



# LIBERTY OR DEATH

JULY 4TH, 2017

PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA

## Part 2

## Part 3

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

"The recognized symbol of excellence in professional wrestling."

[The logo fades to black...

...and comes back up on a shot of a billowing American flag blowing proudly and mightily in the breeze. The voice of Gordon Myers is heard over it.]

"We have done everything that could be done to avert the storm which is now coming on."

[We fade to a darkened screen, showing the very first glimpse of Javier Castillo that AWA fans ever got, back at SuperClash last year.]

"Our petitions have been slighted; our remonstrances have produced additional violence and insult; our supplications have been disregarded; and we have been spurned, with contempt, from the foot of the throne!"

[Fade to a clip of Korugun directly influencing Ryan Martinez' loss of the World Title by having James Lynch masquerading as Supernova interfere in his match with now-champion Johnny Detson.]

"In vain, after these things, may we indulge the fond hope of peace and reconciliation. There is no longer any room for hope. If we wish to be free— we must fight! I repeat it, sir, we must fight! An appeal to arms and to the God of hosts is all that is left us!"

[We fade again, this time showing clips of Jack Lynch trading blows with Ebola Zaire and Jordan Ohara battling Muteesa.]

"They tell us, sir, that we are weak; unable to cope with so formidable an adversary. But when shall we be stronger? Will it be the next week, or the next year?"

[Fade to a shot of the Masked Outlaw dropping Javier Castillo with a haymaker at Memorial Day Mayhem.]

"Shall we gather strength by irresolution and inaction? We are not weak if we make a proper use of those means which the God of nature hath placed in our power. Besides, sir, we shall not fight our battles alone."

[Cut to a sequence of shots, showing the return of Hannibal Carver... Next Gen doing battle with System Shock... and Terry Shane fighting against Ebola Zaire.]

"There is no retreat but in submission! The war is inevitable--and let it come! I repeat it, let it come."

[Quicker shots now showing various AWA competitors embroiled in battle with Korugun soldiers.]

"Gentlemen may cry, Peace, Peace-- but there is no peace. The war is actually begun! Why stand we here idle? What is it that we wish? What would we have? Is life so dear, or peace so sweet, as to be purchased at the price of chains?"

[A shot of Wes Taylor being carried from the Tower of Doom... of Betty Chang being taken into an ambulance... of Ryan Martinez standing underneath a newly-crowned Johnny Detson... of Jack Lynch staring open-mouthed at his traitorous brother.]

"I know not what course others may take; but as for me..."

[We cut to a final black and white shot. Ryan Martinez, eyes down, slowly looks up into the camera, speaking clearly and with great determination.]

"Give me liberty or give me death!"

[We fade to black...

...and then back up on the interior of the Wells Fargo Center as red, white, and blue pyro rocket from the stage and entryway to the ceiling! The Philadelphia crowd is roaring as "The Stars And Stripes Forever" blasts over the PA system.

The setup is the same as we saw during the Pre-Game Show with the ring-sized elevated stage, video wall, and long ramp leading down the aisle. A shot of the American flag shows on the big screen again as more pyro screams towards the heavens.

Speaking of screaming...]

GM: HELLO EVERYONE AND HAPPY BIRTHDAY, AMERICA!

[We cut to ringside to show our announce duo - Gordon Myers in a navy blue suit, white dress shirt, and a solid red tie. Bucky Wilde... well, looks like Uncle Sam. His

long blue coat hangs down to the back of his knees... and his legs, oh, his legs... his legs are covered in red and white striped pants. His shirt is white with red and blue stars topped with a glittering red bowtie. He even put on the top hat, fans. Just for you.]

GM: And Bucky Wilde, what on Earth has gotten into you?

BW: It's the 4th of July, Gordo! And Uncle Bucky wants YOU!

[He points to the camera lens as Gordon shakes his head.]

GM: Patriotism aside, it's a fantastic night for the AWA to be here in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania - our nation's birthplace - for the very first time and what a show we've got in store for you all here at Liberty Or Death!

BW: We've got title matches! We've got contenders matches! We've got cage matches! Heck, we've even got a SuperClash Main Event rematch!

GM: It's going to be a heck of a night, fans, and we're so glad you're spending your holiday evening here with us because we've got some fireworks of our own for you.

BW: And we're not just talking about all those sparklers we just set off. Whew!

[He fans his face with his top hat.]

