



[We fade from black as the opening credits begin, but there will be no Bachman-Turner Overdrive this week. For the first time in a long while, Saturday Night Wrestling has a brand new opening credit montage.]

It is "Don't Look Back" by Boston that plays as the opening scene pans over the Detson Center, showing the big gold-colored sign out in front of the building formerly known as the Crockett Coliseum. And then, clips of AWA action begins to play.

Supreme Wright slapping the Cobra Clutch Crossface onto Dave Bryant.

Johnny Detson crushing William Craven's knee with an ambulance door.

Kolya Sudakov beating Callum Mahoney bloody with the steel Russian chain.]

#Don't look back
#A new day is breakin'
#It's been too long since I felt this way

[The Lights Out Express executing the rolling elbow-dragon suplex combination on Skywalker Jones.]

Demetrius Lake 'burying' Jack Lynch under a burnt Texas flag.

Terry Shane III hitting several of his trademark moves against various opponents, shown in rapid succession.]

#I don't mind where I get taken
#The road is callin'
#Today is the day

[Shadoe Rage drilling Tony Sunn with a beautiful flying axehandle.

The Dogs Of War perpetrating a vicious three-on-one assault on Bobby O'Connor.

Sunshine slapping Travis Lynch right across the face.

Strictly Business hits the Flash And Cash on Dr. Insidious to win in five seconds at Guts & Glory.

Mr. Sadisuto throws salt into the face of Nenshou.

And more footage flashes by - Brad Jacobs, Team Supreme, Rick Marley, Dichotomy, the Reles Boyz, the Samoan Hit Squad, Gibson Hayes, the Walking Dead, the Baddest Thangs Running, Joshua Barnes, and more... and more... and more...]

#I can see
#It took so long to realize
#I'm much too strong

[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 - Ebola Zaire, Frankie Farelli, Cain Jackson, the Longhorn Riders, Matt Rogers, Kenneth Doll, Madhouse McWesson...]

#Not to compromise
#Now I see what I am is holding me down
#I'll turn it around

[The footage freezes on a clip of Johnny Detson driving Ryan Martinez on his face with the Wilde Driver to win the World Television Title before cutting to the Lights Out Express winning the World Tag Team Titles on the very same show as they hit Skywalker Jones with the Demolition Driver.

And then finally to a bloodied Eric Preston getting the cage door smashed into his head with a sickening crunch at Guts & Glory, courtesy of Supreme Wright...

...and EXPLODES into a live shot of the exterior of the Thomas And Mack Center in Las Vegas, Nevada as fans are streaming into the building.]

GM: ...

BW: Cat got your tongue, Gordo? We're on the air, you know?

GM: I know... and I'm just about sick to my stomach already as I saw those opening credits. What in the heck was that all about?!

BW: It's a new time, a new era, and it's time to pay tribute to some new superstars, daddy!

GM: The stench of the Wise Men hangs heavy over Las Vegas, Nevada, as we bring you the final Saturday Night Wrestling of this Coast To Coast tour with all eyes locked on the Fabulous Forum, Labor Day, and the Battle Of Los Angeles!

[We cut inside the lobby of the building where there is a noticeable increase in security, searching and looking closely at every person walking through the turnstiles into the building.

A quick cut shows one of the security officers holding up a large picture of "Hotshot" Stevie Scott, shouting, "CHECK EVERY PERSON THROUGH THE DOOR!"

GM: After the events of two weeks ago, security has been increased at the doors - a manhunt underway for former AWA National Champion, "Hotshot" Stevie Scott who disguised himself as a fan on more than one occasion on the last edition of Saturday Night Wrestling.

BW: Which pales in comparison to the amount of security out here, Gordo.

[Another cut comes inside the building, a panning shot working around the ringside area where we see several armed police officers surrounding the ring, standing up against the metal barricade around the squared circle. They don't look happy to be there.

The fans are cheering but there is a definite buzz of concern in the air over what they're about see considering what happened in Phoenix two weeks prior.]

GM: Armed police out here at ringside... this is what the Presidency of Percy Childes and the reign of power of the Wise Men has resulted in, Bucky. Are you happy about this? Are you proud of Childes, Doyle, and Hayes for this?!

BW: Of course not, Gordo. But at the same time, I'm glad that they've taken the appropriate steps to keep all the AWA's fans - and employees including us - safe! And you should be too.

GM: The only reason that we weren't safe to begin with is because of the Wise Men and their corrupt and crooked actions two weeks ago in Phoenix, Bucky. There's one easy solution to all of this - take Percy Childes out of power and send these Wise Men packing.

BW: Good luck with that.

[As the announcers banter, we see the usual setup. Ringside mats? Check. Red, white, and blue ropes? Check. Barricade surrounding the ring? Check. Red carpet leading down the aisle to the ring? Check. Elevated interview platform? Check. Rabid fans waving signs and shouting their heads off? Check.

But why are they cheering and shouting?

Because the former World Tag Team Champions are sitting inside the ring on a pair of steel chairs, microphones in hand.]

GM: And as you can see, two men who were flat out ROBBED two weeks ago by the Wise Men have taken to the ring. They are in there... they are not SCHEDULED to be there mind you... but they are there and considering the circumstances, I'm not at all sure what they intend to say.

[Skywalker Jones and Hercules Hammonds don't appear to be in any hurry to speak. The former champions just stay seated there, as officials and referees yell at them from the outside of the ring. Finally, Jones brings the microphone up to his lips...]

SJ: I don't think it needs to be said, but Skywalker Jones and Hercules Hammonds are NOT happy about how things went down in Phoenix. They say confession is good for the soul, so let me and Herc get something that's been runnin' through our heads since that night ended off our chests.

Percy Childes, Wise Men...what ya' did in Phoenix to me and Herc, to Ryan Martinez...to Eric Preston...to all the boys in the back and the fans of the AWA...

...was complete and total CRAP!

[The crowd roars at Jones' outburst. There's a rare look of seriousness on Jones' face, filled with rage and emotion as he says exactly what everyone else in the crowd is thinking.]

SJ: You can steal the Presidency, you can steal the Tag Team titles from me and Herc, you can try to take away Eric Preston's career, but you're damn fools, you are DAMN fools, if you think we're just gonna' let you get away with this.

HH: A full-scale riot happens. We have fans attacking wrestlers. We have wrestlers attacking fans. Before the whole world, The Wise Men promised transparency and they gave us exactly that. They showed us what they exactly are.

Thugs. Criminals. Liars. Hoodlums. Thieves.

COWARDS.

[A big pop for that last one.]

HH: So it ain't even surprisin' that the man responsible for startin' that riot, the man that tried to cripple Eric Preston...ain't even here tonight.

I'm talkin' 'bout the man that put wrestlin' in Las Vegas on the map and the man that still calls this town his home.

Supreme Wright.

[A heavy roar of boos can be heard for the wrestler many would consider the most hated man in the AWA, but not quite as loud as you may think. It appears he still has some fans in his "hometown."]

HH: So why ain't he around for the fans that made him worth a damn in the first place? Was he suspended? Punished?

[There's a deep and loud laugh from Herc.]

HH: Nah. 'Course not. Percy Childes in his infinite wisdom, gave Team Supreme the night off for a job well done.

[The crowd jeers, as Hammonds shakes his head sadly.]

HH: But that's okay. There's PLENTY of blame to go around when it comes to The Wise Men and their bootlickahs. And if we can't get our hands on him, then we'll just go down the list.

[Jones points to the officials and referees on the outside.]

SJ: I know ya' want us outta' the ring, fellas, but you AIN'T the ones that are gonna' get us outta' here. 'Cause what me and Herc want is real simple.

The Wise Men.

[A HUGE CHEER!]

SJ: We want'em to come down here and give us something that quite frankly, every single one of us deserves!

An apology.

An apology for their stupidity! An apology for their incompetence! An apology for showin' the world just how big of a joke their...

[Air quotes.]

SJ: ..."fairness" really is!

I want big, fat Percy to get down on his knees and beg forgiveness! I want that loudmouth, slack-jawed Canadian Larry Doyle to tell us how sorry he is for existing! And I need Miss Sandra Hayes to apologize for being BORN!

"OHHHHH!!!"

[The crowd winces at the harshness of that remark, but still cheer with approval.]

SJ: And after you've apologized to me and Herc...after you've apologized to all the boys in the back...after you've apologized to everyone in this crowd

and watching around the world...I want you to do the first RIGHT thing in your whole damn Presidency...I want you to give us....

...our rematch.

'Cause Meekly be damned, we'll rectify THAT mistake ourselves and take back our tag team titles!

[BIG POP!]

SJ: I know you're sitting back there with a big smile hidden beneath one of your ten chins, Percy...wondering exactly why you'd be compelled to give in to any of our demands. Well, it's real simple.

Tell'em why, Herc!

HH: Until our demands are met. Until we get that apology. Until we get our rematch. Until you cowards come down here to face us inside this ring...

[A pause.]

HH: ...this show will NOT go on.

[The crowd is cheering the bold stand taken by the former World Tag Team Champions...

...until the cheers turn to boos at the arrival of the Dogs Of War.]

GM: And here comes trouble already. Wade Walker, Isaiah Carpenter, and Pedro Perez are coming down the aisle towards the ring, serving as the security for the Wise Men here tonight. They're the ONLY ones who are not subject to the Zero Tolerance policy and-

[Pedro Perez raises a mic, addressing Jones and Hammonds.]

PP: Out.

[Perez lowers the mic, looking expectantly.]

BW: Well, that was to the point.

[Jones laughs at Perez, waving him into the ring.]

PP: I don't think you boys understand. We're in charge tonight. This is our show... and you're standing in the way of getting it started. So, you have one choice... get out. Now.

[Jones shakes his head as Hammonds climbs the second rope, waving the Dogs Of War in. Perez smirks, snapping his fingers as a flood of security guards come out through the curtain, marching down the aisle to stand behind the Dogs Of War as they draw closer to the ring. Hammonds and Jones square up, ready for the fight...]

GM: This is getting ugly right out of the gates. This is-

[Out of nowhere, Skywalker Jones rushes to the ropes, rebounding back to leap up to the top rope...

...and springs off into a somersault, diving onto the pile of security in the aisle!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[Hercules Hammonds ducks through the ropes, dropping down to the floor to help his partner and friend...

...when security swarms him, quickly dragging him down as Walker, Carpenter, and Perez step back, the latter shouting instructions to escort Jones and Hammonds out of the building.]

GM: Oh, come on!

BW: Hey, Zero Tolerance is Zero Tolerance, Gordo!

GM: Zero Tolerance for what?! They didn't do anything! They didn't get involved with a match! They didn't attack anyone! This is another example of the Wise Men blatantly and flagrantly abusing their power!

[We catch a glimpse of the sea of security literally dragging Hammonds and Jones up the aisle towards the door to the arena.]

GM: We're mere moments into this night that we're apparently being told to call Zero Tolerance and we've already seen the former World Tag Team Champions ejected from the building, Bucky!

BW: Hey, President Percy called for zero tolerance.

GM: In outside interference! In unsanctioned brawls! Skywalker Jones and Hercules Hammonds did nothing but sit in the ring and...

BW: ...and attempt to hold up the show! I think the office was perfectly within their rights to show those two hooligans the door. Thank goodness we've finally got fine, upstanding World Tag Team Champions like Aaron Anderson and Lenny Strong - the Lights Out Express - for the people to idolize.

GM: We're just minutes into this show and once again, I feel like walking out. Absolutely terrible. After the consequences that their actions had two weeks ago in Phoenix, I would've thought that the Wise Men would tread a little more carefully here tonight.

BW: You'd be wrong... dead wrong.

GM: Apparently so. Fans, we're about to head to the ring for our opening matchup but apparently William Payne has something to say before we see tag team action!

[We go back to the ring and when we do it's focused midring on one William Payne. Dressed for business, fingers and wrists dripping with gold, the dark haired, slightly balding manager stands mid canvas. He is draped in a tailored pinstripe dark grey suit with a navy shirt and properly matching tie. In one hand he holds a microphone, in the other a cellphone.]

WP: Ladies and gentlemen, fans of AWA, my name is William Payne. I represent the very best in the business and right now, that is the Samoan Hit Squad! However...

[Payne lifts up a finger, the rest of his hand still clutching his cell phone.]

WP: However, there are men coming up in this business, youngsters in this proud industry who wish to prove themselves against THE best in the world of tag team wrestling... The Samoan Hit Squad... and I've brought them here to Las Vegas today. This is a city of gambling, ladies and gentlemen, and getting into the ring with the Samoan Hit Squad is the biggest gamble you can make.

Because, frankly, you are betting on your career, your well being, and depending on the mood of Manu and Scola, the Samoan Hit Squad, you might be betting on living any sort of productive life. For example, let's look at the Northern Lights. These two Canadians decided it would be in their best interests... it would be a good bet... to insert themselves in the business interests of myself, William Payne and my tag team, the Samoan Hit Squad.

They, against the odds, decided it would be a good bet to challenge the Samoan Hit Squad for a match at Battle of Los Angeles. And then they decided that they would show myself, William Payne and my tag team, the Samoan Hit Squad, their talent in the realm of technical wrestling.

As if they meant to impress us.

As if it mattered.

[Beat.]

WP: So, myself, William Payne, and my tag team, the Samoan Hit Squad have decided to meet that bet and meet that wager and show you, Northern Lights, just what WE do in the ring.

[The camera pans over to the side where two men stand, talking (worriedly?) amongst themselves. One is dressed in a black and red wrestling singlet, with black ear protectors over the side of his head. He is well muscled with thick legs and strong forearms. He pats his partner on his chest, trying to give him encouragement. That man disrobes a judo gi top,

wearing shorter wrestling style shoes, blue knee pads and blue trunks. He rubs his hands together, reaching up to stroke a dark beard.]

WP: These two men come here tonight, not just gambling on walking out of here under their own power, but on a career within the AWA. This here...

[He points with a cellphone holding hand at the first character.]

WP: ...is Samuel Worthington. He is an undefeated high school State wrestling champion. He is an All American Division Two greco roman wrestler and he, Samuel Worthington, plans to proudly represent the U S of A in the Olympics. Ladies and gentlemen, we could be looking at a future gold medalist right there!

[The crowd applauds as the amateur wrestler raises a hand, stepping to the middle of the ring before heading back to his corner.]

WP: And this man right here is a black belt in judo, a sambo competitor and recently competed in the Abu Dhabi Combat Championships, _the_ most prestigious pure grappling event in the world. Not only that...

[Payne pauses.]

WP: ...this man right here, Jonathan Stevens, is a proud reservist in the United States Army!

[Another POP for the part time military man.]

WP: These two credible grapplers, world class athletes and the pride of our nation called me, William Payne!

[He holds up his cell phone.]

WP: I am a man constantly getting calls from around the wrestling world. "Mr. Payne, please represent me.", "Mr. Payne, I could use your advice.", "Mr. Payne, make me a star!" and yet these two tried and tried and kept trying until laaaaaaaaate one night they were finally able to get through and they asked me. They asked "Mr. Payne, please get us a try out, please. Anything. We'll do anything." And so, I told these two youngsters, two men who are doing everything in their lives to be on top of the world, I listened to them and their stories and I told them. "Yes." I told them I would make sure they got a try out in the AWA and I told them I would make sure they at least had a _chance_ at living their dream.

And so I stand before Samuel Worthington and Jonathan Stevens and I say... here's your chance.

[And that's when the first tubular bells from the theme of "The Exorcist" ring over the speaker system, bringing a loud reaction from the crowd. Payne smirks widely as stomping from the back come the challengees themselves, the Samoan Hit Squad. Manu and Scola don't stop as they make their appearance, railroading all the way down the elevated entrance ramp

towards the ring. Barefoot and clad in solid black pants, the tattooed Samoans roar with tongues out, clawing the air and threatening immediate violence. Their pull at their long hair, snarling gutturally as they finally enter the ring...

...and go right to action.]

GM: Here we go, Bucky! The Samoans attack!

[And that they do, overwhelming the two newcomers with swatting forearms and pounding kicks.]

BW: I am not sure that this is what these two had in mind when they wanted an AWA try out. They surely didn't expect the Samoan Hit Squad and if they did, they are morons for accepting such a match.

GM: The Samoans are all over these two... and there goes Jonathan Stevens out of the ring, tossed by Manu.

[Stunned, Sam Worthington is put against the ropes and sent across. Scola hits first with a thrust kick under the chin, Manu coming immediately after with a scything clothesline that nearly decapitates the young man. He bounces hard off the mat, clutching at his neck and throat.]

GM: Manu heading out of the ring and throwing Stevens right back in!

[But instead of heading in himself, he chases the crowd in front of him away from the ring barrier. Stevens rolls in and into the face of Scola. Instead of backing off, he blocks a swing and ducks under, grabbing an arm.]

GM: Judo throw... NO!

[Instead, Scola blocks the throw and instead rears back with his concrete block of a skull and puts the judoka down to the mat!]

GM: That was absolutely skull breaking! This Jonathan Stevens has to be unconscious!

BW: Just unconscious? He has to have a concussion or worse. Wait. Is that gray matter leaking out on the mat? I'm sure it is!

GM: Bucky!

[Manu heads back into the ring, grabbing Worthington. The amateur wrestler tries for a desperate belly to belly but instead is just ran into the corner by the Samoan. He backs away from his victim, but not so he can rest, but so Scola can come flying in with a leaping three hundred pound splash!]

GM: The Samoan Hit Squad is not letting these two even breath! It's been attempted murder from the bell!

BW: Scola has Worthington. We've seen this before!

[With a forced Irish Whip, Stevens is sent at a charging Manu who flattens him with a crossbody! One man down and unmoving, the two descend upon the last remaining victim, swarming him with punches and stomps!]

GM: This poor Stevens kid is being decimated in there!

[Payne yells for the Samoans to "...finish this! Show those Canadians what a mistake they made!" Manu backs off, drooling and yelling as Scola rips Stevens to his feet.]

GM: Did you hear Payne, Bucky? He wants the Samoans to send a message to the Northern Lights before Battle of Los Angeles.

BW: They better be listening. Chwanay and Rousseau better be watching this.

GM: We just saw this... OH MYYYYY!

[Again, Manu charges out, flattening Stevens to the mat. He pushes down on the poor kid's chest with two gnarled hands, tongue wagging wide as the referee counts a quick and obvious three. But that's not it! Manu gets up, looking over at his order barking manager. The crowd is booing as Payne tell them to "Again! Do it again! Show those Canadian losers!"]

GM: They are going to do it again. William Payne is telling Manu and Scola to his that devastating move again! We need someone out here! We need more referees, officials, someone, or... this match is over! Someone from the back needs... WAIT! THE NORTHERN LIGHTS!

BW: THEY CAN'T BE OUT HERE, GORDO! ZERO TOLERANCE! ZERO TOLERANCE!

GM: We've got referees out here... some AWA security... and it looks like this has finally broken up... oh. Oh, no.

[Rene Rousseau and Chris Choynet are staring down Manu and Scola, with a sea of officials in the way. And then they slowly come to realize that there is a new threat. The officials part to make way for the blue-clad enforcers of AWA security, the Dogs Of War.]

BW: Oh, yes! They attacked somebody, Gordo... they know the rules!

GM: It's six on two! The Northern Lights are backing out of here... of course, anyone would.

BW: Ha! They talk like big heroes, but they're running from the Samoans now!

GM: Bucky! The Dogs Of War would have attacked them if they didn't back out immediately. There aren't two human beings in the world that would survive the Dogs AND the Samoans at the same time!

BW: No, no, the Dogs would have just kept order so that no more riots broke out. The Northern Lights were probably hoping for a riot to start so they could get lost in the crowd and the Samoans would just beat up fans.

GM: Will you stop?! Pedro Perez making the 'ejection' sign, and the Dogs are following the security detail escorting the Lights out of here. I wonder if they would have ejected the Samoans if the roles were reversed?

BW: The roles wouldn't BE reversed, Gordo, because William Payne ain't stupid. He can do simple math. The Northern Lights should have bided their time, but nooooo.

[Payne is laughing at the fan favorite duo as they are led to the exit. He crows about this being the luckiest thing that ever happened to them, while Manu and Scola pace around the ring restlessly, seemingly wanting someone else to attack. Rousseau and Choynet point threateningly back at the trio, and declare that it will be settled in LA.]

GM: Try to tell me this isn't completely ridiculous, Bucky. Four wrestlers who are - let's say unfriendly - to the policies of the Wise Men have walked to this ring... and all four of them have been EJECTED from the building!

BW: Hey, I think they've shown great restraint in not having the Dogs Of War come down here and obliterate these people. ZERO TOLERANCE, Gordo. ZERO! President Percy made it very clear what was going to be allowed here tonight and what wasn't. It's not his fault that these goofs keep buckin' the system!

GM: Are you honestly trying to tell me that Percy Childes isn't using his authority to play favorites, Bucky?

BW: Why would you even imply that?!

GM: Because, in addition to what we've seen here so far tonight, we also received the news just before we came on the air that Team Supreme has been given the night off!

BW: They deserve the night off! Supreme Wright defeated Eric Preston right here two weeks ago in Phoenix and now he's got to look ahead to All-Star Showdown in San Francisco and his World Title rematch with Dave Bryant. I'm sure you recall the thriller those two had at Memorial Day Mayhem.

GM: Of course I do.

BW: Then you recall that it went over an hour?

GM: Yes.

BW: It could happen again LIVE on the FOX Network! Why shouldn't Wright be well-rested for that?

GM: Dave Bryant, the World Champion, is here tonight! In fact, he's defending the World Heavyweight Title here tonight against any member of the Dogs Of War who want the opportunity! How is that fair?!

BW: Bryant made that challenge himself. He reaps what he sows in this case, Gordo. He's going to be lucky to even make it to San Francisco if you ask me. Supreme Wright versus Pedro Perez? Now that's a match! Wright vs Walker? Vs Carpenter? Any of those are top flight Main Events, Gordo. Bryant losing tonight might be the best thing we can imagine.

GM: You're unbelievable. You truly are. Fans, upon learning that Team Supreme was taking the night off, we dispatched a camera crew to a local tavern here in Las Vegas where we're told that the Number One Contender and his entourage are having a party. Let's see if we can get some words from Wright with his shot at the World Title just days away!

[We crossfade into a shot of a familiar face from AWA past that we haven't seen in quite a while: former ring announcer and wrestler, Melissa Cannon. She is dressed conservatively yet chic in a ruffled white blouse and black skirt, standing some distance away from a trendy-looking bar with the neon sign bearing its name strategically hidden from the camera.]

MC: Hey there, folks! This is Melissa Cannon, your AWA on-the-spot field reporter. Earlier tonight, you heard that Supreme Wright and his proteges in Team Supreme were given the night off by President Percy Childes. Well, our backstage sources were able to track them down to this loca-

[Suddenly, an arm wraps itself around Melissa's shoulder, as we see Team Supreme member, Tony Donovan enter the shot. Donovan is out of his tracksuit, looking more suited for a night out on the town in typical blazer and slacks barhopping garb. There's a big grin on his face as he mugs for the camera.]

TD: Well, look at what we have here!

MC: We...

TD: ...wanted an exclusive interview with the hottest prospect in all of professional wrestling? Well, it's kinda obvious, isn't it? I mean, I might not be old enough to do anything in this town yet, but Tony Donovan's still the life of the party! They won't let me in the bar, but you'll keep me company, won't you?

[Melissa is about to answer, when Tony suddenly throws an uppercut into the air at an imaginary opponent, startling her.]

TD: Heck, after I dominated that loudmouth Willie Hammer and showed him that he's not just inferior to the boss, but to ME, it goes without saying! And

yeah, my old man decided to stick his nose into our business again, but Mr. Jackson's just going to have to beat some sense into him again!

[Melissa removes Donovan's arm from her shoulder.]

MC: Actually...I was looking to get some comments from Supreme Wright.

[Donovan laughs.]

TD: Yeah, good luck with that! The boss doesn't want to be seen by any of you AWA muckrakers tonight! We all saw the hitjob you did on us after that riot Martinez caused in Phoenix! All the boss did was beat Preston clean as a sheet in the middle of the ring and he couldn't stand it! Seriously, Martinez should be lucky he still has a job after that!

[Tony shakes his head in disbelief.]

TD: Anyway, even if the boss wanted to talk to you gossip hounds, you're too late. This is the third bar we've hit tonight! Right now, he's probably way too dru-

[Just then, the huge form of Cain Jackson appears behind both Tony Donovan and Melissa Cannon, placing a hand on both of their shoulders.]

TD: Oh. Mr. Jackson, I was just talking to-

[Cain, as usual, doesn't mince words.]

CJ: This interview is OVER.

[Gently shoving Donovan and Cannon aside, Jackson's outstretched hand envelopes the camera lens as we forcibly go to black.]

We cut to the living room of a house, where two kids are playing an Atari 2600. Some pathetic bleeps and bloopers are coming from the screen, as they have in every media portrayal of video games ever. The kids are half-heartedly going through the motions. One of them seems to be having trouble staying awake.]

Kid #1: This is boring.

Kid #2: I wish we had toys that could _really_ fight.

[Suddenly, a body is flung through the large front window with a loud crash. A hard-rock background track plays as the body gets to his feet... wait, is that Rick Marley?]

Kids: *gasp*

[And... is that Dave Bryant running through the broken window to attack him again?!]

Kids: Dave Bryant!

[And... did Shadoe Rage just kick down the front door to attack Terry Shane III from behind while he was grappling with Travis Lynch in the dining room for no apparent reason?! And is that TORA leaping down the staircase at Robert Donovan? And why are Dichotomy beating up the mailman? Oh, there's the Northern Lights turning them around and brawling with them on the lawn!]

Kids: WOAHH!

[Yes, these two kids are about to have a very badly-acted simultaneous cardiac arrest and orgasm. It happens. Especially when Nenshou is jumping off your kitchen cabinet to hit MAMMOTH Maximus with a flying bodypress, Bobby O'Connor is hiptossing Dave Cooper across your family room, and Strictly Business and Air Strike are brawling across your driveway. Percy Childes takes a dish from the china cabinet and breaks it across the back of Tony Sunn as he had Demetrius Lake in a headlock while Ryan Martinez is ramming Johnny Detson's head into the sink in the background, Buford P Higgins and Miss Sandra Hayes are in a shouting match, Hannibal Carver tries to clothesline Callum Mahoney, who ducks... poor Hannibal hits the boys' father who was coming in to check out the noise. Then Alphonse Green wanders by and stomps the poor guy. Because he can.]

Kids: THIS IS AWESOME!

[And cue the sales pitch!]

Announcer: And now you can bring the awesome home with Series Three AWA action figures from Hasbro!

[We cut to the product line, where action figures of all of our favorite AWA characters stand in dramatic action figure poses~!]

Announcer: Relive the greatest matches!

[SkyHerc does a double throw to send The Lights Out Express over the living room divider into the kitchen! Then we see the kids playing with the SkyHerc and Lights Out Express action figures.]

Announcer: Create new dream matches never before seen!

[Steve Spector tries to smash Supreme Wright with a kitchen chair, but Wright pulls open the ironing board from the wall to block it! Then we see the kids playing with the Spector and Wright action figures.]

Announcer: Form brand new alliances and teams that you'd never see live!

[Juan Vasquez and Gibson Hayes double-clothesline Willie Hammer in the kitchen... then both grab for the paper towels to wipe off their hands with disgusted 'yuck' expressions. Then we see the kids playing with these three action figures.]

Announcer: Perform the great signature moves of the AWA wrestlers, or invent totally new ones!

[The magic of blue-screen editing makes it look like William Craven is doing a double-backflip powerbomb to Eric Preston. Well, his body is doing flips in the air as if someone were just spinning the footage around (because that's exactly what it is). Then we see the kids do the same 'move' with the action figures.]

Announcer: The base set comes with the Crockett Colosseum ring and four of the top stars in the AWA!

[Cut to a posed shot of Jack Lynch, Shadoe Rage, Mr. Sadisuto, and William Craven. See, you have to buy the ring, and you get some reasonably-popular-but-not-first-choice guys (GLASS CEILING~!) and then you HAVE to spend money to get the popular guys! Clever!]

Announcer: AWA Action Figures... get them today! Because it's the only way to get this close to the action... AND SURVIVE.

[With that, we cut to the post-fight devastation of the house... it looks like a tornado went through here. And exploded.]

Announcer: Ages 8 and up!

[And cut.

Fade back up to Mark Stegglet where we find the AWA reporter with Tony Sunn. Sunn is wearing a long sleeved navy T-shirt, jeans and has his dark blonde hair pulled back into a ponytail. He also has a deep scowl etched into his face and his hazel eyes smolder in...frustration? Fury? Both are accurate, but it's clear the Ithaca native is trying to keep his emotions in check.]

MS: Tony...I can hazard a guess, but I have to ask, what are you feeling right now?

TS: That's a loaded question, Mark.

[He slowly shakes his head, the glare never wavering.]

TS: Percy Childes, Larry Doyle and Sandra Hayes have turned the AWA into their own personal sandbox and they're now reveling in the chaos! First, they screwed over SkyHerc, then Ryan Martinez. Now, they're targeting Dave Bryant. They expect everyone here to dance to their tune -- or else! Makes me sick...

[There is a look of utter revulsion on Sunn's face. His jaw clenches, weighing his next words carefully.]

TS: No. No more. Bryant, Martinez, just say the word and I'm there. I'm not gonna lie around and let Childes and his goons turn the AWA into a kangaroo court! I refuse to be a pawn for his agenda. Which brings me to Shadoe Rage...

[One of Tony's hands tightens into a fist for a few moments at his side. His eyes narrow sharply at the camera.]

TS: [still trying to sound controlled] Rage, you're a violent, crazy S.O.B. But for as long as I can remember seeing you in action, you've ALWAYS been your own man! When the HELL did you lose your pride?! To go grovel at Childes... even you gotta see a slimeball like him is just using you, Rage. He'll use you to protect Detson and the Lights Out Express and the closest you'll EVER get to gold is seeing the belts draped over their shoulders!

Is that REALLY what you want?!

[Tony finally releases his clenched fist.]

TS: Or maybe you're just looking for another excuse so you don't have to be held responsible for your own actions anymore. Maybe you just LIKE being another lapdog of Childes! Just roll over, show your belly and let him bark out the orders!

[Tony raises his chin in defiance. The powerhouse crosses his arms over his chest as a faint, challenging smile curls onto his face.]

TS: Me? I'd rather be a man.

And I'm gonna prove it at the Battle Of Los Angeles against you, Rage.

[Sunn cracks a smile.]

TS: If Percy lets his newest dog out to the play.

[Sunn storms out of view as we cut to Gordon and Bucky seated at ringside.]

GM: Tony Sunn and Shadoe Rage seem to be on a collision course once again and you just have to wonder if those two will be able to keep their emotions in check here tonight in Las Vegas.

BW: Sunn might. You just never know what Rage might do.

GM: That's right... and just like that, you never know what might happen when the AWA comes to your town for live event action. As you all know, the AWA has been on this Coast To Coast tour all summer long and as we approach the Battle Of Los Angeles and the end of the tour, it's been a red hot summer.

BW: So many big matches, so much fun. I've had a blast on tour with the AWA all summer long, Gordo.

GM: We're about a month away from heading home to Dallas, Texas and the-

BW: Detson Center.

GM: That's a travesty and you know it, Bucky. But yes, we'll be back in the so-called Detson Center for the annual event known as Homecoming which will be an even bigger event this year as it'll host the AWA's annual Rumble matchup. Thirty men battling it out for a chance to be in the Main Event of SuperClash with the World Heavyweight Title on the line. But speaking of champions, on our last Saturday Night Wrestling, Johnny Detson became the new World Television Champion by virtue of his... victory... if you can call it that with a straight face over Ryan Martinez. Detson then inherited the champion's schedule which meant that his first title defense would be against the lanky Texan, Jack Lynch! Our cameras were at ringside in Denver last Saturday night to see that big showdown so let's take a look at some of the highlights right now.

[We crossfade to footage marked "AUGUST 9th - DENVER, COLORADO" where Johnny Detson has Jack Lynch down on the mat in the corner, clinging to the top rope as he presses his boot down into the Texan's throat.]

GM: We're joining this match in progress as Detson was already using his textbook supply of illegal tactics to try and strangle the air out of the big Texan.

BW: Illegal tactics?! Those stinkin' Stench boys are the KINGS of illegal tactics! Like that Iron Claw!

