

AWA POWER HOUR

NOVEMBER 23, 2016

[We start on a black screen as most shows do. We fade up into a royal blue screen with a glittering silver Fox Sports logo in the center of it. A fanfare plays in the background as a voiceover begins.]

"Home to the World Series. The NFL. The GFC. The Daytona 500. The US Open Championship."

[A quick clip from each sport flashes by during the voiceover.]

"The world's biggest events are on Fox Sports."

[The logo and fanfare fade...

...as a giant robot appears, holding up a different version of the Fox Sports logo with the audio bug...]

"WE ARE... FOX SPORTS!"

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

"The recognized symbol of excellence in professional wrestling."

[The logo fades to black...

...and that black cuts to a fast-paced sequence of AWA action shots accompanied by "The Power" by DJ Fresh.

After about thirty seconds of action, we break into a shot of the AWA Power Hour logo. It sits stationary for a moment before spiraling away and leaving us with our first glimpse of the Power Hour set.

On this night, our Power Hour set is an elevated platform sitting in the parking lot of the Mercedes Benz Superdome. And we know this because we can see the hulking gleaming mass of the Superdome sitting in the background. Fans have obviously been invited to this live taping, cheering as we come on the air. And in the middle of it all, a big grin on his face is the one and only Mark Stegglet in a light black jacket with an AWA logo splashed across the breast.]

MS: Hello everyone and welcome to the Power Hour! I'm Mark Stegglet filling in for Theresa Lynch who is still convalescing from her injuries - get well soon, Theresa! We all miss you! And as you can see - and hear...

[The crowd cheers loudly again on cue.]

MS: ...we are LIVE from the sight of SuperClash VIII here on SuperClash Eve! In just a few short hours, you'll all be off to sleep with visions of flying dropkicks and Brainbusters dancing through your head but right now, we've got one more night to bring you all the goings-on here in the AWA before the big event. Now, across town right now, Harvey Sutton and Marcus Broussard are calling all the action at the Devlin Fieldhouse on the campus of Tulane University for the big CCW show. We'll be going LIVE to them later tonight to see the final match in the 2016 Brass Ring Tournament which will pit Whaitiri versus "Arawak" Jack Veles with the winner earning the final spot in tomorrow's Steal The Spotlight ladder match which I'm currently being told is slated to kick off the show at SuperClash. That comes later... but right now, I'm told we've got exclusive footage from that Combat Corner Wrestling show involving the two men in that Main Event matchup. Let's take a look...

[We spiral wipe away from the live shot to footage recorded earlier in the evening inside the Devlin Fieldhouse.

The crowd is jeering as we fade in, Lord William Wesley Windsor rising to his feet. A sheen of sweat covers his body as his victory is made official and he raises a lone arm - a dastardly smile on his face - with his fingers bent into the "V is for Victory" symbol. After a few moments of absorbing the boos, he walks towards the ring announcer, gesturing for the microphone to be handed over to him. It is and he speaks to the sold out CCW crowd.]

WWW: What I would like to do at this time is invite the Brass Ring finalist, Arawak Jack Veles, to the ring, please. Jack, I know you're back there. Please come out, I have an offer that you simply cannot refuse.

[Lord Windsor waits all of five seconds before he starts to get impatient. He yells at Arthur to go to the back and find Jack. The put upon butler scurries up the ramp when "Mama Says Knock You Out" hits.

Arthur freezes in his tracks as the three hundred pound Arawak behemoth, Jack Veles emerges onto the stage. Arthur stands nose to chest with him as Jack moves forward, forcing Arthur backwards until he falls on his backside. Veles steps over the old man and charges the ring, rolling under the bottom rope to come nose to nose with Windsor.]

HS: I don't know what kind of offer Lord William has in mind but it had better be a good one, Shark, because Veles looks ready to rip someone's head right off their body.

MB: Personally, I hope he saves it for Whaitiri.

[The music fades as Lord William puts up his hands, begging off as Veles approaches angrily.]

WWW: Now Jack, I see the fire in your eyes, I do. But I summoned you here for only one reason.

[Jack pulls a face at the word "summoned."]

WWW: I summoned you to make you a once in a lifetime offer, my dear.

[Veles arches an eyebrow now.]

JV: Once in a lifetime?

[Windsor nods, smiling at having grabbed Veles' attention.]

WWW: Yes, you see, you, Jack. You're a prizefighter. A fighter for money. You'll fight whoever they want you to as long as there is a payday at the end of it, right?

[Veles nods.]

WWW: Me? Well, I'm already bloody rich. I fight because I like it. Another thing I like is having what I want. And I want that Brass Ring. So here's my proposal, Mr. Veles. I wish to compensate you for your spot.

[The Caribbean fighter looks puzzled. Windsor gestures for calm as he continues.]

WWW: I wish to buy your spot in the tournament Finals. Arthur, bring me the check. My dear, I suspect you'll find this more than fair. Arthur, if you please.

[Lord Windsor snaps his fingers and Arthur delivers a folded piece of paper to Jack Veles. Veles reads it and his eyes pop. Lord Windsor merely smiles.]

WWW: Yes, my dear, there are that many zeroes. Now all you have to do is step aside and give me that ponce, Whaitiri.

[As Veles' eyes cut from Windsor to the check and back, over and again, the crowd begins to boo, only for those boos to turn into cheers as Whaitiri comes racing down the ring. Without breaking stride, Whaitiri slides under the bottom rope and pops up to his feet, staring at his presumptive opponent for a moment before turning his eyes on Windsor.]

W: What the hell is this?

You're going to buy your way back into the tournament?

[Windsor steps towards Whaitiri.]

WWW: Now you listen here, my de-

W: No! You listen!

[The crowd cheers Whaitiri's angry interruption.]

W: You don't get to just BUY your way back into this tournament. I've worked too hard to see you try and throw around some cash and jump back in line.

And anyway...

[A grin comes to Whaitiri's face.]

W: I beat you once already. All you're going to be doing is paying for another beating.

As much money as you have, I'm not sure that's a smart way to spend it.

Time for you to step back Windsor. Unless...

[Whaitiri turns his head towards Veles.]

W: You'd rather take the check than the loss.

[Veles glares at Whaitiri, throwing another glance down at the check in his hand.]

WWW: You have no business out here, Whaitiri. My business is with-

[Veles angrily interrupts.]

JV: EVERYBODY SHUT THE HELL UP! Listen here, Kiss Ass Boy, you don't get to talk to me about squat. You don't get to walk around here like you're a winner cuz you ain't won squat, boy.

WWW: Exactly.

[Windsor slips an arm over Veles' shoulders, drawing a glare from the fighter who shrugs it off, turning his focus on him.]

JV: But you don't get to dictate to me, neither, Windsor. I do what I want to do. And what I want to do right now...

[He turns back towards Whaitiri.]

JV: ...is kick this punk's ass!

[Veles drops the mic and the check, swarming Whaitiri with a flurry of rights and lefts, forcing Whaitiri backwards.]

MB: Looks like we got our answer, Sutton.

HS: It certainly does! Jack Veles all over Whaitiri in a preview of what we might see later tonight and-

[The crowd roars as Whaitiri fires back, landing a trio of short forearms before a big uppercut snaps Veles' head back. Lord William Wesley Windsor is approaching from the blind side when the crowd's buzzing warns Whaitiri who wheels around, fist drawn back, and causes Windsor to stumble backwards in a panic, landing on his rear end...]

HS: Hah! Lord William doesn't look so tough now, does he?

MB: And look at that pampered prince Whaitiri looking like he's gonna beat up a guy on the mat! What a hero!

[Whaitiri winds up his fists, ready to drop some bombs on Windsor...

...which is when Jack Veles comes surging back into view, diving at the back of Whaitiri's legs, driving his shoulder into the back of his taped-up knee!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

HS: Sneak attack! Veles going after him from behind!

MB: And not just any sneak attack, Sutton - he's going for the leg!

[Whaitiri cries out, grabbing at his injured knee as Veles grabs the foot, repeatedly kicking at the knee as Windsor gets off the mat, dusting himself off and glaring down at Whaitiri with a rapidly-reddening face.]

HS: We've got a problem here, fans.

[Veles throws a glance at Windsor and then nods approvingly as he holds the ankle, allowing Windsor to kick at the taped-up knee himself.]

HS: And now Windsor's joining in on Whaitiri!

[The crowd is all jeers as Windsor and Veles alternate in kicking the leg of Whaitiri... over... and over... and over...

...until finally, the fan favorites in the CCW locker room come charging down the aisle, clearing the ring.]

HS: The ring is cleared! But Whaitiri is down and...

MB: ...and the damage has been done, Sutton. Whaitiri is done for! Finished! Kaput!

HS: That remains to be seen, Shark. But right now, he's down and he's hurting... and as CCW medical hits the scene as well, we'll see if we can find out just how badly Whaitiri has been hurt here tonight.

[The shot stays in the ring, focused on the downed and hurting Whaitiri before spiral wiping back to live action outside the Superdome where the crowd is booing what they just saw.]

MS: A horrible scene down the road at Tulane University earlier tonight, fans... but we're told that Whaitiri has told CCW officials that he plans on competing... and that he plans on winning. You've gotta respect determination and heart like that. The same kind of determination and heart that we're likely to see tomorrow night in this magnificent building behind me from the AWA locker room. And kicking things off tomorrow night will be that big Blackjack Patterson Memorial Battle Royal. Earlier this week, the stars of the AWA Galaxy hit the stage - right down on Bourbon Street - to address the fans and the press in a special SuperClash Press Conference. Right now, we're going to take you to part of that event and hear from two of the men competing in the Battle Royal - Captain Joe Flint and Charlie Stephens, the Soldiers of Fortune!

[We spiral wipe away from live action to pre-taped footage of Joe Flint and Charlie Stephens, dressed in suits and matching slacks, seating behind a table with their names on it. The press gathered before them are buzzing with anticipation to ask their questions. Flint looks rather comfortable in his outfit, while Stephens looks rather agitated and would likely want to be wearing anything else. Stephens rolls his eyes as he starts to make his opening statement.]

CS: Heh. The press..

[Stephens smirks.]

CS: I guess you all can probably take a guess about how we feel about all of you. Ya have three guesses, the first two don't count.

[A murmur is heard in the crowd, as Stephens reaches for a can of Monster Energy drink. He takes a swig from the can, and sets it back down on the table.]

CS: Ya used to have some sort of standards. Now, all ya do is either push an agenda, try to sell and hype up everyone, or jump to conclusions before the full story can be revealed. Look, I understand the AWA suits are probably all tuggin' their collars right now wondering what they got themselves into when they sent us out to address you. But, I guess we can be good little 'soldiers' and humor the suits in the back and you clowns out on the press floor.

[Stephens takes the microphone, and leans back on his chair. He puts his feet up on the table, as Flint just stares in the crowd, acting more professional than his partner.]

CS: So, let's get this over with already.

[The camera pans to the pool of reporters, and an older man stands up, raising his hand to get the attention of the Soldiers.]

?: Mike Ranison, ESPN..

[Camera pans back to the Soldiers, Flint raising his eyebrow.]

JF: ESPN?

[Flint chuckles.]

JF: They've actually got ESPN out here askin' questions? Well, son, it's about time ya decided to give wrestlin' a fair shake. Ya shove the AWA all the way at the bottom of yer little website, and probably talk about us for like thirty seconds every day, while ya tell the world about how someone like Tiger Woods shootin' 6 shots over par while some idiot shootin' 4 under par gets a two sentence mention, if ya even talk about 'em at all.

But at least you bothered to show up. Where's Fox Sports at?

CS: Aw, they're probably interviewing the quote unquote big stars, they ain't sending anyone important down our way obviously.

JF: I'd say that Fox would send their news guys down here but since we don't kiss the toes of our new God Emperor Donald Trump, they didn't even bother. Tucker Carlson? I have a fittin' name that rhymes with Tucker for that puke but heck I'd like for us to still be employed by the time this press conference comes to an end.

CS: I don't see CNN here either, Joe. We're too hot and spicy for those guys.

[Flint and Stephens share a chuckle as the camera shows the reporter looking a bit anxious as the Soldiers' banter continues.]

JF: Awright, awright that guy's got somewhere to go, so whatcha gotta say, pal?

[Ranison clears his throat.]

MR: At the end of your promo on the most recent AWA Saturday Night, Gordon Myers actually seemed like he was starting to see things your way, or at least understand your positions. What would you like to say about those comments, and

what would you like to say to any other people that might sympathize with how you feel?

JF: Well, Mikey, Gordo's allowed to agree, or at least understand. This IS America, after all. On the other hand, he's also allowed to disagree with our methods to get things done. Rest assured, he's gonna have plenty to disagree with in the coming months and years.

[Flint takes a glance over to his partner.]

CS: Hell, ya talk about agreeing and disagreeing with us. To be frank, I don't even agree with my own partner on a lotta political stuff. Joe over there? Liberal as they come.

[Camera pans over to Flint, who grins like a cat that just ate a canary.]

JF: What can I say? I believe anyone of any sort of race, creed, religion, or sexual orientation can be a good American. Contrary to what PatriotTickler68 on Twitter might say, there's nothin' wrong with that.

CS: I've been born and raised conservative, but at least unlike these Fake Facebook Keyboard Patriots, I at least know the difference between liberalism and communism. All I gotta say to anyone that might wanna agree with us... stay tuned.

[The camera pans back to the reporter pool, where another reporter raises her hand.]

?: Hannah Burns, Entertainment Weekly..

[The camera pans back to Stephens, who smirks.]

CS: Sweetie, don't ya have a couple of articles on the Royal Family to write? Hey, Kim Kardashian has a bowel movement, why don't ya cover that instead?

JF: Easy, easy, Charlie, don't wanna have Steggy pull out the hook an' drag off off stage, we still got a few minutes, let the little lady ask her question.

CS: Fine.

HB: Okay... both of you have expressed your feelings on the most recent election on television and on social media, so what do you think of the overall response to the election?

[Stephens ponders his response for a moment.]

CS: See, this response is why we had that promo on last week's Saturday Night. People were very upset about the election, and they had every right to be. So.. what did these so called Online Anarchists end up doing? Knocking over a few trash cans and calling it a day.

JF: Bringin' America back to the elite country it USED to be is a constant struggle. Ya gotta commit, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Me and Charlie here, one thing we've come together on is that we struggled our whole lives to defend our country and our freedoms, and these people who were apparently angry about the election used their freedoms to protest to do absolutely nothing except yell into the void.

If yer mad, get mad. Whatta bunch of pathetic wimps.

[Flint shakes his head in disappointment.]

CS: Probably left some avocado toast in the oven or something.. buncha lazy, no-good millennials. Looks like we're gonna have to show them the value of hard work.

