

Memorial Day Mayhem Pre-Game Show

Monday, May 30th, 2016
KeyArena
Seattle, Washington

[We fade up from black on a shot of a tired-looking Director of Operations, Emerson Gellar. The shot is a closeup so we can't see his surroundings as he begins to speak.]

EG: Hello, AWA fans, and welcome to the Memorial Day Mayhem Pre-Game Show right here live on The X.

[Gellar takes a deep breath.]

EG: It has admittedly been a very exhausting week for many here in the AWA including myself. Earlier this week, as everyone has heard by now, there was an incident regarding Casey James and Tiger Claw that will be addressed later tonight.

But since then, we've had another development.

[Gellar's voice changes slightly, a steely tone creeping in.]

EG: Two nights ago at an AWA live event in Portland, Oregon, there was an assault in the parking lot. The perpetrators of this attack were none other than the Kings of Wrestling and the victim of the attack was one of the men scheduled to face them here tonight in Seattle - Calisto Dufresne.

Thanks to a fan who was in the parking lot taking video of the wrestlers arriving at the building, we have exclusive footage to show you later in the Pre-Game Show about this very serious incident.

[Gellar sighs.]

EG: Since the formation of the professional wrestling business many decades ago, a phrase has appeared at the bottom of every lineup - "Card Subject To Change." And tonight, unfortunately, we are being forced to use that clause.

Because of the actions of the Kings of Wrestling, Calisto Dufresne has suffered an injury to his arm. We do not know how long Mr. Dufresne will be out of action but we DO know that he has NOT been medically cleared to compete here tonight.

[The Director of Operations lets that news sink in a bit before continuing.]

EG: Last night, Travis Lynch was informed of this situation and has been given two options by myself in consultation with the Championship Committee.

Option one... Mr. Lynch can withdraw from the match and we will reschedule the match whenever Mr. Dufresne is medically cleared. In this case, we would find an alternate opponent for the World Tag Team Champions here tonight because they WILL defend those titles.

Or option two... Mr. Lynch can find another partner to stand by his side later tonight in the Winner Takes All matchup.

[Gellar pauses.]

EG: As of right now, we do not have Mr. Lynch's answer but I intend to get that answer before this Pre-Game Show leaves the airwaves here tonight. If you're at home watching this, still wondering if you should drop your hard-earned money on Memorial Day Mayhem, I guarantee you will know if Travis Lynch will compete here tonight or not before you have to make that final decision.

Thank you. And enjoy the show.

[Fade through black...

...and up onto a shot of the Space Needle. The voice of Theresa Lynch is heard.]

TL: Moments into our broadcast and news is already being made, wrestling fans! Calisto Dufresne is OUT due to injury! And now the question is will Travis Lynch compete tonight or will he step aside for another team to take their spot?

[We fade to a shot of a table with our Pre-Game Show panel seated at it. We can see the Seattle skyline in the background.]

TL: Hello everyone, and welcome to the Memorial Day Mayhem Pre-Game Show from high atop the city of Seattle... right up here on top of the Space Needle! Is this something else or what, guys?

[Words of agreement comes from most of the panel. Vernon Riley is peeking over his shoulder and seems less than thrilled.]

TL: I'm Theresa Lynch and you usually find me hosting the Power Hour but this is the hour with the power right here tonight, fans.

[Theresa is dressed down for this panel in a red wool jacket over a black top.]

TL: It's a brisk day here in Seattle - made even chillier way up here, guys.

[The camera lands first on Colt Patterson who has foregone the cold weather gear to show off the guns in a shimmering silver tanktop. He's wearing a matching beret and gold-tinted sunglasses.]

CP: I don't know what you're talking about, Theresa. With you and I up here, it's not cold at all... in fact, it's red hot!

[Patterson strikes a single bicep pose as we cut to a shot of the first AWA National Champion, Marcus Broussard.]

TL: Marcus, I know you love Memorial Day Mayhem.

MB: Absolutely, Theresa. Mayhem is where I became the first ever National Champion - at the very first Memorial Day Mayhem.

CP: It's also where your AWA career ended, jack.

MB: Thanks for the reminder, Colt. Couldn't have done it without you.

[A chuckling Vernon Riley gets the camera over on him.]

TL: Big Vern, welcome to Seattle!

VR: Theresa, I look around this panel and see myself up here with two of the best to ever lace 'em up and I'm just honored to be a part of this. Memorial Day Mayhem is here and I'm pumped up, baby!

[We cut back to a wide shot of the entire foursome.]

TL: We've got a lot of news... a lot of analysis... a lot of everything here tonight. Plus, right down there in the shadow of the Space Needle, we've got the fans filing in to see two great matches in the next... what's the clock say, guys?

[The digital countdown clock appears in the corner of the screen, reading 56:24.]

TL: Fifty-six minutes and counting 'em down until the biggest stage of the summer! We're here to get you ready for this one right here LIVE on The X and if you haven't already placed your order, now's the time. Get on your TV, get on your computer, don't miss out on one of the biggest shows of the year! It's Memorial Day Mayhem and we're under an hour away, fans. Right now though, we're going over to the KeyArena where Mark Stegglet and Sweet Lou Blackwell are standing by. Gentlemen?

[We cut to Mark Stegglet and Sweet Lou Blackwell standing in the middle of the squared circle in the KeyArena. The fans cheer upon seeing themselves on the screen. More and more fans seem to be crowding into the shot as Stegglet and Blackwell speak.]

MS: Thanks, Theresa, and Sweet Lou, it's going to be one heck of a night!

SLB: It absolutely is and as I look at Theresa and the gang over there on top of the Space Needle, I just have to say that as the only guy to get vertigo climbing a foot stool, I'm so very happy to be standing here with you, Mark.

MS: Well, I appreciate that. Of course, fans, the hot story of the moment is what went down with Calisto Dufresne two nights ago in Portland. We'll be bringing you that video later in the show. We've got Canibal taking on Caspian Abaran. We've got Terry Shane and Pure X going against Callum Mahoney and Kerry Kendrick. Plus so much more. I'm really looking forward to tonight and this is just the beginning of it. Theresa, back to you.

[We cut back to the panel.]

TL: Thanks, boys... and yes, it really is just the beginning. We've got a tremendous show ahead of us tonight with some matches that many of us have been looking forward to for a while now. Big Vern, hit me with the match you're looking forward to the most.

[The shot cuts to the veteran wrestler-turned-backstage-agent.]

VR: You know, it's gotta be this big Battle Royal, Theresa. Big Vern loves a big ol' scrum as much as the next guy but when you open it up and invite anyone in the world to come to Seattle to get it on, you're in for a real treat.

TL: Colt Patterson, you have a prediction for us in that one?

CP: You know, Theresa... when you don't even know everyone who is in the match, that makes it hard to pick a winner... but I'm going to go out on a limb and predict that the Electric Dragon, Noboru Fujimoto, is gonna shock everyone and take home the W in this one.

TL: Of course, whoever walks out the winner of this Battle Royal automatically earns a bid in the Battle of Boston tournament coming up over the 4th of July weekend and don't have to go through the Committee selection process. Shark, who have you got in the Battle Royal?

MB: Picking anyone other than Torin The Titan seems kind of silly to me, Theresa, but I think I have to. Torin might have the overwhelming size and strength to win it all but when you look at how focused Supreme Wright has been later... how determined he's been to show the world that he's still the best wrestler on the planet... it's hard to imagine him not willing himself to victory tonight.

TL: The Battle Royal certainly is going to be one of the featured attractions tonight but tonight is also a night of big debuts, guys. We've got two big advertised debuts. First, let's talk about Mason.

[Colt Patterson's feathers appear to be ruffled.]

CP: Yeah, let's talk about Mason. What do we know about him other than he seems to be the golden boy of the marketing department? Shark, you've been in this business a long time now. You ever seen anyone get so much hype when we don't know anything about him?

[Broussard chuckles.]

MB: I make it a point never to argue with you, Colt. It's true - we don't know much about Mason at all. We've seen the hype videos. We saw guys like Brian James talk him up too... so there's reason to believe this guy might be the real deal but until we see him in the ring tonight, I'm not sure I can fully buy in.

TL: Public Enemy says don't believe the hype. Big Vern, what do you think about Mason?

VR: Unlike these two, I DO know a bit about Mason. I've been in the office when they're putting together these hype packages. I've seen him in action in all sorts of combat sports. I think the AWA fans are in for a treat tonight.

TL: Well, speaking of a treat, how about our other big debut tonight? The long-awaited arrival of Olympic gold medalist, Ayako Fujiwara!

[Cut to Broussard.]

MB: Now this is going to be something else, Theresa. Charisma Knight is arguably the greatest women's wrestler in the world... I think we can put a few other names in that debate too but she's up there, right?

[Nods all around.]

MB: But tonight, she's facing a woman who is a superstar before she even laces her boots for the AWA. Ayako Fujiwara has been a huge star for women's wrestling -

joshi - in Japan and sparked a bidding war when she decided to come to the States. But the AWA got her and tonight, we're going to see if she's worth the price they paid.

VR: And if you're Charisma Knight and you believe that you're truly the best wrestler in the world, how frustrated are you that all the hype this weekend is going to Fujiwara? I expect to see Knight come out strong... real strong... and try to spoil Fujiwara's debut.

TL: It oughta be real interesting to see if she can pull that off... but right now, we're heading back over to the KeyArena for the very first match of the night pitting the luchador Caspian Abaran against the very dangerous Canibal! Our own Harvey Sutton and he's got a very special guest with him, former AWA President Karl O'Connor! Boys, take it away!

[We cut back inside the KeyArena where we see the aforementioned duo. Harvey Sutton is a straight-laced play by play man somewhere in his mid-30s. He's got curly brown hair and a swank mustache. By his side is the man known as the Strangler, Karl O'Connor. O'Connor looks better than during his final days as the AWA President. His salt and pepper hair is well-groomed as he smiles at the camera.]

HS: Thanks, Theresa, and what a distinct honor it is to be here at the KeyArena to kick off the biggest stage of the summer - Memorial Day Mayhem! And somehow, it's even a bigger honor to be standing here calling the action on the Pre-Game Show alongside an absolute legend in our sport. Karl O'Connor, welcome to Memorial Day Mayhem!

KOC: Thank you, Harvey, and I'd also like to thank everyone involved with the AWA for bringing me here to Seattle tonight to be a part of this show. Memorial Day Mayhem has always been one of my favorite events of the year for the AWA and I'm so thrilled to be here.

HS: Karl, there's a lot of great action coming up here tonight but kicking things off here with us is going to be one heck of a fast-paced encounter when we see a battle of the luchadors - Caspian Abaran taking on Canibal!

