doyle looks over his shoulder, expecting to see his two charges giggling or at least to see their shoulders heaving in laughter. Then he remembers he manages Sudakov and Jacobs.]

LD: Nothing?

[Nothing.]

LD: The point is, they ask me, how do you do it all? And I tell 'em a simple tale.

Before I was the manager of champions and the maker of legends, ol' Larry Doyle was a hell of a horse handicapper. I could watch a horse race, I could watch two horse races and within fifteen minutes I could handicap the field, give you the odds to win and tell ya how fast they'd run. And the lesson holds true.

Larry Doyle knows how to pick 'em.

Larry Doyle knows how to find a stud.

You people watchin' this should do yourselves a favor and take a look behind me. I have compiled the biggest collection of talent in the Lonestar State since The Best Little Whorehouse in Texas was in theaters. If you wanna mat wrestle and go hold for hold, I'll give ya Sudakov, and he'll give you torn tendons. You wanna go power and speed, you wanna throw down in the back alley, Brad Jacobs is gonna answer the bell. And if you're just plain stupid and wanna end up in a hospital bed not knowin' your name, I'll just direct you to the Director of Security, Van Alston.

He don't miss.

[Doyle reaches into his pocket and pulls out a folded sheet of paper, then puts on a pair of obviously fake LeBron style thick rimmed reading glasses and clears his throat.]

LD: This here is the fax sent out to all of the local television distributors that carry AWA Saturday Night Wrestling With Larry Doyle 'n Friends. Lemme read this advertisement for ya:

"On Friday, June 13th, the AWA invades Knoxville, Tennessee for a live event followed by Lexington, Kentucky on Saturday, June 14th! Both nights will feature BIG 30 man Battle Royals with \$25,000 prizes that you will NOT want to miss!"

Say, Van, have you got the time?

[Alston mutters something off the air that sounds vaguely like "No."]

LD: Brad, have you-

[Doyle just stops. He knows Jacobs won't play along.]

LD: But what about you, Kolya? Have you got the time?

[With something resembling a smirk, Kolya pushes forward and sticks his left hand out, showing the camera a gaudy gold watch with diamonds encrusted around the face.]

LD: Well yeah, I should say you do!

That watch cost about twenty grand, and that suit cost about two large, but then again the Russian Nightmare had twenty five thousand lying around after he eliminated Hannibal Carver, Bobby O'Connor and Lenny Strong all in a row to WIN that big battle royal on June the 13th in Knoxville, Tennessee!

And the next night? Well, wouldn't you know who won the pony, but our own Brad Jacobs here dumped both of Air Strike with one hand, punted Eric Preston so far that Ryan Martinez had to signal for a fair catch, and then with his last ounce of energy eliminated the entire Lynch Family, plus

Blackjack and their mama Henrietta Ortiz Lynch, who is the toughest one of 'em all!

And where do you suppose his twenty five large went?

[Doyle sticks his left hand out and shows a ridiculously gaudy watch, identical to the one Sudakov is wearing.]

LD: Like the unselfish, humble, self sacrificing man that he is, Bradley here graciously donated every cent of his winnings to yours truly, and even got the watch engraved!

[Allow Larry to read it!]

LD: It says... "To the man who saved my life and saved my family. I owe you everything and will spend the rest of my natural life in your debt. Brad."

[The camera pans to Jacobs, whose head is down and whose eyes are closed. He's clenching his jaw and just shaking his head back and forth in tight circles.]

LD: With that kind of loyalty, with that kind of love from my troops, there's only one conclusion left to jump to:

Eric Preston, you and your little treehouse buddies might think you've got a tough group together, but Larry Doyle is backed by an Army. Larry Doyle is backed by men who will risk their life for him, who owe their life TO him. And when you enter Guts & Glory, having never tagged together, having never worked together, and you're looking at a team captained by Kolya Sudakov and Brad Jacobs, you're gonna find out what millions of people around this country who are currently in counseling found out.

Marriages of convenience NEVER work. The enemy of my enemy is NOT your friend, you five can't agree on where to get coffee let alone how to fight this match, how to strategize. I could walk into Guts and Glory with a team of Phil Watson, Mark Stegglet, Gordon Myers, Bucky Wilde and Melissa Cannon and I'd have a plan to take you fools down. But with these two men following my command, along with all the resources and influence that the Wise Men present...

...lemme check my new watch. Thanks, Brad.

[Doyle raises the watch to his ear and grimaces, trying to look like he's listening.]

LD: Your time is up. The Wise Men will reign, and Larry Doyle Enterprises will soar as the dominant force in the AWA. I'll bet his life on it.

[And with that, Doyle sticks a finger towards Jacobs and then gives the command to exit. One by one, all members of Doyle Enterprises leave until it's just Brad Jacobs, who follows along muttering to himself as we crossfade back to Gordon and Bucky at ringside.]

GM: There is no lack of confidence in that man, Bucky Wilde.

BW: Why should there be? You've got Brad Jacobs, a former World Tag Team Champions... a former Stampede Cup winner. You've got Kolya Sudakov, a former MMA World Champion... a former AWA National Champion. This is the elite of professional wrestling under the guidance of the man who revitalized Royalty and made it a serious threat again. You want to shake his confidence? Prove you can do something against those two.

GM: Do you think that Childes and Doyle will select those two to compete in that five-on-five challenge at Guts & Glory?

BW: I would.

GM: We hope to get the answer to that question later tonight as we look ahead. But another man who is looking ahead to the future is Nenshou. He bested Gibson Hayes at Memorial Day Mayhem, after months of taking verbal abuse and mind games. Now he has to get back on track here in the AWA.

BW: You just know Percy Childes was behind that, too. Nenshou was all focused to take Percy down, and then suddenly he can't keep his head on straight because Gibson Hayes completely got to him. Nenshou won the match, but what good did it really do him? Now Percy and the Wise Men have consolidated their power and Nenshou did nothing to prevent it.

GM: I doubt that Hayes would take direction from Childes in any way, shape, or form, but Childes may have done some manipulating of some kind to ensure that Nenshou was tripped up. We may never know for sure. In any case, Nenshou will be in action in mere moments. Let's go up to Phil Watson and get the match underway.

[*DING*DING*]

[Phil's in the ring already, as a wide-shouldered, muscular young man with a long black ponytail steps through the ropes. The newcomer sports mid-thigh-length black tights, black boots, and white wristbands.]

PW: The following contest is set for one fall and a ten minute time limit!

Introducing first, to my right. From Austin, Texas... weighing two-hundred sixty-one pounds... BENJAMIN DEPUE!

[Depue raises his arms in the air, and bounces a bit on the balls of his feet. The rumbling thunder that starts "Raijin's Drums" by George Sakalis kicks off loud cheers from the crowd as Watson continues.]

PW: His opponent, about to make his way down the aisle... from The Land Of The Rising Sun... weighing two-hundred thirty-five pounds... NENSHOU!

[As the powerful drumbeat of his theme plays, Nenshou emerges from the back. He's wearing a black gi-shaped jacket with red trim, red baggy pants, black boots, and a red cloth mask with black and silver trim which is shaped like a hood. The Asian Assassin marches down the aisle with a purposeful stride as the fans applaud.]

GM: Some have speculated that since breaking with Percy Childes, who is still technically on the books as his manager, Nenshou has lost much of his aura of intimidation and mystique.

BW: Hayes had a lot to do with that, too. He made sure that any victory Nenshou got over him was going to be costly. Those mind games destroyed the things that made Nenshou so fearsome... his focus, resolve, and will. Plus, before when Percy was doing all the talking, we never knew anything about him. Now we know that he's basically a male Mafia Princess.

GM: That's not exactly how I would have put it. Nonetheless, Nenshou will try to get back on track against the newcomer Benjamin Depue, recently out of the Combat Corner.

BW: So Clayton Shaw trained him?

GM: Among others.

BW: He's doomed.

GM: Will you stop?!

[Nenshou is now in the ring, and has shed his jacket and hood. His face is painted in black and red, and his brushcut black hair no longer sports a shaved-in symbol (though the growing-in parts still betray signs of the symbols he had in there before). Nenshou extends two fingers in front of him, and starts his meditative trance state.]

BW: Well, if Depue had any sense, he'd attack him now before he gets that battle meditation going.

[*DING*DING*DING*]

GM: Ben Depue running across the ring for a clothesline, but Nenshou ducks him! Quick as a cat, a flurry of strikes... chops and kicks batter the young Austin native into the corner.

BW: Good job, Shaw. This kind of preparation is why you ain't gonna be the AWA President.

GM: Bucky, he's a trainer, not a manager! The Combat Corner rookies are given the tools to succeed but are responsible for themselves and their own strategy. Nenshou with the Irish-Whip... handspring... Depue dives out of the way... WHOA!

[With a quick move, Depue evades the incoming handspring elbow, and it seems that Nenshou will crash into the corner. But a sudden adjustment sends Nenshou leaping backwards instead of coming around with the back elbow, and he jumps backwards onto the second turnbuckle facing inside! The fans roar for the impressively athletic and quick reaction, and more as Nenshou leaps off and drives a chop between the eyes of an incredulous Depue!]

BW: HOW?

GM: An insanely quick reaction from Nenshou to avoid hitting the buckle, and Benjamin Depue has headed for higher ground! Or lower ground, as the case may be... he has rolled to the floor.

BW: At least that was intelligent. He tried to make Nenshou miss and hurt himself, but the guy's way too agile. So take a hike and regroup.

GM: But he has to keep his eyes on Nenshou; he will not be safe from him out there. Nenshou waiting for any possible opening... THERE!

[As it happens, Depue takes his eye of Nenshou for just long enough to see what else was out there on that side of the ring, and the Japanese superstar rushes and dives into a baseball-slide dropkick that connects with Depue's sternum and sends him flat onto the floor! The fans cheer loudly for the blisteringly-fast strike.]

BW: JEEZ! That was like a bolt of lightning! He literally just turned his head for a second and that was it.

GM: Nenshou now on the floor. He pulls up Depue, elbows him in the face, and rolls him back into the ring. This rookie has shown some tactics, with the evasion and the attempt to separate, that would be good in most matches but against a man this fast and agile they don't work. And one mistake is all Nenshou needs... OH MY!

[Depue staggers up to his knee, and Nenshou rolls in the ring, bolts to standing, steps on the outstretched knee, and whacks Depue in the jaw with a rising knee as he steps off the knee like he were climbing stairs! The impact draws more cheers as Depue falls into a heap!]

GM: SHINING WIZARD!

BW: Depue didn't even do anything wrong there; he was just trying to stand, but Nenshou was in the ring so fast... and it's already over!

[*DING*DING*DING*]

GM: Moonsault unnecessary as the Shining Wizard stunned Depue for a three-count here. Let's get the official word!

PW: Here is your winner... NENSHOU!

BW: That shot is a killshot, daddy. Even so early in a match, if he hits it, he can get a fast pin. The rookie didn't stand a chance because he wasn't ready for the speed. He sure wasn't gonna get prepared for that at the Combat Corner.

GM: Or anywhere else. Nenshou on the road to regaining that mystique, as we have not seen such a dominant performance in a while. As long as he has that speed, agility, and impact... with or without Childes, speaking or not, he's one of the biggest threats in the AWA.

[As "Raijin's Drums" begins anew, Nenshou makes a quick throatslash-thumbs down gesture, and then leaves with no further adieu. The fans cheer the victory.]

BW: Okay, reestablishing his credentials is a good start. But where does he go from here, daddy?

GM: Nenshou's goal is the World Heavyweight Title. It always has been, and that has never changed. Dave Bryant has Terry Shane The Third in his immediate future, probably Supreme Wright after that, but I am certain that Nenshou intends to be on the horizon for whomever comes out of these next few weeks as the World Champion. If he doesn't turn his attention back to Percy Childes.

BW: If he's smart, he'll turn his attention to Childes and say "take me back, please".

GM: Given that Childes has a stable of large-ego talents who all want that belt, he would probably serve himself better this way.... HEY! WHAT THE...

[As Nenshou approaches the curtain, a hand reaches through the curtain and throws a large mass of white powder into Nenshou's face! The Asian Assassin staggers back, and a dapper portly Japanese gentleman wearing a bowler steps out from behind the curtain.]

GM: MR. SADISUTO?! What in the world did he do THAT for...?

[The fans boo loudly as Sadisuto is walking with the aid of a wooden cane. The cane has a carved dragon's head handle, and this is what gets violently jammed right in Nenshou's throat as he is blinded by the salt that was just flung in his face.]

BW: Maybe he's jealous of the attention Nenshou got on the Japanese tour. He's the original Japanese import star, Gordo!

GM: Many came before him and many will come after! Sadisuto leaning on that cane which he has planted in Nenshou's neck! Come on!

BW: All that speed means nothing if you can't see.

GM: Sadisuto with a wireless microphone...

MS: Noboru-kun! Hahahahaaaa! Your father say: you faaaaaiiiil him. You fail you familiaayyy! And their patience run out, Noboru-kun. You have one month. Next Satday Night Wrestling, you face Mistah Sadistuo. And if you do not have Wold Heavyweight Champinship by then, Noboru-kun, I send you back! You go back to Japan and neeevvvver wrestle again! Hahahahahaaaa!

[Sadisuto pulls up and exits, still laughing, as Nenshou is gasping for air blinded on the floor.]

GM: What on Earth?! What kind of ultimatum is that?!

BW: The dead serious kind. Do you know what Sadisuto used to do for a living before he became a wrestler? Let's just say he was an interrogator for the Japanese military. And if Nenshou's family called him in? I think Nenshou's in for an interrogation on why he didn't win the World Title like he was supposed to.

GM: This is ridiculous! He might not get a title match in the space of a month! I'm certain that Dave Bryant will have many defenses as the summer tour rolls on, but I don't know if any of them will go to Nenshou... so how can he possibly meet such a ridiculous demand?!

BW: His family doesn't care, Gordo. You heard what Nenshou told us about them. It is a crime family. You MAKE what they want happen or else... kkkkkk.

[Bucky makes the throat-slit noise as Gordon shakes his head.]

GM: By that same ludicrous standard, doesn't that mean that the man they hired to make sure Nenshou won the belt... Percy Childes... also failed?

BW: Oh. Oh! I didn't think about that! The Wise Men couldn't help Percy if the Japanese mob decided he failed them! But, well... I predict if that's the case, Nenshou'll suddenly get some title shots this next month.

GM: We'll find out how this plays out, I guess, because Mr. Sadisuto just made a challenge for the Saturday Night Wrestling after Guts & Glory to Nenshou. I am more than sure that will be accepted. Fans, let's go backstage where Mark Stegglet has caught up with the Collector of Oddities, Percy Childes!

[The camera cuts backstage to the interview area where Mark Stegglet stands at the ready with Percy Childes. Percy is wearing a white suit jacket and slacks, a black undershirt, and a royal-blue tie... quite an unusual ensemble from him. The squat, bald, goateed manager looks a rather pleased with himself for some reason...]

MS: Welcome back, wrestling fans...with me now is Wise Man and leader of the Unholy Alliance, The Collector of Oddities, Percy Childes.

PC: Thank you, Mr. Stegglet. I trust that you understand why I can't do this with Jason Dane.

MS: You'll have to face him later tonight in the Call Of The Wilde.

PC: No. HE will have to face ME later tonight in the Call Of The Wilde. Two weeks ago, I made very clear that the Wise Men had nothing to do with the travesty that ended Memorial Day Mayhem. No impartial observer could look at the evidence and suggest otherwise; it's slanderous. Why is Dane so eager to slander us, I wonder. Could it be... a directive from above?

MS: Well... Mr. Childes... with all due respect, that will be hashed out between you and Dane later tonight.

PC: So it will, so it will. But then why have you requested this interview, Mark? It is somewhat unusual and perhaps a bit inefficient to be called in for two interviews on a single program, when one would suffice, isn't it?

MS: Normally I'd agree, but leaving the topic of the Memorial Day incident for the Call Of The Wilde, there is another important topic that must be discussed. And that is the challenge that was laid down for the match at Guts and Glory at the end of last week's show. It would seem that the Wise Men have some decisions to make with regards to who's going to be on your team... and who's going to be the team captain.

PC: You've gotten ahead of yourself, Mark. The FIRST decision to be made is whether we would bother to accept such a challenge. The Wise Men, as I have said over and over and over, are not a wrestling stable. We're not something you can challenge. You can challenge the Unholy Alliance. You can challenge Larry Doyle's stable. You can challenge the Dogs Of War. But you can't challenge the Wise Men. We're a business venture. That's like challenging the NBA to a game of one-on-one. Yes, there are players in the NBA that you could challenge, but you can't challenge the NBA itself. That is an error of scale.

MS: I think, at this point, we both know that line of logic, while it may be true on some level, doesn't hold up in this situation. The challenge outlined by Eric Preston was clear: you pick five, they pick five, and you meet at Guts and Glory.

PC: And with all due respect, Eric Preston is being willfully ignorant. Yes, we can choose five men to fight them. In fact, I believe we will. But he goes on about "this ends at Guts & Glory"! "You end at Guts & Glory"!

No, we don't. No, nothing will change. If you want us to send you five... granted. Done. Your challenge is accepted. But there are no stakes, Mark. If they win? Congratulations, you get a winner's check. The Wise Men are not of a mind to cease operations because of a match. If you want stakes, put something on the line. And not your careers, because frankly, it is in our best interest to have a group of crowd favorites around, filling arenas.

I mean, why is this so difficult to understand? WHY IS THIS SO DIFFICULT TO UNDERSTAND?

[Childes turns to face the camera.]

PC: Preston. Martinez. Carver. Listen very carefully. THERE. IS. NOTHING. YOU. CAN. DO. We're not a wrestling stable. You can't get us in a ring. Even if you attack myself or Larry, it won't change anything because we can do our business from a hospital bed if need be. And I'm sure your response to that will be "get the bed ready". To which my response is "you would never work in this business again". You can win all of your matches, pin all of our wrestlers, and at the end of the day we're still entrenched. It's over.

It was over THREE YEARS AGO. It ended at Wrestlerock 2011! That was the very last day that the Wise Men could have been stopped in a wrestling ring. All you are doing is lashing out like children who didn't get their way. Crying like children who just learned that there is no Santa Claus.

MS: There are children watching, Percy!

PC: Kids! There is no Santa Claus! No Easter Bunny! No Tooth Fairy! Your parents lie to you every day of their lives because you're emotionally unstable and immature beyond reason. You're basically Eric Preston, Ryan Martinez, Bobby O'Connor, and William Craven in size two shoes. Cry. Cry. And when all of your tears have changed nothing, you'll know exactly... EXACTLY... how all your heroes feel. Impotent. Helpless. And maybe you'll all start growing up and joining the adults in the real world.

MS: That's sick! I can't believe you just said that!

PC: Believe it. Preston, Martinez, O'Connor, Mahoney... and especially Supreme Wright. Listen to me. At any time... ANY TIME... you can grow up. You can call me. You all know my cell phone number. And you can end this maturely. You can sign on. You can be part of the union, for lack of a better term, and you can BENEFIT from us. We're not taking anything from you that you can't have if you want it. Adults do business. Children lash out. When you're finished with childhood and are ready to be men, you call me or you call Larry Doyle. Until then, if a five-on-five match at Guts & Glory is your preferred way of acting out, then I'll bring the crying towel.

MS: I notice you didn't mention Carver or Craven.

PC: We don't want them. They're too far set in their ways. When someone has indulged themselves in childhood for forty years, they're never going to grow up. Someday they'll do what Monosso did and exit Neverland in a wheelchair, and until then there is no point speaking to them. I'm talking to the ones who still have a chance.

MS: Alright, so you have accepted the challenge. Do you have a team? And do you have a captain?

PC: We will...

Voice: That decision's already made, second stringer!

["Showtime" Rick Marley enters from behind Percy. Percy quirks a surprised eyebrow; he didn't expect to see Marley here.]

RM: Dane's a jerk, but at least his voice isn't quite as grating. Dear lord, man... how can you stand to listen to yourself talk?

MS: I--

RM: I can't... so shut it.

MS: I--

RM: (making a zip it motion across his mouth). Shut it.

MUCH better.

[Stegglet glares at him.]

RM: Look, like I've said before... Percy is one of the smartest guys in this business. He knows the strengths and weaknesses of every guy in this business, much less the ones in the company... which is why there's only one clear choice to lead this team-

PC: It won't be you, Rick.

[Marley's eyes go wide as he turns from Stegglet to stare at Percy.]

RM: Not me? What do you mean, not me? I'm the best wrestler in the business, bar none! I'm--

PC: --not hard of hearing, so I won't need to repeat myself. The team captaincy isn't suited for you. You aren't a leader.

[Marley stares at him, then shrugs, nodding.]

RM: Well... the team captain is important, but the really important thing is the makeup of the team that he's leading.

PC: This is very true, Rick. We've got a short list of candidates for the team, but you won't have to compete in that match.

[Marley stares incredulously at Percy for a moment, his eyes narrowing.]

RM: So... not only am I not captain, I don't even make the cut for the team?

PC: You're not a team player, Rick. You're one of the best wrestlers in the world. A former and possibly future World Champion. But great individuals don't always make great teams. We've seen it over and over. Vasquez and

Alex Martinez losing to the original Blonde Bombers is the best example. Larry Doyle assembled a team, and the two Hall Of Famers simply were not a team. I realize that you have been a tag team champion in the past, but you've left that entire mindset behind you when you reached individual superstardom.

[Marley slowly nods, his eyes locked with Percy's as Mark Stegglet looks on, looking incredibly uncomfortable.]

RM: I... see. So you want me to what? Sell popcorn during the matches? Work the concession stand? You know that not one of the guys you've got on that team can hold a CANDLE to me... including Detson. I carried him in that match till he caught sight of Craven, got scared and went looking for his mom. *I* beat Craven...one on one...twice. HE'S afraid to climb into the ring with the big green idiot.

[Percy shakes his head.]

PC: Not at all. In fact, I have a match for you at Guts & Glory. A singles match, where you needn't share the spotlight.

Your job is to eliminate William Craven. You have done it before, and frankly, you're the one man who has his number.

[Marley stands, his arms crossed, glaring at Percy...then he points at his manager.]

RM: Fine. You need me to clear out the boogey man so Detson stops wetting his pants... fine. I'll clean up his mess.

PC: In any event, that match will give you the perfect opportunity to prove that-

[Stegglet takes a step back, holding the microphone out at arm's length as Marley goes still. Childes stops in midsentence as Marley's body language is quite clear. The dark haired wrestler simply stares flatly at Childes...then places his hands on his hips, shaking his head and laughing bitterly.]

RM: So after all that I've done, I need to PROVE myself?

I need to prove 2 things, Childes...and Jack just left town.

[Marley steps towards the manager, who tilts his head sideways while staring into Marley's eyes. Childes grips his crystal-topped cane, and holds it at his side so that it is clearly visible. A signal, perhaps?]

RM: But you know what? I'll do your little errand for you. I'll put Craven down.

Hell, as crazy as he is, with his knee still banged up from the last time he was stupid enough to get into the ring one on one with me. At this point it's probably held together with duct tape, bubblegum and a prayer.

And once THAT'S done?

[Marley gets up into Percy's face, his nose an inch from Percy's.]

RM: Then you and me are gonna have a long chat about BOTH of our futures.

[pause]

RM: And you can take that to the bank.

[Marley stalks off, and Percy puts the cane back in the normal grip.]

PC: Yes, Rick. I will indeed take it all the way to the bank. As usual. As always.

[And then he, too, exits, leaving a silent Mark Stegglet behind as we crossfade to Gordon and Bucky at ringside.]

GM: Some obvious tensions between Percy Childes and Rick Marley, Bucky.

BW: Hey, Percy's accepted the challenge - five-on-five at Guts & Glory so he's gotta do what's right for his team. And he thinks what's right for his team is to NOT have Ricky Marley be a part of it. Can't argue with him, can you?

GM: I'm not used to defending Rick Marley but he raises some good points. He's one of the best wrestlers in the world - a former World Champion in his own right. You really telling me that someone like... maybe one of the Dogs of War would be a better choice?

BW: The Dogs of War are a TEAM, Gordo. They proved that at Memorial Day Mayhem. So, yeah... in this circumstance, they're probably a better choice for that team than Ricky Marley is.

GM: That remains to be seen. At some point tonight, we hope to learn just who the Wise Men will send to represent them at Guts & Glory but right now, let's go up to Phil Watson for the introductions in our next matchup!

[Darkness falls over the area as the first beat hits... then a long note. Electronic sizzle over the PA. Blue lights start flickering around the entrance way. Red. White. Yellow. Blue. A cacophony of lights hit right in tune with Darude's "Sandstorm". Spotlights ignite on the entrance, each one further revealing a bobbing form. Hands reach out from the unknown person's side, swaying and waving to the beat. One final one shows him standing there in his wrestling gear, large headphones on, hands up to hold them in place as he dances.]

PW: The following contest is scheduled for one fall with a ten minute time limit. Introducing first, from Duluth, Minnesota, weighing in at 170lbs... THIS... IS... TORA!

[The high flying spectacle steps out of the entrance way, hands holding the headphones as he dances in place and finally towards the ring, feet flying to the rhythm. TORA is a definite athlete. He is super toned and strong looking though more like a track athlete or gymnast then a bodybuilder or pro wrestler. He's well proportioned and full of energy. He's also fairly handsome in a young college kid sort of way with a clean shaven face.]

GM: We're in for a treat tonight!

[He wears half red/half white tight wrestling pants with red and white kickpads. His pants have a variety of stripes, zig zags, dags and dragonsdown the side in print opposite to the side they are in, a collected kaleidoscope of chaos on each. He wears a haphazardly striped red and white vest over top his nary a percentage of fat upper body. His dark hair is worn in a messy fashioned faux hawk the tips dyed sharp light blue.

Continuing to bob and jive, TORA reaches out to every fan who asks, slapping hands, high fiving and fistbumping. A fan's dancing? He dances right along with them. Fans want pictures? He stops, leaning right in and lets them take the selfie. TORA makes sure to do a full round of the ringside, every hand reached out getting slapped back. He is energetic and bouncing the entire way, taking the ring steps in a single hop and getting onto the apron, TORA urging the crowd out of their seat to dance along (which many kids and women do!).]

GM: TORA, Air Strike, Brian James, Willie Hammer... so many new competitors, young gentlemen here in the AWA are really reaching out and willing to be fan favorites. It's refreshing to see these kids willing to just have fun. Too many wrestlers want to be the bad guy.

[Then he pauses, turns and points and runs over, pulling a Ribera Kid mask out of his pocket and puts it on a smiling kid's face. He high fives the kid, hopping up on the apron, dancing, keeping it up as he steps on the outside turnbuckles to the top. He waves his arm in beat, popping his hands into peace signs to the crowd, drawing them down so the finger tips touch making a mask like gesture. One final step and he backflips into the ring and dances along with the music until it starts fading out and the lights come back on. He discards his vest, throwing it to an attendant as he heads to his corner.]

PW: And his opponent, already in the ring, weighing in at 207lbs...
FUTURESTAR!

[The masked man, tall, lean and Caucasian, throws his hands up, leaping to the second turnbuckle. His silver mask is centered by a black and gold star, silver pants with shooting stars on the backside and his name down his sides and black boots finishing his attire.]

BW: No real men were available tonight?

GM: Both these men belong in the AWA, size or not. We'll see the kind of action they are capable of. Futurestar has even won a few matches on AWA live shows of late.

BW: So did Henry Porten and look what happened to him last show.

[The referee steps into the middle and calls for the bell.]

GM: And here we go! TORA taking on Futurestar. Futurestar is the taller of the two by a good 6 inches, but isn't as thickly built even if he is heavier. We should see some fast paced action here tonight in this match.

[The two come out of their corners and immediately lock up. TORA shoves an arm away and goes into a side headlock, wrenching it in. Futurestar runs him back to the ropes and sends him off, only to be taken down with a shoulder to shoulder tackle. TORA looks down, sprints perpendicular and ducks under a leap frog. He comes across the other side, Futurestar going to his back, TORA leaping between the legs, rolling through and to his feet.]

GM: The speed!

[Keeping the pace going, TORA gets right back up, pushes a charging Futurestar past him and takes him down with an arm drag... and then a second! Both kip up. Both square off. The crowd applauds!]

GM: This is the speed I was talking about, Bucky. This is the type of action we rarely see in the AWA. We have some super fast athletes, some amazing competitors, but it's not often we get two with the Japanese and lucha libre experience like these two seem to have.

BW: You know why it's not often? Because those guys blow out their ACLs and are out for months while real men like Terry Shane and Demetrius Lake are the Main Event stars.

GM: That is completely untrue!

BW: You think this hand shaking, baby hugging, dancy dancing, Tiger Beat kid is going amount to anything in the long run?

GM: If his dreams come true, he certainly will.

[The two are a bit slower moving in, more cautious, reaching out slowly to entangle their fingers. TORA slides on a knee to go behind and get the waistlock, not letting Futurestar get away.]

BW: See, they are listening in there and just good ol' fashioned wrestling.

[Pushing his hips out, Futurestar grabs an arm, spins under and wrenches on the wrist, holding it to his chest. He gives a loud "oh yeah!" as he puts the pressure on. TORA looks for an escape, finally spinning under and close, reversing to wrist hold that transitions into a top wrist lock. He kicks

Futurestar's legs out, putting him on his back. TORA switches to a quick knuckle lock, trying to hold Futurestar to the mat.]

BW: He does realize he is twenty pounds down, right?

GM: But does have the leverage.

[Unable to keep two shoulders down at a time, TORA leaps up, trying to come down on Futurestar, only the masked competitor gets his feet up and into TORA's waist. He pushes him away and uses the entangled arms to get to his own feet. TORA springs right back from there, turning and wrapping his legs into a wheelbarrow, pushing up off that and reaching, taking Futurestar up and over in a tumble!]

GM: Wow! What an arm drag by TORA! His international experience is really shining through!

[Dazed and shaky on his feet, TORA leaps and snares a staggered Futurestar in a hurricanrana, sending him not only over to the mat but right out of the ring! The crowd starts buzzing as TORA looks down from the middle of the ring.]

GM: They know what's coming, Bucky! This is where an athlete like TORA becomes really dangerous. One hundred and seventy pounds isn't heavy in the wrestling business but at the speed TORA can get up to, he becomes a missile.

[Futurestar uses the ringside barriers to pull himself up, but does not see TORA as he runs forward and charges into a baseball slide, snaring his ankles around either side of his opponents neck and throwing himself out to the side, the momentum of the spin taking Futurestar down in a somersault yet again! The crowd POPS!]

GM: Talk about high risk!

BW: That might be some fancy stuff but high risk has only ever gotten people highlight reels. A pile of flips may get your cheers but it also tends to put you on the shelf early.

GM: This crowd is on their feet for that series of moves by this thrilling newcomer to the AWA!

[TORA gets up and leans against the railing, fist pumping and high fiving a fan. He even leans back so a young girl and her friends can take a selfie with him!]

BW: Remember girls, it's #tigerbeat.

GM: You really have a gear to grind here.

BW: I think he's really talented, don't get me wrong, but I'm also a realist. Supreme Wright is arguably the most talented World Champion in AWA history, right?

GM: Right.

BW: How often did he go to the top rope? How often did Calisto Dufresne? How about James Monosso? I'm just saying that moves like these are enough to get you a Most Popular award but the World Title? The Hall of Fame?

GM: There are men like Youth Gone Wild in the Hall of Fame who made his career as a high flyer, Bucky. Skywalker Jones makes his living coming off the top rope and he's one-half of the World Tag Team Champions.

BW:

[TORA rolls Futurestar into the ring, quickly ducking in and out to break a count out before he heads up to the apron and starts clapping above his head, getting the crowd around him riled up and joining in.]

GM: He's looking for something big here, Bucky.

[Grabbing the top rope, bending down, TORA waits for Futurestar to get up before leaping up, springing off the top rope...

...and missing on a crossbody! OHHH!]

GM: Futurestar moved!

BW: That's what I am talking about!

[Shaking his head, Futurestar sees him open and dives forward, rolling TORA up with an Oklahoma Roll!]

GM: THIS COULD BE IT! ONE! TWO!! NO!

[The crowd cheers in delight as their favorite kicks out.]

BW: THAT. That is what I am talking about. Hall of Famers don't take needless high risks. Doing those moves all the time shortens careers. Look at Devon Case. Look at Steve Spector. They made their lives on high risks, on high flying, on trying to impress these ungrateful fans and look where it got them. Unemployed.

GM: Those are some special examples though. Those men took part in brutal matches no man should have to.

BW: And both did lots of flips, lots of top rope moves and lots of risks. Just like TORA has been prone to do. Listen, I get you are all into this baby kissing suck up, but let's not play favorites in this match. It's sickening.

[Fired up at his chance, Futurestar whips TORA into the corner. He follows up, charging in... only to meet a last second boot!]

GM: That caught him right on the chin! He comes Futurestar back... and back kick by TORA! Right in the breadbasket!

[TORA grabs the wincing Futurestar by the wrist and whips him into the far corner. He turns, runs back to the opposite and comes flying in shoulder first to the gut, getting some long time air as he does! POP!]

GM: WHAT WAS THAT! He flew right into Futurestar with a spear like he was Superman!

BW: Imagine if he missed!

GM: He's not done!

[Futurestar slumps to sitting, TORA running around the ring and back in, leaping and somersaulting as he does, landing back-first into the whole of his masked opponent!]

GM: Amazing move by TORA and this crowd is loving him! He pulls out Futurestar... cover!

[And gets a ONE! TWO! And a kickout.]

GM: I was sure that was it, Bucky!

BW: We've said it how many times, TORA is the smallest man in the AWA. He's going to win with death by a thousand stings, not one big move.

[But he doesn't waste anytime, getting right back up and leaping backwards!]

GM: Standing moonsault... another cover! ONE! TWO! Wait! Ropes!

BW: Rookie mistake, Gordo! Rookie mistake! Anyone else would have known to pull Futurestar back out of the corner and into the middle of the ring so something like that couldn't have happened. Less selfies, more practice, kid.

[Visibly frustrated, TORA pulls Futurestar up and puts him against the ropes. He leans in for extra leverage to whip Futurestar across the ropes but instead it's reversed! Futurestar comes barreling back, taking down TORA with a shoulder tackle, only he immediately kips right up!]

GM: Can't keep him down!

BW: How about that knee to the stomach!

GM: Futurestar with a shot out of nowhere, off the ropes...

[And that's when a stunned TORA puts a hand out and yells...]

"SSSSSSSSSSSTOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOP!"

BW: What the?!

[Futurestar does indeed stop, confused...

...and takes an enzuigiri to the side of his head!]

GM: He's staggered...

[The crowd gets to their feet as TORA leaps up, snares Futurestar by the masked head and drives him face first into the mat.]

GM: TORA CUTTER! THERE IS IT! TORA CUTTER! This one is...

[ONE! TWO! THREE!]

GM: ...over!

[The referee jumps up, calling for the bell.]

PW: YOUR WINNER... TOOOOOOOOOOORRRRRRRRRRRRAAAAAA!

[The crowd cheers for the young man as he gets his hand raised in victory. He backs up, putting an arm around the top rope before leaping up and over, flipping to the floor to greet his fans.]

GM: TORA with another big win in his young AWA career. This is a star on the rise. Let's take it to Mark Stegglet on the floor as he tries to get a word with TORA.

[TORA continues to high five fans as he circles the ring. Stegglet comes up, microphone in hand.]

MS: TORA, if we can have a...

[Instead TORA leans back with a family and first takes a selfie, before taking the camera and taking a picture of the family all posing together. He then grabs it, turns it and takes a picture as he mugs silly for the photo. He hands it back, high fiving the two kids before moving to Mark Stegglet and putting his arm around his shoulder.]

TORA: WHOOOO! I love the AWA fans, Mark! Nothing like it in the world!

MS: That was another impressive win, TORA. What does your future hold in the AWA?

TORA: It's whatever these fans want, whatever the AWA management wants. I just loooooooooooooooooove wrestling, Mark! I love being in that ring right up there and doing what I do best. Who's next? What's next?

Just keep putting me against opponents and I'll keep putting smiles on people's faces!

MS: There has to be __someone__ you want to face at this point in your career.

TORA: Oh, there are TONS of guys I'd love to be in there with, but I was raised right, Mark. I gotta work my way up the ladder and earn my chance to be able to face the legends in this business, the big stars of the AWA.

MS: I got one for you then. What about Brian James? He's an absolute beast of an athlete, a freak of nature and as exciting as they come. And after the showdown during the Mayhem Match that you two had, I for one would love to see you against him.

TORA: Brian? I love that guy! Let's do it! You people want to see me take on Brian James? How about you?

[He points at some fans who excitedly agree.]

TORA: How about you girls?

[They giggle and scream.]

TORA: How about you? You? You?

[Dragging Stegglet with him, he asks fan after fan, finally stopping at the still Ribera Kid masked child from before the match.]

TORA: How about you, friend? Do you want to see TORA take on Brian James?

[The kid gleefully nods his head, giving a thumbs up. TORA high fives him, the kid's family enjoying every moment of it.]

TORA: Well, Mark, if the AWA is fine with it, your question has been answered. I would love to take on Brian James right there in that very ring!

MS: There we have it, guys! What a match that could be! We've got to take another break but when we come back, we'll hear from the World Television Champion, Ryan Martinez, so don't you dare go away!

[Fade to black.]

The scene opens on a pair of college coeds at a party with red Solo cups in their hands talking to a young hispanic man and "Showtime" Rick Marley. The hispanic college student nods at the girls smiling as Marley looks on, appearing irritated. As another guy walks behind him, Marley glances over his shoulder, then back at the girls, just in time to notice the girl standing across from him glance at the guy walking by...]

RM: Wait a minute...back that right up? What do you think you're doing?

Girl: Nothing...I was just...

Guy #1: Hey, knock it off, man...

RM: (ignoring him) Nothing is right. I am the greatest thing here, bar none. The fact that you're looking at some sunken-chested moron when he wanders through your idiotic field of vision just shows how worthless you really are. You're standing in front of the greatest--

[The guy grabs him by the arm and takes him to the kitchen as he continues to throw insults towards the girls.]