JF: That's why we're in the Battle Royal. It's a perfect place to show the world good ol' fashioned American.. heh.. pride.

And the ones that actually supported this whole nonsense? Well, can't say we didn't warn ya. Yer gonna end up regrettin' this decision in a few years no matter what the so-called media ends up tellin' ya.

CS: People only really seem to listen to the winners, and if we're gonna break through to these fence sitters, then one of us is gonna have to win the Battle Royal, it's that simple.

[Another reporter raises his hand.]

?: Matt Pugh, WVYE FOX 8 New Orleans. Since you two are in the Battle Royal, have you handled what would happen if you were the last two in the match? There could only be one winner.

CS: Captain Obvious over here... wanna take this one, Joe?

JF: We flipped a coin. Next.

[Someone walks up to Stephens and whispers in his ear.]

CS: Alright, bloodsuckers, we got time for one more question. Make it count.

?: Steve Houser, Times-Picayune. Do you have any comments for the other competitors in the Battle Royal?

CS: Not really, only thing I can think of is that we've pretty much been lookin' forward to bustin' the British Bashers' heads in for awhile now.

JF: Maggots. Slime. Pukes. They wanted to show us up back when we had that USA vs. the World challenge, and ya know what? It's gonna come right back to 'em ten-fold. Hey, boys, we got an openin' at the first Saturday Night Wrestlin' after Super-Clash. We both know we ain't gonna settle anythin' in that Battle Royal, so how about a good ol' fashioned fight on that show? We're gonna kick whatever remainin' teeth ya Queen kissin' fools have left down yer throats.

CS: And once we send those tea drinkin' idiots back to England in Revolutionary War II: Electric Boogaloo, we're gonna set our sights on the tag team champions, whoever they may end up being.

JF: I'm sure there's gonna be other teams gunnin' for 'em but nothin' we as real Americans can't handle.

[Flint looks off to the side, as something appears to have caught his attention. He nods his head, then turns towards the pool of reporters.]

JF: Alright, maggots, looks like our turn is up. Got the suit in charge bellyachin' that we're outta time so I guess it's time for the next piece o' filth to come out here and spew some nonsense about how they're gonna come out and do their thing at SuperClash.

[With that, Flint and Stephens stand up. Stephens grabs his can of Monster Energy Drink, and walks off camera. Flint looks out over the pool of reporters, grins and lets out his trademark yell..]

JF: AT EASE!

[With that, we spiral wipe away from the pre-taped footage to black...

...and then fade back up as the sounds of Jason Aldean's "Lights Go Up" starts to play over various shots of the New Orleans area. A steamboat docked on the shore. A statue in the middle of the city. A twilight overhead shot of cars zipping by on the freeway. An overhead shot of a church cuts to a time lapse shot of the SuperDome - the home of SuperClash VIII as the clouds move swiftly by and the lyrics begin.]

#When the lights come on, everybody's screaming#

[A night time drone shot of the Mercedes-Benz Superdome lights up the screen and then cuts to an interior shot of a crowd celebrating in the 'Dome.]

#Lighters in the sky, yeah, everybody's singing#

[A fan shot of a yellow sign that reads "HOME SWEET DOME" cuts to another crowd shot, this one of a fan gripping a sign that reads "THE DOME IS WHERE THE HEART IS."]

#Every word to every song to a girl to take it home tonight#

[A large crowd shot of a cheering crowd, showing off the immense audience who will be packed into the Dome soon enough.]

#When the lights come on, everybody's feeling#

[Older footage comes up, showing the huge audience that once packed into the Superdome to see Muhammad Ali fight Leon Spinks cuts to a shot of that actual fight.]

#A hallelujah high from the floor to the ceiling#

[A football falls just out of the reach of one of the San Francisco 49ers in a shot from a Super Bowl played in the Dome.]

#Yeah, the drink that we're drinking, the smoke that we're smoking#

[Cut to a shot of Mick Jagger center stage in the Dome at a Rolling Stones concert held there and then to Keith Richards from the same show strumming his guitar.]

#The party we throw, it's going all night long#

[A burst of pyro fills the screen before we see a time lapse of the crowd filing into the stadium for a New Orleans Saints game.]

#When the lights come on#

[Cut to another time lapse shot outside the Superdome as the sun goes down and the lights come on.]

#When the lights come on#

[And we cut to the SuperClash VIII logo with all the information on the show...

...and then back to black before...

To the tune of Black Flag's "TV Party..."

DROPKICK PARTY TONIGHT! #
DROPKICK PARTY TONIGHT! #
DROPKICK PARTY TONIGHT! #
DROPKICK PARTY TONIGHT!

[And a series of quickly cut images interspersed with title cards, Guy Ritchie-style.]

We're gonna have a Dropkick Party tonight!
ALRIGHT! #

RILEY!

[Riley Hunter wielding a WiiMote like his nunchucks.]

We're gonna have a Dropkick Party alright!
TONIGHT! #

LOGAN!

[Logan Blackburn cackling to himself, before giving the camera a cheesy thumbs up when he notices it.]

We got an arsenal of moves
We throw dropkicks and the internet approves #

LARRY!

["Flawless" Larry Wallace runs his fingers through his hair, and points a finger pistol to the camera.]

Everyone's gonna watch us here tonight!
ALRIGHT! #

COUSIN JAX!

[Jackson Hunter shouting at a cell phone a foot away from his face, freezing on a truly terrifying expression and unimaginable profanity.]

We'll somersault off the top rope alright!
TONIGHT! #

CHET AND CHAZ

[The Wallaces, the American Idols perform a quick pose at the Chimpanzee position before passing through the curtain.]

We got an arsenal of moves
We throw dropkicks and the internet approves #

IDOL CHATTER!

[And fade to white...

Back to Chaz Wallace walking through a backstage hallway. The footage is pretty obviously shot documentary-style by Chet Wallace.]

CHAZ: He should be back here. He's gonna love this.

[Chaz stops at a door and knocks.]

CHAZ: Hey Riley?

[Chaz steps through the door. Riley Hunter is seated on a leather sofa against the wall. Nick Axis, a badge pinned to his superhero suit and a police cap over his mask steps into Chaz's way.]

NA: Whoa whoa whoa! Sign in, buddy!

CHAZ: What? I was just gonna drop off these Mad Magazine trade paperbacks I found at the thrift store. Why do I have to sign in?

NA: Since things have been getting so lax around here! I have to protect the Axis!

[Axis holds up a clipboard which Chaz begins writing on.]

CHAZ: ...Name... Chaz Wallace... Person visiting... Riley Hunter... Personal Protection Equipment?

NA: Just put down "n/a."

CHAZ: [sigh] "n/a." Time...

NA: Eleven forty-five.

CHAZ: ...Eleven forty-five. THERE.

[Chaz hands the clipboard back to Nick Axis, then takes two paces to the couch where Riley Hunter is seated.]

CHAZ: Hey Riley. Here's that copy of "It's a World, World, World, World MAD" that I was telling you about.

RH: Thank you, Chaz.

[He sits back down. Chaz shrugs and turns and leaves.]

NA: Whoa whoa whoa, buddy! You gotta sign out!

[He hands the clipboard back to Chaz Wallace, who rolls his eyes, as Nick can be heard addressing someone off camera.]

NA: You too, buddy!

"No thanks. I'm expected."

NA: Sir, I'm going to have to ask you--

[The camera cuts to a scowling Brian James who pushes his way past Nick Axis and Chaz Wallace.]

BJ: Just curious, have any of you idiots smelled the new scent from Axe Deodorant?

[Brian James takes a small can out of his pocket and spritzes the air lightly. Poor asthmatic Nick Axis instantly starts wheezing, disappearing off-screen. Riley Hunter puts the book down and stands up.]

RH: Keep it running, Chet! Well well, Beejay; you sure rose to the bait, didn't you?

BJ: Rose to the bait? Not exactly Hunter. See, I was sitting over there at the adult's table, and I kept hearing a lot of noise from the little kid's table. So I thought I'd come over and tell you children to keep it down.

SuperClash is very important to the grown-ups, and we're getting tired of all your silliness. Now, you want to shut up?

Or do you want to be shut up?

RH: Oh, that's tough talk coming from someone who's had five to six other guys backing him up for the better part of a year to cover for his shortcomings. Hey Brian, unlike the vending machine in your Great Auntie's nursing home with can of Monster Energy trapped between the glass and the metal spiral, an American Ninja fights back.

BJ: I need people? Is that what you're saying?

When TORA ran out of the AWA to Japan, there wasn't anyone "backing me up." And I guess I missed that part in Boston where everyone came out and helped me beat you?

Probably because I took you out myself.

You've got me mistaken with your boy Vasquez. He's the one who's got all of you being his little bitch boys for him, running around like little mercenaries. You know, your cousin Jackson may have been a scary Tim Horton's swilling ratpacker in front of a few hundred rig pigs, ranch hands, and rednecks in Calgary, but in the AWA he's nothing. Only he doesn't know it.

But I'll be happy to show him.

"Oh how quickly they grow up."

[Jackson Hunter enters the frame.]

JH: You think you've got me figured out?

BJ: It ain't hard. You're not even a book. You're more like a poster on the wall. Easy to read, and ain't much to it.

JH: You know Jackie freaking Chan about me. You know sweet F. A. about me. I am totally beyond the realm of your freaking dim-witted, peroxide-haired compre-freaking-hension!

[James gives the elder Hunter the once over.]

BJ: I don't think so.

All I see is a dried up, gnarled old twig that the world passed by that would splinter into a million pieces the moment someone stepped on it.

JH: Oh, the great Brian James' reputation has decided to grace us with it's presence too! You've not actually ended anyone's career, have you?

[James smirks ominously.]

BJ: Yeah I have. But no one you've ever heard of. Because I got to them before anyone ever had a chance of hearing about them.

RH: How? By sucking all the oxygen out of the ring the moment you have to go into second gear?

[James chuckles dismissively.]

BJ: You keep forgetting what happened between the two of us, Hunter. That's fine..

[James turns to Jackson.]

BJ: But let's talk about you, Flippity Dip. You ever end anyone's career?

JH: Maiming people. Psychologically. Making it so that they never want to get into the ring again. Remember when we toured through Calgary? Did you see Seth Colton? The one with the glass eye? Left the arena falling-down-drunk? That was one of my favorites.

[Jackson Hunter and Brian James are inching closer together, their voices lowering to a frightening whisper.]

BJ: I gotta say, this is a lot more talking than I usually like to do.

You're so sure of yourself, why don't you try maiming me then? I'll Blackheart Punch you so hard you'll be finding bits of your sternum in the toilet for months.

JH: Oh, you'll Blackheart Punch me? That depends on my heart being where you punch, doesn't it? What if you miss, or it's in the wrong part of my lizard physiology? These Wallace boys have a pipeline right to Brian Potter; I can see the headlines on Wrestling Watcher Weekly: "300 pound wrestler attacks 220 pound manager. Manager suffers minor bruising and major annoyance. Engine of Destruction gets swarmed and beaten down by cast of 'Idol Chatter', rescued by 61-year-old Hamilton Graham. Tiger Claw commits ritual seppuku in shame." Trust me, Brian: I know my PR and that might damage your ambitions to lead the Kings of Wrestling.

You think that I'm in danger of shattering into a thousand pieces if you so much as breathe on me? Who do you think you're freaking talking to, BOY? I will shatter into a thousand knives that will shred you into a fine red mist. I caught you sniffing around my property once, and I did what I do whenever that happens up at the Broken Arrow Ranch: I took my double-barreled rifle, raised it into the air, and fired off a shell. That is to let you know that the second barrel is aimed directly at you if you don't turn around and go the other way.

BJ: You're good at making noise, little dog. But all that barking, its not going to make me jump. Let's say you do all that, and you expect me to go running.

What happens when I don't?

[James and Hunter are mere inches from each other. Neither blinks. The prolonged silence is tense.]

JH: Mr. James, this is a closed set. I will ask you politely to leave.

BJ: That's what I thought. All right, I'll go.

You kids finish up before naptime. You know how you get.

[James is about to exit, when Jackson Hunter grabs his arm.]

JH: Don't you EVER freaking accuse me of patronizing Tim Horton's.

[Brian James seems momentarily confused, then leaves...]

...and we spiral wipe from "Idol Chatter" back to live footage of Mark Stegglet on the stage in front of the screaming AWA fans.]

MS: Welcome back to the Power Hour, fans, and-

[A very vocal group of AWA fans interrupt Stegglet with a clear chant.]

"DROP-KICK PAR-TY!"
clap clap clapclapclap
"DROP-KICK PAR-TY!"
clap clap clapclapclap
"DROP-KICK PAR-TY!"
clap clap clapclapclap
"DROP-KICK PAR-TY!"
clap clap clapclapclap
"DROP-KICK PAR-TY!"
clap clap clapclapclap

[Stegglet smirks, shaking his head.]

MS: Ahhh, it's been a wild week here in New Orleans and... well, the Press Conference which many assumed would just be your standard smile and wave affair turned a little heated at times. Check out this footage when former AWA National Champion, current CCW color commentator, and one of the Combat Corner's Head Trainers, Marcus Broussard, was on the stage talking about the Brass Ring Tournament and... well, the San Jose Shark experienced a most unexpected interruption. Take a look...

[We fade into the aforementioned Press Conference footage. Former AWA National Champion, Combat Corner trainer, CCW color man... enough with the resume... Marcus Broussard is in mid-response to a question as we join the footage.]

MB: -and I think that if all the great wrestling fans all over New Orleans this week show up at the Devlin Fieldhouse on Wednesday night, they're going to see that Combat Corner Wrestling isn't just the future of the AWA... it's the present too.

[Broussard gestures to another reporter in the crowd.]

MB: Yeah, right up front here.

[A voice rings out from off-camera.]

R: Mr. Broussard, there are a lot of AWA fans concerned about the recent news of new ownership partners for the AWA. As someone who has been here since the beginning, what do you have to say about the Korugun Corporation and FOX taking on new power in the AWA management structure.

[Broussard nods.]

MB: Look, change is always scary. The first day I sat behind a mic to do color commentary instead of climbing up in that ring to wrestle was one of the scariest of my life. And yeah, we've all heard some pretty nasty rumors about Korugun. Are they true? Jason Dane would tell you yes... but I'm willing to give them a chance as long as they show the AWA... the wrestlers... the office... the fans... everyone... as long as they show them the respect that they-

[A voice rings out - a familiar voice - from off-camera.]

"Respect? What the heck would you know about respect, Broussard?"

[The San Jose Shark grimaces, turning his attention to the new figure walking out on stage to a mixed response. He's sporting his trademark super smedium t-shirt with the state of Texas sketched across it. The makeshift replacement National Title belt is over his shoulder. It is the record-breaking National Champion, Travis Lynch, mic in hand as he addresses Broussard and the assembled masses.]