GM: Recently made illegal by AWA President Percy Childes, yes.

[Detson pulls Lynch off the mat at the count of four, peppering him with stiff right hands to the eyesocket, putting him back against the buckles again before grabbing an arm, looking for an Irish whip...]

GM: Detson goes to shoot him across but Lynch reverses, sending him hard into the corner...

[Lynch doubles over, backdropping Detson high into the air before he crashes down hard on the canvas.]

GM: HIIIIIIIGH BACK BODYDROP BY THE CHALLENGER RIGHT THERE!

[Lynch falls to a knee, pushing back up as Detson staggers up to his feet, and DRILLS him between the eyes with a right hand, knocking him right back down. This repeats a few times, the crowd getting louder every time Detson hits the canvas...

...and we cut a little deeper into the match where Lynch has a wristlock applied on Detson, repeatedly slamming his elbow down into the trapped

limb. Detson is walking on tip toe as Lynch wrenches the arm around a second time.]

GM: As we look ahead into the match, Jack Lynch was solidly in control of the match, working over the limb of the World Television Champion, switching now to the hammerlock...

[With the arm trapped, Lynch lifts him up off the mat in a back suplex, dropping him down on his own arm as Detson howls in pain. Lynch covers, gaining a two count before Detson kicks out...

...and Lynch goes right back to the arm, kneeling on the mat as he hooks it in an armbar.]

GM: All seemed to be going in the favor of the challenger until...

[We cut ahead where both men are on their feet again, Detson still trapped in the armbar as Lynch backs him into the turnbuckles...

...and Detson sticks a thumb in his eye!]

GM: ...the cheapshot by Johnny Detson!

[Detson grabs the hair, slamming Lynch's head into the top turnbuckle, before dragging him down in a tights-assisted schoolboy for a two count. As Lynch tries to blindly get up, Detson DRIVES a knee into the side of the head!]

GM: Ohh! Nice shot by the Television Champion!

[Detson goes for another cover, this time slipping his feet over the middle rope for leverage but Lynch again powers out at two. The champion takes the mount, hammering his fist into the side of Lynch's head.]

GM: Detson going to town on the big Texan, battering him into the mat.

[He grabs two hands full of hair, slamming the back of Lynch's head into the mat as the referee reprimands him for the repeated illegal acts.]

GM: The champion had re-established control with some underhanded tactics... and as we go deeper into the match, we'll see that Jack Lynch was able to overcome them.

[Another cut shows Detson hammering Lynch with right hands as the Texas hangs onto the ropes, trying to stay on the apron. The referee backs Detson up but as he moves back in, Lynch slingshots through the ropes to drive his shoulder into the midsection...

...and then slingshots OVER the ropes into a sunset flip, narrowly missing a victory as Detson just BARELY gets a shoulder up in time!]

GM: So close right there for Jack Lynch who was obviously frustrated as he got to his feet...

[Lynch pulls Detson up, hammering him back into the ropes. The hot Texas temper is getting the better of him as he pummels him with frustration. The two are tangled up in the ropes as the referee steps in to act...

...and Detson uses the situation to his advantage, slamming his knee up into the groin of Lynch!]

GM: Detson goes low! The referee suspected it but-

BW: But he didn't see it so he couldn't call it!

GM: You're exactly right, Bucky.

[But as Detson cockily walks off the ropes, ready to take advantage...

...Lynch straightens up, his face red with rage, and HOOKS the Iron Claw on the skull of the champion!]

BW: And there it is, Gordo! An illegal hold by the sneakiest family in the world of wrestling!

GM: Jack Lynch's frustration getting the better of him as he locked on that Iron Claw that is a trademark of his family - and of Texas wrestling. The referee warned him, tried to get him to break it but...

[Lynch refuses, digging his fingers into the head of Detson...

...and the bell sounds to the jeers of the crowd.]

GM: The disqualification came but that didn't stop Jack Lynch from keeping that Iron Claw applied.

[We cut a little deeper and show a handful of officials and referees trying to drag Lynch off of an unconscious Detson who is down on the mat motionless as Lynch's fingers are finally ripped off of Detson's head...

...and we fade back to live action to Gordon and Bucky.]

BW: I bet you liked that, Gordo! I bet you're real proud of that no-good Stench boy!

GM: I don't know if I'm proud of him but I certainly can understand-

BW: Of course you can. You're nothin' but biased when it comes to that family. The hothead, the scumbag, the cripple, the old man, and even their-

GM: I'd watch what you say about Henrietta Ortiz Lynch right about now because I've been told that Jack Lynch is going to come down here and sit in on commentary for our next match.

BW: WHAT?! No one approved that with me!

GM: Contrary to your beliefs, no one has to approve ANYTHING with you, Bucky. But before Jack comes out here, I understand that Mark Stegglet is standing by! Mark?

[Up at the interview platform, Mark Stegglet stands by. Towering over him is the six-foot-nine form of "Black Tiger" Demetrius Lake. Lake is a tall, athletic black man with a large afro, mustache, and a very prominent black beard which extends over an inch down from his chin. The self-professed King Of Wrestling is currently wearing a white ring jacket, red trunks and boots, light yellow kneepads and monogramming on the tights and boots. His left thumb is heavily taped and a black fedora rests atop his head. The King has his hands on his hips, chest puffed out, and is smiling broadly. the crowd boos him viciously.]

MS: With me at this time, the self-pr...

[Lake cuts off Mark in his distinctive deep midwestern-accented voice.]

DL: Don't you dare use the word 'self-proclaimed', Mr. TV Announcer, or the county coroner might make a proclamation about you tonight.

MS: Fine. The King Of Wrestling, Demetrius Lake. Mr. Lake, with the removal of now-President Percy Childes' manager license, as well as Radiant Raven's maternity leave, you have gone from boasting quite the entourage to being all alone.

DL: That's right, Mr. TV Announcer, but remember one thing. All I ever needed was my outside-the-ring affairs to be managed for me. Hotels to get booked, meals to get arranged, workouts to get scheduled. A real ath-e-lete needs his absolute focus for the competition at hand. And while I'm on that subject, all these tourists need to SHADDAP WHEN THE KING IS TALKING!

[The loud boos go to louder boos, unsurprisingly.]

DL: I demand complete silence! Unlike all these bums they bring out here, like the Lunches and the No Honors, I am a fine tuned machine and require complete focus on my work. But Percy Childes has a higher calling. As the King Of Wrestling, I can only do what is best for the sport of wrestling, and so it was my pleasure to accept my release from the expert management of Percy Childes so that he could fix this company. And the first thing he needs to do is move it out of Mexas. But don't move it to Lost Vegas, because nobody here has taste.

[BOOOOOO!]

DL: They need to move it to Missouri-ah, really. Since Old Yeller hisself sent his five carloads of Mexans to fill up all the arenas we went to, just so his boys wouldn't get booed like the egg-suckin' dogs they are, the Missourians never got a chance to see their heroes on this last tour. And it sounds like

we got a lot of Mexans here tonight. No surprise, because Lost Vegas is a tourist town. Nobody really lives here.

MS: I think Supreme Wright does.

DL: Probably just because they got cheap houses. It might be him, about thirty Guineas they got breakin' legs in these casinos, and whatever indentured servants they got cleanin' up after everybody or strippin' nekked in nightclubs. Disgusting.

MS: I don't think this is a topic we want to...

DL: Mr. TV Announcer, you hold that microphone and your tongue both, because your opinion is irrelevant. The King Of Wrestling looks around Las Vegas and sees nothin' but tourists and bums. You got five strip clubs on every street. I'm sad that Raven isn't here, just to show these pitiful women what a real woman is like. I want to thank Radiant Raven for what she did here. When her man, Steven Childes, went down with that injury, she didn't vanish because her man got hurt. She kept the fight on herself. She supported her man without ever being defined by him or losing her own goals. That's a strong woman.

A lot like Miss Sandra Hayes. She manages the best wrestler that isn't Demetrius Lake, and the best tag team bar none, but she didn't let herself be controlled. She is in control. And a lot like Lori Dane, who did the right thing no matter what anybody else thinks. And a lot like Miss Sunshine. Now that is a woman who goes after what she wants. I don't know why she ever looked twice at that pimple-skinned scum Travesty Lunch in the first place, but she is putting that scum in his place no doubt about it. Because she has too much integrity to let that scum get away with attacking her. These are strong women, not like these mindless objects they got here in Lost Vegas. They make me almost as sick as the weak men who let it all happen.

[The fans are booing viciously, and Stegglet has his free hand on his forehead as if trying to keep his skull from exploding.]

MS: Is any of this relevant, or are you just trying to start a boycott of our product?

DL: It is relevant. Because with Raven gone, the world needs to know a role model when they see one. She was a role model, and now more than ever the world needs more. But you got all these people talkin' about these hobos that are standin' up to Percy Childes for no reason. Jim Watkins came in; the man has a crooked face and behaves even more crooked than his face... he came in and did whatever he wanted to people he didn't like, and they canonized the man. So now you got all these hobos that are used to gettin' the biased calls actin' like a crime was committed only because they ain't committin' it, and people think they're heroes.

Bums like Bobby No Honor. Like that paper champion Dave Cryant. Like that criminal, Cannibal Slobber, who we'll never see again because he's goin'

to Attica. And the list goes on. But you, Jack Lunch, you're the worst one. You use that illegal hold, you get the AWA to give you an illegal exemption, and now you're cryin' foul because justice was done. Percy Childes came to me and told me that he could fire Jack Lunch any time, but I want you in the ring, Jack Lunch. I have already beaten you in front of the whole world, and I'll do it again for all my fans.

[BOOOOOOOO!]

MS: It doesn't sound like you have too many in Las Vegas.

DL: That's because my fans would take a vacation in a classy place, like Kansas City.

[BOOOOOOOOO!]

MS: Well, last week you had a lot to say about Jack Lynch, but this week the tables will be turned. President Childes has given him the same opportunity you had last week.

DL: Which I disagree with, Mr. TV Announcer. And yet, all these bums out here want to fight Percy Childes because they say he ain't fair. I should get to do commentary anytime, anyplace, because I am the King Of Wrestling. But Percy Childes told me that the same rules apply to Jack Lunch even though he is the lowest form of life. He shouldn't have the right to speak at all, let alone pollute my match with his insane blather. He owes even these worthless people out here an apology for wastin' oxygen they could have used to breathe. If the man has anything intelligent to say, it will prove the adage that there is a first time for everything.

MS: We're out of t...

DL: Don't you cut off the King Of Wrestling! I'll beat this trash in the ring so fast that I could take a double interview time and you'd still go to commercial a minute early. No question about it. Nobody wants to hear Jack Lunch anyway!

[Unfortunately for Lake, his mic gets cut, and his theme music starts in order to get him to go to the ring. He loudly berates Stegglet, who walks away from him. The piano and drum lead-in to Louis Armstrong's rendition of "Mack The Knife" plays over the PA to the loud boos of the crowd.]

GM: This man is the one who should not be allowed to speak, Bucky! The things he says will get us sued one day.

BW: That's because the truth hurts, Gordo. No one truly gets offended by lies and made-up stuff. They only get mad when it hurts.

GM: Oh, brother.

[As Satchmo's famous trumpet joins in, Lake starts to walk down the aisle with hate in his eyes. The camera pans over to the ring, where Phil Watson

stands by with a Caucasian wrestler that has full length kelly-green trunks with maroon bird shapes, and maroon boots. The wrestler has short black hair, a bit of stubble, and a thin mustache.]

PW: The following contest is set for one fall with a ten minute time limit! Introducing first, already in the ring... from Provo, Utah... weighing two-hundred eleven pounds... MORTIMER TOMPKINS!

[Tompkins does a jumping fist pump, but the crowd is still booing Lake. Demetrius is now nearly at ringside, and is jawing at some fans. He reaches into the crowd, grabs a sign that says "WE LOVE THE LYNCHES", and tears it to pieces in front of the female fans who were carrying it, drawing even more boos.]

PW: And his opponent, making his way to the ring area... from Kansas City, Missouri... weighing in at three hundred seventeen pounds... he is the King Of Wrestling... "BLACK TIGER" DEMETRIUS LAKE!

[BOOOOOOOOOO!]

GM: This man has a remarkable ability to draw the absolute hatred of everyone around him, Bucky.

BW: Only classless people. I think he's great!

GM: Thank you for calling me 'classless'.

BW: You're welcome.

[Lake takes his sweet time getting up on the apron and entering the ring. As soon as he does, "Mack the Knife" stops and The Black Keys' "Hard Row" blares over the loudspeakers, as those boos turn almost instantly into cheers.]

Jack Lynch, dressed tonight in a long sleeved, black dress shirt and a pair of black dress pants, with, of course, his black cowboy hat worn easily and slung low, steps out. The laconic cowboy exudes his customary cool, even this close to his enemy. Lynch pauses near the female fans who've just had their sign destroyed by Demetrius Lake and dips his head in their direction, before pointing to Lake in the ring, mouthing words that seem to promise he'll get revenge on their behalf. As the cheers grow louder, the camera cuts to the Black Tiger, who has his hands clapped over his ears and is yelling at the crowd to shut up. Eventually, Lake comes near the ropes, screaming at Lynch to get in the ring. Jack Lynch seems to think about it, and then shakes his head no.]

BW: Look at that! Every Stench a coward.

GM: Jack Lynch wisely keeping in mind Percy Childes' instructions not to interfere with any matches, lest he be ejected from the building.

[Lynch looks to the fans, and then points to Lake. As if on cue, a chant begins in the stands.]

"GO HOME LAKE! GO HOME LAKE!"

[Over and over again, as inside the ring, Demetrius Lake kicks at the bottom ropes, before pressing his hands against his ears even more tightly.]

GM: Looks like you're about to get a chance to tell Jack Lynch what you think of him, Bucky!

[Sure enough, we see Jack Lynch sauntering over to the announcer's booth.]

BW: Uh... I'm an announcer, not a wrestler!

GM: Not so willing to talk trash now, are you Bucky?

[Wordlessly, Jack Lynch sets his cowboy hat down on the announcer's table, and picks up a headset. He turns, and stares a hole right through Bucky.]

JL: First thing's first. Mr. Wilde, time for you to take that damned thing off. Right. Now.

[The eldest Lynch brother is pointing directly at the #SCUMBAGTRAVIS t shirt that Bucky has been sporting for many weeks.]

BW: You can't make me! Percy will...

JL: Bucky, you can take it off yourself, or I can take it off for you. Which do ya think is gonna be the easier of the two?

BW: But Percy said!

[Jack leans in.]

JL: Percy and his goons are backstage. I'm right here. You bettin' on them bein' faster than me?

[Bucky gulps, and then reluctantly, he shrugs off his gaudy jacket. Pulls off his headset. And then, white faced, he slowly removes his t-shirt... revealing quite the pasty torso to a big laugh from the fans.

The moment it's off, a grinning Jack snatches the t-shirt, calmly drops it on the floor, and begins to wipe his boots with it.]

JL: Put the jacket back on, Bucky. No one wants to see that.

[Bucky pulls his jacket back on, and then settles down at the broadcast booth, staring angrily at Gordon. Lynch, still almost preternaturally composed, settles in on the other side of Gordon, unperturbed by what happened.]

BW: What, you got nothin' to say Gordo?

GM: In fact, I do. Thank you, Mr. Lynch! I've been wishing you would do that for months!

JL: You're very welcome Gordon. Now, let's get this show on the road!

[*DING*DING*DING*]

BW: We're underway, and I hope you get a good look at this beating the King's about to dish out. I know you've seen a lot of them real close up, but you don't seem to remember them real well the day after.

JL: Oh, I remember every lump Demetrius has put on my head. Ain't no doubt that he's a tough customer. What I remember more though is every time I've made the Black Tiger scream.

GM: Collar and elbow, and already Lake with a rake of the eyes. Why he felt the need to do that in a clinch with a man ten inches shorter and a hundred six pounds lighter, I do not know.

JL: What you're lookin' at in there Gordon is a man whose tough and talented, but who's missin' his heart. Demetrius Lake don't know any other way but to fight dirty.

GM: Crushing forearm! And a second, with a huge vertical leap! My goodness, that blow hit from what must have been ten feet up.

BW: That's like a normal guy jumping off the top.

JL: I won't take anything away from his talent. But there's a big world of difference between Mortimer Tompkins, god bless him, and Jack Lynch.

GM: A scoop by Demetrius Lake, and a big body slam from six feet nine inches up. I wonder if he was targeting the 'eighth vertebrae'.

BW: You laugh because you ain't a wrestler, Gordo, but that happens. When someone with skill uses slams and suplexes and all, they make sure it lands exactly right in the same spot. There's a difference for guys who are good.

GM: I guess then even Demetrius Lake gave you that much respect, Jack, because he claimed you were doing that last week.

JL: You don't get to the AWA by bein' bad at your job. And I'll give Bucky this. He's right. You get a feel for these things. You know just how to drop a guy on the same spot.

BW: Eh, I just think he was giving you too much credit because it doesn't occur to someone that good that not everybody does things the same way.

JL: See, and here I thought we were gonna be friends, Bucky.

[In the meanwhile, Lake has flipped Tompkins over, and drives the knee into the lower back repeatedly. With his hands planted on the canvas, Lake slams the kneedrops in one after another, five in all. On the last one, he keeps the knee dug in and pulls up on a chinlock. Mortimer Tompkins shouts in pain as Lake cranks him back, glaring at Lynch the whole time. And running his mouth, of course.]

GM: In any case, there is little doubt of Lake's strategy here. He is targeting the lower lumbar region of Mortimer Tompkins in this contest.

[The camera cuts to Jack Lynch, who is beginning to look uneasy.]

JL: I think he's doin' more than that. He's not tryin' to do anything to win this match. He's tryin' to send a message to me by hurtin' that kid.

BW: I don't know what you're talking about. The King always fights fair, and it is high treason to say that he doesn't.

GM: Very painful hold applied here, and Tompkins struggling to reach the ropes. Lake really has this applied properly. We do not often see mat wrestling out of the man, but when we do, it's generally well done. I believe that he wants people to forget that he was a Missouri state champion in amateur wrestling throughout high school.

JL: He knows what he's doing in there. And when you get three hundred and seventeen pounds of muscle grindin' ya into the mat, you're in for a miserable day. Still. If he's that good, he oughta consider just puttin' the man away.

GM: Tompkins has reached the ropes, and now Ricky Longfellow is putting the count on. There is the four... and goodness! Lake releases, but I think that was a five-plus!

[It was. Demetrius ignores the count in favor of punishing poor Mortimer some more. Longfellow screams at him, which causes Lake to bolt up and tower over him, glaring down and glowering with an obvious intent to intimidate.]

BW: I don't hear a bell.

GM: Lake bullying the official, but according to Percy Childes, if he hits the official, he's going to get windshielded by the Dogs.

JL: Yeah, because we all know that Percy don't play favorites

BW: When has Percy Childes ever lied?!

JL: Every time he opens that mouth of his. Percy Childes would rather climb up a tree and tell a lie than stand on the ground and tell the truth. Percy has stacked the deck in his and his boys' favor every time he's had the chance.

BW: No, he has not. You go back and you look at the footage. What he says, he does. You just don't like it, so you assume he must be a liar.

[Lake reaches through the ropes, grabs Tompkins by the face, and pulls up, bending his back on the bottom rope while fishhooking. He lets go at the four count, and the resulting snapback of the bottom rope sends poor Mortimer's sternum into the apron.]

GM: That's sheer brutality! Demetrius Lake torturing this young man there, and Longfellow checking... oh no.

[Oh, yes. Lake's going into the trunks for a foreign object. The fans loudly object, and Lynch stands up, most of his cool lost now.]

JL: Longfellow, if you don't stop him, I'm goin' in there and doin' it myself!

BW: Hey! Remember what Percy said two weeks ago! No interference, no post-match attacks! Demetrius abided by it, now you have to as well!

JL: Yeah, okay. I'll play ball.

[There's almost no conviction in Lynch's voice as he says that and settles back down.]

GM: Lake has loaded up that thumb! Come on, Ricky, you have got to know about this by now! The "Black Tiger" pulling Mortimer Tompkins in... and the thumb jab to the throat! Tompkins flops right through the ropes to the floor, clutching his throat!

JL: What the hell was that?! You better tell me you saw that!

BW: He hit him in the sternum. It was legal.

JL: The sternum, my Texas ass! That was to the throat Bucky, don't you deny it!

BW: I didn't know blindness ran in your family, too. I always thought it was just stupidity and body odor.

[The camera once more cuts back to the announce booth, where Jack Lynch is giving Bucky a death glare.]

JL: You forgettin' just how close I am right now, Mr. Wilde?

GM: Jack, no! Bucky, stop baiting him! You always complain about me allegedly antagonizing wrestlers, citing my safety... take your own advice!

[In the meantime, Demetrius has followed Mortimer to the floor, after successfully hiding his weapon from Longfellow. He walks over to Mortimer, scoops him up, and slams him down on the barely-padded concrete! The boos are deafening now.]

GM: SLAM ON THE CONCRETE! There's no reason for that! That thin padding isn't enough to absorb an impact like that!

BW: Of course there is a reason for it. He's working on the back, remember? Not many better ways to hurt the back than that!

JL: Where's Percy now? Where's our president now that he actually needs to restore order?

GM: Oh no. No, Longfellow, you need to keep Lake back!

[The reason for Gordon's concern? Lake is dragging Tompkins by the hair around to the broadcast table. We can hear him tell Lynch "Take a good look, this is a new honorary Lunch boy!" before slamming him again, right in front of the table. Jack stands up again as Lake crows proudly about how bad he will hurt this man.]

JL: Oh, you're a real big man. You wanna try doin' that to me? I'll come right around this table and you and I can have a little talk...

GM: Jack, he's baiting you! He wants you to interfere because Childes gave the specific order not to!

BW: SHHHHHH! Gordo, why you gotta meddle?

JL: I'm tellin' ya both right now. I'm not gonna sit here and watch this much longer.

[Lake rolls back in the ring to break the count, then back outside the ring. Lifting up Tompkins again in the slam position, he rams the young man's lower back into the ringpost!]

GM: NO! The referee is going to need to stop the match! What Lake is doing should be obvious!

JL: I told ya. He ain't tryin' to win this match. He's after this kid's career! This is exactly the sorta garbage that the president is supposed to stop! Percy needs to waddle out here and tell that referee to do his job. Or maybe I'll do it for him!

BW: Well, here's three things you're wrong about: real chili has beans, the Iron Claw is illegal, and Percy Childes doesn't need to control the referees.

JL: Sayin' any one of those things gets you a black eye. You wanna know what all three gets ya?

GM: Bucky! Stop it!

[A second time, Tompkins' back goes to the ringpost. The booing is relentless as Lake rolls Mortimer Tompkins back into the ring. Tompkins lays limp, facedown, as Lake ascends to the top rope.]

GM: I don't know whether to be relieved that Lake seems to want to end it, or horrified that two slams to the concrete and two to the ringpost aren't enough somehow.

BW: BIG CAT POUNCE! Right to the back! Three seventeen crashing down from way up there!

JL: Well, at least it's just about over.

GM: Lake rolling Tompkins over for the pin... one, two... HEY!

[At the count of two, Lake rolls Tompkins back over onto his face, and heads to the buckles again! The fans are horrified.]

GM: NOT ANOTHER ONE!

JL: That's it. I ain't watchin' another second of this.

[The headset drops with a THUNK as Jack Lynch whips it off and starts to get out from behind the table.]

GM: Jack, no! It's a trap!

BW: Thank you, Admiral Ackbar.

[Lynch rolls into the ring, catches Lake on the top rope, and slams him off to the roar of the fans! There is a huge THUD as the Black Tiger hits and bounces, and Longfellow bails while calling for the bell.]

GM: Jack Lynch saving poor Mortimer Tompkins, but at what cost?!

BW: Uh oh! He's gonna really rack up the disciplinary action... he's flexin' that Claw!

GM: DOGS OF WAR! THEY WERE WAITING FOR THIS!

[In a flash of midnight-blue, Pedro Perez, Isaiah Carpenter, and Wade Walker hit the ring. Jack rolls out to the floor and the crowd boos.]

BW: Ha ha ha! Jack Stench wanted to be a big hero! Now he's broken the President's rules... rules that Lake followed! And the Dogs can make him pay for it!

[Carpenter holds his arms out to the other Dogs, and calls Phil Watson into the ring. As always, the trio wears midnight-blue sleeveless vests, matching track pants, black boots, and large midnight blue flak jackets over that. 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.

Isaiah Carpenter 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 on Lynch.

The largest of the three is 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.

Carpenter is the one to get the mic. The fans are booing.]

IC: Lynch. You know, two weeks ago, President Percy Childes said that the conditions for you being out here included no interference. You interfered. Right now, we have the right to beat you to a pulp and it's all legal. And if anyone tried to stop us, that would be illegal.

But you know that, right? Two weeks ago, your best friend O'Connor was one of the guys who stopped us from inflicting the penalty on a ref-beater. And how much did he get fined, huh? Almost as much as you did for using the Claw on Johnny Detson during the riot you guys started.

[The crowd boos, and Perez can't resist being a 'backseat driver', leaning in to add his two cents during Carpenter's statement.]

PP: Does Blackjack know how much money you're costing him?

[Carpenter grins before continuing.]

IC: Lynch, you're going to get fined again. And on top of that, we could take you out right now. But Percy asked us to show some mercy tonight.

PP: I think not lighting the body on fire afterwards is merciful enough.

IC: This is a message, Lynch. Get out. Get out of Las Vegas. You are hereby banned from the building, by authority of the AWA President's office. And the next guy to break the rules has been fairly warned. You're gonna get fined, too. You're gonna get banned, too. And after this act of mercy.... you're gonna get escorted to your car.

[BOOOOO!]

PP: Now get the hell out of our building.

[The fans boo, and Lynch is just glowering. Lake is standing behind the Dogs, pointing and laughing at Lynch. Jack is crimson, seething with rage... and here comes the logs on the fire. Demetrius sticks his head over Carpenter's shoulder and adds his two cents.]

DL: Look at him! Look at him! He can't wait. He wants to run in here so bad he can taste it. He wants to put that illegal Claw on me! I tell you what, Jack Lunch, you run in here and I'll LET you put it on! I got my hands behind my back! I'll get on my knees! You use that Claw on me right now like you know you want!

Or you turn and run out of here with your tail between your legs, you no-good bum! You go tell Old Yeller you got fined again and he can't get his twenty percent! You turn and leave and don't you look back! You get out of this buildin' and hope nothin' bad happens to your friends while you're gone. Get out! Get out!

[With inexpressible hate in his eyes, Lynch steps forward. But Bobby O'Connor has run down to ringside, and is putting his arms around his best friend. O'Connor is pleading with Jack not to take the bait.]

DL: Take that carpetbagger with you! He got kicked out of Missoruah and now he's homeless. He can be from Las Vegas like all these bums. Go and spend your last five bucks on one of these cheap Lost Vegas women; you won't make another dime in this company again with all the fines you keep getting!

[Abruptly, Jack pushes away from Bobby in unmitigated fury. But it isn't to attack. Bobby has gotten through to him; Jack knows that he has no choice... so he storms away. The fans boo loudly.]

PP: Oh! Tell all your friends...

[The mic is stuck in front of a smirking Wade Walker.]

WW: The Wise Men send their regards.

[Lynch kicks the railing in frustration and the fans boo loudly.]

GM: That was an ambush! And that "act of mercy" was the exact opposite! Lake and Childes wanted to make Jack Lynch swallow his pride! He'd rather take a beating than this!

BW: Then why didn't he?!

GM: Because if his friends had to come make a save, just as the Dogs said, they'd be punished too! Everyone who stopped the Dogs from windshielding Doc Holliday in Phoenix was heavily fined. And again for their actions in the riot. They can't make a living this way, Bucky! Percy Childes fines them for everything!

BW: "Everything" being the same things Percy's guys always got fined for... starting riots and violating company policy! You act like this ain't fair. It's perfectly fair! The Dogs would have windshielded the King if he had hit Longfellow!

GM: They would not, and you know it!

BW: Prove it.

GM: This is disgraceful! Lake and Childes set this up to humiliate Lynch. We're going to commercial... I don't think I can take another week of 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...

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 Dufresne 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 as we fade back inside the Thomas And Mack Center...]

...well, not exactly. More precisely, we're out in the parking lot of said building, our camera crew having pursued a furious Jack Lynch and his young friend, Bobby O'Connor, out there. But judging from the body language of the two, the partners are not on the same page.]

JL: ...dammit, Bobby!

You're my friend, so I'm givin' ya a free pass tonight. But you don't ever do that again, you hear me? You don't get between me and Lake!

Now I don't know what you were thinkin'...

[O'Connor interrupts.]

BOC: Hold on right there, Jack, and I'll tell you. Tonight, I would've liked nothing more than to see you wipe the floor with those lowlifes. In a sane world, that's exactly what would've happened and every last man and woman in the back would've shaken your hand for doing it. But there's just one thing...

[Bobby shakes his head.]

BOC: We aren't living in a sane world anymore.

The biggest, conniving, two-faced snake this sport has seen in ages is somehow running this company. His lackeys who've tried time and again to end my career... not to mention the fact that they DID end the careers of several other guys... are walking around as the legitimate security force for this company.

These are crazy times, Jack. And you can't fight crazy with crazy and come out on top...

[Bobby sighs.]

BOC: No matter what Mister Carver thinks. We saw what he did, we both agreed that was the completely wrong way of going about things. Do you really want to follow him on the path he's cutting out for himself?

[Jack's expression turns from angry to thoughtful, with a small suggestion of "am I really that close to the edge?" tossed in. His only response is to nod his head slowly as he takes in and releases a breath.]

BOC: Look, this whole thing has gotten a lot bigger than anything we've faced before. Heck, maybe bigger than anything our fathers or their fathers before them had to face. They only had to wrestle the man standing across from them... we have to fight the people that sign our checks.

And your dad might never have had this same struggle, but we both know everything he taught you growing up was leading to this moment. It's time you not only make him proud, but lead by example for every guy and gal in that locker room and show every fan in every seat we won't go down without a fight. But that fight has to be fought with a clear head, Jack... we can't play right into their hands anymore.

[The camera cuts back to Jack, who opens his mouth, only to close it again, stunned into silence.]

JL: Well, when ya put that way. What am I supposed to say?

[Jack exhales slowly.]

JL: Ya made your point, and ya made it damn well. I was bein' stupid. And you're right. At this moment, can't none of us afford to be stupid. Only question is, with me banned and you havin' a target on your back.

[Jack removes his cowboy hat, running his fingers through his hair.]

JL: What do we do next?

BOC: For now, we wait. They want us to rush in without a plan so they can have the upper hand. The show isn't over yet be a longshot... so we stand our ground right here and wait for them to make a mistake.

[As Lynch nods his head and extends his hand to his tag partner, who quickly takes it, we cut back to Gordon and Bucky.]

GM: Bucky, I said it before the break and I meant it. I just don't know how much more of this I can stand. We've already seen... what? Five guys thrown out of the building? This is insane! This Zero Tolerance policy is designed to stack the deck for the Wise Men's army!

BW: It's for the safety of everyone! It's what's best for business!

GM: What's best for- you've gotta be kidding me! It's not what's best for anyone or anything but the Wise Men! Somebody's gotta put a stop to this thing, Bucky, or I think this will be my last broadcast for this company until they do.

BW: Gordo, what are you...?

GM: You heard me. I can't be out here for this. I can't provide this with any legitimacy. Somebody needs to put a stop to this tonight or I'm... I'm out of here. I can't do it anymore. Let's... let's go backstage to Shadoe Rage.

[We fade from Gordon and Bucky backstage. The camera suddenly spins as if it were seized. And, in fact, it was seized. The camera turns to rest its focus on Shadoe Rage. The crazed Canadian wild man pulls the cameraman's attention towards him. He, as usual, looks caught in the midst of some manic rant even though he hasn't said anything as of yet. There's just a mass of dreadlocks flying and beads clinking together. There's just crazed kohl-lined eyes and sunglasses hooked into the side of a fuchsia bandana. There's just a hyper expression framed by a scraggly moustache and French-forked beard. And there's just the uncomfortable sleeveless T-shirt with the impression of a death mask of Rage's face on an Old West poster that reads: WANTED DEAD.]