Guy #1: Jim, eat a Snickers.

RM: (looking offended): Why? What makes you think that *I* need a Snickers bar?

Guy #1: You get really touchy when you're hungry...

[Marley considers it for a moment, then nods, taking a the candy bar and taking a bite...the camera cuts back to his friend.]

Guy #1: Better?

[The camera cuts back to where "Showtime" Rick Marley had been standing a moment before. Now in his place stands a shorter, heavy-set Asian guy holding a Snickers Bar and chewing.]

Jim: Mmmmmm. Better.

Announcer: Snickers. Because you're not yourself when you're hungry.

[The two guys walk back over to the girls they were talking to a moment before, only to find that the girl on the right has been replaced by Nenshou.]

Jim: Sorry ladies.

[Nenshou responds by spraying green mist at him as the camera abruptly cuts to black while Jim screams in pain.]

Fade to black.

Fade back up. Standing in front of an AWA backdrop is Jason Dane. The AWA's ace investigative journalist is joined by the AWA World Television Champion, Ryan Martinez. The AWA's White Knight is dressed in a black and white "Memphis Rock & Soul" Museum T-shirt on, the silver and red title belt strapped around his waist. The young lion, it has to be said, looks tired and beleaguered. He's got a patch of white tape on his forehead, his brown hair partially covering it, and sporting a left eye that's been blackened. Usually clean-shaven, Ryan also sports about a week's worth of scratch stubble on his face.]

JD: Joining me now is the World Television Champion, Ryan Martinez! I don't want to beat around the bush, Mr. Martinez. We've seen you, for months now, fight for your life, week after week, show after show. We've seen you suffer countless attacks at the hands of the Wise Men's henchmen, the Dogs of War. We've seen you in one intense match after another. Alphonse Green, Rick Marley, Brian James, Johnny Detson, those were your last four singles match opponents. I have to ask you, champ, how are you feeling? And are you ready for what's to come?

[Martinez' head lowers for a moment, and when it lifts, his hand is on his chin, fingers scratching the stubble.]

RM: Well you know something, Jason. There are times in life when someone tells you something and even though you might understand it in your head, you don't really know it in your heart.

When I told my father that I wanted to be a wrestler, he said "son, you've just chosen to walk down a long, tough road. A road that'll eat you alive if you take even one wrong step. And even if you come out the other end, you're going to be beat up, worn out and hurting for the rest of your days." And I knew he was right, Jason. But I didn't really -know- it, if you understand what I'm trying to say.

But you better believe I do now.

[Ryan's hand goes into his hair, as he rubs his head.]

RM: Yeah, I'm beat up. Yeah, it takes me a little longer to do things someone else would do without thinking about it. I don't know when I was last home, and I don't know when I'm going to get to see home again.

I'd tell you to ask me if it matters Jason, but we both know it doesn't.

Because there was something else my father told me. He said "son, you take those bumps and bruises and you suck it up. You're a Martinez. You've got my blood flowing through you! You don't surrender, and you don't quit. You plant your feet and you dare someone to try and knock you down."

And look at where all that has gotten me, Jason.

[Martinez slaps the title belt.]

RM: I am the World Television Champion! I am the man that the Wise Men fear! And you better believe they fear me. I am the Wise Men's worst nightmare, and you just have to look at whose those pieces of filth have done if you don't believe me.

You don't go pay top dollar for Kolya Sudakov, you don't pull the Dogs of War out of the gutter, you don't blackmail a good man like Brad Jacobs unless you need them to fight someone that you're afraid of. They got all of

that, and they've left me lying in pools of my blood more often than I'd like to admit.

But I am still here, Wise Men! I am still here, and I'm not going down. You can't buy me, and you can't beat me. I will not submit, and all your money can't change my heart or make me betray the fans that stand behind me. Not only that, but I got an army behind me! You think the Dogs of War are anything compared to who I've got watching my back?

JD: Speaking of the Wise Men, the challenge was laid out for Guts and Glory...

[Ryan shakes his head.]

RM: No, we'll talk about Guts and Glory when the time is right. That time isn't known though, Jason. Because there's a -man- who deserves all of my attention tonight. A man who earned his shot at this title belt, just the way Brian James did two weeks ago.

JD: Tony Sunn.

[Ryan nods.]

RM: That's right. And I'm clearing the decks right now. Because I don't want you to think I'm looking past you, Tony Sunn. I don't want you to think I'm not taking you seriously, because I am. You're a strong man, and more importantly, you're a good man.

And Tony Sunn, tonight...

[A voice comes in from off camera.]

"...tonight is not the night for this."

[Approaching Dane and Martinez is now Tony Sunn himself. Clad in his usual black, silver and white ringlet with matching wristbands and black wrestling boots, the Ithaca powerhouse has a pensive expression on his face as he gives the AWA World Television Champion a respectful nod.]

JD: Tony, what exactly do you mean?

[Sunn is quiet for a few moments, clearly focused more on Ryan. He lets out a small sigh, nodding again.]

TS: There's no doubt that earning a title shot is a tremendous opportunity for me, especially given my short time here in the AWA. And facing a competitor like Ryan Martinez should be one heck of a challenge! But...

[Tony shakes his head, frowning.]

TS: ...we all saw what went down last time out, Ryan -- you got hit HARD by the Dogs of War and the rest of the Wise Men's lackeys.

[He gestures towards Ryan's still-bruised face and winces in sympathy.]

TS: I don't think -- no, I KNOW you're not at one hundred percent to face me tonight!

[Martinez looks like he's ready to protest that, but Tony immediately holds up a hand.]

TS: Now, I know what you're gonna say -- you're a fighting champion. There's no doubt about that! You've got a lotta pride and a lotta heart in the best sense of the words possible! Folks are probably gonna think I'm a fool for doing this, but this is important to me. I remember when Wright stole the Heavyweight title from Dave Bryant. Mark Stegglet asked me that, if I had a similar opportunity, if I wouldn't have done the same thing? Well, I told him I didn't know, but that I'd hope I would have been the better man.

[Tony stiffens, but his jaw is set in determination.]

TS: Now's my chance to be that better man, Ryan. If I ended up winning tonight, there'd always be that doubt. Like an asterisk next to my name, I'd always be questioning myself if I could have beaten you at your best. And I've got no doubt the fans here would be thinking that exact same thing too!

[Sunn looks Ryan right in the eyes in earnestness.]

TS: I want -- I NEED to face you when you're at your best, Ryan! I need to face a man whose fully at one hundred percent physically AND mentally! I need to wrestle the champion whose gonna push me to my limits and make me EARN that gold strap every step of the way! That's why I can't, in good conscience, wrestle you tonight. You've got Guts n' Glory to heal up and prepare for. Take Perez and the rest of those jerks down finally!

[Tony finally offers a small smile.]

TS: And afterwards, I'll be waiting -- Champ.

[For a long time, Ryan stares at Sunn. He clearly doesn't want to sit anything out.]

RM: You say you want me when I'm at my best? All right then. You deserve that. The next shot is yours. You tell me when, Sunn. You say it, and you know I'll be there.

Deal?

[To cement the deal, Ryan's hand extends, and Sunn takes it, the two of them shaking hands vigorously, each holding on, subtly squeezing, both men eager to show that they mean business.]

TS: See you soon, Ryan.

[Ryan releases his grip and nods.]

RM: Oh, you can count on it.

[The camera fades on the handshake, returning to Gordon and Bucky at ringside.]

GM: Well, it looks like we've got a change of plans here tonight as Tony Sunn has chosen to forego his shot at the World Television Title and take on Ryan Martinez when the champion is at full strength.

BW: Unless Sunn's got access to The Rave's time machine, I'm not sure that match will ever happen then. You really think Martinez is going to be in BETTER shape after Guts & Glory?!

GM: Five on five with the Wise Men's army doesn't seem like a recipe for good health, I have to admit that.

BW: Especially when we don't even know who will be in that match yet!

GM: But what a show of sportsmanship from Tony Sunn who chose not to take advantage of Martinez' injured state here in Memphis tonight.

BW: Sucker move. Sunn could've won the Television Title tonight. Now, he's gotta wait for Martinez to heal up. What a boneheaded decision!

GM: But it was the right thing to do and if Tony Sunn is about anything, we've learned it's about doing the right thing, Bucky. Speaking of which, in recent weeks, we've seen Tony Sunn have a couple of interactions with the ever-volatile Shadoe Rage.

BW: Gordo, I heard that Rage has been petitioning the Championship Committee for a shot at the World Television Title but they ain't biting.

GM: I've heard that the AWA has asked for some assurances from Rage that he can keep himself under control. We do NOT need a champion - a representative of this company - acting like Rage has acted in recent months. Perhaps tonight is when we'll see things start to turn for him. Let's go up to the ring and find out!

[We crossfade to the ring where Phil Watson is standing with a very large... a VERY large man in dirty ragged overalls and an impressive amount of Hawaiian shirt.]

PW: The following contest is scheduled for one fall with a ten minute time limit. Introducing first... from Baton Rouge, Louisiana... weighing 475 pounds... Dicky Alley!

[The blubbery beast throws his beefy arms up to a a decent reaction. He's got that swamp people long beard and stringy hair thing down pat. He's also got that infectious Louisiana smile that he beams at the people.]

BW: How much Gumbo did this boy eat growing up? He's huge!

GM: Dicky Alley was raised on gator meat, crawfish and po' boys, Bucky. He's as Louisiana as you can get. And he's got a heart as big as all outdoors.

BW: I'm sure his cardiologist agrees.

[Alley settles in to wait for his opponent.]

PW: And his opponent... from Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada...

[The crowd has a decidedly mixed reaction of cheers and boos as Irene Cara's "Fame" hits.]

PW: SHAAAAADOOOOOOOOOE RAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAGE!

[Rage steps through the curtains wearing a black leather robe with white stars festooned on the back. He spins towards the camera, breathing slowly and rhythmically to keep his generally frazzled nerves calm. His sunglasses are dark black this time, hiding his eyes and his emotions completely from sight. Rage strides down the aisle at a deliberate pace. He even goes out of his way to bump fists with fans and take pictures with anybody who has a cell phone ready in the aisle.]

GM: Shadoe Rage back in action after serving a suspension from in-ring competition due to his reprehensible actions at Memorial Day Mayhem.

BW: Why don't they just ban this lunatic once and for all? Look at him pandering to these fans, trying to suck up to the people so the AWA doesn't kick him to the curb.

GM: Shadoe Rage had some pre-recorded comments for us prior to this match.

[A small square opens on the screen as Shadoe Rage approaches the ring. In the square, Rage is in his ring gear, no sunglasses so that everybody can see his crazy eyes. A black bandana holds back his mass of hair and the kohl eyeliner makes the fevered madness behind his sculpted features pop.]

SR: I'm not going to freak out! Oh no, I'm not going to freak out! To all my Rage-o-holics out there, Shadoe Rage is a contrite man. I came out last show to be apologetic for my actions and Tony Sunn tried to steal my spotlight.

[Rage raises a shaking fist to the camera.]

SR: It took every ounce of me not to punch him in the mouth right there. But that wouldn't look good for the Number One Contender to the AWA Television title to act like a wild animal in front of impressionable young fans. So, I'm not going to behave like an animal.

I'm going to show Tony Sunn that he isn't in my league. Tony Sunn, your only claim to fame is pinning Ricky Lane twice. Big deal, big man. Watch what I do to a fat man tonight. Watch and understand that you will never be in my league, big man. Never!

[The image of Rage shrinks and disappears as we return full screen to the in ring action.]

BW: You know something, Gordo.

GM: What is it, Bucky?

BW: We might all be late to the joke. Rage might just be crazy like a fox. There's a lot of madness in what he's doing, but there's some method in it too. If this boy don't turn him into a grease spot.

[As the bell sounds, Rage lunges at Alley, locking up in a collar and elbow.]

BW: This doesn't seem like the best idea, Gordo.

[And Bucky is quickly proven right as Alley shoves forward, sending Rage crashing head over heels, rolling back into the corner. He springs to his feet, slapping at the turnbuckles and tearing at his hair.]

GM: Shadoo Rage may be more than a little embarrassed after that, Bucky.

BW: Rage is a bad night of television away from turning into Anton Layton and talking about The Master's voice in his head.

[Rage kicks the bottom rope in frustration...

...and then spins around, charging wildly at Dicky Alley for another tieup.]

GM: Right back to the collar and elbow... and down he goes again!

[The crowd cheers a bit as Rage rolls under the bottom rope, slamming his arms down on the ring apron as Aleey does a little jig in the ring, smiling to the applauding fans.]

BW: And while the big man is shuckin' and jivin' inside the ring, Rage is out here on the floor talkin' to himself again. That's just not a good sign for anyone's sanity. When this guy starts talkin', he stops thinkin'.

GM: So far, his attempts to match power with the big man have been in vain. He's been turned back twice so he needs to regroup out there. Normally, we might see Marissa Monet trying to keep him under control but her absence this week is conspicuous once again.

BW: I ain't gonna be the one to ask him about her, are you?

GM: I'd rather not.

BW: Besides, he don't need Marissa Monet if you ask me. Her nagging might have been what sent him over the edge in the first place.

GM: Nagging?! She was trying to keep him from crippling Donnie White... and HIMSELF in the process!

[Rage scrambles up on the apron, pointing a warning finger at his opponent before he vaults over the top rope into the ring. He lands in front of Dicky, spreading his arms out wide. He goes into a pirouette for the fans...

...and then sticks out his hand for a handshake.]

GM: I'm not sure about this one.

[Dicky looks out at the crowd, many of which are shouting for him to not trust Rage. But the big country hoss doesn't listen, shaking Rage's hand without incident.]

GM: Okay, I stand corrected.

[Rage turns and bows to the distrusting crowd.]

GM: A show of sportsmanship from Shadoe Rage.

BW: I suppose. But he-

[Before Bucky can finish, Rage SMASHES him in the nose with a lightning fast jab!]

GM: I stand corrected again. This guy is becoming a real piece of work, Bucky. For so long, he battled his reputation to become a favorite of these fans but in just a few months of dastardly actions, Rage has really turned the tide in the other direction. There are still some cheers out there but there's a whole lot of boos for the Canadian.

[A series of peppering rights and lefts staggers the swamp rat before a hard overhand right sends him falling back into the corner where he sits down with a loud thump, rubbing his nose.]

BW: Rage set him up with the handshake and now he's doing a number on him. Alley may be a big man but he's also as dumb as a stump, daddy.

[With Alley cornered, Rage slaps himself across the chest a couple of times before barreling across...

...and SMASHING a running knee into the chest of the big man, knocking the wind out of him!]

GM: Big running knee out of Shadoe Rage! He's gonna do it again!

[The second knee connects in the same spot, leaving the big man gasping for air down on the mat.]

GM: Rage is trying to pull him up but he can't budge the big man.

[Even with two hands full of hair, Rage can't get Alley up off the mat.]

GM: Rage has him down but he can't move him into a place where he can do something with him.

BW: Gordo, you can be ripped to shreds like Rage is, but that don't mean you got all the power in the world to move dead weight like that. He won't get up till he wants to get up.

[Unable to get Alley out of the corner, Rage resorts to raining sharp elbows down on his forehead. He drives one into his forehead. Then another. And another. And another and another and another ... until ...]

GM: Ricky Longfellow finally forcing Rage out of the corner after he drove ten straight elbow smashes into Alley's skull.

[With Rage under verbal assault from the official, Alley lumbers to his feet, staggering out of the corner with a looping haymaker that Rage ducks under, slipping in behind his bigger opponent...

...and leaps up, hooking him around the head and driving the knees up between the shoulderblades. He yanks backwards, falling to the mat with Alley on top of him, the momentum driving the knees into the lungs and knocking the wind out of him!]

GM: OHHH!

BW: Rage got that takedown but he may have miscalculated, Gordo. He's down on the mat and Alley landed with all of his weight on top of him there! He got squashed under that mountain of a man and-

GM: Longfellow down to count!

[A two count follows that Rage barely is able to twist out from under, avoiding the pin as some fans laugh at the predicament he found himself in.]

GM: Can you imagine, Bucky, if Rage humiliated himself by getting pinned underneath that man?

BW: We'd see a major meltdown, I tell ya.

[Back on his feet, Rage sprints to the corner where he leaps through the ropes to the apron, quickly scaling the turnbuckles...

...and drops the Death From Above double axehandle on a rising Alley, knocking him back down to his knees!]

GM: Death From Above connects but Alley is able to stay off the mat.

BW: Rage is going for it again!

[The second double axehandle connects behind the ear of Alley, forcing him down to all fours...

...but he still will not go down.]

GM: Rage can't get him down to the mat!

[The wild-eyed Rage starts tearing at his own hair again, leaving a nice chunk of it floating down to the canvas before he finally just wraps both hands around the big man's throat, forcing him down with a chokehold!]

GM: Oh, come on!

[Rage holds the choke, clenching his teeth madly as the count reaches four when he abruptly breaks it...

...and then lunges back in with another choke!]

GM: Give me a break!

BW: Hey, he's got five seconds to break. He's playing by the rules, Gordo.

[Rage breaks just before the five count again, climbing to his feet. He looks down at Alley who is flat on his back, breathing heavily. The man from Rage Country leaps straight up into the air...

...and BURIES a leaping knee into throat area!]

BW: That might be it right there, Gordo.

GM: Not so fast. It looks like Rage is heading up to again.

[Rage scales the turnbuckles again, throwing his arms up in the air.]

GM: Shadoo Rage perched up on the top rope! This is his favorite spot, Bucky. He's going to fly!

[A sea of flashes go off as fans take pictures of his flight. He lands with a bang, driving his elbow deep into Alley's chest. Rage pops to his feet, looking down at the motionless Alley.]

GM: Big elbow off the top - the Angel Of Death Drop!

[The referee implores Rage to make a cover but the savage Canadian shakes him off, pointing to the corner again. Rage nods, walking towards the corner. He hops through the ropes, scaling the turnbuckles again...]

GM: What is he doing?!

BW: I think he's making sure it's over!

GM: You've gotta be kidding me!

[Rage leaps from his perch a second time, driving the elbow into the chest of the big man from Louisiana before wrapping up the big man as best he can for the academic three count.]

GM: Shadoe Rage is your winner!

BW: And more importantly, he showed Tony Sunn that there's nothing special about beating a fat guy.

[The ring announcer makes it official as Rage stands on the big man's chest, one finger in the air. He looks out at the crowd with his wild eyes.]

BW: He's calling for it again!

GM: He can't do that! That elbow could puncture a lung, break a rib cage, even cause cardiac arrest! The human body wasn't meant to take the weight of a 240 pound man dropping from over ten feet onto it over and over again!

[Alley is making heavy wheezing noises as Rage climbs to the top again. His eyes are possessed.]

GM: Somebody get some help out here!

BW: Rage has lost it again!

[Referees pour out from the back, quickly making their way towards the ring.]

GM: And if Shadoe Rage wants to blame someone for not getting a shot at the World Television Title, he needs only look in the mirror, Bucky! Get these people out here to stop him!

[The referees hit the ring, forming a circle around the downed Alley, making up a makeshift human shield.]

GM: Thank heavens for these officials willing to put their bodies on the line to prevent Shadoe Rage from getting at Dicky Alley again!

[A fuming Rage drops off the ropes, snatching up a mic from the timekeeper's table before rolling back into the ring.]

SR: You want to protect him from me?!

[The referees can be heard off-mic pleading with Rage to back away.]

SR: Everybody's always so concerned about my opponents! But is anybody worried about me? Hmmm? I want my shot at the Television title but no, Tony Sunn gets it. Why? He beat a fat slob? I beat a fat slob, too!

Anything Sunn can do, I can do better!

[Rage trails off. He snatches one of the referees who drifted too close.]

GM: He's got Davis Warren by the hair!

[Rage clenches his fist, rearing back with it.]

BW: He's gonna get fired, Gordo! If he hits another ref, he's gonna get himself fired!

GM: You're absolutely right... but I'm not sure he even cares! He's lost it yet again here in Memphis!

[Rage looks into the terrified eyes of the official.]

SR: Don't worry, I'm not going to hit you. I'm tired of working for free around here.

[The referee doesn't show any sign of relief since Rage hasn't taken his hand off Davis Warren yet.]

SR: But I want you to send a message to Tony Sunn. Tell him Shadoe Rage isn't impressed. Tell him Shadoe Rage isn't scared of him. Tell him that Shadoe Rage wants him in the ring at Guts and Glory!

[Big cheer!]

SR: Tell him if he wants to try to steal my spotlight I'll show him just what it's like to be in my shadow! Tell him at Guts and Glory, I will eclipse him. Get it? Good.

[Rage looks into the eyes of the terrified official...

...and then rears back his fist again!]

BW: He changed his mind!

GM: Somebody stop him!

BW: I don't think our security is getting paid enough to deal with that madman, Gordo!

[The shocked crowd cries out its collective plea, with a majority begging for Shadoe Rage to release the official unharmed (of course, there's always that select group of misanthropes who cheer for any and all violence regardless of where it's being applied). But those screams turn into wild cheers as an enraged Tony Sunn suddenly BOLTS down the aisle towards the ring!]

GM: SUNN TO THE RESCUE!

[Rage's eyes dart feverishly between Sunn, the crowd and the trapped referee. He kisses his fist as if readying to strike the ref anyway...

...and Sunn immediately rolls into the ring. As the Ithaca powerhouse quickly rises to his feet, Rage instead roughly **SHOVES** the official towards Sunn. Tony is able to catch the poor man, who takes his lucky opportunity to get the heck out of Dodge. The two wrestlers then begin to circle each other like feral dogs jockeying for position.]

BW: Things could explode right now!

GM: Tony Sunn's late father was a referee, Bucky. We know how protective he can get when it comes to the officials!

[By this time, an incensed Sunn has gotten his hands on a mic and brings it to his lips.]

TS: This is what you've become, Rage? A storied career around the world and now you're reduced to begging for attention like a petulant **CHILD**! If you weren't such a danger to everyone around you, I think I'd have actual pity for you. But no...no, you gotta be stopped!

[A shaking fist clenching at his side, Sunn shakes his head. His face is twisted into utter disgust as he glares at Shadoe Rage.]

TS: You want a battle? You want me at Guts n' Glory?! **YOU'VE GOT IT!**

[And the crowd frantically **POPS** for the answered challenge!]

GM: Oh yeah! Tony Sunn vs Shadoe Rage! It's on!

BW: Rage's out of his mind and they're going to put him on Guts & Glory?! The front office has lost it! It's a good thing we're getting a new AWA President!

GM: Indeed it is... and perhaps that new President will be "Big" Jim Watkins who says he's got a contract that says he can name a stipulation for any Guts & Glory match that he wants. Could he put something on these two?

BW: Heck, we might have **ANOTHER** scaffold match, Gordo!

GM: Boy, I hope not. One of those is enough to last me a lifetime, Bucky. These officials are keeping Sunn and Rage apart but at Guts & Glory in a couple of weeks, **NO ONE** will keep these two apart, fans! We're going to take a quick break but when we come back, we'll see former World Tag Team Champions, Strictly Business in action!

[Fade to black.

Fade back up on what sounds like a very passable punk cover of the Beach Boys' "Surfin' USA" with a sun-drenched beach. A voiceover begins.]

"The experts say that it promises to be the hottest summer on record."

[A shot of a pair of bikini-clad girls being baked by the sun.]

"But it's not global warming's fault."

[A shower of sand is kicked in the girls' faces, causing yelps and angry shouts. We slowly pan up from the sand to reveal a grinning Miss Sandra Hayes in a bikini of her own.]

"It's the AWA's fault"

[Cut to shots of AWA action with sunburst graphics and transitions cutting from shot to shot as the voiceover continues.]

"It's become an annual tradition when the AWA hits the road every summer, leaving their hometown of Dallas behind and going out to all the cities thirsting for the professional wrestling action that only the AWA can provide."

[A series of show dates appear on the screen, scrolling past one by one.]

"But this year, the AWA makes history by going COAST TO COAST for the very first time. So, check the tour schedule now for the show nearest you because you do NOT want to miss it when the AWA comes to your town!"

[We cut back to the bikini-clad Sandra Hayes, now with her pink branding iron slung over her shoulder.]

MSH: Can you feel the heat?

[A seductive smile and wink follows before we fade to black...

A quick fade brings us three things -- a large AWA banner, a large, comfortable chair, and a large man seated in that large chair. Not large in the intimidating sense, but large in the too many cupcakes sense. None other than Rob Christie, the Robfathah, sits in this chair, an unusually serious look on his moon-shaped face. The one-time Manager of the Year grins and nods towards the camera.]

RC: Hello, everyone! I'm here...well, let's not be too cute about this. Karl O'Connor had to step down from his position as President of the AWA, and that's a position I am very interested in.

[The Robfathah spreads his hands slightly, then clasps them together.]

RC: One of the most common questions anybody is ever asked when they apply for a job is what their qualifications for that job are, and I assure you all, my qualifications are legitimate. I've been involved in the wrestling business in some way, shape, or form since the year 1996. A much younger and, frankly, much thinner Robfathah was an agent for any number of

professional wrestlers, and that gave me a glimpse into the inner workings of this sport at a pretty early age.

[Christie leans forward slightly.]

RC: I emphasize the word "sport" because despite the efforts of any number of people in the almost twenty years I've been involved in professional wrestling, I still believe in my heart that it's a sport more than entertainment. That's why I gladly handled the day to day affairs of a number of men who still work in the business today -- and why I took the Vice Presidency of Talent Coordination for an organization in California some of you are familiar with. Granted, anybody who remembers that organization might also remember that the job wasn't offered to me, I asked for it, and such were my talents and my charisma that the position was created for me, and a simple manager became a Vice President in what was the most powerful wrestling organization on the face of the earth.

[Christie looks off to the side for a moment as if reminiscing, then looks back towards the camera, suddenly all business.]

RC: Did I say simple manager? I misspoke. I managed champions. I was a voice of reason, a voice of experience, and a man of ideas before I was ever a Vice President, before I ever failed at running my own company.

[An unmistakably sour look crosses Christie's face.]

RC: That's right, I failed. I went into a situation I knew little about, and I paid the price in every sense of the word. I'm much older and wiser than I was when that happened, and most importantly, for the past twenty years, I have lived and breathed wrestling. I have been in love with this sport since I was a kid sneaking around to watch whatever I could on TV, and despite all the variety of nonsense I've dealt with, inflicted from within and without, my love for wrestling has never diminished. As AWA President, I will devote every moment I have to both developing the future of the AWA and to maintaining its current dominance over the wrestling world.

[Christie abruptly rises from his chair.]

RC: I know I'm usually the comic relief, and that was a role I relished in the earlier days of my career. I'm not just the fat clown anymore, though, and if any of you who are listening now aren't taking this seriously, you have a standing invitation to contact me at any time, in any way you see fit.

[Rob pokes himself in the chest for emphasis.]

RC: I am the ONLY man for this job, the only person any of you know willing to do everything it takes to keep the AWA on top...and seeing as how I don't currently work for you and none of you knows just how far the Wise Men's claws have sunk, I just may be the only man any of you can trust.

[We slowly fade to a graphic that reads "CHRISTIE FOR PRESIDENT!" before fading back to the ring where Phil Watson is standing.]

PW: The following tag team match is scheduled for one fall with a ten minute time limit... Currently in the ring at a total combined weight of four hundred fifty-five pounds... Joe East and Steve West!

[Tepid reaction from the fans as East and West raise their arms in the air.]

PW: And their opponents! Weighing in at a combined 457 pounds, they are Andrew "Flash" Tucker and "Money Driven" Mike Sebastian...

STRICTLYYYYYYY BUUSSSIIIIINNEESSSSSSSS!!!

[The opening whispers of Powerman 5000's "When Worlds Collide" begin to creep through the Schoolhouse PA system as the crowd immediately leaps to their feet, showering the two with boos before they even present themselves. As the opening guitar riffs kick in, the curtain sweeps to the side to reveal Andrew "Flash" Tucker and "Money Driven" Mike Sebastian; better known to the world as Strictly Business.

The jeers increase in volume at the sight of the two former crowd favorites as they immediately begin making their way towards the ring. Tucker is clad in a pair of long, black wrestling tights adorned with white lightning bolts. His white wrestling boots go to mid-calf and have black lightning bolts on them. His blond hair hangs down past his shoulders and his torso glistens with water. His eyes are covered by his trademark pair of Oakley sunglasses. The clean-shaven Sebastian rocks a pair of black tights, accentuated by his familiar forest green calling card logo on the right leg; his moniker showcased down the other. His platinum blond hair immediately captures the eye as it glistens with perspiration under the beaming house lights.]

GM: It's been a few weeks since we've seen Strictly Business, Bucky.

BW: They've been busy. The suits love sending these two legends to every possible media destination they can, since they're two of the most recognizable faces in the organization.

GM: Give me a break.

[Strictly Business reaches the ring, climbing inside to meet their foes. Tucker tosses his sunglasses to the outside as the bell rings. Steve West and Mike Sebastian start inside the ring and immediately engage in a collar-and-elbow tieup.]

GM: Regardless of where they've been, they're here now and they're going to have to respond to Air Strike's challenge for Guts and Glory tonight!

BW: They don't have to do anything, Gordo. These two are legends of the sport and can do what they please.

[Sebastian begins pushing West back towards the corner, but West spins Sebastian around and unleashes three quick right hands before whipping him back to the opposite corner.]

GM: Steve West starting quickly here, and he comes barreling across the ring and Sebastian meets him with a hard forearm!

[West stumbles backwards as Sebastian props himself up on the top rope but West recovers quickly, leaping up on the second rope and throwing a right hand that Sebastian blocks. "Money Driven" shoves the youngster off the ropes and flat on his back.]

GM: Sebastian flies and connects with a big legdrop from the second rope! Veterans they may be, but they can certainly still fly with the best of 'em!

BW: They can do pretty much everything with the best of 'em as Air Strike will soon learn if Strictly Business decides to give them the time of day.

GM: Sebastian goes for the quick cover here, one... two... kickout by West. I can't help but notice that you've really turned around on Strictly Business since Rising Sun Showdown, Bucky.

BW: I had dinner with these guys not long ago and they really explained their history to me. I had no idea about some of the big names these two have beaten until they picked up the check.

GM: I see.

[Sebastian scoops West up and walks him towards the Strictly Business corner before dropping him down with a backbreaker and tagging in his partner, Andrew "Flash" Tucker.]

GM: Sebastian with the tag now and Tucker uses the ropes to springboard in and OHH! Big move there as he let the top ring rope do all the work and sent him back down onto West and here comes Ricky Longfellow with the count... one, two and Joe East breaks up the pin!

[Fresh off the springboard moonsault, Tucker climbs to his feet as the referee tries to get Joe East out of the ring. Tucker makes a dash towards East who manages to exit before "Flash" can get to him.]

GM: Tucker turns his attention back to West and- big kick downstairs!

[Quickly tying up Tucker, West takes him over with a vertical suplex!]

GM: Tucker was distracted there for a moment and he paid for it. West now, pulls Tucker over to the corner and tags his partner.

BW: There's still a little ring rust here, Gordo, but they're still going to be dominant. Wait until these two start hitting on all cylinders.

[Tucker is held up for a quick right hand from East. Tucker hits the ground but is quickly pulled back up and whipped to an empty corner. East sizes up "Flash" and dashes across the ring, leaping at him with a dropkick...]

GM: NOBODY HOME!

BW: I hope he didn't have a date tonight, daddy!

[Legs split around the ringpost, straddling the second turnbuckle, East howls in pain before falling to the mat. Both Tucker and East eventually get over to their corners to make tags.]

GM: Both teams make tags here, and here comes Mike Sebastian...

[West comes dashing in to meet Sebastian and is dropped with a right hand. East is up and eats one from Sebastian too. West stumbles towards Sebastian and is sent flying with a back body drop before "Money Driven" bounces off the ropes and meets the rising Joe East with a clothesline that sends him right back to the mat.]

GM: Sebastian is on fire right now, Bucky.

BW: Would you expect anything less from a Hall of Famer?

GM: They're not in the Hall of Fame.

BW: Neither am I which makes me question who they let in there!

[Sebastian covers, getting a two count before it's broken up by East. Tucker returns the favor, dashing across the ring and leaping over Sebastian and West, connecting with a forearm that knocks East back against the ropes.]

GM: The referee needs to get this match under control!

BW: Strictly Business has it firmly under control, Gordo.

[Sebastian gets up and he and Tucker whip East to the opposite ropes. They await his return with a double clothesline...]

GM: Joe East ducks under, spins around...

[He leaps up, connecting with a double clothesline of his own!]

GM: East with the clothesline... and a cover on Sebastian!

[Longfellow drops down to count.]

GM: One...two and Tucker breaks up the pin with a dropkick!

BW: Tag team wrestling at its finest, Gordo!

[West re-enters the fray, pulling Tucker up and looking to whip him into the corner but Tucker reverses it, firing West into the buckles.]

GM: Reversed!

BW: HERE WE GO!

[Sebastian moves to the corner, dropping down to all fours.]

GM: Tucker dashes across the ring and jumps off of Sebastian... LAUNCH PAD!

[After connecting with West, East comes over and tries to whip Sebastian into the opposite corner, but this too is reversed and the process repeats itself. Sebastian drops to all fours, Tucker dashes across the ring...]

GM: ANOTHER LAUNCH PAD! The referee has lost all control of this one, Bucky!

BW: Who cares!?

[East staggers out to the center of the ring, spins around groggily only to find Andrew Tucker's boot flying right at his midsection, doubling him over before dropping a leg over the back of his neck with a rocker dropper...]

GM: TRENDSETTER! THAT'S THE FLASH...

BW: ...AND HERE COMES THE CASH!

[On cue, Mike Sebastian comes flying off of the top rope with the Stock Market Crash frog splash and quickly hooks the leg as the referee dives in for the count...]

GM: ONE! TWO! THREE!!!

[Ding! Ding! Ding!]

[The crowd boos a bit at the outcome as "When Worlds Collide" comes creeping through the loudspeakers once again as Tucker and Sebastian have their hands raised in victory. The duo climb out of the ring, ignoring the jeering crowd and make their way to ringside where Jason Dane awaits them.

The two seem engrossed in reliving their dominating victory before Dane clears his throat, interjecting himself. The two men turn and stare at the man holding the microphone.]

AT: Oh, I apologize, Jason. We didn't even know you were there. You don't get to the level that we're at without rehashin' your matches and seein' where you could improve. Not that there's much room for improvement between the two of us.

[A smirk from Tucker.]

JD: You two have definitely spent a lot of time as of late rehashing old matches and reminding us about your past victories, but what ab-

[Dane is cut off by a wave from Sebastian.]

MS: What about the time the two of us stepped in the ring alongside Christopher Stonebreaker and Otto "The Butcher" Verhoeven? The night we shoveled the last pile of dirt on the career of Tony Starks? These are all covered in the DVD, Dane.

JD: That's all fine and good but these people want to know about Air Strike!

AT: I hardly think these people want to hear about two greenhorn rookies who-

[Tucker is drowned out by the cheers for the young duo, which elicits a frown in response.]

AT: Well, Tennessee ain't exactly known for its Mensa memberships. What is it that you wanna know about Air Strike that we haven't already been clear about, Dane?

JD: They threw down the gauntlet! They want to know whether you're going to finally get in the ring with them at Guts and Glory!

MS: Clearly these Air Strike tykes watched their share of Eddie Jacobs during adolescence as well. They may want to lay off the old lady's cough medicine. Asking to step in the ring with the best tandem this sport ever laid eyes on? No better way than that to steer yourselves straight toward career suicide. We could give you a few names to back that up with, but we'd be here all friggin' night. And after all, we're in Memphis.

[Hometown heel pop!]

AT: If you wanted us to talk about Guts an' Glory, you shoulda just said somethin', Dane. Because we're here to announce that Strictly Business is definitely gonna be inside that ring on July 4th!

[Huge pop from the fans as they anticipate Air Strike finally meeting Strictly Business inside the ring. Tucker nods along with the cheers.]

AT: An' it's definitely not gonna be against two nobodies like Air Strike.

[The pop immediately turns to boos.]

MS: It's like this, suit. We didn't high-tail it out of the good life to be trading fists with a couple of squirts who are better served detailing our Astons. We didn't trade in eighteen holes in the morning and happy hour on the beach for tag team wrestling fodder like this Air Strike team you keep trying to force-feed us. If we're back between those ropes risking life and limb, you

better believe it will be across a formidable team who, for the lack of a better term, matters.

AT: But we recognize how much Air Strike loves us. That they dream that one day they could become us. That one day they might usurp us as their moms' favorite wrestlers. So while we're not gonna grace them with our presence in a match, we're gonna grace 'em with front row seats at ringside, so we can show 'em what a perfect display of wrestling looks like.

JD: If you're not facing Air Strike, then who are you going to be facing?

MS: You don't need to know their names, Matlock - you'll find out on Lady Liberty's birthday just like everybody else. We've made a career out of branding S-B on the backsides of the best this sport has to offer. Do you really think we would bother wasting our time with anybody other than top-tier talent? Eh-eh. There won't be a single question mark surrounding the team we step in the ring with at Guts and Glory.

AT: Rest assured, Dane, that we found two wrestlers that were worth our time. We told you weeks ago that we weren't showin' up unless we found men who could at least carry our duffel bags through the airport. We only rub elbows with the very best this industry has to offer.

You're gonna spend the next two weeks tryin' to break this story, Dane, because the two guys who are gonna face Strictly Business are bonafide legends in the business and when July 5th rolls around, nobody is gonna be talkin' about Dave Bryant, Terry Shane, Styx, Air Strike, or anyone else in that locker room.

[A shake of the head.]

AT: They're gonna be talkin' about how Strictly Business stole the show and continued their march towards immortality.

[On that note, "When Worlds Collide" kicks in one last time and Tucker and Sebastian saunter back through the curtain, chased by boos from the Memphis faithful...