KOC: Heh. You think it's going to be fast-paced, do ya? You might be right, Harvey. These two are two of the best flip and flyers in the game today but I've got a feeling that Caspian Abaran is going to have a bug in him over what Canibal did to him and this is gonna turn into a fight because of it.

HS: For those who aren't familiar with what you're talking about, let's set the stage. It was several weeks ago at an AWA live event where Caspian Abaran was scheduled to take on Kerry Kendrick - a match that fans saw on the Power Hour. Canibal got involved in that match, and used that "blood mist" for lack of a better term, on Abaran in mid-dive. Abaran took a hard fall to the floor and suffered some eye trauma. Tonight marks his return to the ring and you're right, Karl, he's going to be looking for payback.

KOC: If I was him, I would be lookin' for it Strangler Style.

[O'Connor makes a gesture like hooking in his trademark sleeperhold.]

HS: Let's go to the ring for tonight's opening contest!

[We cut to the ring where a ring announcer we don't know is standing. Her name, by the way, is Rebecca Ortiz, and she stands in a sequined red dress showing off some cleavage... not a ton, this is still a family show.]

RO: The first contest of the night is scheduled for one fall with a twenty minute time limit.

[The opening to "Nomad" by Santana starts to play over the PA.]

RO: First, from Montemorlos, Mexicooooo... weighing in at 209 pounds... he is the Prince of the Sun...

CAAAAAASPIIIIIIAAAAAAAN AAAAAABAAAAARAAAAAN!

[The crowd cheers as the music builds. When the famous guitar of Carlos Santana begins to play about fifteen seconds in, Caspian Abaran splits the curtain and jogs out to the approval of the crowd. A young Mexican man with deeply tanned skin and curly dark brown hair, Abaran's attractiveness draws some high-pitched cheers from the female supporters. Abaran's tights are a bright yellow, with intricate patterns intertwined in red and brown down both legs. His boots are red, and has similar intertwined patterns in yellow and brown. He also has wristbands, striped in red, yellow, and brown. Abaran raises his hands up in the air and does a twirl as he jogs to catch all sides of the arena.]

HS: The Prince of the Sun indeed! Caspian Abaran is one of the most popular competitors in the AWA locker room and if you caught Hype Central earlier this week, we saw him visiting some children in the local community - a real treat for those kids.

KOC: This is one of those guys that you can't help but to like, Harvey. He's just a genuinely nice guy... a good kid... and a heck of a professional wrestler.

HS: Gone are the bandages we saw last week on Saturday Night Wrestling. Caspian Abaran, my friend, is ready for action.

[Quickly arriving at ringside, Abaran jogs down the apron and around to his left. He turns and spreads his arms out to the side, reaching them forward to acknowledge the crowd. The nimble luchador then backflips over the top rope into the ring, and proceeds to the opposite corner to greet the fans there.]

RO: Annnnnnd his opponent...

[A woman screams in panic for a moment, a shrill dramatic tone right out of a slasher movie, bringing a disgusted look to the face of Rebecca Ortiz.]

RO: From JUAR-EZZZZ, Mexicooooo... weighing in at 245 pounds...

EL MONSTRUOOOO ASESINOOOOO...

CAAAAAANNNNNIBAAAAAALLLLLLL!

[Then, "Twist of Cain" by Danzig starts its sinister beat and on cue, Canibal stalks through the curtain.]

HS: When you talk about disturbing and twisted individuals, this has gotta be a guy at the top of the list, Karl.

KOC: They used to say the same things about me, Harvey.

HS: Perhaps but you didn't spit blood in the air when you got to the ring.

KOC: No, just in the locker room sometimes when it was over.

[With his head cocked to the side and his posture slightly hunched over, he stares directly at the camera. His eyes seem wide-open, even more so as his sockets are painted pitch black. Slowly, he brings up his hands up to his throat to make a double cut-throat gesture and then point the thumbs downward.

Then, in sync with the refrain of the song, Canibal jerks forward again, quicker than before. He makes his way to the ring with long strides, speeding up to slide into the ring...

...but before he can, Canibal Abaran comes tearing across the ring, connecting with a leaping dropkick through the ropes to the chest, sending Canibal rolling backwards up the aisle to a big cheer!]

HS: FLYING DROPKICK THROUGH THE ROPES AND WE'RE NOT WASTING ANY TIME IN SHOWING WHY THEY CALL THIS SHOW MAYHEM, FANS!

[Abaran rolls back into the ring, looking out to the crowd for a moment before breaking into another dash, hitting the ropes, and sprinting across the ring where Canibal is climbing back to his feet...

...and HURLS himself over the top, diving onto a recovering Canibal with a flying crossbody!]

HS: PLANNNNNNNCHAAAAA OVER THE TOP TO THE FLOOR!

[Abaran gets quickly back to his feet, advancing on the downed Canibal, dragging him to his feet, a trickle of red leaking from the corner of Canibal's mouth.]

HS: Caspian Abaran bringing the high impact offense before Canibal can do his little pre-match ritual and I think that's what we're seeing out of his mouth rather than actual blood.

KOC: Maybe but that dropkick caught him right in the kisser!

[Abaran rockets Canibal back under the ropes inside the ring, pulling himself up on the apron, ducking through into the ring as Canibal crawls away from him.]

HS: A new official joining us here tonight in this one as well - former professional wrestler Jack Marshall has been hired by the front office as a special troubleshooting referee from what I've been told. They believe he's got the toughness and experience to not let some of the shenanigans we've been seeing lately happen.

KOC: My kind of guy if it's true.

HS: You've been known to cause some shenanigans from time to time, Strangler.

[O'Connor chuckles.]

KOC: In my youth, kid. In my youth.

[Canibal has wobbled back into the corner as Abaran approaches, throwing a kick to the body.]

HS: Abaran's got him trapped in the corner, kicking away at the midsection.

[Marshall steps in, physically intervening as he pushes Abaran back with a gruff reprimand.]

HS: Jack Marshall making his presence known, making sure that Abaran obeys the count.

[Abaran grabs the wrist of Canibal, whipping him from corner to corner...]

HS: Abaran shoots him into the far corner, coming in fast!

“WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!”

“OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

[The former El Príncipe Del Sol rushes across the ring, delivering a running overhand chop to the chest! He grabs Canibal by the arm, whipping him across again and running in after him again...]

“WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!”

“OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

HS: AND ANOTHER ONE! HOOOOLY COW!

KOC: Look at the red welt on Canibal’s chest after that! Abaran ain’t pulling his punches tonight, Harvey.

[Abaran grabs the arm, whipping across again.]

HS: Third time’s a charm perhaps as Abaran charges in!

[He leaps up, looking for a high leaping leg lariat but Canibal front rolls out, avoiding it...

...but Abaran sails over the ropes, landing safely out on the apron!]

HS: Wow! What a show of athleticism by Abaran!

[Abaran moves down the apron towards Canibal, leaping up to the second rope, springing off, twisting around into a somersault on Canibal who is still inside the ring!]

“OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

HS: Abaran is flip, flop, flying around that ring!

[Abaran hooks a loose side headlock on the mat, trapping Canibal as he rifles some short right hands into the skull!]

HS: Abaran firing away on Canibal, battering him with-

[Canibal wriggles free, rolling under the ropes to the floor. He glares up at Abaran as Jack Marshall steps in, forcing the luchador back away from the ropes.]

HS: A tremendous surge of offense to start this match out of Caspian Abaran!

[Out on the floor, Canibal circles the ring, glaring up at Abaran who tries to get past Marshall at him but Marshall keeps him back.]

HS: Jack Marshall doing an excellent job of keeping Abaran in the ring in his debut as an AWA official.

KOC: He’s gotta be close to three bills in there, Harvey. Not many guys are going to be moving him around.

[Abaran tries to get past Marshall again but gets shoved back before a warning finger gets stuck in his face.]

HS: The official threatening Abaran with a disqualification if he doesn't follow the rules... and all this has allowed Canibal some time to recover out on the floor, climbing up on the apron...

[This time, the luchador does get around the official, rushing in towards Canibal...

...who swings his leg between the ropes, catching Abaran with a solid kick to the side of the knee.]

HS: Canibal lands a knee downstairs...

[With Abaran momentarily hobbled, Canibal grabs him by the hair, yanking him between the ropes, swinging his leg upwards...

...and bringing it down HARD on the back of Abaran's head!]

HS: Axe kick out on the apron!

[Canibal backs up, swinging his foot up into a big front kick to the mush of Abaran, knocking his head back.]

HS: The educated feet of Canibal being put to good use here in the opening match tonight in Seattle... of course, fans, when we go LIVE on Pay Per View, it's going to be The Gladiator taking on "Red Hot" Rex Summers in the opening match of that one.

KOC: That should be a hard-fought contest. Summers has everything to lose in that one so he's going to be desperate. He's gonna pull out all the stops trying to keep that Steal The Spotlight contract.

HS: But The Gladiator remains undefeated in his time here in the AWA so far. Can Rex Summers be the first to put a blemish on that spotless record? We're going to find out in just about 44 minutes and change, wrestling fans.

[Canibal slingshots himself over the top, dragging Abaran down into a schoolboy cradle, rolling through it and kicking him flush in the face!]

HS: Innovative offense out of the man they called Monstruo Asesino in his time wrestling down in Mexico - Monster Assassin.

KOC: The Mexican people sure do have a way with words, Harvey.

HS: You can say that again as Canibal has managed to put himself in control of this one, dragging Abaran up by the hair...

[Hanging onto the hair, Canibal delivers a series of short kicks to the face, leaving Abaran staggered and easy prey for a front facelock that Canibal uses to deliver kneestrikes to the head.]

HS: Kicks to the head... now with knees to the head. Canibal using his entire body as a weapon...

[Spinning out of the front facelock, Canibal flips Abaran over into a seated position on the canvas, dashing to bounce off the ropes...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

[...and KICKS him right in the spine!]

HS: You could hear that one all the way up on top of the Space Needle, Strangler.

KOC: One of the hardest kickers in the entire locker room for sure.

[With Abaran down on the mat, Canibal stands over him, looking down on Abaran, shouting at him in Spanish...]

HS: Canibal laying the trash talk down on Caspian Abaran.

KOC: Any idea what he's saying?

HS: Unfortunately, I spent my foreign language years in school learning Latin, Karl.

[Canibal reaches down, slapping Abaran across the face once... twice...]

HS: Paintbrushing the former masked man... now dragging him back to his feet...