SR: Las Vegas, Nevada, Shadoe Rage is here in Sin City to talk about the sins that went on last show! You saw the Enemy of the World put down Ryan Martinez with not one but two Angel of Death Drops and take that title off his waist to deliver to Percy Childes and Johnny Detson. That was a great time for the people who are sick of Ryan Martinez's whitebread hero act. That was a great moment for everybody! It was a great moment for me! It was a great moment for the people! It was terrific until Ryan Martinez decided to cause a riot.

[Rage pauses for a moment, letting the camera drink in the sight of his sly smile. Rage looks aloft and off into the distance for a moment. He seems to be reliving some very fun memory.]

SR: Son, I've been there and done that when I was a kid in Europe. It isn't something you want on your resume, boy. Because when all the lawsuits

get settled, they're going to be looking right at you to pay the bill. But I was talking about the sin of last time, wasn't I? You don't have the shoulders to bear the burden of being evil. Stick to kissing up to the kids and leave the hard work to the men that were born to hang.

[Rage twitches, snapping out of his reminiscence. And refocuses on the camera.]

SR: Do you know who was really responsible for the riot? Tony Sunn.

[He pauses to let the weight of his words sink in.]

SR: That's right. I know what you're thinking out there. Tony Sunn wasn't even involved in the riot! But he's to blame. Let me explain to you why. Tony Sunn is a swarthy opportunist. We all know that. He ducked and dodged matching up with Ryan Martinez until he was healthy. Yeah, right. That was never going to happen. So Tony Sunn was really waiting until Martinez was at his weakest, but I called him. And rather than admit in his cankerous soul that he was waiting to take out an injured Ryan Martinez and doing it, he decided to try to fake it. He refused to put Martinez down when he had the chance. And so I had to put him down. I had to put Martinez down and Detson had to finish him off. And that made his blood all hot and he decided he was going to take out on somebody else. So he started a riot.

[Rage nods in satisfaction at his own twisted logic.]

SR: So Tony Sunn, you protector of all that is good and holy, you made this happen. You could have pinned him and let him have his rematch later. You could have pinned him and let me take that title from you because you know you got lucky the first time we matched up. Tony Sunn, you're just a bumbling, bungling fool and I'm sick of you and your swarthy opportunistic ways. So I'm going to tell you this.

Battle of Los Angeles, we hook up again. I promise you, I'm going to beat you because I'm better than you and my soul is honest. I'm a warrior. I'm a man known to evil. I'm the baddest thang running. You, you're just a man who befriends referees and profits from their manipulation. Percy Childes can't call his officials' integrity into question, but he still knows and I still know, I got a bad count at Guts & Glory. Bet it won't happen again. I bet my claim on the Television title that it won't happen again.

[Rage's deranged smile is disquieting as he stares into the camera, every inch the predator.]

SR: One more time at Battle of Los Angeles. What better place for me to expose you for the phony actor that you are? Tony Sunn, it felt so good the first time I dropped that elbow into your black heart. It will feel so good when I do it again. It will feel so good when I finish you off once and for all. Come on, Tony Sunn. Let's dance in the darkness again. And this time we won't need a referee's ten count. You'll be down for three!

[Rage directs his attention to the camera man.]

SR: Go find Tony Sunn! Go let him know that Shadoe Rage accepts his challenge for Battle Of Los Angeles! I want you to show him everything I just said. Tell him I think he's a gutless coward and an embarrassment to this sport. You tell him that Rage is coming for him and he's going to die ... in darkness!

[Rage slaps the camera away. The lens spins three quarters and then the image fades to the ring where Phil Watson is standing.]

PW: The following contest is set for one fall with a ten minute time limit. Introducing first... already in the ring at this time...

CHARLES S. RAAAAAANT!

[The boos go up for the AWA's resident Customer Service Representative in his khakis and polo shirt as he raises his arms in the air.]

GM: It's been a while since we've seen Charles S. Rant in the ring, Bucky.

BW: Well, I hear he's been real busy lately... couldn't say why.

GM: Maybe it's all the people complaining about President Percy and the rest of the Wise Men abusing their power?

BW: No comment.

[The arena lights go out and Billie Holliday's voice is heard singing "Blood On The Leaves." The crowd starts to buzz as they've learned in recent weeks exactly what this means...]

BW: I hate it when the lights go out at an AWA show. Gives me the willies.

[The lights flicker and then flash back on, revealing the mountain of a man, Henri LaMarques, and the crazy homeless lady herself, Poet in the ring.]

BW: GAH! You see?!

GM: The Walking Dead have arrived here in Las Vegas!

[Poet stands in the center of the ring with LaMarques, raising her chalice high into the air. LaMarques bows his head towards it, dropping to a knee as she pours liquid from it into his waiting mouth. His eyes go wide as Poet retreats, cackling a nightmarish laugh.]

GM: Ugh. I don't know what's in that chalice and I'm quite sure I don't WANT to know considering these people.

[LaMarques rises from his knee, turning to rest his gaze on Charles S. Rant who looks like he'd rather be anywhere else in the world at this moment.]

BW: If I was Charles S. Rant, I'd be looking for an exit right about now.

GM: Amen to that.

[But Rant decides that the best defense just might be some offense, charging out of the corner to throw a dropkick to the chest of the Walking Dead's big man...

...who barely moves an inch, watching as Rant drops down to the mat, looking up in disbelief.]

BW: Didn't even budge him! It was like dropkicking a redwood tree!

[LaMarques stares down at Rant who shakes his head, begging off...]

GM: It looks like a change of strategy for Rant.

BW: Too late!

[LaMarques reaches out and grips the ankle...

...but Rant twists free, scooting away to safety as LaMarques' face twitches but he remains still for the moment.]

GM: Henri LaMarques is the power in the Walking Dead tag-team. Last time we saw his partner, Dirt Dog Unique Allah out here against BC da Mastah MC. And BC was taken by the Dead. What is happening to these wrestlers who are taken?

BW: I don't know, Gordo! Why don't you go ask Poet or the Dirt Dog or LaMarques or, if you can find him, that bizarre Jericho Kai! He's in a bunker somewhere, isn't he? Go get some Navy SEALS and go get him.

GM: No thank you. But with President Percy doing... whatever it is that he's doing these days... I have to ask, why isn't this a concern? These men are evidently kidnapping AWA competitors - The Hive, JP Driver, BC Da Mastah MC - and getting away with it!

BW: I'm not sure even Percy wants to mess with these guys.

[In the ring, Rant is rethinking his strategy. Henri hasn't moved. He glares balefully at his opponent but doesn't move. Behind him, Poet is gesturing wildly and yelling at him not to move.]

GM: Poet in complete control of this monster, it seems. The Walking Dead answer to her beck and call.

BW: And she seems to feed them with whatever is in that cup! What if there's soylent green in that cup, Gordo!

GM: Soylent green?

BW: It's people, Gordo! It's peeeeeeepeople!

GM: Will you stop, Bucky! I don't want to hear that!

BW: Because I just might be right.

[LaMarques waits patiently as Rant moves in again, feinting high and going low with a dropkick to the knee that puts the big man down on one knee. Rant scrambles up, throwing a second one to the head.]

GM: Dropkicks aplenty out of Rant, trying to chop the big man down to size.

[Scrambling up again, Rant races to the ropes, bouncing off for a clothesline...

...and goes low with it, dragging LaMarques down to the canvas!]

GM: He pulls him down with the dropkick! Using his speed and quickness advantage to get the big man off his feet. He's no small man but he's positively dwarfed by the barrel-chested Henri LaMarques.

BW: LaMarques is only half as tall on his back! Look at how deep this man's chest is! I don't even know if you can cover him with a lateral press!

[Rant leaps up and delivers an elbow drop to that massive chest. He gets up, shaking his own arm.]

BW: Look at that! He hurt himself with that elbow drop! That's how thick this man is!

[Charles S. Rant follows up his elbow drop with a knee drop. He pauses for a moment and then decides to try to cover, waving frantically for a count.]

GM: ONE!! TWO!!

[The crowd buzzes in reaction as Rant goes FLYING off Henri LaMarques as he pushes him off, throwing him OVER the official and sending him bouncing out to the floor.]

BW: WOW!

GM: Oh my goodness!

BW: Now THAT is power, Gordo.

GM: You can say that again. What a knockout.

[LaMarques lumbers to his feet, staring into the corner as Poet raises her chalice and shrieks to the heavens!]

BW: I'm suddenly terrified for Charles S. Rant, Gordo.

GM: I can't blame you... and you can sense a change in the crowd as well. They don't like Charles S. Rant... but they're very concerned for him in there against a monster like LaMarques.

[The referee's count reaches five before Rant is forced back into the ring. He pushes off the mat, shaking his head before charging in again...

...and runs right into a heavy knee to the midsection!]

GM: Oof! That'll knock the wind right out of you!

BW: LaMarques is built like a powerlifter. Not much definition but a hell of a lot of muscle underneath the surface. He's a very impressive beast but it remains to be seen if there's more than that to him. Can he compete with the upper echelon of talent here in the AWA?

[With Rant doubled over, LaMarques ducks under him, planting his hands on the midsection...

...and POWERS him skyward, sending him sailing high into the air before crashing down gutfirst to the mat!]

GM: OHHHHH!

BW: How high was Rant up there? Ten feet?!

GM: I have no idea but- oh no.

[LaMarques reaches down, grabbing Rant by the throat with one hand, pulling him to his feet. He ducks down, hoisting Rant onto one shoulder. He grabs the legs, walking out to the middle of the ring, turning to face the hard camera...

...and uses the legs to HURL Rant down in a standing spinebuster!]

GM: Good grief!

BW: The ring just SHOOK on that one, Gordo!

GM: This one's gotta be close to over! Rant looks out cold!

[LaMarques grabs the legs under his armpits...

...and starts to spin, lifting Rant off the canvas as he goes for the Giant Swing!]

GM: GIANT SWING IS ON!

BW: Round and round he goes! Once. Twice. Three times.

[Four times. Five times. Six times. Seven. Eight. Nine. Ten. With each revolution, LaMarques builds up more power and momentum until finally he tosses Rant aside, flinging him helplessly to the mat!]

GM: OHHHHH! That's it!

[Poet slithers over to the fallen Rant. She smiles and raises the chalice over him. She lets out her blood-curdling shriek...

...and the lights go out.]

GM: Are you kidding me?! What in the world is-

[Through the pitch black, another blood-curdling shriek is heard...

...and after a few moments, the lights flicker and come back on, revealing an empty ring except for the referee who is looking around perplexed.]

GM: What the...?

BW: They've taken Rant! The Walking Dead have taken another one!

GM: This is... this is just bizarre, Bucky! This is-

[The lights flicker again, resulting in them dimming greatly as the Thomas And Mack Jumbotron lights up to show that we are inside the concrete bunker that astute viewers will come to know as the setting for a Jericho Kai message.

For the first time, we get a look at the man behind the Walking Dead. In the dimly lit room we get an image of some of his features. He is brown skinned. Well groomed with a well shaped goatee and no mustache on his upper lip. His eyes are bright green, narrow and cat-shaped under lazy heavy lids. His hair is twisted in honey-colored dreadlocks with bright blonde tips. He is dressed in a matching pinstripe suit vest and pants in what is either a deep navy or black, a houndstooth tie and a light blue dress shirt rolled up at the sleeves. The contrast between he and the Walking Dead is striking. He holds a short liquor glass in one hand. It is filled with a dark liquid.]

JK: Gather round, it's time I speak to you again. It's time I speak to you about ascension. It is time I teach you the way.

[He leans forward slightly towards the camera.]

JK: This sport of Gods called professional wrestling is all about men chasing immortality. The chance to wrestle with Gods and become a God himself. It's what drives each and every one of you. It's what drives you to train. It's what drives you to compete. It's what drives you to be. It is a glorious thing. But you've forgotten the way. You've forgotten in your chase to be placed amongst the Gods that there are Gods. You do not honor them the way it was done in the past. And they're angry about that, my friend.

[Kai casts a sidelong glance at the camera with his bright green eyes. He sips from his glass, savoring the liquid.]

JK: And so you're being punished. You're being punished by the Walking Dead. You're being punished by me, Jericho Kai. You will be tested. You will be pressed. You will be prepared. You will be turned into the food and drink of the Gods. Nectar. Ambrosia. The food and drink of overcoming death of becoming mortal. We harvested the bees. We harvest the jester. We harvested the driver and found him wanting.

And now we have harvested the heart of the AWA. And I shall learn and take from each of them and take them into me. They give me their strength. They give me their knowledge. And they will make me better for it. And I will make you better for it. I am almost ready. I am almost at full strength. And I will prepare you for the Gods. I will anoint you in ambrosia. I will drown you in nectar. I will prove that you are worthy. Or you'll be left for the jackals.

[He takes another long, slow swallow.]

JK: I'm coming home.

[Fade out.]

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...

We fade back up to discover that Cody Mertz and Michael Aarons, the popular duo known as Air Strike has come to the ring during the commercial break.]

GM: Welcome back, fans... and as you can see, Cody Mertz and Michael Aarons are tired of waiting. They want to get this over with. Ever since Rising Sun Showdown and that shocking betrayal by Strictly Business, Air Strike has been looking for the chance to get their hands on their childhood idols. Andrew Tucker and Mike Sebastian have ducked them at every turn-

BW: Ducked them?! Tucker and Sebastian are here to face the elite! The best of the best! They're used to facing legends... Hall of Famers... not two wet-behind-the-ears kids out of the Combat Corner. Can you blame them for not wanting a rematch?

GM: Yes, yes I can. And I believe all that chatter out of them is just excuses because they know that Air Strike has a very good chance of putting them down for a three count... again. Tonight, Tucker and Sebastian have said that if Air Strike can defeat an opponent of their choice, then they will give them the rematch at the Battle Of Los Angeles.

[As Air Strike paces the ring, waiting to see who their opponents will be, the opening riffs of Powerman 5000's "When Worlds Collide" come creeping through the PA system of the Thomas and Mack Center. The crowd levies boos on the two men who appear; Andrew "Flash" Tucker and "Money Driven" Mike Sebastian, the two members of Strictly Business.

The two men climb into the ring and are eyed warily by the young Air Strike. Tucker waves for a microphone to be tossed his way before making a few casual laps around the ring, taking in the booing crowd.]

AT: Damn, I love this city.

[A small contingency of drunken fans give a rowdy cheer at this.]

AT: Too bad none of you geeks sittin' in here can go out and really appreciate all that it has to offer.

[And that quickly, Tucker loses even the drunken fans.]

AT: Mikey, you an' I have had some crazy weekends here, haven't we? There was that one weekend where we came in the Spearmint Rhino on Friday and didn't leave until the sun came up on Monday.

[Sebastian cracks a grin at the memory.]

AT: What was her name, Gretchen or somethin' right? She was speakin' German to you, wearin' nothin' but Liederhosen and a smile. You had trouble walkin' for a week!

[Tucker laughs as Air Strike stares at him impatiently.]

AT: Oh, I'm sorry, boys; I forgot you were there. I s'pose you two are waitin' to see the team that I came up with for you to get past to have a crack at us. I called pretty much every who's who of tag team wrestling and in between them askin' me who you were, they were tellin' me they were way too busy to waste hard-earned sweat on you.

Sound familiar?

[A smirk.]

AT: Nonetheless, after searchin' high an' low, I was able to find a team willing to get you two kids out of our hair once and for all. So, without further adieu...

[The crowd groans as the curtain parts and the duo known as the Blue Brothers jogs out into view. Tucker and Sebastian find this quite funny as an annoyed Arons shouts, "What the hell is this?!"]

GM: I'm not sure I understand this at all, Bucky.

BW: What's that?

GM: Well, it's quite obvious that Strictly Business wants no part of a match with Air Strike... yet they've given them the Blue Brothers, a team that doesn't exactly have the best win-loss record to put it nicely. If Air Strike beats them, they'll get the match!

BW: Maybe Tucker and Sebastian aren't as worried about facing them as you think, Gordo.

GM: Perhaps... or perhaps I smell a rat.

BW: That might be the chili you had for lunch. I warned ya.

[As Will and Andy enter the ring, not even four hundred pounds between them, they threaten Air Strike... a lot. Mertz and Arons look pretty agitated...

...and throw a pair of dropkicks sending the duo back through the ropes and out to the floor to a big cheer!]

GM: The referee calls for the bell... I guess this is legal now...

[Mertz and Aarons grab the top rope, sharing a high five before catapulting over the top with stereo planchas onto the recovering and surprised Blue Brothers!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[Tucker and Sebastian can be seen huddling up in the corner, pointing as Aarons shouts in their direction.]

GM: Michael Aarons is hot under the collar about this show of disrespect from Strictly Business as they put Andy Blue back inside the ring... and Mertz is going up top!

[Reaching the top, Mertz leaps off, pumping his arms and legs as he crashes down on a prone Andy Blue!]

GM: FROG! SPLAAAAASH!

[Mertz plants his hands down on the chest, a confident cover as the referee counts three.]

"DING! DING! DING!"

GM: That's it! Air Strike wins and now they're going to get their shot at Strictly Business on Labor Day in Los Angeles!

[The crowd is celebrating along with Aarons and Mertz when the voice of Mike Sebastian interrupts them all.]

MS: That's a nice win for you guys. A hard-fought win over a team that's pretty much right at the same level that you two are.

[Sebastian chuckles as Mertz shouts for him to get in the ring.]

MS: No, no... I'm quite alright out here. But you see, here's the thing. 'Drew over there thought that the Blue Brothers were the right choice to face you guys. But me... I disagreed. I thought you deserved a... let's say, a bigger challenge. So, you've beaten his team... now, let's see if you can beat mine.

[Sebastian lowers the mic as the curtain parts again to reveal the overly-muscular duo known as Shock And Awe.]

GM: Uh oh.

BW: Oh, this party is over right now! No way Air Strike survives these two powerhouses.

GM: Seriously? Shock And Awe are impressive physical specimens but Air Strike has achieved great success in the AWA tag team division for months now.

BW: Two big men always beat two little men. Bank on it.

[Solomon Shock climbs up on the apron, an African-American man with his hair buzzed close to the scalp and muscles on top of muscles. Alexander Awe sports a mohawk and has his beard shaved into a chin spike. He slides in under the bottom rope, belly-crawling into the middle of the ring where he looks up at Mertz and Aarons, sticking out his tongue in a ghoulish grin...

...and gets low dropkicked in the mush!]

GM: Ohh!

[The crowd cheers as Aarons dives on top of Awe, battering him with right hands and forcing him under the ropes to the floor. Aarons pops up to find his partner, Cody Mertz, shouting a warning from the corner as Shock tears towards him with a clothesline.]

GM: Aarons ducks down...

[He blindly throws a back thrust kick up into the sternum, sending Shock staggering backwards into the turnbuckle. With a shout, he mounts the midbuckle, raining down right hands to the skull as the crowd counts along!]

"ONE!"

"TWO!"

"THREE!"

"FOUR!"

"FIVE!"

"SIX!"

"SEVEN!"

"EIGHT!"

"NINE!"

"TEN!"

[Aarons hops down, grabbing Shock by the arm...]

GM: Irish whi-

[...but Shock slams on the brakes, overpowering Aarons and pulling him back into a shoulder tackle that takes Aarons down!]

GM: Ohh! Shock with the reversal that takes him down...

[Shock drags Aarons back up by the arm, pulling him into a second short-arm shoulder tackle... and a third... and a fourth puts Aarons down on the canvas!]

GM: Solomon Shock taking the fight to Michael Aarons, showing off that power advantage as he drags Aarons off the mat...

[Grabbing Aarons under the armpit, Shock spins and HURLS him back into the turnbuckles! He rushes in after him, rocking Aarons with a heavy clothesline!]

BW: You still doubting Shock And Awe now, Gordo? They're about to put your little Boy Scout duo down for a three count and end their dreams of facing Strictly Business on Labor Day.

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

...where Aarons drops into a baseball slide, stopping his momentum cold as he climbs to his feet. Shock is barreling across towards him.]

GM: Here comes Shock and- DROP TOEHOLD TAKEDOWN!

[Shock goes down hard, smashing facefirst into the canvas. Aarons kips up to his feet, leaping up to drop an elbow on the back of the head, smashing his face into the mat a second time.]

GM: Aarons with a rally... and a tag!

[Mertz and Aarons each grab an arm, pulling Shock up.]

GM: Double whip sends him in...

[A double back kick to the gut stuns Shock as the Air Strike members hit the ropes, rebounding back...]

GM: Double clothesli- ducked by Shock!

[And the big man mows them down with a double clothesline of his own!]

BW: AND SHOCK PICKS UP THE SPARE! OH YEAH!

[Shock throws his arms apart, giving a roar as he marches to his corner, slapping his partner's hand.]

GM: In comes Alexander Awe on the tag.

[Awe steps in, yanking a rising Mertz to his feet. He scoops him up, marching out to the middle of the ring...

...and DRIVING Mertz down in a backbreaker!]

GM: Backbreaker!

BW: He ain't gone, Gordo!

[Awe pulls him back up, dropping him down a second time... and a third time... before eventually flinging him down on the canvas.]

GM: Wow! An impressive series of backbreakers out of the 260 pound Alexander Awe... and a win here tonight for this powerful duo would really elevate them in the eyes of the AWA's fans and powerbrokers.

[Awe smirks, shouting at Michael Aarons as he pulls Mertz to his feet again, tagging Shock back in.]

GM: Both men back in...

[Shock boots him in the gut, pulling him into a standing headscissors.]

GM: A powerbomb on the way!

[But as he lifts Mertz up, Mertz counters it, flinging himself backwards in a rana...

...that SNAPS Shock over, bouncing him off the mat!]

GM: Mertz with the counter to save himself!

[Mertz is immediately crawling towards the corner as a surprised Solomon Shock tries to get back up...

...and Mertz makes a lunging tag!]

GM: The tag is made! In comes Michael Aarons!

[Aarons throws chop after chop to Solomon Shock...

...and then leaps up, popping him with an enzuigiri!]

GM: OHH! Aarons caught him!

[Aarons pops back to his feet, leaping into a European uppercut that sends Shock staggering back into the corner where Aarons comes in fast, leaping up...

...and LAUNCHING Shock over and down to the mat with a monkey flip!]

GM: Down goes Shock off the monkey flip... Aarons right back up again...

[He rushes in, catching the off-balance rising Shock with a flying forearm, knocking him back into the corner where Alexander Awe tags back in.]

GM: Awe makes the tag...

[Aarons throws himself into a back elbow, stunning the incoming Awe. He grabs an arm, firing him across the far corner where Mertz uses the top rope for momentum, blasting Awe with a forearm smash as Aarons approaches

from the blindside, leaping up to grab the back of the head and SMASH Awe's face into the mat!]

GM: Aarons pulls him up... tag!

[Mertz and Aarons work in tandem, lifting Awe up and placing him on the top turnbuckle. Aarons drops down on all fours as Mertz dashes across, leaping into a forearm smash that knocks Shock off the apron...

...and then sprints back the other way, springing off the back of Aarons to hook Awe's head between his legs!]

GM: MERTZ EXPRESS!

[Mertz rips Awe off the ropes, throwing him down hard in a rana. He scrambles into a cover.]

GM: ONE!! TWO!! THREE!!!

"DING! DING! DING!"

[Mertz climbs off Awe, quickly joined by his partner in an embrace before they turn their attention back to Tucker and Sebastian, the latter of which is mockingly applauding.]

AT: Well, boys, you did it. I guess we have to follow through on our end of the bargain.

[Huge pop! Mertz pumps a fist, shouting off-mic at Tucker and Sebastian.]

AT: We said we'd consider facin' you two if you could get past a team of our choosing. Mike, shall we consider it?

[The two look at each other for about two seconds.]

AT: Well, we've considered it and we're not really interested.

[Huge jeers as Air Strike looks like they're about to lose their minds.]

MS: I don't know why this is so difficult for you two to wrap your heads around. Sorry to say, but square pegs don't fit in round holes. You boys have outkicked your coverage longer than anybody anticipated but it's time you realize it's just not in the cards.

You two make for a great story and all. Some foam fingers, a nice fluff piece in the arena program, all that. The fans can read about all the tenacity and wherewithal you bring to this business, but at the end of day, these people spend their hard-earned unemployment checks to see Strictly Business perform. _Not you_.

[Air Strike charges across the ring in a rage as Strictly Business bails out quickly. Tucker holds his hands up in protest.]

AT: Alright, alright, alright! How about this? If you two can beat a team that we both can agree on, we'll give you a match.

[Air Strike looks on, disbelieving.]

AT: We mean it. Now, if we can just find a team we can agree on...

[Tucker is scratching his chin when suddenly...]

GM: HEY!

[Pete and Jim Colt come tearing into the ring from behind, attacking both members of Air Strike!]

GM: Where the heck did they come from?! This is a setup!

BW: Ya think?!

[Pete Colt fires Michael Aarons through the ropes, sending him out to the floor as Jim Colt rushes at a dazed Cody Mertz, leaping off one foot and swinging the other leg up to the jaw!]

GM: FLOAT KICK ON MERTZ!

[With Aarons out on the floor, Pete Colt grabs Mertz off the mat, lifting him up in an electric chair as Jim Colt starts to climb the turnbuckles...

...and Michael Aarons rushes him, leaping up on the apron and shoving Jim off!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[Aarons slingshots himself to the top rope, leaping off with a dropkick to the jaw of Pete Colt, sending him staggering back...

...into a DEVASTATING reverse rana by Mertz that SPIKES Colt skullfirst into the mat!]

GM: ONE!! TWO!! THREEEEEEEEE!!!

"DING! DING! DING!"

[An irate Tucker and Sebastian lose their minds at ringside, screaming and shouting into the ring...

...but bailing out from the ringside area as Aarons and Mertz celebrate their victory. After a few moments, Colt Patterson joins the duo in the ring, mic in hand.]

CP: You must be really proud of yourself, huh?

[Aarons smirks.]

MA: Proud? Of course we're proud. We're going to Los Angeles, baby, and we're going there with a match!

CM: A match almost a year in the making, Mr. Patterson. A match that through every twist, turn, and dodge we stood strong. A match that we had to ask for time and time again. A match I don't think anybody would argue that we had to earn, but we earned it nonetheless.

MA: Yeah, Mike and Tucks wanted to be cowards for the better part of a year...

[Cut up the aisle where Tucker and Sebastian are screaming back towards the ring. Aarons grins.]

MA: ...but now, at the Battle of Los Angeles, Air Strike finally gets in the ring with Strictly Business one more time.

[Fist bump exchange between the duo.]

CP: I've never seen two punks so eager to get their tails kicked but that looks like what we have right here.

MA: Colt-o, buddy, ain't nothing going bring us down from this high. Those two, could have stepped in the ring anytime they wanted against us, instead, they run and hide. Well, the running and hiding time is over. Now they get the high-flying, death-defying...

CP: Just stop for one second!

[A startled and now slightly annoyed Aarons looks at Colt.]

CP: You think one fluke win in Japan against a legendary tag team makes you worldbeaters? That was Japan; this is going to be Los Angeles, a city they helped put on the map. I have it on the highest authority that Japan would not meet their strict lighting instructions for the ring, that the temperature in the building was five degrees off, and that their own personal stylists and nutritionists did not make the trip to Japan! What are you going to do now, in their backyard, when they have all these things going for them?

CM: Do?

[Mertz exchanges a glance with his partner.]

CM: Mr. Patterson, we are going to do what we always do and go out there and fight! We've heard the excuses, but the times for excuses are over. Strictly Business, we've jumped through your hoops and gone through your obstacles and we are undeterred. We want you in that ring, and we'll see you in Los Angeles.

MA: Where one more time, they are going to have to come face to face with the high-flying, death-defying...

[Aarons trails off as he shoots a glance towards Colt through the corner of his eye.]

MA: ...Strictly Business humbling, making their hope and dreams come crumbling, Teenage Dream Team that's always on the scene....

[Aarons pauses for an extra moment as he smirks over towards an obviously annoyed Colt Patterson.]

MA: ...Air Strike!

[Aarons holds out his fist for a fist bump with his partner.]

MA: So get the hair and make-up boys ready and make sure you pay them overtime. Because you might want to look all pretty before the match, but after? That's where they'll really earn their pay!

[With that, the duo walks off camera.]

CP: There you go... two punk kids in for a real rude awakening come Battle of Los Angeles where they face the legendary team of Strictly Business. Let's go to Mark Stegglet and the Rising Sun Report!

[We crossfade to the bank of monitors that can mean only two possible things - this time, it's the Rising Sun Report as revealed by the big graphic alongside Mark Stegglet.]

MS: Welcome to the Rising Sun Report - your one-stop shop for all the news on our friends in Tiger Paw Pro. Two weeks ago, TPP made headlines all over the world as two new champions were crowned. Violence Unlimited won the Global Tag Crown Titles and Noboru Fujimoto won the Global Crown Championship. They're in the midst of a break before another big tour coming up shortly. A tour that will run from late August through mid-September and will feature several big events.

[The graphic changes to a shot of Sultan Azam Sharif.]

MS: Former AWA star Sultan Azam Sharif has signed on for this tour - a big story that has the entire nation buzzing in hopes of seeing Sharif square off with the new champion.

[The shot switches to Kenta Kitazawa.]

MS: The first Todd Michaelson student, Kenta Kitazawa, has been in touch with the AWA Talent Relations office about a future tour of the United States. If it happens, many are hoping to see a Rising Sun Showdown rematch between Kitazawa and former World Champion Supreme Wright.

[One more graphic change.]

MS: And lastly on this quick-and-dirty version of the Rising Sun Report, breaking news out of Tokyo says that Mr. Sadisuto was in Japan this week... on behalf of the Wise Men brokering a deal of some sorts. No one knows the exact content of this meeting although many believe it has something to do with Sadisuto's recent encounter AND threats towards Nenshou. More on this story as it develops.

For now, I'm Mark Stegglet and we'll see you next time on the Rising Sun Report!

[We fade away from the pre-taped Rising Sun Report to reveal Mark Stegglet, live and in person this time, standing in the middle of the squared circle... and he's not alone.]

MS: Ladies and gentlemen... my guest at this time is a second-generation competitor out of the great state of Missouri... Mr. Terry Shane.

[The camera pulls back a bit as the man known as the Ring Leader steps into frame. He stands straight, not a single strand of black hair arrayed out of place on his head and pulled back tight into a ball. His arms, covered by the emerald robe that dresses nearly his entire frame, are folded behind his back. His face is stoic, stony-eyed, and his complexion is unusually pale.]

MS: Two weeks ago, we saw a very tense exchange between yourself, Mr. Shane, and your... perhaps former manager in Miss Sandra Hayes. Not to mention the involvement of the AWA President himself, Percy Childes. That exchange resulted in an ultimatum being laid down for right here tonight in Las Vegas. You were told that you MUST come down to this ring tonight and agree to make yourself a loyal and willing member of the Wise Men's army. If you do that, you get yourself a match later tonight against an opponent of the Wise Men's choice. A victory there earns you a second shot at the World Heavyweight Title... against whoever walks out of All-Star Showdown with the title around their waist. High stakes-

[Shane calmly removes a hand from his back and lifts it to his pursed lips. He extends a single finger in front of his mouth which silences Mark Stegglet.]

TS: I am very aware of the stakes, Mark.

It was I who stood down Percy Childes and Sandra and gave them an ultimatum – not the other way around. Contrary to what everyone might believe, I have a lot of respect for both of them.

They are conniving.

They are manipulative.

They are prepared.

[Shane pauses.]

TS: I champion those values, Mark. I wear them like a badge and when I see an opportunity to strike I take it and that is exactly what the confrontation was about. Percy Childes is the Collector of Oddities and Sandra wants to build a House of Champions. I fit into both niches, do I not? I am championship worthy and I am a prize that any agency or organization would be ecstatic to build around. I rose up the ranks of the AWA faster than anyone thought possible.

[He emphasizes his point by counting off on his fingers.]

TS: Faster than Ryan Martinez whose father helped build this place and the ones before it.

Quicker than any of the Lynches whose family rules the state in which our company was built upon.

I accelerated up to World Title contender even quicker than the man who your beloved arena is now named after.

These men also have legacies. These men's names also have extreme worth and value. Yet it was I who walked into Memorial Day Mayhem over a year ago and staked my claim as a force to be reckoned with... not them. It was I who single handily eliminated Stevie Scott and Todd Michaelson's golden child Eric Preston and won the Rumble to earn my right atop ALL of those men, Mark.

Why does this matter?

[Shane stares at Stegglet who stares at him blankly.]