GM: Absolutely not... and to kick things off, we're heading up to the ring for a first here in the AWA - a six woman battle to determine who will go on to the Battle of Saskatchewan later this month and take on Kurayami for the Women's World Title! Rebecca Ortiz, take it away!

[We cut to the ring where the six competitors are already standing, some tugging on ropes, some bouncing off them, all waiting for action.]

RO: The opening contest tonight at LIBERTY OR DEATH is our SIX FOR A SHOT match!

[Big cheer!]

RO: The six women you see before you will battle inside this ring until one woman is pinned or made to submit. The winner will move on to the Battle of Saskatchewan to take on the AWA Women's World Champion!

[Another big cheer as Ayako Fujiwara extracts herself from some streamers that were flung as she just entered.]

RO: And now... the participants... first, from St. Petersburg, Russia... weighing in at 125 pounds... XENIA SONOOOOOVAAAAAA!

[Sonova steps towards the middle of the ring, throwing a quick left-right combo followed by a spin kick before she comes to a halt, raising her arm to the crowd.]

RO: The next entrant... weighing 171 pounds, and fighting out of Northampton, Massachusetts... this is... MICHELLE BAAAAAAAILEYYYYYYYYYYYYYYY!

[Bailey bounces out of the corner, a big grin on her face as she stands in a matching spandex sleeveless crop top and shorts that stop right above the knee, in a rainbow of pastel pink, yellow, and blue, with a pattern of kitty faces, unicorns with rainbow manes, stars, cassette tapes, donuts, cupcakes, and diamonds scattered throughout. She's also wearing two different colored kneepads, both

pastel, one yellow and one blue, along with glittery pink shinpads over blue and white wrestling shoes.]

RO: Next... from Fujinomiya, Japan... weighing in at 70 kilograms...  
AYAKOOOOOOOOOOO FUUUUUUUJIWARRRRRRAAAAA!

[The Olympic gold medalist steps to mid-ring, bowing to the cheering fans before straightening up, staring across the ring at the opposition.]

RO: From Montreal, Quebec, Canada... weighing in at 125 pounds... the Canadian Dream Girl... SKYYYYYLAARRRRRR SWIIIIIIIIIFT!

[The Dream Girl bounds out to the center of the ring, a big grin on her face as she thrusts her fist up into the air.]

RO: Next... from La Feria, Texas... weighing in at 171 pounds... MARGARITAAAAAAA  
FLOOOOOOORRRRRRESSSS!

[The tall drink of Texan water swings her arm up into the air, giving a whoop as the crowd cheers.]

RO: And finally... from Minneapolis, Minnesota... weighing in at 166 pounds... TRISH  
"T-BONE" WALLLLLLLAAAAAAACE!

[The powerhouse stomps out to mid-ring, planting her hands on her hips, looking out on the crowd with a smirk.]

GM: Alrighty... all six women are already in the ring. Big stakes in this one, Bucky.

BW: Big stakes? Really?

GM: It's for a shot at the Women's World Title, Bucky.

BW: Sure... but that's just as likely to be a shot at ending up in a Canadian hospital. I mean, at least it's a Canadian hospital so you won't go broke being there but still...

GM: Of course, you're referring to a potential showdown with Kurayami who we're told in the midst of quite the successful tour of Japan, having already defended the title successfully a few times this week. It's a dangerous matchup no doubt... but a necessary one if you want to become the Women's World Champion. Alright, fans... under the rules of this one, all six women are allowed in the ring at the same time and... well, Trish Wallace apparently says she's not budging from center ring.

[Referee Shari Miranda has some quick words for all six competitors...

...and then signals for the bell.]

"DING! DING! DING!"

GM: We're off and running in this one and... what's this about now?

[Wallace makes an exaggerated show out of pointing to each of the other five women in the match, points to the ropes, and then beckons them towards her.]

GM: Looks like some kind of challenge being issued by T-Bone Wallace and... here we go...

[Xenia Sonova gives a nod before dashing to the ropes, bouncing off, running hard towards Wallace who holds her ground...

...and sends Sonova crashing backwards to the canvas!]

GM: Ohhh! Big tackle by the second-generation star and down goes Sonova!

BW: Look, Gordo... Trish Wallace is built solid as a rock. It's gonna take more than Sonova's 125 pounds to have an effect on her.

[Sonova sits up, a disappointed look on her face as she rolls to her feet, backing clear as she makes room. Wallace turns slightly, pointing a finger at Skylar Swift.]