[Shoving Abaran back against the ropes, Canibal throws a right-handed punch followed by a left-armed forearm. He repeats the combo, leaving Abaran clutching the ropes to stay on his feet before Canibal shoots him across the ring, sending him bouncing off the ropes...]

HS: Clothesline ducked by Abaran... off the far side...

[And as Abaran rebounds, Canibal does a full spin, nearly separating Abaran's head from his shoulders with a spinning heel kick!]

HS: Abaran nearly lost his head on that one as Canibal delivers that devastating kick, making a quick cover...

[A two count follows before Abaran kicks out. Canibal pushes up to his knees, glaring at Jack Marshall who holds up two fingers. The mysterious man from Juarez runs a hand over his tattoo of a skeleton of an angel wielding a scythe, giving a nod before getting back to his feet.]

HS: What a back and forth battle this has been so far as Canibal drags Abaran back to his feet... oh! Hard backhand strike to the temple sends Abaran to a knee.

[With Abaran down on a knee, Canibal backs off to the far corner. He clutches the ropes with his hands, throwing his head back and spewing the red mist into the air!]

HS: Whoa!

KOC: That's a pretty sickening sight, Harvey.

HS: Caspian Abaran didn't even see it and he may be happy about that as he starts to struggle to his feet...

[As Abaran gets there, Canibal approaches him, twisting and throwing his leg out into a thrust kick, catching Abaran in the chest, sending him flying backwards into the corner...

...and then rushes right in after him, catching him in the chin with another kick!]

HS: YAAAakuuuZAAAA KICK! Right on point!

[Canibal grabs Abaran by the throat, dragging him out of the corner out to the middle of the ring, setting up for his short chokeslam...]

HS: Canibal's got him hooked!

[Looking around at the jeering crowd, Canibal gives a big thumbs down to the crowd before attempting the chokeslam lift...]

...but Abaran slips out, scissoring Canibal's head between his legs, dragging him back down into a double-leg hooked rana!]

HS: RANA! RANA OUT OF NOWHERE!!

[Marshall dives to the canvas.]

HS: ONE!!! TWO!!! THREEEEEE-

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

HS: SHOULDER UP! CANIBAL JUST BARELY GOT OUT OF THAT!

KOC: I thought he had 'im, Harvey.

HS: I think everyone did, Strangler.

[Abaran looks desperately at referee Jack Marshall, holding up three fingers and getting a shake of the head in response.]

HS: New official Jack Marshall - who is doing a tremendous job in this one - says it was only two and Abaran is beside himself.

KOC: He doesn't have time to be beside himself, Harvey. He needs to get up and get back on his opponent. Crying the blues don't get the job done.

[Canibal climbs up off the mat as Abaran does the same.]

HS: Both men up to their feet!

[Canibal fires first, throwing a right hand that Abaran blocks. A left hand follows but Abaran blocks it as well, throwing a kick of his own to the midsection. He grabs Canibal by the arm, whipping him towards the corner...]

HS: In comes Abaran!

[...but as the luchador leaps into the air, Canibal hooks him around the head and neck, HURLING him down to the canvas with tremendous impact!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

HS: BIG URANAGE SLAM IN THE CORNER!

[Canibal drops to his knees, applying a lateral press.]

HS: ONE!!! TWO!!! THRE-

[The crowd ROARS as Abaran kicks out, just barely staying alive in this battle to open up Memorial Day Mayhem!]

HS: This one's still going as Canibal drags him up... slams him headfirst into the corner!

[With Abaran trapped in the corner, Canibal throws a series of roundhouse kicks to the ribcage before grabbing him by the arm.]

HS: Whips him across the ring... coming in after him...

[But at the last moment, Abaran leans back, tucking his legs into his chest which causes Canibal to SLAM into the raised knees!]

HS: Oh! Abaran with the counter... hops up to the middle rope...

[Reaching out with both hands, Abaran grabs the hair of Canibal, leaping off, twisting around...]

...and DRIVES Canibal facefirst into the canvas with a split-legged tornado facebuster!]

“OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

HS: THAT’S IT! THAT’S GOTTA BE IT!

[Abaran throws his arms apart, diving across the chest of his opponent...]

HS: ONE!!! TWO!!! THRE-

[But just before the three count can come down, Canibal reaches up, digging his fingers into Abaran’s eyes, and raking them HARD! Abaran cries out, falling off of Canibal, frantically rubbing at his eyes as Canibal slides out from under him, pushing up to a knee as Jack Marshall loudly and angrily reprimands him for the eyerake!]

HS: Canibal went to the eyes - to the injured eyes!

KOC: Exactly what I would’ve done in my glory days.

HS: Abaran can’t see a thing, trying to get back to his feet...

[And with Abaran blinded, he doesn’t see Canibal coming as he leaps into the air, hooking Abaran around the head and neck...]

...and DRIVES the back of his head into the canvas with a twisting lariat takedown!]

HS: TWIST OF CAAAAAAIN!

[With Abaran prone on the canvas, Canibal quickly applies a cover, hooking the leg deeply.]

HS: ONE!! TWO!! THREEEEEEE!!

“DING! DING! DING!”

[As the bell sounds, Canibal slides off of Abaran - almost slithering as he backs away. The crowd jeers loudly as Canibal climbs to his feet, having his hand raised by Marshall as the ring announcer makes it official.]

RO: Here is your winner... CAAAAAANNNNNIBAAAAAAL!

[Canibal steps towards the stunned Abaran who is still rubbing at his eyes. He stands over him, staring down at him as Jack Marshall steps in, demanding that he not attack his defeated opponent any further.]

KOC: Canibal's gotta be careful here, Harvey. A referee has full authority to disqualify someone - to reverse the decision if someone decides to attack a beaten opponent.

HS: I'm sure Canibal is aware of that... but part of you has to wonder if this disturbed individual actually cares.

[Canibal continues to stare and stare until Jack Marshall finally steps in, physically moving Canibal backwards and away from his defeated opponent.]

HS: Jack Marshall finally making sure that Canibal walks away from this... and as he walks away, I'm told he'll be heading over to the interview platform down there on the arena floor where Sweet Lou Blackwell will be standing by.

KOC: Sweet Lou might want to seek the high ground on this one.

HS: Sweet Lou, take it away!

[We cut to the interview platform where, despite Karl O'Connor's warning, Blackwell, always the consummate professional is standing.]

SLB: Take it away indeed. The electricity in the air tonight in the KeyArena is absolutely incredible and after what we just witnessed, I'm guessing this crowd just got even MORE excited about what's to come!

[The fans cheer in response to that. Blackwell looks to the side as Canibal walks up on the platform. A trace of the face paint remains, mixed with sweat and smeared across his left cheek.]

SLB: Canibal, what a win to kick off Memorial Day Mayhem! Do you have any comments about your victory?

[Canibal, eerily wide-eyed, gives a long, dead stare to Sweet Lou. The moment lingers on...]

SLB: I meant-

[Canibal grabs Blackwell's forearm and moves the mic closer to his mouth.]

C : Caspian... you heard him. He proclaimed his intention of ending my pursuit... my hounding... ending me. Instead, he learned that the past grows stronger, every day. He looked away, ignored it... me... for years and years... until tonight, when I paid back all the pain of the times gone by tenfold.

[His strange accent and his low voice sound even more menacing than usual.]

C : He had turned... blind... to reality. Just like every herd animal, grazing on a meadow, does not perceive the danger. They chew, they ruminate... they REGURGITATE, all the while oblivious to the menace.

[He leans forward slightly.]

C: The threat... that is me. The grass eaters... the cows and lambs and sheep... that is everybody in the locker room, in the front office...

[His gaze starts to wander and he raises his voice.]

C: Everybody in the KeyArena tonight!

[The crowd answers with a heated round of boos. His eyes snap back to the camera.]

C: And even you, in your own cozy abode, glued to the idiot box in front of you.

Tonight, you have learned of a stalker. You may deny it. You may try to forget it. But... this knowledge will remain, gnawing, gnawing, gnawing...

[He slowly shakes his head.]

C: ...until you recognize... the HUNGER!

[Finally, he releases Lou Blackwell, who immediately retreats a couple of steps. Canibal does not give him another look as he slowly walks out of the shot.]

SLB: That... uh... well, I don't even know what to say about that. So, uhh... hey, let's go back to our Pre-Game Show panel up on the Space Needle!

[We cut from inside the KeyArena to the Space Needle as our countdown clock reads 39:33. Another cut gets us back to our Pre-Game Show panel.]

TL: Sweet Lou with some cutting edge insight there, gentlemen.

[Laughter all around!]

TL: A big win for Canibal here to open up the show and that's gotta start working him up the ladder of contention, right, Shark?

MB: I would think so, Theresa. A win over quality competition like Caspian Abaran has got to get him in the picture for the World Television Title, in my opinion.

TL: The World Television Title, of course, is on the line later tonight as well when Shadoe Rage gets his long-awaited rematch against the champion, Supernova. And just like when they met at SuperClash, there will be no time limit here tonight.

CP: Yeah, but unlike SuperClash, tonight Shadoe's got his team with him - the Misfits.

TL: The Misfits got themselves in the headlines nine days ago when they defeated Supernova and Derrick Williams... thanks to the aforementioned Shadoe Rage. But you're right, Colt... they could look to repay the favor here tonight to their Coach and help him get the title back.

CP: That's not what I was saying.

VR: Oh, I think it's exactly what you're saying, Colt... and I think it's exactly the gameplan that Shadoe Rage has here tonight. Do you really expect him to go out there all by himself and beat Supernova? I've known Supernova a long, long time and the kid finally got some AWA gold around his waist. If Rage is going to take the title from him, he's going to need to bring every weapon he has at his disposal... including the Misfits.

TL: Big Vern, you have a prediction for this one?

VR: I'm sayin' that 'Nova fights off all the dirty tricks and walks out STILL the champ.

TL: Colt?

CP: Beyond a shadow of a doubt - pun fully intended - the King of Rage Country is going to become a two-time champion here tonight.

TL: Shark?

MB: This is a tough one, Theresa. Supernova's going to be desperate to keep the title he worked so long to get but Rage is borderline obsessed with the World Television Title. I... I'm going to go with Rage recapturing the title here tonight.

TL: We shall all see later tonight. Right now, we're...

[She throws a glance at the monitor.]

TL: ...a little under 38 minutes to go before the opening bell. But we've still got that big tag team matchup to come here in the Pre-Game Show with Kerry Kendrick and Callum Mahoney taking on Pure X and Terry Shane. That's going to be a good one. In fact, I'm told that Mark Stegglet has just caught up with half of that tag team matchup. Let's go back to the KeyArena and see what he's got. Mark?