...Just like on the last episode of Saturday Night Wrestling, the feed is interrupted by static. Slowly, we get a foggy picture, which clears up after a few seconds. We find ourselves in a lavish office overlooking an awe-inspiring view of a hustling cityscape hundreds of stories below. Thoughtfully looking out the window is a middle aged man in a black Armani suit. He is speaking, but we still haven't regained audio. The expression on his face seems to indicate he has just heard or seen something upsetting as he takes his glasses off and turns around to exclaim something at the camera. After a moment, audio is finally recovered.]

Businessman: ... and I reject that very idea outright. This company has prided itself on adhering to every environmental guideline that there is since our very beginning. And there is nothing in the history of this business that would ever indicate drilling of this kind could ever cause that sort of damage.

[He pauses to regain his composure, putting his glasses back on before continuing.]

Businessman: I understand the general public is upset. They are outraged, and rightfully so. This is a very concerning situation. And I understand the need to have someone to blame in such troubling times. But the very simple fact is this: this is beyond anything mankind is capable of causing, even with the most impressive machinery. What we are talking about here is a crack in the Ear--

[Suddenly, static takes over the feed once again. The feedback forces the audio to cut out yet again, and the scene eventually fades to black entirely.]

We slowly fade back up on the ringside area where wearing a sleek white linen suit with red tie is Gibson Hayes. To his left, standing with a microphone in his hand, is Jason Dane - interviewer extraordinaire.]

JD: We are down here at ringside where I've been joined once again by former World Champion Gibson Hayes. Mr. Hayes, you're fresh off losing another match, this time against AWA Original, Sweet Daddy Will-

[A yawn escapes the former champion. Dane looks irritated.]

JD: You don't seem to be too concerned about your recent losing streak.

[Hayes gives a dismissive gesture towards Dane.]

GH: I'm not. I mean, I did quite a bit of thinking. I took a good, long look at myself. I began to wonder just what I was doing. I had to take stock, look over options, and ask the most important question of my career.

[Dane has to ask the questions.]

JD: And what question would that be?

GH: Would I look better with the World Championship or the Television Championship around my waist? Think about it, Dane. Really think - which belt accentuates my wardrobe? Which bit of shiny lucre is more slimming?

This is important stuff, Jason. All in all, I'm wondering if we shouldn't do an entire piece on what belt goes better with each suit I own. After all, I'll be representing all of your wallets. So, the least I can do is give you something nice to look at. Lord knows your homes are hideous, your wives are ugly, and your children are stupid.

JD: You've lost two straight matches - this last one to one of the men who helped build this company in Sweet Daddy Williams.

GH: I see your lips moving, but nothing you're saying makes any sense. Do you want proof of what I can do? Fine, I'll show you just what you want to

see. Lemme think... I know, bring out that little jumpy guy, you know the one. Stupid name, from Mexico.

JD: You're talking about Caspian Abaran.

GH: Sure, whatever. Send him out, let's be done with this. Sheesh...

[Hayes rolls under the ropes into the ring, again refusing to even bother to change into ring gear. He kicks off his shoes, sitting on the top turnbuckle as a referee comes dashing into view. The referee speaks to him for a few moments before the 5'9" Caspian Abaran, dressed in his yellow full length tights with red and brown pattern, marches out. Hayes claps for the "enhancement talent" as he heads down the aisle.]

GM: I fail to see what these actions do to further any sort of path for Gibson Hayes.

BW: Hayes ain't never been predictable. Heck, it seems he's more entranced with his own personal Turkish Delight than the actual prize, Gordo.

GM: I'm not getting the reference... wait, is that...

BW: Oh, Hayes just spit in the face of Abaran!

[Hayes, not showing any respect to his opponent, has let fly a giant gob of spit into the face of Caspian. Hayes follows up with a hair pull take down and steps on the chest of Abaran. Hayes grandstands, taking a bow on each side of the ring.]

GM: Hayes continually refuses to rise to the occasion - he's staunch in his refusal to acknowledge the weight of the situation.

BW: You gotta wonder if he's just happy collecting a paycheck while making everyone miserable and disappointed. He ain't got no friends... though I am available for the right price... ask Strictly Business.

[Hayes kicks Abaran in the stomach as Caspian tries to get up. Another kick to the gut and Gibson picks up the luchador off the mat.]

GM: Hayes drags Abaran to his feet and-

[The crowd jeers as Hayes fishhooks the luchador, tugging back and taunting him to the fans' dismay. The boos are flying as Hayes releases, being admonished by the official who he dismissively waves off.]

GM: These fans have had enough. They're tired of Gibson Hayes.

BW: Maybe they're just tired from the walk to the concession stand - they aren't the most fit bunch.

[Hayes lifts the luchador up, throwing him down to the mat with a simply body slam. Smirking, thinking this is enough, Hayes lazily drapes himself over Abaran...]

...for only a two count.]

GM: Two count only for Gibson Hay- what in the world?!

[A now suddenly irate Hayes hops up to his feet and throws what can only be called a giant hissy fit - stomping his feet, poking the referee in the chest while complaining about a "heinously slow and inaccurate count."]

GM: Hayes has snapped! He's shouting at the official! He can't believe that wasn't a three count and-

[Suddenly, Abaran reaches up, dragging Hayes down in a schoolboy. The referee dives to the mat as Abaran runs in place, applying more pressure to the cradle.]

GM: ONE! TWO! THREEEEEEEE!!

"DING! DING! DING!"

[Abaran springs up off the mat, throwing his arms in the air in triumph before wisely bailing out of the ring before Hayes can attack him. The crowd is roaring for the luchador.]

GM: Gibson Hayes has lost again! That's three matches in a row and you'd have to bet that this loss is perhaps the worst in his career!

BW: And Hayes none too happy! He has his hands in his head and looks beside himself, daddy! This ain't the way show you're worth your contract.

GM: ...again, we can agree. Hayes has gone from hot property to dud rather quick.

BW: The Greg Oden of the AWA?

[Hayes is angrily kicking the bottom rope in frustration as Abaran backs down the aisle, celebrating his shocking victory.]

GM: This has GOT to be one of the biggest upsets in AWA history, fans! What a moment for Caspian Abaran! And what a terrible moment for Gibson Hayes who looks as shocked as you could possibly imagine! Fans, we've got to take another break but when we come back, we'll see the Walking Dead in action!

[Fade to black.]

Cut to a very long shot of the exterior of a pretty dingy looking building.]

"Have you ever dreamed of fame?"

[Cut a little closer.]

"Of glory?"

[A little closer.]

"Of your friends and family seeing you on television?"

[And just a little closer, revealing a red, white, and blue sign that reads "AWA Combat Corner."]

"Well, now you can make all your dreams come true by signing up today at the AWA Combat Corner - the official training school for the American Wrestling Alliance!"

[We cut to the interior of the building where we can see lots of standard gym equipment surrounding a very basic wrestling ring. There are people lifting weights, running on treadmills, and of course, working out in the ring.]

"With the very best trainers in the business, the AWA Combat Corner is the most-equipped training facility to get you in shape and get you in the ring in the shortest amount of time!"

[Cut into the ring where an unseen instructor is barking out instructions to two young students who are grappling on the canvas.]

"So, stop by the Combat Corner today... call our offices... visit our website... and let them know that you want to be the next AWA Superstar! You want to be the future of the business! You want to wrestle!"

[Fade to a graphic that has all the info on the AWA Combat Corner before we fade back to black...]

The scene opens in the back. Some non-descript room with some non-descript backdrop. There in the middle of the room sitting on a metal chair is Johnny Detson. Detson is wearing a black zipped up sweat jacket with long gold tights and black boots. It almost appears to be an identical room from where Hannibal Carver spoke last show, which would be impossible since we're not even in an arena this week. Looking down at the floor, Detson begins to speak.]

Detson: So many things change throughout this landscape of ours. People come and go. The cheers ebb and flow. Wins... losses... things changes. But out of all those things, out of all those changes, one of the most absolute things in this sport of ours... one of the most stone cold facts our industry has...

[Detson pauses.]

Detson: ...is that Supreme Wright is going to do what's best for Supreme Wright, EACH and EVERY time.

[Detson looks up, acknowledging for the first time that you might be speaking to someone other than himself.]

Detson: Cashing in at SuperClash? Good call. Cain Jackson? Great protection. Team Supreme? Masterful manipulation. Each and every time.

[Detson shakes his head almost in disbelief.]

Detson: So Supreme coming out and doing what he did was... unexpected. One might say... disappointing.

[Detson smirks at the camera, recalling old conversations before continuing.]

Detson: But even this unforeseen event does little to change the end result. You tip the scales of one small battle, but you also tipped your hand as well so the next time you might find the results a shade different. Can you handle that, Supreme? Doesn't really mold into your theory of self-preservation does it? Like Eric said, this is a war.

[Detson smiles.]

Detson: Are you going to be there each and every time? Are you going to watch Eric Preston's back and trust that he's watching yours? Or are you going to go out there and get your pound of flesh and leave? Because you're not there to help them; you know it; they know it... EVERYONE knows it. AWA be damned, Supreme Wright was wronged, and that's just something that can't happen, can it?

[Pausing, Detson gives that last question some extra weight before continuing.]

Detson: So look what you did. You joined a fight you want no part in. You joined a fight where you don't belong. Because it requires you putting your faith in others - just something you can't do. Look at your team... two men who bonded over your betrayal, a corporate relic longing to remain relevant, and some guy named "arm bar". Who's to say Ryan and Eric won't turn on you, wouldn't be the first time for some, would it? Who's to say Carver doesn't stay relevant by throwing an elbow to the back of the former champ's head? Who's to say we haven't already bought off one of those four men beside you? Who's to say they weren't with us the whole time?

[Shrugging, Detson throws his hands out as if he doesn't have the answers himself.]

Detson: You don't know... how could you? Eric Preston called this a war, and he's right. And all wars are won with the better armies who have the better strategies.

[Detson nods in agreement with his last statement.]

Detson: But look around, gentlemen, you don't have an army. You have five people with five different reasons for being out there. One guy just looking for a fight; one former champ looking for revenge. One guy looking to redeemed his fractured soul; and one guy just dying to stay relevant. And finally, one just fighting for his honor and code.

[Detson shakes his head with disgust, dismissing the idea outright.]

Detson: That's not an army; that will never be an army. Heck, you couldn't even form a book club out of that group, mainly because Carver can't read but I digress.

[Again, Detson smirks.]

Detson: You don't have an army. You have a losing situation. You have a bunch of individuals with different agendas. While we... we have a collective unit with a one purpose, one goal, one mission.

[Detson glares as he raises a finger to point directly at the camera.]

Detson: Destroy each and every last one of you! So you don't need to worry about winning.

[Detson shakes his head.]

Detson: Because winning in this war is if we let you...

[Detson closes his eyes and sighing deeply letting the last word come out as he exhales.]

Detson: ...survive.

[Detson opens his eyes, burning a hole through the camera as he glares at it before walking out of the shot...

...and then we crossfade to the ring where Phil Watson is standing.]

PW: The following tag team contest is scheduled for one fall with a fifteen minute time limit. Introducing first ... at a combined weight of 507 pounds ... JP Driver and Alex Worthey!

[There's a small round of applause for the two wrestlers in a "We've heard of you before" manner. Both wrestlers raise their hands in the air to acknowledge the crowd and try to get a bigger reaction.]

PW: And their opponents ...

PA: We `ome!

[The lights cut out.]

GM: Uh oh.

BW: These guys creep me out, Gordo. And it's not just the homeless thing - although hobos are some freaky creepy creatures.

GM: We apologize for Bucky's generalizing of homeless people.

[“Strange Fruit” plays over the PA speakers. The lights flash on again and Worthey and Driver find themselves surrounded by Henri LaMarques, Unique Allah and the crazy homeless-looking priestess, Poet. Poet raises a chalice before them and shrieks insanely to the sky.]

GM: What in the...?

[JP Driver and Alex Worthey look back and forth at the individuals surrounding them...

...and then lunge into action, throwing punches at Dirt Dog Unique Allah and Henri LaMarques as Poet makes her way out to the floor

GM: The Walking Dead have been making erratic and bizarre appearances on AWA television for months now. And this is their first appearance actually competing in the ring.

BW: I still don't understand what happened to the Hive but since they tangled with the Walking Dead, no one has heard anything from them.

GM: Poet, the priestess of this weird cult has their masks. That's all I know. I don't know what it would take for the Hive to give those up.

BW: Could be we're about to find out.

[In the ring, the flying fists of Driver and Worthy seem to have little affect as the Dead absorb the blows. Finally, Poet lifts her chalice again and screams.]

BW: Sheesh, can someone make her stop doing that? Sends a chill right up my spine, Gordo.

[But the scream seems to "signal" the Dead, bringing them to life with blows of their own. The smaller Allah peppers Worthey with fast rights and lefts as his much larger partner simply grabs Driver around the neck with two hands, hurling him back into the corner.]

GM: Henri LaMarquez gets Driver in the corner, hammering away with rights and lefts to the body that are just shaking Driver to his core. He's getting pummeled by the big man!

BW: And he's not defending himself at all, Gordo.

GM: He's certainly not. Get in there, referee! Get this monster out of the corner!

BW: Longfellow looks like he's smelling a corpse in there. He's terrified to even speak to LaMarques!

[A huge uppercut from LaMarques sends Driver over the top rope, crashing down to the floor in a heap. A satisfied LeMarques settles back to his corner, temporarily restoring order as Unique Allah stomps Worthey repeatedly.]

GM: We get down to a one-on-one finally as Unique Allah squares off with Alex Worthey.

BW: I remember Allah. He's been around for a while. I remember him from back in Portland and Los Angeles. He had that crazy match with Petrow back in Toronto. But he looks different to me, Gordo. He's moving weird.

GM: Well, he's notorious for competing with the "drunken style." He likes to keep his opponents off balance with a staggering, stumbling style.

BW: But this is different, Gordo. Watch him. He's not stumbling or staggering. It's more like he's ... lurching?

[Indeed, Allah whips Worthy into his corner and follows him in. There is a hesitation to his gait as he moves awkwardly, leaping up and connecting with a drop kick to Worthy's chin.]

GM: Big impact on the dropkick in the corner!

[Allah lands on his back and stays there for a few moments before he folds from the waist and sits up, dragging himself to his feet to make the tag to LaMarques.]

GM: Their movements are unnatural.

BW: It's like it's taking a little longer for their bodies to react to their thoughts, Gordo.

GM: Like they're the Walking Dead?

BW: Guess they got named right.

[LaMarques drags Worthey to his feet and hoists him in the air and tosses him out of the corner with a biel throw!]

GM: Oh my! A whole lot of power on display right there as he hurled Worthey out of the corner...

[He squats into an athletic stance and lurches out of his corner with an explosive clothesline that turns Worthey inside out. Worthey turns a 360 in the air and lands in a heap on the canvas.]

GM: GOOD GOD ALMIGHTY! What a clothesline!

BW: There's still a lot of strength behind that man, Gordo. When a hoss like that hits you it hurts on impact and it hurts on landin', daddy.

GM: The big man of the team, Henri LaMarques, tags Unique Allah back in...

[Desperately trying to help his partner, JP Driver reaches over the ropes and slaps his hand.]

GM: JP Driver tags himself back in!

BW: That doesn't seem very bright.

GM: He's trying to help his partner, Bucky!

[Driver comes in fast, charging at Allah who drops into a baseball slide, staggering up to his feet. Driver spins around, coming back into a clothesline that takes him down...

...immediately followed by a legdrop down across the chest!]

GM: Ohh! Hard-hitting combo by Dirty Dog Unique Allah!

[Allah pauses a moment, rubbing at the scar that disfigures his belly. His face grows lax as he extends a hand and tags out to LaMarques again.]

GM: Another tag is made as Allah seems to be out of sorts here.

[Allah immediately drags himself towards Poet, reaching through the ropes with his cupped hand. Poet pours red liquid from the chalice into his hand and Allah drinks thirstily. After a few moments, he bounces to his feet with more energy than before.]

GM: What is in that cup that Poet carries?

BW: Gordo, I don't speak madman so I got no clue, but from what I deciphered last week is that she's crazy, he's crazy and the big guy is crazy. Why the hell would you ask me what's in that cup? I didn't fill it. I wouldn't drink none of it. I don't want nothin' to do with it.

[Inside the ring, LaMarques grabs Driver by his feet.]

GM: Oh, this can't be good.

[LaMarques gets a grip on the legs, hoisting Driver off the mat where he begins spinning around and around and around in a Giant Swing...]

GM: Look at the power! JP Driver is not a small man and-

[LaMarques releases, allowing Driver to crash to the canvas in the corner. The plodding big man tags in Unique.]

GM: Another quick tag by the big man. There's some excellent team work in there, Bucky... some quick tags.

BW: Look out here, Gordo.

GM: Allah's scaling the ropes, stepping up top...

[He leaps off his perch, crashing down with a sitdown splash on the chest of the prone Driver!]

GM: Ohh! That's gotta be it!

[Allah grabs Driver's right leg, cranking on it as the official gratefully counts the pin.]

"DING! DING! DING!"

[Phil Watson seems ready to make it official when suddenly the lights cut out.]

GM: What in the world...? The match is over and-

[A few moments pass before the lights come back on, leaving no sign of the Walking Dead...

...or JP Driver.]

GM: Oh my stars.

BW: What the-?! Where the heck did he go?!

[Crawling back into the ring, Alex Worthey looks around frantically, shouting his long-time partner's name.]

GM: Alex Worthey is distraught! Where did the Walking Dead go? And did they take JP Driver with them?!

BW: This is just like what happened to The Hive, Gordo! They took them away and we've never seen them again!

GM: Alex Worthey is heading to the back... he's gotta find his partner!

[Worthey heads up the aisle, shouting "JP!" over and over again with a bewildered and concerned expression on his face.]

GM: I haven't got the slightest idea what's going on here but I don't like it... I don't like it one bit, Bucky.

[Fade to black.

Words appear across the screen, accompanied by the sounds of a type writer.

"This advertisement was brought to you by ACHILLES."

And then we fade into a single lone chair in front of an enormous wall of screens and monitors. Every one is tuned to it's own discordant frequency. Some show old cartoons. Others show late evening infomercials. A John Wayne movie. A Korean gun battle. A ninja movie. Godzilla. Each one it's own little palette of color and noise.

The black leather chair turns. And there, sitting on it, legs crossed... is November. He wears a leather jacket over a shirtless body, tight black jeans and thick black boots.]

N: The AWA needs leadership and in the Lords year of two thousand fourteen there is only one way to effectively rule. And I, November, leader of ACHILLES, international hero and idol to all can be that leader. NAY... I _am_ that leader.

[His fingers remain steeped under his chin.]

N: For I am willing to put _this_ boot down...

[And he does.]

N: ...and make... you... all... HEEL!

[He stands up to his full height, turning towards the screens, hands crossed behind his back. Those screens come to life, each a showcase of his career.]

N: November. For President.

[Fade back to black...

We crossfade to Mark Stegglet standing in the ring.]

MS: Ladies and gentlemen, joining me at this time is a man who set the wrestling world on fire after his impassioned battle cry that ended the last Saturday Night Wrestling. Please welcome, Eric Preston!

#THIS!

#IS!

#SURVIVAL OF THE FITTEST!

[The beginning to "Survival" by Eminem blares but is enveloped in cheers by the Memphis crowd, who erupt at the sight of Preston. Eric is dressed in wrestling tights and boots with a "Blood, Sweat and Tears" shirt over top, and as the crowd pays their respect, Preston returns in kind, holding up both arms, pointing back at the crowd and egging them on. He walks down the aisle after a few seconds and ducks into the ring, holding up a hand to quiet the crowd down as Stegglet speaks.]

MS: Eric, it has been a whirlwind two weeks. After the events of the last Saturday Night Wrestling, what is going through your head?

EP: Two weeks ago was a defining moment.

And when a defining moment comes along, either you define the moment or the moment defines you.

Ryan Martinez and Brian James were having a great match, a heck of a match, and in the blink of an eye all hell breaks loose. Dogs of War, Johnny Detson, the Russian, Brad Jacobs. And then it's Hannibal Carver, it's Callum Mahoney, it's Supreme Wright. People I don't talk to, people I'm not buddies with, but guys who have been screwed over and done dirty just the same. People who won't stand for it anymore.

And that energy, Mark, the roar of the people, the passion and the emotion, not just inside the ring but out... I'll never forget it. It'll stay with me until I'm old and grey, until I'm hooked up to tubes and oxygen tanks.

The _people_ are ready for a change, the boys in the back are ready for a change, WE are READY for CHANGE!

[Preston punctuates every other word by slamming his hand down, and then looks to the crowd as they fire up.]

EP: So I defined the moment. I drew the line in the sand. We're going to make history at Guts & Glory, Mark Stegglet, mark my words.

MS: And what do you have to say-

[Before he can finish, Preston puts his hand over the mic and then grabs it.]

EP: Before you go any further, I gotta say something. To the people who have stayed with me, who have allowed me to earn back your trust and your respect, who have our backs when we're fighting the good fight and doing things the right way, who bring that energy and that emotion in the heat of the fight...

...I gotta tell ya that I love you too.

To the people who wake up every morning, who put their hard hats on and pack their lunch, who work their hands to the bone to feed their family, and then plunk down your hard earned money to come watch us wrestle, it's a privilege and an honor to lace up these boots in front of ya.

[Preston pauses for a moment as the crowd cheers and claps, and someone shouts out "WE LOVE YOU GUYS TOO!"]

EP: I know ya do, brother, right back at ya.

Why do you think this hits home with the fans, Mark? Because we've all been there. We've all busted our humps at our job, worked like a dog because we knew there was a light at the end of the tunnel, because we knew that our hard work would be rewarded... and when the time came to claim what was ours, to get that bonus or that promotion or that World Title match, we never got it. We never got what we DESERVE.

Because there was backroom politics involved. Power plays behind the scenes, people pullin' strings and cuttin' checks so that the workers, like US, like YOU, get the short end of the stick.

Well, I never liked politicians, I don't trust 'em as far as I could throw 'em, and Lord knows no one can throw Percy Childes very far. So we're gonna take care of business on July 4, we're gonna send these Wise Men packin' and--

[Just then, "Milk of Human Kindness" by Clutch plays.]

BW: Is this going to turn into a lovefest now?

GM: I don't believe so, Carver has made no secret of his feelings about Eric Preston... but certainly that's in the past after what transpired last time.

BW: Anything's possible with this maniac!

[Carver walks down the aisle, almost absentmindedly acknowledging the fans as his focus is quite clear. He never takes his eyes off of Preston for a second, even looking up as he steps through the ropes as to not break the gaze. He calls for a microphone and steps just inches away from Preston before speaking.]

HC: It goes without saying that I've got no problem with everything you just said. Even moreso, I don't have a problem with what you said last time around and with yeh rallying the troops.

The thing is?

[Carver looks at Preston dead in the eyes.]

HC: I do have a problem with YOU.

[A shocked and mixed reaction from the crowd, as they all like both men but Carver's declaration of hostility definitely doesn't sit right with a good portion of them.]

BW: What'd I tell you, Gordo?!

GM: This could get ugly in a heartbeat, neither man is anyone to be taken lightly.

HC: These people might be surprised, but I can at least respect yeh for not showing any shock on yer face. I've made it known to yeh and to everyone.

What yeh've done, I don't like it. I don't like yeh running with Bobby when I think yer a snake in the grass... and I don't buy yer "redemption". Nothing wrong with that, I can't stand a whole lotta folks. Hell, there's whole locker rooms full of them.

[Carver smirks before continuing.]

HC: The thing is? That can't happen. This war, it's way too big. Too big for personal gripes to get in the way of the good work that we all know MUST be done.

Now we could sit here and hem and haw... work out our problems like rational adults.

But that ain't really me. Yeh see because if I got a problem?

[Carver looks to the crowd and grins.]

HC: I punch it in the face until its gone.

[BIG cheers for the tease of a match between these two.]

HC: So what do yeh say, Preston? How about we settle this like men, and at the end we leave whatever problems we had going into this on the battlefield? How about we get a zebra out here to call for the bell... and we work out our problems right in this ring... RIGHT NOW?

[Carver drops the mic to the canvas, kicking it out of the ring and steps back... raising his arms up in an almost crucifixion pose and moving his fingers back and forth in the universal sign for "bring it".]

MS: A match right now, can we-? Can we do that?

[Preston takes his shirt off and throws it out of the ring, then grabs the microphone from Stegglet.]

EP: Let's send someone out here and do this. Mark, Gordon, Bucky, do us a favor and send word back.

[The crowd roars as Preston turns to the back and waves for someone to come down, and as the camera goes to a wide shot a referee can be seen jogging out on the far right hand of the screen. The crowd cheers and both wrestlers start to loosen up.]

GM: Fans, we've got to go to commercial and we'll figure this all out. Don't you dare go away!

[Fade to black.]

Open to a finely set dinner table in an upscale restaurant, as soft classical music is playing. Tuxedoed servers are hustling and bustling, bringing finely polished silver trays of food to tables. The camera zooms in on one table,

where one person stuffs a napkin into his collar and picks up his fork and knife...

...Bucky Wilde.]

BW: Ya know, daddy, I been everywhere in this sport of ours, and I seen 'em all. I know what it takes to be a top guy, I know what it takes to keep them turnstiles movin' and keep them cash registers ringin'.

I've seen the best technical wrestlers of all time, I've seen the highest flyers that've ever lived, I've seen the most powerful human beings to ever walk the face of the Earth!

But when it comes down to it, we all wanna see the same thing...

[The last waiter comes and sets down the kind of plate you'd see for a gigantic bird or maybe a small dinosaur. With a finely manicured hand the waiter takes off the lid of the obviously gourmet meal...

...and reveals the newest AWA DVD! AWA's Best Grudge Matches!]

BW: ...a good fight!

[The scene goes from Bucky in the restaurant to clips of some of the AWA's most famous fights, as Bucky narrates.]

BW: AWA's Best Grudge Matches is gonna bring to you the most intense, the most personal battles we've ever seen. Fifteen matches in high definition, with yours truly and my main man Gordo on the call. And even better, I'm your host!

[The shot switches to the intense staredown between Calisto Dufresne and City Jack.]

BW: It was nothing but high drama and emotion when Calisto Dufresne and City Jack squared off, I guarantee you that.

[Switch to a much younger Eric Preston pulling back on James Monosso in their famous Towel Match.]

BW: Or maybe you wanna relive Eric Preston and James Monosso goin' toe to toe in a towel match, with nothin' but pride and sanity on the line!

[Switch to the Southern Syndicate huddled outside the massive WarGames structure, with Juan Vasquez looking across the ring, the crowd in the background frenzied.]

BW: And what would a DVD about grudge matches be without WarGames? The Southern Syndicate in all their glory, daddy, standin' across the ring against Juan Vasquez and his all star team. What a match it was! And for you completist fans, we've got the first ever AWA WarGames, featurin'

names you haven't heard in a long time, like Werewolf Gregorson and Despair!

It's all here, baby, all the matches that made your hair stand up. Alex Martinez and the Dragon, William Craven!

[Cut to that barbed wire match, both have been punctured.]

BW: The Lynches, the Beale Street Bullies, Broussard vs. Stevie in a Loser Leaves Town. Juan Vasquez and Dave Cooper puttin' it ALL on the line!

The tension, the emotion, the heartbreak, the sorrow. The pain, the blues and the agony! It's all right here, daddy. So get off the couch, run to your car, and go get you some!

[Cut back to Bucky in the restaurant, piece of meat on his fork.]

BW: Bring home the bacon today, daddy, and sink your teeth into the finest the AWA has to offer!

[As Bucky inhales his dinner, the camera fades to the DVD cover as a voice over plays.]

"AWA's BEST GRUDGE MATCHES is available at AWAsShop.com, Target, Wal-Mart, KMart and wherever DVDs are sold. Kids, get your parents permission!"

[Cut back to a shot of the ring.]

GM: Fans, we are back from commercial and substitute referee Ray Davis has just signaled for the bell! Eric Preston and Hannibal Carver are going to settle their issues right here, only a few days before Guts and Glory!

BW: This might be unWise, Gordo, that's all I'm saying. They oughta just head to a therapist like everyone else these days! They're gonna beat the Wise Men, but not until they beat the snot out of each other? Don't make sense to me, daddy, none at all.

[Davis signals for the bell, and the crowd buzzes as both men move to the center of the ring. Carver says a few words to Preston, who responds with a choice comment of his own and suddenly both men spring into action, locking up and battling for position. The bigger and stronger Carver takes control and backs Preston into the corner, but Preston uses his momentum and switches positions as both guys hit the buckle...]

GM: Preston releases and swings- right hand ducked by Hannibal Carver!

[Carver dodges underneath and lets the momentum of the missed right hand take Preston into the corner, where the Southie is ready to greet him.]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"
"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

BW: That's gonna leave a mark, daddy, and the bell just rang!

GM: Open hand slaps across the chest! Hannibal Carver is as physical a competitor as we have in the AWA!

BW: And Eric Preston better be ready to match it! Eric Preston is a classically trained wrestler, he's a technician, he's a ring general. Hannibal Carver is a fighter, daddy, the only speed he knows is kill. Something's gotta give, and we aren't about to see Carver bust out an Oklahoma roll, I'll tell you that!

[A left to the breadbasket doubles Preston over, and Carver sends him across the ring with an Irish whip. Carver follows in, looking for a clothesline, but the Combat Corner grad slips out of the way. Carver hits the turnbuckle chest first and staggers out from the energy transfer, where Preston is waiting and ready...]

GM: Biiiig powerslam by Eric Preston! There's some power, there's some explosion by Preston!

BW: So much for a feeling out process, Gordo, this here's a fight!

[Preston rolls away as Carver does the same a moment later. From across the ring, in opposite corners, both men jaw at each other, with Preston waving for Carver to bring it on and Carver obliging! The Boston Brawler rushes to the center of the ring, as does Preston and the two men unload fists on each other to the delight of the crowd!]

GM: We've got a brawl! We've got a brawl on our hands! Rights and lefts, upstairs, downstairs, Eric Preston and Hannibal Carver are letting it out right here on Saturday Night Wrestling!

BW: We might not get a winner here, Gordo, this ain't about wins and losses at all. Eric Preston has tried to convince the world that he's a changed man and Carver never bought it for a second! Carver darn near turned his career around because of his respect for James Monosso, the man Preston put in traction for the rest of his life! There ain't no way they can ever get along, it just isn't gonna happen!

[A well thrown forearm shiver stuns Preston and Carver backs him into the corner, then grabs Preston's head with both hands and HURLS him into the center of the ring. Preston scrambles to get to his feet and is getting to his knees JUST as Carver is barreling forward...]

GM: RUNNING KNEE TO THE SIDE OF THE HEAD! That's a Carver speciality, and it knocked Preston right out of the ring!

BW: And let's remember that earlier in his career, Eric Preston was plagued with concussion issues-

GM: Compliments of James Monosso.

BW: -so Lord knows what a move like that would do. It could scramble his eggs all over again.

[Preston regroups on the floor and Carver is right behind him, driving a forearm into the back and then a double axehandle right below the neck that puts Preston face first onto the barely-padded parking lot.]

GM: Hannibal Carver is dangerous, he is deadly! Of all the athletes in AWA, he's the one you LEAST want to be fighting on the outside!

BW: He's a maniac, I've been saying that for how long?!

[Another double axehandle keeps Preston flat on the ground, and Carver straightens up and looks to the crowd for a brief second. He goes to stomp on the back of Preston, but the alert Preston swings his lower body and kicks Hannibal's legs out from under him! Carver falls back first to the ground, and Preston springs to his feet!]

GM: Preston, back to his feet and he brings Carver with him! I think Carver hit the back of his head when he fell to the ground, Bucky, because he looks stunned for the moment.

BW: Not too much up there to stun if you ask me.

GM: Eric Preston now, throws Carver headfirst through the ropes, back into the ring, and it looks like Preston is taking a trip to the high rent district!

[Eric Preston gets to the top rope just as Carver gets to his feet, and as Hannibal turns around Preston flings himself off the top rope and amidst a sea of lightbulbs, hits a picture perfect cross body block! The crowd erupts for the high risk move and then keeps on cheering as Preston goes to town with fists to the head of Carver!]

GM: Eric Preston! Feverish right hands! Raining down blow after blow, forcing Carver to cover up but Preston will have none of it!

EW: Preston's got a lot to prove, daddy! You don't just appoint yourself the leader of men, you gotta prove your mettle. It ain't just a one way street on Carver's end!

[Preston sneaks a left hand in to the cheek that visibly stuns the Boston Brawler, and then yanks him up to a standing position. Carver goes for the ride and on the rebound he sees that Preston has put his head down, anticipating a back body drop. Carver slows up and punts Preston right in the face, straightening him back to a vertical base.]

GM: Carver charges, clothesline- ducked by Preston!

[Preston spins around and grabs Carver around the waist, then rushes him to the ropes. Preston looks to spring back for a Rogers cradle, but Carver

holds on to the ropes and headfakes, sending Preston tumbling back. When the Combat Corner grad gets to his feet, Carver is in mid stride... and does not miss this time around.]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"OOOOOHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: My stars and garters! Tremendous lunging clothesline from Carver, and Eric Preston was darn near turned inside out!

BW: Preston flipped in the air but didn't stick the landing! Russian judges were NOT impressed, daddy! Hahaha!

[The clothesline from Carver was dead on, and for the first time in the match Preston does not spring back to his feet. Carver sees that Preston does not pop up and the Boston Brawler adjusts in kind, rolling his shoulders back a few times to loosen them up and then cracking his knuckles.]

GM: Hannibal Carver, my goodness, he knows he scored with that jarring clothesline, and he's stalking his prey.

BW: There was no feeling out period in this match, Gordo, it's been two guys swinging for the fences and letting it all hang out. But it don't take the head cashier at Wal-Mart to tell you that Carver was gonna win a brawl. Now he's about to take Eric Preston apart.

[Carver brings Preston to his feet, and walks him to the corner where he chickenwings Preston's left arm with his own, then grabs Preston's head with his right hand and RAMS his face into the near turnbuckle. Carver repeats the attack and then bashes a forearm into his lower back, then another and another. Carver lets go of Preston's arm and pushes him forward, then steps forward himself and snakes his right arm around Preston's collarbone, grabbing him across the face. With his left hand, he straightens out the left arm of Preston, and then spins around so he and Preston are facing out of the corner, and grapevines his leg...]

"THWAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

BW: Ouch! Yikes baby, that'll rearrange your spinal column.

GM: A side Russian legsweep into the corner by Hannibal Carver, continuing to work on that back.

[Preston on the mat, Carver takes a step back, throws his arms wide and falls forward with a headbutt. Carver gets back to his feet and repeats the process, this time hitting Preston right above the ear.]

GM: Pair of headbutts from Carver, here's the cover! One, two, Preston kicks out!

[Carver pushes Preston away from the corner, covers again and this time hooks the leg.]

GM: One, two, no sir, Eric Preston gets the shoulder out again.

[Hannibal Carver picks his opponent up and body slams him with ease, then measures him for a moment before jumping up and burying his boot between Preston's eyes. Preston pounds his right hand into the mat as he tends to his eye with his left, as Carver goes to the near ropes and waits...]

BW: Preston's gotta get outta dodge, daddy, he needs a timeout.

GM: There's no time outs in our sport and Eric Preston is well aware of that! But Preston's on the business end of a Hannibal Carver beating at the moment, and he's got to be thinking of a way to turn the tide here.

[Preston rolls to the corner and gets to his feet, blinking his eyes once or twice to make sure he can see, stumbling out of the corner, still on the ropes... not noticing Hannibal Carver bouncing off the ropes and gaining speed...]

BW: Carveeeeeer!

"WHAAAAAAAAAACK!"

GM: RUNNING BOOT TO THE SIDE OF THE HEAD! PRESTON GOES THROUGH THE SECOND AND THIRD ROPE TO THE OUTSIDE!

[Carver follows outside, staying perched on the ring apron as Preston tries to get up, getting to his hands and knees and crawling to the guardrail, using one hand and then the other to climb back up... and then falling back to the ground as Carver jumps off the apron and buries a double axehandle in between his shoulder blades!]

GM: Taking to the air is not usually in the Carver repertoire, but it was doubly effective.

BW: This is where Preston doesn't wanna be, he's back outside with Carver. He's gotta get it back in the ring, get off the defensive here. He can't brawl with Carver, that's for sure.

[The Boston Brawler stands Preston up and buries a right into his breadbasket, then an elbow to the back of the head. Another left to the ear sends Preston staggering around the corner as Carver follows in hot pursuit...]

GM: Here comes Carver, looking to take another shot- NO! Preston moves out of the way! Carver hits sternum first against the railing!

BW: That's the opening Preston was looking for! Let's see if he listens to Big Bucks!

[Preston turns Carver around and BLISTERS him with a chop across the chest, then rears back and drills him with a right hand! Another chop,

another right hand, another chop, another right hand, Preston alternates back and forth as the crowd gets louder and louder.]

GM: He's taking a page out of the Ryan Martinez playbook! Chop after chop, now it's Preston laying it in!

BW: Dig deep, young Preston, let's see what you got!

GM: Bucky, are you cheering for Eric Preston?!

BW: Not a chance, daddy, I just wanna see a fight! Just like these people, I wanna see the fists fly! I hope they beat the breaks off each other!

[Preston lays in another chop, then takes two steps back and rushes at Carver...

...who deftly bends over and backdrops Preston over the railing into the front row but Preston swings his legs around and lands on his feet!]

GM: Eric Preston lands the dismount this time! Carver turns around-

BW: BAM! Right to the face!

GM: Now it's Carver who tastes boot leather!

[The former Gamecock reaches down and grabs Carver by the head. Preston hooks for a suplex and goes to lift, his back facing the crowd.]

GM: He's trying to suplex him into the front row! This is getting increasingly dangerous out here in the parking lot!

[Carver grabs hold of the railing, blocking the lift and then breaks the front chancery with a headbutt. Carver throws a right hand that Preston blocks and once more the Combat Corner grad returns fire with a right hand that breaks Carver's tenuous hold.]