TS: Because unlike them, I make a difference. With me on the side of the Wise Men they are unstoppable. Percy knows this. Sandra knows this. Even Larry Doyle knows this. They know with the World Title around my waist that they have a champion they can be proud of and that is why I was able to manipulate and pull the favor back towards myself. My fate...

...lies in my hands.

Who else around here can make that claim? Answer me, Mark. Who else?

MS: No one.

TS: That my friend is a fact worth repeating.

[There's a pause as Shane seems to be waiting.]

TS: Go ahead.

MS: No [pause] one.

TS: Very good.

MS: And if you lose this match? If the Wise Men stack the deck against you?

TS: Then I manipulate the odds back in my favor. When I declare war-

"You should think before you speak."

[Miss Sandra Hayes slinks into view through the curtain, mic in hand and attitude plastered across her face. She addresses Shane from the top of the aisle.]

MSH: Terry...nTerrence. Do we really look the part of the fool? Do you really think anyone is buying your, what did you call it, ultimatum? Please Terry, we both know how this is going to play out. You're going to walk out to that ring and Percy Childe has no choice but to unleash hell's fury on you. You did this to yourself and you did this to him. Do you not understand?

We are building a NEW empire.

Do you think we are in a position to take anyone lightly who is throwing rocks at our walls? Do you?!

[Hayes pauses, staring at Shane.]

TS: You left me no other option.

[Hayes smiles.]

MSH: Oh, but there IS another option, Terry. You can forget all this nonsense. You can forget about the World Title - not forever but for right now. You can throw all this aside and you can stand with us... you can fight with us... and you can be one of us.

That is not just another option, Terry... it is your ONLY option.

[Shane seems to be seething mad as he raises the arm holding the mic, jerking Stegglet's arm around by the elbow.]

TS: Sandra, I have known you a long time. Longer than most people realize. Have you ever known me as someone who falls in line and walks to the beat of someone else's drum?

[Her head lowers, shaking from side to side.]

MSH: Your stubbornness is going to be the end of you, Terry.

[Shane fires back.]

TS: And your arrogance and choice of friends is going to be the end of yours. I am standing in this ring. I am ready, Cassandra.

I am not here to fight a war... not with you... not for you. I am here to become the World Heavyweight Champion - my birthright - what I live and breathe every single day for.

[Shane pauses.]

TS: I have made my choice. Perhaps it is time for you to make yours. I will not back away from my dreams to stand in your army. You have your answer.

[Shane waves her towards the ring.]

TS: Bring your army. Bring your war. Bring your empire, Cassandra.

I have ONE goal and one goal only.

And if that means I have to bury a sword in your chest to get it...

...then so be it.

[Shane shoves Stegglet aside as a furious Sandra Hayes burns with anger.]

MSH: When this is over... when this is done... just remember, it didn't have to be this way.

[As she lowers the mic, the horrific sound of dogs barking and snarling is heard over the PA system. The lights dim as spotlights begin to swirl throughout the Thomas And Mack Center.]

GM: Oh my god.

BW: Did Sandra Hayes just sic the Dogs Of War on Terry Shane?!

[Hayes' furious glare turns into a large smile as Pedro Perez, Isaiah Carpenter, and Wade Walker emerge to flank her. Terry Shane steps to the middle of the ring, his fists balled up as he shrugs out of his emerald robe, hurling it to the floor.]

GM: If the Dogs Of War are looking for a fight, it appears as though Terry Shane is ready to give him one!

[Shane gives several shouts at the incoming Dogs Of War as Hayes looks on gleefully from the top of the aisle. Pedro Perez is the first one there, pulling up to a stop on one side of the ring. Isaiah Carpenter is next, on the other side of the ring as Wade Walker brings up the ring, blocking the aisle to any Shane escape attempt.]

GM: The Dogs Of War are surrounding the ring! Terry Shane is trapped! He's got no way out!

BW: But which one of 'em is Shane going to have to wrestle?!

[All three men climb up on the ring apron, staring in at Shane who is trying to find a way to defend himself.]

GM: I'm afraid the answer to that might be all of them!

[The Dogs Of War step through the ropes in unison, forming a triangle of terror around Shane who is looking back and forth between the trio, trying to figure out who to strike at first.]

GM: This isn't right, Bucky. I'm no fan of Terry Shane but even I can tell you that this isn't right. The man shouldn't be subjected to a three-on-one beating from the Dogs Of War... no man should.

[Pedro Perez is hopping up and down, very eager to rip the Ring Leader limb from limb. Isaiah Carpenter is smirking at Shane's nervous stare from attacker to attacker. And Wade Walker is simply rolling his neck, ready to strike at any moment...]

GM: Terry Shane is at the mercy of the Dogs Of War... who absolutely have NO mercy, Bucky. We've seen them do unspeakable things to people and now-

[The crowd ROARS in a bit of a shocked reaction as Lenny Strong and Aaron Anderson come through the curtain.]

GM: The Lights Out Express - the World Tag Team Champions - are out here!

[Sandra Hayes cuts them off, arguing with them at the top of the aisle...

...which fails as Anderson and Strong shove past her, making their way quickly towards the ring. The duo quickly moves around the ring, sliding under the ropes.]

GM: Uh oh! Now THIS just got interesting!

[Anderson and Strong take up spots next to Terry Shane, shouting at the Dogs Of War who suddenly have closed ranks, standing toe to toe and staring across at the new World Tag Team Champions.]

GM: Anderson and Strong are standing side by side with the man who brought them to the dance! And NOW if the Dogs Of War want a fight, they've got their hands full!

BW: Man, I hate to admit it but I'd drop some coin to see this go down, Gordo.

GM: You might not have to, Bucky, because it looks like it's about to-

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[A stiff elbow shot to the side of the head from the Knockout Kid, Lenny Strong, sends Shane staggering towards Aaron Anderson...

...who shoves Shane skyward, **BLASTING** him with a European uppercut on the way down!]

GM: GOOD GRIEF!

[The jeers pour down on Anderson and Strong as the World Tag Team Champions put the boots to their former leader, stomping him into the canvas...

...and then stepping back, inviting the Dogs Of War to take their shot at Shane.]

GM: You've gotta be kidding me! This is a five-on-one beating!

[Carpenter and Perez take their turn stomping Shane into the canvas as Wade Walker paces around the ring, ready to hit something high impact given the first chance to do so.]

GM: Perez is dragging Shane to his feet...

[The former Combat Corner student grabs Shane in a side waistlock, reaching down and hooking a leg in a cradle as Carpenter dashes to the ropes, bouncing off...

...and leaving his feet with a one-legged dropkick that sends Shane falling back into a devastating back suplex by Perez!]

GM: OHHH! What a doubleteam by the Dogs Of War!

[Walker backs up, jumping up on the middle rope as he waves for his allies to lift Shane up. Anderson and Strong move to oblige, lifting Shane up and walking him to the corner where Walker muscles him up onto his shoulders...

...and leaps off, **DRIVING** Shane down to the canvas with a superbomb!]

GM: OH MY STARS!! SHANE JUST GOT PLANTED BY WADE WALKER!!

[Walker lets off a roar, backing away as Strong and Anderson take their chance to stomp Terry Shane into the mat again.]

GM: This is disgusting.

BW: I can't believe you're even complaining about this.

GM: It's terrible... no matter who it's happening to.

[Anderson pulls a limp Shane off the mat by the hair, shouting in his face as Strong climbs up to the second rope. The Combat Corner graduate shoves Shane up in an electric chair lift...

...and Strong leaps off, snatching Shane by the head!]

GM: NECKBREAKER!! OHHHHHH!

BW: THE GLASS CUTTER!

[Shane lies flat on his back, having had the back of his head and neck VIOLENTLY slammed into the canvas. The loud crowd reaction quickly dies out into a buzzing silence. Anderson and Strong trade a high five over the motionless form of their former leader before exiting the ring alongside the Dogs Of War.]

GM: The Wise Men have struck... and struck hard once more here in Las Vegas. We're going to need some help out here right now for Terry Shane... we're going to take a quick break but we'll be right back.

[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 AWAshop.com, Target, Wal-Mart, KMart and wherever DVDs are sold. Kids, get your parents' permission!"

[We fade back to footage marked "Tucson, Arizona - August 3rd - Hometown Hero Challenge. We can see "Desert Fox" Blaine Howe in action against someone that the graphic identifies as Alex Gonzalez...

...and we quickly see Howe defeat Gonzalez with a middle rope Russian legsweep.

A new city, a new graphic. "Grand Junction, Colorado - August 8th" with Howe in the ring against Rocky Starr...

...and Howe defeats Starr with a swinging neckbreaker to earn the three count.

Moving right along, we land in Denver, Colorado on August 9th as Blaine Howe finds himself in the squared circle against "Jarhead" Jeff Porter.

We get a few more highlights of this one as Porter batters Howe against the ropes, taking him up and over with a clothesline. He grabs the top rope, catapulting himself over the ropes onto Howe.

A cut further in shows Porter on the floor, attempting a running headbutt but Howe sidesteps, cracking Porter's forehead open on the steel.

A little later in the match, we see that Porter is bleeding heavily as Howe leaps off the middle rope in a flipping neckbreaker, gaining a three count.

"August 10th - Salt Lake City, Utah."

A lanky cruiserweight known as Walt Anderson flies through the air with a somersault koppo kick. He goes to follow it with a moonsault when Howe brings up the knees, rolling Anderson into a cradle for a three count.

"August 15th - Reno, Nevada."

With Howe trapped in the corner, a young Japanese competitor by the name of Yoshinara Soto goes to work with a series of brutal kicks to the chest. With the count to four, Soto backs off...

...and DRILLS Howe with a baseball slide dropkick!

We cut deeper into the match where Soto ducks a wild right, leaping up to kick him in the side of the head!

Ultimately, the end comes when Soto springs off the knee of Howe, smashing his other knee into the temple, landing a Shining Wizard to gain the three count to end Howe's lengthy run in the Challenge.

Lastly, we cut to footage marked "EARLER TONIGHT" with Soto tangling with the 340 pounder - "Big Bad" Bruno Bradley.

The former bounty hunter manhandled Soto, press slamming him... powerslamming him... using a hiptoss that sends him across the ring.

We hear cheers as Bradley cartwheels away from an attacking Soto, throwing a dropkick of his own that sends Soto bouncing off the canvas.

A top rope headbutt rocks Soto as the spider-webbed tattooed skull connects to give the former Tiger Paw Pro competitor the victory.

A graphic comes up, hyping Bruno Bradley continue to run the Hometown Hero Challenge gauntlet in the days to come...

...as we slowly fade to Gordon Myers in an obviously pre-taped segment where he's near an old building that looks like a barn.]

GM: Fans, I'm here at the Silver Star Ranch for a special interview with Travis Lynch. Now I just need to find him.

[The camera follows Gordon's head as he looks across the landscape. The camera pauses as Gordon sees Travis off in the distance near a barn. He's lifting a hay bale and carrying it over to an old pick-up.]

GM: Ah, there he is. Let's see if we can't get under some of that shade over there by Travis before this heat gets to me.

[Gordon and the cameraman quickly make their way over to Travis. As they approach, Travis can be seen attired in a pair of blue jeans and his black cherry ostrich boots, his T-shirt is tossed over the back of the pick-up. Travis looks up at the sound of feet walking across the dry dirt and rocks of the driveway, a large smile crosses his face.]

TL: Gordon!

[He loads the hay bale onto the back of the old ford pick-up truck and wipes his hands on his faded blue jeans. Sweat glistens on his body from the hot Texas sun.]

TL: I'm sorry, Gordon, I lost track of the time.

GM: We may be a bit early, Travis.

[Gordon takes a handkerchief from his pocket and begins to dab at his forehead.]

GM: I have to ask, why are you moving those hay bales in this heat?

[The Texas Heartthrob chuckles as he grabs his shirt and wipes the sweat from his face and chest.]

TL: When you're at the ranch, Gordon, you work. Doesn't matter how hot it is or how much blood you may have lost on national television. Once you're here, you're working dawn till dusk. But I'm sure you want to get out of this heat and there's something I want to show you so come this way.

[The three men walk a few feet towards a partially opened barn door.]

TL: Right there, Gordon...

[Travis pushes open the barn door and points to the center where an old wrestling ring is standing. The ring shows its age as it as the canvas is a faded gray color, stains covering it, and the ring ropes are no longer jet black showing their years from the amount they've faded.]

TL: Right there is the ring where we learned this business since we were knee high.

[Travis kneels down, grabs a hand full of the reddish brown dirt and lets it fall between his fingers back to the ground.]

TL: This dirt right here Gordon, it isn't red clay... nah, it's been stained this color from years and years of Jack's, James' and my blood... blood that formed crimson masks which scared the hell out of Ma.

[Travis stands back up to his feet and just stares towards the empty center of the barn for a long moment.]

TL: You don't hear too much about the Silver Star Ranch and the talent that it produced. It's not like The Yard down there in Amarillo or The Zone in Florida where they become household names overnight. It's not like the Combat Corner, where young kids come in and leave future Main Eventers. The Chamber run by the Augers in Calgary stretches 'em till they are some of the toughest SOBs in North America.

But here, here at the Silver Star Ranch... Gordon, this was the Sparta of professional wrestling schools!

[Gordon Myers nods at the obvious pride Travis has in his family legacy. A slight smile comes across Travis' face as he runs his hand through his dirty blonde hair, noticeably avoiding the bandages across his forehead as he does so.]

GM: Travis, you mentioned how Henrietta was scared by the crimson mask on her boys, so I have to ask - how did she react to what Ebola Zaire did to you on the last Saturday Night Wrestling?

[Travis grimaces, nodding at the obvious question.]

TL: Well, I wish I could say she chalked it up to a young man doing his job but with James' injury, Jack being sent to the hospital... well, I think you get the idea how she was.

GM: I don't doubt for a second that she was worried, but she had to be relieved that it was just minor.

[Travis laughs.]

TL: She doesn't view twenty five stitches as minor, Gordon. Luckily she didn't see me when I was in the hospital, blood dried upon my face, my shirt stained a deep red, piles of gauze, now bright red, on the floor ... but there

was one highlight to that evening, you should have seen Jack's face as he was on the phone with Ma.

[Travis smirks.]

TL: For a second, I thought he was going to finish the job for Zaire. But then he would have had to answered to Ma.

After the hospital, the AWA told me to take a bit of time off and recover so I came back to the ranch. When I walked through the front door Ma was right there to greet me with a massive hug.

[Gordon smiles.]

GM: That's sweet.

TL: It was till she let go and slapped me right across the cheek.

GM: What? You're kidding, right?

TL: I wish. It's not a great feeling to be twenty-six and being slapped by your mom.

GM: I don't get it. Why did she slap you?

TL: For making her sick with worry. She laid into me about how she was up all night wondering if I would get through the surgery...

GM: Surgery?

TL: She occasionally overreacts to make a point, Gordon. For thirty long minutes she screamed and cried that she couldn't survive if her sons wound up in the hospital again. That she refused to allow Jack or myself to sacrifice our wellbeings for this sport like James did...

[Travis pauses and takes a deep breath, slowly exhaling as he just looks at the ring before him.]

GM: For the past few months, I personally thought Sunshine was all talk, just trying to embarrass your family and more importantly you. But there is no question in my mind that Sunshine brought Ebola Zaire to the AWA for that very reason, to sacrifice your wellbeing.

[Gordon pauses for a moment as he looks at Travis, who's still just gazing at the old ring.]

GM: Travis, I wouldn't be doing my job if I didn't ask, but do you think Henrietta is right to be worried?

[Travis exhales again.]

TL: She has every right to be worried, Gordon.

[Travis turns back to face Gordon as he continues to speak.]

TL: You should be happy you didn't see the tears form in her eyes when I told her that I was going to finish what Ebola Zaire started.

[Gordon gasps in shock.]

TL: Interesting, Ma had that same look on her face just before she started slamming the balls of her fists into my chest, screaming that she wouldn't let me, that it would only happen over her dead body.

The only thing I could do, Gordon, was just hold her tight and tell her I knew what was I doing. She looked up into my eyes, tears running down her cheeks and said if I knew what I was doing I wouldn't have bandages covering half my face.

[Again, Travis pauses, and he looks down at the dirt floor of the barn for a long moment.]

TL: I didn't know what to say, Gordon, I'd never seen Ma look that scared before. And it nearly broke my heart when she shoved me away and she went to the other room.

[Travis looks back up to the camera.]

TL: I stood there for a few minutes before I started to head to my old room when I heard the gruff voice of the old man. And the one thought that went through my head was "Thank God, he'll understand."

GM: With his well documented wars with Boris Ostrovsky and the Moonshiners, I can see why you knew he'd understand.

[Travis nods.]

TL: The amount of blood he lost, the bones he had broken, the time he spent on the shelf from that spike piledriver in '76, I knew I had my ally to convince Ma ... but I was wrong.

GM: Wrong? I don't understand that at all! Blackjack was the measuring stick for brutality and blood loss in his prime. How could HE not back your decision?

[Travis shakes his head slowly to the side as he runs both hands through his hair.]

TL: He put his arm around my shoulder and brought me right here, Gordon. And he told me of the night Ebola Zaire made his first appearance in PCW.

[Travis reaches up, wiping the sweat from his brow.]

TL: Told me how the fans in the arena where in awe of the savage as he tore his opponent apart in the ring... how that awe became disgust as the fork ripped flesh from bone... and how they were in fear when he exited the ring and charged at a child in the front row.

His eyes opened wide in fear as the crazed animal charged... and that's when Blackjack came charging from the back and stood toe to toe with the savage.

[Travis clenches a fist, rubbing his knuckles with the other hand.]

TL: Now, I know the fans that night say the savage beast was scared of Blackjack and ran to the back to cower but Blackjack admitted the truth to me. Blackjack stood there, staring at the scarred body of the wild animal, and for the first time in his life, he felt true fear. Ebola stared at him with a demoniacal look upon his face and if his handler didn't lock the collar around his neck and drag him away... the old man said he has no idea what would have happened.

Unfortunately though, he did find out later. Ebola and Blackjack stood across the ring from one another on Christmas Day and Christmas night, ma, Jack, James and myself spent it in the hospital by his side. Do you how hard it is for a six year old to look at his dad as tubes are attached to both his arms, running into his nose and mouth, blood soaked bandages wrapped around his bicep from where the fork tore at flesh and muscle...

Ma was crying, Jack was comforting her and James was trying to keep my attention elsewhere. But he couldn't, I was fixated on dad.

[Travis pauses.]

TL: I didn't understand at the time how severe it was. No one told me how much blood the old man lost... that the fork barely missed an artery... No one told me how close we were to losing him that night.

[The Texas Heartthrob once again pauses, a look of anguish in his eyes.]

GM: I knew Blackjack was hurt in that match, I just never knew it was that bad.

TL: Outside of the family, I think Blackjack Patterson was the only other person to know. All the fans and the boys in the back could know was that the Iron Claw defeated the Savage.

After he told me that story, the old man put both hands on my shoulders and looked me in the eyes as he said...

"Travis, son. I don't wanna see you get in the ring with Zaire. You were young, but I know you remember what he did to me. I've never been hurt like that. I've never been bled like that. And I never, ever met someone so eager, so bloodthirsty. Someone who counted his victories, not in gold or pinfalls but in bloodshed.

What happened between him and me? Well, I'm a proud man, but I ain't too proud to admit that sometimes I still wake up in a cold sweat, haunted by nightmares of what he did to me in the ring. If he ever did to you what he did to me? I couldn't live with it. It'd kill your mother, havin' to see her boy laid up like I was. We're just now gettin' Jimmy back to where he used to be. That happens to you? It'll kill us, Travis.

But you're my boy, and I know you. And I know that you're your own man, son. And I know I can't tell you what to do. You're gonna make the choice that's right for you. Maybe it's going to San Francisco and lying to that hussy just to keep that beast away.

Or maybe you're gonna try and take that monster on.

Your mamma and I love and support you, son. But if you choose the latter? You just need to understand one thing.

Neither of us can watch it. Neither of us can do anything but look away until it's over."

[Gordon remains silent as Travis begins to walk towards the old ring. He slaps both his hands onto the ring apron before turns back to the camera.]

TL: I've been thinking about the tears of Ma and those words for the last few days, Gordon. The old man is right, Gordon, I could easily walk into San Francisco and tell Sunshine that I let my pride get the better of me... that I owe her a true apology...

Each second of that apology, I would be trying to hold back vomit and bile as it would make me sick to my stomach to lie to her... to let her think she has been right the whole time.

[Travis sits upon the ring apron.]

TL: And then I would be lying to you as well, Gordon. When we entered this old barn, I told you this ring was the Sparta of wrestling. What kind of warrior would I be if I lied just to avoid the monster?

GM: Honestly, Travis, that might not be the worse idea.

TL: You're right, Gordon, it may not be. But it's not the idea I've picked.

[The camera catches the stunned look of shock that comes upon Gordon's face. Travis continues to speak.]

TL: Battle Of Los Angeles, I will step into the ring with Sunshine's savage animal... and I will put him down!

[The camera holds on Travis' focused and determined face, etched with anger as he delivers his challenge...

...and we slowly fade to black.

And back up on the laughter of Bucky Wilde.]

BW: Oh, that's precious, Gordo. The kid's too dumb to realize when he's been licked and should head off into the sunset. He should stay on that ranch, throwing hay around and picking up cow manure! Instead, he's gonna walk into the fires of Hell with the Devil himself! He's gonna get into the ring with Ebola Zaire and... well, history is gonna repeat itself. He WILL end up in that hospital bed like his old man did. The Butcher WILL make another Lynch bleed out! And I'm gonna sit there and treasure every single moment of it.

GM: You're disgusting. Travis Lynch has made a decision that could very well cost him his career and you're enjoying it!

BW: You're damn right I'm enjoying it. That family has been a plague on this business for far too long and now the REAL plague is comin'... and hell is comin' with 'im, daddy!

GM: We hope to get words from Sunshine later tonight during the Control Center to find out if this challenge has been accepted but right now, let's go to the ring that has been set up for... to be honest, I have no idea what it's been set up for. Let's see if we can find out...

[Static.]

GM: Wait a second... there is no way Terry Shane is any condition to come back out-

[Gordon's voice fades out just as the arena lights give out as well. A loud whistle screeeeeeeeeeeeches over the airwaves.]

V/O: This is the final boarding announcement for Amtrak train 44, the northbound Cardinal, departing on track 13 for Las Vegas...

...ALLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLL ABOOOOOOOOOOARRRRRDDD!!!

[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.]

BW: THE CHAMPS! ARE! HERE!

GM: Now that the REAL World Tag Team Champions have been ejected from the building, I'm sure Anderson and Strong have no issues at all with coming out here and running their mouths.

[Smoke spits out from the entrance portal and spills out of the entrance portal. The silhouettes of three individuals emerge and evoke an image of

them floating on clouds as they step out and are only visible from the knees up. The Siren is the first that we lay eyes on and she is decorated in a scorching black and gold single shouldered hourglass ensemble. Her black rat tail hangs over her right shoulder, fastened by a gold hair clip, and over her other is her signature florescent pink-taped branding iron.]

GM: Haven't we seen enough of this woman tonight? After what she pulled with Terry Shane, suckering him into putting himself back into the Wise Men's control... and then having the Dogs Of War take him out? Disgusting!

BW: Hey, that's tough love at it's finest. Terry Shane tried to show up the Wise Men two weeks ago... next time, he'll tow the line for sure.

GM: I wouldn't bet on that.

[Out next are the Siren's most loyal clients. Lenny Strong... Aaron Anderson. The Lights Out Express. Strong's light brown hair spills across his shoulders and over the top of his zipped up black track suit with gold trim. He has short ring trunks on and the tip of his matching knee pads are slightly visible. Anderson matches him step for step. Head shaved tight, facial stubble five to six days old. Unlike his counterpart, he wears long ring tights that vanish into the smoke. His track jacket is unzipped and the trio pause as Anderson and Strong simultaneously hoist their titles up into the air which draws a shower of boos from the Vegas crowd.]

GM: There's the World Tag Team Titles which they essentially STOLE two weeks ago from Jones and Hammonds. I can't wait for that duo to get their rematch, Bucky.

BW: Who said they're gettin' a rematch? After their behavior earlier tonight, President Percy just might strip that rematch away from them!

GM: That certainly sounds like something he'd try to do.

[Anderson and Strong reach the apron first where they both pull up on the top rope and press down on the middle one with their boots. Hayes ducks through and is soon followed by her champions as the three of them stand in the ring beside an out of place rusted ball cage with a dozen or so ping pong balls inside.]

MSH: Ladies... Gentlemen... YOUR NEW WORLD TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS...

Lenny Strong!

[She gestures to Strong who raises his title up in the air.]

MSH: Aaron Anderson!

[Anderson mimics Strong's posture.]

MSH: THE LIGHTS! OUT! EXXXPREEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEESSSSS!!!

[Downpour of boos.]

MSH: It is both my honor and privilege to stand beside the GREATEST tag team in the AWA's storied history. Never before has the AWA been blessed with two dynamic individuals who embrace all the tools necessary to be deserving of the term five-star athletes.

[She pauses.]

MSH: Pardon me. Five star CHAMPIONS.

[She raises her hand up, fingers extended upright.]

MSH: Speed! Strength! Charisma! Good Looks! And most importantly...

...WINNERS!

That's what my clients are... winners. What you saw earlier tonight with Terry Shane is what happens when quite frankly... you don't get the job done. Unlike the Shane Gang, MY team has no place for LOSERS. No place for second best or second rate. It was out of necessity that we set a new standard for ourselves. As part of the Wise Men, we could no longer affiliate our championship caliber pedigree directly with Terry and the losing culture that HE created. Ask yourselves...

...what is your first instinct when you hear the name Harry Hyatt? How about Donnie White? And now, NOW... when you hear the name Terry Shane what comes to mind?

I'll fill in your answer for you.

LOOOOO-SER.

That is why effective immediately we will no longer associate our names with Terry Shane and the [miming quotes] Shane Gang and instead be rebranded as a powerful entity under the Wise Men banner. As of this moment, standing before you in the ring are the first and founding members of HAYES-DANE...

[Grinning.]

...MICHAELSON INCORPORATED!

GM: She can't use his name!

BW: Why not? That's her father, besides, it's not like Todd is putting it to use at the moment.

[The crowd unravels, jawing and booing echoes throughout the arena.]

MSH: HDM-INC will be the most powerful and successful brand the AWA has ever seen and it all starts with these champions beside me. What men like

Terry Shane and to take it a step further... men like Skywalker Jones, men like Ryan Martinez, and even men like Dave Bryant fail to realize is... they are replaceable. I could pick up the phone right now and have a dozen Terry Shanes gift wrapped on my doorstep.

Problem is?

This billion dollar princess doesn't like coal in her stockings. I want REAL champions, men like Supreme Wright who as a champion defended his title more frequently than any champion before him. Men like Johnny Detson whom wherever he goes, he brings home the gold. And men like these two upstanding citizens next to me. Men who defy the odds, conquer the unconquerable, and never say die. These men will are revolutionizing tag team wrestling and rebranding what it means to be a champion.

LS: Preach on, sister. Ya see these?

[He gestures to the title in his raised hand and towards Aaron who has his title wrapped around himself like a neck warmer.]

LS: These didn't come easy. Hell, they didn't come quick neither. Fact is, we waited a long, long time to get them and ya know what? It wasn't because we didn't have the drive. It wasn't because we weren't good enough. It wasn't because we lost shot after shot after shot. Nah, it ain't like that at all. It's because teams like the Bishops... teams like SkyHerc... they wanted to sit on the sidelines. They wanted to show up and defend the titles when it was convenient for them and on their terms. They felt like they earned the right to sip Pina Coladas on the shore of Waikiki and fly in for one off... cash in a nice paycheck when they needed to spring for a new wardrobe or they depleted their supply of rubbing oil to grease up the old pectorals. Well guess what? We ain't those guys, jack!

We promise to defend these titles and we promise to take on ANYONE.

AA: ANYONE!

[Aaron pumps his fists in the air.]

LS: History tells us that there's a proper way to go about this. A certain etiquette that comes with winning the titles and offering up a rematch to the men who you soundly... what's the word?

AA: Destroyed.

LS: Hell yeah, brother. Destroyed. But for some reason I'm forgettin' what that thing is. So I ask myself... what would Skywalker Jones do in this situation? What would Big Herc say?

AA: WHO SKYHERC?!

[Strong snickers.]

LS: Who, indeed. So, as the ambassadors of fairness and my memory suddenly bein' one checker piece short of a connect four on what the right thing to do is... we have only one option. Aaron, if you will.

[Anderson grabs the big tumbler machine beside him which is filled with ping pong balls.]

AA: Ahem. Seeing as how we are in...

...Las Vegas!

[There's a few cheers but it's quickly terminated by the faithful AWA fans who boo Aaron's attempt at persuading their loyalty.]

AA: It is only fitting that we play a little game of championship lottery.

In this mechanism are a dozen markers and each one of them as an AWA tag team listed on them. We are going to pull TWO balls out of the machine and-

LS: Wait, hold on. Gordon. Gordon Myers?

BW: He's asking for you.

GM: I hear him.

LS: You may want to write this down, you old bum.

[The camera cuts to Gordon who is glaring into the ring at Lenny Strong who is taunting him.]

AA: But this ain't your ordinary lottery. What we have going on inside here is a little bit more... high stakes... if you will. The only teams represented in here have NEVER received a tag team title shot but tonight that will change for one team. The two teams whose names we draw will face off in a match this evening and the winner will be the NEW #1 contender to our World Titles and will be awarded the first shot at our gold LIVE at All-Star Showdown on the FOX Network! Prime time, baby!

Sandra, if you will...

[The Siren curtsies and smiles as she walks over to the tumbler and begins cranking it around and around and around as Lenny Strong makes a drumroll sound. Finally, she plunges her hand into the container and pulls out a ball. Her eyes widen as she stares at the result.]

MSH: The first team... no strangers to the men beside me...

...Vance Ricks and Trampus Kennedy. The Surfer Dudes!

[Strong makes a "spooky fingers" gesture as Anderson clashes his fists together.]

LS: We're rooting for you, bros.

[Strong smirks as Miss Hayes begins tumbling the names around once more.]

AA: I got this one.

[Anderson reaches into the ball pit and grabs the second marker. He holds it high up into the air, waving it around frantically.]

AA: Who's it gonna be?!

LS [mockingly]: Pick me! Pick me!

[Strong playfully jumps around as if trying to rip it out of Aaron's hands who lowers and raises it just out of reach.]

AA: Someone's future lies in my very hand, Lenny. Who do you think it is?

[Strong pretends to hurt his ankle and falls down to one knee. Anderson brings his arm down and just as he does...

...Strong lunges for his arm and yanks the ball out of his hand! He holds it up victoriously while Aaron slumps down a bit, arms on his hips.]

MSH: Now that's not very nice, Leonard. You give that right back!

[She waves his finger at him and Strong lowers his head, dropping it to his feet. Anderson goes to pick it up and just as he reaches for it Strong taps it away with his foot. This occurs four more times before the pair of them go wild and begin kicking it around the ring like a soccer ball...

...until it eventually skips out underneath the bottom rope bouncing around on the floor before coming to a halt in front of the announcer's table.]

LS: Now look what you did! Some generic team will forever drift off into mediocrity without their shot!

AA: You're right.

[Strong nods before he and Anderson collectively shrug their shoulders.]

AA: Let's pick another one!

[Strong claps his hands together like a small child as Miss Hayes spins the tumbler around once more. Both Strong and Anderson reach for the cage but Hayes swats their hands away, selfishly reaching in herself. She draws another ball, looks at it, then looks at her men, and back to the ball.]

LS: Well?!

AA: Come on! Just read it!

MSH: And their opponents...

...Air Strike.

[The crowd roars as she holds up her hand, quickly silencing them.]

MSH: Oh wait, I'm sorry. I meant Air Strike Lite. The team of Brian James and TORA!

[Strong and Anderson act like a bullet hits them each in the chest and they collapse to the ground.]

MSH: Gentlemen, your match...

...begins now!

GM: What a revelation, Bucky! Brian James and TORA taking on the Surfer Dudes with the winner getting a World Tag Team title shot at the Lights Out Express! I may be annoyed by their actions, heck, I found them downright irritating, but this is a chance of a lifetime for these two teams!

BW: Wait, wait, wait.

GM: What?