[We cut to the KeyArena where Mark Stegglet is standing by backstage in front of an AWA banner.]

MS: Thanks, Theresa. Coming up in just a short while is the final match on the Pre-Game Show is the first of two matches on the pre-game show and joining me right now are two of the competitors in that match, two-thirds of the trio known as SM&K...

[Cue Callum Mahoney and Kerry Kendrick, as they stride into shot and flank Stegglet. Erica Toughill is there, too, taking up position slightly behind and to Kendrick's other side. Both men are dressed to compete, Mahoney in a black studded leather jacket, with metallic spikes covering the shoulders and lapels of the jacket, over a black singlet, with the image of a brown bear, standing on its hind legs, across the front. Kendrick is in his midnight green and platinum satin robe.]

MS: Callum Mahoney and the self-proclaimed "Self-Made Man" Kerry Kendrick. Gentleme-

CM: Shut up, Mark! Take charge, Ric.

[Toughill grabs Stegglet by the wrist and guides the microphone toward Mahoney.]

CM: Surely there should not be any questions about a match that we should not even be in for two simple reasons... First, as I have said time and time again, we are done with the misfit-

MS: You're not facing The Mi-

[Erica's grip on Stegglet's wrist tightens.]

CM: What did I tell you, Stegglet? I know very well the fellas we'll be facing, because time and time again we have outsmarted and put down Shane and the man who is too much of a disgrace to bear the Langseth name. So not only are we being placed in a match against two fellas not in our league, Kerry and I should not be in a match on some Pre-Game Show! Much like "Red Hot" Rex Summers, we belong on the Memorial Day Mayhem card, and that's exactly what we plan to do: put away Pure X and Terry Shane, quick and easy, for good this time, then make plans for making an impact on the main show later. Tell `em, Kerry!

[Toughill drags Stegglet's arm to Kendrick.]

KK: In business, there is a term: "loss leader." It's taking a product and selling it at a loss, with the idea that the profit is going to come from other avenues. See, the Armbar Assassin and the Self Made Man are taking a glorious opportunity. We're taking the opportunity to put ourselves here on free television to entice you to order Memorial Day Mayhem. Sure, we may lose by being in such a low profile position on the card, but we're going out there to set the tone for the entire evening. Who's going to want to follow us? Who in that locker room can deliver the kind of wrestling clinic that we intend to give 99 and 44/100% Pure X and Robo-Shane 3000? In my eyes there's only one guy in that locker room who doesn't have to sweat upstaging me and Callum, and that's the man that Stole the Spotlight. The only beatdown that'll top ours is when "Red Hot" gives that big thumbs down to Gladiator. That's why we run with him, and that's why he runs with us. That's our brand. That's our business. And business is booming.

[Kendrick slaps Mahoney on the back.]

KK: Let's hit it, Callum.

[Mahoney and Kendrick exit. Toughill does not. Her hand is still firmly grasping Mark Stegglet's wrist.]

ET: ...

[She continues to glower at Stegglet.]

ET: ...

[Finally, she releases him and follows after M&K, maintaining ominous eye contact with Stegglet who gingerly rubs his wrist as we fade back to the panel atop the Space Needle.]

TL: SM&K with their usual brand of controversial comments there... and I'm sure that Pure X and Terry Shane will be more than happy to try and shut their mouths later tonight.

CP: Good luck with that. Terry Shane ain't been the same since the Shane Gang fell apart and Pure X has been living in the shadow of his uncle for years now. SM&K is rollin' right over those two and then they've got the Gladiator to take care of later tonight.

TL: That match will actually be taking place right when we go LIVE on the air on Pay Per View, fans. Don't hesitate to place your order now because if you do, you might miss out on Rex Summers defending that Steal The Spotlight contract against the undefeated Gladiator. We'll have more on that one later tonight but, Marcus Broussard, I want you to talk about this women's tag team match we'll be seeing later tonight.

[We cut to a shot of the first AWA National Champion who nods.]

MB: You know, Theresa... there were a lot of doubters... a lot of naysayers when the AWA started up this Women's Division. A lot of people didn't want to see it. A lot of people thought it was a waste of time but I think women like Julie Somers... like Lauryn Rage and Charisma Knight... like Melissa Cannon have shown that it's anything but that. And I can't wait to see what happens when Lauryn Rage's thugs climb in there to face what I'm calling right here and now the superfriends of the Women's Division, Julie Somers and Melissa Cannon

CP: The superfriends, huh? That's not the way I see it at all, Shark. The way I'm lookin' at it, Somers and Cannon may be all smiles and high fives on the outside but on the inside, they're thinking about the Women's World Title and how to get it,

they're going to have to go through each other. And just like Travis Lynch and Calisto Dufresne will find it later tonight, that's no way to be a tag team. But the Serpentine's have trained together, fought together, lived together, and learned together... and tonight, they're gonna win together, jack.

TL: Shark, you refer to the Serpentine's as Lauryn Rage's thugs - a label she's objected to in the past. She says they're her friends... her allies... her partners.

MB: You can call them whatever you want, Theresa, but we all know they're here to run interference for her. She knows that both Melissa Cannon and Julie Somers have been looking to get their hands on her and if she can get her Serpentine's to do some damage, maybe break them down a bit before they get to her, she's going to be a very happy woman.

TL: Our cameras caught up with Lauryn Rage a little while ago... let's see what she has to say about this situation.

[We cut backstage to pre-recorded footage.. Lauryn Rage is sitting on an equipment box, microphone in hand. Behind her, the Serpentine's stand half in the shadows, half on the light. Their oiled muscles shine in the contrast between light and dark. They glare into the cameras, hissing and showing their fangs and their semi glowing snakelike eyes. Lauryn shows most of her big white teeth as her eyes glitter.]

LR: Melissa, time's up. Time to face the music, B.

[She stares pointedly at the camera.]

LR: If you wake up tomorrow, I want you to remember what caused all this. You got ticked off because you weren't good enough to get to SuperClash. Losing to Miyuki and Charisma should have tipped you off that you weren't good enough, by the way.

[Lauryn gives her infamous eye roll Lauryn Look <TM>.]

LR: But my big brother got you a pay day. He got you a spot as a referee. I guess you just got mad because he saw what all of us saw. You're not a wrestler anymore. You're washed.

[Lauryn reaches into the top of her wrestling gear and pulls out a Bounce dryer sheet. She balls it up and tosses it at the camera.]

LR: Hit the dryer, Cannon. You're washed!

[She smiles brightly at the joke.]

LR: This is all on you, Cannon. Because you hurt my brother, I'm going to hurt you. With them!

[She points behind her to the Serpentine's who flicker their tongues hungrily. Lauryn lovingly pats Mamba on her bulging biceps.]

LR: These girls are taking you out. You think you're the face of the AWA's Women's Division? You think you're even relevant? I mean, if I were you, I'd give it up. But then I don't know what it's like to be irrelevant.

[Sarcastic Lauryn Look.]

LR: These girls are taking the spot you're taking up. So they're going to take you out.

And Julie Somers... I don't even know why you're even in here. Cannon is just using you for Cannon fodder.

[Gif-worthy Lauryn Look before she breaks into a mocking laugh. Even the Serpentes allow themselves a humored smile.]

LR: You want in on this beating? So be it, B. Don't think you'll get any sympathy. You won't. No mercy on you, no talents. Got it?

M: NO MERCCCCCY!

C: You's a dead baby bird, stupida.

LR: (condescending but cute Lauryn Look) Ain't no more to it, ya dig?

[And we cut back to a live shot of our Pre-Game Show panel as the clock reads 32:12.]

TL: Rage and her Serpentes are ready for a fight... but don't forget, Lady Lightning herself, Lori Wilson, will be at ringside to keep an eye on Lauryn Rage.

VR: And maybe a big ol' foot too if she don't watch her mouth.

CP: You'd like that, wouldn't you?

VR: Sure would!

[Colt Patterson shakes his head with disgust as Theresa moves on.]

TL: So many big matches coming up here tonight, fans... believe me when I say you do NOT want to miss this show. If you're watching us on The X right now, make sure you call your TV provider, get on the computer, your tablet, your phone, whatever... and make sure you're a part of the biggest stage of the summer, Memorial Day Mayhem. Still to come in our time left on The X, we've got that big tag team match, words from Rex Summers and The Gladiator, plus the decision from Travis Lynch - will he find himself a tag partner for tonight or will he step aside and let another team challenge Wes Taylor and Tony Donovan here tonight?

CP: He should cut and run like your old man.

[Theresa frowns at Colt Patterson.]

MB: Say what you like about Blackjack Lynch... and plenty of people have over the years and I'm guessing will continue to do so... but I don't think anyone could ever call the man a coward. He's never backed down from a fight and I don't expect his kids are about to start a new family tradition.

VR: Amen, brother.

[Lynch flashes a satisfied smile at the grumbling Patterson.]

TL: With that, fans, let's move on to talk about another legend in our business - Hamilton Graham. Big Vern, explain to me what in the world Hamilton Graham has against the Phoenix, Jordan Ohara, and how does that affect this match tonight between Ohara and "Flawless" Larry Wallace?

[We cut to Riley who nods.]

VR: It's plain and simple, Theresa. Hamilton Graham is a miserable son of a gun to use language that the office won't yell at me about. He's tough, he's mean, he's one of the greatest of all time... but "all time" ain't "this time."

TL: You're saying he wants to still be in the ring?

VR: I'm saying that Hamilton Graham believes he could be the World Champion today if given the opportunity. And hey, any veteran worth his salt will tell you the same thing. Heck, deep down, I think I could give someone like Johnny Detson a run for his money too... but dreams ain't reality. And reality can be hard to swallow sometimes. Hammy's a tough guy but his days are done... and seeing someone like Jordan Ohara who has his entire future ahead of him is tough for Hammy to deal with.

CP: What a crock, Riley! You know as well as I do that Jordan Ohara is a pampered, spoiled, self-entitled brat just like all these kids walking the streets of Seattle. This place used to be about the grunge scene right? The kids singing about their "teen spirit?" Being all miserable and angsty? Whining about their place in life? Those guys were the best compared to kids like Ohara who think the title should be given to them before they've earned a single thing. Before they've paid a single due.

MB: Oh, come on, Colt. Jordan Ohara trained in the Tiger Paw Pro Dojo. I'm as proud of the work we do in the Combat Corner as anyone but I'm going to tell you that the Dojo can be hell for someone trying to get into this business. If you survive training there, you've EARNED your spot.

CP: What happened to the Marcus Broussard who was the first to wear the National Title? You gone soft, kid.

[Broussard chuckles as Colt fumes.]