BW: That might have knocked some sense into Carver, or maybe knocked out a little more, depends on who you ask.

GM: It certainly buckled his knees. Preston leaps back over the railing, smashing a forearm down between the eyes!

[Carver stumbles back as Preston lands near the ropes, slamming his hands down on the ring apron. He turns back just as Carver regains his senses and charges, leaping into the air...

...where Preston catches him around the face, falling back and somehow dropping Carver throatfirst on the middle rope!]

GM: CARVER GOES THROAT FIRST! HOT SHOT BY ERIC PRESTON, CARVER CAN'T BREATHE!

[Carver puts both hands to his throat, trying hard to suck in oxygen and is easy pickings for Preston, who shoves Carver under the ropes into the ring. Preston bends over and sucks air for a second, then stands up and waves at the crowd with one hand, beckoning for more noise as he follows into the ring, where Carver is on one knee, crawling toward the corner. Once Carver gets to the corner, Preston takes flight and follows in with a flying avalanche, then spins around the Boston Brawler and goes back to work!]

GM: Big right hand from Eric Preston!

"WHAAAAAACK!"

BW: Followed up with a chop! Carver's head shot back from that!

[Now it's Preston who opens fire, lighting up the Boston Brawler with the hardest right hands and chops he's able to throw. A left to the side of the head and a knee to the midsection double Carver over, and Preston quickly brings him back up and rifles another chop off his chest.]

GM: Eric Preston, he took a beating and now he's dishing one out! These two guys are BOTH double tough, they're BOTH ready for war! It's been brutal from the word go, Bucky, now feeling out process, no slow start!

BW: This is the best release of aggression I've seen since Colt Patterson's alimony hearing!

GM: BUCKY! WOULD YOU PLEASE?!

[Preston now grabs Carver and sends him for the ride, but Carver plants his feet and reverses the momentum. Preston races to the corner and then jumps up onto the second, then pushes off the top rope with his right foot... the fans rise to their feet, knowing what's coming...

...and then watch as Hannibal Carver DRILLS Preston in the back right in the midst of his trademark jump back elbow! Preston SCREAMS in pain as he hits the mat, but he's being picked up a second later and hooked around the waist...]

GM: A back suplex by Carver, and my gosh did he plant him! What a shot from the Boston Brawler a moment ago, and everyone in the building heard Preston cry out in pain.

BW: Carver's a big man, but he's got an 8 cylinder engine, Gordo, lemme tell you. It takes him 7 or 8 minutes just to get warmed up.

[Carver brings Preston to his feet and without a moment to lose HURLS him into the corner, where Eric hits the buckle chestfirst and involuntarily bounces right back out. Carver is waiting and when Preston is within reach he hooks a rear waistlock and lets it fly...]

"THUUUUUUUUUUUUUD!"

GM: Tremendous, tremendous waistlock suplex by Carver, and now here's the cover! One! Two! Th- kickout by Preston at two and a quarter! Carver asks referee Ray Davis to make sure it was a good count, and I assure you it was.

BW: Who can blame him? The referees are just as crooked as some of the promoters anymore! It's the damn wild west in the AWA these days!

GM: Hannibal Carver, he bends over to grab Eric Pre- INSIDE CRADLE! ONE! TWO! T-NO NO, CARVER GOT OUT OF IT! PRESTON ALMOST STOLE ONE!

BW: A move made famous by the San Jose Shark, one of Preston's teachers! He just about laid a perfect trap, Gordo!

[Furious, Carver roars to his feet and bumrushes a slowly rising Preston, and then sends him for the ride. Carver takes two steps forward and bends for a back body drop, and a rebounding Preston nimbly leapfrogs over the attempt, then stops on a dime and turns around, grabbing Carver in a rear waistlock...]

GM: Waistlock from behind, can Preston return the favor from a moment ago? No! Carver breaks the hold and goes behind, grabbing a waistlock of his own! Swiftly into a full nelson!

[And with a grunt, Carver lifts Preston into the air and then jumps forward, sitting out and jamming Preston's entire body on impact!]

GM: That's the Dorchester Drop! Once again, immense damage done to the back and spinal column of Eric Preston!

[The Combat Corner graduate rolls onto his back, and Carver boots him in the side, forcing him onto his hands and knees. From there, Carver straddles his opponent...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

...and rattles his teeth with a crossface! And another! And another!]

GM: If this is how respect is earned inside the squared circle, I'm glad to be in the announce booth! Carver is pummeling Eric Preston with those blows across the face, absolutely rocking him with one after the other!

BW: He's beatin' him like he owes 'im money, Gordo, I'm getting jitters just watching it!

[As Carver connects with a crossface again, he reaches down and grabs Preston by his short black hair, making sure he can hear as he screams at him.

"C'mon Eric, yeh gotta show me somethin'! Show me what you got, whatta ya got, kid?"]

GM: Remember fans, these men will be TEAMMATES at Guts and Glory, but this is all animosity, this is all dislike!

[Carver registers one more crossface, then jumps up and jams all of his weight across the lower back and core of Preston. The Combat Corner grad goes down in a heap but has no chance to recover, as Hannibal Carver picks him back up and flings him into the near corner. Preston gets his arms up, protecting his head, and Carver leisurely walks to the corner, watching as Preston blows air upward out of his mouth, trying to get the sweat out of his eyes.]

GM: Eric Preston is hurting, he's in a bad way here, and Carver is just measuring him.

"WHAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

GM: Left to the midsection! Now a right to the kidneys and ribs! Another pointed right fist in the same location!

[Eric Preston crumbles to the corner, his hands cupping his side... then finds a burst of energy, and fires out with a right hand!]

BW: Preston with a right hand! Where's he finding the energy?

[Another right hand finds the mark, but there's considerably less force behind this one. A third right hand comes in from Preston, but it is looping and lacking any kind of velocity behind it. Carver easily ducks the wayward punch and drives a knee into the midsection of Preston, doubling him over once more. With one hand, the Boston Brawler turns Preston around and hooks him for another belly to back suplex... but at the height of the lift, Preston backflips out of it, and pushes Carver into the corner!]

GM: Carver goes chestfirst into the corner, but how much power was behind it?

BW: Not a lot, Gordo, not as much as Eric Preston needed.

[The shove moves Carver enough to give Preston a chance to think, and when Carver backs out from the corner, Preston dives forward and rams his shoulder right underneath the Southie's knee! Carver falls to the mat like a sack of bricks, uncharacteristically yelping in pain as Preston rolls away!]

GM: Oh my! Oh my! Eric Preston expertly clipped that knee and Hannibal Carver went down in a hurry!

BW: That's gonna drop even the toughest guy in the blink of an eye, daddy, a chop block done right will tear ligaments and keep surgeons busy for months!

[The Combat Corner grad gets up to his feet and finally takes a breather as Carver rolls on the canvas. Preston wipes the sweat streaming down his face and measures Carver, waiting for the opportune moment...]

BW: This is right in Preston's wheel house, daddy, this is just what he's looking for! Carver made a mistake, Preston was able to capitalize, and now it's time to pay the piper.

[Hannibal Carver gets to his feet, one hand on the ropes, and Preston sprints through and kicks him right in the back of the knee. Carver falls like a ton of bricks, and Preston is all over him...]

GM: Preston now, turns Carver onto his stomach and pins the knee to the mat with his foot... and then DRIVES it back down into the canvas! That CANNOT feel good!

BW: You don't know the half of it, Gordo, Carver's in a world of pain.

GM: Preston turns him back onto his back, Carver's facing up... and Eric Preston drives the point of his knee into the exposed thigh muscle! Now a kick, and another one, Preston's taking that leg out right in front of us.

BW: And you know what they say about a one legged man in a butt kickin' contest.

[A third kick goes right to the back of Carver's knee, and when Preston helps his opponent up, the Boston Brawler can barely stand. Now it is Preston who measures his prey, and a left to the gut doubles Carver over, a second before another kick to the back of the leg sends him crashing to the canvas.]

BW: I never thought I'd say this... but Eric Preston smells blood. And he's goin' to get him some.

[Now it's Preston's turn to provide some commentary, draping Carver's now injured leg over the bottom rope, then turning back to jaw at him:

"Here you go Hanny, just for you, kid!"

With that, Preston puts his right foot on the middle rope, bounces off and drops all of his weight downward, across the exposed leg of Carver.]

GM: That'll end your career right there! That'll blow out a knee! This is your teammate, Eric, think about what you're doing!

BW: Keep going! Go ahead, Preston, we all know your true colors!

GM: Both of these men have proven their point! I should think they've earned each other's respect! This has gone far enough, there could be serious damage done!

[Carver writhes on the mat, his leg in bad shape, as Preston goes across the ring and carefully climbs to the second rope. He takes a big breath and exhales, pauses for a second... then leaps off and drives his fist between the eyes of Hannibal Carver!]

GM: A big fist drop, and that will do it! One, two, thr- no no, Carver kicks out!

[The fans cheer at the bravery of Carver, as they did for Preston minutes ago.]

GM: Both men, maybe showing more guts than brains here-

BW: I have more toe jam than these two have brains!

GM: -taking one another to the limit right before our eyes. We ALL have to respect the mental toughness and intestinal fortitude on display here tonight.

[Preston is back on his feet as referee Ray Davis bends over to talk to Hannibal Carver. Davis asks Carver if he's going to give up, and Carver responds by shoving the referee out of his face, shouting for Preston to bring it on! Preston just nods his head in agreement, and once again scales the turnbuckle, perching on the second rope. The Combat Corner grad raises his fist up and then jumps off, looking to land another fistdrop...

...but hits nothing but canvas!]

GM: Carver rolled out of the way! The Boston Brawler still has more fight left in him! Carver drags himself to his feet, Preston charges- drop toe hold by Hannibal Carver!

BW: I'll be damned! I'd have lost money on that bet!

GM: Now it's Carver, kicking Preston with his one good leg, driving the point of his boot into his opponent's side! Carver now, brings Preston to one knee-headbutt to the midsection by Preston! Forearm across the back by Carver! Now another! And an elbow, right across the ear by Hannibal Carver! There's no quit in either man!

[Preston crawls away from Carver, using one hand to steady himself as he gets to his feet. Wobbly, extremely uneasily, Preston turns around, right into a forearm from Carver, who quickly hooks him for a suplex!]

GM: Suplex, maybe a brainbuster coming up! Carver, he lifts- NO NO! HIS KNEE GAVE OUT! PRESTON WITH THE PIN! ONE! TWO! THR- CARVER KICKS OUT! HANNIBAL CARVER GOT THE SHOULDER OUT AT TWO AND NINE TENTHS!

[Preston rolls off as Carver attempts to get to his feet, furious that he was in so much peril... he grabs the second rope, looking to stand straight up and in perfect position as Preston raises forward and DRIVES the top of his knee into his jaw!]

BW: NIGHTY NIGHT!

GM: ERIC PRESTON WITH THE DREAM MACHINE OUT OF NOWHERE! HERE'S THE COVER! ONE! TWO! THREEEEEE!!

[The bell is rung as Ray Davis raises Preston's hand in victory.]

GM: Wow! A hardfought battle by both of these men... and in the end, it's Eric Preston who manages to slip in the Dream Machine, that devastating kneelift which was all she wrote for Hannibal Carver, Bucky.

BW: A tough matchup and a big win for Eric Preston but you have to wonder now, can these two really co-exist as teammates after that match? I can't see how.

GM: Preston's on his feet, looking down at Carver. The referee's helping Carver up to a knee.

[Carver rubs his chin, looking up at Preston as Phil Watson makes it official over the PA system. With a handful of the referee's shirt, Carver drags himself to his feet.]

BW: Uh oh... we might not be done here, Gordo!

[... when Carver gets to his feet, stalking towards Preston.]

GM: Clearly word is quick to get to the back, because here comes the cavalry!

[Perhaps sensing things are about to break down in the ugliest of possible ways, Callum Mahoney and Ryan Martinez run down the ramp from the backstage area. Ready to restrain a raging Boston Brawler.]

BW: Well, I'll be...

[But end up not having to as Carver nods with an impressed look on his face... and extends his hand towards Preston for a handshake to a HUGE reaction from the crowd as well as the two wrestlers who have by now reached the ring.]

GM: He said he wanted to settle their differences in the ring here tonight, and Hannibal Carver is as good as his word!

[Preston, looking relieved that he doesn't have to be on the receiving end of more abuse from the Boston Brawler, returns the nod and shakes hands with Carver as the crowd EXPLODES. Carver raises Preston's hand, pointing to him and then to the crowd... urging them on to give all their support to Eric Preston as we fade to black.

Open to a finely set dinner table in an upscale restaurant, as soft classical music is playing. Tuxedoed servers are hustling and bustling, bringing finely polished silver trays of food to tables. The camera zooms in on one table, where one person stuffs a napkin into his collar and picks up his fork and knife...

...Bucky Wilde.]

BW: Ya know, daddy, I been everywhere in this sport of ours, and I seen 'em all. I know what it takes to be a top guy, I know what it takes to keep them turnstiles movin' and keep them cash registers ringin'.

I've seen the best technical wrestlers of all time, I've seen the highest flyers that've ever lived, I've seen the most powerful human beings to ever walk the face of the Earth!

But when it comes down to it, we all wanna see the same thing...

[The last waiter comes and sets down the kind of plate you'd see for a gigantic bird or maybe a small dinosaur. With a finely manicured hand the waiter takes off the lid of the obviously gourmet meal...

...and reveals the newest AWA DVD! AWA's Best Grudge Matches!]

BW: ...a good fight!

[The scene goes from Bucky in the restaurant to clips of some of the AWA's most famous fights, as Bucky narrates.]

BW: AWA's Best Grudge Matches is gonna bring to you the most intense, the most personal battles we've ever seen. Fifteen matches in high definition, with yours truly and my main man Gordo on the call. And even better, I'm your host!

[The shot switches to the intense staredown between Calisto Dufresne and City Jack.]

BW: It was nothing but high drama and emotion when Calisto Dufresne and City Jack squared off, I guarantee you that.

[Switch to a much younger Eric Preston pulling back on James Monosso in their famous Towel Match.]

BW: Or maybe you wanna relive Eric Preston and James Monosso goin' toe to toe in a towel match, with nothin' but pride and sanity on the line!

[Switch to the Southern Syndicate huddled outside the massive WarGames structure, with Juan Vasquez looking across the ring, the crowd in the background frenzied.]

BW: And what would a DVD about grudge matches be without WarGames? The Southern Syndicate in all their glory, daddy, standin' across the ring against Juan Vasquez and his all star team. What a match it was! And for you completist fans, we've got the first ever AWA WarGames, featurin' names you haven't heard in a long time, like Werewolf Gregorson and Despair!

It's all here, baby, all the matches that made your hair stand up. Alex Martinez and the Dragon, William Craven!

[Cut to that barbed wire match, both have been punctured.]

BW: The Lynches, the Beale Street Bullies, Broussard vs. Stevie in a Loser Leaves Town. Juan Vasquez and Dave Cooper puttin' it ALL on the line!

The tension, the emotion, the heartbreak, the sorrow. The pain, the blues and the agony! It's all right here, daddy. So get off the couch, run to your car, and go get you some!

[Cut back to Bucky in the restaurant, piece of meat on his fork.]

BW: Bring home the bacon today, daddy, and sink your teeth into the finest the AWA has to offer!

[As Bucky inhales his dinner, the camera fades to the DVD cover as a voice over plays.]

"AWA's BEST GRUDGE MATCHES is available at AWAsShop.com, Target, Wal-Mart, KMart and wherever DVDs are sold. Kids, get your parents permission!"

[We cut back from commercial to find a clip of JW Hardin hitting a Cattlebuster. The clip changes to show different legendary competitors hitting their signature moves as a voiceover begins.]

"JW Hardin... Steve Kowalski... Tiger Claw... Steve Spector... Caleb Temple... Serge Annis... you could name names all day."

[The screen continues to show highlights of main wrestling promotion shows over the last twenty years, featuring the names mentioned and more.]

"What do all these men have in common? They all reached the pinnacle of this sport. They all reached the top. Champions, all. And more importantly, they all shifted the paradigm. All of them changed the way we saw wrestling. All of them stepped it up, put on shows, tore down houses, and during the most turbulent time in wrestling history, they changed the game. You adapted to what they brought to the table, or you were left in the dust.

Next week, it happens again."

[The scene shifts to show clips from the Combat Corner where a fairly tall, well built wrestler appears in all, hitting his fellow students with various suplexes.]

"My name... is Derrick Williams. I study my history, I was trained by champions... to become a champion.

Next week, I'm coming to AWA.

And I'm coming... to CHANGE THE GAME!"

[The camera cuts back to the ring, where Phil Watson stands at the ready, mic in hand. A young African American man stands behind him wearing full-length black tights with thick red stripes running down each side, black boots, and black athletic gloves that go almost to the elbow.]

PW: Ladies and gentlemen, the following contest is scheduled for one fall, with a ten minute time limit. Introducing first, already in the ring and hailing from Arlington, Virginia and weighing in at 261 pounds...

RASHAAAAAAAAAAN HIILLLLLLL!

[The crowd responds with a light scattering of applause]

PW: And his opponent, hailing from Allentown, Pennsylvania and currently residing in Miami, Florida...weighing in at 215 pounds...

"SHOWTIME" RICK MARLEY!

[The arena lights dim as laser lights begin to play around the roof of the arena for a five count. Suddenly, a pair of white pyro bursts set in time with the bass drum light up the entry way as the remainder of "Saints of Los Angeles" by Motley Crue floods the PA system. As the audience's eyes adjust to the light level again, they see "Showtime" Rick Marley standing at the top of the ramp with his back to the crowd. The dark haired cruiserweight is wearing a leather biker jacket festooned with LED lights running up the sleeves and down the back, where they reveal script that reads "Simply The Best".

Under the jacket, the fair skinned light heavyweight has his dark hair slicked back and wears a midnight blue set of long legged trunks with the word "Showtime" stitched across the butt. White spotlights trail up from his black boots and cascade up the pant legs. Turning around and holding his arms up over his head to soak in the (negative) reaction from the fans in attendance before he pumps his fists and starts his way down to the ring. The normally chatty Marley is silent as he marches down to the ring, his eyes locked on Rashan Hill as he approaches.

GM: This is not the animated Rick Marley that we normally see on the way down to the ring, Bucky.

BW: After the conversation that he had with Percy earlier tonight, I'm surprised he's even out here at all, daddy. Percy Childe is the only thing that's made Ricky Marley even moderately noteworthy for the past year or more... if he says you need to prove yourself, you need to prove yourself. End of story.

"DING! DING! DING!"

GM: Here's the bell...and Marley seems to disagree.

BW: He's been wrong before, and I'm sure he'll be wrong again.

[Marley and Hill circle each other for a moment before they move towards each other, Hill going for a collar and elbow tie up, which Marley fakes, then quickly drops and hits a drop toe hold that sends Hill crashing to the mat.]

GM: Nice takedown right out of the gate by Rick Marley who may not feel like he needs to prove anything to Percy Childes but perhaps he's looking to prove something to himself here tonight.

[Hill is quickly back up to his feet and charging Marley, only to get caught with an armdrag take down. Hill back to his feet a third time and charges...with the same result.]

GM: Pair of armdrags by "Showtime" Rick Marley keeping Rashan Hill off-balance as Hill gets back up... look at this!

[Marley charges in, leaping up, and taking Hill down with a flying headscissors that sends the larger man rolling out of the ring to the floor.]

GM: Oh! What a rapid fire series of moves from Rick Marley! And Rashan Hill is out on the floor already in this one.

BW: Hill doesn't seem to know which end is up after that last bit, Gordo!

GM: Marley showing his lucha libre roots on that one. He may not be as good as he thinks he is in the eyes of many but when's he's got a mind to, Rick Marley can put on a heck of a show.

[After a few moments of recovery time, Hill rolls back into the ring where Marley is waiting with a boot to the back of the head.]

GM: Marley catches him coming back in, dragging him up to his feet now by the hair...

[He fires Hill towards the ropes, racing to the opposite ropes himself, and coming back with a flying forearm that drops the bigger man down to the mat.]

GM: Whoa! Lots of momentum on that forearm...

BW: Marley's dragging Hill towards the corner, trying to get him in position for something.

[That "something" is revealed when Marley leaps up into the air, splitting his legs to bounce off the top rope into a backflip, and catching Hill squarely across the torso!]

BW: SPLIT-LEGGED MOONSAULT AND A BEAUTY!

[Marley stays in the lateral press, shouting, "HOW DO YOU LIKE THAT?!" as the referee delivers a two count.]

GM: Two count only but that can't take away from the impressive showing from "Showtime" Rick Marley so far in this one. Marley looks downright driven in the ring tonight, Bucky.

BW: Can't really say I blame him. He got called on the carpet by Percy Childes earlier tonight. Childes wouldn't let him captain the team for Guts & Glory... heck, he wouldn't even let him ON the team. He put him in a singles match against the always-dangerous William Craven and essentially said that Marley has to take Craven out to prove himself. He's gotta take that maniac out?! What happens if he doesn't?!

[Marley doesn't argue the close count with the official for once, firing a couple of shots to the forehead of Hill before bringing the bigger man to his feet in a front facelock...

...and rushes towards the corner, running up the ropes while holding the facelock, spinning out, and DRIVING Hill right down on top of his flat top haircut!]

GM: OHHH! ABSOLUTELY DEVASTATING!

[Marley sits up, looking down at Hill and shaking his head before he climbs to his feet. He leans against the ropes, looking out at the booing crowd with a frown.]

BW: What in the world is he doing, Gordo?

GM: I'm not entirely sure but if Rick Marley is looking for approval from the fans, I'm afraid that boat sailed a long time ago... right around the time he hit his Casting Call Superkick on The Sultan.

[Marley turns back towards the slowly recovering Hill and brings him to his feet, hitting a series of right hands to the head before placing him in a side headlock.]

GM: We've seen this before.

[Marley rushes the ropes, leaping over the top to SNAP Hill's throat down on the top rope before snapping him back down to the canvas.]

GM: Good grief! That was unnecessary and uncalled for, Bucky!

BW: Looks like Marley is out to prove himself here, Gordo. Percy's lit a fire in him and Marley's gonna hurt someone, daddy.

GM: Rashan Hill doesn't deserve to lose his career just because Rick Marley had a disagreement with his manager about his perceived place in the pecking order! Look at him grab his neck...that could have done permanent damage!

[Marley is on the move and ignoring referee Davis Warren while Hill tries to draw breath in spite of the damage to his throat. Instead of going into the ring, "Showtime" hops up the apron, then to the top rope...and flies...nailing the gasping Rashan Hill with The Highlight Reel tuck Senton Bomb only moments after Hill's back had hit the mat.]

GM: What an impact on The Highlight Reel, Bucky!

BW: This one's over, daddy... but for Rashan Hill, I'm not sure it ever really got started...

GM: Here's Davis Warren with the count...

[Warren makes a mercifully quick three count before calling for the bell.]

"DING! DING! DING!"

PW: Here is your winner... "SHOOOOWTIME" RIIIIICK MAAAAARLEY!

[Marley stands and looks irritated still as Davis Warren raises his hand in victory... then motions for the microphone from Phil Watson.]

GM: What in the world is he doing?

BW: I don't know but it seems like he's got something on his mind.

[Marley stands, looking out into the sea of faces in the crowd as boos cascade down on him, then nods.]

RM: So, what do you think? Do you feel like I've got something to prove?

[The crowd responds with a massive round of boos and jeering while Marley looks out into it and nods.]

RM: See, that's what I thought. If you DID think that...if you actually BELIEVED that I had to prove something at this point, you'd have sat on your hands. You'd have been quiet as a church mouse...not screaming yourselves hoarse.

So...that leaves me to wonder how in the world someone else...someone in this business...someone that I've let guide my steps for...well...longer than was obvious to anyone else...how can THAT guy think that I've got something to prove?

Am I delusional, or is Percy?

BW: I know where MY money is...

[The crowd... is confused. They'd like to hate Marley some more, but hating Percy instead seems like a good option too...]

RM: William Craven is a big, scary, dangerous guy...

BW: And stupid. Crazy...

GM: Will you stop?

[The crowd cheers at Marley's mention of the Kooky Quartet member...he looks up, shakes his head, chuckles and continues.]

RM: He's a guy that's put me on the shelf before...

[Louder cheers at the thought of Marley getting hurt.]

RM: He's a guy whose fingers I had to break to beat him in a cage match... he's a guy who I THOUGHT I'd beaten again recently, only to find out that some twerp had held onto his leg to hold him down...

[Boos at the mention of Marley's tainted win over Craven.]

RM: At Guts and Glory, it'll be me and him, one on one...and the marching orders I've got are to take him out. Finish him off.

The Unholy Alliance...the Wise Men...

[Massive boos at the mention of both.]

RM: ...they feel like he's in the way, and it's my job to make sure it gets done.

[Marley pauses.]

RM: Thing is, I really wanted to see him wake up.

Back in October when I slapped him backstage THAT'S what I wanted.

This punch drunk idiot that's been wandering around like a lost puppy isn't William Craven...not the William Craven that I fought.

Not the William Craven I BEAT.

THAT Craven was a monster. He was a beast. He kept coming, no matter what. It took everything that ANYONE had to even slow him down, but less stop him...but I did.

I put him down.

This Craven?

He's like a kitten that's been de-clawed. A snake that's been defanged.

Homogenized. Neutered.

Pathetic.

BW: Wow...I don't think he likes how Craven's acting very much.

[Marley pauses as the crowd boos loudly.]

RM: The sad thing is that you know its as true as I do.

The farce that's been wandering in and out of AWA rings for the past year is NOT William Craven.

So if I do what Percy wants...all I'm really doing is protecting his legacy and preventing further damage.

The old Craven could stop me...but the new one has no chance.

[Marley looks out into the booing crowd and nods.]

RM: You're right. It's better to end him before things get worse for him... before people remember him for the clown he is instead of the beast he was.

[Marley nods, though he's still frowning, and his expression still looks troubled.]

RM: Percy's right about one thing: I'm the guy to do it...and you can take that to the bank.

[Marley tosses the mic back to Phil Watson and heads to the back through a cloud of booing.]

GM: Marley offered strong words, but he doesn't seem like a guy that's feeling confident in his convictions.

BW: He's questioning orders from Percy Childes, Gordo...and that never leads to a good place.

GM: Could he be having an attack of conscience?

BW: Does Rick Marley HAVE one of those? He's done some terrible things... and this is ME saying this.

GM: That's true...but it looks like...maybe he's having second thoughts, Bucky.

BW: Percy will straighten him back out. You watch.

GM: Well, we'll see at Guts & Glory... but something... or someone that we almost DIDN'T see at Guts & Glory is Travis Lynch who suffered a horrific assault at the hands of The Lost Boy two weeks ago.

BW: Assault?! It was a fight he agreed to! It's not the Lost Boy's fault that Lynch got all choked up!

GM: Oh, would you stop?! Our own Jason Dane is standing by to get some comments from the man himself, Travis Lynch!

[Once again, we cut to the makeshift interview area where Jason Dane is standing. The camera focus on Jason for a few moments before pulling back and the cheers from the ladies of Memphis can be heard.]

JD: These cheers are not for me. They are for my guest at this time, Travis Lynch.

[Travis, attired in a pair of blue jeans, ostrich cowboy boots and a super smedium black tank top, places his hand on the shoulder of Jason and smiles for a moment.]

JD: Travis, let's just get right to it. Earlier tonight, we heard Sunshine say she wanted the world with one less Lynch in it.

TL: She nearly got her wish, Jason. Last Saturday Night Wrestling, the Lost Boy did exactly what the harpy wanted. He beat my tail all over the arena just like he has done before ... but this time he wasn't facing an eighteen year old rookie. He wasn't expecting me to dish it right back and you could see the fear in Sunshine's eyes when she realized the Lost Boy wasn't going to get the job done.

And that's the reason she ordered him to grab the camera cable and wrap it around my throat.

[The camera zooms in and focuses upon the neck of Travis, where yellowish-brown ligature marks are visible. The camera continues to focus on the ligature marks as Travis resumes speaking.]

TL: As I tried to pry the cable from my throat, all I could hear was her joyous cackling...

[As Travis pauses, the camera pulls back bringing both Travis and Jason back into frame. Travis looks down at the ground for a long moment before running his hands through his dirty blonde hair.]

JD: Travis?

TL: That cackling just echoed in my ears, as a vision of James in the hospital filled my mind... and then i could only picture Ma and the old man standing by James' side. With the cable still around my throat, I continued to gasp for each individual breath, I saw Jack graspin' his throat ... and still the harpy's cackling rang in my ears.

Who knows what would have happened if Air Strike and Sweet Daddy Williams didn't come rushing down when they did ... but I would never have forgiven myself if that cackling were the last sounds I ever heard.

[Travis again runs his hands through his hair.]

JD: We've all seen how Sunshine has been a thorn your family's side and there doesn't seem to be an end in sight for you, Travis.

TL: Oh no Jason, there will be an end. This thing with the Lost Boy and myself, it's been goin' for eight long years now and it's time for it to be laid to rest.

[Cheers can be heard coming from the fans inside the makeshift arena.]

TL: Sunshine, you told everyone you want the chance to end me once and for all. Well, I'll be at Guts and Glory, so bring your beast, Sunshine, and let's see if it has any guts!

JD: Travis! Are you kidding me? He nearly hanged you!

TL: I WAS hanged, Jason. Not once but twice by that escapee from the looney bin and I'll be damned if I don't finish it once and for all! And Sunshine, I want you to watch as your hired beast is beaten pillar to post, just like your prized Beale Street Bullies were! I want you to realize that when Jack and I told you to stay away it was the best advice ever for you.

JD: In a way though, Travis, in her mind it probably wasn't. I mean she's claiming that her newfound wealth is all because of the #ScumbagTravis movement.

[A look of indignation comes across the face of Travis, he exhales deeply before speaking again.]

TL: You know something, Jason. Sunshine has spent too long profiting off of the suffering on my family. She claimed to love James, said she wanted to spend every waking moment with him ... and then she betrayed him for the Bullies! As James was lyin' in the hospital bed, wondering if he was going to be able to walk, do you know what she was doing, Jason? Sunshine was drinking champagne with the Bullies and laughing about what they did to James.

[Travis shakes his head in disgust.]

TL: Let's not forget that Sunshine is now selling those disgusting T-shirts. But what's more heinous than those T-shirts is the fact she has the audacity to claim the proceeds are going to a battered woman... Sunshine, I never laid a finger on you and you know it! The fact is after the Bullies left you slumped behind a dumpster, you needed to be in the limelight, so just like you did to James... you lied!

You spread a vicious lie that only the lowest of the low believed.

[Jason coughs but you can clearly hear the name Bucky as he coughs once again.]

TL: Yet, the T-shirts weren't enough for you, Sunshine... 'cause in that bleached blonde head of yours, you truly believed the lie... believed it to the

point that you hired the Lost Boy to do the dirty work. And what did hiring him cost you, Sunshine? Ten minutes of what you do best in the back seat?

[Jason looks a bit stunned at Travis' last comment.]

JD: Travis, this is a family-

[Travis angrily interrupts.]

TL: Well, no more. I'm sick and tired of it, Sunshine. Tired of the lyin', tired of you dragging my name through the mud, tired of you living off of my family's suffering. Jack and the old man put an end to your Bullies and I will personally put the final nail in your coffin!

[Travis slaps Jason on the back and walks off screen.]

GM: The challenge has been issued!

BW: And you better believe that Sunshine will accept on behalf of her man. We WILL see Travis Lynch vs The Lost Boy at Guts & Glory, Gordo.

GM: With each match officially announced for Guts & Glory, you have to wonder which one "Big" Jim Watkins will choose to have an influence on by slapping a stipulation on it. Perhaps we'll see Travis versus the Lost Boy in a Falls Count Anywhere match... or a Texas Bullrope match...

BW: How 'bout a Strap Match? I'd love to see the hide taken right off Travis Stench's back, Gordo.

GM: Any of those are possible. But that's not 'til Guts & Glory while we still have a ton of action to go right here tonight. Right now, let's go back to the ring for more tag team action!

[As we crossfade, we see two men in the ring, with Phil Watson standing by. One has short brown hair and a stocky build. He wears a green singlet with the Italian flag on the front, white kneepads and boots. The other has olive-tanned skin, ruffled black hair which goes almost to the shoulder, a mustache, and a nice build. He wears blue trunks with a white coat of arms on the front left hip, white kneepads, and sneakers which have the Italian tricolor on them from heel to tip.]

PW: The following tag team contest is set for one fall with a twenty minute time limit.

Introducing first, already in the ring... from Catania, Sicily, Italy and Verona, Veneto, Italy respectively... at a total combined weight of four hundred eighty-eight pounds... the team of THE SICILIAN STUD and MATTEO CINQUETTI!

[The crowd gives some light cheers for the Italian tandem, before a now-familiar exclamation from a group of people comes over the PA.]

WE! ARE! IN! CON! TROL!

[The techno-rock open of "Vengeance" by The Protomen opens up over the PA as the fans boo.]

PW: And their opponents...

[After a short time, the curtain parts to reveal two figures. The taller of the two, Matt Ginn, stands about six-seven, with a slender build. He has reddish-brown hair in a Caesar style, a thin-cut goatee and mustache. He sports black trunks with large white triangular patterns on each hip, running from waist to legline, and black-and-white boots, elbowpads, and kneepads. The boots, pads, and triangular parts of the trunks feature the three-circle biohazard symbol. He's wearing a black Aperture Laboratories polo shirt and heavy wrist tape, which he's adjusting.

The athletically built man alongside him, Mark Hoefner, has light brown skin and short black hair in a slightly receding hairstyle. His attire is a mirror to his partner, though with red in place of the white. He's wearing a brown T-Shirt that features a graphic of Thomas Edison fighting Nicolas Tesla. The two men stop at the top of the aisle and survey the scene, conversing a bit before proceeding down the aisle.]

PW: Coming down the aisle... from Cambridge, Massachusetts and Shenandoah, Pennsylvania respectively... at a total combined weight of four hundred eighty-seven pounds...

...MATT GINN... MARK HOFNER... they are DICHOTOMY!

[The duo take their time proceeding to the ring. Ginn gives several of the fans disgusted looks and dismissive gestures while Hoefner shouts insults and makes threats. They stop a couple times on the way to do this, taking their sweet time.]

GM: Bucky Wilde's favorite tag team coming down the aisle. How are your clients-by-proxy, Bucky?

BW: It's not like that, Gordo! But I will point out that they're the Number Three Contenders to the World Tag Team Titles, and as long as they keep taking my friendly advice they'll keep climbing to the top!

GM: One thing I have noticed is that Dichotomy has steered well clear of all of this controversy with the Wise Men.

BW: They need to stay neutral until they get the right offer. Percy and Larry both need a tag team. They'd do a lot worse than to inquire about a young team that is already in contention.

[When they arrive at ringside, Dichotomy heads for the ringsteps. They cautiously ascend the steps, keeping a wary eye out for their opponents. Both men enter the ring from opposite sides of the cornerpost, and proceed

to center ring. Ginn immediately starts accosting the referee while Hoefner hops to the second turnbuckle to yell at the booing fans some more.]

GM: Well, tonight they have to contend with the Italian combination of the Sicilian Stud and Matteo Cinquetti. I understand that Cinquetti is on a US tour, working here in Memphis for the local territory.

BW: Yeah, he's not on an exclusive contract with them, so he's gonna take whatever experience he can get. That's the right idea. Let's see if he's got anything.

[*DING*DING*DING*]

GM: The bell rings, and the Sicilian Stud is ready to start. Dichotomy is still discussing it. As usual, Ginn and Hoefner are taking their sweet time.

BW: Twenty minute time limit.

GM: Perhaps, but I'm sure our audience would appreciate a little more action from the get-go.

BW: You could stuff how much the audience's desires matter into a thimble and have room left for your thumb. It's all about the bottom line. Take your time and do it right.

GM: It appears that Matt Ginn will start for Dichotomy. The Sicilian Stud is anxious to get started here, but Ginn is stretching out, testing the ropes... hey!

[While Ginn is gearing up to take on the Stud, Hoefner walks around the apron and approaches the opposing corner. He shouts something at Cinquetti that seems like "go back to **Italy you stinking greaser", with possibly an extra sh in front of Italy. Hard to tell, because WKIK blanked that little section. The Stud turns to address this situation, and Ginn grabs him in a waistlock and folds him over with a belly-to-back suplex.]

BW: Dummy.

GM: Misdirection play by Dichotomy, and a devastating suplex on the Sicilian Stud! Matt Ginn is six feet seven inches tall, and makes that suplex feel like falling off a cliff.

BW: And he's putting the boots to the Stud now!

GM: Hoefner mocks the Italians all the way back to his corner, while Ginn applies a double armlace submission. He has his shoulder in the back of the Stud's neck and both arms hooked in a double chickenwing of sorts. A very painful hold, and an unusual one. That is more common in Japan than the US.

BW: It works just as well on either continent. It looks like an armlock but if you look close, he's really using his shoulder to stretch the neck.

GM: The Stud at a loss here, and Ginn stepping backwards to drag him back towards the corner.

[Hoefner reaches over and slaps his partner on the back to make himself the legal man. Slinging himself over the top rope, the Pennsylvanian sprints to the far ropes, hurtles back and crashes into the Stud's chest with a dropkick as Ginn keeps the hold applied. He lands flat on his back from the dropkick, and from here he stomp-kicks the Stud repeatedly as referee Johnny Jagger lays a count on.]

BW: The Sicilian Stud is wide open in this hold. Hoefner's teeing off on him.

GM: Because Matt Ginn is contesting Johnny Jagger's count. It's good to see Johnny Jagger back in action after being assaulted by Terry Shane at Memorial Day Mayhem. Dichotomy always works to manipulate the official for an advantage, but they may want to avoid going to that well very often with the AWA's head official. He is going to have a short hook for these two.

BW: Especially after Meekly sold out. Well... actually, considering who Meekly sold out to, Jagger's probably trying to keep up appearances so it doesn't look like he's on the take as well!