TL: What does the AWA know about respect? They don't respect me.

[He slaps the belt.]

TL: They don't respect this and what I've done for it.

[Broussard snorts audibly.]

MB: What you've done for it? Don't you mean what you've done TO it?

[There are some "ohhhhhhs" from the crowd.]

MB: Because the last time I checked, it wasn't the AWA who got drunk in some European bar and left the title belt to be snatched up by some groupie with a nice smile.

[The "ohhhhhhhhs" are louder this time.]

TL: You don't know a damn thing, Broussard.

MB: No? I know that every day you set a longer record with that belt is an embarrassment to all of us who came before you. That means men like Ron Houston... like Kolya Sudakov... like Calisto Dufresne... like Stevie Scott... even Juan Vasquez is embarrassed by you, Lynch.

[Broussard stares dead into the eyes of the National Champion.]

MB: And you better believe that I'm embarrassed by you.

[Lynch smiles.]

TL: How will I ever go to sleep knowing you're not proud of me, Broussard? How will I make it through the day? And you standing up for the legacy of the National Title is more embarrassing than I could ever be. How long did you hold that thing, Shark? A month? Two? You're the big defender of all things National Title for that?

I don't think so. Because the last time I checked, I've held that title for over 450 days. No one else is even close to that.

That makes me the greatest National Champion of all time...

[He pauses, turning towards the fans.]

TL: ...and it makes SuperClash a damn joke since I'm not on it defending the title.

[The crowd responds, more boos than cheers now.]

TL: That's right. You paid your hard-earned money to see Air Strike - a team who hasn't been together in almost a year - get a title match. You paid your money to

see Terry Shane of all people get a title match. And you, of course, paid your money to see Melissa Cannon - Michaelson's favorite girl - get a title match too.

But no match for Travis Lynch. No defense of the AWA's longest standing championship.

They even found room on the show for one of your little CCW brats, Broussard.

[Broussard's eyes flash with anger. He removes the mic from the podium, slowly walking towards Travis Lynch who is standing at the front of the stage.]

MB: Those "brats"... have more respect for this business than you ever have.

Those "brats"... they work harder for this business than you ever have.

And those "brats"... they've even got more respect for your family's legacy than you... ever... have.

[Broussard smirks.]

MB: Because I know your father... and I know that he goes to bed every night thanking the Good Lord upstairs for his kids growing up the right way, doing the right thing, and being the people he always wanted them to be.

And then there's you... the one who's worse than Matt.

[Travis suddenly surges forward, blasting Broussard off his feet with a left hand! The crowd groans at the assault... and then boos as security storms the stage, flooding the space between Lynch and Broussard as the Shark gets off the stage, looking ready for a fight. Both men trade words off mic as security tries to establish control as we fade to black...]

...and then back up to a backstage area from a very recent live event. This hallway is fairly plain, with only a SuperClash poster shown on the wall. Suddenly, a commotion is heard, and the camera turns towards the commotion. It looks like two men are carrying an unidentified local talent down the hallway on a canvas stretcher and the camera focuses on it briefly before a loud shout is heard in the background.]

?: YA STUPID PUNK, AH WAS IN A BAD MOOD AND AH TOLD YA NOT T' MESS WITH BLASTER MASTERSON.

[The camera turns around and marching down the hallway is Blaster Masterson, along with his manager Jackie Wilpon. Masterson is in his ring gear, glistening in sweat and looking very angry as usual. Both men stop in front of the poster, and Masterson quickly turns to the camera, putting his face up to the camera lens.]

BM: WHADDAYA WAAAANNNTTT?

[Masterson grits his teeth, then stomps away, seemingly frustrated about something.]

JW: Looks like Sweet Lou ain't here, folks. Probably off doin' some appearances hypin' up SuperClash or somethin'. Probably chattin' it up on some fancy SiriusXM interview. That fella's got a face for radio, am I right?

[Wilpon chuckles.]

JW: Yeah, as ya can see.. well, things ain't sittin' right with us right now.

BM: AH WAS ROBBED!!! AAAGGGHHH!!

[Masterson turns towards and wall and pounds both fists against it.]

JW: Ya see, that there Golden Ticket shoulda been ours...

[Masterson swings around, shouting and interrupting Wilpon.]

BM: THAT GATDANG TWEEERRRPPPP JACKSON HUNTER!!! HE'S GONNA GET IT!!!

[Masterson grits his teeth, breathing heavily through his clenched teeth. Wilpon nods his head in agreement, but steps forward in an attempt to calm the big man down.]

JW: Easy there big fella. We don't want a problem with the Axis... yet.

To be perfectly honest, th' name doesn't sit well with me anyway, but that's gonna have t' be a story for another time.

[Wilpon rubs his bulbous nose and lets out a deep breath.]

JW: Alright, well... folks, it ain't often that yer ol' pal Jackie gets outsmarted, especially by the.. ahem... second best hype man in da business.

Well played, pal, well played.

[Masterson paces back and forth in the background, grunting as Wilpon mock claps.]

JW: But was messin' with the big man right as he was mere fingertips away from his ultimate destiny really worth it? At the end of the day, ol' Skywalker continued to be irrelevant anyway while the Axis wins, again.

[Wilpon rolls his eyes.]

JW: Dat's a cryin' shame, cuz Skywalker? See, that's a cat that coulda been on top of da world by now. He was doin' things people 10-15 years in places like Portland, Los Angeles, the Great Lakes, or Canada couldn't even begin t' imagine. In some alternate timeline... if ya believe in that sorta crap, SuperClash coulda been between Skywalker Jones and Blaster Masterson for the World Heavyweight Title. There would have been a lot of money to be made.

[Wilpon shakes his head.]

JW: But this is th' current reality, we're gonna have to fight in a Battle Royal instead. I ain't complainin', the best always had t' start somewhere. It just ain't gonna be ol' Skywalker, that opportunity has come an' gone as far as we're concerned. See, of what one Buford P. Higgins did, he's now starin' down the barrel of the biggest dang cannon to have ever rolled into the AWA, a force of nature ready and willin' ta launch him straight into irrelevance.

[Masterson bellows out "AH'M GONNA SQUASH HIM LIKE A BUUUGGGGGG" before stomping back towards the camera.]

BM: SKYWALKER JJJOOOONNNNEESSSS.....

[Masterson pauses, closes his eyes, and begins to laugh through his teeth. Then, suddenly his eyes shoot open.]

BM: Think ya can crawl out of th' woodwork like ya like t' do once every three months and rob ME of MAH RIGHTFUL SPOT IN STEAL TH' SPOTLIGHT?? Ya like ta fly don'tcha? I'm gonna catch ya and rip those stinkin' wings right off of ya, then I'm gonna spin ya round and round..

And I'm gonna throw ya...

[Masterson closes his eyes again.]

BM: And ya ain't gonna come back down cuz unlike Icarus, yer gonna fly right through the sun an' it's gonna go all supernova like in the space books.

And then...

[Masteron grits his teeth.]

BM: Everyone else in that ring's gonna burn to a crisp and in the end I'm gonna be standin' alone on a pile a' burnt up bones...

Yer brand new.... KING OF THE BATTLE ROYALS!

[Masterson backs off and starts laughing..]

BM: AND WHO KNOOOOOWWWSS... what's gonna come next?

[Wilpon grins, and steps forward.]

JW: I think we're all long overdue for a new crownin' anyway,

See ya at SuperClash for the coronation, boys.

[Masterson stomps off, shouting at nothing in particular. Wilpon walks off, trailing his charge as the camera fades to a new scene.

"Prince" Colin Hayden stands before a SuperClash VIII banner. He is dressed in a white jacket patterned with gold fleur-de-lis over a red dress shirt and black pants. Hayden is flanked by the British Bashers, Robbie Storm to his right and Rory Smythe to his left, both of whom are dressed to compete in white tights, with the Union Jack over Smythe's left thigh and Storm's right thigh. Both men are also sporting facial hair – full beards with handlebar mustaches. "Prince" Colin Hayden brandishes his black cane, tipped with silver and topped with a silver roaring lion's head, with a pair of red gemstones for its eyes, as he speaks.]

PCH: The Soldiers of Fortune would rather talk politics with that funeral stunt less than two weeks ago. Unfortunately for you, starlight, there will NOT be any politicking in the Blackjack Patterson Memorial Battle Royal! Every man for himself. Your political affiliations don't matter. Neither does your party. Of course, should the opportunity arise, Robbie and Rory WILL take the fight to Stephens and Flint. After all, the reckoning between the British Bashers and the Soldiers of Fortune IS an inevitability.

ROBBIE: Make no mistake, winning the Battle Royal would be a tremendous achievement for both Rory and myself. And if it came to it, both of us know it would not be personal if one ended up eliminating the other to be the last man standing. Along the way, though, it's all fair game and neither Rory nor I are going to waste our shots when it comes to taking out the Soldiers of Fortune. You just have to hope that it's going to be enough to square things between our two teams.

PCH: Because the last thing you want is a drawn out war, starlight, since you already have your eyes on the World Tag Team Titles. Mind you don't overlook the

Bashers, who have got their eyes on you! You can't say you didn't see them coming. After all, we did warn you. Can't blame us when it's you who choose to ignore the signs.

[The three members of the British Bashers grin at the camera. Such nice guys. And we fade to black.]

In stark, high contrast black and white, a large curtain with the words "SuperClash VII" written large across it cascades to the ground like a falling leaf. Behind it is a slow-motion montage of similarly stark monochrome clips, slowly fading in to each other. Leonard Cohen's rumbling, deep voice plays over top the minimalist orchestration of "You Want It Darker.']

[Brian Lau raises the hands of Wes Taylor and Tony Donavon...]

If you are the dealer
I'm out of the game #

[...Lau shakes the hand of "Dr." Harrison Fawcett...]

If you are the healer
It means I'm broken and lame #

[...Brian James looks over his shoulder as Lau raises the arm of Johnny Detson...]

If thine is the glory then
Mine must be the shame #

[...Summers, Mahoney and Kendrick all triple teaming the Gladiator...]

You want it darker
We kill the flame #

[...Shadoe Rage looking around the ring with maniacal eyes ...]

Magnified, sanctified, be thy holy name

[...The Hangman, shot from below, slowly tightens his noose around an invisible neck...]

Vilified, crucified, in the human frame

[...Flex Ferrigno with some poor victim's skull trapped in a powerful headlock...]

A million candles burning for the help that never came

[..."Flawless" Larry Wallace and his Best Damn Dropkick In The World in magnificent slow motion...]

You want it darker

[...Lauryn Rage makes her way down the aisle, Women's World Championship belt in one arm, phone extended at arm's length in the other...]

There's a lover in the story
But the story's still the same #

[...Erica Toughill cracks her knuckles, a slow-motion bubble emerging from between her lips...]

There's a lullaby for suffering
And a paradox to blame #

[...Another woman in a darkened space, the light forming a halo around her: the silhouette is in the general shape of Charisma Knight...]

But it's written in the scriptures
And it's not some idle claim #

[...Anton Layton fondles the Eye of Tyr, visibly giggling between Porter Crowley and The Lost Boy.]

You want it darker
We kill the flame #

[...Derrick Williams nailing Jordan Ohara with a Blackout, fading to Riley Hunter similarly betraying Ohara with an Instant Karma...]

They're lining up the prisoners
and the guards are taking aim #

[...Jackson Hunter trying to pull the Suited Savage MAWAGA off his prey...]

I struggled with some demons
They were middle class and tame #

[...Maxim Zharkov applying the Gorynych to a chained Kolya Sudakov...]

I didn't know I had permission
to murder and to maim #

[...Juan Vasquez piledriving Ryan Martinez, fading to a smile on Vasquez's face...]

You want it darker

[The stark monochrome montage is suddenly bathed in a golden light. A solitary figure is seen in the distance, standing tall.

I'm ready, my lord...

[Before we get a good look at him or her, a metallic font splashes on screen.]

"SUPERCLASH VIII."

"The American Wrestling Alliance presents: SuperClash VIII: Thursday, November 24th, live from New Orleans."

[Fade to black...

...and fade back up to footage marked "EARLIER TODAY...". We are backstage. From the desk and the man behind it, a viewer could assume we are looking at AWA co-owner and acting Director of Operations Jon Stegglet's office for the evening. It's an unusual camera shot though... not the usual camera angle we come to expect from AWA production and even the camera itself seems different. Stegglet is not alone in the room though. A slender man in a black suit with dark sunglasses and a security guard-style earpiece stands near the desk - a bodyguard perhaps?

Stegglet is working through some paperwork on his desk when a loud pounding on the door gets his attention. He doesn't get a chance to respond before the door

wildly swings open, clattering against the wall on its hinges and Axis manager Jackson Hunter stalks angrily into view.]

JH: Stegglet, you miserable piece of-

[Stegglet raises a hand slowly.]

JS: Careful.

[He gestures directly at the camera, turning to look at it.]

JS: Our new All Access 365 cameras brought to you by our friends at FOX. They're always watching, Mr. Hunter.

[Hunter arches an eyebrow, staring directly into the camera before turning back to Stegglet with a deep sigh.]

JH: Fine. I was told you wanted to see me. Something about my medical check.

[Stegglet nods, shuffling through the paperwork. He pulls a sheet of paper into view.]

JS: Aha... here it is. This is your physical from Dr. Bob Ponavitch, head of AWA Medical, stating that despite winning the Golden Ticket at our last Saturday Night Wrestling, you are still deemed physically unable to compete by Dr. Ponavitch and his staff.

And this...

[He pulls another sheet of paper into view.]

JS: ...is an opinion from AWA Legal that we'd be putting the company at tremendous liability to let you into the ring considering Dr. Ponavitch's findings. Now, considering our recent run of luck with lawyers, I'm sure you can understand-

JH: Oh, I understand.

[Hunter chuckles quietly, and joylessly.]

JH: I understand that you are under the same influences that have kept me blackballed from returning to the ring after all these. You've got that same look on your face as you did when I showed up here five years ago looking to get into the ring. I am as good as anyone else in that locker room... all these trust fund wrestlers coasting off their last names: Lynch, Martinez, Donovan, Taylor, O'Connor, Wright, James—definitely James—and especially... Colton.

This is a wrestling promotion, Jon, not a country club! You KNOW that in the past two decades... TWENTY YEARS... that the best two wrestlers in the world have been Jackson Hunter, and then Riley Hunter. Look up the awards on Wikipedia! Ask Tiger Paw Pro for their merchandise numbers. If you want to uphold the slightest veneer of the American Wrestling Alliance maintaining its position as the elite wrestling promotion worldwide and to maintain its position as such, I belong in this match! But nooooo! I was mean to the Colton family, and the Colton family was nice to us that one time!

[Stegglet allows Hunter to shout himself out, leaving the Axis manager breathing heavily as Stegglet rises from his desk.]