TL: We're under the thirty minute mark now, fans... 29 minutes and change until the biggest stage of the summer.

[We cut to an elevated shot off the Space Needle, showing the fans streaming into the KeyArena.]

TL: The fans are jamming into the building as we speak. This city has been electrified by the presence of the AWA, gentlemen... and it's only going to get better as the night goes on. And we're just a few minutes before throwing it back to the building to see the other half of our Pre-Game Show matches - the tag team showdown between Pure X teaming with Terry Shane and the duo of Kerry Kendrick and Callum Mahoney.

CP: And where two of SM&K are, the other two won't be far away... a lesson that The Gladiator would do well to remember later tonight.

TL: A barely-veiled threat from Colt Patterson towards the Gladiator who we'll be hearing from in just a short while now. But right now, let's talk about this Russian Chain Match we're going to be seeing later tonight, guys.

CP: You mean the end of Kolya Sudakov and the dawn of a new era of AWA history?

TL: That sounds like a Jackson Hunter suggestion for hype.

CP: We had dinner last night. Sue me.

TL: I'm sure. Marcus, you've known Kolya Sudakov for a long time - what can we expect to see tonight?

MB: Kolya Sudakov is a tough man but more importantly, he's a proud man. He knows that he's going into this match overmatched physically. He knows that Zharkov's got size... strength... youth on him. But that steel chain that's going to tie them together is one heck of an equalizer. Sudakov's been around that chain his entire career. He knows it. It's a part of him. And he knows how to use it. Zharkov... we don't know. We've seen Zharkov in many matches over the past year or so but this... this is something else. This is a fight, a battle, a war. What happens when Zharkov feels the steel? What happens when he bleeds? Sudakov knows what all that feels like. Does Zharkov?

TL: Does Zharkov indeed? Sweet Lou's standing by with Jackson Hunter - maybe he can get that answer for us. Sweet Lou?

[Cut to "Sweet" Lou Blackwell standing at the entrance of the KeyArena. The fans are already booing, because beside him is the third wheel of the Axis of Evil: Jackson Hunter. He's agitated and irritable as ever, always seemingly looking over his shoulder, hand on hip, his ubiquitous clipboard clenched in the other so tightly you can see his knuckles turning white if your screen is large enough.]

SLB: Alright fans, still time to go before we go live to Pay-Per-View on the Biggest Stage of the Summer; we may be sold out of tickets here in Seattle, but you can still call your local provider and order Memorial Day Mayhem. And my guest at this time... is pacing beside me like a man about to be sent to the electric chair: Jackson Hunter, I'm almost afraid to ask out of concern that it'll elicit a massive tirade of verbal abuse again, but—

JH: Blackwell, have I got my "Verbal Abuse" face on?

SLB: It looks like it.

JH: No.

[He shoots Blackwell a seriously scary glare. Sweet Lou winces back a few inches in response.]

JH: This is my "Verbal Abuse" face.

[He returns to his natural (tetchy) expression.]

JH: So make it quick.

SLB: Well... [clearing his throat] My sources are claiming that the Russian backers of your man Maxim Zharkov are having second thoughts about your role as North American advisor of the Last Son of the Soviet Union; not only is Maxim Zharkov's undefeated streak on the line—possibly only one Sickle away from being over—but a poor performance tonight against the Russian War Machine could result in you falling out of favor with the people pulling your strings in Siberia.

JH: That is patently and absolutely irrelevant.

SLB: And not only that, following tonight's event, my sources say that when the AWA tours Canada, Maxim Zharkov will NOT be joining you as his visa will be invalid if he does so. And that would leave you and Juan Vasquez without your heavy weapons man.

JH: Who is saying all this? Your "sources?"

SLB: My sources, yes.

JH: Sweet Lou, the only "sources" you should be keeping mind of are the ones writing Mrs. Blackwell's name and phone number on the walls of the men's bathroom...

[Lou frowns in disgust, but lets Hunter continue.]

JH: Listen... Fans of the American Wrestling Alliance: please attend carefully. I advise you at home to check that clock on the screen and make sure your order is placed for tonight's event. Call again to confirm if you have to. And be reminded that what happens in that ring tonight with only Sudakov, Zharkov and 50 pounds of chain will not be for the weak of heart.

History teaches us the transfer of power in Russia is never gentle. Old and tired regimes are snuffed out thoroughly. Tonight, you will witness so much more than the final battle of an AWA Original. You will witness so much more than the end of a former AWA National Champion. We in the Axis are not in the business of making martyrs out of our enemies, but Sudakov? Kolya, you leave us no choice. You could have disappeared. You could have run. Instead, you challenged Zharkov. You poked that Russian bear, like you didn't know better. Like you're craving some sort of absolution by fighting back.

Zharkov will do so much more than give you your penance, Kolya. He will BURN you, Kolya. He will burn your heart and soul right out of you. And The Tsar will cleanse the AWA of you, as though you had never existed. Just as Juan Vasquez, the greatest wrestler that the AWA has ever seen will cleanse the AWA of Alex Martinez, like he did with Ryan Martinez; the question isn't going to be "can Juan Vasquez piledrive Alex Martinez?" it's going to be "how MANY piledrivers will he use on Alex Martinez to finally put the old man to bed!?"

SLB: You, sir, are demented! And yes, you are making that face!

JH: After tonight, get used to seeing it.

SLB: Get out of here! Theresa, back up to you and the panel!

[We cut back to a wide shot of the Seattle skyline as Theresa's voice is heard. The countdown clock reads 24:27.]

TL: Thanks again, Sweet Lou... and as we drop under 25 minutes on the clock, the tingle is in the air. I'm excited about what's still to come to here tonight and gentlemen, I know you all are as well.

VR: Under 25 minutes, hooo baby! I can hardly wait! So many great matches! Debuts from Mason and Fujiwara! Who the heck's gonna be in the Battle Royal? And will Travis go find a partner or step aside?!

TL: We're going to get the answer to that last question before we go off the air on the Pre-Game Show according to Emerson Gellar. We're also still going to get words from "Red Hot" Rex Summers and the Gladiator who will be in the opening match of the Pay Per View! But before we get any of that, let's get some exclusive comments from the team we're about see in action - Pure X and Terry Shane!

[The camera jump cuts backstage. "Sweet" Lou Blackwell stands in-between what a couple of months ago felt like a very strange partnership... Pure X and Terry Shane III. Pure X is in his typical wrestling gear, nodding his head as he's in the process of taping his wrist; X sports a new dark green T-shirt (one sale at AWAShop.com!) - "Xero Tolerance". Shane looks ready to go. His soaking wet black hair spills over his ears, a towel is draped around his neck and bare chest, and he has baby blue ring trunks on with white, emerald green, and gold streaks running up the legs.]

SLB: Gentlemen, your match is coming up in just a few moments. Your thoughts?

TS3: Lou... you know X and I have been around the wrestling business our entire lives and you know me pretty well and I'd like to think the fans are starting to get to know the real Terry Shane too... I wasn't born yesterday and I've been around the block a few times.

I know as well as everyone else in the building that when we climb into the ring against Kendrick and Mahoney we need to have a set of eyes on them and a set of eyes on Toughill and Summers.

Summers... Toughill... I've said it before and I'll say it again. The two of them are the wild cards out there, they're the wild card that continues to shut Pure X and I down and tip the scales in their favor. But if you think for one second... ONE MOMENT... that we're coming down the aisle and stepping through those ropes unprepared then you're crazier than my reputation. You see there's a lot of boys in the back watching right now that are tired... they're tired of the antics of guys like Detson and James... they're tired of the outlandishness of the goons standing in front of us tonight... they've survived this song and dance so many times over whether it was Percy's army, the Southern Syndicate, the Bullies, or well... even my old Gang.

And quite frankly... they're sick and tired of being sick and tired, Lou. So the boys... they're watching real close tonight and I promise you...I PROMISE YOU...that if Summers or Toughill or anyone for that matter lays a finger on X and I that aren't supposed to...

...well, you're not going to have to wait till Boston to see another massacre.

If you want to jump us... if you want to stick your nose in that ring tonight... prepared to GET jumped, Rex. Prepare to get hit back, Toughill. It isn't just the boys that are looking out for us, Lou. I know there's a handful of ladies back there that wouldn't mind cracking that little slugger across the jaw.

SLB: I don't mean to overstep my boundaries here...but who, Terry? Who are these boys and girls that you speak of that are going to risk their well being at your expense less than an hour away from the start of Memorial Day Mayhem?

[Shane cocks an eyebrow at Lou who defensively puts up a hand.]

TS3: There's two ways I could answer that question, Lou.

[Blackwell nods, agreeing.]

TS3: But if I've learned one thing from this man...

[He gestures towards Pure X.]

TS3: ...it's that sometimes you need to take the High Road. The old Terry Shane would have bit that question hook, line, and sinker and ended up with a foot in his mouth and a whole lot of people itching to get their hands on him. What I'm going to do instead is talk to you about loyalty.

Loyalty goes a long way in this business, does it not?

[Blackwell nods.]

TS3: Loyalty is standing up against something or someone despite what might be best for yourself. There was another battle not so long ago in Los Angeles... you

were there, Lou. I was there too. I was there standing opposite of the men and women I brought into this company because I stopped drinking the Wise Men Kool-Aid. I stopped ignoring what my gut and instincts and heart was telling me. It was the beginning of the seeds being planted into my ear by guys like O'Connor and Martinez and even the Lynches who knew...they knew long before I did that there was more cause to my fight than what I allowed the World to see.

I could have been a yes man for Percy and Larry and Sandra...I could have been a company guy and you know maybe I'd have a World Title on my resume by now and the real axis of power and scope of the AWA today would be entirely different. But not a day has gone by where I didn't know for FACT...

...that I CHOSE the right side.

Where's Percy now, Lou? Where's Larry? Sandra? The Dogs of War? Rick Marley? Demetrius Lake?

GONE.

And me? I almost followed them out the door never to be seen or heard from again. That Cibernetico...it was a career killer for a lot of men and not just for those that opposed the AWA. I could run down the list but just know...KNOW...that O'Connor wasn't the only man that reached out to me when I was down and out and it all points back to that night, to that Battle in Los Angeles...I was loyal to the AWA on that night and for that and that alone there's guys back there that may not be my best friend but if I needed them...if I REALLY needed them...they'd be there for me...for US...because of it.

This man right here...

[Shane gestures to Pure X.]

TS3:defines loyalty. He defines the authenticity of what makes this the greatest sport on our planet. But most of all, for a man like me who needed it more than most...he has defined friendship and whatever happens...whatever happens out there in that ring tonight I know he will have my back.