BW: Whose name is on that other ball?! I can't help it, daddy, I'm curious.

[Bucky leaps out of his chair and darts around the table. He picks it up and his jaw just about hits the floor. Acting as if his stock portfolio just crashed, he scuffles back around the booth to his chair.]

GM: Well?

[He holds it up for Gordon to see.]

BW: It was Dichotomy! Gordo, we gotta stop this match! It should be the Surfer Dudes against Dichotomy, not the Surfer Dudes against the Howdy Doods!

GM: Be that as it may, the match is next!

BW: This is an outrage!

[We abruptly fade to black.

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 night in Sacramento, the World Tag Team Champions, the Lights Out Express are in action!"

[The graphic changes.]

"Friday night, August 22nd, the AWA comes to the Cow Palace in San Francisco for a special LIVE PRIME TIME event - All-Star Showdown!"

[Another change of information on the screen.]

"Next weekend, we continue to work our way through California as we visit San Jose on Saturday night and Bakersfield on Sunday afternoon."

[The graphic changes one more time.]

"Saturday, August 30th, the AWA hits San Diego for the final non-televvised stop of the Coast To Coast tour!"

[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 fade back up, we're in the ring where Phil Watson is standing.]

PW: The following tag team contest is set for one fall with a thirty minute time limit and it is a Number One Contender match!

[The fans in Las Vegas cheer as Surfin' USA" by the Beach Boys starts to play over the PA.]

PW: Introducing first... about to make their way down the aisle... hailing from Southern California and weighing in at a total combined weight of four-hundred and eighty-five pounds...

...VANCE RICKS... TRAMPUS KENNEDY... THE SURFER DUDES!

[Upon being named, the Dudes emerge from the back, throwing up the Shaka sign to the fans. Both Surfer Dudes look like stereotypical 80's California surfer guys, with tanned skin, blonde hair (Ricks has dark roots) and blue eyes.

Kennedy wears tie-dyed bicycle shorts while Ricks opts for tie-dyed trunks (the actual pattern is slightly different between them; Kennedy has a tangerine/red/violet cloud pattern while Ricks has a yellow/ blue/orchid whorl pattern), a tie-dyed 'Surfer Dudes' baseball cap (worn backwards), and sunshine-yellow ring jackets with 'Surfer Dudes' on the back. Kennedy has tie-dyed kneepads (with a black rubber base), black elbowpads and boots, and taped wrists and fingers. His hair is long and hangs almost over his eyes, while his physique is impressively sculpted. Ricks sports white kneepads, elbowpads, and boots. His physique is nice, but not at Kennedy's level. He's got shorter spiky (bleached) hair, and a tattoo on his right shoulder of a yin and yang with kanji script underneath translating into "Life & Death".

Kennedy and Ricks make their way down the entrance aisle towards the ring. Both men stop periodically to slap hands with any fans who have their hands out-stretched. Kennedy and Ricks get to the ring and climb in. Ricks climbs up onto the second turnbuckle and gives the crowd the Shaka sign. Kennedy removes his jacket and strikes a bicep flex. Ricks hops off the second turnbuckle and sheds his jacket. Both men move to their corner as their music stops playing.]

GM: What a huge opportunity for these two young competitors. Any tag team in the world would want a shot at the AWA gold.

BW: And Dichotomy should have been that team! I call massive shenanigans!

[Phil Watson continues.]

PW: And their opponents... at a total combined weight of four hundred and ten pounds... the team of BRIAN JAMES and... TOOOOOORRRRRRAAAAA!

[And on cue the first beats, fizzle and drums of Darude's "Sandstorm" hits over the PA. Blue and white lights pulse in nonsensical rhythm as two figures dash out from the back. The two, TORA and Brian James, are a bundle of unleashed energy as they make their way down the entrance ramp, reaching down for high fives, pointing out to fans.

TORA is a definite athlete. He is super toned and strong looking though more like a track athlete or gymnast than 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. 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 dragons down 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.

James is practically sprinting down to the ring, pausing to alternately throw shadow punches in the air and reach over and slap the outstretched hands of the cheering fans. James is tall, with a lean, lanky build. His dirty blond hair is pulled back into a loose ponytail that bounces as he races to the ring. To the ring, James wears a black t-shirt with the words "Claw Academy" written in gold across the chest, with a stylized orange and black tiger emblazoned on the back. Instead of normal wrestling trunks, he wears Muay Thai style boxing shorts, black on the left side, and white on the right, the Claw Academy logo embroidered on the back. Over each hand he has the same half black/half white five ounce MMA style gloves, with white tape underneath extending to mid forearm. We can also spot some black tape on his fingers - a remnant of his injury suffered at the hands of Supreme Wright. Both elbows and knees are covered in black pads. His boots are standard black wrestling boots with white laces, the letters "BJ" done in gold on the outside of each. Once at the ring, James wipes his boots several times on the ring apron, before passing between the first and second rope, stepping towards the center of the ring. He peels off his t-shirt and throws a few more punches, waiting eagerly for the bell to ring.]

BW: Look at these crooks! There is NO way they should be in the ring. It should be Dichotomy, the name on this ball right here sitting in front of me. Instead we get these two ADD kids.

GM: This should be quite the competitive match, no matter what you think of the participants, Bucky. One of these two teams is going to take on the Lights Out Express for the AWA Tag team Titles next Friday night at All-Star Showdown!

[The bell rings and it's TORA and Trampus Kennedy left in the ring. The two quickly start circling the ring, Kennedy going for an ankle pick, TORA backing off and stopping against the ropes, rolling his shoulders and bouncing in place as Kennedy gets back up and into position.]

GM: The Surfer Dudes may be colorful, but they're both well accomplished technicians. Don't let their modicum of success thus far in their AWA run trick you. They can prove a tough opponent for anyone in the tag team division.

[The two then lock up in the middle of the ring, the larger Kennedy switching into a wrist lock. TORA walks in a circle, finally rolling forward andipping up to his feet. As quick as that was, the following arm drag is even faster. Kennedy rolls off and gets up as TORA charges... and is taken down by an arm drag himself. He hops to his feet, squaring off with Kennedy to smattered applause.]

GM: Some quick action here to start off this match. A collar and elbow lock up again, TORA reaching up and into a side headlock.

BW: And thrown right off.

[Kennedy turns to scoop TORA but the high flier spins around rapidly, hooking his legs around the Surfer's head and sending him over!]

GM: Spinning headscissors!

[Kennedy hits the mat after a full flip, staggering up and into the corner. He goes to make a move out, but TORA is right there with a stunning leaping knee right to the jaw, reaching over and tagging in Brian James.]

BW: Not only did they cheat to get their spot, now they're cheating in the ring. One at a time, referee, come on here. I mean, the Surfer Dudes are... well... dude, so cool.

GM: I sense sarcasm.

BW: But I'll take their legit spot in this match over how these two got theirs.

[Brian James slams Trampus Kennedy with a few solid elbows and a stomp to the stomach before tagging back in TORA. Brian James backs off... then turns and knocks Vance Ricks off the apron with an elbow before charging in with...]

GM: YAKUZA!

[Kennedy slumps to a sit, TORA charging in right after and diving with a somersault right into the Surfer Dude to a big cheer from the crowd, a cheer that keeps going as he rolls to his feet and charges back across the ring, diving through the ropes right into Vance Ricks, smashing him against the ringside barrier!]

GM: MY STARS, WHAT A DIVE! Amazing action is happening right now, right here in the AWA and men like TORA and Brian James are at the forefront of it!

BW: And unfairly pushing Dichotomy out of the way to do so!

[TORA comes back into the ring, grabbing a trying-to-recover Trampus Kennedy and pushing him back into the corner. He reaches up to tag in Brian James, who easily leaps to the top rope and slams an axehandle into the back of the Surfer Dude. TORA exits and James pulls Kennedy to the middle of the ring.]

GM: Second generation star Brian James and TORA are dominating early in this match. Kennedy hasn't even had a chance to tag out to his partner yet.

[James holds a clinch on Kennedy, howls to the crowd and starts launching knee after knee after knee after bone on bone knee to the chest, rattling Trampus Kennedy!]

GM: My lord, Bucky! The impact on those knees... you can tell Tiger Claw trained this kid! You see it in the way he moves, the way he strikes. Astoundingly dangerous striking coming from Brian James!

BW: And he tags right back out.

GM: Fantastic team work back and forth here by TORA and Brian James. They are keeping fresh, keeping their man isolated, you'd think they have been a tag team for a long time if this were your first exposure to either.

[TORA comes in, hopping to the top rope and coming down with an elbow drop to the spine of Kennedy. He spins off, giving Kennedy some room before moving back in and grabbing him by the wrist. He sends him off for an Irish whip but Kennedy is able to somehow get his much larger frame under him, deny it and pull TORA in.]

GM: MY STARS!! A belly to belly suplex out of nowhere by Trampus Kennedy, showing some amazing strength and resolve... and here comes Vance Ricks!

BW: And the shoe is on the other foot!

[The nearly two hundred and forty pound Vance Ricks grabs the much smaller TORA, scoops him up and puts him down to the mat with a side slam, shifting over and hooking a leg tight. The pin attempt barely gets a two, Vance right back up and pulling TORA with him.]

GM: This is where TORA and Brian James could be in trouble. If the Surfer Dudes can isolate TORA, they'll have a distinct advantage in size and power.

BW: They wouldn't if it was Dichotomy in there.

GM: Ricks just stunned TORA with a kick to the stomach, putting him to all fours.

[And immediately comes off with a lightning quick dropkick to the head.]

GM: Right in the temple! That will stun anyone! Cover!

[And again TORA manages to kick out, but it was close enough to get Brian James to step into the ring.]

GM: Vance Ricks tagging in his partner. Trampus Kennedy is looking for some revenge now, stomping down TORA in the middle of the ring.

[And pulls him up, ducking behind.]

GM: And a solid belly to back suplex!

BW: Pin him!

[He tries... but this time Brian James manages to come in with a stomp to the back to break the count. The referee is in there, pushing him away to his corner. Not a rulebreaker at all, Kennedy waits for the referee to turn around before legally making a tag.]

GM: Kennedy out, Vance Ricks in and heading... wait, he's heading to the top!

[And makes a shaka symbol before he leaps off...

...right into a perfectly timed dropkick to the chin! The crowd cheers as Ricks is stood straight up, eyes crossed before tumbling to the mat.]

GM: WHAT A COUNTER! Trampus Kennedy went for something, got caught and now TORA has room to make a tag!

BW: And you better believe he needs to.

[The crowd starts cheering, clapping as TORA crawls to make a tag to a frantically yelling Brian James. He paces back and forth, reaching a hand wayyyyy out for a tag... and he gets it!]

GM: Here we go! Brian James is in the ring... running elbow for Kennedy! One for Vance Ricks! Another for Kennedy!

[Brian James runs around the ring, screaming at the sky and beating his chest as Ricks purchases some stability against the ropes. The Surfer Dude charges...]

GM: SPINEBUSTER!

[POP!]

GM: AND ONE FOR TRAMPUS KENNEDY! BRIAN JAMES IS CLEARING HOUSE IN HERE!

[James dives back on top of Kennedy, hooking a leg for the cover.]

GM: ONE! TWO! RICKS WITH A DIVING SAVE!

BW: Where's Brian James' partner? I see the Surfer Dudes working together, but not... oh... damn.

[Brian James rolls away from Kennedy. Ricks, after the diving save, does the same, getting up. He turns and sees TORA approaching and goes to charge when the dazzling athlete reaches out a hand.]

TORA: STOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOP~!

[Ricks, smarter then that, cocks his head and turns around... only to be hit by an enzuigiri by Brian James that sends him backwards towards TORA, who then leaps, plants his knees into Vance Ricks' back and pulls him backwards into a lungblower!]

BW: His spine!

GM: What a combination! Out of the box, on the spot thinking.

BW: Kennedy with a shot to Brian James! They aren't done yet!

[James goes down to all fours from the impact to the spine. Kennedy backs off, gathering energy for a final strike... but TORA comes flying in, leaping off of James back with a HIIIIIIIGH crossbody that wipes them both out!]

GM: TORA rolls out of the ring to recover and Brian James has Kennedy. He's putting him into the corner. I think we know what's next!

BW: And Vance Ricks is gone, out of the ring after TORA nearly broke his spine.

GM: James has him in their own corner. Lifting him up...

[And sits him on the top turnbuckle. He reaches down to tag TORA as he hooks an arm over his own neck and lifts!]

GM: SUPERPLEX!

[The crowd cheers at the massive impact, cheers growing as TORA mounts the turnbuckles, throws up a double peace sign and leaps!]

GM: FIRE! IN! THE! SKY!

BW: No! Not these guys!

GM: ONE! TWO! AND THREE! We have our next contender for the AWA tag team championship! It's going to be Brian James and TORA taking on the Lights Out Express!

[And to make it official:]

PW: YOUR WINNERS... TORA AND BRIAN JAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAMES!

[The fan favorite duo celebrates, making the "belt gesture" as the fans roar.]

GM: What a win! James and TORA overcoming a very good tag team to win their shot at the LOE at All-Star Showdown which is just days away! Who will prevail on prime time television?!

[We fade to black.]

Fade in on footage first seen on the July 19 edition of Saturday Night Wrestling of Pedro Perez stepping into the light from a lone light bulb in a darkened corner of the room where the Dogs of War were filming their message. There is a jump cut to Perez holding up a sheet of paper, then another jump cut to Perez doing an audible "tsk, tsk."]

PP: You had your chance to create order.

[Jump cut to Perez grinning madly as the piece of paper burns in his hands.]

PP: Now it's our turn to create man's greatest fear... chaos.

[Cross-cut to footage of Franklin Roosevelt's First Inaugural Address.]

FDR: So, first of all, let me assert my firm belief that the only thing we have to fear is fear itself.

[Cross-cut back to Perez grinning madly as the piece of paper burns in his hands.]

PP: Now it's our turn to create man's greatest fear...

[Quick cuts to the events at the closing of last Saturday Night Wrestling in Phoenix:

Wild-eyed Bobby O'Connor, swinging a chair at anything that gets close to him.

Then to Jack Lynch who has the Iron Claw locked on the head of Johnny Detson.

Then to Nenshou who spews mist in the direction of Pedro Perez who ducks it, causing the Asian Assassin to spray a security guard.

The footage has been edited such that FDR's voice is laid over Perez's.]

FDR: The only thing we have to fear is...

PP: Chaos.

[Then to Isaiah Carpenter flinging himself off the top rope, somersaulting onto a pile of wrestlers and security guards, not caring who he wipes out in the process.

FDR's voice is electronically distorted into a low growl.]

FDR: Fear itself.

PP: Chaos is coming at the hands of the Dogs Of War...

[Then to Stevie Scott trying to fight off three security guards preventing him from taking a tire iron to the skull of Wade Walker who is busy shoving away an enraged fan who is coming at him with a broken beer bottle.

Then to Dave Bryant tackling Demetrius Lake into the ringpost, slamming his spine into the steel.

Then to Ryan Martinez who is digging at the eyes of Cain Jackson down on the mat. Nearby, a security guard is pinning a fan to the mat while Tony Donovan stomps the drunken member of the AWA faithful.

Then back to Supreme Wright, leaning back with the Cobra Clutch Crossface applied as a water bottle bounces off his skull.

This time, it is a different electronically-distorted voice, strange yet somehow familiar, that is laid over Perez's; the same voice from last SNW.]

"When I come for my vengeance..."

PP: And it's coming soon.

"Fear is coming with me."

[It's a full-blown riot in the city of Phoenix as more and more wrestlers, fans, officials, guards, and finally, the police, get involved in trying to restore order. The shot freezes then dissolves into black.]

Fear... is coming... with me."

[The voice fades, leaving just a black screen for a few moments before we fade back up to the broadcast position. Unfortunately, while we were away, it appears that a hijacking has taken place.

Gordon Myers is unhappily sitting off to the side as the tag team of Dichotomy has stolen his spot. Matt Ginn and Mark Hoefner are wearing street clothes, which in their case is professional attire. Ginn is wearing a crisp white dress shirt, red tie, and black slacks while Hoefner's wearing a threadbare brownish-grey jacket, wrinkly blue dress shirt, and blue slacks. At six-seven, Ginn is much taller than everyone else in sight; he has a reddish-brown Caesar hairstyle which is growing out a bit, as well as a neat mustache and beard. The tan-skinned Hoefner is more athletically built, and despite the receding hairline on his very short black hair he has a smooth complexion and is still fairly young. Both have a headset; one of them is probably Gordon's, since he doesn't have one.]

BW: We're back, and what a treat! An unexpected visit from Dichotomy! Don't worry, Gordo, you'll get your seat back in a minute.

[Gordon crosses his arms in an almost comical bit of disapproving grumpiness.]

BW: So you guys musta seen earlier on how you got robbed out of a number one contender's match, right?

MG: Of course. And since that drawing was sanctioned by the AWA, and since we were drawn, that makes us legally the co-Number One Contenders.

MH: Or, let's put it this way. It BETTER make us the co-Number One Contenders! We keep getting left off of shows. We didn't even get interview time, so we had to come out here and kick Myers to the curb.

MG: An indisputable improvement.

MH: So how else are we supposed to rise in the rankings?!

MG: Recall, at Rising Sun Showdown, the only thing that stood between us and the World Tag Team Championships was the fact that we had to wrestle a match earlier that evening. And against a top tag team, at that, in the Gaines family.

MH: You'd think we'd get a rematch, right? At least, you'd think we'd get top contender matches against other contending teams, right? But no. Of course not.

MG: So this is the last straw. We live in a world where two sub-adequate singles competitors are the de facto Number One Contenders due to the fact that the current tag team champions are either very clumsy, or were able to read the name in the ball and conveniently dropped it in hopes of drawing an easier opponent. Which they did.

BW: Well, ya can't blame the Lights Out Express, can you?

MH: The real problem is the fact that you got a bunch of pretenders like TOTO and Brian Jimmy taking up space on the card in the first place! Let alone the contenders pool!

MG: Let alone the gene pool.

MH: So like we said. We expect that we should be named co-Number One Contenders, so that when those two middle school dropouts get rolled like the losers they were born to be, we get the next shot.

MG: Otherwise, we're afraid that the resulting fallout will be quite odious indeed. Our name was drawn. If we don't get, we shall simply have to take.

BW: Alright. I think Gordo's about to cry over in the corner there, so let's get back on schedule.

MG: We now return you to your regularly scheduled propaganda.

[With that, Hoefner chucks his headset at Gordon, who flails a bit trying to catch it. Dichotomy leaves in a huff, and Gordon slides his chair back over as he attempts to get his headset back in position.]

BW: There you hear it from Dichotomy. A real tag team. Not like our new alleged top contenders.

GM: Whining. All it ever is with them is whining. Nobody wants to hear it; that's why they don't get scheduled to compete.

BW: Whining kinda like what you're doin' right now, Gordo? And have been for two weeks straight?!

GM: Bucky. Seriously?

BW: Yes, I'm serious as a heart attack. If you can complain endlessly about Percy this and Wise Men that and Supreme Wright the other thing, then Dichotomy can point out to everyone that they got robbed. Their name was drawn and they got bupkus. You know it and the world knows it.

GM: That draw was a farce anyway since we all know the former champions are the real Number One Contenders until they lose a rematch. Dichotomy makes me physically ill. Fans, let's go up to the ring for more action.

[Crossfade to Phil Watson up in the ring.]

PW: Ladies and gentlemen, the following contest is set for one fall with a ten minute time limit. Introducing first...

[The grating electric sounds of "More Human Than Human (Remix)" by White Zombie starts up over the PA, and the fans boo.]

PW: From Oakland, California... weighing in at two hundred nineteen pounds... "THE ANARCHIST" MATT ROGERS!

[Watson's intro takes us through the opening segment, and when the main melody of the song is heard, Rogers steps out from behind the curtain. Matt Rogers has pale skin, long black hair, a mustache, and pointed goatee. He is slight of build, and has a few tattoos on his arms and chest. He wears long black tights with a red circle-An anarchist symbol on each leg, black ankle supports, and heavily taped wrists, forearms, and fingers. He's also sporting a black leather jacket with red and white bandanas wrapped around the shoulders and an intricate skull design stenciled on the back in red paint. His head is down as he walks, as if he's heading down the street and doesn't want to be bothered. Some of the lights are dimming and undimming in time to the music, giving a subtle effect.]

GM: And here comes Matt Rogers, a man who's been on a bit of a roll as of late, but dripping with arrogance.

BW: It ain't arrogance, Gordo, it's confidence.

[Rogers gets to the ring, rolls under the bottom rope, and pops up to his feet. After a moment of glaring down, he lifts his head and stretches his arms out wide, giving the fans an arrogant look as he absorbs their boos. He

holds this pose for a couple of seconds before walking to his corner, ignoring the referee as he goes past.]

PW: And his opponent...

["More Human Than Human" is replaced by the opening 8-bit sounds of Birthday Massacre's "Video Kid", slowly fading in the electronic rock song proper]

PW: From Brooklyn, New York, weighing in at 265 pounds...

DERRICK WILLLLLLLIAMS!

[Williams steps through the curtain, wearing his all white gear, still doing more pandering to the fans who give him a pretty much lukewarm reaction.]

GM: And here's a young man that's had more than a few problems getting out of the gate here in AWA.

BW: That's an understatement, the kid's been terrible. The Game Changer. What a joke.

[Williams enters the ring, peeling off his jacket, and pumping his arms to the crowd, trying to get a reaction and getting little]

GM: Williams again investing more in the fans, without showing them much to get interested in. He had a horrible debut a couple weeks ago on Saturday Night Wrestling, and he didn't fare much better on the road.

BW: Much better, Gordo? He still hasn't won a match yet! The boy's a flop! Ordinarily, I'd say it's no big deal but considering he trained under a pair of former World Champions in Curt Hansen and Kevin Slater, you had to expect more than what we've seen so far.

GM: You could say that, Bucky. The bell sounds and we're underway.

[Williams and Rogers circle each other, before locking up, ending with Williams armdragging the smaller Rogers out of it.]

BW: Well, look at that... he pulled off an armdrag. The sun even shines on a dog's rear now and then.

[Both men get up, Williams flashing a quick smile before they go back into another tieup.]

GM: Right back to the lockup as Matt Rogers, the winner of the Golden Opportunity match recently. He's done quite well for himself since then, picking up a string of victories during the Coast To Coast tour.

[Rogers pulls Williams into a side headlock. The Game Changer tries to battle out, backing up to the ropes to shove the Anarchist across the ring, bouncing him off...

...and dropping him down with a shoulder tackle!]

GM: Nice tackle by Williams, showing a little more here tonight than we've seen since he arrived here in the AWA.

BW: That ain't skill, that's physics 101. Williams has fifty pounds on Rogers, no way he wasn't gonna go down on that one!

[Smiling to the crowd, Williams rushes the ropes, bouncing back as Rogers ducks down. The young man leapfrogs the doubled-up Rogers, hitting the ropes again.]

GM: Off the ropes a second time... this time it's Rogers who leapfrogs over Williams who hits the ropes again, a lot of speed behind him...

[Rogers ducks his head, flipping forward to catch Williams flush in the chest with a koppo kick, knocking him down to the mat.]

GM: Ohh! Rolling kick by Matt Rogers puts Williams down on the mat... and he's right there on top of him, stomping him over and over.

[He drags Williams into a seated position before hooking in a nervehold.]

GM: Nervehold applied by Rogers.

BW: Now, Rogers ain't gonna lock this on like Mr. Sadisuto would but it's gonna wear him down for sure. Williams ran right into that kick though - Luke Kinsey could've seen that comin' and he ain't seen a thing in months. His inexperience just shines through at every chance. I just don't know if this kid's got anything, Gordo.

[Rogers switches to a rear chinlock, tightening up his grip on Williams who tries to battle out, stomping his feet to get the crowd rallied.]

GM: Young Derrick Williams trying to get the crowd going...

BW: ...and failing miserably at it.

GM: Well, he certainly hasn't given them much to cheer for in his young career so far.

[Climbing to his feet, Williams turns into the hold and buries an elbow into the midsection. A second one loosens the grip and the third breaks him free.]

GM: Williams breaks out of it...

[He lunges at Rogers in what closely approximates a double leg takedown but he actually lifts him off the mat, driving the smaller Rogers back into the corner.]

GM: Oof! Back to the corner goes Rogers!

[Grabbing the middle rope, Williams lays in shoulder tackle after shoulder tackle into the gut of Rogers, knocking some of the wind from his sails.]

GM: Now this is a bit unexpected out of the Game Changer, laying in those shoulders to the midsection!

BW: He's starting to look like an actual pro wrestler instead of cannon fodder!

[Williams straightens up, throwing a pair of right hands to the jaw before grabbing an arm...]

GM: Irish whip sends Rogers across, coming in behind him...

[The crowd actually cheers for Williams as he turns his back, throwing a high impact back elbow into the jaw!]

GM: The rookie is starting to gain some momentum here, fans!

[He pumps an arm up and down, trying to get more cheers from the fans as Rogers stumbles out, getting scooped up and slammed down with a textbook body slam.]

GM: Right out of Wrestling School 101 as Rogers hits the mat and-

[Williams leaps high into the air, laying his body out as he drops a big elbow down into the chest!]

GM: Wow! A whole lot of elevation on that elbowdrop!

BW: What's gotten into this kid? I didn't know he had this in him at all. This is the most offense we've seen out of him so far.

GM: Matt Rogers is a much better competitor than he's faced so far. Perhaps this young man is simply rising to the level of his opponent. It wouldn't be the first time that's been heard of.

[A dazed Rogers rolls over, trying to drag himself through the ropes to the floor for a breather as Williams steps out to the apron, looking over and pointing, appealing to the crowd who've gone from not interested in the slightest to slightly interested. He starts clapping before dropping down to the floor, circling around the ringpost...]

GM: What's Williams got in mind here?

BW: He's comin' on fast, Gordo!

[The athletic newcomer is charging hard, leaping into the air and extending his legs...]

GM: DROPKICK!

[...but Rogers pulls himself out of the way, causing Williams to clunk down backfirst on the apron as Rogers hits the ropes, rebounding off...]

GM: LOOK OUT!

[A baseball slide out of Rogers sends both feet SMASHING into the ribs of Williams, knocking him off the apron to the floor. Rogers ducks under the ropes in pursuit as the crowd jeers.]

BW: Haha! The kid thought he had something going but it turned out the only thing goin' is him... right back to the loss column.

GM: It's not over yet, Bucky.

[Rogers grabs Williams by the trunks...

...and DRIVES him shoulderfirst into the steel ringpost!]

GM: OHHH! INTO THE POST!!

BW: That was an accident, I think, Gordo. He was trying to put him back into the ring and Williams slipped out of his grip.

GM: I'm sure.

[A dazed Williams gets rolled in, clutching his shoulder as Rogers slips thrgh the ropes, backing into the corner. He sits like a cat ready to pounce, waiting for the dazed rookie to stumble to his feet. Williams is still on shaky legs as he turns around, right into the vicious jumping spin kick of Rogers]

GM: SCYTHER KICK! ONE! TWO! THREE! That's it.

[The bell sounds as Rogers has his hand raised by the official.]

BW: The only thing Derrick Williams has changed around here is my opinion of Kevin Slater and Curtis Hansen... which frankly wasn't so hot to begin with. Former World Champions they might be but top notch teaching? Let's leave that to Supreme Wright.

GM: Give me a break!

BW: What?! Did you see what Cain Jackson did to Robert Donovan at Guts & Glory?! What Tony Donovan did to Willie Hammer two weeks ago?! Supreme Wright is the best pro wrestling trainer in the world!

[Rogers makes his exit from the ring as a dazed Williams is helped to his knees by the official. He angrily punches the mat, shaking his head as he rolls out to the floor, still trying to piece together what went wrong as he makes his exit as well.]

GM: Another night, another loss for Derrick Williams who just can't seem to find his way here in the American Wrestling Alliance so far. Fans, we're going to take another quick break but when we come back... I'm being told that President Percy Childes, Larry Doyle, and Miss Sandra Hayes intend to address the fans here in Las Vegas. The Wise Men are next so don't you dare go away!

[We fade to black.

In the background, we hear the slowly building sounds of the Alan Parsons Project's "Sirius."

One word slowly fades in, filling the entire screen.]

"SUPERCLASH"

[We cut to a montage of still photos from SuperClash events gone by - Stevie Scott standing nose to nose with Juan Vasquez, Alex Martinez putting William Craven into barbed wire, Dave Bryant locking the Iron Crab on Calisto Dufresne, City Jack standing over his best friend to protect him with a baseball bat, Bobby Taylor trading blows with Kevin Slater, and so on and so on. The graphic changes.]

"VI!"

[As the roman numeral fades, we catch a glimpse of AWA owner Bobby Taylor in what appears to be a major city, walking the busy streets in his cowboy boots. We see glimpses of illuminated marquees with the latest big musical productions. We see towering buildings. Jam-packed streets. A small hot dog cart with a vendor hawking his offerings.

And then shots that become slightly more obvious.

A street of major theaters.

The 9/11 Memorial.

The Empire State Building.

The Statue Of Liberty.

The shot fades to the black screen again with three letters that say it all, coming up one by one.]

"M...S...G."

[Cut immediately to a panning shot of the world's most famous arena, the camera circling around it before cutting to an overhead shot of it before cutting to the sign that reads "MADISON SQUARE GARDEN." And then one more cut to a black screen with all the details.]

"SUPERCLASH VI

MADISON SQUARE GARDEN
NEW YORK CITY
NOVEMBER 27, 2014"

[The graphic holds for a moment and then cuts to one more graphic.]

"LIVE ON PAY PER VIEW."

[We slowly fade from the graphic back to Gordon and Bucky at ringside.]

GM: SuperClash VI is coming to Madison Square Garden in the City That Never Sleeps! It's going to be a historic night for the American Wrestling Alliance. Tickets are on sale now for the biggest event of the year and we've been told that they are going fast! If you want to be a part of SuperClash VI, you NEED to buy your tickets now.

[We fade up from black to discover the ring is quite full as several individuals have entered the squared circle during the commercial break.

Most noticeably, we see a ring of armed security guards standing along the ring ropes, eyes fixed on the crowd beyond the barricade, keeping an eye open for any rumblings of what went down in Phoenix.

The Dogs Of War are also present in their usual midnight blue ensemble, pacing back and forth to keep their eyes peeled for trouble. The ever-volatile Pedro Perez points a warning finger at some boisterous fans, cackling as some security goes to reprimand them... or worse. Isaiah Carpenter smirks at the disturbance as Wade Walker looks ready to rip the ears off a gundark at any given moment.

As for the rest?

Wise Men. Dirty, stinking, plotting Wise Men.

AWA President Percy Childes absolutely looks the part in his navy blue suit, white undershirt, and red power tie. The bald, squat man has a dark thin goatee and is carrying his crystal-tipped cane which may or may not have an ancient artifact of power on the handle. Fact. The crowd boos anyway, and they boo with great gusto.

Next as if she were on a downtown New York City runway is none other than Miss Sandra Hayes. The Siren is the epitome of sex appeal in a see-and-be-seen single sleeve black dress with a blouson top and figure-hugging skirt. Gold sequins accent the sweeping neckline and her freshly polished branding iron rests over her bare shoulder.

The last part of the group is "Hollywood" Larry Doyle who is sporting a black leather jacket over a "Russian War Machine" t-shirt. His blue jeans are okay but his red cowboy boots stand out... a lot. He raises the mic to speak.]

LD: There are times when only one of the Wise Men need to be present and there are times when all must answer the call to assert our authority. After

the events of two weeks ago, you people need a reminder as to who is running things around this joint! It's not Jim Watkins! It's not Old Man O'Connor! It's not the suits in the back whose bank accounts rise and fall on the sweat of men like myself, Kolya Sudakov... and yeah, even Brad Jacobs.

It's us... right here... the Wise Men. We run this place whether you all like it or not.

[Doyle hands the mic off to Hayes.]

MSH: Do you believe us yet? Do you believe that the Wise Men are where the power lies in this company? Ask Terry Shane if you don't believe it. He wanted to be a guy who stands up for what he believes in... for himself... but in the end, he crumples just like everyone else before him.

Sooner or later, you will ALL fall in line and if you don't... well [she shrugs] then we can just put you in line ourselves like we did with Terry earlier this evening. Quite frankly, it doesn't matter much to me or either of these fine gentlemen how you get from point A to point B. Sooner or later, you will ALL consider yourselves true believers in what the Wise Men bring to the table.