GM: Will you stop! The AWA's head office would never have done what you and Percy Childes are suggesting, and Jason Dane will get to the bottom of that later tonight.

BW: Jason Dane couldn't get to the bottom of a bowl of oatmeal.

GM: Vertical suplex by Mark Hoefner, very well executed. Hoefner throws himself completely into whatever he does. At least as far as wrestling maneuvers go. I understand that the same couldn't be said about his military service.

BW: Who are you to judge?

GM: A veteran! And facts don't require judgement. Hoefner drops a jumping double knee, and the Sicilian Stud is in trouble. Hoefner scoops up the Stud and slams him to the canvas. Tag back to Ginn,

BW: They're setting something up... Ginn Irish-whipped Hoefner to the ropes.

[Hoefner comes off the ropes, and Ginn back body drops him! Hoefner does a half turn in midair and lands on his feet... double-stomping the Stud in the abdomen. He bounces back, as Ginn falls back with a measured elbowdrop to the same area.]

GM: Quite an athletic move by Hoefner, but that acrobatic twist was not extraneous... it built momentum for the double stomp!

BW: And a low-risk aerial move, because if he missed he'd have just landed on his feet. Again, these guys are smart, and that might be their biggest edge in the tag team division. It is loaded with vicious, powerful, and brutal teams. I don't think any of them are going to be as tactically sound as Dichotomy. It's what they do.

GM: Ginn with a foot to the back of the Sicilian Stud... REVIEW BOARD LOCKED ON!

BW: I love this move. The Stud's going nowhere, and Ginn walks along the mat using the guy as a shoe.

[The standing surfboard stretches the Stud out... we can hear his exclamations of pain as Ginn pulls back on the arms. He takes a step with the left foot that he has in the Stud's back, dragging the Sicilian facefirst across the canvas before stepping forward with the right and putting all of his weight on the man's spine. And repeat as needed.]

GM: It is very difficult to counteract Ginn's clinical technical wrestling, especially when mixed in with Hoefner's hyper-aggressive speed rush.

BW: Which is why they're a dichotomy. Well, that and Ginn's a science-obsessed skeptic while Hoefner literally believes that Ramses and Nostradamus were the same person and they came from Vega Minor.

GM: I've heard some of his theories, yes. Ginn's theories are just as mad in the other direction, which is why he failed as a scientist. These two belong with each other.

[As Ginn 'walks' the Stud by the corner, Hoefner again slap-tags him. He slingshots himself over the top to stomp the Stud in the head, and proceeds to run off the ropes and hit a baseball-slide dropkick to the face! He crashes so hard into the Stud, who is immobilized by the review Board, that the crowd lets out a loud sympathy 'ohhhh!']

BW: OW! I think the Sicilian Stud belongs in traction after that!

GM: Devastating! Hoefner with the cover... and Matteo Cinquetti makes the save with a high-jumping elbowdrop!

BW: Cinquetti saved the match for sure. That wasn't Dichotomy's big finish but they hit it so good right there that it would have finished the Stud. And Cinquetti's dragging the Stud to his corner. It'd be smart, if it didn't mean he was gonna take a needless beating two-on-one.

GM: Matteo Cinquetti makes the tag, as does Hoefner who took that elbow to the back of the head. Ginn rushes in... OH!

[The Verona native rushes in and leaps into a flipping elbow smash, tumbling in mid-air to bash Ginn across the chest with the elbow. The unorthodox move catches Ginn completely off-guard and levels him to the approval of the crowd!]

BW: Aw, come on! Flippy circus moves ain't gonna get it done.

GM: Against Matt Ginn, it's not a bad choice. A second flipping elbow! I don't know what else you would call that! Ginn's reflexes are not the best, and Cinquetti taking advantage!

BW: As soon as he gets caught on one of those risks, it's over. Bet.

GM: Matteo Cinquetti, out of Verona Italy, bringing the crowd to their feet. Cartwheel into a dropkick! That may have been extraneous showboating, Bucky. He'll need to watch out with that.

BW: Even we agree there.

GM: Scooping Ginn, and a side backbreaker. Much more pragmatic with the execution. He rushes to the ropes... GOODNESS!

[The unorthodox offense continues as Cinquetti runs, grabs the top rope with both hands, pushes himself up and back with a backwards flying splash! The ropes give him high elevation without having to climb a turnbuckle, and he immediately hooks a leg as the fans hope for the upset.]

BW: Two count only. This Italian took Ginn off-guard with unorthodox moves, sure, but he'll need something serious to take this any further.

GM: The fans are behind him! Cinquetti off the ropes... HEY!

[As the fans cheer, Cinquetti leaps on the second rope to go for something like a quebrada or springboard move, only for Hoefner to violently shove the top rope inwards, causing the Vernonan to lose his balance and fall on his back! The boos are loud for that dirty trick.]

BW: He never touched him! That was NOT illegal!

GM: It was too! No different than holding the top rope down!

BW: No, the rules are explicit about holding the ropes down. They don't explicitly mention pushing it in.

GM: Cinquetti up... AND A BIG BOOT BY GINN LEVELS HIM! Those long legs of the six-foot-seven inch MIT graduate bashes Matteo's face in, and Ginn makes the tag!

BW: See? You can't make any mental mistake against Dichotomy.

GM: Hoefner gathers up Cinquetti. Matteo fighting back! Punch to the midsection of Hoefner! Off the ropes... flipping elbow... no!

BW: What works on Ginn don't work on Hoefner, and vice versa! Again, that's why they're a dichotomy. Hoefner's WAY too fast to catch with flippy circus moves if he ain't hurt.

GM: Mark Hoefner dodged, and Matteo took himself down there. Using the corner to stand... SHOTGUN BLAST BY HOEFNER! RUNNING DOUBLE KNEE SMASHES CINQUETTI IN THE CORNER!

BW: All impact, daddy.

GM: Hoefner with two handfuls of hair on Cinquetti... running turnbuckle smash, and then slams him back-first to the canvas! Signature offense by Mark Hoefner, who tags Ginn back in.

[After the exchange, Hoefner puts Cinquetti on his shoulders. Ginn walks behind him, rolls to his back, and puts both knees up. Hoefner Samoan Drops Cinquetti onto Ginn's knees, and Ginn instantly grabs the chin and ankles to apply a bow-and-arrow with Hoefner still laying on him!]

BW: OUCH! They mighta just broke this kid in two!

GM: I've never seen that transition to a bow-and-arrow, and that took exceptional timing! The Sicilian Stud in to break it up, because a submission hold started THAT way would probably draw a submission rather quickly!

BW: I'm surprised the Stud's on his feet!

GM: He is a tough man! Hoefner steps up to him, and the Stud slings him with a biel throw! Pulling Cinquetti towards the corner, and there is the tag! The Sicilian Stud back in, and let's see what he can do when he isn't ambushed!

[Not caring that he tagged out, Hoefner rushes at the Stud. He throws the leaping haymaker, but the Stud ducks it, turns, and scoops him up with a biiiig body slam!]

BW: No way!

GM: The Sicilian Stud picking up Hoefner, and hurling him over the top rope! The Stud is a very strong man, Bucky, who completes in strongman competitions in Italy! Hoefner was outmuscled there. Now over to Ginn!

BW: Uh, uh! Remember what I said! What works on Hoefner won't work on Ginn!

GM: The Stud attempted to press Matt Ginn, but Ginn twisted him into a three-quarter nelson, spun him back around, and planted him with a reverse neckbreaker! A brilliant technical counter, and you're right... trying to overpower Ginn is probably not the best strategy. The Stud's strength didn't help him as Ginn easily outleveraged him.

BW: These Italians put up a fight, but I think they've hit the wall, daddy.

GM: Ginn tagging Hoefner, and lifting the Stud up on his shoulders. The Stud has seconds to get out of this before...

[Too late. The Stud is seated on Ginn's shoulders facing away from the top turnbuckle from which Hoefner launches a flying bulldog. The Sicilian Stud crashes face-first to the mat and is completely knocked out. The crowd reacts loudly to the devastating move, but boo the result as Hoefner covers with a knee to the face.]

BW: __APOCALYPSE NOW__!

GM: And nobody's going to get up from that!

[*DING*DING*DING*]

BW: Another step up the ladder, daddy! These two want the belts, and they have the won-loss record to contend for them now.

GM: I hate to admit it, but that's correct. Let's get the official word.

PW: Here are your winners... MATT GINN... MARK HOEFNER... DICHOTOMY!

WE! ARE! IN! CON! TROL!

[As "Vengeance" begins anew, Ginn and Hoefner take the time to walk around the ring and boast to the fans. Hoefner animatedly screams and yells at them, looking them over as if he's convinced that they're a threat that needs to be backed down, while Ginn just smugly berates them about being imbeciles with poor taste.]

BW: And the official word is: winners. You remember how they were when they started in the AWA? Look at them now!

GM: As much as you like to pat yourself on the back for helping them rise up, Bucky, I do concur. They suffered some terrible humiliations and beatings as preliminary wrestlers, but are now the ones doling those out. They do need to be careful, however, as the ladder to success is very much a two-way path. Anyone they step on on their way up may well meet them on their way down, or step on them on their way past.

BW: Nah, you can't ever worry about what other people think or do. You just gotta go for it or you'll never get nowhere.

GM: Oh dear... Ginn has taken the microphone from Watson. Dichotomy was not scheduled for interview time, but it seems they have something to say.

[Ginn hands off the mic to Hoefner, who starts things off while pacing around the ring.]

MH: Cut the music!

[They do. The crowd boos the duo who are about to share their opinions.]

MH: Two weeks from now, the AWA is putting on a little show. You might have heard of it. It's called Guts & Glory.

[The fans cheer the supercard.]

MH: Last year on the Fourth Of July, the AWA had an all-challenge show. Anybody could come out and challenge anybody. Me and Matt were sick and tired of being held back and dumped on. We were sick and tired of being trapped in that preliminary locker room making peanuts for getting beat up. We decided it was time to do the beating up. We decided to take the trip out to the ring, challenge a couple of clueless morons, and take the first step to getting out of the preliminary locker room.

Oh, wait, that reminds me. Matt, keep going.

[Hoefner hands Ginn the microphone, kicks Cinquetti (who is checking on Stud) in the face, and picks up Stud to throw him out of the ring. Ginn addresses Stud's fallen body as Cinquetti rolls out to check on him again.]

MG: Enjoy your trip back to the preliminary locker room. Be sure to tell them all that we don't miss any of them, just as soon as you regain cognitive function and the ability to speak.

[He then goes back to the camera.]

MG: But back to the matter at hand, Mr. Hoefner and myself regard last Fourth Of July as our genesis. Though we were cheated by a myopic referee, we came to the attention of the promoters and forged our partnership over one goal. That being, to gather the fortune that we each need to exit this rotted blight of a sport and get back to the lives that were taken from us by the machinations of society. One year ago, on July Four, it began with an accepted challenge. This July Four, we will mark its continuation with a challenge.

MH: That's right. Any tag team in the AWA, any two singles who think they can be a team, even two guys from the dregs who think they can do what we did. We'll be in Springfield, Missouri in two weeks, and we'll take on anybody.

MG: We had some rather unpleasant discussions with the AWA front office, who communicated to us that we would not have a contest on that show. "It's too full!", they say. We say that the time for us to accept 'no' as a viable answer has long passed. Mr. Hoefner and myself have seen the payout for a supercard spot, and we will not allow another one to slide by us again. We are certain that we can find two men that feel the same. After all, someone has to put the "Guts" in Guts & Glory. We will bring the former and take the latter.

MH: Just remember one thing. If you take us up on this, you better show up to fight like everything depends on it. Because for us, that's reality. We're gonna celebrate our anniversary of liberation with a big winner's check, and

a big step to those World Tag Team Titles and all the cash flow that comes with them. We can't sit back and wait for the big match checks any more.

MG: And we simply cannot wait... to be rid of all of you.

[Ginn tosses the mic back at Watson as "Vengeance" picks up where it left off. Dichotomy begins to exit.]

GM: Dichotomy with an open challenge for Guts & Glory.

BW: Last year's show was nothing but open challenges, so it makes sense to have one this year too. That's what the 4th of July is all about, right?

GM: Perhaps, but I know as a point of fact that the AWA, absent a President, is going to try to keep as tight of a control on its shows as possible until that position is filled... and indeed, Guts & Glory is already jam packed. We shall see what comes of this challenge. At least they were honest with their motives.

BW: Yup. Big shows mean big money for the people who wrestle on them.

GM: Fans, we've got to take another break but when we come back, it'll be time for Demetrius Lake's disgusting... I'm not even going to dignify it. But I believe you do NOT want to miss it.

[Fade out.

And back up from black on a shot of the sun shining on a hot summer day over a beautiful white sand beach.]

"It's summer. The time of the year when all minds turn to one thing..."

[The camera drifts over a beach volleyball game with some well-toned bodies.]

"Wresting!"

[The shot shakes and then breaks apart to reveal AWA action inside the ring.]

"The summer is that one time every year where the AWA goes on the road, bringing all the hottest action to the town near you. And this year, for the very first time, we're going COAST... TO... COAST!"

[The shot fades to show a graphic over top of it.]

"Tomorrow afternoon, we'll be in Little Rock, Arkansas for a live event featuring Skywalker Jones and Hercules Hammonds in action!"

[The graphic changes.]

"Friday, June 27th, we'll be in Fayetteville, Arkansas for an All-Star show with William Craven, Bobby O'Connor, and Hannibal Carver taking on the Dogs Of War in the Main Event!

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[It evolves again.]

"Sunday, June 29th, the AWA arrives in St. Louis with Dave Bryant, Supreme Wright, and Eric Preston on the card!"

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"This all leads up to Friday, July 4th in Springfield, Missouri at Hammons Field for Guts & Glory! The World Title will be on the line under the stars featuring a special concert with rock and roll band Styx and a fireworks show after the matches! Bring the family out for a fun-filled night in Springfield!"

[The graphic fades, leaving the AWA logo.]

"It's the major league of professional wrestling coming all summer long to a town near you as we go COAST TO COAST!"

[The AWA logo fades to black...

And we come back, not to a pan of the crowd or a face of a wrestler, but rather to the scene of a massacre! Two men pummel another in a corner, both laying winding right hands into his upper body and neck.]

BW: How is he even standing?!

GM: Ladies and gentlemen, for those returning, these two men are the Samoan Hit Squad and this match is underway!

[The two large men, both in the high two hundred pound range take a step back at the referee's nervous command before moving right back in, grabbing the poor opponent under his arm pits and throwing him HIGH and over into the middle of the ring to land hard on his back, a back instantly arching in pain.]

GM: These two men, Donald Funk and Bruce Leroy were entering the ring for this televised match during the commercial break, when from out of nowhere the Samoan Hit Squad attacked! It's been a brutal beating so far and it doesn't look like it's going to end.

[The second man, we assume Bruce Leroy by his yellow, black striped jumpsuit, is on the apron, but holding his midsection in pain. Funk slowly gets up, silver bell bottomed pants nearly tripping him up.]

BW: The Samoans are BRUTAL, Gordo! If they stick around this time, the rest of the tag team division is in for a rude awakening, daddy!

GM: Manu is in the ring, grabbing Funk. Irish whip and he ducks...

[Somehow, Funk sees it coming and stops, kicking upwards into Manu's chest. He instantly straightens up and stares a stare that turns the dark skinned Funk pale.]

GM: Bad move there... BIG clothesline from Manu stops that!

[Manu tags in his partner Scola. He comes in, snarling and grunting gutturally before laying a falling headbutt to the sternum. He doesn't even bother with a pin, instead picking Funk up and lacing him with a chop, throwing him into his own corner right after.]

BW: I really don't think this Bruce Leroy wants in!

GM: He has no choice, Funk tagged him!

BW: Way to leave your partner to the wolves!

[Scola doesn't wait for Funk to get in. He grabs the poor man by his afro, digging both hands deep into the hair, and pulls him (with a yelp) over the top rope and into the ring. Donald Funk tries, he truly does, but is leveled as Scola lets go, steps back... and hits a thrust to the throat flattening him.]

GM: He hits the ropes... BIG SPLASH! Look at the height he got there!

BW: William Payne has these two fired up like maybe never before.

GM: He's been outside the ring the entire time, directing traffic, yelling encouragement. He could take the Samoans to new heights with his managerial ability.

[A small inset screen opens up in right corner on the viewing area. Framed by two massive men is the used car salesman smile possessing William Payne. He is dressed identical to tonight, an ash grey suit with a dark red shirt and tie. To his sides are the Samoans themselves, mugging for the camera. Manu sticks his tongue out long, growling, Scola with both powerfully gnarled hands on his manager's shoulder.]

WP: My name is William Payne and these two gentlemen with me: Manu, Scola, they are the newly returned, newly rejuvenated, newly re-energized, new direction Samoan Hit Squad.

[He puts his hands out to his side in display.]

WP: The Samoans are back... and this time it's going to be different. We do not care about the Wise Men. We do not care about the Gainesville Gyp. We don't care about the effluent gang wars diseasing AWA. We don't even care about gold. We are here for one reason.

[Payne steps back, letting the massive physicality of Manu and Scola dominate the screen.]

WP: Because these two men like to hurt people. Badly.

[And the screen fades as the two men mug for the camera, one corner of Payne's mouth curling into an even wider smirk.]

BW: If anyone is good at hurting people, it's these two.

GM: These two behemoths, monsters, they are a wrecking crew in there... and Manu is tagged in.

[The two both grab poor Funk and lean back, coming in with a skull splitting double headbutt. Funk goes down and he does not writhe in pain. He isn't even moving.]

GM: My stars! He is out! He has to be unconscious.

BW: Unconscious? He's hockey player concussed!

GM: That's an interesting phrase.

[Barely aware of his surroundings and trying desperately to make a showing that could get him signed, or at least booked again, Bruce Leroy enters the ring. IMMEDIATELY he is put down by a thrust kick to the jaw by Mafu. The Samoan steps back after, thrusting his hands out and roaring in Samoan to the skies.]

GM: There has not been a single pin attempt this entire match! William Payne has told them at every opportunity to keep going and they have. The wrestling business is going to be two men short after this affair, Bucky.

BW: At least they'll get one more pay window in their life, well, one that isn't a disability check.

GM: Oh wait, I spoke too soon. Payne's telling them to end it.

[And he does with a simple thumbs down gesture and a nod. The two in the ring take some time to catch their composure before falling into line and picking Leroy up. Scola puts him against the ropes, holding him with one hand across his throat against the ropes. Manu stomps across the ring to turn and wait. Scola looks at Payne, who subtly nods, and Irish whips him across the ring, full force. Manu charges forward, leaping and turning as he does to crush his nearly three hundred pounds across Leroy and smashing him into the ground!]

GM: OH MY! RUNNING CROSSBODY BY A GIANT OF A MAN! This one is academic!

[And it certainly is, Manu pushing both meaty palms down on the chest of Leroy as the referee easily counts to three.]

BW: And there we go. They hurt people.

GM: Another dominating match by the Samoan Hit Squad, back in the AWA and under the umbrella of William Payne. This is quite the addition to a tag division that is not only stacked but keeps getting better and better.

[A ruckus starts again as the Samoans grab both Donald Funk and Bruce Leroy, dumping them HARD through and over the ropes to clear room as William Payne enters the ring. He steps in between, shushing the referee away.]

PW: Your winners of this match... *urk*..

[That would be William Payne stealing the microphone.]

WP: Let's do this correctly, ok? My name is William Payne and your winners are...

... THE SAMOAN HIT SQUAD!

GM: What a performance, Bucky! The rest of the division needs to pay attention to these three.

BW: They definitely do, Gordo. The AWA's tag team division seems to be getting better and better each and every week and the World Tag Team Champions better keep their eyes on teams like the Samoans, daddy.

GM: Fans, two weeks ago, we saw a case of "tough love" as two Team Supreme members collided in a dispute over one of their roles in Supreme Wright's title loss at Memorial Day Mayhem. One of those men was Tony Donovan... the other was Cain Jackson. As you might imagine, this didn't sit well with Tony's father, Robert... and a brawl ensued. Donovan the Elder issued a challenge... and now we're going to find out what Cain Jackson's response is.

[We crossfade to a shot backstage, where we see Cain Jackson and the rest of Team Supreme, standing by with Mark Stegglet. Jackson is standing with his arms folded across his chest, while the other members stand at ease behind him. They are all in their trademark red and black tracksuits, with Jackson in a sheer black tracksuit to signify his status above the others. Looking a bit intimidated, Stegglet looks up at Jackson and begins to speak...]

MS: Cain Jackson, on the last edition of Saturday Night Wrestling, you were challenged to a match at Guts & Glory by Robert Donovan after he interrupted a match between you and his son, Tony Donovan. Your answer to that challenge?

[Jackson just stands there for a moment staring straight ahead, before giving a simple one word response.]

Jackson: Yes.

[And he doesn't appear to have anything else to say.]

MS: ...That's it?

[Jackson turns his head towards Stegglet, looking slightly annoyed.]

Jackson: I accepted Robert Donovan's challenge. Were you expecting something more?

MS: Well...yes.

[Cain goes back to staring straight ahead.]

Jackson: Tony Donovan understood that he made a mistake and he had the courage and integrity to face the consequences for his mistake. It's just unfortunate that Robert Donovan still thinks he needs to treat his son like a child.

I don't need to explain just how disgusting and embarrassing his father's actions were for Tony.

Team Supreme had no problem with Robert Donovan, until he insisted on MAKING himself a problem.

[In the background, we see Tony Donovan slightly shift his feet, trying his best to remain stoic.]

Jackson: We have been more than patient with Robert Donovan, but now our patience is at an end.

[The hardened expression on Jackson's face intensifies ever so slightly.]

Jackson: And now Robert Donovan...

...is at an end.

[Fade out...

...and back to Phil Watson standing inside the ring.]

PW: The following tag team contest is set for one fall and a fifteen minute time limit.

[As Phil is giving intros, two large men enter the ring. One is a very muscular young man with short brown hair, and a long face. He wears red trunks and black boots, red kneepads and spandex forearm bands. The other is much less muscularly defined but more massive, with a tall black mohawk and jagged eyebrows. He's wearing blue jeans and brown boots along with a black vest through which protrudes a beer belly.]

PW: Introducing first, now in the ring. From Topeka, Kansas and Bonesteel, South Dakota respectively... at a total combined weight of five hundred fifty two pounds... LEE HARRIGAN and MADHOUSE McWESSON!

[Both men pump their fists in the air and shout to opposite sides of the ring. Madhouse then grabs the mic to impart some words of wisdom in a crazed voice.]

MM: YYYYYEEEEEEEEAAAAHHHHHH! IRON OUT YOUR BIRTHDAY SUIT, GRANDMA! WE COME TO KILL SMASH HIT EAT CRUSH SOME GUYS! LOOK OUT SANTA CLAUS WE'LL SEND A CHIMNEY DOWN YOU TOO! RHHHHAAAAAAA!

[McWesson throws the mic back at Phil and proceeds to wander around ranting randomly as Harrigan nods sagely as if everything he just said is a) intelligible and b) the absolute truth. The crowd reacts in a loud buzz of 'what the hell?' proportions.]

BW: Gordo, some statements just stand alone.

GM: There is indeed nothing to add, is there?

[The fans turn to cheers as "Compter Les Corps" by Vulgares Machins plays over the PA, going straight to the chorus. Jogging down the aisle comes the Northern Lights, Rene Rousseau and Chris Choynet. Both men wear white satin ring jackets with "NORTHERN LIGHTS" stitched on the back in blue, and the Quebec and Maine flags intercrossed on a patch on the right chest. Both wear white trunks, kneepads, and boots (the same flag logo is on the boots). They wear blue wristbands, and Choynet wears full forearm supports in blue. Rousseau has a raven-black mullet and Choynet sports dark brown hair in a ponytail. Both have the classic clean-faced good looks popular with the ladies, and the cheers are definitely high in pitch. Rousseau and Choynet are on either side of the aisle, slapping hands as they run down.]

PW: Their opponents, now coming down the aisle... from Montreal, Quebec and Portland, Maine respectively... at a total combined weight of four hundred forty-eight pounds... RENE ROUSSEAU and CHRIS CHOINET... THE NORTHERN LIGHTS!

[The duo proceed in opposite directions upon reaching ringside, slapping hands all the way around the ring. They do a high five as they cross opposite the aisle, and go past one another to complete the circuit.]

BW: Oh. Oh, I'm gonna hurl, Gordo.

GM: Please turn your head away from my shoes. I just bought these.

BW: Why do these suck-up pretty boys somehow manage to get by with this baby-kissin' routine? I thought for sure somebody would have smashed their faces in by now. They shoulda been uglified up long ago. It would be for their own good, ya know.

GM: Many have tried, Bucky.

[The duo do a synchronized leap over the ropes and into the ring. McWesson and Harrigan attempt an ambush, but they're too slow and the Lights each intercept their man coming in with a dropkick!]

[*DING*DING*DING*]

BW: CHEAP SHOT BY THE NORTHERN LIGHTS!

GM: It was not, and even if it was, would you really complain about it considering that you keep on about how 'soft' you think they are?

BW: Good point. WHAT A LACK OF A CHEAP SHOT BY THE NORTHERN LIGHTS! Showin' that they ain't got the will to win.

GM: Rousseau and Choynet still with the jackets on, the music still playing, and they send Harrigan off the ropes... double back body drop! McWesson back in, double elbow to the prodigious midsection, and a double vertical suplex on the big man! The ring shook with the impact! McWesson and Harrigan are out of there, and that attempted pre-match assault backfired as the Northern Lights cleaned house!

BW: If you're gonna backjump a guy before the match, you gotta remember that the first part of 'backjump' is 'back'! Don't just run at them when they're facin' you!

GM: The Lights divesting themselves of the jackets, and now referee Marty Meekly is getting Choynet out of the ring.

[The camera gets a look at Choynet as he realizes who the referee is, and his expression goes from triumphant to very sour. He thrusts a finger in Meekly's face and makes several accusatory statements. Marty's shoulders droop slightly as he counts for one of the Lights to get out, not reacting to anything Choynet says but clearly uncomfortable about it.]

BW: Ooooh. Didja see that? Shwanay's gettin' in Meekly's face like the sanctimonious little twerp he is!

GM: Marty Meekly has much to do to restore the faith and trust of the wrestlers; Choynet and Rousseau need to let him do his job and allow Meekly's performance to speak for itself.

[Outside the ring, Harrigan loudly dares Rousseau to come get in his face. So he does, unleashing a slingshot plancha faster than Harrigan can dodge. The big Kansasan is hammered into the floor hard as the fans roar!]

BW: And there goes Frenchy, forgettin' that he's in a wrestling match and not the circus.

GM: Rousseau a classic technician, but is capable of high impact flying when needed as we just saw! Madhouse McWesson from behind as Rosseau recovering on the floor!

[The South Dakotan kicks Rousseau in the back as he stands, grabs his hair, and tries to ram him into the railing. But Rene blocks this, elbows McWesson in the ample midsection, and reverses it with a loud CLANG!]

BW: I think it's real funny how the Northern Lights act so offended when people cheat, and there they go rammin' a guy into the railing.

GM: McWesson tried it first, and when someone plays with fire the Northern Lights are not afraid to burn them with their own flames, to an extent.

BW: You got an excuse for everything, Gordo.

GM: It must be a sign that I've worked with you for too long, Bucky. You're rubbing off on me.

BW: Ha. Okay, good answer.

GM: Rousseau rolls Harrigan into the ring, and pulls him up. Irish-Whip off the ropes, and takes the six-four, two hundred seventy-two pounder down with a hooking clothesline! Rousseau leaping to take his man down, driving down with him almost like an inversion of a bulldog.

BW: Tagging already. If I was Meekly, I'd fast count Shwanay just to shut the little goof up.

GM: That would prove Chris Choisnet right, though, wouldn't it? The Northern Lights with Harrigan up... Choisnet lifting and a side backbreaker. Rousseau hits a standing driving elbow drop as the backbreaker hits! A punishing double-team move, and Choisnet with the half-nelson cradle cover.

BW: Only a two. Harrigan's too strong to try and get with that freestyle pin combo. It's a good way to pin somebody, but a big strong guy really ain't gonna be impeded by it.

GM: Choisnet applying a bodyscissors, and a chinlock. Looking to wear down and take the breath from Lee Harrigan at the same time. And this IS a tactic most effective on larger men.

BW: Yep. Not much that being stronger will do for you here, except help you get to the ropes.

GM: Or perhaps to stand up. Incredibly, Lee Harrigan getting to standing... and more incredibly, Choisnet is keeping the hold tightly applied!

[The fans applaud as Lee Harrigan, now on his feet, tries to swing around to dislodge Choisnet. Choisnet has a bodyscissors-chinlock tightly applied, and Harrigan is turning red from exertion as he is failing to get rid of the guy. Finally, he runs to the corner in an effort to smash the Portland native into

the buckles. However, Chris drops off of him at the last moment and Harrigan hits the buckles side-first!]

BW: Aw, man, he's like a parasite you can't get rid of. In more ways than one.

GM: Harrigan staggered, and Choynet rocks him with a Side Russian Legsweep! Floats over into a pin... McWesson runs in with a shoulder-drop to break it up, but Choynet rolls off and Madhouse hits his own man!

BW: I thought Madhouse and Harrigan would work together good as a team because their styles are similar, but they need a lot more ring time as a team if that's gonna happen. No coordination.

GM: Tag made by Choynet, and the Northern Lights in with a leaping double back elbow to send the man from Bonesteel out of the ring!

BW: And that leaves Harrigan against two men.

GM: Lee Harrigan is still dazed, and a wild swing fails to connect. Rosseau whips him off the ropes...

[As Harrigan runs back, Choynet dips his head and launches the big guy backwards with a back body drop. Rousseau catches the legs on the way over so that Harrigan's upper back is all that hits the mat, and it is a single deft move from there to get him over into the Quebec Crab. The fans loudly cheer the smooth double-team.]

GM: _LE BOMBE DE ROUSSEAU_! RENE ROUSSEAU WITH THE QUEBEC CRAB APPLIED!

BW: Now I think Shwanay had a point about Meekly! I counted six seconds that Shwanay was in the ring. He should have DQed them but didn't!

GM: Harrigan with the tap out!

[*DING*DING*DING*]

BW: Are we sure? Are we SURE?!

GM: He was clearly tapping the mat in the middle of the ring, Bucky! Don't be absurd!

BW: He might have just been pounding the mat and rallying the crowd to cheer him on! This would be the second time that Marty Meekly called a bad submission in a Boston Crab!

GM: Oh, please. Let's get the official word!

[Rousseau and Choynet celebrates the victory. The referee goes over to raise their hands... Choynet hesitates before allowing Meekly to touch him, but relents... looking at him with suspicion the whole time. Meekly is

avoiding eye contact, and quickly exits the ring as soon as this is done.
"Compter Les Corps" begins anew as the fans are cheering.]

PW: The winners of the match... RENE ROUSSEAU... CHRIS CHOISNET...
THE NORTHERN LIGHTS!

BW: If the Northern Lights are not hypocrites, they'll demand that the
decision be reversed!

GM: Bucky, you have GOT to be kidding.

BW: He was in for six seconds, not five. And Harrigan might not have
submitted. There's reasonable doubt! They should forfeit the match to
show that they're serious about being uptight rules-crazy goody-two-
shoeses.

GM: We can certainly see that Marty Meekly's job is going to be much more
difficult for the foreseeable future. Even in a fairly straight-forward, one-
sided match he appears to be overly scrutinized.

BW: Well, we'll just have to see what shakes out during the Call Of The
Wilde, Gordo! I'll get to the bottom of this.

GM: Along with Jason Dane.

BW: DESPITE Jason Dane!

GM: I somehow knew you'd say that. In any case, the Northern Lights take
another step in their pursuit of the World Tag Team Championships. We'll be
back after this.

[Fade out.

And back up from black on a shot of the sun shining on a hot summer day
over a beautiful white sand beach.]

"It's summer. The time of the year when all minds turn to one thing..."

[The camera drifts over a beach volleyball game with some well-toned
bodies.]

"Wresting!"

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[The graphic fades, leaving the AWA logo.]

"It's the major league of professional wrestling coming all summer long to a town near you as we go COAST TO COAST!"

[The AWA logo fades to black...

As we return from commercial, solemn pipe organ music is playing over the PA. A procession of people dressed in black are heading down the aisle. The fans are booing.]

GM: We're back, and as-

[Bucky interrupts Gordon in a hushed tone.]

BW: Hush! This is a funeral! Have some respect for the dead!

GM: This is NOT a funeral, and I will not respect this sham.

[At this point, a brown coffin is being wheeled down to the ring. The coffin is set on a drapery-covered cart of some kind. Walking ahead of the coffin, clad in a black suit and striped ivory-and-tan tie, is the grey-and-light brown permed former World Champion Hamilton Graham. Graham has a slight smirk on his face as he serves as the pallbearer, accompanied by a helmeted security officer.]

BW: Now there's some class and respect. Hamilton Graham showed up for this.

GM: I find that hard to swallow. Graham has never been one for frivolity, and that is all this is.

[Behind the coffin, we see Radiant Raven clad in a black dress with flowing black-lace extensions from the sides of the dress. The dress has black spangles, and her raven-black hair is done up in a strange cross between a beehive and a wave. Her makeup is blue-tinted, and includes a makeup-painted tear down from her left eye. Raven has a completely stone-impassive facial expression and is carrying a bouquet of black roses.

Shortly behind her is the master of ceremonies, the "Black Tiger" Demetrius Lake. The six-foot-nine Lake is wearing a heather-grey suit with a dark mahogany-colored tie, and a black fedora which pushes his round afro down a bit. He's got a very smug look on his face, accented by his conical beard. Two more helmeted security officers, carrying billy clubs, are flanking him.]

BW: I agree that Jack Stench was mostly frivolous, but that's no reason to disrespect the funeral of his career. I know that Bobby O'Connor promised to do that last week, but Demetrius brought some crack security with him.

GM: They look familiar.

[The coffin is wheeled up against the side of the ring, as Graham enters the ring. Raven sets the bouquet on the casket, though she picks one rose out and tucks it onto her dress as a corsage. She plucks a second rose and puts it on Lake as a corsage, and then the Black Tiger also ascends the ring steps. The slow organ music continues to play... if anyone paid attention to it, they'd realize that it is a very slow organ rendition of "Mack The Knife".

Lake heads to center ring and takes a wireless house mic from the podium that has been placed there. He removes some notes from his inner pocket, and places them on the podium. The back of the notes can briefly be read, in large black letters: EULOGY TO THE ALLEGED CAREER OF JACK LUNCH. The booing goes on as the organ music quiets... but still plays dimly throughout the proceedings. Lake takes a long pause to wait for the boos to die down.]

BW: This IS a travesty, Gordo. These fans are booing a funeral! They're like those Westboro nuts!

GM: Not even remotely the same thing.

[After a while, it is clear that the boos are not stopping. Raven, who is at ringside with the large group of black-clad 'mourners' (freeze-frame bonus: one of them is her fiancée), grabs the ring announcer's mic and berates the crowd.]

RR: This is a funeral! Show some respect.

[BOOOOOO!]

RR: Then again, it's only Jack Lynch. I guess it's more appropriate this way. Die as you lived, I guess. To great derision.

[BOOOOOOOOOO!]

BW: Ha ha ha!

[Lake waits a bit longer, and the boos drop down a bit out of sheer fatigue. Then he starts.]

DL: Dearly beloved...

[He says this in the exact tone that a minister would use at a funeral. He takes a long pause.]

DL: ...is what I would say if anybody in Memphis, Tennessee was loved. Nobody from Memphis has ever been loved. If only you ever had a King in Memphis, maybe you could feel special. But I'm here tonight, so there's a first time for everything. Let me start again.

[BOOOOOOOOOO!]

DL: Friends. Family. We have gathered here to... no, wait. Jack Lunch didn't have no friends, and his family's too shamed to show their faces. Let me start again.

ahem

People I had to pay to come down and pretend to be sad, we are gathered here today to pay the appropriate respect to the career of Jack Lunch, which died a merciful death on Memorial Day of this year. In fact, I brought down the remnants of his career in a vessel appropriate for it.

[The camera gets a long pan of the coffin, which is really quite a beautiful one... obviously expensive and well-crafted.]

DL: No, not that. We just brought that thing down because of state regulations on what you can call a funeral. Raven, bring in the actual coffin his career is buried in.

[Raven goes to the coffin, reaches underneath the drapery that covers the cart underneath it, and pulls out a shoebox. She slides the shoebox into the ring, drawing even more boos from the crowd. The shoebox has "JACK LUNCH'S CAREER" printed on it in magic marker.]

DL: Raven... I told you get a box that's appropriate to the man's career. This is Adidas. Adidas is too good for the man! I expected Roos or Zips. Anyway, we will continue. The first thing is we will get a career testimony from the greatest champion in all wrestling history, Mr. Hamilton Graham.

[Lake hands the microphone to Graham, who is in a surprisingly good mood. He holds up the microphone and speaks in his slow, deliberate cadence.]

HG: Thank you, Mr. Lake.

[BOOO!]

HG: I know that many would be surprised to see me do something of this nature. Ordinarily, I am against using television or arena time on things that are not to do with actual wrestling matches. But this is a special case. You see, I have a very long memory. I remember everything that I have ever experienced, in great detail. Dates, times, locations. For many wrestlers, these things run together over time. But not for me.

And that is why I wish to call attention to July 8, 1988. It was a Friday night card in Abilene, Texas. I was hot in contention for the World Heavyweight Title, as was my opponent on that evening. I wrestled a Bunkhouse Match against a man you all know all too well, Mr. Blackjack Lynch. After that match, I required seventeen stitches, and he required twenty-four. This battle was not televised. It was not featured in the magazines of the day. But the reason I remember it is because of the words Blackjack Lynch spoke after the police broke up the match without a winner.

He got on the microphone. And he said this: "Hamilton Graham. I swear to you before God Himself, that my blood will spill until I have no more before I see you lay a fingerprint on the World Heavyweight Title."

[Graham pauses, and laughs. A dark, malevolent, but entirely genuine laugh.]