[Blackwell shifts the mic to X.]

PX: Isn't that something, Lou? Loyalty... A Shane and a Langseth, talking - bonding - over loyalty?

[X chuckles to himself.]

PX: Loyalty - and not a misguided loyalty, Lou. Not "loyalty" to someone who's only it for personal gain... Not "loyalty" to the stooges sent to wolves to not get one's hands muddied. No! Loyalty to an IDEAL, Lou! Loyalty to the principle that the ring deserves! Loyalty to the fans who pay to see a fight, not the four "man" circus act clown show Mahoney, Kendrick, Summers, and Toughill -

[X shakes his head, trying to calm himself at the thought of his opponents but failing.]

PX: Those four? Ever since I got here... From day ONE, Lou! Day one! They've made a mockery of that ring I RESPECT! Night in, night out! Same damn thing, over and over! And I can't take it anymore! NO MORE!

[Shane briefly lets out a shocked but approving look at the fire of his tag team partner.]

PX: And certainly not tonight, Lou! NOT tonight! Those four, they've only formed a bond out of convenience - if one of them trips, none of them pick up the load but rather just sharpen their knives to stick the other's back. Thick only as thieves would be... But Terry and me? We're force multipliers - we make each other that much better, that much stronger and tonight? Tonight we WILL see respect in that ring and we WILL see justice served!

[X and Shane look on determined as we fade back to the Space Needle.]

TL: Strong words there from Pure X and Terry Shane. Alright, guys... prediction time! Who takes the W in this tag match?

VR: I'm going with Pure X and Terry Shane. Those two are still pretty recently back in the AWA and they're looking to make a big impact tonight on Pay Per View!

CP: They're not even on the Pay Per View, you buffoon. Anyone picking anyone other than SM&K here is delusional. You've got the Self Made Man... THE AWA Original in Kerry Kendrick. You've got the Armbar Assassin himself, Callum Mahoney. Plus Erica Toughill, the Batwoman of the AWA, down at ringside watching their backs? This is a done deal, jack.

TL: Shark?

MB: My gut agrees with Big Vern but my brain agrees with Colt. I think SM&K is coming into this with a plan... but Terry Shane is a plotter himself. What it comes down to is which one of these two sides has the better gameplan. I got this one a toss-up, Theresa.

CP: Coward. Pick a side.

[Broussard looks irritated at Colt Patterson as we cut back to a closeup of Theresa.]

TL: Colt Patterson, you never cease to make friends and influence people. Harvey, Mr. O'Connor... back down to ringside for the call!

[We cut back to the interior of the KeyArena where we find all four men already inside the ring, trading verbal barbs from afar.]

HS: Thanks, Theresa... and as you can see, we're already ready to go in this one as these two teams have walked the aisle, talked the talk, and now all that's left is for them to walk the walk.

KOC: "Mr. O'Connor." Makes me feel like a grandpa.

HS: You ARE a grandpa. Speaking of which, how's Bobby doing? How's his recovery?

KOC: He's doing well. Working hard like his father and I taught him.

HS: Can we expect to see him back in the ring soon?

[The Strangler chuckles.]

KOC: Maybe sooner than you think, Harvey... sooner than you think.

[In the ring, referee Ricky Longfellow signals for the bell to get the match started.]

"DING! DING! DING!"

HS: Alright, in this tag team grudge match, it's going to be Callum Mahoney starting things off against Pure X who has gotta be a little sore in his knee after the beating SM&K put on it nine nights ago on Saturday Night Wrestling.

[X and the Fighting Irishman circle one another for a bit, looking for an advantage...

...and Pure X shoots in, going low and grabbing one of Mahoney's legs, looking for a takedown. Mahoney frantically clubs away at the back of Pure X, trying to fight free, stumbling backwards...]

HS: Mahoney's trying to get loose... trying to-

[Mahoney goes falling down to the mat but was able to get close enough to the ropes, he easily grabs them, forcing a break.]

KOC: Mahoney showing the signs of a true veteran there. He knew he was going down on the single leg but knew that if he got close enough to the ropes, he could escape the takedown once X got it.

[Pure X lets go, getting to his feet as Mahoney drags himself closer to the ropes. He signals to Erica Toughill out on the floor who comes closer.]

HS: A little strategy session it looks like.

KOC: Does Toughill even talk?

HS: I... believe so.

[Toughill walks away as Mahoney pulls himself to his feet, glaring at Pure X who beckons him forward.]

HS: Round Two now... both men circling once again...

[This time, it's Mahoney who dives in, looking for a takedown...

...but Pure X flattens out, stuffing the takedown attempt, shoving Mahoney's face into the mat. X spins across his back, hooking an arm, cranking up in a hammerlock.]

HS: Pure X showing off that mat wrestling technique, sliding into a hammerlock as he forces Mahoney back to his feet.

[The Fighting Irishman looks for an exit, trying to find a way out. He reaches back, grabbing X around the head and neck, trying to snapmare his way out of the hold but X turns up the pressure, forcing Mahoney to abort his attempt.]

HS: Pure X with that hammerlock applied in the middle of the ring. Mahoney reaching out, trying to grab hold of the ropes...

[But X holds his ground, keeping Mahoney in the center and then starts backpedaling towards the corner, spinning out into an armwringer as he gets there, reaching out to tag Terry Shane in.]

HS: Quick tag to Terry Shane... the former Ring Leader steps in...

[Winding up, Shane throws a forearm uppercut to the underside of Mahoney's wrenched arm. Mahoney walks away, grimacing as he shakes out his arm. Shane advances, grabbing the wrist.]

HS: And now Shane cranks the arm around, twisting it...

[Shane lands an overhead elbow on the shoulder... and another... and another before making a tag.]

HS: Another quick tag...

[Pure X steps in as Shane holds the arm, winding up and driving his elbow down across the tricep. Mahoney winces again, reaching out with the other hand towards his corner as he stumbles across the ring.]

HS: Pure X grabs the arm, pulling Mahoney back...

[Dragging Mahoney towards the middle of the ring, Pure X swings him down onto his knees in a straddle armbar.]

HS: And at this point in the contest, the Armbar Assassin is having his own arm twisted, yanked, and torqued by Pure X and Terry Shane.

[And with Mahoney trapped, he waves a hand at Erica Toughill who is suddenly up on the apron, baseball bat draped over her shoulder. The official gets right up in her face, shouting at her to get down...

...while Kerry Kendrick comes through the ropes, blasting Pure X across the back with a forearm smash that knocks him down to the mat. The crowd jeers the Self Made Man as he vacates the ring and as Mahoney makes the tag to him.]

HS: Illegal activity on the part of SM&K brings Kendrick in on the tag...

[Each grabs an arm, whipping Pure X across the ring, and taking him off his feet with a double back elbow!]

HS: X goes down... and the boots are comin' from Kerry Kendrick, stomping Pure X into the mat.

[Pulling X up by the hair, Kendrick rifles him headfirst into the top turnbuckle near the SM&K corner. He grabs X by the hair, pressing his face into the top rope, and slowly drags him down the length of the ring, raking his skin against the rope.]

KOC: And if you want to talk about a basic move that hurts so much more than you can possibly imagine, that one is it, Harvey.

HS: Both men in the neutral corner now, Kendrick whips him across...

[The Self Made Man dashes across the ring, throwing a back elbow up under the chin a second time, knocking X down into a seated position near the corner. Kendrick grabs the top rope, laying some heavy boots into the chest of Pure X before dragging him back up.]

HS: Another whip coming up...

[The hammer throw sends X bouncing into the corner, staggering out as Kendrick comes charging in. X ducks a clothesline attempt, popping back up, changing direction, and throwing himself into a tag.]

HS: Terry Shane in off the tag!

[Shane rushes in, catching the incoming Kendrick, lifting and twisting him in mid-air before dropping him down across a bent knee!]

HS: QUEBRADORA! A LITTLE ACTION FROM SOUTH OF THE BORDER!

[Shane turns to confront Callum Mahoney who rushes in to attack, greeting him with a series of short European uppercuts, staggering the Fighting Irishman backwards, knocking him through the ropes and out on the apron.]

HS: Shane sends Mahoney out to the floor!

[The third generation grappler buries a rolling sole butt into the gut of an advancing Kendrick, doubling him up. Shane steps forward, snagging a front facelock...

...but Mahoney is right back in, drilling him from behind!]

HS: Sneak attack by Mahoney! The referee is right up in his face about it!

[With Shane down on the mat, Kendrick starts putting the boots to him, kicking and stomping his foe into the canvas.]

HS: Kendrick is all over Shane after the illegal assist from his partner. The referee's gotta do a better job of maintaining some control in there, fans.

KOC: Might need TWO referees the way these jackals are going about their business.

[Kendrick drags Shane off the mat by the hair, scooping him up and slamming him down in the middle of the ring before immediately leaping up to snap a legdrop across the throat, shouting for the official to count.]

HS: Kendrick gets one... he gets two but that's all!

[The Self Made Man gives the referee an earful from his seat on the canvas and gets a "You do your job, I'll do mine!" in response to cheers.]

HS: The referee not going to allow Kerry Kendrick to bully him as Kendrick gets back to his feet, backing to the corner now.

[Kendrick hops up to the midbuckle, standing up before he leaps off to drive the point of his elbow down into the throat!]

HS: Ohh! The elbow connects and another cover!

[Another two count follows before Shane lifts the shoulder off the canvas.]

HS: Again Kendrick complains about what looked like a good count to me, Strangler.

KOC: It did and that's my problem with this kid, Kendrick. He's always whining and complaining. Always blaming someone else for his lot in life. He needs to take some personal responsibility in there and he needs to stay focused on the job at hand.

[Kendrick, still barking at the official, climbs up to his feet again, marching to his corner where he slaps Mahoney's outstretched hand.]

HS: SM&K making the exchange again as Kendrick brings Mahoney in, hooking a front facelock... and a big boot up into the ribcage!

[Shane staggers away, falling to his knees as he stretches out to his corner but Mahoney circles around to cut him off, smirking as he delivers three hard forearm shots to the jaw, knocking Shane from his knees to his back.]

HS: Hard shots by Mahoney... one of the toughest men you'll ever encounter inside a pro wrestling ring, Karl.

KOC: Absolutely. He comes from that European carnival circuit and if you're gonna work there, you've gotta be tough.

[Mahoney measures the downed Shane, coming down with a kneedrop to the cheekbone. Shane rolls back and forth in pain as Mahoney pulls him to his back, jamming his forearm into the cheek in a pin attempt.]

HS: Two count for Mahoney this time but Terry Shane is refusing to stay down, fans.