Money. Power. Glory.

[Her eyes flash at those three words.]

MSH: All night long, we've had to deal with people who just can't seem to bear living in a world where the Wise Men run the show. We've had fans get ejected from the building. We've had people prevented from ENTERING the building and we've had... what? A half dozen or more wrestlers we had to politely escort out the front door?

[She shakes her head.]

MSH: Tsk, tsk, gentlemen. So stubborn and arrogant, aren't they?

[She looks to Larry who nods.]

MSH: The crazy thing is... it doesn't have to be this way. There is a simple and easy way to do things in this company now...

[She gestures to Doyle and Childes.]

MSH: ...and, well, there is a hard way.

[She gestures to the Dogs Of War.]

MSH: Believe me, you do NOT want to walk down the path of the hard way.

[Doyle takes the mic back.]

LD: As I look out on this crowd tonight, I see people wearing t-shirts with their favorite wrestlers on them - men like Dave Bryant... like Ryan

Martinez... like the FORMER World Tag Team Champions... like Eric Preston...

[Doyle chuckles.]

LD: Good. That's good. Root for them. Pay your hard-earned money to see them in this ring. Buy their t-shirts. Buy their posters. Call your local cable company and tell them you want to order SuperClash VI on Pay Per View to see them compete!

We encourage you to like them...

[A shake of the head.]

LD: ...and try not to hate us too much when we crush them like we did to Preston two weeks ago. Like we did to Martinez. Like we did to Jones and Hammonds. Like we did to... need I go on?

[The crowd is all over Doyle's case as he hands off the mic to President Percy.]

PC: I have one matter to address today, and I'd like to do it quickly because two weeks ago, my appointment to President took too much focus away from the wrestlers.

And that matter is, in fact, the attention that my appointment is getting FROM the wrestlers. So many deluded souls believe they have to "save" the AWA, for some reason. And the result was that they fanned the Phoenix crowd into a riot.

Essentially, what he have is blatant hypocrisy. These wrestlers, among their number being Ryan Martinez, Bobby O'Connor, Eric Preston... rest his soul.

[Percy gives a brief moment of silence for Eric Preston, which the crowd boos because it is a thinly veiled mocking. Pedro Perez puts his hand on his heart and gazes up with extremely melodramatic fake crying.]

PC: Hannibal Carver, who I will terminate just as soon as I wade through the contractual clauses that will entail. Jack Lynch. And now even Dave Bryant. Among others. These people didn't raise a peep when the previous administration discriminated against me. Apparently, "lack of preferential treatment" is some kind of crime. Protecting referees is some kind of crime. And for reasons that I cannot fathom, they think they can somehow stop me from being President by... what? Wrestling? Starting riots? I have no idea what they think they're doing, but I will tell you what they are doing: derailing the AWA.

I have fined many of them for inciting that riot. And again for interfering with AWA security matters. As it stands, quite a number of people have lost money by acting foolishly. Needless to say, if you cannot make a living, you cannot, well, live. I do not want to resort to firings, except when the blatant assault of civilians and criminal destruction of property is involved, and at

this rate I will not have to. I'm not sure how these people are going to eat, let alone feed their families.

And so, here is yet another... YET ANOTHER... attempt to appeal to sanity.

[Childes shakes his head, pleadingly putting up an open hand at the camera.]

PC: Just stop. I am not here to antagonize you, I am here to help the AWA become better than ever. It is this misguided resistance, this pointless kneejerk reactionary thrashing about, this ill-conceived rebellion that is causing the problem. Why does anyone think that I would want the business that makes me money to fail?! How stupid do you think I am?! I want everyone on the same page, making money. I want to make these fans happy so that they will gladly pay to see the AWA, and get their money's worth by seeing the best wrestlers in the world. It makes no sense to resist me. None!

These people advocated Stevie Scott, and how many careers has he shortened? How many times has he cheated someone? No different than I! He did what he needed to do. But nobody demonizes him. And these people still pine for Watkins, whose management strategy was "give his few designated heroes everything they want and screw the rest". The thing you all seem to THINK I am doing, when in fact I have applied the rules equally. But he does not get demonized, either.

Anyway, that is all. The olive branch is out there. End this. And we can all move on. With us leading the way.

[He gestures to Sandra with the cane.]

PC: As Miss Hayes explained, we can do things the easy way... or we can do them the hard way. The decision is ultimately up to you but I can promise you one thing... at the end of the day, there is no one - NO ONE - who will stop us from getting things done OUR WAY.

[Percy lowers the mic, soaking up the jeers as Sandra and Doyle step to his side, each raising their arms and loving the abuse of the fans. The Wise Men are on top of the wrestling world and they know it. They are the power. They are the strength. They are the vision of the days to come.

They... are... screwed.]

GM: WHAT THE-?!

[The Las Vegas crowd EXPLODES at the sound of "Ecstasy Of Gold" by Ennio Morricone being pumped in over the PA system.]

GM: Bucky, do you hear that?! DO YOU HEAR THAT?!

BW: It can't be! He's... he's...

GM: I THINK HE'S HERE! I THINK HE'S COME BACK! I THINK HE'S-

[The cheers somehow get even louder as AWA co-owner Todd Michaelson strides through the entrance curtain. You might expect someone who has spent the past nine months or so in Mexico licking his wounds to look a little worse for wear but not the former World Champion as he stands impeccably dressed in a olive-colored suit and white dress shirt with green tie. His blonde hair is slicked back into a ponytail and he...

...well, he looks pretty irritated truth be told.]

GM: TODD MICHAELSON IS HERE! THE FOURTH OWNER OF THE AWA IS HERE AND WILL YOU LOOK AT THE WISE MEN NOW?!

[There is obvious concern all around... although Percy Childes looks markedly less concerned than a frantic Larry Doyle and a nervous-looking Sandra Hayes appear to be. Michaelson slowly raises an offered mic.]

TM: Somebody's been very, very naughty while I was gone.

[Big cheer! Childes smirks, perhaps even chuckles at Michaelson's statement.]

TM: I mean... I'm out of it for a little while and everyone gets delusions of grandeur or something.

[Another big cheer - made louder by the geeky demographic of the AWA faithful.]

TM: Lemme see if I can get all this straight...

[Michaelson raises a hand, ticking things off on his fingers.]

TM: Since I walked away at SuperClash, Supreme Wright essentially stole the World Heavyweight Title... stole my students... basically ripped my school down to the timbers... got robbed of the World Title himself... somehow translated that into meaning he should work WITH you people... and then nearly crippled a man that - although we've had more than our fair share of problems - is the closest thing to a son that I've got.

Does that sound about right?

[Another big cheer! Todd nods.]

TM: Then... the Wise Men are revealed. After all the speculation about where the power lies in the AWA, we find out it was Percy Childes... I know I'm shocked about that. Who would ever suspect that the sneakiest, most manipulative, most-evil guy I've ever encountered - and I worked for Chris Blue - is one of the Wise Men?

[There's some laughter from the crowd as Todd nods.]

TM: Larry Doyle. "Hollywood" Larry. Larry Doyle engineered the fall of Royalty... although I'm pretty sure we were almost there when "Big" Jim decided to make Joe Petrow spend the rest of his hopefully pain-filled days sucking dinner through a straw.

[Another nod.]

TM: And then there's...

[Michaelson glares down the aisle, staring at Sandra Hayes.]

TM: The fruit of my wife's loins. You, my dear, are the biggest surprise of them all if you ask me. But there will be plenty of time to discuss how you weaseled your way into Lori's life, guilt-tripped her like no other, and then wrapped her around your finger enough to orchestrate this out-and-out disaster I see before me.

[Sandra shouts down the aisle off-mic.]

TM: Now, now... no tantrums, little girl, or I'll send you to your room without dessert.

[Laughter from the crowd.]

TM: Man, I'm going to make one HELL of an evil Stepfather.

[Another big cheer as Sandra throws a tantrum.]

TM: But enough of me laughing at you... because right now, the three of you are standing in there laughing at all of us, aren't you? You're laughing that the forces of good in this company - men like Ryan Martinez, Bobby O'Connor, and Eric Preston - are trying to stand up for what's right while you just keep swatting them down with your limitless power.

Percy, you strike me as a comic book kind of guy.

Ever heard the saying - With great power comes great responsibility?

[Childes grins in response.]

TM: No? Fair enough. Let's try this one...

Percy Childes, Sandra Hayes, Larry Doyle...

You have FAILED this company.

[Big cheer!]

TM: You were entrusted with the ultimate power to run this company in a fashion that lived up to the history of the past and the promise of tomorrow that it has earned. And if you'd done that? If you'd come even CLOSE to

doing that, I'd still be sitting on a beach in Mexico with a beer in one hand and a... well, another beer in the other!

But you just couldn't do it, could you? One show you had power... and in one show, you ABUSED that power to get your way like a spoiled child.

[He shakes his head.]

TM: I had a real bad feeling about it when Lori came to see me after she spilled the news to the entire world. She wanted to apologize... she wanted to explain everything. Now, what happened between my wife and I from there is between us... but I had the most horrible chill run down my spine when she said the words "President Percy Childes."

[Doyle pats Percy on the back, shouting off-mic at Todd.]

TM: Yeah, you all are real proud of yourselves. I can see that. I went out of my way to find a sports bar down there where I could see SNW from Phoenix...

...and what I saw broke my heart. I saw my worst fears realized and I saw that something had to be done to stop the three of you before you destroyed everything that me, Jon Stegglet, Bobby Taylor, Juan Vasquez, Stevie Scott, Marcus Broussard, City Jack, Tin Can Rust, Gordon Myers, Bucky Wilde, Jason Dane, Mark Stegglet, Kolya Sudakov, James Monosso, Raphael Rhodes, Ron Houston, Calisto Dufresne...

[Todd pauses, taking a deep breath.]

TM: ...Alex Martinez, Nenshou, the Bishop Boys, Dave Cooper, Violence Unlimited, the Lynch family, and so many more have built over the years. Yes, even you three morons had a hand in putting this promotion where it's at right now. But to get what you wanted, you were willing to tear it all down and rebuild it in your image.

[Todd grumbles something about the "Detson Center", shaking his head.]

TM: So, I came back. I caught a plane to Los Angeles, saw my wife, told her what I intended to do. She wasn't happy... but most wives are never truly happy with their husbands, right?

[Todd shrugs.]

TM: Then I took a plane to Phoenix, went to the hospital, and sat for hours with Eric Preston. I apologized for being gone when I was needed... he forgave me like I knew he would. He apologized for things he did in the past... I forgave him like he knew I would.

And then I told him that I was coming to Las Vegas to put a stop to this and to kick your ASS in the process!

[Todd starts marching down the aisle, pocketing the mic as he shrugs out of his sportscoat. Percy signals to the Dogs Of War who take up a spot in front of him. Security pours into the aisle, forming a wall. The crowd jeers as Michaelson grimaces.]

TM: It's gonna be that way, huh?

[Todd nods.]

TM: Fair enough. I'll wait my turn. I spent the last hour in a limo out back with my fellow members of ownership, Bobby Taylor and Jon Stegglet. We're in agreement - although my wife is not - and I believe, speaking with 70% of ownership behind me, that it's more than enough for me to say...

Percy Childes... you're fired!

[The crowd ERUPTS in an ear-splitting reaction! The cameras cut to the crowd, people leaping up and down with joy. A cut back to the ring though tells a different story as Percy Childes grins smugly at Todd Michaelson.]

PC: Is that right?

Todd Michaelson rides in on his white horse to save the day from the forces of evil. Is that how you imagined this would turn out?

[Childes chuckles.]

PC: You see, Todd Michaelson... unlike you and yours... I play this game for keeps. And the moment I took power - the moment I became the President of this company - I put AWA legal to work finding out what it would take to oust me from power... as I'm sure Mr. Stegglet and Mr. Taylor did as well.

I'm quite sure their findings were the same as mine...

[Michaelson grimaces, turning his head.]

PC: ...and yours, I can tell. It was a nice bluff, boss... but I'm afraid I don't bluff. I've GOT the cards to win this hand.

[The people are buzzing with confusion.]

PC: You see, fans of Las Vegas, Todd Michaelson came out here full of bluster hoping he could bully yours truly out of my lawfully-gained position as the AWA President. However, he knows as well as I do that the by-laws of this company PROHIBIT the firing of ANY AWA President within six months of his hiring unless the FULL 100% of ownership agrees.

[The crowd boos as Todd seethes.]

PC: And by my count, without the lovely Mrs. Dane-Michaelson casting her vote alongside yours thanks to my colleague, Miss Hayes...

[Sandra Hayes grins.]

PC: ...YOU are the one who have failed this company, Mr. Michaelson.

Now, security, if you please...

[Childes glares at Michaelson.]

PC: Get this man the HELL out of my building.

[Security starts to move in on Todd as Pedro Perez steps through the ropes, barking off-mic at his former trainer. Michaelson glares at Perez.]

TM: Where the hell did they dig you up from?

[The crowd cheers as Perez makes a lunge at Michaelson but is held back by Carpenter.]

TM: Alright, Percy... you're right. You called my bluff and you're right. You've obviously done your research too... so that's why I came prepared to make a deal.

[Childes arches an eyebrow, calling off his thugs for the moment.]

TM: The way I see it, there's only one thing you - and the rest of the Wise Men - want more than you as AWA President... and that's the knowledge that you can have that job for an extended period of time without me, Jon, and Bobby getting in your face about it, looking for loopholes... maybe hiring a bounty hunter or two...

[Big cheer! Percy tugs at his collar a bit on that one.]

TM: There's a reason they call that guy the Outlaw, you know?

[Another big cheer!]

TM: You want us to step aside and let you do your thing without fear of reprisal from ownership, right?

[Childes nods.]

TM: That's my offer.

I'm willing to put a one year UNBREAKABLE contract up for grabs. A contract that says this company is yours from the day after Battle Of Los Angeles until one year later. That's a whole lot of time for you to do whatever the hell you want to this place, Childes.

[Childes nods his head thoughtfully as Larry Doyle pops in next to him.]

LD: Nuh uh, Michaelson! I smell a rat! What's the trick?! What's the catch?!

[Michaelson chuckles.]

TM: Can't get one past you, Doyle. Of course there's a catch.

And the catch is that I might be out here alone right now... but at Battle Of Los Angeles, I won't be alone. At Battle Of Los Angeles, I intend to walk this aisle with a team of guys who want nothing more than to take on whoever you've got in the Main Event! Team AWA versus the Wise Men's Army!

[HUUUUUUUGE CHEER!]

TM: If we lose, you get that contract.

[Childes nods.]

PC: And if WE lose?

[Todd grins.]

TM: You're out as the President. We'll reinstate your manager's license, you can go back to doing whatever it was you were doing before.

And...?

[Percy watches, waiting.]

TM: The Wise Men are done. History. Kaput!

[Big cheer!]

TM: I don't EVER want to hear about the Wise Men again.

[Larry Doyle is obviously concerned, grabbing Percy by the shoulder and speaking very animatedly off-mic. Sandra Hayes slides over, listening to both men before offering her input. Childes shakes his head a few times, closing his eyes in thought.]

TM: Well, Wise Men... what's it going to be?

[Childes slowly opens his eyes, glaring a hole through the AWA owner.]

PC: You've got... a deal.

[HUUUUUUUGE CHEER from the AWA faithful! Michaelson grins.]

TM: Excellent. Well, now that we've got the broadstrokes ironed out, let's handle some details.

While I was down in Mexico, I caught a few lucha libre shows - hey, it's in my blood, you know? - and I saw some interesting ideas that I thought I'd love to bring to the AWA if I ever came back.

And one of those seems absolutely perfect to unveil at the Battle Of Los Angeles.

[The crowd is buzzing in intrigue.]

TM: Team AWA vs the Wise Men's Army... under CIBERNETICO RULES!

[There's not a big reaction to that as most people aren't familiar with those rules. Don't worry though - we'll catch you up! Childes pauses, considering the offer.]

PC: I'll agree to that... under a condition of my own...

[Todd gestures, waiting to hear it.]

PC: The Wise Men get to set the size of the teams.

[Michaelson shrugs.]

TM: Sure, I'll go for that.

PC: Then we have an agreement. At the Battle Of Los Angeles from the Fabulous Forum on Labor Day - LIVE here on WKIK - it will be the Wise Men's Army taking on Team AWA in a Ciber-

[Todd interrupts.]

TM: One more thing, Percy, before we lock this down...

[Childes look impatient at Todd stepping on his hype.]

PC: What?! What more can you want?!

[Michaelson grins.]

TM: I want to be able to put ANYONE on my team that agrees to join it... and hell, I'll give you the same option. Deal?

[Childes looks puzzled, trying to run through the possible scenarios in his head.]

PC: ...deal.

[The crowd cheers as Todd smiles, nodding his head.]

TM: Well, then... I guess I'll scoot on out of here. It seems like I've got a team to put together.

[The music kicks in for Michaelson again as he backs down the aisle, waving at the ring where Doyle, Hayes, and Childes have huddled up off-mic again.]

GM: Wow! Todd Michaelson has returned and the Battle Of Los Angeles takes on greater importance than any of us could have imagined! Team AWA vs the Wise Men's Army with the very future of the AWA hanging in the balance!

[The Wise Men are all puzzling out their next move as the crowd roars as we 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...

Once again, as we return from commercial break, it isn't to the arena's interior, but to the parking lot. There, in an open space surrounded on all four sides by cars, stand many of the AWA's top stars. Jack Lynch is there, standing near Bobby O'Connor. But those two are far from the only ones gathered. The camera doesn't catch all of them but we can easily spot the Northern Lights, Brian James, TORA, Air Strike, Skywalker Jones, and Hercules Hammonds among others. The AWA's heroes talk amongst

themselves, the voices mingling and covering one another. Until finally, from off camera, a voice cuts through the noise.]

“What’s the point in all this? Why don’t we just surrender, and give Percy what he wants?”

[All eyes, as well as the camera, turn towards the voice. And there, moving towards and then into, the crowd, is none other than the AWA’s White Knight, Ryan Martinez. Martinez is dressed simply, wearing a black t-shirt stretched across his muscular chest, and a pair of simple blue jeans. He moves forward with quiet determination, the sea of humanity parting around him until he stands with his back to the bumper of a black SUV.]

RM: Look at everything that Childes, Doyle, and Hayes have taken from us. How many more broken bones and shattered dreams do we have to endure? How many more times are we going to run our heads into a brick wall until we... wise up?

[Exhaling, looking out over the sea of disbelieving faces, Ryan continues, his voice calm and measured.]

RM: You know what they say. You can’t fight city hall, or the Wise Men. They’re too powerful. This is hopeless. These things happen, and when they do, you have to go with the flow. You have to go along to get along. Surrender and submit, and things will get better. You just have to accept what is, because one person can’t make a difference.

And some of you are telling yourselves that this isn’t your problem. That as long as you keep your head down, it never will be. That you can live, you can even thrive, under President Childes. As long as you keep your mouth shut and don’t try to get a big head or try to be a role model. Because, you’re telling yourself, you never asked to be a role model. You didn’t ask for this. You’re a wrestler, and that’s it.

This war has taken its toll on me. And on all of you. And none of us are better off now than we were before. Percy Childes and his cronies has everything, and we’re all standing here in a parking lot, while they’re all in there doing what we should be doing.

So maybe it’s time to accept the inevitable.

[Martinez is quiet for a long time, letting those words set in.]

RM: Don’t listen to those voices.

Don’t give in to soft voices that tell you that you have no choice, you have no power.

Don’t surrender.

Don’t back down.

Don't retreat.

Don't compromise.

Don't believe the Wise Men.

Don't stop believing in yourself.

[With each word, Ryan's passion and conviction have grown stronger, his voice raising from quiet and measured to intensely defiant. A fire has come into his eyes. He pauses, climbing to the roof of the SUV, looking out over all of the men gathered there.]

RM: Don't forget who you are. Don't forget that together, we can do anything. Don't think that this is the end. Don't stop fighting.

I know each and every one of you. And I know –exactly- the kind of men you are. Talented, dedicated, resourceful, and true to yourselves and true to the people who believe in you. And I tell you now, that no one believes in you more than I do.

I'm the biggest fan all of you have. And I'm telling you right now, not only can we win this war, but we will win this war. Todd Michaelson is here, and you all heard what he had to say. And let me ask you this.

Do you really think I'm going to Los Angeles, my hometown, without the certainty that by the time I leave, the Wise Men will be nothing but a very bad memory? Do you think I would walk into my home and let Percy and his goons get the last word? It cannot happen. And it will not happen.

And if you don't believe me, then believe that man.

[Ryan's finger extends, as he points to the back of the crowd. And there stands Todd Michaelson. Michaelson strides forward into the middle of the pack that circles around him to hear what he's come to say.]

TM: Those of you who've been kicked out of the building tonight... I can't get you back in. I'm sorry. Percy's still in charge... for now. But I can tell you that you're not the only ones who aren't in the building tonight...

[Todd nods as nods circle around the group, obviously getting what he's saying. The camera cuts back to Ryan who has got something of a grin on his face.]

RM: Well, you heard the man? Let's go cause a ruckus.

[Fired up, the wrestlers march out of the parking lot, ready to incite what could be another riot. Ryan steps off the SUV's hood, and is about to join them, until he stops dead in his tracks.]

RM: I knew you had something to say. Don't think I didn't see you staring a hole into me this whole time.

[The camera moves away from Ryan and slowly zooms in to the lone man who remains after the crowd has dispersed. There, standing in what had been the middle of the crowd, unmoving, unblinking, staring straight ahead, vibrating with manic intensity is Hannibal Carver. Martinez moves to stand right in front of them, neither of them ceding any ground, both refusing to budge.]

RM: Go ahead. I know you've got something on your mind.

[Carver slowly nods, staring at Martinez.]

HC: How's Eric?

[Martinez exhales, as if the air has been forcibly pulled out of his lungs. A haunted look comes into his brown eyes. Still, he does not falter as he answers Carver.]

RM: He's... he'll live. He got-

[Carver angrily cuts him off.]

HC: He got his skull smashed in... again... when yeh, his best friend, was supposed to be watching his back! I was off suspended and he was YER responsibility. Yeh should have been there for him. Yeh should have protected him. Now...

[Todd Michaelson, who's been watching the brewing confrontation, steps between the two.]

TM: Now, he'll come back... just like he always has... and kick the hell out of Supreme Wright for what he did. And if for some reason he doesn't, I need the two of you to be ready to do it for him.

[Ryan and Carver are glaring at each other as Michaelson tries to play peacemaker.]

TM: This team needs both of you to win. I need both of you to win this thing. It's time to decide where you stand. You can either show up in Los Angeles and help end this mess that we're all in... or you can beat the hell out of each other and when you're done...

[He pauses, looking around.]

TM: ...maybe there'll be some ashes of the place left to fight for.

[The former World Champion glares at both men, making sure they get his message before turning to walk away.]

RM: There's plenty I could say, Hannibal. I could say that if you were able to control yourself, then maybe -you- could have been there to protect Eric.

Maybe it's your fault for not being able to get past your own issues and be there when you were needed.

I could say that.

But here is what I am going to say. Todd is right. We need you in Los Angeles. I need you in Los Angeles. You bring something to the table that I don't. That honestly? I can't. I wasn't lying before, Carver. I do believe in you. And I do want you on my side.

And I hope that you can be honest enough to admit that the same is true in reverse. I hope you can admit that you need me on your side too. But I will make you a deal, Hannibal. If after Los Angeles, you're still feeling sore. If you still feel that you need to work something out, then any time, any place, I'll meet you in the ring.

And we can settle this like men.

Now you tell me, can you accept that? Can you hold it together until we get through the Wise Men? Can you and I work together? Which is more important to you, Carver? Tearing a chunk out of my hide, or finally putting down the Wise Men once and for all?

You can take this...

[Ryan's hand extends, as if to shake Carver's.]

RM: Or I can do this.

[Martinez' fingers curl into a tight fist.]

RM: Make your choice.

[Carver smirks.]

HC: Yeh see, Martinez... that's where yeh and the fat man are alike. Yeh think it has to be one way or another. Yes or no. Black or white. A handshake or a punch.

Good thing I already saw the light. Not long ago I was like yeh. Playing by the rules. Doing what they expected. But when it's scum like that who're holding the rulebook?

[Carver nods.]

HC: It's time to set that piece of trash on fire and throw it out the window. So no, I ain't gonna shake yer hand because I didn't come out here to make friends with yeh.

And I ain't gonna trade hands with yeh because I did that song and dance before... and all it got in the end was Eric in a neckbrace.

But as far as me being in yer team, me in yer army?

[Carver shakes his head.]

HC: I ain't playing that game anymore. I ain't in yer or anyone else's army. I'm not a soldier.

[A smile crosses the Boston Brawler's face... but it is a sick smile, one completely devoid of humor.]

HC: I'm an assassin. But will I be there when it's time to put an end to this whole mess?

Bet yer bottom dollar. So go run off to yer sorority mixer.

[Carver begins backing away, never taking his eyes off of Ryan until he's completely vanished from view in the shadows.]

HC: I'll be there when it's time to shove a dagger through the heart.

[Surprised by Carver's words, Martinez stands in place, watching him recede into the darkness. Finally, Ryan shakes his head, confident, at least, that Carver will be there when he's needed. That bit of business finished, Ryan moves swiftly to join the others as we fade back into the building to the announce desk.]

GM: The fight is on! And when Todd Michaelson said he needed to go start putting together his team, he wasn't kidding. Team AWA already has Ryan Martinez and Hannibal Carver on it!

BW: But Carver's fired! He's gonna be fired!

GM: It doesn't matter! Percy agreed to let ANYONE who wanted to be on Todd Michaelson's team to join it! Hannibal Carver is on board! We've got two on Team AWA!

BW: But they don't even know how many they need! Percy's holding that card... and who knows when he'll tell Michaelson how many he needs to bring to the big dance... how many he needs to bring to the Battle Of Los Angeles!

GM: There's a whole lot of guys back in that locker room who would love the chance to fight for this company - you better believe that! Including the guy who is about to be in action right now... so let's head up to Phil Watson for more action!

[Crossfade into the ring where Phil Watson is standing.]

PW: The following contest is set for one fall with a ten minute time limit. Introducing first... already in the ring at this time... from Topeka, Kansas... weighing in at 272 pounds... Lee Harrigan!

[A very muscular young man with short brown hair throws his arms up to jeers. He's wearing red trunks and black boots as he points to the jeering fans, threatening to backhand them all... even children.]

PW: And his opponent...

#WHO WAN' SIT ON SWEET DADDY'S LAP TANIIIIIIIIGHT?!#

[The self-styled sounds of "I'm Gonna Be Your Sweet Daddy" kicks in to a big reaction from the Las Vegas crowd.]

PW: From Hotlanta, Georgia... weighing in at 302 pounds...

SWEEEEET
DADDYYYY
WILLLLLLLLLLLIAMMMSSSSSS!

[The rotund fan favorite bursts into view, clad in a red windbreaker and a pair of matching red trunks and boots. He points to the fans, pumping a fist to a big reaction.]

GM: You talk about a man who is AWA down to the very core, you're talking about Sweet Daddy Williams.

BW: He's also a man who is pancake batter down to the very core.

GM: Very funny, Bucky. But if Todd Michaelson is looking for people to represent the AWA and be a part of that team at Battle Of Los Angeles, you better believe that Sweet Daddy Williams would answer that call!

[Williams yanks off his jacket, throwing it down to reveal an old school AWA t-shirt - probably one of the first ones made back in the day. He jerks a thumb at it to a big cheer as he marches down the aisle, nodding his head at the cheering fans. Upon reaching the ring, he pulls himself up on the apron...

...and gets assaulted by a charging Lee Harrigan who slugs him with a plodding forearm to the back of the head!]

GM: Ohh! What a shot by Harrigan!

[The crowd jeers Harrigan as he reaches over, scooping the three hundred pounder up with ease...

...and SLAMS him down hard on the canvas as the bell sounds!]

GM: Lee Harrigan with the attack before the bell, now stomping him into the mat.

[Harrigan stands over him, clapping his hands together before leaping skyward, dropping a big elbow down into the t-shirt covered chest of the fan favorite!]

GM: Big elbowdrop by Harrigan who covers!

[The count hits two before Williams slips the shoulder up off the mat.]

BW: This is the guy you want fighting for the AWA? The guy who is getting beaten up by Lee Harrigan? Now, Harrigan is a tough competitor... a strong guy... but if Williams is having trouble with him, if I'm Todd Michaelson, I don't want him anywhere near the army that the Wise Men can put together at the snap of their fingers.

[Harrigan drags Williams off the mat, pausing to shout at the fans...

...and Williams slaps the hand away, breaking the grip and opening fire on Harrigan with a right hand to the jaw!]

GM: Big right hand by Williams... and another... and another! He's got Lee Harrigan backpedaling now, right up against the ropes...

[Williams crouches over, throwing a series of quick rights and lefts to the midsection. He grabs an arm, shooting Harrigan across...

...and leaps up, turning to flatten the rebounding Harrigan with his flying hind quarters!]

GM: THE D DESTROYER! DOWN GOES HARRIGAN!!

[Williams hits the ropes, taking a few REAL big steps, before leaping up into the air, dropping a three hundred pound elbow down into the chest of Harrigan!]

GM: Big running elbow drop connects... and Williams is going for it all right here.

[Back up on his feet, Williams swings a hand around in the air, smiling at the crowd's reaction. He hauls him up, tugging him into a side headlock and walking to the corner...]

GM: RILEY ROUNDUP!

[...and charges out, DRIVING Harrigan facefirst into the mat!]

GM: CONNECTS!

[Williams flips over, applying a lateral press.]

GM: ONE! TWO! THREE!

"DING! DING! DING!"

[Williams promptly climbs to his feet, giving a throat-cutting gesture at his music starting up. He gestures outside the ring, calling for a mic.]

SDW: Nah, nah, nah... ain't no time to party here tonight... not even in Las Vegas!

[Big cheer from the Vegas crowd!]

SDW: There's serious business in the air, baby. There's serious business that needs to go down... and it's gonna go down in Los Angeles. The Battle Of Los Angeles - ain't never been a more fitting name 'cause the AWA is goin' to battle... hell naw... the AWA is goin' to war, baby!

[Big cheer!]

SDW: Todd Michaelson's got a whole lot of soldiers linin' up in that locker room, lookin' for their chance to slap on a little bit of camo, strap on a bunch of attitude, and crap on the Wise Men's chances of ever seein' the light of day again!

[Even bigger cheer!]

SDW: I ain't a former champion like Ryan Martinez. I ain't a bloodthirsty savage like Carver. But what I am is AWA where it counts...

[He beats his chest with a clenched fist.]

SDW: Right here, baby. Sweet Daddy was here the day this place got started and Sweet Daddy gonna be here the day they turn out the lights. So, if you're lookin' for someone willin' to give it all for this fight... for this battle... for this war...

[Williams nods confidently.]

SDW: Look no further, boss man. Look no-

[Williams' words are cut off by the sound of "Hollywood" Larry Doyle who appears through the entrance curtain, flanked by Kolya Sudakov and Brad Jacobs.]

LD: Wait a second, wait a second here, Mr. Daddy Williams, you know good and well that you do not have the authority to enter yourself into this match, don't you? You know good and darn well that you're not WISE enough, correct?

GM: Todd Michaelson can appoint ANYONE he wants, Bucky, who is to say he hasn't put Sweet Daddy on his team already?

BW: Michaelson wants to win, right, that's his goal here? Then there ain't no WAY he'd want Uncle Jemima here on his team!

[Doyle begins to walk down to the ring, and Sudakov and Jacobs are power walking on either side of him.]

LD: You're not fit to fight in the biggest match the AWA's ever seen, Michaelson doesn't want you! And we sure as hell don't want you either! But the most pathetic thing on Earth is someone who just doesn't know when it ain't there time. Someone who isn't WISE enough to see the writing on the wall...

[And now Jacobs and Sudakov are in a full sprint...]

LD: ...so we're here to open your eyes!

GM: No! They can't!

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

BW: THEY JUST DID!

GM: ZERO TOLERANCE! DAMMIT, THEY CAN'T EVEN ABIDE BY THEIR OWN MADE UP RULES! THIS IS AN EMBARRASSMENT!