JS: Nevertheless, Mr. Hunter... I called you here to inform you that under NO circumstances, will you be competing tonight in the Steal The Spotli-

[The sunglass-wearing man clears his throat audibly, interrupting Stegglet.]

JS: You... have something to say?

JH: Who is this clown?

[Stegglet grimaces.]

JS: Our new... partners... in the Korugun Corporation wanted to have a representative on site this week to make sure their opinions were known.

[Stegglet turns back to Sunglass Guy.]

JS: And I'm guessing you have one to share.

[Sunglass Guy pauses, listening to his earpiece intently.]

SG: Mr. Stegglet, I have been informed that Jackson Hunter was given a full physical by Korugun medical staff and our staff has deemed him physically capable and ready to compete in Steal The Spotlight.

[Hunter beams at Stegglet who looks shocked.]

JS: Your staff. But what about OUR staff?

SG: I'm sure Dr. Ponavitch was simply looking out for the best interests of the American Wrestling Alliance. However, our review of Mr. Hunter has shown him more than ready to compete and we wish him the best of luck in his endeavors here this week.

[Stegglet shakes his head, standing tall for a moment before his shoulders visibly slump.]

JS: Tell your puppet master that this is on you. This is on Korugun. I want no part of it.

[Sunglass Guy slowly nods as Jackson Hunter straightens his tie.]

JH: Now, if you'll excuse me... The spotlight doesn't steal itself.

[Hunter turns to make his exit, leaving Stegglet to glare at Sunglass Guy before sinking back into his desk chair, resuming his paperwork as we circle wipe back to Mark Stegglet live on location at the Superdome's parking lot.]

MS: Steal The Spotlight is coming, fans, and it appears as though Jackson Hunter will be involved with it.

[Boos rain out as Stegglet smiles.]

MS: You guys are hyped for this show! I can't even imagine how loud it's going to be in that building here behind me tomorrow night considering how boisterous you all are right now.

[The crowd proves Stegglet right with a raucous ovation.]

MS: But speaking of Steal The Spotlight, Jackson Hunter isn't the only one who is a last minute entry into the big match. The final spot in that big-time matchup is being reserved for the winner of the 2016 Brass Ring Tournament that's been ongoing down in Combat Corner Wrestling. The final of that tournament is going

down a little later tonight and we'll be bringing it to you live right here on the Power Hour. But before we do, let's hear right now from the two men competing in that matchup - "Arawak" Jack Veles and Whaitiri!

[We circle wipe away from Stegglet and open on one of the finalists of the Brass Ring Tournament, Arawak Jack Veles stands before the CCW green and white banner. The ugly huge slab of man stares into the camera with a ragged towel over his head, staring out at the viewers. He breathes deeply and hard, flexing bulky arms that aren't shredded or ripped.]

JV: OHHH WHAITIRIIIIIIIIII!!!!!! Kia ora, right? That's how you say hello, right? Let me give you a greeting from Arawak Jack Veles. Go [BLEEP!] yourself. You come out here show after show week after week with your sappy super clean image and you pander to these idiot fans who lap it all up. I see they all love you around here. The ladies all swoon. The kids all want to touch you like you're some superman with a tan and even some of these suspect men seem to be into this crap you're selling. Well I'm not. I ain't into this mealy-mouthed shake your hand and kiss your ass pandering you do. Whaitiri, you make me sick. Like all those jerks on the islands selling out for the tourists. I don't care what these fans think of me. I don't care what they think about the islands. I don't give a damn because they don't feed me. They don't fight me.

[Jack Veles tears the towel off his head as he snorts and snarls into the mic.]

JV: Whaitiri, you better take my words seriously. Because I am going to expose you! I am going to break you! I am going to own you! You want to be a fan favorite! I want to fight. You understand. That makes me tougher than you. That makes me hungrier than you. I am not those clowns you beat to get here. How's that knee, by the way? You may think you're next, but I'm _NOW._ This world is mine. MINE! It will never be yours! BECAUSE OF ME!

BECAUSE OF ME... you will be a footnote!

BECAUSE OF ME... you will be eating whatever crap you eat through a straw!

BECAUSE OF ME... you will not be the Brass Ring winner and you will not go to SuperClash to steal the spotlight!

I... WILL!!!

[Veles looks like a snarling bull as he hunches over in the camera frame, taking up all the screen with his mass.]

JV: Whaitiri, I'm breaking your leg. I'm breaking your back. I'm putting your ass to sleep! You say mihi. I say 'mama mai a mama ki a koe!' That means 'Mama said knock you out!'

[The screen holds on the ugly Arawak for a moment before the shot fades...

...and comes up on the backstage area where CCW interviewer Mariah Wolfe is standing with the embattled rookie sensation, Whaitiri. For once, the handsome half Maori isn't smiling. His dark hair is pulled back into a tight ponytail, and the expression on his face is intense.]

MW: I think it's fair to say that no one has come as far, or suffered as much during the Brass Ring tournament as you have.

[Whaitiri nods.]

MW: But through it all, here you are.

[Another solemn nod from Whaitiri.]

W: That's right, Mariah.

Here I am. And I'm not going anywhere.

I've heard it all. From Sid Osbourne to Mr. Broussard. I've heard everything they've said. All the hate, all the dismissal.

But let me just ask you this? – who's standing right now?

Who took the beating of a lifetime from Odin Gunn and came out the other side? Who took it to Sid Osbourne, the man that put Max Magnum on the shelf, and beat him? Who got his knee wrecked by Windsor, but is standing here right now, ready to take on Jack Veles?

That's me.

And nothing anyone says about me changes that. I'm here. There hasn't been a round of this tournament that didn't see me get my butt handed to me after the match was over.

But here I am.

MW: And in just a few minutes, you'll have your biggest challenge, as you take on Jack Veles. And after what happened earlier...

[Whaitiri takes in a deep breath, exhaling slowly, his face red in anger.]

W: After what happened earlier...

[Fists clench, as Whaitiri finds himself unable to speak.]

MW: I'd say you have all the motivation you need.

[A nod from the half-Maori.]

W: You saw what happened. You saw Windsor try to buy his way into the finals. And then you saw the both of them try to take me out.

Jack Veles... I know you. I know your type.

You're a bully. You're loud. You push your weight around, and you think because you're tough, that means you can do what you want. You're a big talker, Veles.

Me? I'm a big doer.

You talk a lot of trash, Veles, and I've seen you in the ring. You can back it up. I know tonight won't be a match. It'll be a fight.

But here I am. Ready for that fight.

You can say all you want. Just like Osborne. Just like Windsor. And just like them, all that talking won't amount to much when I'm spearing you out of your shoes.

I don't know what this tournament means to you, Veles, but I know what it means to me. It means I get to go to SuperClash. It means I get to be in the ring with great men, in front of tens of thousands of screaming people.

It means I get to be in the same place where Jordan Ohara shuts Derrick Williams up. It means I get to stand in the same ring where Alex Martinez has the last match of his life. It means I get to stand in the same ring that, a few hours later, will see Ryan Martinez take back the World Title he should never have lost.

You want to jump me from behind? You want to fight me? You want to blacken my eye, break my nose, bust my name? You want to take my dream from me?

Well, here I am.

Let's see what you got.

[With those words, Whaitiri walks away, ready for battle as we fade to black...

...and then fade back up as the sounds of Jason Aldean's "Lights Go On" starts to play over various shots of the New Orleans area. A steamboat docked on the shore. A statue in the middle of the city. A twilight overhead shot of cars zipping by on the freeway. An overhead shot of a church cuts to a time lapse shot of the SuperDome - the home of SuperClash VIII as the clouds move swiftly by and the lyrics begin.]

#When the lights come on, everybody's screaming#

[A night time drone shot of the Mercedes-Benz Superdome lights up the screen and then cuts to an interior shot of a crowd celebrating in the 'Dome.]

#Lighters in the sky, yeah, everybody's singing#

[A fan shot of a yellow sign that reads "HOME SWEET DOME" cuts to another crowd shot, this one of a fan gripping a sign that reads "THE DOME IS WHERE THE HEART IS."]

#Every word to every song to a girl to take it home tonight#

[A large crowd shot of a cheering crowd, showing off the immense audience who will be packed into the Dome soon enough.]

#When the lights come on, everybody's feeling#

[Older footage comes up, showing the huge audience that once packed into the Superdome to see Muhammad Ali fight Leon Spinks cuts to a shot of that actual fight.]

#A hallelujah high from the floor to the ceiling#

[A football falls just out of the reach of one of the San Francisco 49ers in a shot from a Super Bowl played in the Dome.]

#Yeah, the drink that we're drinking, the smoke that we're smoking#

[Cut to a shot of Mick Jagger center stage in the Dome at a Rolling Stones concert held there and then to Keith Richards from the same show strumming his guitar.]

#The party we throw, it's going all night long#

[A burst of pyro fills the screen before we see a time lapse of the crowd filing into the stadium for a New Orleans Saints game.]

#When the lights come on#

[Cut to another time lapse shot outside the Superdome as the sun goes down and the lights come on.]

#When the lights come on#

[And we cut to the SuperClash VIII logo with all the information on the show...

...and we fade back up to The Lion's Den, the members standing before a SuperClash backdrop. Standing to the left is Rene Rousseau, who is dressed in royal blue robe and wears sunglasses. To Rousseau's right is his manager, "The Professional" Dave Cooper, who is wearing a pair of black slacks, a white button-down shirt and a red necktie. To Cooper's right is one half of the Samoan Hit Squad, Mafu, who has unkempt black hair hanging down the sides of his face and wears black tights with a blue floral pattern. Standing behind Cooper is Scola who has an afro, his arms folded, and is dressed in tights similar to Mafu's.]

DC: Take a look at these gentlemen beside me -- three of the greatest talents the AWA has ever known, and all they were ever looking for was the right opportunity. And tonight, they've got that opportunity in the Blackjack Patterson battle royal. Believe me, The Lion's Den has already made its mark, dominating all the competition that's come their way, and now, we use this battle royal as the opportunity to show everyone exactly how dominant we're gonna be in 2017.

[He hooks a thumb toward Rousseau.]

DC: This man, right here, has found new life ever since he accepted my offer. He's already proven to Chris Choynet who is the better wrestler, and tonight, I know he's going to be proving that to a lot more people. But don't take my word for it -- here from the man himself.

[Rousseau chuckles and pulls off his sunglasses, revealing arrogance in his brown eyes.]

RR: Chris Choynet, I'm seeing a lot clearer these days, that it was the likes of you that kept me from realizing just how great I could be. I've already proven that to you in the ring, but it seems your friend, Cesar Hernandez, can't accept that I'm the better man. Well, tonight, you better believe I'm going to show you, Hernandez, that I'm not only better than the partner I used to have, but I'm better than him, and better than any of the other wrestlers in this battle royal tonight! Once I win tonight, I'm going to move to bigger things -- and whoever is the World Television Champion after SuperClash, you will be in my sights, I promise you that!

[He glances back toward Scola, whose eyes have been drawn to Rousseau -- not a glare, mind you, but a look that suggests he's not pleased with Rousseau's claims.]

RR: No offense meant to you or your brother, Scola -- besides, tonight, this is the chance for you and Mafu to demonstrate who is the best tag team in the AWA, by showing everyone just how lethal of a duo you are.

[Mafu flips his head back and raises a finger at Rousseau.]

M: My brother isn't taking offense, Rene -- he wants to win that battle royal as much as you do -- as much as I do! But you're right -- we will prove to everyone who is the best tag team in the AWA, and whoever walks out with that gold, they shouldn't be celebrating too long, because the Samoan Hit Squad will be waiting for them! Ha ha!

[Scola glances at his brother, his facial features still stoic, but his eyes a little more relaxed. After a moment, a smile slowly forms on his lips, he nods, then slaps his brother on the shoulder -- at which point that smile disappears.]

DC: Take a look, AWA -- these men don't squabble about every little detail like kings do. They don't establish a pecking order like an axis does. They are all committed to being the best, meaning they push each other, making each other better, and thus getting results! And tonight, they're gonna get results, I promise you that, and there's nothing anyone can do to stop us, least of all, people like Cesar Hernandez!

[Rousseau and Mafu both chuckle, while Scola just grunts, and the camera cuts to...

...a SuperClash backdrop, with a podium in front of it, the podium with two tables to either side. Seated at the table to the left are several AWA officials, and at the podium is none other than Sweet Lou Blackwell.]

SLB: All right, folks, I'm sure a lot of you who came today have a great interest in one participant on SuperClash in particular -- he is considered one of the greats of Major League Baseball, and the man who will be is his partner is considered one of the greats of the American Wrestling Alliance. They will be teaming together to face Kerry Kendrick and Flex Ferrigno -- they are none other than the now-retired member of the Boston Red Sox, David Ortiz, and his tag team partner, former AWA World Television Champion, Supernova!

[There's applause as Supernova and Ortiz walk onto the set, heading toward the two empty seats at the table to the podium's right. Supernova, who is wearing sunglasses but no face paint and is dressed in a black Supernova T-shirt and blue jeans, sits closest to the podium and Ortiz, who is dressed in a Boston Red Sox T-shirt and black jeans, sits beside him.]

S: Thank you, everyone. Now, I have no idea where Ferrigno and Kendrick are. I can only imagine that Kendrick would be spending more of this time complaining about how everyone is just here to cozy up to the man seated next to me. But I know many of you do want to talk to my partner for SuperClash, so I'll just open it up for questions from all of you.

[He gestures to Ortiz, who examines the crowd and points to a person.]

Reporter #1: Thank you, Mr. Ortiz. May I ask you what prompted you to get into the wrestling ring?

DO: To be honest, I never thought I'd be doing something like this. I thought Flex Ferrigno was just trying to draw attention to himself when he was taunting me. But after a while, it was clear he wasn't gonna let up -- and that's when he hooked up with Kerry Kendrick and they kept talkin' their game. Now, most of you know I'm easy going, but they were talkin' their game so much, I had to answer them.

[He gestures to another reporter in the crowd.]

Reporter #2: What can you tell me about the training you've gone through and how does it compare to your workouts for baseball?

DO: I can say it's a lot more intense. You watch these guys in the ring and you think what they do is so simple, but the workouts Supernova put me through made me realize it's not that simple at all. To be honest, I'm still feeling sore after the latest workout he put me through. But I knew if I was going to be up for this match, I had to go through every workout. Believe me, Supernova got me in shape for this.

[Another reporter stands up and gestures to the table.]

Reporter #3: Supernova, what do you have to say about how Mr. Ortiz handled himself in the workouts?