[There are some cheers in Seattle for Shane for the kickout as Mahoney climbs to his feet, stomping Shane repeatedly...

...and then gestures to the crowd, taunting them by clapping. He gets big jeers for this which makes him smile.]

HS: Hard to believe these fans once cheered Callum Mahoney, isn't it?

KOC: You could say that about a lot of guys, Harvey.

HS: I suppose that's true as Mahoney drags Shane up off the mat, hoisting him up into a fireman's carry...

[Mahoney walks around the ring, doing a full circuit with Shane up on his shoulders before facing the corner where Pure X is shouting for his partner to make the tag.]

HS: Pure X calling for the tag but right now, Terry Shane is in a bad predicament and can't get to his partner.

[But as Mahoney goes to lift Shane up over his head, presumably for a gutbuster, Shane slips free, landing on his feet where he buries a short knee into the midsection, swiftly hooking a double underhook...]

HS: Shane is loose! Lifts him up...

[...and brings the legs bouncing down off the top rope, adding more momentum as he takes Mahoney back over, flinging him down to the canvas with a double underhook suplex!]

HS: BUTTERFLY EFFECT! SHANE HITS THE BUTTERFLY EFFECT! And THAT might buy him the time he needs!

[The crowd roars in response as Shane starts crawling towards his corner, stretching out an arm towards Pure X who clenches his teeth, reaching out as far as he can towards his partner..]

HS: Terry Shane is crawling for it! Crawling across the ring towards his partner, Pure X, who is ready to get back in there and- AND THERE'S THE TAG!

[Pure X comes quickly through the ropes, charging across the ring and throwing himself into a dropkick that sends Kendrick off the apron before he can intervene. The crowd cheers as the technician scrambles back up to his feet as Mahoney does the same, ducking a wild clothesline attempt before he spins, tripping up Mahoney and taking his feet out from under him.]

HS: HE'S GOT THE ANKLELOCK ON MAHONEY! HE'S GOT IT LOCKED IN!

[The Fighting Irishman claws at the canvas, desperately looking for a way out but his escape isn't coming in the form of the ropes... not this time.]

HS: Kendrick's coming in!

[But Terry Shane stumbles across the ring, drilling Kendrick with a forearm uppercut that knocks him flat. Shane dives on top of Kendrick, pounding him with clenched fists.]

HS: Shane's pounding on Kendrick! He's in illegally but so is Kendrick!

[The official moves to the corner, grabbing Shane and pulling him back across the ring.]

HS: The referee's trying to get Terry Shane back to the corner... Kendrick's back on his feet and-

[As Shane and the official bicker, Kendrick turns to Toughill who sends her baseball bat flying over the ropes and into his waiting hands. The AWA Original winds up, ready to strike...

...when Pure X wheels around, burying a boot into the gut of Kendrick, causing him to drop the bat!]

HS: X CAUGHT HIM COMING IN!

[Pure X grabs Kerry Kendrick, swinging him around into a full nelson as Toughill moves quickly to the other side of the ring, getting up on the apron and getting the official stuck between her and Shane as they argue!]

HS: X has got-

[But before he can hoist Kendrick up into a dragon suplex, Callum Mahoney scoops up the discarded baseball bat, takes aim...

...and SMASHES it across the back of Pure X, knocking him flat to the canvas. The Fighting Irishman throws the bat aside as Kendrick rolls out to the floor. Mahoney dives on top of Pure X as Toughill points it out to the official who wheels around, diving to the canvas.]

HS: ONE!!

[Shane, spotting the pin attempt, is coming through the ropes as the referee hits the mat a second time...]

HS: TWO!!

[...and makes a desperate lunge at the back of Mahoney...]

HS: THREEEEEEEEE!!!

[...and lands a split second too late!]

"DING! DING! DING!"

HS: Justice has not been served on this night in Seattle!

[Mahoney rolls from the ring, joining the celebrating Toughill and Kendrick out on the floor.]

HS: SM&K picks up the victory... and Strangler, that was as dirty as it gets.

KOC: I don't know if I'd go that far but it certainly won't go down in the Sportsman's Guide to Professional Wrestling. At the same time though, Harvey, a win is a win.

HS: A win is certainly a win in the eyes of many. Pure X and Terry Shane coming up short here tonight once again thanks to Erica Toughill and that baseball bat... something that the Gladiator better keep in mind later tonight if he intends to keep his undefeated streak intact. Alright, fans... let's head back to the Space Needle to our Pre-Game Show panel!

[We fade from the disappointed Terry Shane kneeling next to his still-downed partner back to the Space Needle.]

TL: It may not have been the cleanest of wins but it's a win nonetheless for Kerry Kendrick and Callum Mahoney. SM&K scores a victory and you would think that might get them into the World Tag Team Title mix, Shark.

MB: I'd think so. They may not be the Number One Contender after that but "in the mix" is a good way to describe them. A couple more wins might get them right into the title situation.

TL: But the question is - who will the champions be after tonight? Going into tonight, we knew that we were going to see a special Winner Takes All attraction where the National Champion-

CP: Your no-account brother.

TL: -Travis Lynch would team with the most decorated champion in AWA history, Calisto Dufresne, to take on the AWA World Tag Team Champions, Wes Taylor and Tony Donovan who are no stranger to the kind of dirty tricks we just saw out of SM&K.

CP: You call 'em dirty tricks... I'll call it successful winning strategy.

TL: Call it whatever you want but those tricks... that strategy may have paid off in a big way because as it stands right now, guys, the tag champions have no opponent here tonight.

MB: That's not exactly right, Theresa. They've got an opponent... we just don't know who that opponent will be. We know that Emerson Gellar gave your brother an option last night. He could either pack it in, step aside, and let someone else get the shot tonight with a promise that he and Dufresne will get a future shot at the titles when the Ladykiller is healthy again.

VR: OR... he could go find himself a last second partner.

MB: That's right. We don't know what decision he's made but we do know that - one way or another - Taylor and Donovan WILL defend the titles here tonight.

CP: And that's a sham if you ask me, Shark.

MB: I didn't because I think Gellar's right here. Taylor and Donovan caused the situation so it's only fitting that they don't benefit from it. Those titles are gonna be on the line even if we don't know-

TL: Sorry to interrupt, Shark, but I'm being told that right now, we do know and we're about to make it official. With this Breaking News update, let's go back to the KeyArena to the master of scoops, Sweet Lou Blackwell!

[We cut back to the backstage area of the KeyArena where Sweet Lou Blackwell is standing, looking excited.]

SLB: Theresa Lynch, you flatter me, my dear... but in this case, you're right. I've got quite the scoop. Moments ago, I spoke to Emerson Gellar as he walked out of Travis Lynch's locker room. The National Champion is here in the building and he says that he WILL compete tonight. He says he's got a partner and he'll be in that Winner Takes All match tonight! So, big news from back here in the locker room area, fans! Theresa, back to you!

[We cut back to the Space Needle.]

TL: Thanks, Sweet Lou, so there you go, fans! Travis Lynch, the National Champion, has found himself a partner and he'll be battling for the World Tag Team Titles-

CP: And his own gold.

TL: -later tonight! Shark, your thoughts.

MB: It's a dangerous move, Theresa, but one that could pay off. Travis Lynch has been preparing for this match for weeks but with hours to go, he calls an audible and goes with a different tag team partner - someone he hasn't worked with let alone teamed with. They've got very little time to plan strategy... no time to gel. This is dangerous for him and could mean the National Title changing hands. But on the other hand...

VR: On the other hand, Taylor and Donovan now are going to take on a team they're not prepared for either. Their little strategy may have just backfired on 'em, baby!

TL: You could be right about that but we won't find out until later tonight... just like we won't find out who will walk out of Seattle as the Steal The Spotlight contract holder. "Red Hot" Rex Summers won that contract during the annual Steal The Spotlight match back at SuperClash... but now he's gotta defend the gold.

CP: And can we talk about what a horrific act of discrimination that is? No other Steal The Spotlight winner EVER has been forced to cash in the contract or defend it. Emerson Gellar is drunk with power and has been since his first day in the AWA.

TL: You may think it's discriminatory, Colt, but it's happening. Whether you like it or not, Rex Summers is putting that contract on the line here tonight against a man who is undefeated here in the AWA - The Gladiator!

CP: I don't like it... not at all. You know who else doesn't like it? Callum Mahoney, Kerry Kendrick, and Erica Toughill. You know who else doesn't like it? Rex Summers. And when I met up with him earlier today before I climbed every single step of this damned tower, he told me how much he doesn't like it. Watch that screen!

[Patterson points straight ahead as we fade to footage marked "EARLIER TODAY" where Colt Patterson is standing backstage. Next to him, with his back to the camera, stands the 2015 Steal the Spotlight winner, Rex Summers. The sequins upon the yellow robe of Summers are reflecting the light in all directions. The lovely Summers Sweetheart, attired in a tight purple dress smiles at the camera as Patterson speaks.]

CP: Fans, we are just minutes away from Memorial Day Mayhem and my guest at this time needs no introduction, but he deserves one. My guest, is the 2015 Steal the Spotlight winner, "Red Hot" Rex Summers!

[The Summers Sweetheart motions to the robe of Summers as he raises his arms to the side showing off the sequins which spell out RED HOT.]

CP: Rex, my friend, as I said Memorial Day Mayhem is rapidly approaching and tonight you will be defending the Steal the Spotlight contract against the Gladiator.

RS: And you need to tell me what's wrong with the AWA...

[Patterson appears to be about to respond but Summers continues to speak.]

RS: What's wrong here is Emerson Gellar trying to railroad the "Red Hot One" right out of the AWA. Makin' me defend my Steal the Spotlight contract and maybe costing me a shot at whatever title I desire here in the AWA all in one night. But tonight, Gellar will find out that's what mine is mine and no one and I mean no one can or will take it away from me.

'Cause you see, ever since I returned to the AWA, I've said I will be wearing gold around this chiseled waist and Colt, that day is approaching. But I'll be damned if Gellar is going to force me to take that opportunity before I want to.

CP: Rex, you know I have never doubted you and I'm not doubting your words now, but there are those who say that the Gladiator's undefeated streak will not end tonight.

RS: SNORT SQUEAL SQUEAL SQUEAL SNORT!

[Summers slowly turns his head to look at Patterson.]

RS: Do you know what that noise is, Colt? Let me give you a hint, it's not these Seattle Sweathogs wallowing in the mud, hoping for one lone night of ecstasy. Oh no, Colt, it's the sound of Gellar's next pig being led to the slaughter. This pig may be covered in paint and talk about his gods...

[The Summers Sweetheart removes the robe from the back of Summers. He turns around and pops a double biceps pose.]