[The Russian Sickle from a running Kolya Sudakov sent the message, and as the Russian War Machine picks Sweet Daddy back up, Brad Jacobs barrels forward and spears the living hell out of him, making sure the message is clear. Sweet Daddy clutches at his ample midsection and hollers in pain as Jacobs kicks him with the point of his toe, rolling the rotund wrestler right out of the ring. Larry Doyle finally enters the ring, microphone in hand, and looks at Sweet Daddy on the outside.]

LD: Now, now, gentlemen, surely you know, you are in CLEAR violation of the rules here tonight. No man, and we mean NO MAN, will be subject to physical altercations that do not take place within the parameters of a previously signed match. As such, as such, I, Lawrence Oliver Doyle, have no choice but to KICK YOU TWO OFF THE SHOW FOR THE REST OF THE NIGHT!

BW: Gadzooks and good gravy! Heavens to mergatroid!

GM: Will you please...

LD: You two are in direct violation of the laws, and we will tolerate NO ONE breaking those laws. We run a solid ship here in the AWA, and there's GOT to be some law around here! So Jacobs, Sudakov, I've no choice but to suspend you WITH pay for the remainder of the evening and into next week. But, just to show that we also have a heart here in the Texas Booking Office...

[Doyle reaches into his wallet and pulls out a wad of cash, and then counts out a sum for each.]

LD: Here's two thousand dollars for each of ya.

GM: What?! Are you kidding me? Suspended, with pay? Two thousand dollars in cash? Some punishment!

BW: The law cannot be breached, Gordo! It's a fierce punishment, but no man is exempt.

[Sudakov and Jacobs collect their cash, and exit the ring. Doyle affects an angry face for a moment, and then resumes talking when they're out of site.]

LD: What I did for you all was a favor. Because those men are capable of mass destruction. Those men are capable of ending lives and ending careers. So getting them out of here, giving them two large apiece to go lose in a G-string was the best thing for business. I just saved careers by getting those two out of this building.

But don't you worry, Todd Michaelson, their suspension will be over long before the Battle of Los Angeles. Those two men will be the first people into Los Angeles, and they'll be the last people out when your decade long power trip burns to the ground in the same city that it started. How apropos is it, Michaelson, that for all those years you called Los Angeles home, and after the Battle of Los Angeles you're never going to want to set foot in that rancid, festering hole of human depravity ever again. Because Los Angeles will stop being your home, it'll stop being the place where you spent so much time with your best friend and your morally negotiable wife, spending all those hours providing levity while men bled for your amusement.

After the Battle, Los Angeles will be the place where your dream died. Los Angeles will become the place you can't bear to think about, that you won't be able to look at without getting that knot in the pit of your stomach. Because we all have to look reality in the face at sometime in our lives, we all have to face failure.

You will face failure EVERY TIME you set foot within the city limits of Los Angeles, reality will surround you like maggots on rotten fruit every time you roll one wheel on your rental car over the city limits.

[Uncharacteristically, Doyle is emotional and serious, face red with anger.]

LD: Los Angeles will be the DEATH of Todd Michaelson, it will be your Waterloo! WE will _END_ you in your hometown, and leave you to rot like the rest of the jobless, useless, feckless, worthless, mindless bums in the gutter. You should have stayed home with your Amazon wife, and let your step-daughter who you knew nothing about continue to repair your broken family name. Is it any wonder the only worthwhile thing your wife ever donated to this Earth had NOTHING to do with you?

["Ooohhhhhhhhhh."]

BW: That's not, that's not nice.

LD: Is it any wonder Sandra couldn't have stayed farther away, while you humiliated her mother every week on TV? The chickens are coming home to roost, Todd, all the nasty things you've done are coming back to bite you,

the same as they are for your broken student Preston. Bad things happen to bad people. What you do in the beginning WILL haunt you in the end. And by God, Larry Doyle will be there when you beg for mercy, right before we extinguish all hope.

The Battle of Los Angeles can't come soon enough.

[Doyle cracks a grin as he drops the mic, turning to exit the ring.]

GM: Despicable. Despicable in his words. Despicable in his actions. Larry Doyle proving he's a Wise Men through and through here tonight.

BW: Be careful how loudly you say that, Gordo.

GM: The threat of the Wise Men doesn't concern me anymore. If they want me, come and get me!

[We fade away from the ring to a shot of the parking lot area where "Showtime" Rick Marley, dressed in street clothes, is talking directly to the camera which has gone live in mid-sentence.]

RM: -easy enough work. A thousand dollars, and all you have to do is follow me around with the the camera and mic hot so that the production truck can cut to your feed anytime then want. It's easy money, and something that you basically do anyway. Just more... directed.

[From offscreen, a voice responds.]

Cameraguy: And you're sure this is on the up and up? I don't wanna get in trouble with the union or the bosses.

[Marley smiles broadly.]

RM: I have absolutely no clue, but it's an easy thousand, right?

[The dark haired wrestler moves through the arena doorway and into the locker room area, nodding to the security guy.]

Security: You ain't got a match today, Mr. Marley.

RM: Yeah. I got a text that I was... summoned.

Security: Yeah, by President Childes. He left word that when you arrived you were to be sent up to see him. Immediately.

RM: And if I'm not interested in seeing Mr. Childes?

Security: Well... you don't have a match, so you really don't have much else to do today, do you?

[Marley glares at the security guard, who stands stoically unimpressed in the face of his irritation.]

RM: Fine. Awesome. Let's go see what Percy wants.

[With that annoyed comment, Marley starts towards the nearest stairwell. The security person he was speaking to, a short middle-aged man who certainly doesn't look like he'd be any threat, pipes up in a protesting tone.]

Security: The camera crew isn't invited.

RM: *I* invited them...if Percy wants me, he gets the camera crew too. He's all about transparency for the fans, right? Well, this is part of that whole immersive viewing experience. Who needs to watch actual wrestling when you can be fascinated by contract signings backstage, right?

[The security guy looks uneasy at the thought of the camera crashing the meeting with Percy, but eventually nods. Marley hustles up the stairs, and we're following him as the two men continue to speak.]

Security: Go right on in when you get to the office.

RM: Yup. That was gonna happen anyway.

[It does not take long for Marley to arrive at this facility's temporary office, and he lets himself in. The office has beige walls, dark blue carpeting, and a black wood desk. Behind this, with two open laptops and a variety of documents in front of him, is a rather intent looking President Percy Childes. As seen before, the bald, squat, goateed President is wearing a dark blue suit and red power tie.

Also as seen before, Percy is flanked by the Dogs Of War. Isaiah Carpenter is keeping a watch at the door, Pedro Perez is pacing, and Wade Walker stands right next to Percy with an obvious protective body language.

Unlike before, though, Childes is now also accompanied by none other than the AWA World Television Champion, Johnny Detson. Detson is sitting in a chair, TV Title folded and resting on the President's desk. Detson is dressed similar to earlier on, black slacks, dark blue shirt, his skinny black tie is loosened and a jacket rests over the arm of the chair. He immediately stands up when Marley enters the room.

Percy also stands when Marley arrives, and offers his hand. His eyes light up, and although he isn't smiling, he does seem relieved... at least until he sees the camera.]

PC: Rick, thank you for coming. You won't need the camera crew, I have one.

[Marley looks down at Percy's hand for a long time... uncomfortably long, before offering the most perfunctory of handshakes to his former manager.]

RM: NEED the camera? No, not really. But I figure that a feed that goes straight to the production van might work out a bit more like I remember it

than one that you've had a chance to play Tricky Dick with... live and learn, right, Mr. President?

[Percy's eyes lock onto Marley's before sliding over to the camera for a moment, then he nods.]

PC: Ah. Well, I can make that concession.

[He turns to the Dogs.]

PC: Gentlemen, there will be no need for your presence at this time. Please give Mr. Marley and myself some space.

PP: You sure about that? The way I heard, Marley's been...

PC: Do not question me.

[Perez seems unconvinced, but throws his hands up as if to say that he's not responsible if anything happens. Carpenter gives Childes a curious look, while Walker leaves without displaying any sort of body language. Once the Dogs Of War clear out of the room, Percy sits back down.]

PC: I apologize for that, Rick. They're very protective; that's their job.

RM: You've even got them mostly house trained. That's pretty good. Next you'll hire a tutor to teach Johnny here to win a match in that ring on his own.

[Detson takes issue with the comment.]

JD: At least I've been in a ring these past couple months, unlike some people who need a forced vacation because they can't do their job.

[Marley is about to respond - perhaps physically - when Percy interrupts.]

PC: No, no, let me stop this before it starts. The reason for this meeting is to put an end to the drama. Rick, you and I have butted heads for months now. I have kept it private, but you've brought it public. The time has come to bury that hatchet. I concede.

RM: You concede? Concede what?

PC: That I need you. Everything is on the line, and I need the best wrestlers in the world. You are one of those. So I will concede defeat in our war of words. You will have no further issue getting booked on AWA television. It was unprofessional of me to do that in the first place. And I apologize for snubbing you.

[Marley stares at Percy again, then shakes his head... and laughs.]

RM: Wow... you must have your pants specially made. How do you walk? After canceling my matches, backhanded omissions, and generally being a

passive-aggressive jerk to me, you have the nerve to come crawling back to me and ask me to be on the team because you realize the stakes are too high for you NOT to have me?

[Percy's response to this outburst is somewhat odd. Instead of taking offense with it, he seems confused that it is even a problem with Marley.]

PC: Well, yes. That's business.

JD: This is ridiculous! Percy, he obviously doesn't get it, or doesn't want it. You don't need him...

[Detson gives a dismissive gesture towards Marley.]

JD: ...you have me! You know, the person in every battle fighting, winning for this cause, nose to the grindstone. I'm the one getting the job done, not him. Not now, not ever!

RM: You couldn't lead your way out of a freakin' Chuck E. Cheese, chuckles. And grindstone? The only grindstone your nose has been on is the one wedged up Percy's-

[Percy angrily interrupts again.]

PC: Enough! Gentlemen, in the real world, co-workers do not always get along. Everyone watching this show has at least one person they work with who rubs them the wrong way... well, except for the unemployed, so it is probably only half of the people who watch this show. Nonetheless, professionalism dictates that you take care of business regardless of how you feel about the people you work with. You are both professionals. I expect you to work it out.

RM: You seem to have skipped the part where I smiled, the music swelled, and I said it was all okay. I haven't agreed to be on anything yet, Percy.

[Childes nods.]

PC: I trust that you will, Rick. Not only did I bring you back to the AWA with a generous contract that I negotiated for you, I am also the one who can ensure you get back to the upper-level position on the card to which you have been accustomed in years past.

RM: So, title contention, then?

PC: Of course.

RM: Like that title?

[Marley points at the gold on the desk next to Detson.]

JD: Yeah, like you deserve a title shot. But if you're itching for a beating that badly...

[Detson takes a step towards Marley, but Childes interrupts again.]

PC: STOP. Rick, you're trying to provoke Johnny. That's unprofessional. But... the answer to your question is yes.

[Now it's Detson's turn to look incredulous.]

JD: Excuse me?! Did you just say that he could get a title shot?

PC: I don't see the issue, Johnny. You just now wanted to hit Rick in the face. But assaulting someone in my office would draw a large fine. Wouldn't you rather be paid to do something you want to do, as opposed to having to pay for it?

[This calms Detson down considerably. Even Marley seems more at ease.]

JD: That makes sense.

RM: That... wasn't what I expected to hear either. This COULD work. We take care of business in Los Angeles, and then...

[Percy waves him off before speaking.]

PC: Just keep in mind, gentlemen. Taking care of business. Rick, are you in?

RM: You hold up your end of the deal, and I'll do it. Hell, with me on the team maybe we'll even overcome Johnny's "leadership."

[Marley helpfully puts air quotes around the word "leadership."]

PC: And you understand that Johnny Detson is the captain of the team? I do expect you, and everyone else, to abide by that.

[This is a bit more of a sticking point, and Marley grits his teeth thinking it over. Detson sticks his chin up, grinning a mirthless grin directed right at his rival.]

RM: Fine. You swallowed your pride, so I'll do the same. But remember one thing. After the Battle Of Los Angeles, I want you to remember EXACTLY how this went down.

JD: Oh, don't worry Rick, he will. It's real simple: shut your mouth, do what you're told, and we'll win. Because someone has been winning matches...

[As if Marley had any doubts, Detson points to himself and smirks before patting the front plate of the Television Title.]

JD: ...and someone else has just been watching them.

RM: Well... "Leader"... now that you've got actual talent on your team, you stand a chance in this Battle of Los Angeles...

[With this, Marley leaves, though the cameraman lingers for just a moment.]

JD: Percy, you've gotten us this far, but this is a mistake. Rick Marley can't be trusted!

PC: Johnny, I trust Rick Marley to be Rick Marley. He'll want to one-up everyone and win; that pseudo-Napoleon complex is what drives him. I don't care who on my team wins, so long as my team wins. So trust isn't an issue.

JD: Yeah, but I don't think you...

[Detson stops as the camera catches the corner of his eye. He does an about face and glares at the camera.]

JD: Reality show time over there buddy... GET. OUT.

[The camera retreats, and we cut to black.]

Open to a pan of an empty Crockett Coliseum, before an event. The blue seats form a sea around the ring, which stands out like an island.]

VOICEOVER: The home of champions.

[Brief flashes of famous faces appear as the pan continues. Vasquez. Scott. Monosso. Dufresne. Wright.]

VOICEOVER: The home of legends.

[More: Broussard. Rogers. Martinez (the elder). Spector. Langseth.]

VOICEOVER: And the home of the best in the world today.]

[More: Shane. Martinez (the younger). Lake. Carver. Bryant.]

VOICEOVER: And now... to you.

[The pan of the arena slowly morphs from a live action shot, to a 3D digitized animation shot of the exact same place. Everything looks the same, except this is no longer live footage... it looks like a video game.]

And in the next shot, we see that it IS one; the stands are filled with virtual fans as a virtual Supreme Wright locks up with a virtual Dave Bryant. Rapid-fire cuts to the game avatars of many AWA stars, past and present, either in ring, in selection screens, or in entrances.]

VOICEOVER: The year is 2014. And the game... has... changed.

[And cut to a still shot of Supreme Wright holding up the title after his championship win at SuperClash, because that's the cover of AWA 2K14 by 2K games.]

VOICEOVER: Rated E for Everyone.

[Cut.

A burst of static appears on the screen. It goes away for a split second, only to be replaced with another burst. The image finally corrects, showing aerial footage of a burning skyscraper. A voice is heard, the same as the last time Saturday Night Wrestling was interrupted by static.]

"Chaos. Destruction."

[Another burst of static eradicates that visual, eventually replacing it with footage of a storefront being smashed in during a riot.]

"The kind that can only be brought by that most vicious of animals..."

[A man in a ski mask is seen leaping out of the destroyed shop window, clutching a DVD player under his arm.]

"... man.

His crimes are not limited to slights against his Mother."

[Another burst of static. It is replaced with a view from inside the Rusty Spur. Clearly from some time ago as William Craven looks on as Jack Lynch, Bobby O'Connor and Hannibal Carver toast each other with frosty mugs filled to the brim with beer.]

"Self destruction. For the pleasure of now, he destroys his body. Damage that can never be undone."

[Another burst of static, as that jovial bar scene is replaced by one that won't be forgotten by any AWA fan anytime soon. Supreme Wright grips the steel door of the Tower of Doom, sending it crashing into the skull of Eric Preston.]

"He destroys his brother. For selfish advancement of one's own career. For shallow revenge."

[A burst of static, this time replaced only by darkness.]

"How long can it be expected to go unpunished? How long can our mother Earth witness the destruction of her lands and her children without a savior?"

[A thoughtful pause.]

"How long can she expected to be silent?"

[Another burst of static, eventually replaced by footage of an active volcano, spewing forth red hot lava.]

"No longer."

[Static, and then footage of an earthquake splitting paved concrete roads as if they were rice paper.]

"The time is long past due. No concern from the brave few can make up for the crimes of the many."

[Static, and then a tornado rips through farmland... uprooting trees and houses alike.]

"The time for her children to face punishment is at hand. But no champion need stand up. No heroes are necessary..."

[And much like last time, that dark laugh is heard.]

"... for she has something much better. Because though we have seen countless champions, countless heroes... there can only ever truly be one..."

[A burst of static, finally replaced by a computer readout of a faultline in the earth's crust.]

"... KING."

[A final burst of static, as the feed is finally restored to order and we switch to the locker room area where Mark Stegglet is standing alongside the Asian Assassin, Nenshou. Nenshou is dressed for battle - rocking a black gi-style jacket with red and white trim and featuring a snake on the back. His face paint is red and black with some white highlighting.]

MS: Joining me now is the former AWA Longhorn Heritage Champion, Nenshou! Nenshou, you really seem to be getting back on track as of late and many have wondered if championship gold is in your immediate future.

[Nenshou, never lacking for words, gives his appraisal of the situation.]

N: No.

[Stegglet looks puzzled, waiting for more.]

MS: No? That's it?

[Nenshou nods.]

MS: Okay, well... if championship gold isn't-

[Stegglet is interrupted by a voice coming from off-camera.]

"What I think he means is... there's more important things to deal with than titles right now, Mark."

[There's a cheer inside the building as AWA co-owner Todd Michaelson strides into view, putting Stegglet between himself and Nenshou.]

TM: You heard what I said earlier?

[Nenshou nods.]

TM: You want to take out these Wise Men as badly as I do... for different reasons, sure... for personal reasons... but you want them gone just like I do... just like Martinez... Carver... O'Connor... Lynch... all the rest of them do.

[Nenshou nods again.]

TM: Then shake my hand and come stand with us in Los Angeles to take care of this once and for all...

[Michaelson extends his hand to the Asian Assassin who stares at the offered hand for several moments...

...and accepts it! With one more nod, Nenshou walks out of view, leaving a grinning Todd Michaelson behind.]

MS: Wow! What a coup! Nenshou joins Team AWA and the Battle Of Los Angeles just got even more exciting!

[Michaelson puts a hand on Stegglet's shoulder.]

TM: Startin' to come together, Mark... startin' to come together.

MS: Right now, let's head back up to Phil Watson and see the newest member of Team AWA, Nenshou, in action!

[Up to Phil Watson, who stands by next to a clean-shaven dark-skinned African-American man with a flattop afro. He wears full-length black tights with thick red stripes running down each side, black boots, and black athletic gloves that go almost to the elbow. The bell rings twice to get everyone's attention.]

PW: The following contest is set for one fall, with a ten minute time limit. Introducing first, already in the ring... from Arlington, Virginia... weighing two-hundred sixty-one pounds... RASHAN HILL!

[The fans give Hill a tepid reaction, but cheer more loudly when thunder rolls over the PA, going into "Raijin's Drums" by George Sakalis.]

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

[It does not take long before the familiar form of Nenshou emerges from the back. Nenshou is wearing a black gi-style jacket with red and white trim, featuring a snake on the back. He has baggy black wrestling pants and red boots, and his face paint today is red-and-black with some white highlighting. The Asian Assassin has a brushcut and a severe expression on his face as he marches towards the ring, his eyes locked on his opponent.]

GM: Nenshou on his way to the ring, and he may very well have found the focus that he has lacked for the past year, Bucky.

BW: Can you imagine if he had never left Percy Childes, though? He'd probably be the World Champion right now. We wouldn't have this controversy with Marty Meekly or anything. Heck, he could have even taken Percy's offer at Guts & Glory, because as close as he came to beating Dave Bryant, one little bit of help would have gotten it done!

GM: That's highly speculative. One thing for sure is this: all of Nenshou's troubles has been due to out-of-ring problems. Inside the ring, he has defeated almost everyone he has faced. Once his issue with Gibson Hayes turned into a wrestling match, he defeated him. Once Mr. Sadisuto got face-to-face with him, Sadisuto had to give up on the match and use the salt to get out of trouble. And all of those out-of-the-ring problems stems from the Wise Men if you ask me... that's why Nenshou has joined Team AWA... that's why Nenshou will be allied with the best in the business in trying to drive the Wise Men out of town.

[Nenshou is now in the ring, and he quickly divests himself of the jacket. Referee Davis Warren checks his finger and wrist tape, nods, and goes to call for the bell...

...but the koto of "Sakura Sakura" interrupts him before he can.]

BW: Well, speak of the devil and he may just appear!

GM: Accurate, Bucky. Very accurate.

[Mr. Sadisuto emerges from the top of the aisle, dressed spectacularly in tailor-made formal attire and a spiffy bowler hat. He grins broadly, and produces a wireless microphone. The crowd boos him loudly.]

MS: Noboru-kun! Did you think you safe from Mistah Sadisuto because Ryan-kun save you? Hahahahaha, Noboru-kun, you need to think back. Mistah Sadisuto alllways get job done one way or othah! Mistah Sadisuto say that Ryan-kun would lose Wold Television Champonchip two week ago. And... he not champion anymore! Hahahahahaha!

GM: He didn't cause that!

BW: Oh, really? Are you sure? Who initiated that challenge, Gordo?

[Sadisuto keeps talking, so that answer will have to wait.]

MS: Mistah Sadisuto say, Noburo-kun will be sent back to Japan. And when I fight you one month ago, I learn all your seeeecrets. I learn exactly style needed to defeat and injure you so bad that you neeeever wrestle in USA again. And I make sure that Wise Men know who to call, and make sure that he was ready to come to USA and make big money. Since you join Ryan-kun and all othah troublemaker, you out of chances. They give Mistah Sadisuto notice that this is the week it will happen.

Now! Boy-san!

[Sadisuto is now halfway down the aisle, and he points at Hill. Hill points at himself in an 'are you addressing me' motion.]

MS: Yes, boy-san. Vely vely nice hair. Now, GO. You be paid for this match, just go!

[Hill shrugs and steps out of the ring to the boos of the crowd.]

MS: Now, Noboru-kun! Noboru Fushinoshi, hahahaha. Your opponent tonight! Mistah Sadisuto present... SUPAH NINJA TWO!

["Sakura Sakura" begins again, as a tall man dressed as a stereotypical ninja walks out from the back. he bows to Sadisuto and marches towards the ring. Nenshou seems unimpressed and the fans boo.]

BW: Gordo! Is that... the Super Ninja? The one who used to hang with Marcus Broussard?!

GM: I don't think so, Bucky. This is Super Ninja Two. The original was a dangerous fighter, but probably not in Nenshou's league. So if this is the man that Sadisuto promised to bring in for the Wise Men, he'll have to be an upgrade.

MS: Hahahahahaha!

[And Super Ninja Two leaps over the top rope in a spectacular show of athleticism... only for Nenshou to smash his face in with an even more impressive display of athleticism by nailing the jumping spin kick on the man before he even lands! The crowd erupts as the sickening smack of leather hitting flesh echoes across the arena!]

GM: OH MY STARS! NENSHOU ALMOST DECAPITATED HIM!

[*DING*DING*DING*]

BW: You can't call for the bell now! Watson needs to do an introduction! Nenshou just cheapshotted him!

GM: Nenshou picks up the Super Ninja Two, and hits the backbreaker! Are you kidding me... after that introduction?!

BW: No way!

GM: MOONSAULT! NENSHOU WITH THE MOONSAULT... AND THE SUPER NINJA TWO IS DONE!

[*DING*DING*DING*]

GM: What a humiliating... WAIT A MINUTE!

[A figure dressed in a sleeveless hooded jacket leaps over the barrier adjacent to the backside of the ring. He immediately dives underneath the bottom rope and springs up to his feet grabbing a rising Nenshou by the back of the head and SLAMMING his skull into the canvas.]

GM: MY STARS! THAT WHOLE MATCH WAS JUST A DIVERSION! WHAT IS GOING ON HERE?! Mr. Saduisto is applauding the action on the outside!

BW: I have no idea, Gordo, but at this point, nothing surprises me anymore!

[Nenshou sits up and the figure UNLOADS a flurry of kicks to the back of his head, hammering Nenshou's head down towards his knees. The man bolts to the ropes, springs back...

....and DRILLS him with a running knee to the back of the head that sends him sprawling over onto his chest near the ropes!]

GM: Where is security?!

BW: Is that really a solution at this time considering who is in charge?

GM: This is Zero Tolerance night! Where the heck are the Dogs Of War now?!

[Nenshou heaves an arm up onto the ropes as he tries to pull himself up to one knee. The figure shoves him with his heel, forcing Nenshou halfway through the ropes. Another heel kick to his rear end sends Nenshou flopping onto the outside of the ring apron. The figure stands behind him, still in the ring, spreading his arms out like an eagle as Nenshou instinctively pulls himself up. The man reaches over the ropes and jerks Nenshou's head underneath his arm put into an inverted facelock, pauses, and then leaps...

...somersaulting over the rope and DRIVING Nenshou's jaw into his shoulder as he lands kneeling on the barely-padded floor!]

GM: WAIT! I KNOW THAT MOVE! THAT'S-

[The figure jumps up, hovering over a barely conscious Nenshou, throwing his hood back from over his brow and revealing himself.]

GM: NOBORU FUJIMOTO! THAT'S THE TIGER PAW PRO GLOBAL CROWN CHAMPION!

BW: I take back what I said about never being surprised anymore.

GM: What the heck is he doing here, Bucky?! What business does the Tiger Paw Pro champion have with Nenshou?!

[Mr. Sadiusto climbs up on the ropes beside Fujimoto and screams out something in Japanese. Fujimoto grins, leaning down to grab the black mats that cover the floor...

...and rips them up to expose solid concrete!]

GM: Oh my god. What in the...? They're exposing the cement floor here in the Thomas And Mack Center, Bucky!

BW: I can see that - but why?!

GM: I don't know but I'm guessing it's not good news for the newest member of Team AWA!

[Fujimoto turns his attention back to Nenshou, pulling him off the floor by the hair, tugging his head into the crook of his arm by the elbow, leaning over him, holding him to keep him from falling back to the floor...

...and then EXPLODES into a twisting motion, falling back to DRIVE Nenshou's face into the exposed concrete floor!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

BW: FALLING LASER LASSO!

GM: There's no way he's getting up from that, Bucky! And look at Mr. Sadiusto! He's laughing! He's soaking up every moment of this! He said he had a secret weapon for Nenshou and he wasn't messing around!

[Mr. Sadiusto perches himself over Nenshou who hangs over the ramp, his upper body falling downward.]

MS: Hahahahahahaha! Noboru-kun fall for oldest trick in book! Hahahahaha! I introduce you to secret weapon, man who is vely much best wrestler from Japan today! I am proud to help train him long ago, and Noboru-kun's father did too! Now he has exceed his masters! Noboru-kun, meet Noboru-sama! Noboru Fujimoto! Hahahahahahaha!

[Fujimoto stares down at Nenshou and unzips his leather hooded jacket. Sure enough, fastened around his waist, is none other than the TPP Global Crown Championship. Fujimoto unhooks it and holds it up in the air with both hands, taunting the crowd who are still shocked by the arrival and actions of the Tiger Paw Pro champion.]

GM: Nenshou's down. He's hurt and I believe he's hurt badly, fans. He hasn't moved since hitting the floor... his head... his face slammed into that

concrete at a sickening impact and I'm very concerned about his condition right now. We need some help out here and we need it quickly!

BW: Gordo, if Sadisuto brought Fujimoto here... does that mean that Fujimoto is working for the Wise Men?!

GM: I don't... I hate the thought of that but they certainly would have the power, the money, the influence, the resources to make something like that happen, Bucky. They very well could've brought the Tiger Paw Pro Global Crown Champion to the AWA!

BW: And if he's working for the Wise Men... he's gotta be a part of their army on Labor Day in Los Angeles!

GM: There is a very real possibility of that... and as our medical team hurries down the aisle to help Nenshou, we're going to take a break, fans. This is a bad situation and... well, we'll be right back.

[Fade to black.

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 night in Sacramento, the World Tag Team Champions, the Lights Out Express are in action!"

[The graphic changes.]

"Friday night, August 22nd, the AWA comes to the Cow Palace in San Francisco for a special LIVE PRIME TIME event - All-Star Showdown!"

[Another change of information on the screen.]

"Next weekend, we continue to work our way through California as we visit San Jose on Saturday night and Bakersfield on Sunday afternoon."

[The graphic changes one more time.]

"Saturday, August 30th, the AWA hits San Diego for the final non-televvised stop of the Coast To Coast tour!"

[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...

Yes, it's that stereotypical "redneck" music playing once again as we see a car traveling down the highway. A pig has its head sticking out one of the back windows in the breeze. The other back window has some dirty, hair feet sticking out it. The voice of Buddy U. Loney is heard.]

BUL: Are we there yet?

[The voice that we now know belongs to the poor son of a gun who has been saddled with this duo (trio if you count the pig) responds.]

Cameraman: No.

[A pause of a few seconds.]

BUL: How 'bout now?

Cameraman: No.

[A few more seconds.]

BUL: What about-

Cameraman: NO!

[We cut ahead in time as the car is filled with the sounds of snoring. It pulls into a parking lot that might look instantly familiar to AWA fans. The car pulls to a stop as the cameraman gets out, stretching. He looks up, nodding his head as the camera pans to show the building formerly known as the Crockett Coliseum. A groan is heard from the backseat of the car as the passenger door opens and a yawning Chester O. Wilde climbs his large frame out.]

COW: We here?

Cameraman: Yeah.

[Chester looks up at the building, scratching his chin.]

COW: Where we at, hoss?

Cameraman: Dallas.

COW: Dallas? Ah thought we were goin' to Vegas! Bright lights, big city!

[The cameraman sighs.]

Cameraman: At the rate we were going, I figured we were better off just cutting to the chase. We're in Dallas. The AWA will come home soon enough and we'll be here waiting for them.

COW: Ain't they on the road for another month?

Cameraman: Yeah.

[Chester scratches his chin again.]

COW: Where we gonna sleep?

[The cameraman looks surprised like he hadn't even considered that. They both turn towards the car.]

Cameraman: Speaking of sleep, I'm going to get some now. Stay close. Don't wander off.

COW: No problem, hoss. Ah'll be here.

[The cameraman gets back into the car as Chester stares at the building, taking a seat on the hood of the car.

We dissolve to show the passage of time as it's now later in the day and we hear more snoring from the car. Chester is staring up at the building still...

...and suddenly snaps his fingers.]

COW: That ol' cameraboy got us to the wrong place! This ain't the Crockett Coliseum! That sign says this is the Detson Center!

[It certainly does.]

COW: Hey! Hoss! Hoss?!

[No response. Chester shakes his head.]

COW: Poor lil' fella is tuckered out. Ah guess it's up to me to find where we're supposed to be.

[You can almost hear the universal facepalm as Chester settles into the driver's seat, backing out of the Crock- err, Detson Center parking lot. We cut to a shot further away as Chester's voice is heard.]

COW: Now where did that map go?

[The music starts up again as we fade to the graphic...

"THE WILDE BUNCH. COMING SOON!"

...and then back to Gordon and Bucky at ringside. Bucky is laughing now.]

GM: What's so funny?

BW: At this rate, my no-account moron nephews aren't ever gonna find where the AWA is at and I won't have to worry about them humiliating me on national television!

GM: Oh, that's hysterical. Making fun of your poor nephews. They seem like really nice guys, Bucky.

BW: Oh, sure. The cows all love 'em. The chickens too.

GM: You're a real riot making fun of your own family like that. Fans, it's been an exciting night of action here in Las Vegas as Todd Michaelson has made his long-awaited return and is busy backstage assembling a team to take on the Wise Men's Army at Battle Of Los Angeles. I'm told that Mark Stegglet will be hosting a special Control Center a little later and he'll be running down the teams as they stand so far. I can't wait for that but right now, Mark Stegglet is standing by in the ring with the World Television Champion himself, Johnny Detson! Mark?

[We crossfade to the ring where Mark Stegglet is indeed standing with Johnny Detson who is wearing a black suit and dark blue shirt. The World TV Title is held in his hand which is down at his hip, almost making it seem as though he's dragging it. But slowly, he pulls the title up and shows it off to the camera with a cocky smirk plastered on his face. After a moment he throws the title over his shoulder and looks down at the announcer.]

MS: Thanks, Gordon. As you can see-

[Detson interrupts.]

Detson: Really? This is what it's come down to? Todd Michaelson?

[Detson scoffs.]

Detson: Todd Michaelson was an over-rated piece of garbage who took his ball and went home; the only thing that's changed between now and then is that he's got a better tan.

[Laughing, Detson continues.]

Detson: Now, Todd thinks he and his brainwashed stooges are going to come back and fix the AWA. Well newsflash, this place has run just fine without you. You are no longer needed or wanted!