S: I'm sure they were an eye opener for him, but he was dedicated. He took it seriously, he never complained. I know there's a lot of wrestlers who don't think guys like David Ortiz should be stepping into the ring -- they think it's disrespectful to the wrestlers who put in all the time and effort at what they do. But I give David credit, because he has never acted like he was above any of the wrestlers. He told me that whatever he needed to do, he would do it. I can see why his teammates on the Red Sox respect him so much.

[Ortiz gestures to another reporter.]

Reporter #4: David, have you had a chance to interact with any of the other wrestlers and, if so, how have they treated you?

DO: I did get to shake Torin the Titan's hand -- and, man, they aren't kidding when they call him a Titan! [Laughs] Really, though, I heard that Torin was the type of guy who you had to get to know before he'd consider you part of the locker room. I just asked him about what was expected of me and that I would respect his space. And he's been friendly to me ever since we've met. I approach it the same way with others -- I won't speak for any of them, but most of the wrestlers I've met, they haven't treated me any different. I look at it this way: When I first broke into the big leagues, I treated the veterans with respect, and I approached it the same way here. That's what you have to do, because that's how they'll respect you and realize that you aren't acting like you know more. They'll know you just want to be part of the locker room and be good to everyone.

Reporter #4: Supernova, would you say that most of the wrestlers are getting along with David?

S: Well, I don't want to speak for everyone -- though I can imagine that guys like Kendrick and Ferrigno aren't fans of him being in the locker room.

[There's laughter at that remark.]

Another reporter stands up and gestures.]

Reporter #5: Supernova, prior to SuperClash, you seemed to believe that you shouldn't have to be in a match like this. That hasn't caused you conflict with David Ortiz, has it?

[Supernova takes a deep breath.]

S: Look, I got frustrated when I said what I said -- and I talked to David about it and he understands. He always strives for championships and he's disappointed if he doesn't get to play for one, so he saw where I was coming from. But rest assured I am committed to this match and I'm going to be right by David's side through it all. However -- and I already told David this, but now I'll tell everyone else -- once SuperClash is done, you better believe I'll be gunning for championships again. And, yes, my sights are definitely set on the AWA World Heavyweight Championship belt. I call myself the franchise of the AWA, but if I really want to prove I'm that, then the way to do that is to win that World Title. That means, regardless of who wins the World title bout, you better believe I'm gunning for that shot.

[The camera cuts back to Mark Stegglet live outside the Superdome where the fans are cheering.]

MS: You gotta love hearing David Ortiz express his respect for the business like that... and you've also gotta love hearing Supernova make it clear to both Juan Vasquez and Ryan Martinez that whoever walks out of the Superdome tomorrow night as AWA World Champion, he's coming for them. That tag match pitting Ortiz and Supernova against Kendrick and Ferrigno is going to be a hot one and it's just one of so many top notch matchups you'll see tomorrow night at SuperClash. But you just knew Kerry Kendrick would find a way to get a word or two... or three... or four in himself. Earlier this week, Mr. Kendrick and Erica Toughill found themselves on the set of Fox Sports Live. Let's take a look...

[Caption: "COURTESY FOX SPORTS 1."]

Cut to the "Fox Sports Live" interview area, where hosts Jay Onrait and Dan O'Toole sit opposite Kerry Kendrick and Erica Toughill.]

JAY: Oh hey, Kerry Kendrick the Self Made Man and Erica Toughill are joining us, and on Thanksgiving night, Kerry and his partner Flex Ferrigno are taking on Supernova and David Ortiz, just formerly of MLB. It's the AWA, it's SuperClash VIII. Guys, thanks for being here.

KK: Great to be here.

[Toughill smiles and nods.]

JAY: So talk about what it's like. You and Flex have been calling out David Ortiz for weeks and now that the match is signed, what are your thoughts?

KK: Like you said, it's the Superdome. It's shaping up to the largest paid pro wrestling crowds in over a decade. And I know Ortiz and Supernova are taking on an insane training schedule, y'know. They're formidable opponents, so...

...when we beat them...

DAN: I was just wondering when the punchline was coming.

KK: ...Yeah, when we take them down in front with the eyes of the world upon me and Flex, no one can say that we don't belong.

DAN: Kerry, do wrestlers get anything like stage fright in front of a huge crowd like this? Supernova and David Ortiz are probably going to be two of the fan favorite on the card that night.

KK: It's all psychological, guys. Flex and me, we're strong mentally. You can't get in our heads. And really, I've had this in my head as my destiny for a while. You'll ask me the same question when I'm headlining SuperClash IX next year.

JAY: Erica, how about you? You have a Falls Count Anywhere match against "Spitfire" Julie Somers coming up the same night. How does wrestling in front of 70,000 people compare with wrestling in front of 30 people in the Diefenbunker?

[Cut to footage of the same: except for the thirty-odd fans, Toughill, her opponent in a blue jumpsuit with yellow trim, and the ring itself, the entire scene is made from reinforced concrete.]

ET: Where did you find that?! That was the most insane place I've ever wrestled in! It's like this bunker four stories underground...

DAN: Yeah, it was supposed to be a bank vault for the Government of Canada in the event of a nuclear attack but it was decommissioned.

KK: I...

ET: Yeah, it was this batty promotion called "Apocalypse Wrestling" that ran all these shows in weird places around Ottawa, like abandoned warehouses and the woods and stuff like that. Age of Rage wanted me to be their presence there.

KK: I think...

DAN: Be sure to say "hi" to Lauryn for us too.

KK: [butting in] Well, Erica will take care of Julie Somers, no problem, and then she'll watch our backs to make sure none of Ortiz and Nova's crew try anything funny, right?

[The suddenly gregarious Toughill shifts back to her usual sullen self.]

ET: Yeah.

[She inflates a pink bubble in the awkward silence.]

KK: I guess my question is: if David Ortiz is retiring from baseball, what are they going to nickname all the fat kids on Little League teams when "Big Papi" becomes unavailable?

[Flash forward to the end of the show, with Onrait and O'Toole wrapping up.]

JAY: [in the middle of a conversation] ...And that's why I never drink out of Colin Cowherd's mug.

DAN: And now some feedback from earlier in the program when we interviewed Kerry Kendrick and Erica Toughill about AWA SuperClash.

[A heavy sigh.]

JAY: Problem, Tool-sy?

DAN: We just checked in on "The Self Made Man" Kerry Kendrick's Twitter feed. He says...

[The tweet appears onscreen.]

@KendrickSMM

I don't know who the Dbags hosting Fox Sports Live are, but they suck at conducting interviews.

JAY: No, that's constructive. I mean, he doesn't go into specifics as to why we suck.

DAN: I think "Dbags" is inaccurate; I've never worn a fedora in any meaningful way.

JAY: Well, I think it went very well. I promise to get to bottom of our "Dbaggy-ness" when we interview him next year before SuperClash IX.

[The pre-taped footage fades away to be replaced by another live shot featuring Mark Stegglet on stage in front of the cheering crowd in New Orleans.]

MS: That tag team matchup is going to be something else, I promise you that... but right now, I'm going to be joined by a man who has... shall we say "connective tissue" with three... count them, three... matches on this star-studded lineup tomorrow night in the Mercedes Benz Superdome. At this time, please welcome to

the Power Hour stage... the leader of the Kings of Wrestling and the only manager to take up residence in the Pro Wrestling Hall of Fame... BRIAN LAU!

[The crowd jeers as Lau struts up on the stage, impeccably dressed in a olive green suit and matching mirrored sunglasses despite it being night time.]

MS: Mr. Lau, welcome to the Power Hour.

BL: Well, Stegglet... it's your honor and pleasure of course... as you try and steal Theresa Lynch's job out from under her.

MS: I most certainly am not.

BL: Right. Next you'll tell me you volunteered to spend your night outside the Superdome with these degenerates...

[He gestures to the assembled fans who boo in response.]

MS: Mr. Lau, can we get to the point of why I asked you out here?

[Lau shrugs.]

BL: It's your show... or so you hope.

[Stegglet shakes his head with disgust.]

MS: I wanted to ask you about the three matches on this show that you're connected to... that you're the most interested in. First off, let's talk about the so-called Clash of Kings. Moments ago, I referred to you as the leader of the Kings of Wrestling and now, I'm second-guessing that. When Brian James and Johnny Detson collide tomorrow in the Superdome, are they determining the leader of the Kings of Wrestling?

[Lau smirks.]

BL: Relationships are complicated, Stegglet, which is something you'd know if you'd ever talked to a woman at all. When you put together the four highest performing competitors in pro wrestling... it gets complicated. They're all great and know they're great... and so egos come up... different points of view on goals and how to accomplish them... and so my job was to shepherd all those different views into a cohesive mission statement. I did it for years with the Syndicate and that's what I was doing with the Kings until very recently.

MS: You've made it clear that you have no intention of being in anyone's corner for that match between James and Detson yet you WILL be at ringside.

[Lau nods.]

BL: You're doing well here, Stegglet. I WILL be at ringside because I want a front row seat for the future of the Kings of Wrestling.

MS: And what does that future look like? After all, you came back to pro wrestling after a period of several years for one reason - to manage Brian James and take him to the top. If James fails tomorrow against Johnny Detson and Detson becomes the leader of the Kings of Wrestling, what's next for Brian Lau?

BL: The same thing that's always been next for Brian Lau, Stegglet - leading people to the top. You look at the World Tag Team Titles. With the exception of a brief period early in the year, Wes Taylor and Tony Donovan have DOMINATED that division this year - true?

MS: True.

BL: I'd say that's taking them to the top, wouldn't you?

MS: We'll get to the tag champs in a moment, Mr. Lau, but what about Brian James? If Johnny Detson is leading the Kings, won't he make the immediate goal to put the World Title back around his waist? And if he does that, is Brian James going to be satisfied with playing second fiddle to Detson?

[Lau looks a little uncomfortable with the question, tugging at his collar a little.]

BL: Then he'd better win.

[Stegglet shakes his head.]

MS: Okay, let's say he does... and Brian James becomes the man looking to challenge either Juan Vasquez or Ryan Martinez for the World Title. You and I both know there's no chance that Johnny Detson sits back, smiles, and runs interference for James.

[Lau angrily responds.]

BL: Look! I told you it's complicated! Everything you're saying... yeah, it's probably true... but when one man is leading the Kings, that one man will be responsible for helping me re-establish that mission statement. And it'll be clear to all what the Kings stand for.

MS: A lot of people believe this is the first step towards the Kings coming apart.

[Lau stares at Stegglet.]

MS: No comment?

BL: I didn't come out here tonight for this, Stegglet. To be treated this way with your little gotcha questions and snide comments. The Kings of Wrestling are the most powerful unit in all of wrestling. Forget the Axis. Forget the Slaughterhouse. Forget the Lion's Den. The Kings of Wrestling are it. Number One. Numero Uno. The shi-

MS: I think that's enough of that. Switching gears, let's talk about the World Tag Team Titles.

[Lau nods, breathing a little easier.]

BL: Gladly.

MS: Part of your job as manager is helping your clients secure the most favorable matchups for them... and I've gotta wonder how you allowed Taylor and Donovan to end up defending the titles against one of the best tag teams in AWA history... who haven't had a match in the AWA in months.

[Lau's jaw drops, his cheeks flushing.]

BL: This is... I can't... next question!

[Stegglet raises a hand.]

MS: Okay, okay... maybe I've gone a little too hard on you. Let's switch to one more match, Mr. Lau. Casey James and Tiger Claw will be teaming up to take on

two of the AWA's greatest in Jack Lynch and Supreme Wright in a Syndicate Street Fight. What do you think we'll see out of that match?

[Lau smirks.]

BL: Jack Lynch is a tough guy. A good fighter. A former World Champion. Supreme Wright is one of the best in the world on the mat. Another former World Champion. But... they're not the Syndicate.

MS: Meaning what?

BL: Meaning that even with some ring rust on them... Tiger Claw is still the most feared striker this business has ever known. He's the man who went through the Killing Box - the most demonic structure this sport has ever seen no matter what your Uncle has got his PR goons spinning about the Woodshed - with Simon Ezra in one of the greatest matches of all times and come out the other side. He's choked out more people than a fish bone.

And Casey James? James is a sick piece of work.

MS: He's your friend!

BL: More than that. Those two are family to me. But I'm a realist and I tell it like it is. Casey James is a sick and twisted individual. He's a former King of the Death Match. He's set people on fire! He's beaten up his own parents! He lost a finger in a match and laughed about it! Lynch and Wright think they know what they've gotten themselves into, Stegglet - I'm here to tell you that they're wrong... dead wrong... as wrong as two humans can be. Tiger Claw might choke one of them out... if they're lucky. Because if they're not... and it's James who gets his way with them... someone's going to emergency...

[He shrugs.]

BL: ...and someone might just be going to jail as well.

MS: There you have it, fans. Brian Lau with some-

BL: Hold on.

[Stegglet arches an eyebrow.]

BL: You said you were going to ask me about the matches I'm most interested in.

MS: And I have.

BL: Fake news.

[Stegglet grimaces.]

MS: What have I missed?

BL: You missed the one that EVERYONE is the most interested in. Vasquez. Martinez. Woodshed. World Title.

MS: What stake do you have in that one?

BL: The AWA World Title is the greatest prize in our sport... perhaps ever... and that comes from a man who has managed people who held the IIWF World Title AND the EMWC World Title, arguably the two greatest championships in this sport's history. So anyone in this sport who doesn't have a vested interest in seeing who walks out

of the Superdome tomorrow night with that title around their waist... well, they should give up the ghost and take up selling used cars. And when you add in the kicker of it being perhaps the final match of Juan Vasquez in the AWA - a kicker that shakes the industry to its foundation... that changes everything... well, if you're not glued to that monitor tomorrow night, I suggest you take off your boots, hit the concession stand, and start selling these fat slob some nachos... oh, and make sure they get extra napkins to wipe the cheese of their chins.

[The boos pour down anew as Stegglet sighs.]

MS: Brian Lau, ladies and gentlemen.

[The boos continue as Lau tips an imaginary cap at them, turning to make his exit.]

MS: And on that note, let's take another look at some footage from this week's Press Conference with the Phoenix himself, Jordan Ohara. Take a look...

[We circle wipe to pre-taped footage as Jordan Ohara walks up to the Press Conference podium, dressed in a Jordan brand <Tm> Carolina Blue tracksuit with the hood down and back over his shoulders. He wears his hair in a high ponytail with two wavy bangs hanging down over his face. He looks over the area, visibly a little overwhelmed by the sheer number of reporters covering the event.]

Reporter: Jordan, Jordan! What are you doing with your hair?

[Jordan smiles, a little grateful the first question is a softball.]

JO: Um, I'm experimenting. Having fun with it. In Japan, the young tigers aren't allowed to be visually distinct. Short hair, black trunks, black boots. You are meant to wrestle your way into recognition. I think I've done enough of that to allow myself not to cut my hair.