HG: I won the World Title some five months later. And now, Blackjack Lynch, where is your blood? The blood that you would spill until you have no more?

[Graham looks down on the shoebox... and spits on it.]

HG: Your blood has dried up and blown away. The only son you have left is the serial abuser who will probably be in prison by the end of the year. And my fingerprints will once again adorn the World Title in the form of this man. Demetrius Lake. The King Of Wrestling! I doubt very seriously that you even remember those words you spoke, Blackjack. They were spoken idly, to inflame a crowd full of your own Texans, so that they would come back to Abilene the next month. But I remember every idle word ever spoken about me. And I avenge them. I avenge all of them.

And if not me, then mine. I cannot say that Demetrius Lake will be the next World Heavyweight Champion. That honor belongs to Terry Shane The Third, who is the only man in the AWA I would put on the same plane as the King himself. But I guarantee that he will be the World Champion. And when he is, then I expect direct apologies from not just Blackjack Lynch, but a long list of men who made similar statements. And I expect you all to pay very close attention, because those who oppose my legacy have only one fate.

[Graham stops the shoebox in, and then claps Lake on the chest as he hands back the microphone. The crowd is booing vehemently.]

GM: What? Hamilton Graham... how long does this man hold grudges?!

BW: FOREVER.

DL: You heard it from the man himself. And now, the eulogy for Jack Lunch's career.

It is true that the man himself is not dead, as best as we know. He may very well have jumped off a bridge after getting buried in his own flag. But in any case, he will never be seen again. And his career leaves behind this...

[Lake reaches down to open the stomped-in shoebox... it is empty.]

DL: Nothing. Because that's what he was in the end. I can assure you that he stole so much money from Mexas fans while headlining PCW that he could have moved to Memphis and fit right in with this city of criminals. The crime rate here would have doubled to 132 percent. His illegal finishing move was another sign of how corrupt he was. His little brothers looked up to him and tried to emulate him, which is why one of them can only beat women and the other one is now a cripple who can't even brush his last tooth without help. The only two sentences that can possibly form a eulogy for Jack Lunch's career are these: Professional wrestling itself is a better place with him not in it. You're welcome.

[With that, Lake steps back, and soaks in the boos. The boos turn to cheers, however, as Bobby O'Connor storms out from the back. Bobby storms out in a red and white flannel shirt with the sleeves rolled up, blue jeans and a pair of cowboy boots. He glares at Lake, pointing an accusing finger at the big man.]

BW: Hey! You can't interrupt a funeral!

GM: Bobby O'Connor swore that he'd make Lake pay if he went through with this! And I don't think security guards are going to stop him!

[The three helmeted security guards form a wall to block O'Connor, and remove their helmets... to reveal themselves. Pedro Perez Jr, Wade Walker, and Isaiah Carpenter. The Dogs Of War stand between O'Connor and the ring, and they grin nasty, hateful grins.]

BW: You were saying?

DL: The King knows that all the peasants get uppity when they know they're outclassed, so I made sure to get the best security in the world. So, while you get the added bonus of watching Karl O'Connor's last legacy get crippled up in the aisle so bad you'd think he was James Lunch, I think I will close this funeral the only proper way. Jack Lunch wanted to stop me from burning a Mexas flag so bad that he ruined himself to do it? Well, I wanted to bring the biggest Mexas flag I had the misfortune of seeing, in this coffin,

and burn it right now to show the world that you can never stop the King from doing what he sets out to do! But much like an honest man, we couldn't find one here in Memphis.

So we'll use the Tennessee flag as a cheap stand-in instead, just like the Titans used Tennessee as a cheap stand-in for Houston when rent got too high down there.

GM: Oh my. We're going to have a riot.

BW: Security!

[The Dogs Of War are advancing on O'Connor, who bravely stands his ground. Lake motions for the people at ringside to slide the coffin into the ring, so they do. Demetrius reaches down, opens it up...

...and the right hand of Jack Lynch clamps itself securely on his forehead as Lynch sits up from the coffin! The crowd explodes!]

GM: JACK LYNCH IS HERE! AND HE'S GOT THE _IRON CLAW_ ON LAKE!

BW: NO!

[The Dogs Of War turn around to see what is happening in the ring, and O'Connor tackles Carpenter from behind. Perez leaps on him in a flurry of wild punches. Walker lines up his billy club to smash O'Connor, but a sprinting Hannibal Carver comes from the side and tackles him to the floor! Perez kicks O'Connor, who rolls towards ringside, and then moves to hit Carver.]

GM: HANNIBAL CARVER IS HERE TO BACK UP O'CONNOR! AND HERE COMES WILLIAM CRAVEN!

[Craven, being much slower than Carver, is driving one of the backstage material carts that are used to ferry around supplies and equipment. The cart is, in fact, hooked to some large equipment boxes. With a predatory smile on his face, he tries to run over Perez, who dives out of the way at the last moment. Craven gets out of the cart... which now blocks easy access to the ring from the aisle (due to those boxes), and joins the fray.]

BW: Somebody do something!

GM: The Dogs Of War are cut off from the ring! That cart is as wide as the aisle! In the Crockett Coliseum, we have that elevated ramp to prevent things like this, but not in Memphis!

[In the ring, Lake is floundering and flailing like he was being electrocuted, as Lynch slowly stands with an infuriated glare in his eyes. As always, and especially appropriate for this occasion, Lynch is dressed head to toe in black, wearing a short sleeve button up shirt and a pair of jeans. Lynch's face is twisted with all of the pent up anger that his feud with Lake has instilled in him, and he can be seen smiling as his fingers dig into Lake's

skull. Pushing his body forward to get out of the coffin, Lynch uses his momentum to knock the Black Tiger back, Lake knocks over the podium as he falls backwards, to the joy of the crowd!]

BW: THIS IS A NATIONAL TRAGEDY!

GM: This is justice!

[*WHAP!*

BW: This is Hamilton Graham's right hand!

GM: GRAHAM WITH A MASSIVE OVERHAND RIGHT FLOORS LYNCH!
Hamilton might be in his fifties, but he is still a dangerous man! I don't think Jack Lynch can fight him and Lake!

BW: When he was thinking up a sneaky plan to get in the coffin and ambush the King, I bet he never thought Hamilton Graham would be there!

GM: Graham kicking Lynch in the ribs. Those are hardened leather shoes! Now pulling Lynch in... HE'S GOING TO PILEDRIVE HIM!

BW: Jack Stench is fighting it, but Lake hammers him with a double axehandle! It is two on one! We'll get that funeral after all!

[We see Craven using his wooden bokken and Carver using one of the clubs taken from the Dogs to hold the trio at bay. And then we see that when the cart got parked in the aisle, there was one guy who ended up on the ringside section of it!]

GM: BOBBY O'CONNOR IS IN THE RING!

[As Graham tries to pick up Lynch for the piledriver, his upper body is exposed, and O'Connor runs right through him with the devastating crooked-arm lariat! The fans approve loudly.]

GM: _BUTCHER BLOCK_! GRAHAM IS WIPED OUT!

BW: You can't hit a legend like that!

GM: Raven tripping O'Connor and pulling him under the ropes! O'Connor rearing back, but he won't hit a woman! Raven is daring him to hit her, but Bobby was raised better than that!

BW: I'd give her even odds of winning that fight. But O'Connor isn't a Stench so he won't do it.

GM: Lake has pounced on Lynch, though! Kicking away at him... and now HE is setting up a piledriver! Oh, no!

BW: HE'S GOT HIM UP!

[Briefly. But then Lynch gets his legs down, and flips Demetrius over his head! The three-hundred plus pounder is back body dropped through the air... and into the coffin!]

BW: NO!

GM: Jack Lynch backdropped Lake into that coffin, and now he has shut the lid on him! The King Of Wrestling is being buried in state!

[And he's not done. Lynch drags the coffin near the ropes, stomps the lid down on Lake's head as he tries to sit up out of it, and then (with quite a feat of strength) reaches down to put the end of the coffin up on the top rope, standing it up. The crowd is up in anticipation. He then shows even more strength by picking up the bottom of the coffin, and pushes it so that the bulk of the weight of the coffin is over the top rope... sending it tilting over the top and to the floor! The door swings open and Lake flops out on impact, bouncing into the cart parked at the end of the aisle with the coffin falling over on him! The fans roar for this devastating and humiliating exit from the ring.]

BW: This is a nightmare! Somebody pinch me! The King is down! Jack Stench is trying to commit regicide!

GM: The Dogs Of War are finally getting to Lake, having detoured through the crowd! But they are too late! The funeral is in ruins, and Demetrius Lake is the one who has just been laid to rest!

[Lynch and O'Connor stand tall in the ring as Raven and Graham are on the floor checking on Lake. Graham is ranting in a fury, yelling out "THIS IS AN OUTRAGE!" over and over. Walker, Perez, and Carpenter arrive to keep Lynch and O'Connor from following up. Wisely, they scoop the King and start to exit stage left. But they have to go through the crowd, which is not willing to let them go quietly after all the trash Lake talked. The group is doused with beverages and trash as they hustle out.]

GM: This is mayhem! We'll be back after this!

[Fade to black.

Fade back up on what sounds like a very passable punk cover of the Beach Boys' "Surfin' USA" with a sun-drenched beach. A voiceover begins.]

"The experts say that it promises to be the hottest summer on record."

[A shot of a pair of bikini-clad girls being baked by the sun.]

"But it's not global warming's fault."

[A shower of sand is kicked in the girls' faces, causing yelps and angry shouts. We slowly pan up from the sand to reveal a grinning Miss Sandra Hayes in a bikini of her own.]

"It's the AWA's fault"

[Cut to shots of AWA action with sunburst graphics and transitions cutting from shot to shot as the voiceover continues.]

"It's become an annual tradition when the AWA hits the road every summer, leaving their hometown of Dallas behind and going out to all the cities thirsting for the professional wrestling action that only the AWA can provide."

[A series of show dates appear on the screen, scrolling past one by one.]

"But this year, the AWA makes history by going COAST TO COAST for the very first time. So, check the tour schedule now for the show nearest you because you do NOT want to miss it when the AWA comes to your town!"

[We cut back to the bikini-clad Sandra Hayes, now with her pink branding iron slung over her shoulder.]

MSH: Can you feel the heat?

[A seductive smile and wink follows before we fade to black...]

We fade back up where Jack Lynch stands with Bobby O'Connor in the middle of the ring, the fans cheering, as Lynch paces back and forth. Finally, Lynch stops, lifting the wireless microphone Demetrius Lake must've dropped up to his mouth.]

JL: As ya can see, the reports of my demise have been greatly exaggerated!

[Jack pauses a moment, to soak in the cheers of the fans who enthusiastically welcome his return.]

JL: Now, I'll confess. What happened on Memorial Day left me in a dark place. And I'll admit, it took me a couple of weeks to shake it off and get my head screwed on right. It's true, I went missin' for a time. I didn't answer the door when Trav showed up. I didn't come down to the Spur, despite Hannibal's invitation. And I got a twenty five minute voice mail from Bill Craven that's gonna require a dictionary and a six pack to make sense of.

[Jack and Bobby share a knowing chuckle.]

JL: But what did shake me outta my funk was this guy right here. Bobby O'Connor showed up two weeks ago, and he stood up for me. Beaten up as he was, he was ready to stand up for a guy who was havin' trouble lookin' at himself in the mirror.

And that, my friends, is what Bobby O'Connor does – he shows up.

Whenever you need him, wherever there's a fight, this guy, he's there. Whether it's the Dogs of War or Demetrius Lake, you're not going to find a better, more stand-up guy than the Strangler's grandson.

[The crowd starts a "Bobby!" chant after Jack's praise. Young O'Connor smiles, but still manages to look slightly embarrassed.]

JL: What you just saw was the latest event in a whole history of bad blood. Not just between me and Demetrius. But between the Lynch family and the Graham Family. And between the Grahams and the O'Connors. There's a lot of history there, and a whole ocean of bad blood between us.

And speaking of history, I've got a history of doin' pretty good when it comes to tag teams. Between me and my brothers beatin' the original incarnation of the Unholy Alliance, or me and Jimmy beatin' the so-called greatest tag team ever not once, but twice, to winnin' the Cup, to bein' National Tag Team Champions. So I think I've got plenty of bonafides when it comes to bein' part of a team.

And since Hamilton Graham is always lookin' for one last shot, and since we all know Demetrius Lake is more likely to show up when he's got backup, I'd like to ask ya somethin' Bobby.

You wanna take on Graham and Lake at Guts & Glory? You wanna be my partner?

[Jack turns to O'Connor, and hands the microphone over to him.]

BOC: Jack, my friend...

[Bobby extends his hand for a shake, which Lynch immediately accepts.]

BOC: ... it would be my honor.

[Huge crowd reaction for this, as both men smile and nod before Bobby continues.]

BOC: And to you fans, I owe you an apology. Last time, I can honestly say for the first time I truly lost my temper. I heard the disgusting things Lake had to say, and that was way more than I could take. I was standing in the back, saw that chain... and the next thing I knew I was trying to take his head off with it.

[The crowd cheers for this, despite Bobby's attempts at an apology. Bobby blinks, a bit surprised at the response to attacking a man with a chain. He takes a second to regain his composure before continuing.]

BOC: That's not the man my parents raised me to be. That's not the athlete my coaches growing up trained me to be. And more than all that, it isn't the wrestler my father and grandfather DEMANDED that I be. So for that, I'm sorry.

[Bobby nods.]

BOC: But something I'm not sorry for... is shutting these two up. I'm not sorry for knocking Hamilton Graham inside out here tonight. Despite the history that's there... I respect my elders and respect everything every veteran in this sport did to pave the way for young guys like me.

But after the hateful ranting and raving I heard from you tonight... I have no choice but to throw that out the window. Everything you said tonight tarnishes everything you've ever done. The thought that Blackjack Lynch has anything to apologize for is a joke... and if you think me and Jack will ever let your charge be in the position to make Blackjack sorry?

[Bobby shakes his head.]

BOC: You're living in a fool's paradise. Jack had it right, tonight was the latest event in a long history of bad blood. The latest... and FINAL. I have had enough of these ridiculous egos trying to run roughshod over the wrestling business. It's so-called men like these that forced my grandfather to step away from the business he loves so much.

[Bobby nods sternly, raising a clenched fist.]

BOC: At Guts & Glory, all the glory will be ours, the time for my apologies are over... and they'll be the ones who truly sorry.

[Bobby lowers the microphone, taking Jack's hand and raising it to a huge ovation from the crowd as we fade to black.

A black screen slowly fades to a graphic that reads as follows, accompanied by a voiceover.]

"THE FOLLOWING ADVERTISEMENT HAS BEEN PAID FOR BY THE AWA."

[And then we cut to a grainy handheld camera, walking around the ringside floor of a small arena. Dimly lit and filled to capacity, the arena boasts a crowd that is loud and rowdy.]

VOICEOVER: The whole world has its eyes on Dallas, every Saturday Night.

[We get a couple of quick clips from Saturday Night Wrestling, of major stars in action. Juan Vasquez hitting the right cross on Stevie Scott. Alphonse Green nailing Dave Cooper with the Hunger Strike. Jack Lynch chasing Demetrius Lake in an effort to Claw him. After this, we go back to the handheld. The user is climbing the ring steps, giving us a first person view of what it must be like for a wrestler to enter that ring.]

VOICEOVER: But what about those two weeks in between? You hear us promote the great action all over Texas and nearby states. And every summer, we travel all around the world. No TV production; just a gala featuring the AWA stars and a few thousand of their closest friends.

[The cameraman walks around the ring, filming the crowd. There are about five thousand here, and a sign that bids all welcome to the Cal Farley Coliseum in Amarillo, Texas.]

VO: What great matches have we never seen? How much blood was spilled in the pursuit of a dream, and we never knew?

[Now more clips... in less professionally-produced areas. The clips feature not only current, but former AWA stars. We see Rick Marley with a flying headscissors taking down Shadoe Rage. We see The Rave diving out of the ring at the Blonde Bombers. We see MAMMOTH Maximus pressing Kolya Sudakov overhead. We see Calisto Dufrense using the ringpost to free himself from the grip of Glenn Hudson. And we see Hannibal Carver slugging it out with Hercules Hammonds.]

VO: They're called "house shows". Classic matches, held in arenas all over the United States, seen only by the fans in attendance. But the AWA did have cameras at some of these events... and captured some of these intense battles. And now, for the first time ever, you can witness them too.

[We get a product screen featuring a DVD Set: AWA Signature Series Volume Three: House Show Classics. The cover features a montage of images from each clip shown above.]

VO: The AWA Signature Series, Volume Three. House Show Classics, featuring unaired matches from the entire AWA run.

[As each match below is mentioned, we get a clip of it...]

VO: See... From 2013, Calisto Dufresne defends the AWA World Heavyweight Championship against the World Television Champion Glenn Hudson.

From 2012, James Monosso defends the very same title against Dave Cooper.

From 2009, a 15-man West Texas Bunkhouse Battle Royal.

From 2010, Stevie Scott defends the National Title against Vernon Riley.

From 2013, Dave Bryant defends the World Television Title against Mr. Sadisuto.

From 2011, Nenshou defends the same belt against James Lynch.

From 2013, The Blonde Bombers defend the World Tag Team Titles against The Rave.

[Back to the product splash.]

And besides these seven great matches, there are eleven other great contests. Eighteen matches in all, on a two DVD set. Special features include...

[A clip of a variety of young wrestlers setting up a ring... some of whom we recognize as stars today.]

VO: ...a behind the scenes documentary on the travels and travails of life on the road...

[And then another of a training session at the Combat Corner.]

VO: ...and an exclusive look inside the Combat Corner over the years. See some of the friendships and rivalries that formed before they were stars!

AWA Signature Series Volume Three, House Show Classics. Available today from Amazon, Best Buy, and AWAsShop.com. Get yours today!

[One last look at the product screen, and the commercial ends.

When we pan up to the ring, we see Phil Watson already in the ring with two wrestlers. However, the men are in opposite corners rather than standing side-by-side for a tag team match. We saw a scene very much like this on the last Saturday Night Wrestling, because these are the same men.]

PW: The following is a special rematch, scheduled for one fall and a ten minute time limit.

Introducing first, to my left... from Lebanon, Tennessee... weighing in at two-hundred two pounds... "JUMPING" JACK DANIELS!

[Daniels is a stringy-haired wild-eyed kid with a brown mullet, five o'clock shadow, black trunks with his name in white lettering (in the same font as the whiskey), black boots, and orange Confederate-flag kneepads. He jumps and fistpumps and whoops.]

PW: And his opponent... from Stone Mountain, Georgia... weighing two-hundred forty pounds... HENRY PORTEN!

[At the sound of his name, Porten does a lap around the ring waving his fists in the air like a loon. The bulky Porten has a dirty blond brushcut, long blue tights, and red laceless boots. The name "HENRY" is printed down one side of the tights in red, and a red fireball is printed on the other. He also wears white wristbands.]

GM: Alright, Bucky. These two men were scheduled for a matchup last week before William Payne intruded with the Samoan Hit Squad.

BW: Sparing us all. Can he get out here again?

GM: It seems that Henry Porten wants the microphone from Phil Watson.

BW: What?! William! Bring the Samoans, quick! This kid's gonna reduce our IQs by fifty points!

[Porten gets the mic and speaks. His voice is a low baritone, and he speaks slowly with a notable Southern drawl. However, his tone and mannerisms are so completely earnest that they're almost childlike.]

HP: Hi.

[He waves at the fans. Many wave back.]

HP: Hey, buddy.

[He motions to Daniels, who gives a 'who me?' hand motion. Porten nods and keeps talking like he's having a normal conversation instead of addressing a crowd.]

HP: Yeah! So, uh, last time we had a match. And... and... and the Samoan guys came out for no reason and attacked you and me both. I watched a lot of old shows on the new AWA All-Access app, and I saw that every time a couple guys come out for a match, guys that don't got no music, that haven't won any matches on TV yet... somebody always thinks it's an invitation to show up and attack everybody. Ya know what I mean?

[Daniels is in a wary fighting pose, with an incredulous look on his face like he can't believe that Porten's talking like this on TV. He gives a slow shrug and mouths "mayyyybe?"]

HP: That's gonna keep happening till somebody stands up and makes it blow up on somebody. And if there's anything I love more than lighting stuff on fire in my backyard, it's blowing stuff up!

[Daniels, Watson, and referee Davis Warren all take a single large step back. Porten is oblivious, but has a goofy grin on his face just thinking about blowing stuff up. The crowd gives a decent reaction to the extremely non-sequiterian line.]

HP: Like Mythbusters. But with fists. So like Fistbusters! That's funny cause we'd actually be busting faces, not fists.

[He laughs, as if that were a funny joke. And then, completely seriously and earnestly, with a natural, innocent look on his face.]

HP: So, ya wanna team up and fight the Samoans on the next show?

[Now the crowd cheers, because standing up for yourself is good. But Daniels looks at Porten like he's crazy. And tells him so.]

JD: Are you crazy?!

HP: No, I took my medication today.

[Daniels can only jawdrop at that. And then respond.]

JD: No!

HP: Aw. Hey, did the bell ring yet?

[Davis Warren calls for the bell.]

[*DING*DING*DING*]

HP: Okay!

[And with a big goofy grin on his face, Henry drops the mic and slugs Daniels right in the face! The crowd cheers as Porten goes right on the offense as Daniels falls back and covers up.]

GM: Good for Henry Porten! Bullies will keep bullying until their victims stand up for themselves, and I'm frankly ashamed of Jack Daniels for saying no.

BW: This kid is insane! He's got the mentality of an eight-year-old, Gordo, in and out of the ring! What moron would WANT to fight the Samoan Hit Squad?!

GM: Someone with some conviction and courage. Jack Daniels rolling out of the ring after several hard blows from Porten, who is trained in both wrestling and the mixed martial arts. Porten is quite a dangerous striker, and earned his opportunity to wrestle on Saturday Night Wrestling by way of winning several matches at house shows... usually with a devastating knee smash that he unloads on a seated or kneeling opponent. It's an absolute knockout blow.

BW: That he's never landed on a decent wrestler.

GM: Daniels was brought in from the local Tennessee territory to get a look, as he is just out of wrestling school himself. But what I've seen of his courage doesn't impress me. I'm going to guess no relation to Hall Of Famer "Hotspot" Scott Daniels.

BW: It's a little early to be making assumptions, isn't it? All he did was recognize that Henry Porten is insane and that the Samoan Hit Squad should be avoided like the Bubonic Plague... so he has established common sense.

GM: Daniels back in, and a collar-and-elbow tieup. Daniels takes control with a side headlock, but Porten is much bigger and stronger and flings him off. Daniels off the ropes, ducks a clothesline. Leapfrog on the way back!

["Jumping" Jack goes for a crucifix rollup on his way off the third time, but Porten does not budge. Henry smiles happily as he pulls Daniels up onto his shoulder, and then snaps forward sharply, hurling him back-first to the mat in front of him as he drops to his knees to drive him down. The crowd gives the high-impact move a good reaction.]

BW: OW! Jumping Jack's gotta know better than to try that move so early on a bigger guy. Inexperience.

GM: Inexperience indeed, and Porten with a devastating counter! Now straddling his man, and hammering him with the mixed-martial arts-style mounted punches! This is a terrible position for Daniels to end up with, as he is outweighed by thirty-five pounds.

BW: Closed fists! This ain't MMA! Different sports, different rules! You don't see Kolya Sudakov getting confused when he's in the wrestling ring. I'd like to see Porten try that on Kolya.

[Warren gets Porten to break cleanly after a three count. Mostly because Henry seems to think that he was counting Daniels' shoulders down, He jumps up and down until Warren lowers his raised hand and explains things to him, after which his shoulders slump with an 'awwwww'... before his mood swings back around as Daniels gets up and he can go elbow him in the chest.]

GM: Kolya Sudakov is a different class of fighter, Bucky. Porten trains and competes in mixed martial arts; Sudakov is a high-level professional mixed martial-artist. There is a big difference in the level of competition they face.

BW: Not in the AWA there isn't. The only difference here is Kolya wins matches. Just like the Samoan Hit Squad. This kid ought to be put on unintentional-suicide watch.

[Porten clamps on a headlock, and uses a side headlock takeover, but Daniels makes a nice athletic move and flips over to his feet, sliding out of Porten's grip. He then pokes the Georgia native in the eyes with both thumbs before hitting a standing dropkick.]

GM: They also said that tiny Costa Rica could never defeat Uruguay or Italy in the World Cup, but they beat both of them this past week!

BW: Aw, not soccer! Gordo, talkin' about soccer when wrestling is on is unAmerican!

GM: A nice snapmare by "Jumping" Jack Daniels. Daniels off the ropes as Porten is seated...

[The Lebanon, Tennessee native rushes Porten, but Henry lunges up to his feet and jumps into the oncoming Daniels, using his bulk to take him flat down with a leg on each side hooking the back of Daniels' thighs.]

GM: FIERRO PRESS! The Tommy Fierro Press gets a two count, and both men to standing...

BW: CLOSED FIST!

GM: Wow! Spinning backfist blow by Porten leveling Daniels! They call that the 'Uraken' in Japan, Bucky, and Porten does that as well as anyone as Daniels just went from full alert to not really knowing where he is...

BW: Oh no! He better figure it out fast!

[Daniels slowly and groggily tries to get to his feet as the crowd, having just loudly cheered the vicious-looking blow, are treated to an even more impressive followup... Porten bounds off the ropes at top speed and steps into a violent kneesmash to the jaw as Daniels as on his knees! The blow connects with a loud WHACK, and the fans cheer as Daniels collapses into a heap.]

GM: THERE'S THAT KNEE! That vicious, vicious knee! Jack Daniels is down and out!

[*DING*DING*DING*]

[Porten pins Daniels, and the fans cheer his victory as he leaps around the ring like he just won the lottery.]

BW: How do we live in a world where this mental midget has a win on Saturday Night Wrestling?!

GM: He earned it! Let's get the official word.

PW: Here is your winner... HENRY PORTEN!

[Porten grabs the mic again.]

BW: Cut the mic! Cut it while I still have brain cells left!

HP: YEAH I WIN! Oh. And. Next Saturday Night Wrestling! Samoans! And other guy! Samoans manager dude with the bad tie!

BW: His name is William Payne, you imbecile!

HP: I'm gonna get one of my buddies to be my partner, and you show up to wrestle! You can't go around doin' whatever you want and think people will just let you. Now... hit my music!

[Pause.]

HP: Oh! Right. Never mind. I got this.

[He then starts humming theme music for himself as he heads to the back, slapping hands the whole way.]

HP: # Doot-doo-doo, doot-doo-doo, doot-doo-doo.
Doot-doo-doo, doot-doo-doo, doot-doo-doo.
Hmmm-hmmm-hm-hm-yeaaaah!
Doot-doo-doo, doot-doo-doo, doot-doo-doo!

[And then the cord runs it's length and his 'music' cuts out, so he just sprints the rest of the way back with his fists in the air.]

BW: We just lost all of our viewers, Gordo. All of them. Our Nielsen ratings for this segment will be a negative number.

GM: Will you stop! A courageous challenge to William Payne and the Samoan Hit Squad. Will they answer the challenge in one month's time?

BW: Will they even know about it? Will anyone be able to tell them? There's nobody watching, Gordo! It's almost... liberating. Like I can now say or do whatever I want because I know all the WKIK guys and sponsors just changed the channel. In fact, I think I...

GM: Let's go backstage to hear from one-half of tonight's Main Event!

BW: Spoilsport.

[Cut to backstage, where Mark Stegglet stands next to Brian James. The tall James is wearing his "Claw Academy" t-shirt, and the front clings to his chest, soaked through with perspiration. Draped over his dirty blond hair is a black towel, the fringe at the edges partially obscuring Brian's eyes. There's a different energy to James tonight. He's less bouncy, more focused.]

MS: Standing next to me is a man who came within a hair's breadth of being World Television Champion.

[Brian reaches out, gripping the microphone, two of his fingers still wrapped in black tape. Slowly, James pulls the microphone towards him.]

BJ: Mark, I appreciate that you're trying to soften the blow. But the truth of the matter is, Ryan Martinez beat me. I came close, but I also came up short. But Ryan, I hope you hold that belt a long time. Because every day I'm training.

And I want another shot.

MS: I would say you certainly would be in line for another opportunity. That is, if Mr. Martinez can get through the long line of competitors standing in front of you. Men like Tony Sunn, Johnny Deston, Shadoc Rage, just to name a few.

[Brian nods.]

BJ: Oh, I can wait. I know what went wrong. I know I got a little too excited. I know I got ahead of myself. And I know I lost my temper.

[James' head bows slightly.]

BJ: And I apologize to the fans for that. And I apologize to Ryan for that. And especially, I apologize to my teachers. To Mr. Claw and to Mr. Michaelson. I won't ever let you down like that again.

MS: Moving forward, we need to address what happened at the end of your match. When the Dogs of War came to attack.

[James shakes his towel covered head.]

BJ: No Mark, they didn't attack me. They attacked Ryan. But me? Me, they just dumped out like day old garbage! Well, I have news for you Dogs. I am not garbage, and I am not so easy to get rid of!

You three... jerks bit off more than you can chew when you came looking to mess with me!

[James is starting to move a bit, some of his somber mood being burned away by his mounting intensity.]

BJ: I know what you three are all about. You can say whatever you want, but I know you're not brothers. You're just a pack of wild animals. You hunt together not out of any sort of brotherhood or friendship, but because that's just how you're made. You're mean, and nasty and messed up in the head!

So what am I going to do about it?

I could go run with my tail tucked between my legs. I could go hide out in Puerto Rico for a few years, and wait until I was nearly forgotten. I could sell my soul and do the bidding of men like Percy Childe. But that's what weak men do. And that's what all three of you are. Weak, pathetic little men. You come at people behind because you don't have the guts to fight a man face to face.

Well, I do!

[James is getting really fired up now, hands opening and closing, feet stomping.]

BJ: But you can bet I'm not stupid to do this alone. There's three of you and one of me. In times like this, you need someone to have your back. You three may say you're brothers, but we all know that's a shame. What binds you isn't brotherhood, it's something dirtier. But boys? I got two brothers of my own. Two men who have my back, not for money, or because it gives them an opportunity. But because they're my friends. I called my brothers. I called Michael, and I called Cody. And I asked them if they'd stand with me.

Can you guess what they said?

[Brian pulls the towel off his head, and is suddenly all smiles.]

BJ: YEEEEEEAAAAAAHHHHHHH!!!!

But don't take my word for it.

[James turns and into the shot walks Cody Mertz and Michael Aarons of Air Strike. Aarons has a smile beaming on his face as he speaks.]

MA: Ya see you guys over there want to attack our main man Bri over here three on one? No that don't sit too well with Air Strike. So why don't we add a little more Strike...

[Aarons jacks a thumb in James' direction.]

MA: ...to Air Strike and see how you Dogs like it when the fight is three on three!

CM: Dogs of War you guys fight as a unit, you fight together, and you fight strong. If your ideals and beliefs weren't so completely backwards you would be almost admirable.

[Mertz looks at James and Aarons.]

CM: But you see we have a pretty formidable group ourselves. One that's trained together all those months at the Corner which Pedro is all too familiar with. We also have a group that watches each other's' backs like Brian did for me in Japan, and now I get to return the favor tonight. So this group wants to think of themselves as the superior collective unit in the AWA.

[Mertz again looks at his partners.]

CM: Well I think the three of us will have something to say about that! The Dogs are a formidable group but I think they'll find the going a little tougher when their target is facing them and not getting jumped from behind.

[Aarons and James nod in agreement.]

MA: You know it Cods, and soon the Doggies will too. Cuz those Dogs got to deal with the high flying...

[Aarons points at Mertz.]

MA: ...death defying...

[Aarons points at himself.]

MA: ...Muay Thaying...

[Aarons points to James.]

MA: ... group you see before you! We got the Air, he's got the Strike, and those Dogs of War better look out cuz they getting put down tonight!

[Aarons holds out two fists for the all-important Double Fist Bump. James, using his good hand gives another over eager exchange causing Aarons to shake his hand out in mild discomfort as he and Mertz walk off.]

We crossfade back to the ring where Phil Watson is standing with a pair of masked competitors.]

PW: The following contest is a tag team match scheduled for one fall with a fifteen minute time limit. Introducing first, already in the ring at this time, from Parts Unknown at a combined weight of 620 pounds...

THE EXECUTIONERS!

[Two men clad in black from head to toe, including masks, bellow at the fans to some jeering.]

PW: And their opponents...

[Lights; Out! A loud whistle screeeeeeeeeeechers over the airwaves.]

V/O: ALLLLLLL ABOOOOOOOOooooooooAAAAAARRRRRD!

[The slow clanking of train wheels churning quickly heightens into hard grinding noises just as the hard hitting lead guitar riff kicks in for the "Kundalini Express" by Love and Rockets. The rapid banging of drums and synthesizers fire up next before the methodical and monotone voice of Daniel Ash is cued.]

GM: It has been an interesting turn of events in Camp Terry Shane, Bucky. Two weeks ago we saw Terry Shane III lay down the hammer on the Gang and put his troops into check. There's no telling how they are going to react-

BW: React? I'll tell you how they are gonna react, daddy. They are going to march on out here... lay a whooping' on these masked morons... rally behind the the Ring Leader and help him bring home the World Title just as they set out to originally do. There's no chinks in their armor, Gordo. They are stronger and more determined then ever before!

[Smoke screens the entrance portal but soon enough the silhouettes of three figures are lit up by neon green flood lights and spiraling lasers. Miss Sandra Hayes slithers out first and it doesn't matter if it's Texas, Japan, Cambodia, or here in Memphis... the cat calls soon follow. Hayes struts out in a pair of platform red pumps, whipping her white collarless dress around before coming to a pause with her florescent pink branding iron pointed towards the entrance. In unison, the Lights Out Express step into view.]

GM: I guess we will see if that's the case, Bucky. Anderson and Strong did not accompany Shane to the ring when he interrupted Steve Spector last week and announced his intentions to challenge Dave Bryant for the World Title in his home state of Missouri at Guts & Glory. In fact, we hadn't heard from them since their vicious assault on the World Tag Team Champions until Mark Stegglet was able to catch up with them a few days ago. Roll the footage.

[A ring where the Executioners are standing is reduced to a small split-screen in the corner. The main feed and larger screen is quickly filled up by Lenny Strong and Aaron Anderson standing beside Mark Stegglet.]

MS: Gentlemen, and I use that term loosely...

LS: Careful.

[Strong wags his finger at Stegglet while Anderson puffs up his chest, arms folded against it.]

MS: How would you describe yourselves after that [pause] heinous attack on Skywalker Jones and Hercules Hammonds in the parking lot two weeks ago. Cowardly? Desperate?

AA: Calculated.

[Stegglet scoffs at the notion.]

MS: You can't be serious.

LS: We most certainly are, jack! Those two goons have been fillin' everyone's heads with lies and tall tales. Champions they may be but honorable they ain't. They attacked us, Mark. Didja forget 'bout that? How many times didja expect us to sit on our hands and let them blast us with cheap shot after cheap shot? How many more times were we supposed to let that go unpunished?

AA: I'll tell you, Mark. None. Not a single.. more.. time. Skywalker Jones talked about their being no tears over spilled blood between Herc and himself at Memorial Day Mayhem when they were paired up on opposite sides of each other. Even thieves have honor amongst themselves. Skywalker Jones... He. Has. None.

MS: And what of Terry Shane's-

LS: No more questions, Stegglet. We've got the answers you're seekin' and we're gonna lay them for the entire world to hear loud and clear. We want the champs. Whether it's Guts & Glory, Homecoming, Prom, SuperClash XVIII.. it don't matter, jack! We're comin' for em' and we're comin' in hot. Jones and Hammonds.. you've run out of places to hide. Ya hear me? If not... hear this!

[He slaps Anderson on the shoulders.]

AA: We were brought here for one reason and one reason only. To collect gold and build the most recognized brand the wrestling world has ever seen. The Shane Gang. Three words that for the past year and a half have been synonymous with words like ruthless, determined, and unstoppable. But those words, as callous and daunting as they may be... don't equal success. They don't add up to anything more or less than where we were as individuals whether it was in the Combat Corner or the Yard in Amarillo.

Together, we are destined to be more.. much more. There is only one word that matters to Terry Shane III and only one word that will brand The Shane Gang as the most dominant faction the wrestling world has ever seen.

Champions.

Herc.. Jones.. this IS the Year of the Shane Gang.

And it's time for you to realize that there's only one end to your fabled little run as the saviors of tag team wrestling.

LS: LIGHTS!

[Strong slaps his elbow into the palm of his other hand creating that all too familiar *SMACK!* noise.]

LS [low]: Out.

AA: Ain't no way else around it.

[The large screen fades and the small live look-in of the AWA arena rapidly encompasses the view. But while the statement was ongoing, we saw Executioner #1 shoot for a collar and elbow tie-up and Anderson quickly side step him, wrapping his arms around his waist, and pulling him over with an explosive suplex that dumped the masked man on his shoulders. The Executioner pops back, shaking his head, and is met by a boot to the midsection that buckles him over. Anderson hammers him with forearms forcing him down to one knee. The first graduate of the Combat Corner grabs him by the back of the head and then begins forcefully driving his right knee into the jaw of the Executioner. Davis Warren warns him and Anderson blasts him with a final cap of the knee that sends him flopping onto his back.]

GM: A much more aggressive and determined Aaron Anderson tonight, Bucky. You've got to believe every word that came out of his mouth and that of Strong earlier this week. These two seem more determined then ever then bringing those titles home to the Shane Gang.

BW: And you were worried there was some sort of unspoken uneasiness amongst them. This is their year, Gordo! The Year of the Shane Gang! We are just here for the ride!

[Executioner #1 gets up and immediately voices his complaint to Davis Warren, acting out that Anderson yanked him by the mask.]

GM: The Executioner is complaining to the official that Anderson was holding him by the back of his mask. He may have a point there, Anderson's grip seemed unusually tight.

BW: Oh please, that's the oldest trick in the book!