[The fans boo loudly as Detson shakes his head at their response.]

Detson: That's the problem with all these people. With the Ryan Martinez, the Bobby O'Connor, all of these people...

[He gestures to the fans, drawing louder boos.]

Detson: Even you...

[Detson points right at Stegglet.]

Detson: ...you all had the special treatment, the good life, until the Wise Men banded together and started taking back. You people never had a problem with it, until you weren't on the list, now the world's coming to an end because you aren't the chosen ones. Well, the reality in this situation is that Todd Michaelson has lead a charmed life for his entire career! Which is why it will give me no greater joy when I lead the team that will firmly plant this new reality down around him!

MS: Are you saying that you are the captain for the Wise Men team?

Detson: Of course I'm saying that, and when you think about it there's no better choice. I demanded to lead this team and Percy, Larry, and Sandra all agree it should be the one who has been fighting this fight near its inception; the one who lead his team in WarGames; the one who lead his team in the Tower of Doom; the one who carries the gold; the ring general; the one who says it and then gets the job done. EACH. AND. EVERY. TIME! When you add it all up, the answer is really simple; and that answer is Johnny Detson.

MS: Perhaps but there's so many others with Supreme Wright, Kolya Sudadov, possibly even Terry Shane or even Ric-

[Detson cuts him off.]

Detson: Yes it is true that the Wise Men have the very best wrestlers the AWA has ever seen from the World Tag Team champions to the Dogs of War and plenty of former champions as well... but who better to lead this superior force then one of the best ring generals and born leaders professional wrestling has ever seen? The Wise Men are so far superior that Todd has no choice but to beg for outside help.

[Detson smirks.]

Detson: But if Todd thinks one of his LA relics are going to save him, I would love to see him try. Because any old idiot with a light tube isn't going to match up against the wrestling superiority staring back at them from the Wise Men side of the ring. But we all know who the apple of Todd's eye is...

[Detson smirks almost morphs into a sadistic smile. He steps up closer to the camera staring into the lens.]

Detson: Hannibal. Hannibal Carver. I'm Johnny Detson, nice to FINALLY meet you, I've heard such wonderful stories. You want to put down the prison shank and put on the wrestling tights? You want back in so you can burn the place down?

[Detson takes a step back and simply shrugs.]

Detson: Problem is, that fire? It was already started. Better off for you to do what you do best and just step back and watch it burn. Worry about Hannibal Carver, and not what Todd and the others want you to become. Because if you don't, I'll make you wish you stayed in jail.

[Detson laughs again.]

Detson: The problem, Todd, is that you don't have anyone on your side that hasn't said the very same thing you told Percy. Each one of them walked up to that line and placed their foot over it. And each one of them... FAILED! They failed because I made them fail. This match that you've made is just one more failure to set them up for. So you get your O'Connors, your Martinezes, your Lynches, your Bryants... go get Da Carvah!

[Detson throws up some air quotes for added effect.]

Detson: You go get them and set them up for failure again. Because that's all they are and that's all you'll ever lead them to be. Johnny Detson inspires greatness, Johnny Detson inspires victory, Johnny Detson gets... the job... done.

[Detson sneers after that last emphatic word looking down at Stegglet, before over to his title, then back towards the camera, almost at Todd Michaelson himself.]

Detson: And no matter what corner of the earth you look, you'll never have anyone that matches up to that!

[Detson glares at the camera before looking back at Stegglet.]

Detson: And to steal a phrase from a lesser known associate of mine... you can take that... to the bank!

[Detson snorts with laughter and prepares to make his exit when suddenly...

...the sounds of "California Love" break in over the PA system to a big cheer!]

GM: Oh yeah! It looks like someone has taken exception to the vile words spewed out of the mouth of the World Television Champion!

[The cheers pick up as Willie Hammer strides into view, dressed in a green and white Combat Corner t-shirt and his long green and white wrestling trunks and boots.]

GM: Willie Hammer is in the house!

BW: After he lost to Tony Donovan two weeks ago, I figured he'd be off licking his wounds for a few weeks at least. I guess I was wrong.

GM: Willie Hammer has got to be overjoyed by the return of his trainer and mentor, Todd Michaelson, to the AWA and by the look on his face, I'm guessing that the words of Johnny Detson about Todd has struck a nerve on this young rookie.

[Hammer quickly makes his way down the aisle, stepping through the ropes and locking his gaze on the World Television Champion who looks more than a little disgruntled that this young rookie would see fit to interrupt him.]

MS: Willie Hammer, I don't believe you were scheduled to be out here right now.

[Hammer nods, grabbing Stegglet's mic hand and steering it towards him.]

WH: And I don't believe this piece of trash standing in front of me right now has ANY right to wear that piece of gold on his shoulder.

[Detson smirks, slapping the faceplate of the title belt.]

WH: A lot of good men have sweat and bled to make that title what it is today, Johnny Detson. Men like Glenn Hudson... like Robert Donovan... like Dave Bryant... like Ryan Martinez. Men that you couldn't beat on your best day if all things were even.

But you don't work that way, do ya?

[Detson tilts his head at Hammer.]

WH: That's right, you like the odds slanted in your favor. You like to kick a man when he's down. You like to circle like a damn buzzard, just waitin' to pick the bones if given the chance.

What I saw go down two weeks ago in Phoenix is enough to make a grown man cry.

You're holding the World Television Title. You're holding a title...

[Hammer jerks a thumb at himself.]

WH: ...that I want!

[Big cheer as Detson chuckles.]

WH: You're holding a title that don't belong to... and that you ain't good enough for, brother! You mighta been the cock of the walk when you were the champ down in Arizona... but here... now... you're the answer to a very important trivia question.

[Hammer lets it hang, waiting til Detson leans in and says.]

Detson: And what's that?

[Hammer grins.]

WH: "Who was the first person Willie Hammer beat to win an AWA title?"

[The crowd ROARS in response as Detson seethes.]

WH: Now... I see you out here in your Sunday finest and I just know that you ain't gonna be willin' to fight me here tonight in Las Vegas.

[Detson nods as the crowd jeers.]

WH: But at All-Star Showdown...

[The crowd begins to buzz.]

WH: With the big, bright lights shining down on us LIVE on prime time network television...

[Hammer nods as the buzz grows.]

WH: You ain't got no excuse, Johnny D. Just like you ain't gonna have any excuse when I walk into San Francisco... and turn yo' lights...

[He snaps his fingers.]

WH: ...out!

[Detson smirks before shrugging the title belt off his shoulder, throwing a right hand at Hammer who blocks it, rocking Detson with a right... another right... a third right!]

GM: The fight is on!

[Detson buries a knee into the ample gut, grabbing an arm to throw Hammer to the ropes. Hammer rebounds off, ducking under a wild clothesline attempt. He slams on the brakes, spinning around...

...and leaves his feet, throwing a spinning leg lariat that knocks Detson down to the mat and sends him rolling promptly to the floor! The crowd is roaring as Hammer slams his fists down on the mat, waving for Detson to get back in.]

GM: The challenge has been issued! The challenge has been-

[Hammer snatches the discarded mic off the mat.]

WH: And that ain't all, Johnny D. 'Cause when I'm done kickin' your tail all over San Francisco and becoming the NEW... WORLD... TELEVISION CHAMPION...

[HUGE CHEER!]

WH: Then I'm comin' to Los Angeles as part of Team AWA and we gonna do it all over again, jack!

[Hammer throws the mic down as Detson starts to come back in...

...and then bails out to the floor as AWA security comes tearing down the aisle towards the ring, pushing past Johnny Detson to seize Willie Hammer by the arms.]

GM: Wait a second!

BW: Hammer instigated it! He started a fight with someone he wasn't contracted to face!

GM: But Detson threw the first punch! Why in the world is security escorting Willie Hammer out of the building?!

[The crowd jeers loudly as security walks Hammer back up the aisle. Detson is glaring at him from the floor, pointing to the title belt as Hammer nods his head in response.]

GM: Wow! Willie Hammer, the young rookie, with a bold move here tonight in Las Vegas. He's issued a challenge for the World Television Title at All-Star Showdown... AND he says he's gonna be part of Team AWA at the Battle Of Los Angeles!

BW: This kid's too big for his britches as my mama used to say.

GM: His britches might be held up by the World Television Title belt in a couple of weeks and what a story that would be, fans. Johnny Detson is livid out here and-

BW: And who can blame him? Who in the HELL is Willie Hammer to get in a former World Champion's face like that?!

GM: Fans, we've got to take another break but when we come back, it's time for the Control Center so don't you dare go away!

[Fade to black.

One word slowly fades in, filling the entire screen.]

"SUPERCLASH"

[We cut to a montage of still photos from SuperClash events gone by - Stevie Scott standing nose to nose with Juan Vasquez, Alex Martinez putting

William Craven into barbed wire, Dave Bryant locking the Iron Crab on Calisto Dufresne, City Jack standing over his best friend to protect him with a baseball bat, Bobby Taylor trading blows with Kevin Slater, and so on and so on. The graphic changes.]

"VI!"

[As the roman numeral fades, we catch a glimpse of AWA owner Bobby Taylor in what appears to be a major city, walking the busy streets in his cowboy boots. We see glimpses of illuminated marquees with the latest big musical productions. We see towering buildings. Jam-packed streets. A small hot dog cart with a vendor hawking his offerings.

And then shots that become slightly more obvious.

A street of major theaters.

The 9/11 Memorial.

The Empire State Building.

The Statue Of Liberty.

The shot fades to the black screen again with three letters that say it all, coming up one by one.]

"M...S...G."

[Cut immediately to a panning shot of the world's most famous arena, the camera circling around it before cutting to an overhead shot of it before cutting to the sign that reads "MADISON SQUARE GARDEN." And then one more cut to a black screen with all the details.]

"SUPERCLASH VI
MADISON SQUARE GARDEN
NEW YORK CITY
NOVEMBER 27, 2014"

[The graphic holds for a moment and then cuts to one more graphic.]

"LIVE ON PAY PER VIEW."

[We slowly fade from the graphic to a nice panning shot of the arena as Gordon and Bucky are heard once again.]

GM: Welcome back to Saturday Night Wrestling, fans, on a wild night here in Las Vegas. In case you missed it, Todd Michaelson has returned and he has declared war on the Wise Men. He's made a challenge for-

[Suddenly, the crowd rises to its feet, cheering wildly.]

GM: What in the world?

[Gordon sounds genuinely confused as the World Heavyweight Champion quickly makes his way down to the ring -- no robe, no music. He's wearing his usual ring attire, his fists are heavily taped, and he's holding the title belt. Bryant makes his way around the ring, snags the microphone from a startled Phil Watson, and rolls into the ring.]

GM: The champion is here, but he isn't scheduled to be!

BW: President Percy didn't clear this! Bryant better hope security isn't around!

[Bryant steps to the center of the ring, facing the aisle.]

DB: Sorry if I surprised you, Gordon, but I didn't really feel like sitting around waiting until it was my turn to come on out here with those damned rabid Dogs running around. You think there's any way at all I walk out of here with the belt if I give that crooked piece of trash who calls himself "President" half the chance? To hell with that.

[Bryant pauses, taking a deep breath.]

DB: This belt is the only one not controlled by Percy and his cronies, and you can bet he'll do anything and everything in his power to change that. Hell, I even gave him an extra chance by challenging his favorite lackeys for a match here tonight, but hey, I've never been accused of being all that bright. I'm willing to come out here and risk it all because this place, the AWA, is worth the risk. It's worth risking my blood, my sweat, worth risking broken bones, worth the risk of maybe meeting a windshield face-first...

[Bryant holds the title belt up, staring at it.]

DB: This isn't just a title belt to me, it's a symbol of the faith that the AWA had when they signed me. It's a symbol as much as it is a championship, a symbol of excellence, of persistence, of resilience. Holding this belt means that you're the best in the AWA, the very best in this business, the biggest jewel in the AWA's crown...

[Bryant drops the belt at his feet.]

DB: ...and it doesn't mean a damned thing if there's no AWA to represent. That's Percy's goal, his endgame. He's going to break this place down, piece by piece, tear it apart and force it to fit whatever idiotic notion he has of what it should be, and I'll be damned if I stand by and let that happen. Todd, I know you're still here and I know you're listening to this. You and the AWA gave me my career...hell, you gave me my LIFE back, and I want you to know, here and now, in front of my favorite fans in the world...

[Bryant smirks as the crowd pops.]

DB: ...that if you need me to fight for the AWA on Labor Day, no matter the cost, I'll be there. It would be my pleasure to help throw that fat scumbag

out on his ass...and it would be my pleasure, tonight, to break whichever Dog he sends out here in half!

[With that, Bryant throw the mic down, creating a fairly audible BOOM.]

GM: Dave Bryant, the World Champion, has decided to not play into the hands of his opponent here tonight. He's not going to walk into whatever trap they might lay out for him! He's the World Champion and he wants his opponent out here now!

BW: You think just because he came to the ring first that the Dogs Of War can't spring whatever they had in mind for him all along?

GM: Nevertheless, Dave Bryant has also just made it clear that whether he's the World Champion or not on Labor Day, he's going to stand with the rest of Team AWA to take on the Wise Men's Army!

[The horrific sound of snarling and snapping dogs is heard over the PA system as the lights dim. A series of swirling spotlights "search" the arena, trying to find their target...

...and then come to rest on Dave Bryant standing in the aisle as the Dogs Of War come marching towards the ring, flanked by members of AWA security.]

GM: Look at this! They're not even coming alone! They've got all these security guards coming with them!

BW: It's better to be safe than sorry, right? Bryant might spark up another riot after all. He was there two weeks ago, you know.

GM: Oh, I remember. And I also remember the Wise Men's role in that little debacle... something you seem perfectly willing to ignore.

BW: They didn't start the fire, Gordo.

GM: It was always burning since the world's been turning?

BW: Huh?

[The midnight-blue clad members of the Dogs Of War - Pedro Perez, Isaiah Carpenter, and Wade Walker - come to the ring, each taking up one side as the extra security literally forms a wall on the barricade, enclosing the ring in a human cage.]

GM: I don't like this for Dave Bryant... not one bit, Bucky.

BW: Hey, he brought this on himself. He made the challenge, Gordo. He wanted this match.

GM: He wanted to defend his title like a champion should!

[Walker, Carpenter, and Perez pull themselves up on the apron in unison, staring in at Bryant who has his fists balled up, spinning in a circle, ready for a fight to come from any side...

...when suddenly, Carpenter and Walker drop down, leaving the volatile Pedro Perez to slip into the ring, charging Bryant who meets him with a right hand on the jaw!]

GM: Right hand by Bryant... and another! The World Champion came to fight!

BW: Never forget that Bryant's got a history as one of the dirtiest players in the game. If he has to break every rule in the book, he might do it here tonight.

[With Perez dazed, Bryant grabs a handful of hair...

...and ROCKETS Perez over the top rope to the floor below to a huge reaction from the Vegas crowd!]

GM: OH MY STARS!

[Wheeling around, Bryant charges the ropes...

...and drops into a baseball slide, driving his feet into the chest of Isaiah Carpenter and sending him sprawling backward, up and over the steel railing as the wall of security guards breaks apart!]

GM: OHH! CARPENTER INTO THE FRONT ROW!

[Bryant pops back up, turning towards Wade Walker who is poised and ready for the World Champion, waving for him to "bring it on."]

GM: Uh oh.

BW: Yeah, keep on comin', Bryant. Let's see how you deal with the biggest dog of 'em all!

[The World Champion backpedals, not about to tangle with the big man... not yet at least. He drops down, rolling out to the floor where Pedro Perez is regaining his feet. Bryant pastes him with an uppercut, sending him staggering backwards where security clears a path to the railing.]

GM: Bryant's taking the fight to Pedro Perez out here on the floor...

[He grabs Perez by the arm, looking for an Irish whip to the apron...

...but Perez slaps the grip away, slamming his forearm into the ear, sending Bryant down to a knee. Grabbing two handfuls of hair, Perez lays in a vicious pair of headbutts to the bridge of the nose. The World Champion is sprawled out on the floor as Perez turns, stepping up on the barricade and shouting at the jeering fans.]

GM: Pedro Perez is out of control - the man is just completely erratic.

[He turns back, leaping off with a clubbing forearm across the back of Bryant, knocking him facefirst to the floor. The referee shouts at Perez, ordering him to put the match back into the ring and Perez shouts back, mocking him.]

GM: No respect for anyone at all.

BW: That's how Michaelson brings 'em out of the Corner.

GM: It most certainly is not. You better believe that if Pedro Perez turned out this way, he was warped after his days in the Combat Corner... and since Percy Childes was involved in bringing him back to the AWA, you better believe he's had some bad advice.

[Perez pulls Bryant up, smashing his elbow down on the back of Bryant's head a few times before rolling him back under the ropes into the ring. The Puerto Rican hothead climbs up on the apron, pointing to the corner...]

GM: Pedro Perez has spent the last few years in his homeland of Puerto Rico, home of some of the most violent and bloody matches in the entire world of wrestling... and now he's trying to translate that into becoming the new World Champion right here tonight.

[Perez steps up to the second rope, climbing to the top as Bryant drags himself up off the mat...

...and leaps off, aiming a double axehandle at the World Champion who buries a right hand into the midsection, causing Perez to flip over in a somersault on the mat to a big cheer!]

GM: Nice counter by the World Champion!

[Bryant grabs Perez off the mat, whipping him to the ropes...

...and BURIES a running knee to the gut on the rebound, again flipping Perez over onto the mat!]

GM: Down goes Perez again!

[Bryant turns, ready to fight as Wade Walker moves suddenly near him but a word of warning from Johnny Jagger keeps Walker in place, arms raised as he says he was just changing his view.]

BW: Hey, I don't think the referees are allowed to boss around security.

GM: Security... what a joke that is!

BW: The Dogs Of Ware are some of the best security guards I've ever seen, Gordo.

GM: Of course you'd say that. Gotta earn that bonus from the office of the President.

BW: What are you implying?!

GM: Not a thing.

[Bryant pulls Perez up again, drilling him across the chest with a knife-edge chop that sends Perez falling back into the corner. Bryant winds up, burying right hands into the midsection over and over again. The count reaches four before Bryant backs off, glaring out at Wade Walker who is gripping the middle rope with his right hand.]

GM: The World Champion is wisely keeping an eye on the Dogs Of War at all times. He knows he can't trust Walker and Carpenter to stay out of this thing.

[Bryant walks across the ring, faking a kick at Walker who steps back with a smile, nodding his head. On the other side of the ring, Isaiah Carpenter climbs up on the apron, angrily shouting at Bryant who rushes him, grabbing the top rope with both hands...

...and YANKING Carpenter into a king-sized somersault over the ropes into the ring!]

GM: BRYANT BRINGS CARPENTER IN!

[Bryant dives on top of Carpenter, drilling him with right hands to the skull as Wade Walker slips under the ropes, waiting...

...and as Bryant rises, Walker storms him!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: WALKER CUTS HIM IN HALF WITH THAT SPEAR!! GOOD GRIEF!

[Perez rushes out of the corner, diving on top of the downed Bryant, strangling him with both hands as the referee signals for the bell.]

"DING! DING! DING!"

GM: The referee's calling for the bell! This match is over!

[The crowd boos with disappointment as Carpenter joins in, stomping Bryant as Walker climbs back to his feet, pacing back and forth, ready to help finish off the World Champion.]

GM: This whole thing was a setup from the first moment, Bucky. The Dogs Of War had no intention of trying to win the World Title here tonight... they're here to soften up Bryant for Supreme Wright!

BW: Not a bad strategy even if you've got no proof of it. If that's what the Wise Men set out to do tonight, it looks like it's about to work!

[Carpenter and Perez drag Bryant up to his feet, each holding an arm to keep him up as Wade Walker steps up on the second rope, standing tall as they hoist Bryant up, setting him on Walker's shoulders...]

GM: This is what they did to Terry Shane earlier!

[...and then vacate the premises as Walker leaps off, DRIVING Bryant down to the mat with a superbomb!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: KING-SIZED POWERBOMB OFF THE MIDDLE ROPE BY THE DOGS OF WAAAAAAAR!

[Bryant is laid out on the canvas as Perez stands over him, taunting him.]

"This is the last time you're gonna be the champ! It's over, old man! Over!"

GM: Get that lunatic away from the World Champion!

[Walker looks down at Bryant...

...and then gestures for Carpenter and Perez to pick him up.]

GM: Oh my god, they're gonna do it again!

BW: Bryant may not make it to San Francisco, Gordo!

GM: And half the locker room - the men who might save Dave Bryant - are already gone from the building!

BW: And anyone else who might think about it knows they've gotta deal with the wrath of the Wise Men if they do!

[A quick cut to the top of the aisle shows Sweet Daddy Williams, Willie Hammer, and a few others trying to get past a wall of security to no avail as Carpenter and Perez drag a lifeless Bryant back to his feet, marching him towards the corner where Wade Walker is standing...

...when suddenly, the lights start to flicker quickly - creating a strobe-style effect.]

GM: What in the...?!

BW: What's going on here?

[Suddenly, through the flickering lights, we can see bodies pouring over the barricade from the aisleway... a rush of fans coming into view that we hadn't

seen before. Some pour into the ring, some stay surrounding it, some are up in the aisleway.

All are causing confusion... chaos... pandemonium as AWA security rushes to subdue them.

The lights cut back to full, showing about a hundred people wearing EXACTLY what "Hotshot" Stevie Scott was wearing two weeks ago, all hiding their identities from those surrounding them.

The Dogs Of War rush into action - Perez and Carpenter throwing back hoods on sweatshirts...]

GM: They're trying to find Stevie Scott! They're trying to find the Hotshot!

[Walker throws Bryant aside, stepping down to join his allies in the hunt. He grabs a doubled-up hooded fan, spinning him around...]

"WHOOOOOOOOOOOOOOSH!"

GM: FIREBALL! FIREBALL IN THE FACE OF WADE WALKER!!

BW: No, no! He missed it! Walker got out of there in time!

[Walker bails out to the floor, frantically checking his face for burns as "Hotshot" Stevie Scott reveals himself to a DEAFENING reaction from the AWA faithful. Stevie cracks a Steviegrin, putting a finger up to his lips to "silence" the roaring fans...

...and then UNCORKS a Heatseeker up under the chin of a turning Isaiah Carpenter, knocking him flat!]

GM: HEATSEEKER ON CARPENTER!

[Carpenter rolls out to the floor where Pedro Perez catches him, dragging him away from the ring as security tries to get the mass of fans surrounding the ring out of control!]

GM: Stevie Scott has put one over on the Wise Men again!

[Scott leans down, helping the World Champion up to his feet. He pats him a couple of times on the chest, letting Bryant sling an arm over his neck to stay on his feet as Scott waves the Dogs Of War back into the ring and we cut down to Gordon and Bucky.]

GM: Stevie Scott has made no secret of the fact that this will not end between he and the Wise Men until either he's gone from the AWA or Percy Childe is gone from the AWA. And he has just struck another blow against their plots as he saved Dave Bryant, saved the World Champion who has to defend his title at All-Star Showdown against Supreme Wright LIVE on Prime Time television on the FOX Network in mere days! This situation is getting extremely explosive and I don't know what's gonna happen in San Francisco

with the entire world watching! Fans, right now, we're heading over to Mark Stegglet in the Control Center who is gonna run down the entire Battle Of Los Angeles lineup as we know it!

[We crossfade from the confusion at ringside to the bank of television monitors that means the return of the Control Center. We fade again to show Mark Stegglet standing alongside a graphic with the Battle Of Los Angeles logo.]

MS: Welcome to the Control Center! We stand here in Las Vegas just sixteen days away from the Battle Of Los Angeles. The Coast To Coast tour comes to an end in the Fabulous Forum in Los Angeles, California on Labor Day for perhaps the most important event in AWA history. Of course, we all know about the Main Event - which we'll talk about in a little bit - but before we get to that, let's run down the rest of the show!

[The graphic changes to show the Samoan Hit Squad and the Northern Lights.]

MS: Tag team action will be on display as Mafu and Scola, the Samoan Hit Squad led by William Payne will take on Rene Rousseau and Chris Choisnet, the Northern Lights!

[The graphic changes again, this time showing Air Strike and Strictly Business.]

MS: This one's been a long time in coming as Air Strike takes on the former World Tag Team Champions, Strictly Business, in what should be one heck of a grudge match!

[Another change shows the words "HOMETOWN HERO!"]

MS: It'll be the Finals of the Hometown Hero gauntlet as two competitors clash with the winner moving on to earn themselves a slot in this year's Rumble to be held at Homecoming!

[Another change.]

MS: Earlier tonight, we heard the challenge and now we can confirm that it'll be a Guts & Glory rematch when Shadoe Rage goes one-on-one with the New York powerhouse, Tony Sunn!

[And again.]

MS: Travis Lynch has elected to go against the wishes of his family - of his parents - and he has issued the challenge. He wants Ebola Zaire at the Battle Of Los Angeles... and right now, we have pre-recorded comments from Sunshine to answer that challenge! Let's take a look...

[We crossfade to the aforementioned pre-taped footage as a gleeful and grinning Sunshine is staring into the camera. We can see her

#ScumbagTravis t-shirt on display, the neckline cut to reveal some cleavage. Her bright red lipstick framing the perfectly-polished teeth.]

S: When I was a little girl back home in Alabama, I love Christmas. It was my favorite time of year. The lights, the tree, the smells of my mama cooking. Everything was perfect.

And like most little kids, the gifts. It was all about the gifts.

[Sunshine steeples her manicured-fingernails together.]

S: I can still remember waking up on Christmas mornings, racing down the stairs, scanning the room to find the things that weren't there the night before. The big stuff.

You'd tear it apart, ripping paper to shreds, strewing it everywhere.

And there it would be. The big gift. The one you'd waited months - or longer - for. The one that made everything else pale in comparison.

[She smiles again.]

S: That's what you've given to me, Travis. You've given me the big gift. The one that I've been waiting for. You've thrown yourself into the snake pit... into the lion's mouth... into the tank of sharks.

You've thrown yourself into war with Ebola Zaire.

And make no mistake, Travis... this WILL be a war.

[She nods.]

S: I personally just got off the phone... well, twice today actually. The first call was with President Percy Childes to discuss the Battle of Los Angeles and your match with the Walking Nightmare, Ebola Zaire.

You see, Mr. Childes is quite familiar with Ebola Zaire. He knows firsthand what the monster is capable of.

And as such, he knows that the risk of disqualification in your match is high.

[She can barely contain herself.]

S: So, when you meet Ebola Zaire at Battle Of Los Angeles, it will be in a NO DISQUALIFICATION match!

[She giggles... yes, a girlish, glee-filled giggle.]

S: The other call, you ask? It was with him.

[She shrugs.]

S: There's no use hiding it any more, is there? I think anyone who knows the legacy of Ebola Zaire knows that he is a hired gun... an assassin with a large bank account. He is the kind of savage that will draw pools of crimson... for only the largest amounts of green.

These t-shirts could pay for The Lost Boy... the Longhorn Riders... Dichotomy.

[She smirks.]

S: They could have... but they didn't. His money did. Because - just like me - he hates you, Travis. He hates you... he hates your family... and he wants nothing more than to see your career ended at our hands.

He paid for them... just like he paid for Ebola Zaire.

Your blood... will be on his hands.

[She chuckles.]

S: And it'll be like Christmas in September for all of us.

[The big smile returns as we slowly fade back to the Control Center.]

MS: No Disqualification! Travis Lynch versus the ever-dangerous Ebola Zaire! That's going to be a wild one, fans!

[The graphic changes one more time.]

MS: And of course, the Main Event... the Cibernetico... Team AWA vs the Wise Men's Army. Let's take a look at the rules for this huge stakes showdown!

[A graphic comes up that reads "CIBERNETICO" across the top and enumerates the rules as Mark reads them off.]

MS: As you know, this is a Team vs Team encounter. To win, you must eliminate every single member of the opposing team. The match uses traditional Mexico Lucha Libre rules which means that a tag can be made by either a traditional tag or escaping the ring to the floor.

Eliminations can be achieved by your standard rules - pinfall, submission, disqualification, countout, or the referee deeming someone unable to continue.

Both teams will be set up under a "batting order" - the wrestlers are put into a specific order and may only tag in and out in THAT specific order.

[The rules disappear.]

MS: Now, let's talk about the teams. For the Wise Men's Army, so far we've been able to confirm the following team:

The team captain and World Television Champion, Johnny Detson.

Another former World Champion in "Showtime" Rick Marley.

The Black Tiger and self-proclaimed King Of Wrestling, Demetrius Lake.

All three members of the Dogs Of War.

Former MMA Champion and former AWA National Champion... the Russian War Machine, Kolya Sudakov.

Formerly one-half of the World Tag Team Champions, Brad Jacobs.

The current World Tag Team Champions, the Lights Out Express.

We can now also confirm that the Tiger Paw Pro Global Crown Champion, Noboru Fujimoto will be a part of the squad.

[Stegglet pauses.]

MS: So, by my count, that gives the Wise Men's Army a twelve man team at this point. We have yet to hear whether or not Team Supreme will have a presence on this squad. Now, remember... Percy Childe, Larry Doyle, and Miss Sandra Hayes get to name the number of team members. That means that Todd Michaelson needs to assemble a minimum of a twelve-man team... and we've just learned that the Wise Men intend to open up All-Star Showdown with a full introduction of their team in the middle of the ring.

[Stegglet nods.]

MS: Let's take a look at who makes up Team AWA so far:

The former World Television Champion, Ryan Martinez.

The reigning World Heavyweight Champion, Dave Bryant.

The young rookie fan favorite, Bobby O'Connor.

The big Texan and one-half of the former AWA National Tag Team Champions, Jack Lynch.

Another young rookie and former Combat Corner student in Willie Hammer.

The Asian Assassin himself, the mysterious Nenshou... however, there are unconfirmed reports that Nenshou suffered a serious injury in that attack by the debuting Fujimoto and may be forced to withdraw.

The former World Tag Team Champions, Skywalker Jones and Hercules Hammonds.

And of course, the wildman brawler, Hannibal Carver.

[Stegglet shakes his head.]

MS: That puts Team AWA at nine members... and potentially as low as eight if Nenshou cannot compete. They are at a serious numerical disadvantage that Todd Michaelson will need to overcome in the next few days before All-Star Showdown when the full teams on both sides of the aisle will be announced-

[Stegglet pauses, grabbing at his earpiece.]

MS: What in the...? Fans, we've got... we've got some kind of a situation developing at- let's go now! Cut to the feed!

[We abruptly cut to the parking lot of the same bar that we saw earlier tonight when Melissa Cannon tried to get comments from Supreme Wright. Several cars have apparently just pulled in judging by the people climbing out of them. The voices of Gordon and Bucky are heard over the video.]

GM: Fans, we've broken in on the Control Center because we just received word that... look at this!

[The parking lot of the tavern is now filling up with AWA fan favorites - Skywalker Jones, Hercules Hammonds, Brian James, TORA, Air Strike, Bobby O'Connor, and Ryan Martinez - all of whom are pointing and shouting towards the entrance of the building...

...where a shocked Tony Donovan is standing.]

BW: Uh oh! Get out of there, Tony!

[Donovan wheels around, shoving past a bouncer to charge into the building, shouting a warning as the AWA's fan favorites come pouring through the door at the same time. The cameraman rushes in after them, getting through just in time to see Hercules Hammonds throw himself into a full body tackle on a Team Supreme member, knocking him back onto a pool table.

A second Team Supreme member takes a swing with a pool cue, breaking it across the back of Brian James who was tangled up with a third.

Fists are flying as Bobby O'Connor gets shoved back over a table by two Team Supreme members.

Cain Jackson throws a big boot at Skywalker Jones who sidesteps, causing Jackson to shatter a mirror on the wall.

Cody Mertz leaps off a table onto two more Team Supreme members, hammering away on the floored students.

Tony Donovan dives into the fray, throwing an uppercut that snaps TORA's head back, knocking him over a railing...

...and then Ryan Martinez charges him, knocking Donovan THROUGH the wooden railing with a spear tackle!]

GM: The fight is on! Team AWA is NOT gonna take it anymore! This is just a sneak preview of what it's gonna look like in Los Angeles! The fight is on! The battle is on! THE WAR FOR THE AWA IS UNDERWAAAAAY!

[With the brawl raging all over the bar...

...we fade to black.]