[There are some laughs from the crowd as Ohara smiles, gesturing to another reporter.]

Reporter: You've finally got Derrick Williams in the ring this week. How personal has this become to you?

JO: It's very personal. Derrick Williams was a man I called a friend. And he betrayed everything we stood for to sell out to Vasquez. I want to teach him a lesson.

Reporter: If he changed his ways, would you find it in your heart to forgive him?

JO: I'd love to have to cross that bridge, but honestly, he may be too far gone. But if he were willing to change his ways, I would be right there by his side to make sure he stays on the path.

[The flashbulbs of the cameras go off again and the assembled crowd starts to buzz as Derrick Williams enters our view, wearing a custom fit white suit with a black shirt and white tie. His hair is in a top knot and he's wearing a pair of designer sunglasses. He steps over to the podium as Ohara steps back and motions that he has the floor]

DW: Yes... J, cute. If I change my ways, you'll stand by me.

[Williams chuckles.]

DW: It's almost frustrating because you're just not getting it.

[A shout from the press gets Williams' attention.]

Reporter: Derrick, what isn't he getting?

[Williams turns his focus back on Ohara.]

DW: What Jordan isn't getting is that I'm still looking out for him. That all that's happened isn't because I've sold out, it's because I've found the way. That my game is higher. That right now, I've graduated to playing Chess and he's still stuck on Candy Land. That it won't be him keeping me on the path, it's me keeping him on it.

[Ohara interrupts.]

JO: Derrick, you're delusional.

[Williams smirks, removing his sunglasses]

DW: One day J, one day soon... you're gonna realize that I'm right, always been right, and that's the day we start to rule the world.

But right now, I just need to keep you humble.

[This time, it's Ohara with the smirk.]

JO: Humble? Derrick, you're playing games again.

[Jordan stands up, unzipping his track jacket.]

JO: I'd like to see you try to humble me. I'm right here.

[The crowd buzzing and the flashbulbs popping grows stronger as Williams steps closer to Ohara who has moved back to confront him. The two are nose-to-nose for a time, the tension building with every moments that passes. They stay like that long enough to give the press their hype pic...

...and Williams backs off, shaking his head as he slides his sunglasses back in place.]

DW: Another lesson, J. Never do it for free when people will pay to watch. I'll see you Thursday... amigo.

[Ohara fumes at Williams dropping Vasquez' "catchword", watching as his former friend and partner exits the stage as we fade to black...

...and then fade back up as the sounds of Jason Aldean's "Lights Go Out" starts to play over various shots of the New Orleans area. A steamboat docked on the shore. A statue in the middle of the city. A twilight overhead shot of cars zipping by on the freeway. An overhead shot of a church cuts to a time lapse shot of the SuperDome - the home of SuperClash VII as the clouds move swiftly by and the lyrics begin.]

#When the lights come on, everybody's screaming#

[A night time drone shot of the Mercedes-Benz Superdome lights up the screen and then cuts to an interior shot of a crowd celebrating in the 'Dome.]

#Lighters in the sky, yeah, everybody's singing#

[A fan shot of a yellow sign that reads "HOME SWEET DOME" cuts to another crowd shot, this one of a fan gripping a sign that reads "THE DOME IS WHERE THE HEART IS."]

#Every word to every song to a girl to take it home tonight#

[A large crowd shot of a cheering crowd, showing off the immense audience who will be packed into the Dome soon enough.]

#When the lights come on, everybody's feeling#

[Older footage comes up, showing the huge audience that once packed into the Superdome to see Muhammad Ali fight Leon Spinks cuts to a shot of that actual fight.]

#A hallelujah high from the floor to the ceiling#

[A football falls just out of the reach of one of the San Francisco 49ers in a shot from a Super Bowl played in the Dome.]

#Yeah, the drink that we're drinking, the smoke that we're smoking#

[Cut to a shot of Mick Jagger center stage in the Dome at a Rolling Stones concert held there and then to Keith Richards from the same show strumming his guitar.]

#The party we throw, it's going all night long#

[A burst of pyro fills the screen before we see a time lapse of the crowd filing into the stadium for a New Orleans Saints game.]

#When the lights come on#

[Cut to another time lapse shot outside the Superdome as the sun goes down and the lights come on.]

#When the lights come on#

[And we cut to the SuperClash VIII logo with all the information on the show...

...and then back up on Mark Stegglet standing with the Superdome looming in the background.]

MS: Welcome back to the Power Hour... and over my shoulder there, you can see the site of SuperClash VIII tomorrow night - the Mercedes Benz Superdome here in New Orleans. But what will be the site of next year's SuperClash... SuperClash IX? We've been getting closer to answering that question for weeks upon weeks now - narrowing down a massive list of potential host cities until we came down to two.

[We cut to an aerial shot of the Georgia Dome.]

MS: Will it be the Georgia Dome in Atlanta? Or more precisely, will it be the final event in that building that has seen so many major events over the years? It is slated to be demolished... but stadium officials have agreed to delay the closing of the building if - and only if - the AWA agrees to make SuperClash IX the final event in that massive stadium. It has hosted two Super Bowls, the Olympics, the Final Four, so many college Bowl games... but will the final event be SuperClash with seventy or eighty thousand people on hand?

[The footage changes to show the stadium formerly known as the Toronto SKydome.]

MS: Or will we witness the very first SuperClash to be held outside the United States? The building known as the Rogers Centre in Toronto has seen everything from the World Series to the Rolling Stones. And pro wrestling fans know that it has been the home for everything from Ring Wars to No Imitations Accepted. The love from AWA fans in Canada was off the chain during our visit earlier in the year and to see SuperClash land in Toronto would truly be a historic happening for the seventy thousand or so in the building and fans all over the world.

[The video changes back to Mark Stegglet.]

MS: Toronto, Canada... Atlanta, Georgia... one of those fantastic cities will have a big, big reason to thankful tomorrow night when the 2017 schedule of AWA events is announced LIVE on Pay Per View. But that's looking very far ahead. Right now... we've been talking about it all night, fans, and we're set to go LIVE to the campus of Tulane University here in New Orleans to see the Finals of the Brass Ring Tournament. Whaitiri vs "Arawak" Jack Veles - only one can move on to tomorrow's Steal The Spotlight Ladder Match. Who's it gonna be? Let's go over to our good friends Harvey Sutton and the Shark himself, Marcus Broussard, on the call! Gentlemen?

[We fade away from Stegglet on the elevated platform to the interior of the Devlin Fieldhouse where we can see a hot crowd is buzzing with anticipation over the tournament Finals set to begin.]

HS: Much thanks for that welcome, Mark, and Shark, it's been one heck of a night here in New Orleans as we here in Combat Corner Wrestling serve as the appetizer for the main course that will be tomorrow's SuperClash!

MB: I've been on SuperClash, Sutton... in fact, I won that Legends Battle Royal just last year. I know what it feels like on SuperClash Eve with the butterflies in your stomach as you lay there sleepless in New Orleans, envisioning what tomorrow is like. But for one of these guys in this Brass Ring Tournament Finals, they've still got one more match to win before they get to the big dance tomorrow.

HS: This has been one heck of a tournament, Shark, and now it comes down to this - Whaitiri... Jack Veles... who is taking home the Brass Ring? Let's go up to the ring and find out!

[While the announcers were introducing the match, the sounds of LL Cool J's "Mama Said Knock You Out" started to play over the PA system to jeers from the crowd before "Arawak" Jack Veles steps out onto stage, a towel over his head and a short sarong wrapped around his black mid-thigh length tights. After a moment, Lord William Wesley Windsor comes out behind him, politely applauding.]

HS: What is this all about?! What's he doing out here?!

MB: Looks like Veles got himself some backup before the Finals.

HS: Backup? More like a ringside thug!

[Veles pays Windsor little mind before he saunters down to ringside, scowling at the ring as he pulls at the ends of the towel around his neck. Windsor follows, keeping his distance as he looks disdainfully at the jeering crowd.

Reaching the ring, Veles leaps onto the apron in a single bound and then hauls himself through the middle ropes. He takes the center of the ring, staring about at the crowd before he falls back into his corner, pulling the towel from his head and draping it around his shoulders as he stares a hole through his opponent's corner. Windsor takes his place silently in the corner, looking on as the music fades out.]

HS: Well, if Whaitiri wasn't facing tall enough odds heading into this one, things just got even more difficult for him in my estimation, Shark.

MB: Bum knee, tough opponent, someone out there playing mind games - Whaitiri's in for a rough night if you ask me.

[With his foes lying in wait, Whaitiri's introduction is kicked off the sound of AC/DC's rock classic "Thunderstruck."]

HS: Oh yeah! And you know what this means! New Zealand's fighting son is heading to the ring!

[The 6'3, 255 pound Whaitiri emerges from the back, throwing up an arm in salute to the cheering fans as he hobbles towards the ring. He is the picture perfect pro wrestler... tanned, handsome, muscular... except for the heavy white tape wrapped around his injured knee.]

MB: Right away, Sutton, you see all that wrapping on the leg and what a bullseye that is for a guy like Jack Veles. He's going to dedicate this match to ripping that leg to shreds and I, for one, am going to enjoy watching him do it.

[Whaitiri is moving very slowly, wincing with every step on the taped-up leg. His right arm, covered in an intricate series of Maori tribal tattoos, reaches out to slap the occasional hand as Windsor whispers something to Veles who remains with his head covered by the towel, eyes burning into the approaching Whaitiri.]

HS: Whaitiri down by the ring, looking out at all these fans and-

[Suddenly, Veles whips the towel off his head, barreling across the ring, and HURLS himself between the top and middle ropes, throwing himself onto Whaitiri to a huge reaction from the crowd!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

HS: WHATTA DIIIIIIVE! KING-SIZED DIVE THROUGH THE ROPES TO GET THIS PARTY STARTED!

[The 290 pounder climbs back to his feet, a determined expression on his face as he pulls Whaitiri up by this wavy black hair and shoots him back inside the ring. Veles quickly rolls in after him, crawling into a lateral press.]

HS: Veles is looking to end this thing early, fans... but the referee waves him off. He says he hasn't started the match yet!

[An irate Veles is instantly to his feet, bullrushing the referee backwards. The CCW official backpedals into the corner, pleading his case as Veles grabs the top rope, trapping him there. The Caribbean bruiser leans forward, his forehead very close to the referee's as he reads him the riot act from close range.]

HS: Leave him alone, you big bully!

MB: Maybe if he'd do his damn job and count the pin!

HS: The match hadn't started yet! Veles went after him before the bell and-

[The crowd is cheering as Whaitiri slowly gets up off the canvas, approaching the corner where he grabs Veles by the shoulder, wheeling him around into a big swinging right uppercut that snaps Veles' head back!]

HS: Oh! Whaitiri digs down deep for that one!

[A second uppercut lands... and a third...]

MB: Those are closed fists, Sutton!

HS: You think Veles is above throwing a fist or two?

MB: I think Veles isn't above doing whatever it takes to win this match. Can Whaitiri say the same?

[Grabbing Veles by the arm, Whaitiri whips him away from the corner to the far side, sending him crashing into the buckles. The New Zealand native pauses, checking on the official's welfare before he turns, charging in on Veles.]

HS: Leaping forearm in the corner! And Whaitiri has him trapped against the buckles...

[The referee steps from the corner, signaling for the bell.]

"DING! DING! DING!"

HS: And there's the bell to start this one.

MB: When Whaitiri is in control. I tell ya, Sutton, the bias towards Whaitiri is so thick, you could-

HS: Cut it with a knife?

MB: What the hell does that even mean?

[With Veles trapped in the corner, Whaitiri squares up, throwing hooking blows to the head...]

HS: Whaitiri trying to chop the 6'4, 290 pounder down to size... right hand... left hand... right hand... left hand!

[The blows are landing flush for a bit before Veles brings up his arms to defend, absorbing some of them. He lashes out, landing a jab to the bridge of the nose that sends Whaitiri stumbling backwards, grabbing at his face.]

MB: Hah! Send the pretty boy to the plastic surgeon!

[Veles steps out, ready to follow up...

...but Whaitiri elevates, lashing out with both legs, catching Veles square on the chin and sending him down to the mat!]

HS: Standing dropkick and it was a beauty, fans! Picture perfect height... great extension... and that one sends Veles down to the floor.

[Veles paces around the ringside area, looking for a way to regroup as Whaitiri gets up to his feet. The referee starts his ten count on Veles but only gets up to about three before Veles pulls himself up on the apron. The fired-up Whaitiri is instantly on him though, landing a big leaping overhead elbow to the crown of the skull, knocking Veles back down to the floor to big cheers from the New Orleans crowd.]

HS: And down goes Veles again! Whaitiri holding court in mid-ring, daring the big man from the Caribbean to do something about it.

[Veles approaches the ring again, shouting something up at Whaitiri who beckons him forward. Veles suddenly goes low, reaching under the ropes to grab Whaitiri by the ankle.]

MB: Oho! Here we go... going after that leg...

[Whaitiri frantically uses his other leg to kick at Whaitiri's grip, stomping down on the wrist. Veles recoils, shaking out his arm in pain as the crowd cheers again...

...and Whaitiri steps up on the middle rope, grabbing the top as he gets some lift, swinging down with his legs under the second rope and DRIVES both feet into the face of Veles!]

HS: WRECKING BALL DROPKICK!

[Veles stumbles back, falling to a knee on the floor as Whaitiri gets back to his feet, shaking out his taped-up knee as he walks around the ring, shouting to the cheering fans.]

HS: Shark, I'd have to say that Whaitiri is not simply the most popular competitor in CCW these days... but he's one of the most popular competitors in all of wrestling.

MB: Bully for him. Why don't you ask Travis Lynch what the cheers of the fans means when you're a disgrace to yourself?

HS: For those who missed it, my broadcast colleague here had a little verbal run-in with the AWA National Champion at the SuperClash Press Conference earlier this week and... well, that much salt is bad for you, Shark.

MB: How long have you been waiting to use that one, Sutton? Since some bonehead on the Internet said it? The only thing bad for me is seeing the title that I held before anyone else turned into a joke... an afterthought... by a guy who breaks his own record for title reign length every time he steps into the ring.

[Whaitiri circles back around as Veles gets up on the apron, looking to get in...

...and catches the incoming Whaitiri with a swinging knee up through the ropes.]

HS: Jack Veles going downstairs on Whaitiri, cuts him off...

[Veles steps through the ropes, slamming a pair of forearms down across the doubled-up Whaitiri's back, forcing him down to his knees. Veles looks out at the jeering crowd, grabbing Whaitiri by the wrists...]

HS: What is this now?

[Whaitiri senses danger, twisting his body around, crossing Veles' arms in front of him, and uses the awkward hold and his position down on a knee to leverage Veles up and over with a throw.]

HS: Nice counter by Whaitiri... on his feet... to the ropes...