[Warren calls out to Anderson who waves him off and barks out to Executioner #1 . The masked man moves back in for another tie up and this time Anderson ducks his head underneath his right arm and locks his hands together around his waist into a bearhug, lifts...

...and then shifts his right hand out from around his back and presses it into his chest and SPIKES him down!]

GM: Oh my!

BW: What a spinebuster, daddy! Now THAT'S how a Carolina boy crushes someone!

GM: Speaking of... Carolina born and bred star Jeff Jagger was rumored to have made an appearance two weeks ago at our show in North Carolina but he suffered a left ankle injury during a training session and yet another unfortunate setback in the young man's career.

BW: Boo-hoo. Terry Shane got ram-rodged into a dumpster head first and he was able to appear at the show! That's what separates the men from the boys and the champions from the pretenders!

[Anderson drags the Executioner to his corner where he reaches over and Lenny Strong tags himself in. Strong catapults into the ring, dropping a knee across the chest of their opponent before rolling up to his feet in one fluid motion. As he springs up he rockets himself into the far ropes, bounces back, and rushes towards a rising Executioner...

...spins and DRILLS the Executioner between the eyes with a spinning big boot!]

BW: DISCUS BIG BOOT!

[And he flails over the top rope and lands hard on the floor below.]

GM: What a shot by Strong! Strong throws some of the meanest strikes in the game, Bucky. I'd fork over my hard earned money to watch him trade shots with an up and comer like Brian James whose pedigree is second to none.

BW: Anyone who came out of the Claw Academy has got the edge in my book but that sweet dreams elbow of his has known to leave men lyin' on their back starin' up at the arena lights. Kinda like how Casey James probably feels right now. God rest his soul.

GM: Would you stop that?!

[Strong threatens to leave the ring and Davis Warre intervenes. On the outside, the Executioner clutches at his back and tries to find his footing underneath him but it is the Siren who strikes next, sweeping his feet out from underneath him with a slash of the branding iron.]

BW: That's my girl.

GM: Far from it.

BW: Did you ever notice how we don't have commercials for Sandra's branding irons anymore, Gordo? One of the hottest sellers of all time and I've got an attic full of them. The front office had to pull the commercial because they couldn't fill any more orders!

[With the Executioner still down, Anderson steps out on the floor. He stomps on the back of Executioner #1 before he scoops him up, elevating him over his shoulder so he's parallel to the ground and facing the ring. Anderson grins, shouting "INCOMING!" as he bull rushes forward and LAUNCHES him from the floor over the middle rope and into the ring...

...where he is met by the uppercutting right arm of Lenny Strong who DRILLS him in the jaw!]

GM: OH MY STARS, BUCKY!

BW: Just... wow.

[Executioner #1 lies helpless on the mat and Strong lays over him, pushing up on his chest.]

GM: One. Two. Th-

[Just before Warren's hand can slap the mat for a third time the larger member, Executioner #2, dives on top of Lenny Strong and breaks up the pin!]

GM: A crucial save by Executioner #2 but at what cost? Now his partner has to keep on taking a beating!

[Irate, Strong shoots up. He gets into the face of the masked man who fearlessly shoves him back with both hands and sends him tumbling into his own corner. Strong's eyes fill with rage as he darts towards him but the official steps in-between the two and escorts Executioner #2 back to his corner. Still facing Strong, he mockingly waves to him as he forced out of the ring.]

GM: What guts by Executioner #2, not only did he not back down but he just shoved Strong clear across the ring with little effort and Strong is far from being a small man. We've seen him trade shots with the War Pigs and Hercules Hammonds and hold his own.

[Flustered, Strong slaps Anderson back in and the Charlotte native steps through the ropes. He points to Executioner #2 across the ring as he stands over his partner. After a quick crack of both pairs of knuckles he reaches down and snares Executioner #1 around the waist, dead-lifting him from the ground and into the air.]

GM: Great show of strength by Anderson.

BW: Wait for it...

[Anderson holds him waist high, shouts out, and jerks him up higher before spinning him around...

...and driving him back first over his knee!]

BW: A trip down Tobacco Road for the Executioner!

[Anderson presses down on him drawing a two count from Davis...

...before he inexplicably pulls up.]

GM: Come on, that's just poor sportsmanship.

BW: He ain't done yet, Gordo. These guys have been itchin' to pummel someone since they got back from Japan and were robbed from being in the Stampede Cup Finals.

GM: They cheated and they were caught, Bucky.

BW: They had their hands raised and then were robbed of victory! If anything, O'Connor should have restarted the match just like he did at Memorial Day Mayhem with Wright and Bryant! He's lucky he retired because his job was on the chopping block from what I understand!

[The Axeman yanks Executioner #1 up and displays him to his partner. He mockingly holds his arm up for him which is about a foot out of reach of Executioner #2 who tries to lean and swipe his partner's hands.]

GM: We have now gone from poor sportsmanship to down right disrespectful.

BW: He's trying to help him out! He needs to tag and Anderson is just trying to help him hold his hand out!

GM: Hardly.

[Aaron Anderson redirects his attention back to Executioner #1 as he whips him hard into his own corner. The masked man collapses to one knee and then instinctively pops back where he is met with a vicious set of backhand chops that force him back into the corner. Strong reaches out and Anderson obliges, tagging him in.]

GM: When these two are on the same page there's no telling what they can accomplish. They are the longest tenured tag team on our roster right now, Bucky, and they are only getting better and better each time out. They grew leaps and bounds in the Stampede Cup, I'll give them that, but they've just been barely scraping through with seedy wins. A win over the the champs

would change that and cement them as one of the top ten teams to ever step foot in an AWA ring.

BW: Top ten? You're crazy. I dare you to name ten AWA teams better than them here and now!

GM: Rough N' Ready, Violence Unlimited, the Blonde Bombers, the Blonde Bombers 2.0, Dufresne and Freeman, Kentucky's Pride, the Bishop Boys —

BW: Ok, ok. We've had some of the best teams around, I get it. But you gotta admit. These guys are in their prime and on the verge of breaking through.

GM: As much as it pains me...

BW: I told you!

[With Strong and Anderson both in they each grab Executioner #1 by an arm. In unison they begin to whip him across the ring...

...only to put on the breaks and whip him back into the corner!]

GM: A brutal double whip, Bucky! We've seen this before and if history repeats itself, we are about to-

[Before Gordon can finish the Lights Out Express repeat the process, yanking Executioner #1 forward only to whip him right back into the corner. They repeat this a third, fourth, fifth, sixth, and seventh time...

...before letting up and watching him sleepwalk out of the corner and plummet face down into the canvas.]

GM: Absolutely vicious. If his entire body weren't covered in black leather you would see welts on top of welts on his back right now.

[Anderson exits as Strong positions himself back in his corner. He steps through the ropes and begins to ascend up the backside of the turnbuckle. He reaches down, tagging Anderson as he rises up in the corner.]

GM: Anderson is headed straight for the Executioner who is still out cold on the canvas. What are they going for here, Bucky?

BW: It could be anything, Gordo. These boys have thirty-two different ways to finish a match. The Demolition Driver, Assault & Battery, the Glass Cutter, there's no tellin' what they've got in store for this poor sap!

[Anderson peels the masked man up, lowers his head through his legs, and shoves him up into the air over his shoulders. He balances himself, slowly turning him towards Strong in the corner who crouches, leaps, spins...

...and SMACKS his arm across the face of the Executioner who collapses down and bounces off the mat!]

BW: SANTA FE TO ALBUQUERQUE!

[Strong lays hunched in the corner as Anderson rolls himself back first over the down and out Executioner.]

GM: We've got one! Two! Save by Executioner #2!

[The much larger masked man drops a big elbow across the chest of Anderson breaking up the pin!]

GM: Another save by Executioner #2.

BW: I don't think he's getting a Christmas Card from his partner this year.

[Anderson quickly shoots up, he lunges for masked man who ducks under and throws his body into the ropes. Anderson does the same, vaulting himself off the ropes on the other side of the ring and the two men charge forward as Anderson extends his right arm...

...only to be steamrolled over by a MASSIVE flying shoulder tackle!]

GM: OH MY! Nobody saw that shot coming!

[Strong peels himself off the canvas just to see his partner Anderson obliterated by Executioner #2. Miss Hayes shouts out to him and he burns rubber across the ring, narrowing in on the man in all black...

...who lowers his head and LAUNCHES him up into the air with a king-sized backdrop!]

GM: GOOD GRIEF! HE SENT HIM TO THE MOON WITH THAT ONE!

BW: This isn't happening!

GM: Executioner #2 has the Lights Out Express reeling

[Anderson, now back up, clasps his hands over his head as he tries to pummel the masked man over the head but he is met with a stiff kick to the midsection which buckles him over allowing Executioner #2 to knot his arms up and around his waist and yank him up into the air...

...and then CRUSH him into the canvas back-first!]

GM: OH MY STARS AND GARTERS, BUCKY! WHAT A POWERBOMB!

BW: There is no way that is- That man is a fraud!

GM: Who? You don't think?!

[Executioner #2 roars, bringing the crowd to their feet. Strong, wobbles forward, still feeling the effects of colliding with the ring moments ago.

Executioner #2 easily buckles him with a shot to the midsection and wraps his arms tightly around Strong's gut, lifts, hiking him up and over his shoulder...

...and then snaps him back, SMASHING him face-first into the mat!

BW: THAT'S THE HAMMER! THAT'S THE HAMMONDS HAMMER! I KNEW IT!

[Executioner #2 pumps his fists into the air as the crowd rallies behind his every move.]

GM: The Memphis crowd is hot for the Executioners-

BW: You mean Hammonds and...

[Bucky's words drift as he stares at the ring, realizing the other Executioner who is still out cold is much too large to be Skywalker Jones.]

BW: What is going on?!

[The beastly Executioner #2 flexes a double bicep pose, kissing one arm as Aaron Anderson, still on his chest, reaches out underneath the ropes where Miss Sandra Hayes hands Anderson her patented branding iron. The Axeman shields it against his body, rising slowly while Davis Warren checks on Executioner #1 and Lenny Strong. Finally the large masked man turns just in time...]

GM: LOOK OUT!

[To eat the tip of the branding iron right in the jaw!]

BW: Doesn't matter much who is under there now, does it?!

[The big man crumbles upon impact and Anderson heaves the branding iron under the rope. He moves towards Strong first, slapping him several times across each cheek. Lenny, still rattled, stands up on shaky legs as Anderson pulls the masked man up to his feet.]

GM: They're trying to pull off the mask, Bucky!

BW: Expose that impostor!

[Strong struggles with his fingers, still dazed, but eventually fastens them into the back of Executioner #2's mask. He yanks the black threads from their loopholes...

...just as another man emerges, dressed in black, from the side of the apron.]

BW: WHAT IN THE WORLD?!

GM: Is that- Executioner... Number Three?!

[The slender masked man crawls towards Executioner #1 and grabs him, rolling him frantically out of the ring. He quickly scoots himself into the same position on his back just as Strong removes the final thread from the mask, ripping it off...

...revealing?]

BW: WHAT?!

GM: Is that Rock Bradley?!

[Bradley, the former body builder turned wrestler, has blood trickling from his forehead as Strong's eyes widen. Dumbfounded, he staggers back, turning towards the other Executioner on the ground...

...who pulls him down into a small package!]

GM: ONE! TWO! THREE!

*DING! DING! DING! *

BW: NO! NO! NO!

[Both Executioner #3 and Strong jump up and the masked man dives out of the ring. Strong lunges for him but he backpedals away, ripping his mask off...]

GM: SKYWALKER JONES!

BW: This is absurd!

[Anderson shoves Bradley to the ground and stomps across the ring and as he does so there's some commotion in the front row behind him.]

GM: Wait- look over there, Bucky!

[Gordon, nearly out of his seat, points towards the front row where a hulking man leaps over the railing and dives into the ring.]

GM: IT'S HERCULES HAMMONDS! HAMMONDS IS IN THE RING!

[The Tupelo Tower charges across the ring, extends both arms, and clotheslines Anderson and Strong! Anderson falls through the ropes at the feet of Skywalker Jones who unloads a flurry of rapid-fire stomps to the back. Strong, caught in the ropes, is yanked back into the ring where Hammonds jerks up, pressing him into the air with both hands high over his head...]

GM: What power! THAT'S Hercules Hammonds, Bucky! Look at that god-given strength!

[And Hammonds dumps Strong behind him where his body bounces off the ring mat.]

GM: And there goes Jones!

[Skywalker Jones dashes across the ring apron on the outside and leaps, corkscrewing his back flipping body around...

...and lands chest first on top of Aaron Anderson!]

GM: What athleticism! One of the most talented teams we have ever seen, Bucky!

BW: B-But...Rock Bradley!

GM: A rare appearance for the three time California IFBB body-building champion and third runner up at last years Mr. Olympia in Las Vegas, Nevada.

BW: Rock. Bradley.

[Jones, now with his attention on the ring, leaps up to the apron and swiftly maneuvers himself to the top of the turnbuckle. Hammonds drags Strong up and hooks him around the waist, gut wrenching him over his shoulder...

...and SLAMMING him chest first into the canvas!]

GM: THERE'S THE HAMMER, BUCKY!

BW: I saw it.

GM: And here comes the nail in the coffin!

[Jones stands, air-brushes his shoulder, and leaps...

...somersaulting through the air and crashing down into the chest of Aaron Anderson!]

GM: OH MY STARS!

BW [muttering]: In Your Face Disgrace.

GM: Strong and Hayes are pulling Anderson out! The Lights Out Express are getting out of dodge!

[A fuming Sandra Hayes is shouting down the aisle at the World Tag Team Champions as Strong essentially drags his partner back towards the locker room.]

GM: The World Tag Team Champions have pulled one over on the Lights Out Express... but it's all fun and games until these two get in the ring with one another, Bucky.

BW: Which SHOULD happen at Guts & Glory, Gordo.

GM: Will it? Let's find out right now in the Control Center!

[We crossfade to the bank of television monitors that can only mean the Control Center is upon us. After a few moments, we crossfade to Jason Dane standing in front of a similar setup with the Guts & Glory logo splashed over his right shoulder.]

JD: Hello everyone and welcome to the Guts & Glory Control Center! We are just thirteen days away from the 4th of July where the AWA will be coming to you LIVE here on WKIK from Hammons Field in Springfield, Missouri. It's going to be a jam-packed night of action... a night so full that AWA officials have given strict instructions to the locker room that there will be NO impromptu challenges. This lineup that I'm about to run down is final!

[The graphic changes to show The Lost Boy and Sunshine on one side of the screen and Travis Lynch on the other.]

JD: It's a good ol' fashioned Grudge Match as Travis Lynch attempts to shake a long-standing monkey off his back and defeat the man who assaulted him on his first night in the wrestling business, The Lost Boy. With Sunshine paying the bill, The Lost Boy may stop at nothing to put Lynch down and get a little bit of payback for the woman scorned.

[The graphic changes.]

JD: How about this one that started back at Memorial Day Mayhem? It'll be two top contenders for the World Television Title doing battle when the strongman Tony Sunn meets the wildman Shadoe Rage!

[The shot changes again, showing Rick Marley and William Craven.]

JD: A long-standing feud is rekindled when "Showtime" Rick Marley attempts to do the bidding of the Wise Men and put his longtime rival William Craven on the shelf once and for all.

[A new graphic comes up.]

JD: This should be an exciting display of athleticism as Brian James and TORA give us a return from their showing back in the Mayhem Match.

[A different graphic comes up, showing Gibson Hayes on one side of the screen and Strictly Business on the other.]

JD: There will be no impromptu matches - no surprise showdowns. But Strictly Business has yet to reveal who they have signed to face. We do know however that they have bought two front row tickets so that Michael Aarons and Cody Mertz can witness it firsthand. Also, Gibson Hayes has come to the AWA Championship Committee and he has signed a contract as

well. Hayes has DEMANDED a rematch with Caspian Abaran. Can Hayes break his losing streak at three matches? We'll find out in Springfield!

[The graphic changes again.]

JD: You wanna talk about fireworks? We're going to be giving the fans in Springfield a patriotic fireworks display after the show... but during the show, we're going to see fireworks of a different kind as the muscle of Team Supreme, Cain Jackson, will take on the father of one of the Team Supreme members, Robert Donovan!

[The graphic is altered.]

JD: The AWA has always had a strong respect for the history of professional wrestling and there is perhaps no match filled with more history than this big tag team showdown that we learned about earlier tonight. Jack Lynch and Bobby O'Connor - representing two of the greatest wrestling families in our sport's history - takes on the student and teacher duo of Demetrius Lake and Hamilton Graham. When you go back and look at the history between Hamilton Graham and the O'Connors... remember, it was Cameron O'Connor, Bobby's father, that Graham defeated to win his first World Title on New Year's Day of 1979. You go back and look at the history between Hamilton Graham and Blackjack Lynch. And of course, you look at the history between Jack Lynch and Demetrius Lake. As Jack Lynch put it, there is an ocean of bad blood between these four men and it's going to be a real barn-burner on the 4th of July in the state of Missouri!

[Another graphic change, this one showing the World Tag Team Titles.]

JD: The AWA World Tag Team Titles will be on the line in a Stampede Cup rematch when Skywalker Jones and Hercules Hammonds put the gold up against Aaron Anderson and Lenny Strong, the Lights Out Express. Will the Year of the Shane Gang kick off in golden fashion at Guts & Glory?

[A filled graphic arrives, showing the five faces who will challenge the Wise Men's army at Guts & Glory.]

JD: The challenge was made two weeks ago and it was accepted right here tonight. Now... we can reveal both teams.

On one side, you will have Ryan Martinez, Eric Preston, former World Champion Supreme Wright, Hannibal Carver, and Callum Mahoney.

On the other?

[The graphic changes to show the team.]

JD: Johnny Detson, Brad Jacobs, Kolya Sudakov, and two members of the Dogs of War. Percy Childes and Larry Doyle have elected NOT to reveal which two members as of now but two will be inside the ring... and it's a safe bet that the other one will be OUTSIDE the ring.

[Dane grins.]

JD: And we can also now announce that "Big" Jim Watkins has elected to use his power to add a stipulation to any match on that show on this five-on-five battle. We caught up with "Big" Jim a few moments ago to get his comments.

[Crossfade to footage marked "MOMENTS AGO" where a grinning Jim Watkins is rubbing his huge hands together.]

JW: I had a lot of great moments in my career. Too many to count unless you're writing a book or putting together a DVD. But one of my greatest moments took place right here in the AWA when I stood inside the ring, covered in blood, and led the crowd in the Pledge of Allegiance, paying tribute to this great country on its' birthday.

And I'm gonna give those boys a chance to have that kind of moment for themselves after they've fought their way up to the lights and down to the floor in one of the damndest battlefields in the sport...

...and they've chased the Wise Men straight out of the AWA!

[Watkins grins, nodding his head.]

JW: It's the 4th of July. It's five-on-five warfare... and I can't think of a better place to have it than in the TOWER... OF... DOOM!

[We cut back to Jason Dane with a HUGE Tower Of Doom graphic by his side, showing the three stacked steel cages that make up the structure.]

JD: The Tower Of Doom RETURNS to the AWA for the first time since WrestleRock back on the 4th of July 2011 where two teams of five will battle their way up and down three stacked steel cages until every member of one team makes it out to the floor.

But who will be standing at the bottom? Who will be the Keeper Of The Key?

[Dane nods.]

JD: I'm told that the AWA front office has someone in mind for that role but the person will NOT be announced until match time.

[The graphic changes one more time.]

JD: And of course, we've got the big one... the Main Event for the World Heavyweight Title which will see the new Champion, Dave Bryant, defend the title against a man who won his shot at it over a year ago, Terry Shane III! Who will walk out of Springfield as the World Heavyweight Champion? And after their direct influence on the Memorial Day Mayhem Main Event, will the Wise Men play a role on the 4th of July? We'll find out in 13 days.

[We fade back to a generic Guts & Glory graphic.]

JD: It's the 4th of July. It's Springfield, Missouri. It's Guts & Glory! There are a handful of tickets still remaining, fans, but if you can't be with us live in Springfield, join us LIVE here on WKIK for all the action. For the Control Center, I'm Jason Dane and I'll see you in Springfield!

[We cut away from the Control Center to a very odd camera shot. It appears to be on top of a building, looking down at the setup for Saturday Night Wrestling. A voice is heard from off-camera.]

"The AWA looooooves their history, don't they?"

[The camera pans roughly. It's a handheld camera for sure. There's a burst of exposure as the device tries to adjust before revealing the Dogs Of War, in their ring gear, standing atop the building that we can now safely assume is the Mid-South Coliseum. Pedro Perez is the one speaking.]

PP: They wanted SO badly to get inside this building. To relive the glory days of Mid-South Wrestling with the Beale Street Bullies... with George Rogers... with the Moonshiners...

[Perez sneers.]

PP: Yeah, I know my history too. But just like the AWA was shut out of this building, you're looking at three men who were shut out of competing in the AWA for far too long. The front office would like you to believe we came "out of nowhere" but we all know that's far from the truth.

We were the forgotten sons of the Combat Corner.

[Isaiah Carpenter speaks, the world's largest chip on his shoulders.]

IC: At least you made television, Pedro... at least you got fed to the lion named Vasquez. Some of us couldn't get that far. Some of us got shown the door 'cause we didn't take lip from some trash in the Corner.

Trash like the three boys we're facing tonight.

[Carpenter smirks as Perez continues. Wade Walker stands behind them, stoic as he stares at the camera.]

PP: Boys. That's what you are, ain't it? Three little boys who crave their daddy's attention. Whether it's Aarons trying to be the superstar that Michaelson told him he could be. Whether it's James trying to somehow grow up to be half the man his father was. Or whether it's Mertz who...

[Carpenter lifts a finger, shaking his head.]

PP: Some secrets are best left unsaid, huh?

[Carpenter smiles, tapping his temple.]

PP: Watch out for this guy. He knows everything.

[Carpenter's arms come up in front of him, rippling with muscle.]

PP: But secrets or not, the fact is that we're dealing with three little boys who'd love nothing more than to do what the big boys couldn't do at Memorial Day Mayhem. They want to knock off the Dogs Of War.

But maybe you three haven't heard the news.

[Perez points off the building top, gesturing to the ring set up in the parking lot below.]

PP: This is our yard now.

[Carpenter leans in.]

IC: And we'll do whatever it takes to keep it that way.

[Carpenter and Perez peel away, leaving the big man behind. He leans close, shaking with intensity, hair soaked with sweat as he utters one line in his deep bass voice.]

WW: The Wise Men send their regards.

[He palms the camera, shoving it aside as we abruptly cut back to the ring where Phil Watson is standing.]

PW: The following contest is a six man tag team match scheduled for one fall with a thirty minute time limit. Introducing first...

["Can't Hold Us" by Macklemore and Ryan Lewis begins to play as Cody Mertz and Michael Aarons come racing out of the back to the cheers from the crowd.]

PW: Weighing in at a total of four hundred twenty pounds, Michael Aarons and Cody Mertz... the team of... AIIIIIIIR STRIIIIIIKE!

[All smiles and sprinting down the aisle, Air Strike slap the hands of all the fans that stick their arms out. Aarons has a well-toned, tanned small size frame with shoulder length brown hair. He is wearing long green tights with a white vertical stripe going down the leg; Mertz is a similar size if not a little smaller with short, messy dirty blonde hair. Mertz has on long white tights with a green vertical stripe going down each leg. Each is wearing the Air Strike Fan Club tee shirt!]

PW: And their tag team partner... from Portland, Oregon... weighing in at 240 pounds... BRIIIIIIIIAAAAAAANN JAAAAAAAAMES!

[James storms into view, a walking ball of enthusiasm as he gives several "YEAAAAAH! LET'S DO THIS!" as he comes through the curtain. He trades fierce fist bumps with both partners, ignoring any pain that might shoot

through his black-taped fingers. James bounces from foot to foot, showing his off six foot six height before pointing towards the ring that all three men go charging toward, diving under the bottom rope and popping up to their feet in unison!]

GM: Without a shadow of a doubt, these three men together form one of the most popular trios in all of the AWA. Air Strike has worked themselves into one of the top tag teams in the business while Brian James is perhaps the hottest rookie we've seen in quite some times.

BW: Hey, that black tape is still on his fingers.

GM: Yes.

BW: If Creed was the red gloved rookie, can we start calling James the black-fingered rookie?

GM: Those fingers are still being taped up after Supreme Wright's brutal attack on them several weeks ago but James seems to be able to compete with them like that without any trouble.

[James is still bouncing back and forth as the music fades...

We get a pan of the crowd, and then the makeshift arena lights go out. However, the arena's emergency lighting immediately kicks on. The bright blue-white glare of a number of smaller lights casts a surreal atmosphere over the arena, as emergency lighting tends to do. The sounds of a large pack of hunting dogs barking, snarling, and growling is head over the PA briefly, segueing into "War Machine" by KISS. Booing is heard as a number of spotlights sweep the crowd, as if searching for someone.]

PW: Introducing first, now entering the ring area... at a total combined weight of seven hundred eighty-two pounds...

...PEDRO PEREZ... ISAIAH CARPENTER... WADE WALKER...

...THE DOGS! OF! WAR!

[Midway through the introductions, one of the spotlights finds the three men in question marching through the crowd towards the ring, and all of the spotlights converge on that location. The trio wear midnight-blue sleeveless vests, matching track pants, black boots, and large midnight blue flak jackets over that.

In the lead is Pedro Perez. Perez is a dark tan-skinned man with a well-sculpted physique. His hair is short and curled, with quite an obvious use of hair gel. There is an intense look on his slightly-bestubbed face. His wrists and hands are taped up with white athletic tape, and he sports a pair of dark sunglasses.

Behind him is Isaiah Carpenter, who is a bit larger than Perez. Carpenter is a brown-skinned man with a wrestler's physique and a clean-shaven face.

Isaiah has very short black hair with one line shaved on each side, wrapping all the way around his head. His wrists and hands are also taped up, but with shiny black electrical tape, and he's keeping a stern eye out over the crowd for potential danger.

In the back is the largest of the three, Wade Walker. Walker is a slapped together white man with tan skin and shoulder length, stringy, thin blonde hair. His biceps and forearms are bulging, and he's got the tattoo of the sun god holding a three pronged pitchfork on his right shoulder. He seems the most emotionally composed of the three, confidently bringing up the rear.]

GM: Here they come! The Dogs Of War came out of nowhere this spring and quickly established themselves as more than the Wise Men's hired muscle when they defeated Eric Preston, Ryan Martinez, and Bobby O'Connor back at Memorial Day Mayhem.

[Not wasting any time, Michael Aarons and Cody Mertz come barreling across the ring, throwing themselves into stereo tope dives into a stunned Carpenter and Mertz, knocking them back into the barricade to a huge reaction!]

GM: OH MY STARS!! AIR STRIKE STRIKES HARD!

[Wade Walker, suddenly steaming mad, steps up on the apron where Brian James approaches fast, throwing rights and lefts to the head of Walker...

...and then leans up, cracking Walker with an enzuigiri that stuns him, forcing Walker to drop off the apron to the floor!]

GM: JAMES FLOORS WADE WALKER!!

[James enthusiastically springs to his feet, giving a huge shout as he barrels to the far ropes, rebounding back at top speed...

...and goes for a tope dive of his own that Walker cuts off with a thunderous leaping forearm smash to the jaw!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: WALKER STOPS HIM COLD!!

[The powerhouse of the Dogs of War turns his back, yanking James out through the ropes and over his shoulder in powerslam position. He steps away from the ring, turning back towards it...

...and DROPS to his knees, SLAMMING Brian James facefirst into the ring apron!]

GM: GOOD GRIEF!

BW: Can you stop yelling, Gordo?! My ears are killing me already!

GM: What an incredible start to what promises to be a wild six man war between these six competitors!

[Walker climbs to his feet in time to get swarmed by Aarons and Mertz who are throwing rights and lefts as quickly as they can, overwhelming Walker who backpedals as the referee shouts to get the action inside the ring.]

GM: Johnny Jagger hasn't signaled for the bell yet. This match isn't officially underway - not yet at least.

[Walker reaches out, piefacing Mertz down to the floor where he backrolls to his feet, charging back in, leaping up, and smashing a right hand on Walker's ear!]

GM: The fight continues out on the floor and-

[Walker drills Aarons with a right hand, knocking him back down to his rear on the floor. The big man grabs Mertz under the armpits, swinging to throw him into a seated position on the ring apron...

...and then SLAMS his forearm into Mertz' sternum!]

GM: Ohh! The heavy shot to the chest sends Mertz back inside the ring... and Walker's coming in after him.

[The big man steps through the ropes as the bell sounds, dragging Cody Mertz off the mat by the arm.]

GM: Walker shoots him across... here he comes!

[A heavy running clothesline causes Mertz' feet to come up off the mat on the impact. They settle back to the canvas as Walker sidesteps and lights up Mertz with a knife edge chop!]

GM: Walker grabs him by the hair... ohh! What a European uppercut!

[Walker hangs on, delivering blow after blow to the jaw of Cody Mertz as Michael Aarons crawls in, rushing past the official...

...and leaps up on the back of Walker to a big cheer, flailing away with right hands to the face!]

BW: Walker's getting doubled up on by Air Strike again!

[Aarons spins Walker around, laying in a few forearms to the jaw as he grabs him by the arm.]

GM: Irish whi- reversed!

[Aarons CRASHES into the corner, smashing his own partner into the turnbuckles.]

GM: Good grief! Walker is incredibly strong! He's nearly three hundred pounds and all of 22 years old! This kid has a tremendous future ahead of him and... look at this!

[The crowd roars as Walker leans over, lifting BOTH members of Air Strike up in a fireman's carry...

...and DRIVES them back with a Samoan Drop!]

GM: GOOD GRIEF! A DOUBLE STACKED SAMOAN DROP BY WADE WALKER!!

[Walker pops back to his feet, throwing his powerful arms apart with a roar. The crowd jeers the gesture which makes Walker REALLY give them a gesture to boo.]

GM: Oh, there's no call for that. Fans, we apologize for that.

BW: These guys don't give a damn about anyone's rules, Gordo. Yours, the AWA's, WKIK's... hell, the United States too, I'd bet.

[Walker turns around...

...and gets caught with a lightning fast right-left jab combo from a recovered Brian James. The blows from the six foot six rookie continue to land, forcing Walker back into the turnbuckles.]

GM: Walker's back in the corner!

[James steps to the side, grabbing the top rope as he snaps off roundhouse kicks into the ribcage!]

GM: James is going to work on him and-

[From outside the ring, Isaiah Carpenter and Pedro Perez grab the legs of James, yanking his feet out from under him and dragging him out to the floor...

...where they promptly use his arms to THROW him backfirst into the ring apron!]

GM: OHHH!

BW: And this is how the Dogs Of War beat Preston, Martinez, and O'Connor back at Mayhem, Gordo. In a one-on-one showdown, the Dogs might be in trouble but when teamwork comes in... when it becomes a numbers game, the Dogs are on top of it all.

[As Michael Aarons and Cody Mertz struggle back to their feet, Walker slaps himself across the pectorals, tearing across the ring at full speed, stretching his arms out to either side...]

GM: Double clothesli- ducked!

[Aarons and Mertz avoid the double clothesline...

...and CONNECT with a double superkick that sends Walker crashing back into the turnbuckles! The referee again steps in, trying to force it down to a one-on-one matchup as Aarons leaps up on the second rope, hammering Walker with angry closed fists!]

"ONE!"

"TWO!"

"THREE!"

"FOUR!"

"FIVE!"

"SIX!"

"SEVEN!"

"EIGHT!"

"NINE!"

"TEN!"

[Aarons drops down, waving for Mertz to assist as they double whip Walker from corner to corner. Walker bounces off, staggering out...

...and gets LAUNCHED up and over with a double backdrop down to the mat!]

GM: Walker hits the mat hard... and finally, the referee steps in and forces Cody Mertz out to the apron. After a few minutes of action, we're finally able to get this down to a one-on-one matchup at a time. Remember, fans, we're going to be seeing the Dogs of War take part in the Tower in 13 days at Guts & Glory while Brian James will be taking on TORA in what should be a fantastic matchup.

BW: Air Strike will be there too... living a lifetime dream by watching Strictly Business from the front row.

GM: Disgusting. I can't believe Andrew Tucker and Mike Sebastian are ducking Aarons and Mertz like this. And they want to be Hall of Famers?!

[Aarons drags Walker off the mat, peppering him with some short jabs to the jaw...

...and then throws a standing dropkick, knocking Walker flat again.]

GM: Michael Aarons seems VERY hot under the collar here tonight. We know that Air Strike was very upset over what happened to Brian James two weeks ago at the hands of the Dogs Of War and the rest of the Wise Men's henchmen.

[He mounts Walker, hammering him with right hands until the referee forces him to get up. A furious Aarons stalks away, heading towards the corner where Mertz implores him to calm down a little bit.]

BW: Aarons has got a bit of a temper, Gordo... maybe a little bit of a dark side.

GM: I don't know about that. He just seems fired up at the idea of getting his hands on the Dogs Of War after what they've done over the past few months.

[Aarons turns back towards Walker who is climbing to his feet...

...and just grabs the Air Strike member, throwing him bodily into the corner where Perez and Carpenter swarm, hammering him from the outside despite the referee's protests!]

GM: Come on, Johnny! Get them off Michael Aarons!

[Cue Cody Mertz to come charging across the ring followed shortly by Brian James who trade fisticuffs with Perez and Carpenter, breaking their ally free while Walker crouches down, slamming a clenched fist into the canvas...

...and then barrels across the ring, leaping up to clutch his hands together...]

"OHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: DEVASTATING HAMMER BLOW ACROSS THE CHEST OF MICHAEL AARONS!!

[Walker stands over the stunned Aarons, shouting at Mertz and James to "get out of his yard!"]

GM: Wade Walker is so explosive in there... and he tags in Isaiah Carpenter. Carpenter is someone I can't quite get a pulse on, Bucky. Our sources say he's the technician of the group but I've also heard he's got a high flying background.

BW: That makes him unpredictable. It makes him someone to watch. It makes him someone who could hit from any direction at any time!

[Carpenter and Walker pull Aarons off the mat, whipping him across the ring together. As Aarons rebounds, Walker yanks him up into a bearhug as Carpenter hits the far ropes, bouncing back to hit the near ropes facing Aarons...

...and skies through the air, taking him down with a leg lariat!]

GM: Nice doubleteam by the Dogs of War... and Carpenter lunges on him, hammering him down into the mat!

[A series of brutal hammerfists leaves Aarons trying to cover up as Carpenter grabs at his foot, rising up off the mat...

...and applying a lightning-quick spinning toehold, dropping down to his knees to put maximum pressure on!]

GM: Carpenter drawing a target on the knee of Michael Aarons, perhaps trying to take some of the air out of Air Strike.

[Carpenter climbs back to his feet, giving the limb a couple of hard yanks before hauling him towards the corner where he slaps the hand of Pedro Perez...

...who catapults over the top rope, kicking the extended limb!]

GM: Pedro Perez is in... no Junior anymore, fans. This man says he's not going to live in his father's shadow as men like Brian James do... his words not mine.

[Perez bails away from the leg, stomping Aarons' face with the flat of his boot - a fact he informs Johnny Jagger of as Jagger complains about the stomps.]

BW: Totally legal stomps there, Gordo. Jagger's got no cause to get on Perez' case for 'em.

GM: Maybe not but I'm sure Perez will be breaking the rules at any moment now.

[Dragging Aarons up by the arm, Perez whips him the short distance into the nearest corner. The impact is so sudden, Aarons staggers out and gets dropped with a hard back elbow under the chin!]

GM: Down goes Aarons off the elbow!

[Perez is smiling maniacally, leaning against the ropes as he stares across at Cody Mertz who is shouting for his partner to get to the corner and make the tag. He waves at Mertz, calling him into the ring...

...and then wheels around, stomping Aarons right out under the ropes to the barely-padded asphalt parking lot below!]

GM: Perez forces him out... and now Johnny Jagger is forcing him back...

[But as Aarons climbs off the ground, Isaiah Carpenter barrels down the length of the apron, leaping off with a Superman punch right on the jaw!]

GM: OHHHH!

BW: I'll say it for ya, Gordo - good grief, daddy!

GM: Carpenter got a lot of air time and a lot of impact behind that leaping right hand. Michael Aarons went down hard off of that.

[Carpenter ignores the protesting official as he shoves Aarons back into the ring, backpedaling towards his corner as Mertz and James drop down to pursue him.]

GM: Johnny Jagger out to the floor, cutting off Mertz and James. He's doing his best to keep this thing under control.

[But as Jagger argues with the fan favorites, Carpenter slides back under the ropes into the ring. Perez pulls Aarons up, hooking in a side waistlock as Carpenter hits the ropes, coming in fast...

...and throws a running single legged dropkick to the jaw, forcing him right back into a high impact back suplex out of Perez!]

GM: OHH! Another devastating double team out of the Dogs of War!

BW: You talk about Air Strike being tag team specialists, Gordo... look at the Dogs of War! These Dogs were bred for teamwork!

[Carpenter slips back out before the referee gets back in, shouting at Perez as the wild-eyed Puerto Rican drags Aarons to his corner, slapping the hand of Wade Walker.]

GM: The big man's coming back in...

[Walker scoops Aarons up, holding him across his chest...

...and DROPS him down in a backbreaker!]

GM: Ohh!

[Walker rises back to his feet, holding Aarons like a small child before he drops down with a second backbreaker...]

GM: That's two!

[He spins a full 360, showing the trapped Aarons off to the rest of the crowd before dropping down a third time!]

GM: Three backbreakers by Wade Walker! Goodness!

[He straightens up, looking at his own corner...

...and LAUNCHES Aarons up and over, bouncing him off the canvas with a fallaway slam!]

GM: OHHHHH!

BW: He threw him too close to the corner! Mertz and James are trying to tag!

[But before they can even get close, Pedro Perez bursts through the ropes, charging across with a pair of right hands that sends them down off the apron to the floor!]