RS: But he's stepping into the ring tonight with the perfect creation of the gods.

[Summers places his hands behind his head and gyrates his hips a few times. The Summers Sweetheart runs her hand over his well-oiled abdominal muscles as he does.]

RS: Colt, what you need and what the rest of these sweathogs need to know is tonight the Gladiator is going to be ripped to shreds by the uncrowned champion, the true lion of the AWA...

[Summers smirks at the camera.]

RS: And as his carcass is spread all over that ring, like the ancient gladiators of old, I'm going to step over that carcass victorious!

So get used to it, Gellar, 'cause no matter how many pigs you send to the slaughter, the "Red Hot One" will continue to be the man who ALWAYS steals the spotlight.

[Summers blows a kiss to the camera and walks away, closely followed by the Summers Sweetheart as we fade back to live action atop the Space Needle.]

CP: Hah! You talk about Blackwell havin' all the scoops, the only scoops that slob gets are double scoop sundaes at the ice cream joint after the show. THAT'S a real scoop right there, doll face!

[Theresa looks irritated by "doll face" but keeps her professionalism strong.]

TL: I'm not sure there was any scoop at all in there actually. Rex Summers believing he's going to win and retain the Steal The Spotlight contract tonight isn't a scoop, Colt.

CP: You're as thick as your brothers sometimes. The real scoop isn't that, Lynch. The real scoop is that Rex Summers speaks Gladiator's tongue!

[Colt gives an approximation of some Gladiator-esque snorts and snarls before bursting into a cackling laughter.]

TL: Laugh it up, fuzzball. You may be laughing and Rex Summers may be laughing but I have a suspicion that the Gladiator will have the last laugh. But before we hear from him, I want to talk about our Main Event.

VR: Are we even allowed to do that?

TL: The Unsanctioned Match comes Memorial Day Mayhem for the second year in a row. Last year, it was an absolute classic pitting the King of the Death Match, Caleb Temple, against the AWA World Champion, Ryan Martinez. This year, Ryan's father, the legendary Last American Badass-

CP: You kiss your father with that mouth?

TL: -taking on his fellow Hall of Famer, Juan Vasquez. Jon Stegglet made this match nine days ago, overruling Emerson Gellar who had refused to sanction it. Jon Stegglet said he couldn't sanction it either but he sure could make it happen... and tonight, it'll happen when Vasquez and Martinez collide here in Seattle.

MB: Theresa, if this show wasn't already sold out nine days ago, we would have seen a land speed record with people rushing out to buy tickets for this show when that match was signed. In a world that puts the label "Dream Match" on showdowns that are anything but... this is the epitome of the phrase "Dream Match." Two all-time greats. Two former World Champions. Two Hall of Famers. This is one of those that people sit around their living rooms and in bars talking about it... what would happen if those two went at it... tonight, we're going to find out.

TL: Colt?

CP: Theresa, I'm going to have a very personal conversation with Alex Martinez right now, icon to icon. A-Mart, listen up. It's tough. I know it is. When I went under the knife for my neck and they told me that I should never wrestle again, my heart sank down to my toes. I was too young for that. My career was really just getting started. But I lost everything that day when the EMWC said no. They said I was too banged up. I was too much of a liability - the same stuff they're telling you now. But there's one big difference, kid. You had your run. You had your career. You had the kind of career that kids in the Combat Corner dream about having. You don't need tonight. You need to walk away like I did. Just walk away before Juan Vasquez makes it so you can't walk at all.

TL: Big Vern?

VR: It's easy to say "just walk away." But it ain't so easy to do it. Colt, you say you did it but you didn't. How many times did you try to come back? Three? Four? I walked away... and I came back. I walked away again... and I came back again. The doctors all say no. Our bodies all say no. But we don't listen because there's something driving us. The money, the women, the glory, the ego... whatever it is. For Alex Martinez, it's something else. It's his family. It's his son, damn it. Alex Martinez believes he can lay hands on Juan Vasquez and get even for what Vasquez did to his boy... to his flesh and blood. Can he do it? I don't know. But I do know we're going to find out tonight.

TL: It's Unsanctioned, fans! Only the rules they've agreed to! The AWA wants no part of this but it's going to happen right here tonight in Seattle! And if you're not sitting in that arena right now, the only way you can be a part of this is to get on the phone, grab your remote, go online, and let your provider know that you want to be a part of the biggest stage of the summer.. you want to be a part of Memorial Day Mayhem! Fans, we're ticking down to just a few minutes left! I want to thank all of my great panelists here with me tonight. Big Vern... the San Jose Shark, Marcus Broussard... yes, even Colt Patterson.

[Grins all around.]

TL: For all of them plus Harvey Sutton, Karl O'Connor, Mark Stegglet, and Sweet Lou Blackwell over in the KeyArena, I'm Theresa Lynch... it's almost here, guys! It's almost time! Mark Stegglet is standing by with the Gladiator! We gotta go!

[We cut to Mark Stegglet in front of an AWA backdrop. Pacing beside him is The Gladiator, who is dressed in his wrestling attire and has his gladiator helmet upon his head.]

MS: In mere moments, fans, Rex Summers will be defending his Steal the Spotlight contract against this man, The Gladiator.

[As Gladiator paces around...]

G: Aaarrggghhh aaarrggghhh aaarrggghhh.

[...he's doing that.]

MS: Gladiator, it was just a few weeks ago that you inserted yourself into the ongoing clash between Rex Summers, his allies Callum Mahoney and Kerry Kendrick, and their issues with Pure X and Terry Shane III. Now, it has led to tonight's encounter in which you will attempt to claim the Steal the Spotlight contract. What are you expecting from tonight's encounter with Rex Summers.

[Gladiator keeps pacing, speaking in a hushed tone.]

G: Rex Summers continues to tempt fate, continues to taunt the lion, believing he cannot possibly be harmed by the lion, but the more he tempts fate, the greater the risk he takes, until he reaches the point that the lion can take no more...

[That's when he raises his finger and his voice.]

G: AND THE LION TAKES FROM THOSE WHO TAUNT HIM! YOU, REX SUMMERS, YOU MAY HAVE STOLEN THE ACCOLADES TWO WEEKS AGO, BUT TONIGHT YOUR MOMENT OF RECKONING IS UPON YOU! THE MOMENT YOU MUST FACE THE LION THAT IS BEFORE YOU, THE LION WHO WILL PROVE TO YOU THAT YOU CANNOT TEMPTING FATE AND EXPECT TO SURVIVE! AFTER TONIGHT, REX SUMMERS, YOU WILL FIND THAT YOUR CLAIM TO THE SPOTLIGHT WILL NO LONGER SURVIVE, AS

ME AND MY GLADIATORS SHALL LAY CLAIM TO THE NEXT STEP ON OUR PATH, THE NEXT STEP CLOSER TO THE ULTIMATE DESTINY!

[Gladiator goes back to pacing.]

MS: Certainly, though, Gladiator, you must know that Rex Summers has his allies, along with Erica Toughill, the woman who has been called the Queen of Clubs, and they may try to stack the deck against you. What are you prepared to do to counter that?

G: I KNOW OF THE ATTEMPTS BY REX SUMMERS TO CHANGE THE PLAYING FIELD, FROM THE MONGRELS HE KEEPS BY HIS SIDE TO THE QUEEN OF NOTHING WORTH RULING OVER! BUT THOSE MONGRELS, THEY HAVE THEIR OWN AFFAIRS THAT MUST ATTEND TO AND I BELIEVE THEY ARE IN NO SHAPE TO INTERFERE AFTER WHAT THE LIKES OF PURE X AND TERRY SHANE DID TO THEM! AS FOR THE QUEEN OF NOTHING, IF SHE TRIES TO INTERVENE, SHE WILL FIND THAT SHE, TOO, CANNOT CONTINUE TO TAUNT THE LION AND EXPECT TO SURVIVE! THE ONLY THING SHE WILL GUARANTEE IS HER OWN DEMISE ALONGSIDE REX SUMMERS!

MS: Well, that brings us to the question about what happens if you win the Steal the Spotlight contract. You have made an issue about how Rex Summers has bided his time in deciding what to do with the contract. Should you win tonight, how soon can we expect you to cash in on the contract?

G: AS MANY WISE MEN HAVE SAID, THERE IS NO TIME LIKE THE PRESENT! AND THOUGH I DO NOT INTEND TO LOOK A STEP BEYOND THE STEP THAT I HAVE YET TO TAKE, I KNOW EXACTLY WHAT MUST BE DONE ONCE I HAVE TAKEN THAT FIRST STEP! FOR I SEE THE MAN WHO IS CALLED OUR CHAMPION HAS TAKEN IT UPON HIMSELF TO NOT DO THE HONOR OF FACING ANOTHER IN COMBAT! BUT ONCE I TAKE THAT FIRST STEP TO BE TAKEN TONIGHT, I KNOW WHAT THE NEXT STEP WILL BE AFTER THAT, AND IT WILL BE TO ENSURE THAT THE CHAMPION FACES ME IN COMBAT, DO THE HONOR THAT IS EXPECTED OF HIM, INSTEAD OF EXPECTING TO GET NOTHING BUT PAMPERING TONIGHT!

MS: Wait a minute... Gladiator, are you saying you would plan to challenge the World Champion, Johnny Detson, TONIGHT if you are victorious against Rex Summers?!

[Gladiator growls a bit, then raises his finger once more.]

G: YOU ARE A MAN OF INTELLIGENCE, MARK STEGGLET, AND YOU HAVE DEDUCED EXACTLY WHERE MY DESTINY AWAITS LATER ON! BUT, FOR NOW, MY DESTINY IS TO TAKE THE SPOTLIGHT AWAY FROM REX SUMMERS AND NEVER LET HIM RETURN TO HIM AGAAAAAAIN!

[With that, Gladiator walks off the set, growling.]

MS: Holy... fans, that is HUGE Breaking News! The Gladiator has stood here by my side and said that if he wins the contract - if he beats Rex Summers tonight - he intends to cash it in TONIGHT to face Johnny Detson! I can't believe... can he even do that?! Johnny Detson's supposed to have the night off! I don't... can someone find Emerson Gellar? Can we get a comment? Can we get...

[Stegglet grabs his earpiece.]

MS: Fans, we're out of time! I'm off to find Emerson Gellar right now! We need an answer to this! Can The Gladiator challenge for the World Title tonight? There's only one way to find out! Memorial Day Mayhem is just about to go LIVE on Pay Per View and you need to be right there with us! In five... four... three... two...

[Stegglet grins, pointing to the camera...

...and we fade to black.]