[But suddenly, Whaitiri pitches forward, falling facefirst to the mat. He pops up to a knee, looking angry.]

MB: Hah! What a klutz!

HS: Something happened there and you know it, Shark!

[Whaitiri points an accusing finger at Lord William Wesley Windsor who shakes his head defiantly.]

HS: Oh, he did it... you can see it all over his smug face!

MB: Oh yeah? Prove it!

[Whaitiri rises off the mat, shouting at Windsor as he approaches him...

...which allows the rising Veles to rush him from behind, putting a knee into the back that sends Whaitiri falling through the ropes to the floor outside the ring!]

“OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

HS: A hard fall to the outside of the ring here on the campus of Tulane University... and with just a few minutes gone in this match, it’s been a very hard-hitting and exciting affair, Shark.

MB: A lot on the line in this one. Guys work their whole lives to get their chance at the big time and these two have a chance to earn their spot on the biggest show of the year. Those are huge stakes and I can’t wait to see Jack Veles in Steal The Spotlight tomorrow, Sutton.

HS: A big presumption on your part, Shark. Couldn’t it be Whaitiri in that ladder match just as easily?

MB: How do you even compare a stone cold killer like Jack Veles with a baby-kissing suckup like Whaitiri?

HS: These fans sure think Whaitiri could win this thing.

MB: Oh, that must be why they’re paid so much money for their expert analysis of the professional wrestling action... oh wait, that’s me. The fans have opinions, sure. But as much as they think their opinions matter, they don’t. So they can keep their star ratings and their brushes with greatness on Twitter. They don’t know a damn thing until I tell them how it is.

[The referee is still reprimanding Windsor who shakes his head, walking away as Veles steps to the apron, dropping down to the floor.]

HS: Veles outside the ring now, going after Whaitiri who is trying to get up off the mats at ringside...

“WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!”

“OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

HS: My god, what a chop out of Veles!

MB: You talk about hard-hitting action, Sutton - Jack Veles is going to bring that part of the equation in spades!

[A second chop lands, splashing across the chest of Whaitiri, sending him stumbling back against the barricade as a rapidly-reddening welt starts to form on his massive chest.]

HS: Whaitiri back against the steel railing at ringside...

[Grabbing Whaitiri by his wavy black hair, Veles launches into a ferocious barrage of short elbow strikes to the side of the head, leaving the New Zealander reeling before he drags him off the railing...

...and SMASHES him facefirst into the ring apron!]

MB: Faceful of canvas for Whaitiri - look at this!

[To the jeers from the crowd and the high-pitched squeals of terror from the ladies in the house, Veles uses two hands full of hair to drag Whaitiri's face back and forth across the apron...]

HS: Savage actions by Veles, trying to put a serious hurt on Whaitiri out on the floor.

[The warning from the official causes Veles to back off, leaving Whaitiri to slide down to a knee on the floor, still leaning up against the apron...]

...which is when Veles charges back in, laying in a heavy kick to the face, knocking Whaitiri flat on his back!]

HS: Veles showing the fans why he's considered one of the best strikers in the sport these days, using that running kick to drop Whaitiri like a bad habit as the referee continues to count both competitors out of the ring.

[Veles pulls Whaitiri to his feet, shoving him under the ropes before rolling himself back in. Again, he crawls into a lateral press.]

HS: Our first pin attempt of the match...

[A two count follows before Whaitiri kicks out.]

MB: Correction, Sutton. Veles went for a pin earlier but the referee - in his Whaitiri-fueled bias - refused to count it.

HS: You seriously think there's a bias against Veles in this?

MB: No, I think Veles is irrelevant in that. It could be any opponent and there would be a bias because it's a bias FOR Whaitiri. Look, Sutton... even a rosy-glassed optimist like you has to admit that promotions are biased towards certain competitors because of the way they look or talk or whatever. And even a blind man could see that Whaitiri is the Chosen One by the suits. They want to see him succeed. They want him to win this tournament. They want him in that match at SuperClash tomorrow... and even if the referee isn't consciously trying to make that happen, he has to know in his subconscious what needs to be done to make his bosses happy.

HS: I don't know, Shark... conspiracy theories? You're starting to sound a little like those guys on the Internet you despise so much.

MB: You take that back, Sutton. I may be retired but I'm still in good enough shape to take you down.

HS: I have no doubt of that, my friend.

[Veles pulls Whaitiri to his feet, shoving him back into the corner where he rushes in with a clothesline.]

HS: Clothesline in the buckles by Veles, rocking Whaitiri with that one...

[He twists his body around, using his back to hold Whaitiri in the corner...

...and throws a quick one-two of back elbows to the sides of Whaitiri's head.]

HS: Whaitiri in a bit of a daze after those elbows to the noggin...

[Veles reaches back, snatching a snap mare and taking Whaitiri down to the mat where he promptly drills him with a kick between the shoulderblades!]

HS: Kick to the spine by Veles...

[Veles BLASTS the seated Whaitiri across the chest with a knife edge chop.]

HS: ...chop to the chest by Veles!

[And with Whaitiri prone on the mat, Veles leaps high into the air, dropping a knee down across the chest.]

HS: And a king-sized kneedrop finds the mark to finish it off! Lateral press by Veles gets one... gets two...

[But Whaitiri slips the shoulder up off the mat, breaking the pin attempt.]

HS: Two count there for the near-three hundred pounder... ohh! Short forearm to the jaw... and another!

[A flurry of short forearms finds the mark as Veles holds Whaitiri off the mat by the hair... and then shoves him back down, settling into another pin attempt.]

HS: Another two count for Jack Veles who looks to be trying to end this one early, Shark.

MB: It's a smart move, Sutton. The winner of this one has one hell of a tough fight ahead of them tomorrow night in the Superdome so winning quick would be ideal for them both.

[Climbing back to his feet, Veles keeps his grip on Whaitiri's hair, landing a front kick to the face... and another... and another...]

HS: Not much on these kicks - more agitating than aggressive.

[Veles pulls Whaitiri to full height, using a knife-edge chop to send him staggering backwards towards the ropes...

...where he pushes off, leaping up to deliver a forearm to the jaw to big cheers!]

HS: Veles lands the chop but Whaitiri is fighting back!

[Veles lands another chop but Whaitiri returns fire with a forearm to the side of the head!]

HS: These two big, big men are trading blows in the middle of the ring... in the middle of the Finals of the Brass Ring Tournament!

[The Caribbean native winds up, landing a third chop...

...and with a mighty roar of energy, Whaitiri unleashes a flurry of palm thrusts to the chest followed by two big uppercuts, snapping Veles' head back and driving him across the ring!]

HS: Whaitiri's got the spirit of the islands in him, driving him forward and back into the fray!

[With Veles up against the ropes, Whaitiri lands one more uppercut before turning on his heels, running across the ring, rebounding off the far side...

...and running right into a running big boot to the mush by Veles who followed him in!]

“OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

[Whaitiri falls back into the ropes from the impact of the boot, staggering off into Veles’ waiting arms as he flings the New Zealander across the ring with ease!]

HS: Northern Lights Suplex - and he didn’t hang on to that at all, Shark, tossing Whaitiri across the ring like a sack of garbage.

MB: That’s strength, Sutton. That’s power. But it’s also picture perfect technique and execution.

[Coming up off the mat, Veles viciously stomps down on the sternum of Whaitiri, making sure he stays in position as the 290 pound beast races to the ropes, building momentum as he rebounds, leaping into the air, and crashes down backfirst on the chest of the New Zealander!]

HS: SENNNNNNTONNNNN BOMB!

[Veles throws his arms apart in a “it’s over!” gesture before settling into another pin attempt.]

HS: Could this be enough right here?

[The referee counts one... counts two... counts...]

HS: NO! Shoulder’s out at two!

[The fans jeer for Whaitiri as Veles takes a knee, glaring at the official. In the background, we can hear Lord William Wesley Windsor at ringside barking angrily at the referee as well.]

HS: Veles and Windsor giving the referee a little lip but that’s undeserved if you ask me. That looked like a good count from my vantage point.

MB: I’ve gotta agree, Sutton. Veles needs to keep his eyes on the prize and not get wrapped up in some foolishness with the ref.

[Veles drags Whaitiri off the mat by the arm, winding up...]

HS: Another big chop by Veles... Whaitiri’s chest is rapidly becoming a red mess, Shark.

MB: Welcome to the world of pro wrestling!

[A second chop sends Whaitiri stumbling backwards, ending up in the corner. Veles nods, backing off as Whaitiri clings to the ropes, trying to stay vertical.]

HS: Big Arawak Jack taking aim here... here he comes!

[Veles moves swiftly for a man of his size, leaping into the air with his arm cocked back...

...and CRASHES chestfirst into an empty set of buckles as Whaitiri lunges clear in time!]

HS: Veles missed! Whatever he had in mind - that big forearm perhaps - he missed it and this is Whaitiri's chance to turn this thing around just short of the ten minute mark in this Main Event contest! Which of these men will score the biggest win of their careers and move on to tomorrow night's Steal The Spotlight ladder match at the biggest pro wrestling show of the year? We may be on the verge of getting the answer to that question!

[Whaitiri slowly hobbles back in to the corner, grabbing Veles by the arm, whipping him across the ring. Veles hits the buckles backfirst, staggering out towards the waiting Whaitiri...

...who lifts Veles up in his powerful arms...]

HS: ARE YOU...

[...and PRESSES HIM OVERHEAD!]

HS: ...KIDDING ME?!

MB: Holy...

[The crowd ROARS at the incredible show of strength as Whaitiri presses the near 300 pound Veles up into the air for all to see...

...and HURLS him down to the canvas to a tremendous roar!]

HS: WHAT A PRESS SLAM OUT OF WHAITIRI! WHAT AN INCREDIBLE MANEUVER!

[Veles clutches at his lower back as he comes up off the canvas...

...and gets steamrolled with a running clothesline that takes him back off his feet!]

HS: Veles goes right back down... and Whaitiri is feeling this moment, fans! Whaitiri realizes he could be on the verge of victory here in New Orleans right about now!

[Pumping his arms up and down, drawing energy from the crowd's vocal support, Whaitiri strides to the far corner. He throws his arms all the way up, drawing them down with a loud "HAAAAAA-OOOOOOOOH-AHHHHHHH!" before he turns back around, planting his fists down on the canvas and staring across the ring, watching and waiting as Veles starts to rise...]

HS: Whaitiri is looking for that spear that he calls the Charge of Tūmataunga! If he hits it, this one might be over right here, fans! Veles is stunned... he's having a hard time getting up off the canvas...

[Veles gestures to the official who gets closer, checking to see if he can continue...

...which allows Lord William Wesley Windsor to snake his way around the ring, ending up behind Whaitiri where he snatches the New Zealand native by the ankle!]

HS: Windsor! That no-good weasel Windsor has got Whaitiri by the ankle!

[An emotionally-charged Whaitiri wrests his leg free, turning to shout at Windsor who backpedals, pleading innocence...]

HS: Whaitiri's going after Windsor now but-

[Windsor's momentary interference and distraction serves its purpose, getting Whaitiri's eyes going the wrong way and allowing Veles to storm past the official, charging across the ring...]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[...and DIVING shoulderfirst into the back of Whaitiri's knee!]

HS: He clipped him! Veles clipped the injured knee - that wrapped knee - and listen to the reaction of Whaitiri!

[The crowd falls quiet as Whaitiri howls in pain, grabbing at the heavily taped knee.]

HS: And this could be a problem, Shark.

MB: Oh, this IS a problem for Whaitiri and his legion of lemmings, Sutton. This is the moment that Jack Veles has waited this entire match for. The knee is hurt... Whaitiri is down... and on my mark, unleash hell.

[Veles grabs the foot of Whaitiri, lifting it off the mat as he swings his own leg and knee into the knee of Whaitiri over and over again...]

HS: And there he goes on cue... going right after the knee... and Lord William certainly looks pleased with himself outside the ring, fans. He's directly responsible for this! I believe Whaitiri was on the verge of victory when Windsor got involved again!

[Still holding the foot, Veles winds up an arm and drives an elbowdrop down into the knee, wrenching it on the way down to the canvas. With the leg wrapped around him, Veles pulls on the ankle, torquing the knee violently as Whaitiri cries out, pounding useless forearms into Veles' hulking back.]

HS: Most people don't know this, fans, but CCW doctors had advised Whaitiri to withdraw from this match. They thought he was risking serious injury to that knee to compete tonight... but the opportunity to become the Brass Ring Tournament winner... to earn that slot in Steal The Spotlight and potentially win that contract... it just meant too much for the young man from New Zealand.

MB: And now Jack Veles may be on the verge of sending Whaitiri to the hospital. Smart move.

HS: Oh, come on, Marcus. You've wrestled hurt before in your career because you knew it was an opportunity you couldn't pass up.

MB: I did, sure. And look at me now. I'm sitting out here with you instead of being in that ring in the Superdome tomorrow night where I belong. Who knows, Sutton? Maybe I'd be in that ring fighting Vasquez for the World Title instead of young punk Martinez. But I'm not because the doctors say this neck is being held together on a string. Wrestling hurt is brave... maybe even noble... but never believe that it's smart. I'll attest to that.

[In the meantime, Veles is back on his feet, dragging Whaitiri across the ring to the ropes. He puts Whaitiri's foot on the ropes before stepping up on them, leaping into the air, and bringing his near 300 pound frame down on the injured limb. Whaitiri cries out in pain again as a cruel smile crosses Jack Veles' face.]

HS: Jack Veles looking to dish out more punishment here in what he hopes will be his ultimate road to victory... but don't doubt that he's enjoying putting a hurt on Whaitiri as well.

MB: Jack Veles believes he's been overlooked for far too long... that he's been sitting here in CCW beating people up while men his lesser have gotten the call to the AWA. So, yeah... he's looking to send a message on his way to Steal The Spotlight tomorrow night in the Superdome.

HS: Say that happens, Shark... do you think Jack Veles can win Steal The Spotlight?

MB: It's a ladder match, Sutton. There are too many intangibles. Anything can happen in a ladder match and you'd be a fool to even try to pick a winner.

HS: Veles continuing to assault the knee, dropping all that weight down on it a second time as we creep towards the fifteen minute mark in this battle.

[Veles yanks Whitiri clear from the ropes by the leg, putting more strain on it before he wraps it up, twisting it around into a spinning toehold.]

HS: Spinning toehold locked in! The very hold that Terry Shane hopes to use tomorrow night against Callum Mahoney to capture the AWA World Television Title! Tonight, we just might see Jack Veles use it to advance to tomorrow's Steal The Spotlight ladder match! Can Whitiri hang on? Can he find an escape?