GM: PEREZ CLEARS THEM OUT!!

[The fans are jeering Perez as the referee backs him across the ring, leaving Wade Walker to stalk across, pulling Aarons off the mat by the hair...

...when Aarons suddenly slaps the hand away, tucking his head under Walker's chin and drops to his knees in a jawbreaker!]

GM: OHHHH!

[Aarons pops back up, backing to the ropes behind him, and leaping up to land a high knee to the jaw!]

GM: A SECOND SHOT TO THE CHIN!!

[Aarons spins, facing the corner, making a dive...]

GM: TAG!

[Cody Mertz is quickly in, slingshotting up to the top rope, and diving off with a crossbody that floors Walker. Mertz rolls off, using the momentum to spring up, rushing the other corner...

...and connects with a split-legged dropkick that sends both Dogs of War to the floor!]

GM: MERTZ CLEARS THE CORNER!!

[Michael Aarons rolls to the floor where Brian James drops down to check on him as Mertz gets up, swinging an arm in the air as he charges the rising Walker...

...and leaps up, snaring Walker's head between his legs, snapping him over in a lightning-quick rana!]

GM: OH MY!

BW: Mertz is the master of the rana! He's got lucha libre training in his background and even a guy the size of Wade Walker is going over if that move is applied in the right way, daddy!

[Mertz pumps a fist as he gets back up...

...and slaps the outstretched hand of Brian James!]

GM: TAG!

[The son of the Blackheart comes in fast, shoving the rising Walker back into the corner of the Dogs Of War.]

GM: James has got 'im in the wrong part of town, fans!

BW: That's a rookie mistake. A hot-headed rookie mistake as he put the man into his own corner!

[James tees off, first landing a half dozen sternum-cracking kicks to the chest. The son of the Blackheart pivots, setting his feet to throw knife-edge chops across the chest as well.]

GM: Johnny Jagger's ordering him out of the corner but James isn't paying a bit of attention to the AWA's Senior Official!

[As James gets hotter and hotter under the collar, he switches stances again, throwing brutal right crosses and left hooks in quick succession, battering Wade Walker from side to side...

...and finishes it off with a devastating elbow uppercut that snaps Walker's head back, sitting him down against the turnbuckles!]

GM: Good grief! What a shot!

[James stalks away, shoving his past angrily past the official before wheeling around, tearing back in...

...as Isaiah Carpenter deadleaps to the top rope, springing off with a dropkick to the chest that knocks James flat on his back where he backrolls up to his feet, charging back in...]

GM: JAMES!

[...and OOOOOOOBLITERATES Carpenter with a running high kick to the jaw, flipping Carpenter over and dumping him chestfirst down on the canvas!]

GM: MY STARS IN HEAVEN!! CARPENTER GOT WIPED OUT!!

[James celebrates the big kick, leaning down to slap the canvas with both hands...

...and gets FLATTENED by a Wade Walker lunging clothesline as the big man surges to his feet!]

GM: GOOD GRIEF!! GOOD GRIEF!!

[An angry Walker stalks back to the corner, slapping the hand of Pedro Perez. Perez quickly scales the buckles as Walker lifts James up under his powerful right arm, dropping him in a side backbreaker...

...and Perez comes sailing off the top rope, dropping an elbow down across the throat!]

GM: OHHH! DECAPITATION BY THE DOGS OF WAR!!

[Walker steps out to the apron as Perez goes for a cover.]

GM: ONE!! TWO!! TH-

[James lifts a shoulder, breaking the pin a split second before Perez grabs a handful of hair, relentlessly pummeling him with right hands to the skull, shoving him back down to the mat before rushing to the far ropes, rebounding back...

...and dropping a king-sized leaping senton down across the chest!]

GM: And there can be no doubt where Perez learned that, fans. Pedro Perez did his time in the Combat Corner and he had a short-lived obsession with Juan Vasquez... perhaps it is not as short-lived as we thought.

[Perez rolls off, sitting on the mat with an arrogant smirk as he looks across the ring at Mertz and Aarons on the apron, slapping the top turnbuckle to try and encourage the son of the Hall of Famer to get up and keep fighting.]

BW: The Dogs of War defeated one team with the son of a Hall of Famer back at Memorial Day Mayhem and they're looking to add a second one to their resume here tonight, daddy!

[Perez climbs off the mat, throwing James back into the Dogs' corner where Walker wraps his arm around the throat, holding him in place as Perez rains down punches and kicks to the trapped rookie.]

GM: Perez drags him out - again getting warned by the official...

[The Puerto Rican throws a quick one-two right-left combo to the jaw before throwing a haymaker that puts James back down on the mat. He leans back, slapping the hand of Wade Walker who stomps in, giving a roar as he crouches down, putting the rising Brian James squarely in his sights...]

GM: Walker's looking for that spear! We've seen this before!

[As James battles to his feet, Walker comes tearing across the ring, lowering his head to deliver the spear tackle...

...when James leaps up and forward, dragging Walker down in a sunset flip!]

GM: SUNSET FLIP! SUNSET FLIP!! ONE!! TWO!! THR-

[But Pedro Perez charges in, booting James right in the face to break up the pin...

...which brings in an angry Michael Aarons, raining down blows of Perez who ducks away as the referee intervenes!]

GM: Aarons is being forced out and- look at Perez!

[Perez pulls James up, whipping him back into the Dogs' corner, and charges in after him...

...but James sidesteps, causing Perez to slam chestfirst into the turnbuckles!]

GM: OHHH!

BW: GERMAN!

[James hooks the rear waistlock, popping his hips, and LAUNCHING Perez over in a released German suplex that folds him in half! The crowd roars for the high impact as James gets back to his feet...]

GM: SPEAR!

[But James leapfrogs, using his six foot six lanky frame to propel him out of Walker's sights...

...and sending Walker SLAMMING facefirst into the middle turnbuckle!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: HE MISSED! HE MISSED!!

[The crowd ROARS as James wheels around, hooking a second rear waistlock...]

GM: You gotta be kidding me! Walker's almost three hundred pounds!

[James nods to the roaring fans, cinching up his grip, gritting his teeth together...

...and HOISTS Walker up, dumping him over in a bridging German suplex!]

GM: BRIDGE!! ONE!! TWO!! THR-

[The crowd ROARS in shock as Carpenter comes flying over the top rope, dropping a somersault senton right down on James to break up the pin attempt!]

GM: And again, a member of the Dogs of War are there to save their partner and save the match!

[Carpenter rolls off, turns around...

...and gets SPEARED off his feet by Michael Aarons who takes the mount, hammering away at him! Cody Mertz barrels past the official a moment later, pulling Pedro Perez up for a barrage of right hands in the corner!]

GM: We've got all six men inside the ring and it's breaking down here in Memphis!

[Mertz throws a quick blast of rights and lefts to the gut before leaning over, hoisting Perez into a seated position on the top turnbuckle. The Dallas native gives a shout as he backs off, pointing at Perez to a big cheer from the Memphis crowd!]

GM: Mertz is giving himself some room to work - here he comes!

[Mertz charges the corner, deadleaping up to snare Perez' head between his legs...

...and WHIPS him over into a rana, bouncing him off the canvas!]

GM: THE MERTZ EXPRESS!

[Mertz scrambles over, making a cover...

...but the official waves it off, pointing to Walker and James!]

BW: They're the legal men! Good call by Jagger! Mertz tried to steal one but Jagger caught him!

[Jagger forces Mertz and Aarons out of the ring as the Dogs roll out to the floor, leaving a dazed Walker and James inside the squared circle. The two big men in the match slowly climb to their feet, coming together in the middle of the ring...]

GM: Right hand by Walker!

[James staggers before returning fire!]

GM: James responds! The son of the Blackheart lands his own right hand!

[Walker throws a second haymaker, staggering James to a knee...

...but he EXPLODES upwards, catching Walker with a palm strike uppercut!]

GM: They're trading shots in the middle and-

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: HEAD KICK!! HEAD KICK!!

[Walker stumbles, staggers...

...and slumps down to his knees from the impact of the roundhouse kick to the temple!]

GM: JAMES HAS GOT HIM DOWN... BUT CAN HE KEEP HIM DOWN?!

[James leans down, slapping the canvas with both hands as he gives a huge shout...

...and THROWS a roundhouse aimed at the temple of the kneeling Walker!]

GM: ROUNDHOUS-

[Walker ducks it, coming up quickly to lift James up into the electric chair!]

GM: HE'S GOT HIM UP! HE'S GOT HIM UP!

[Perez and Carpenter are quickly in, grabbing the flailing arms of the rookie from Portland...]

GM: We saw this at Memorial Day Mayhem! This is how they finished off Bobby O'Connor! This is how-

[But Mertz and Aarons come tearing in, trading blows with Carpenter and Perez, battering them back and forcing them to release the arms of Brian James...]

...who pummels the forehead of Walker, rolling through into a Victory Roll!]

GM: VICTORY ROLL! ONE!! TWO!! THRE-

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: WALKER KICKS OUT!! WALKER KICKS OUT!!

[Brian James falls forward, face in his hands as Air Strike manages to knock Perez and Carpenter back into the ropes...]

...where a pair of dropkicks sends them over the ropes and down to the barely-padded asphalt parking lot!]

GM: OHH! PEREZ AND CARPENTER GET CLEARED OUT!!

[The duo turns back towards Walker, pulling him off the mat. The double whip sends him across...]

GM: Double back elbow takes him down... to the rop- OHHHH!

BW: CARPENTER AND PEREZ PULL THE ROPES DOWN! THEY TOOK OUT AIR STRIKE AND-

[A shocked Brian James looks back and forth at his partners, moving to the ropes to check on them as Perez and Carpenter stomp them into the mat...]

...and slowly turns...]

GM: SPEAR!!

[The crowd ROARS as Walker lays out Brian James with a high impact spear tackle, nearly breaking him in half with the impactful blow! Walker collapses across the motionless James, reaching back to hook both legs.]

GM: ONE!! TWO!! THREEEEEEEE!!!

"DING! DING! DING!"

[Walker falls off of James, rolling out of the ring to join his allies. Their music kicks in again to the jeers of the AWA faithful as Perez scrambles up on the apron, shouting at the downed and defeated opponents.]

GM: The Dogs Of War win again! Another breathtaking matchup ends with the Dogs Of War using their superior teamwork to score a victory... their willingness to win at all costs.

BW: What a unit this trio is... and when you get two of them in the Tower, that's a weapon that the Wise Men might ride straight to victory, Gordo.

GM: They might... but who? Who will it be? Who will represent the Dogs Of War in the Tower? We'll find out in thirteen days, fans. We've got to take one final break but when we come back-

BW: IT'S THE CALL... OF THE WIIIIIIILDE!

GM: Indeed. Stick around for that one, fans... you do NOT want to miss it!

[Fade to black as Perez continues to taunt the defeated opponents.]

What we see next is a wrestling ring, which inexplicably has a large gold-colored throne in it. Fans are booing all around, though this honestly looks more like a set than an arena. Seated on the throne is, of course, the self-styled "King Of Wrestling", Demetrius Lake. The dark-skinned Missourian is wearing a purple king robe, purple trunks and boots with gold kneepads and monogramming on the trunks and boots. Atop his head rests a regal crown. He rests one hand on the knee like the classic "Thinker" pose, but he has the trademark sour scowl on his afro-and-conebeard ringed face. We get some chryon identifying him for the benefit of non-wrestling fans: "THE KING OF WRESTLING DEMETRIUS LAKE"

The voiceover is from Lake himself.]

DL: It's hard to be the King.

[He's suddenly attacked by a couple of unknown wrestlers, who fail to harm him as he stands up and starts beating on them.]

DL: You got uprisings...

[The next scene shows Lake, still inexplicably in his "King attire", leaving an arena late at night, looking around at several restaurants which all say "CLOSED". he slumps his shoulders.]

DL: ...you got famines...

[The next scene shows him behind the wheel of a large cadillac, pulled over and angrily tapping his wristwatch as a police officer is writing a ticket. he shows the officer a billing that clearly reads "WRESTLING! 8PM BELL TIME!", but the officer is still going slowly. Also: he's still in his ring attire, or at least the robe and crown.]

DL: ...you got paperwork...

[And after that is a scene of Lake walking down a busy city street while everyone around him boos, throws trash, and shouts out at him. Demetrius is still in his same King ring attire, because how else will the people watching this commercial know he's a pro wrestler?]

DL: ...and all the peasants command my attention 24 hours a day.

[Back to the initial scene, where the "Black Tiger" is polishing off his last assailant by bashing his face into the back of his throne. He then sits back on the throne, which is funny because the opponent's head and upper body is still on it (and he flails helplessly for the rest of the scene), and returns to the "Thinker" pose.]

DL: It's a tough job, but if there is one thing that a King must never do, it is to allow his circumstances to make him sweat.

[Lake reaches behind him and pulls out an aerosol can of Right Guard deodorant. He applies it to himself as the voiceover continues.]

DL: Right Guard. Used by true ath-e-letes, the King Of Wrestling Demetrius Lake, and anybody with both armpits and sense.

[He then reaches over to one of his assailants who is just trying to get up, and sprays it right in the man's eyes.]

DL: Or just armpits. It works regardless.

[Cut to the product screen...]

DL: Right Guard. For The Win.

[...a bell rings, and then out.

As we fade back up, we find Bucky Wilde standing in the center of the ring. A red and black rug has been laid down over the majority of the canvas to "class it up" a bit. Everyone's favorite color commentator has the house mic in his hand and as we'll quickly learn, he's not afraid to use.]

BW: It is the moment you've all been waiting for - not just all night... but for the past two weeks. It's the reason all you morbidly obese freaks dragged yourselves out of the local barbecue joint, putting down the slab of ribs and wiping all the sauce off your chins...

[The boos are pouring down on Buckthorn.]

BW: ...and made your way to Memphis' finest sporting venue...

[Wilde chuckles.]

BW: A parking lot for a building which saw its' heyday in the 1970s!

[Bucky seems to enjoy being booed. Some people.]

BW: It's the reason all you people at home turned off the Kardashians or whatever twisted reality show the E! Network is passing off as quality programming these days and flipped the channel over to yours truly.

It's the biggest moment of the night... a moment bigger than the World Television Title match... a moment bigger than the Main Event...

[Wilde grins.]

BW: It's... THE CALL... OF THE WILDE!

[And more boos... predictably.]

BW: I am, of course, your host... Bucky Wilde - the straw that stirs the drink! The man that-

[The crowd cheers as Jason Dane comes striding into view from the locker room area, carrying a mic of his own.]

JD: I think that's just about enough of that, don't you?

[Dane is power-walking to the ring, not wasting a moment. Bucky looks agitated as Dane climbs the steps, ducking through the ropes.]

BW: You're early. I hadn't called you out here yet.

JD: I don't care. These people may be tuning in... they may be here to see this interview go down but they're not here because of you.

[Wilde grimaces.]

BW: You think they're here for you, ya little twerp?!

[Dane shakes his head.]

JD: No, they're here for answers. They're here for the truth! And they know you're not going to get them either of those things after that sham we saw two weeks ago with you and Percy Childes.

[Wilde is bristling with anger now.]

BW: SHAM?! I suppose you think your little chat with the World Champion got us somewhere. He's crooked... and if you don't buy it, maybe you're crooked too!

JD: The only thing crooked around here is your spine after all the bending over backwards you did to sell Percy's hogwash story.

[Big cheer!]

JD: There's only one way to get to the bottom of this... and you know it.

[Wilde nods, gesturing to Dane.]

BW: After you.

[Dane nods.]

JD: Ladies and gentlemen, the first guest on this special edition of The Call Of The Wilde... the World Heavyweight Champion... the Doctor of Love... DAVE BRYANT!

[A familiar cough rings out over the PA, followed by the opening notes of Metallica's "Bad Seed". The crowd cheers loudly as the World Heavyweight Champion steps through the curtain. Bryant's wearing a sky blue dress shirt, matching tie, and black slacks. He's also wearing the World Heavyweight Championship belt around his waist, and a few steps down the aisle, Bryant pauses, looks to either side of the aisle and, grinning, "polishes" the title belt with his sleeve for a moment before heading further up the aisle. Bryant climbs the steps and steps between the ropes, the grin fading from his face as he gives Bucky a less-than-friendly sideways look before stepping to Jason Dane's side.]

JD: Like I promised... the World Champion is here. Now, did you live up to your end of the deal?

[Wilde glares at Dane.]

BW: You're damn right I did. People of Memphis... people of the world... I present to you the leader of the Unholy Alliance... the leader of the Wise Men... the Collector of Oddities himself... PERCY CHILDES!

[No music plays to herald the entrance of Percy Childes. In fact, by the time Bucky finishes introducing him, he's almost to the ring. The fans boo their little hearts out for the hated manager, who is wearing something quite unusual for him: a white suit jacket and slacks, a black undershirt, and a royal-blue tie. He's carrying his crystal-tipped cane in one hand and an attache case in the other, and has an intent expression on his face as he glares at Dane. Childes steps up on the apron, and looks out over the booing crowd as their volume is annoying him, which encourages them.]

BW: Alright... we got the guests of honor here, Dane. Let me start this off by having Percy remind you of what REALLY happened at Memorial Day Mayhem.

[Dane shakes him off.]

JD: No, we've heard that song and dance before. Let's get right down to this. Dave Bryant, in front of all of these fans... with the entire world watching... did you have ANYTHING to do with Marty Meekly's decision to call for a submission and put the World Title around your waist?

[Bryant stares at Percy briefly, who doesn't seem to care, and then looks straight at Jason Dane.]

DB: No, Jason. As far as I knew, the only thing I did to cause Meekly to ring the bell was lock Supreme Wright in the Iron Crab.

JD: But Percy Childes... despite your best attempts to deny it... I'm quite certain that you did.

PC: Is that what you want to believe? I've been quite open about the things I have done in my career, Dane. And two weeks ago, I told you the truth. Neither myself nor Larry Doyle were complicit in affecting the decision at Memorial Day Mayhem. There are three possibilities as to what happened: either Wright submitted, Meekly made a mistake, or Meekly jeopardized his entire way of life to cost Wright the match. I had no reason to want the belt on Dave Bryant: no motive. I had no method to leverage Marty Meekly to do something that calamitous: no means. Without motive and means, there is no crime.

You are throwing accusations on the Wise Men because of your misguided crusade against us. You want us to vanish. And you are directly employed by people with motive, means, and opportunity. Why don't you turn your magnifying glass inward? The evidence demands it. There are only two reasons why you wouldn't first look at the AWA executive board. Are you afraid of what you will find... or are you a part of the plan?

I think the former... but we are getting very, very close to the point where we stop giving you the benefit of the doubt. VERY. VERY. Close.

[Childes steps directly into Dane's personal space, but the journalist doesn't back off.]

JD: You can threaten me all you want, Percy. For almost a year now, I've only stuck my toe in the water of what you've gotten yourself into because I've been afraid. I've been afraid of what you and your thugs might do to me... to my family. But I can't do it anymore. You're on a mission to take over this entire company and these people need to know it.

No means and no motive, huh? So, if there's no means and no motive, you say that there's no crime?

[Percy nods.]

JD: But what if I prove otherwise? What if I prove that you - and the Wise Men - had both means AND motive to make this happen?

[Percy smirks, giving a "bring it on" gesture.]

JD: You want to claim that the Wise Men had no reason to put the title on Dave Bryant? That you didn't have a motive?

[Percy nods.]

JD: I actually believe that... to a degree. I believe you had no reason to put the title on Dave Bryant... but I also believe you had every reason in the world to take the World Title off of Supreme Wright.

[The Collector of Oddities shrugs, defiantly glaring at Dane.]

PC: Oh? Then let's hear it. Why? The only reasoning that would make sense there is if we felt that Bryant would be so much easier to get the title from than Wright that we'd somehow use the leverage to get Marty Meekly to risk his career on him. You'd think we'd save that for a title match if we had it. Do you suppose that Bryant is that much weaker than Wright?

JD: That's not what I'm saying at-

[Bryant cuts Dane off, but is staring daggers at Percy.]

DB: If you think I'm "so much easier" to get the title away from than Wright, you're more than welcome to send one of your boys to give it a shot, Childes. The Iron Crab and I would welcome the chance to get real cozy with any of you Unholy Alliance scumbags.

[Percy looks ready to respond, but Dane reasserts himself quickly.]

JD: You wanted the title off Supreme Wright... because you wanted CONTROL of Supreme Wright!

[The crowd murmurs at that and even Bryant looks surprised at what Dane just said.]

JD: Love him or hate him, no one is going to deny that Supreme Wright is one of the most dangerous competitors in this business. He's a guy who is obsessed with being the World Champion and has been since the beginning of his career. He betrayed every fan he's ever had... he betrayed the teacher and the company who embraced him after he walked out on all of them... and he did it because he saw an opportunity to become the World Champion.

[Bryant interrupts.]

DB: Come on, Jason, you brought us all out here to try to the bottom of what happened. Get to the point, already, being this close to Percy is giving me hives.

[Dane nods.]

JD: The point is that we know what Wright's willing to do to win the title... we know what he was willing to do to KEEP the title... but God only knows what he'll be willing to do to get the title back!

Supreme Wright will be willing to do ANYTHING to get that title back around his waist. He'll lie, he'll cheat, he'll break any rule.

[Dane pauses.]

JD: He might even join the Wise Men.

[The crowd buzzes as Percy openly laughs at Dane's accusation.]

JD: There's your motive. To make the most desperate man in the AWA a little bit more desperate for your help.

Now, as for means... well, that took a little more research. What you said two weeks ago made a lot of sense. Why WOULD Marty Meekly risk everything in his career to participate in what's being called the Gainesville Gyp?

[Dane glares at Percy who returns the stare.]

JD: At the end of the day, it comes back to what it always comes back to... money.

[Percy starts to protest but Dane raises a hand.]

JD: I heard it all last time you opened your mouth. Talk about lawsuits and not being offered that much money. But I don't buy any of it. I don't buy it at all, Percy. The fact is - and I believe you know this quite well - every AWA official's contract carries a "no fault" clause that states they can NOT be sued by any party regarding a decision made in the ring. It's a very recent clause to be added... something that came up during the most recent round of negotiations... something that seems like it was almost created in preparation of something like this happening.

You did say the Wise Men have contacts in EVERY part of the AWA, right? I suppose that'd go for Talent Relations AND Legal too, huh?

[Percy looks a little flustered now.]

JD: So, with no lawsuit to worry about, it became an issue of how much. Meekly no doubt knew that he'd be risking his career as an official so the price had to be right. The AWA front office is reviewing Meekly's officiating history, I'm guessing you know that.

[Childes nods.]

JD: Then you'd also have to know that they've found several decisions that were... controversial. You'd have to know that the evidence is starting to pile up against Marty Meekly that not only did he rob Supreme Wright of the World Title at Mayhem but that he's been on the take for months or longer!

And if you honestly expect me - and these people - to believe that the Wise Men can't bankroll an official to keep him comfortable for the rest of his life, you take us for bigger fools than I thought possible.

[Dane raises a finger - no, not that one.]

JD: Look at the money spent on Kolya Sudakov to bring him back from Japan and MMA to the AWA. I've seen the payoffs for his fights. He doesn't come cheap. Larry Doyle took a manager's share of a million dollars last year on one night alone. You've got two former World Champions under your control who couldn't be on the cheapest of contracts.

No, the money is there, Percy. It's always been there.

[He ticks off on his fingers.]

JD: Means. Motive. Crime.

[Percy is fuming as he glares at Dane.]

PC: That's the best you can come up with? Then answer me why we would do something so obvious to a man who takes things so personally? You're reaching, Dane. You've called this meeting to waste time and to obfuscate for your employers. You...

[And then...

...there's static.]

JD: Who invited him?!

[Bucky's grin widens as he watches the demeanors of Dane, Bryant, and Childes twist from the perfect fraction of calm and calculated to a contorted bit of uneasiness. In the ring, you could hear a pin drop...

...while the crowd buzzes with a curious and manic anticipation as "Dance of the Knights" trumpets over the loudspeakers. Out first walks the Ring Leader, Terry Shane III. Black hair matted flat over his head and neatly folding down the nape of his neck and sunk into the collar of his shimmering green robe. His steps are purposeful as he readies himself to enter the ring. By his side, matching him stride for stride, is the "Siren" Miss Sandra Hayes.

Hayes has an unusual surplus of chic swagger, even for her, as she bounces around him, swatting extended hands of fans in the front row with her

fluorescent pink branding iron. Her tar colored rat tail ricochets from shoulder to shoulder with each step. Even in her silhouette hugging green dress she still manages to position herself appropriately over the middle turnbuckle which allows Shane to float into the ring with greatest of ease. He is instantly cut off by Jason Dane.]

JD: What gives you the right to come out here tonight?!

[Shane, standing as straight as an arrow, surveys the ring. His eyes maneuver from Dane, to Childes, to Bryant, and then to Bucky Wilde.]

TS3 [off-mic] I was invited.

[Dane shoots a glare towards Bucky who just shrugs his shoulders.]

JD: Then I've got a question for you, Mr. Shane. What-

[Shane snatches the mic from Dane who is almost taken back by the gesture. Instead of reaching back for it, he intelligently gestures at Phil Watson who, without much rush, retrieves an additional mic.]

TS3: No, Jason...It is I who have a question. It is I who can not wrap my brain around the REAL elephant in the room. Sitting backstage just now I, like everyone else in the arena tonight, have to know something. No, scratch that, I NEED to know something. The same something every single person out here is wondering as we watch each of you trade verbal slaps like a bunch of sloppy housewives and avoid the real matter at hand.

There is only one REAL question on everyone's mind and quite frankly I am sick and tired of waiting for the answer.

[Eyes dart around the ring like fireflies.]

TS3 [elevating his voice]: Why in the WORLD are you all out here talking about Marty Meekly?!

[Childes fights back a snicker as Dane throws his hands up in the air.]

TS3: There is only one truth that these people seek Mister Investigative Reporter guy as my dear friend would say. It is not whether Percy Childes [gesturing to him] and Larry Doyle came out to the ring at Memorial Day Mayhem with the intentions of costing Supreme Wright the match. It is not a question of whether Marty Meekly wrongfully awarded the match to Dave Bryant. Is it not even about the aforementioned official hitching a ride with our resident Wise Guys and whether or not they painted the town red while sipping Fuzzy Navels through twisty straws and playfully pattered their evil genius fingers together.

It is about HIM...

[He shoots a glare at Dave Bryant.]

TS3: ...and me. It is about Guts & Glory. It is about the Fourth of July in MY home state of Missouri and whether or not Dave Bryant can find the will and the way to walk out of the land of the Shane Gang with the World Title around his waist.

[Bryant goads Shane, mouthing "get real" to him.]

TS3: Let me spoil the storybook ending for you, Dave. There is no way in this WORLD or the next one that you will EVER leave Missouri with the World Title in your possession. For the past year I have stood by idly and allowed you to prosper. I have allowed you to become a champion not once but on two occasions. I allowed Supreme Wright to step forward and create a name for himself and his followers and done nothing about it.

Because I was waiting...

[Bucky mutters, "Told you" away from his mic.]

TS3: Waiting for that perfect moment. Waiting for an opportunity such as this when the entire World was ready and deserving to have me as their champion. They needed to see me expose Hannibal Carver as the fraudulent ring monkey that he is. They needed to see me dispose of that washed up hack Steve Spector and send him back to Graceland with his family. And now, more than ever, they need to see that title around the waist of a REAL Champion. A deserving champion. A champion whose name they can speak of proudly and confidently and tell stories about long after we are all said and done in this business. And finally, FINALLY...

...I and I alone feel as though THESE people are ready to herald Terry Shane III as their World Champion.

[Shane positions himself closer to Dave Bryant. Wilde, wide eyed and bushy tailed, relaxes in the corner while Childs conveniently repositions himself on the far side of the ring.]

TS3: And the truth of the matter, Dave. Without you, without Supreme, without even James Monosso...these people would not have truly been able to appreciate and glorify how GREAT of a champion I will be for them.

So thank you, Dave. From the bottom of our hearts. Sandra and I thank you for letting the most esteemed title in our sport slip between your fingers before you were even able to put it around your waist on the grandest stage of them all and thank you for not making too much of a mockery of it the second time around. The last thing these people want is for yet another new title to be made because Dave Bryant destroyed its' legacy.

[Bryant, having obviously heard enough from the first challenger to his World Heavyweight championship, reaches out and snatches the microphone out of TS3's hand.]

DB: You know, Terry, this is the second time you've walked yourself out

to this ring and ran your mouth at me. It's a crying shame that Steve Spector isn't here to bash your brains out the way he did the last time this happened.

[Bryant smirks at Shane, who bristles at that particular statement.]

DB: You really expect me, or anybody else standing in this ring not named Bucky Wilde to believe that you were just waiting all this time? You expect us to believe that you were just picking your moment?

[Bryant pauses.]

DB: You really think we're all that stupid? You won your title shot, lasting more than an hour in a Rumble that featured some of the best and the biggest names in this business...and then you sat on it. You sat on it for a full year, Terry. A year! Nobody here is gullible enough to buy your "waiting for the right moment" story -- you lost focus, plain and simple. Ever since Hannibal Carver damn near knocked your brains out of your skull, you've been chasing your tail. You went after a guy like Steve Spector because you thought he was weak, thought he was so old and so physically fragile that he'd just tuck tail and run.

[Bryant shakes his head.]

DB: Didn't quite work out that way, did it, Shane? He stood and fought you, showed you just how closely a man can step to the edge of madness without quite falling over. Suddenly, something you thought would be an amusing distraction was a genuine threat, and so you kept sitting on your title shot until, frankly, most of us forgot you were waiting in the wings.

[TS3 fires back with something the microphones don't quite pick up, and Bryant laughs.]

DB: So, why wait, Terry? The same night you won your title shot, Calisto Dufresne sent James Monosso out of this business. Maybe you saw that and decided to see what happened with Dufresne and his title reign... unfortunate for you that Dufresne managed to surround himself with challengers that you, apparently, are deathly afraid of. You never even showed your face, never even _threatened_ Dufresne with a match. Fast forward to SuperClash...

[Bryant grimaces, while Shane laughs out loud.]

DB: ...and another man you didn't ever even attempt to challenge, Supreme Wright.

[Shane abruptly stops laughing.]

DB: During the Chase for the Clash, when I had a few minutes to sit and think, I wondered when you were going to rear your head, Terry -- just when you'd decide to let the world know that you were going to challenge the champion. I thought maybe you'd try to swing having your match

after the World Title match at SuperClash, but that didn't happen. I thought maybe you'd try to challenge Supreme Wright after he wrestled one hell of a grueling contest against Kenta Kitzukawa, but you let him rest, let him recover, let him face his next opponent...me. Now, you're out here, you've laid down the gauntlet...and I'm out here now to pick it up and slap you right across the jaw with it, Shane.

You sat on your title shot for one simple reason -- fear. You were afraid of Royalty. You were afraid of Supreme Wright. Threatened with the loss of your title shot, you manage to scrape up the courage to challenge me...but I have some real bad news for you, Shane.

[Bryant steps right up in TS3's face.]

DB: Supreme Wright is a better wrestler than you, or any other Shane, could ever even dream of being...and whatever the hell else happened that night, all things being said and done...

[Bryant unhooks the title belt from his waist, holding it up in the air with his free hand.]

DB: I'm the champ...NOT him!

[And almost as if on cue, "Black Skinhead" by Kanye West begins to play, as the crowd roars with a mixture of cheers and boos for the man that emerges from behind the curtains, the former AWA World Heavyweight champion, Supreme Wright.

Wright is dressed sharply in a navy blue waistcoat over a white tailored dress shirt, a dark purple necktie, and matching navy trousers. He walks down to the ring with an angry, bitter look on his face, a demeanor filled with nothing but bad intentions, and a microphone in hand. Stepping through the ropes, the former champion exchanges glares with Bryant and Shane.]

SW: Let's get one thing straight. There's only ONE World Champion standing inside this ring...

...and you're looking right at him.

[A decisively mixed reaction. Supreme points to Bryant and Shane.]

SW: What you two are fighting for at Guts & Glory, isn't the right to hold MY World Title. What you're fighting for is second place. What you're fighting for is the right to be known as a fake and a fraud. What you're fighting for, is the opportunity to face ME.

[Miss Sandra Hayes seems to have a retort ready, but thinks better of it when Wright stares her down.]

SW: I did not lose my World Title. I did not submit away my World Title. I had it ripped away and stolen because that was the ONLY way the World

Title could ever be taken from me. And no matter how deep and twisted the conspiracy goes, no matter what role Karl O'Connor or Dave Bryant may have played in it, there's one man that I hold responsible.

[Wright turns to rest his gaze on that one man.]

SW: Percy Childes.

[Supreme takes one step forward as Jason Dane and Bucky Wilde immediately take one step back, giving the former World Champion room to confront the accused.]

SW: Mama didn't raise no fool, Mr. Childes. The Championship Committee was always in your pocket. But with a champion like me, the power you held over that corrupted boardroom didn't mean a damn thing. Try and try as much you wanted, your boys just couldn't take the title from me. And it hurt, because Supreme Wright holding the World Title took away the one thing you had over everyone.

Control.

[Wright stares Childes straight in the eye.]

SW: Just admit it, Mr. Childes. Admit that you conspired to steal that World Title from me. Admit that the only reason why Dave Bryant is holding a World Title that he doesn't deserve is because you paid Meekly off.

[The staredown between the most dastardly manager in AWA history and one of the most polarizing superstars in AWA history is intense...

...but is broken after a few moments by Percy Childes' words.]

PC: I won't admit what isn't true, Wright. Haven't you heard a single thing I've said? Regardless of whether it was the AWA executive board, a bad decision, or a submission you're unwilling to own up to, the fact remains. You are no longer the champion. If you want to change that, then the best thing for you to do is stop listening to the witch-hunt that the AWA broadcast team, with one notable exception, is being ordered to conduct. Stop listening to the lies. The only people out here who are not pretending to be something they are not, besides Bucky Wilde, are you and me.

If you want your title back... show some wisdom.

[Silence...and then the stoic mask melts away, revealing a wide-eyed, rage-filled look on Supreme Wright's face. A brief look of realization forms on Percy Childes' face that soon gives way to shock, as Supreme Wright steps forward, balling up his right hand tightly into a fist...

"SMMMMAAAAAACCCCKKKK!!!"

...and lays out Percy Childes with a massive right cross!!!]

GM: HE PUNCHED HIM! HE PUNCHED HIM! We've NEVER seen Supreme Wright punch ANYONE! MY STARS IN HEAVEN! HE JUST KNOCKED CHILDES OUT COLD!

[Wright stares down at Childes' prone form on the canvas briefly, before looking at the shocked faces inside the ring. He then makes his exit, walking back up the aisle as the crowd continues to buzz with excitement, stunned at what they just witnessed...

...until Wright comes face to face at the top of the aisle with a human blockade!]

GM: Uh oh! Wright's face to face with the Wise Men's army! The Dogs of War, Johnny Detson, Jacobs and Sudakov! They're all there and they're blocking the path of the former World Champion! This is could be major trouble for-

[With a crazed shout, Hannibal Carver comes tearing out of the shadows, diving onto the back of Brad Jacobs, dragging him down to the floor in a flurry of punches!]

GM: CARVER! HERE COMES THE REST!

[Eric Preston, Ryan Martinez, and Callum Mahoney come steaming out of the locker room into view, quickly pairing up and trading blows with the Wise Men's army...]

GM: We've got a fight on our hands in the aisle! We've got a preview of the Tower of Doom breaking down here in Memphis and-

[Seeing the forces of good still outnumbered by one, Dave Bryant tosses down the World Title belt, stepping through the ropes...]

GM: The World Champion's heading up the aisle! He's heading down to help-

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[...as the opportunistic Sandra Hayes kicks the middle rope up into his groin!]

GM: OH, COME ON!!

[Bryant collapses back into the ring where Terry Shane lunges to his knees, grabbing a handful of hair and hammering the World Champion with closed fists between the eyes!]

GM: The challenger in thirteen days is beating the tar out of the World Champion!

[We cut to the top of the aisle where the ten (well, eleven) men involved in the Tower of Doom are trading blows to the roars of the Memphis fans.]

GM: There's fighting going on all over the building!

[A cut back to the ring shows Terry Shane climbing to his feet, scooping up the discarded World Title belt. He grins as Miss Sandra Hayes steps in, strapping the title belt around his waist.]

GM: That could be a vision of the future, fans. That could be the moment we see at the end of Guts & Glory. Terry Shane could be thirteen days away from the Year Of The Shane Gang becoming a reality. He could be on the verge of becoming the World Heavyweight Champion.

[Cut back to the top of the aisle where Wright and Sudakov are trading stiff forearm shots. Jacobs and Carver are hammering away at each other. Preston and Martinez are battling with the Dogs Of War. Detson and Mahoney are trading chops.]

GM: The Tower of Doom being previewed on one side of the building! The World Title match on the other! This thing is set to explode and you do NOT want to miss Guts & Glory!

[Another cut back to the ring shows Shane gloating over Bryant, the title belt secured around his waist...

...and Bryant lunges forward, snaring a double leg takedown, putting Shane on his back. Huge cheer!]

GM: Bryant's got the legs! Bryant's got-

[HUUUUUUUUGE CHEER!]

GM: IRON CRAB! IRON CRAB!

[The AWA World Heavyweight Champion leans back, wrenching the back of his challenger in thirteen days...

...until Miss Sandra Hayes SMASHES Bryant in the back of the head with the branding iron, knocking him flat on the mat!]

GM: OHHHHH!

[Shane slowly gets up, standing over Bryant, lifting the title belt over his head. The boos pour down on the Ring Leader as Hayes gleefully applauds her man's actions.]

GM: Shane with the title belt! The Wise Men at war in the aisle! But in the middle of it all, Percy Childes got punched out and you gotta love that! We've gotta go! We're out of time! We'll see you at Guts & Glory! So long everybody!

[We get a nice long shot showing the brawl in the aisle before panning back to the ring where Shane and Hayes are standing over the motionless World Heavyweight Champion...

...as we fade to black.]