[Veles leans into the hold, putting maximum pressure on the knee as he shouts "TAP! TAAAAAAAAP!" at his tormented victim. Whitiri defiantly shakes his head, shouting "NOOOOOO!" to the referee's question.]

HS: Whitiri managing to hang on so far... refusing to give up... knowing just how much that spot in Steal The Spotlight is worth to him.

MB: Is it worth a broken leg? A torn ACL? A year or more of his career on the sidelines trying to rehab? Be smart, Whitiri... call it and live to fight another day.

[Again, Whitiri refuses to quit when asked by the official as Veles leans forward...

...and gets popped with a right hand from a desperate Whitiri!]

HS: Oh! Whitiri trying to fight his way free and-

[Veles throws the leg aside, dropping a big elbow on the chest of Whitiri.]

HS: Well, the hold is broken for the moment but perhaps not the way Whitiri was envisioning.

MB: Hey, he's loose. He should be thankful for that.

HS: As we sit here on the campus of Tulane University on Thanksgiving Eve, one of these two men will be very thankful for their victory in the not-too-distant future, fans. The fifteen minute mark of this match is imminent and as Jack Veles drags Whitiri off his feet, shoving him back into the corner, the man from New Zealand is going to need to find a way to turn this thing around and quickly if he hopes to come out on top.

[Backed into the corner again, Veles wraps Whitiri's injured limb around the middle rope, taking aim and launching into a series of brutal and precise kicks to the taped-up knee, the crowd jeering louder with every blow landed...

...and then he angrily switches to chops, lighting up the chest of Whitiri with a barrage of vicious blows across the sternum. The referee steps in, calling for a break which Veles angrily obliges with, stomping away from the turnbuckles. The

camera holds on Whaitiri, trapped in the ropes, a mess of red welts covering his chest as Veles walks to the opposite corner, leaning back against the buckles while the referee tries (and succeeds) in getting Whaitiri's leg free.]

HS: Whaitiri is barely able to stand in that corner after all the abuse that leg has taken during the past several weeks of this tournament... and here comes Veles again!

[Veles barrels in from across the ring, leaping high into the air to land a forearm smash in the buckles!]

HS: Ohhhh!

[He promptly turns his back, leaping up, and twisting around with an enzugiri to the back of the skull!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

HS: Two high impact blows to the skull and Whaitiri is on Dream Street, fans! The end may be near for the brave young man from New Zealand!

[Whaitiri slumps down in the corner, ending up seated on the mat as he leans against the turnbuckles. Veles nods approvingly as he stomps across the ring again, pivoting around...]

HS: Veles charging hard and-

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

HS: CANNONBALLLLLLL SPLASH IN THE CORNER!

[Veles again drags Whaitiri from the buckles, dropping into another pin attempt.]

HS: ONNNNNNE... TWOOOOOOOO... THREEEEEEEEEEEE-

[The crowd ROARS as Whaitiri's shoulder pops off the mat just before the three count falls!]

HS: No! No! Two count only! The shoulder came up!

[An irate Veles is instantly on his feet, holding three fingers in the face of the referee as he backs the official across the ring.]

HS: And Jack Veles is losing control, fans! That temper of his is breaking out and he needs to be careful to not lay one finger on that official or his night just might be over.

MB: If you think he's mad now, Sutton, try him after you disqualify the man in the biggest match of his career.

[Veles grabs at his head in frustration, turning away from the official to approach the corner where Whaitiri is using the ropes, dragging himself back to his feet.]

HS: Veles traps him in the corner... stiff jab to the jaw... and another... and a third!

[Grabbing the arm of the dazed Whaitiri, Veles whips him from corner to corner, sending him crashing into the far turnbuckles...]

HS: Veles has Whaitiri where he wants him, fans... coming in hot!

[The stampeding Veles twists his body around, looking for the running back elbow in the corner...]

HS: ELBOW!

[...and comes up empty as Whitiri DIVES out of the way just in time!]

HS: HE MISSED! VELES HITS THE BUCKLES HARD!

[With the crowd cheering him on, Whitiri pushes himself to his feet, throwing a look towards Veles...

...and surges forward, cocking his right arm back...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

HS: PALM STRIKE! HE JACKED HIS JAW WITH THAT ONE!

[With Veles now reeling in the corner, Whitiri steps up to the middle rope, looking out to salute the cheering CCW crowd. He balls up his fist and goes to work, the crowd counting along with every blow...]

"ONE!"

"TWO!"

"THREE!"

"FOUR!"

"FIVE!"

"SIX!"

"SEV-"

[But before the seventh blow lands, Veles ducks down, dipping between the legs of Whitiri and out of the corner...

...where he grabs the injured leg by the ankle, pulling hard!]

HS: OH!

[The yank pulls Whitiri off the buckles, sending him crashing facefirst down on the turnbuckles. His feet aren't underneath him as he falls, his knee smashing into the canvas...

...which is when Veles snatches him in a rear waistlock, lifting him with ease and DRIVING him down into the canvas with a bridging German Suplex!]

HS: GERMAN OUT OF THE CORNER! THE REFEREE DOWN TO COUNT!

ONNNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOOOO! THREEEEEEEEE-

[HUUUUUUGE CHEER FROM THE CROWD!]

HS: SHOULDER UP! THE SHOULDER IS UP AT TWO! MAN OH MAN, WHAT A SHOWING FROM THESE TWO MEN! THESE TWO WARRIORS!

[Veles is furious as he gets to his feet, again shouting at the official who waves him off, holding up two fingers... and gets one in response. Classy.]

HS: We apologize for that, fans, but in the heat of battle... wait a second!

[The crowd buzzes as Veles yanks Whitiri to his feet again, holding the waistlock...]

HS: Another one?!

[...and LAUNCHES the 255 pound Whaitiri like he's nothing, throwing him down violently on the back of the head and neck with a released German Suplex!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

HS: BIG TIME GERMAN OUT OF VELES! IS THAT ENOUGH?!

[Veles takes a knee, wagging a finger at the jeering crowd as he gets back up, stalking across the ring towards Whaitiri who has managed to roll to his stomach, pushing up with his powerful arms...

...which is where Veles snatches him again, deadlifting him up off the canvas, and THROWING HIM DOWN with brutal impact!]

HS: A THIRD GERMAN SUPLEX BY JACK VELES!

[Veles again throws his arms apart in a "it's over!" gesture before he dives onto the prone Whaitiri.]

HS: VELES GETS ONE!! VELES GETS TWO!! VELES GETS THR- NO! NO! KICKOUT! KICKOUT! MY GOD, HE KICKED OUT!

[The crowd is absolutely going nuts at this point as the series of near falls has them roaring for the New Zealand native as Veles angrily pounds his fists into the canvas in frustration.]

HS: Veles is frustrated! Whaitiri is resilient! And this crowd is deafening, Shark!

MB: I can't believe the son of a bitch kicked out of that. I thought it was over for sure!

HS: Veles is beside himself right now. He's gotta be wondering what else it could possibly take to put this young man away and cash his ticket to SuperClash! What more can he do to him, Shark?

MB: You sure you want to find out?

[Veles climbs to his feet, taking several deep breathes as Lord William scurries about the ringside area, trying to find an optimal location to interfere from if needed. The Caribbean native grabs Whaitiri by his wavy black hair, dragging him off the mat...

...and right into a standing headscissors.]

MB: Hah! You asked for it, Sutton! Now, Veles is REALLY gonna put this kid away!

HS: We know Jack Veles is a big fan of that pop up powerbomb... but rarely do we see one from a standing position. He's set for exactly that though, reaching down to wrap his arms around Whaitiri's muscular torso...

[Veles gives a shout as he muscles Whaitiri up into the air...

...but at the peak of the lift, Whaitiri flips over the top, rolling Veles into a sunset flip!]

HS: ONNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOO! THREEEEEEEEEEEEEEE-

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

HS: SHOULDER UP AT THE LAST POSSIBLE MOMENT!

[Veles scrambles up quickly, looking to get another shot at the powerbomb...

...but Whitiri comes up firing!]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

HS: PALM STRIKE!

[The impact of palm on chin snaps Veles' head back, sending him falling back into the corner, his eyes glassy on impact!]

HS: Holy...

MB: He may have knocked him loopy, Sutton! Veles is dazed!

[Whaitiri hobbles back across the ring, throwing himself back into the corner. He tiredly nods his head several times, throwing his arms all the way up, and drawing them down with a loud "HAAAAAA-OOOOOOOOH-AHHHHHHH!" before he turns back around, planting his fists down on the canvas and staring across the ring...]

HS: He's looking for it again, fans! The Charge of Tūmataunga!

[Lowering his head, Whitiri shakes out his injured leg a few times before charging across the ring. The charge lacks his usual speed and intensity because of the injured knee...

...so few are surprised when Veles sidesteps it, shoving Whitiri chestfirst into the turnbuckles!]

HS: OHH! Veles avoids the spear and-

[Veles wraps his arms around Whitiri's head and neck to a HUGE shocked reaction from the CCW faithful!]

HS: REAR NAKED CHOKE! REAR NAKED CHOKE BY JACK VELES!

MB: This is it, Sutton! Turn out the lights! Turn 'em all out! As my ol' pal, Bucky Wilde used to say... we're goin' to Sizzler!

HS: Do they even have Sizzlers anymore?!

MB: My Malibu Chicken obsession says they do!

[Veles drags Whitiri away from the ropes, beyond the reach of his desperately grasping arms...]

HS: Veles wisely dragging Whitiri out to the center of the ring, his arms constricting the flow of blood to the brain. Whitiri's gotta get out of this quickly or his night - and this tournament - is over!

MB: Jack Veles has walked a long hard road to get to this point, Sutton. Former high school football player, former MMA competitor... he's wrestled in Canada... in his homeland in the Caribbean... even some tours of Japan before he got his Combat Corner tryout!

[Whaitiri reaches out with both arms, desperately trying to get to the ropes to force a break as a defiant Jack Veles shakes his head, arms constricting around the neck as he tries to render his opponent unconscious.]

HS: Whaitiri's trying to get to those ropes but Veles is hanging on! Can Whaitiri find a way out again? Can he continue to defy the odds in this tournament? The fans are behind him! I'm sure his home country of New Zealand is behind him! But is it enough? Is it enough to inspire him... to drive him to get to those ropes in time?

[Whaitiri takes two big steps forward, arms reaching out...

...which is when Lord William Wesley Windsor scrambles up on the apron, grabbing the top rope with both hands, pulling it backwards and out of Whaitiri's potential grasp. The crowd EXPLODES in jeers for Windsor as the referee immediately gets up in his face, protesting the blatant attempt to interfere.]

HS: Windsor's trying to keep the ropes away from Whaitiri! The referee is beside himself at that action and-

[Veles takes just a split second to shout at Windsor to get off the apron...

...and that moment of distraction is all Whaitiri needs to surge forward, grabbing the middle rope, yanking himself towards it as he ducks low...]

HS: MALFUNCTION AT THE JUNCTION!

[...and causes Veles to crash into Windsor, a blow that knocks Windsor off the apron to a loud ovation and one that causes Veles to stumble backwards stunned!]

HS: VELES AND WINDSOR HIT HEADS, I BELIEVE, AND-

"HAAAAAA-OOOOOOOOH-AHHHHHHH!"

[Whaitiri bounces off the ropes, getting a few steps under him before launching himself at Veles...]

HS: SPEAR! SPEAR! THE CHARGE OF TŪMATAUENGA!

[The crowd ERUPTS for one of Whaitiri's signature moves as he dives across the torso, wrapping up both legs tightly.]

HS: ONNNNNNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO! THREEEEEEEEEEEEEEEE-

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

MB: KICKOUT! KICKOUT AT TWO!

HS: Incredible! I thought he had him right there... and look at Whaitiri! Look at Whaitiri rolling to the apron with every bit of strength he has left in his body!

[With Veles prone and rolling around on the mat, Whaitiri drags himself to his feet on the apron, hobbling on his taped-up knee towards the corner.]

HS: Are you kidding me?!

MB: He can't do it, Sutton!

HS: That remains to be seen, Shark! Whitiri steps to the second rope... trying to get himself up for Ranginui's Prayer, that flying splash off the top! If he can get there... if he can hit that...

[Whaitiri grimaces, shaking out his leg as he tries to get to the top rope. He pulls hard with his powerful arms, trying to drag himself up...

...and ends up on his perch, barely able to stand as he looks out on the roaring crowd, arms spread wide...]

HS: HE'S UP THERE! HE MADE IT! HE... LEAPS!

[Whaitiri leaps high into the air, soaring through the sky as Veles lies prone...

...and CRASHES down with all his weight on Veles' torso!]

HS: HE GOT IT! ONNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOO! THREEEEEEEEEEEEEEE!

"DING! DING! DING!"

[Whaitiri rolls off of Veles, wearily throwing an arm into the air as the Tulane University crowd roars with support for the New Zealander.]

HS: Whitiri has done it! He's beaten Jack Veles! He's won the Brass Ring Tournament! And he's won the final spot in tomorrow night's Steal The Spotlight ladder match at SuperClash! What a night it's been here from the Devlin Fieldhouse on the campus of Tulane University, fans!

[Whaitiri continues to celebrate as we fade from that live shot...

...to another live shot, this one of the stage set up in the Superdome parking lot. The fans are cheering the action they just saw. Even Mark Stegglet claps a few times before addressing the crowd.]

MS: Whitiri is headed to Steal The Spotlight... and I can't think of a better way to wrap up this night - the eve of SuperClash VIII which will go down tomorrow evening in that magnificent building right behind us here. For pro wrestling fans, it is by far the biggest night of the year and it's almost upon us, fans! Are you excited?

[The fans cheer in response.]

MS: Are you pumped up?!

[A louder cheer.]

MS: Are you hyped?!

[Even louder still. Stegglet grins.]

MS: Me too. And it's less than 24 hours away now. I'm excited, you're excited, the city of New Orleans is excited and...

[Stegglet's words drift off as something seems to catch his eye off-camera. He pauses, rising out of his seat. He looks around, concern evident on his face as a figure somehow manages to get past security and climb up on the stage. Stegglet backpedals, looking alarmed as the figure comes into view. Security rushes forward to encircle Stegglet and subdue the figure as the crowd buzzes with confusion.]

MS: It's okay! It's... he's not dangerous!

[Security pauses at Stegglet's words but doesn't back off completely. They do, however, loosen their perimeter around both men and we get our first full glimpse of the intruder... Jason Dane.]

MS: Jason, what in the world are you-

[Dane interrupts.]

JD: Mark, I don't have time. It's live so I knew I could get... they're coming, Mark. They're coming.

MS: Who is-

JD: Korugun. They're-

MS: Jason, they own part of the company now. They're already here.

JD: No, no... you don't understand. This is just the beginning. They've got... it's a god [BLEEP] army, Mark. It's the end of-

[And abruptly, we cut to black...]