BW: Now she wants her new-found bestie to take her shot.

GM: This should be interesting. We know that Charisma Knight and Dr. Leah White have issued a challenge towards Swift and Wallace for five days from now at Eternally Extreme 2 but we don't know if that challenge has been accepted.

BW: AND we don't even know what kind of match Knight and her Doctor are looking for. They said they're not saying until the challenge gets accepted.

GM: Skylar's got these fans behind her... she's going to give this tackle a shot...

[With the crowd cheering loudly, Swift dashes to the ropes, springing off as she charges towards Wallace who sets her feet...

...and as they clash, Swift stumbles backwards, falling down onto her butt. She grimaces, looking up at Trish who smiles, shrugging at her frenemy.]

GM: Skylar Swift gives it all she can - as she always does - but she comes up short as well.

BW: Another buck twenty fiver, Gordo. Not gonna get it done.

[Wallace nods at Swift, turning to her left...

...and locking eyes with Ayako Fujiwara.]

GM: Now this is getting interesting. Fujiwara tips the scales at about 155.

BW: That might get it done. Let's find out.

[Fujiwara steps up to Wallace, standing nose to nose with her, muttering at her in Japanese...

...and she breaks away, dashing to the ropes, rebounding back fast with a loud bellow...]

"EEEEEEYAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA!"

[Fujiwara lunges into the big tackle, smashing into Wallace...

...who HOLDS HER GROUND as Fujiwara bounces a few feet back, grabbing at her shoulder!]

GM: Ayako with the big tackle... but she can't knock Wallace off her feet either!

BW: She didn't go down though either. She's gotta be pretty proud of that.

[She certainly doesn't look proud though as Fujiwara stomps off to the corner, crossing her arms in a huff as Wallace smirks... and turns towards Michelle Bailey.]

GM: Two more to go... and Michelle Bailey actually outweighs Wallace, Bucky!

BW: She does, she does... but Wallace has that low center of gravity. This should be a big crash.

[Bailey looks out to the fans, beckoning her hands towards them, getting the crowd louder and louder before she breaks to the ropes, bouncing back...]

GM: BAILEY OFF THE ROPES!

[But Wallace lowers her shoulder, pushing up slightly on impact...

...which actually sends Bailey staggering backwards, losing her balance to land on her butt as well. Bailey claps her hands together in frustration as she looks up at Wallace who smiles, obviously pleased with herself...]

BW: Bailey's lacking a little in the speed department these days, Gordo. I think it cost her there.

GM: I think you're right.

[...until she gets a very large tapping on the shoulder.]

GM: Uh oh!

[And as Wallace turns around to look up at the six foot one inch frame of the cowgirl from La Feria, Texas. The crowd ROARS with anticipation as Flores looks down on the five foot three Wallace.]

GM: Wallace is shorter than Flores. She's lighter than Flores. Stronger? That remains to be seen.

BW: But as Bailey just showed us, Gordo. Height's not always an advantage in something like this. That low center of gravity might be the key...

GM: Those powerful legs and thick torso of Wallace keeping the opposition from being able to barrel her over...

[Flores reaches down, tousling the hair of Wallace...]

GM: Flores having a little fun with-

"SLAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[The crowd groans as Wallace slaps the hand away, sticking a finger up in Flores' face!]

BW: She didn't like that, Gordo.

GM: Apparently not... and Margarita Flores has got a bit of a temper on herself as well as Harley Hamilton can attest to. Those two got into a little bit of an altercation on our Pre-Game Show if you missed it.

[Flores jabs a finger into Wallace's chest, shoving her back as Wallace insistently points at the ropes.]

BW: Be careful what you wish for, T-Bone.

[A fired-up Flores turns and lumbers into the ropes, rebounding back towards a waiting Wallace, the crowd buzzing with anticipation for the big crash...]

GM: BOOM!

[And Flores' mighty running tackle does... nothing! Wallace holds her ground, letting loose a roar in response!]

BW: Are you kidding me?!

GM: Wallace holding strong!

[Flores turns, rushing to the ropes again...]

GM: Margarita's going to do it again!

[She runs a little harder this time, throwing herself into Wallace...

...who falls back a step but stays on her feet!]

GM: Oh! She budged her!

BW: But that's it! Wallace is still standing!

[Flores runs to the ropes again, hitting them strong...]

GM: Flores coming off again and-

[...and lands another big tackle, this time knocking Wallace back a few steps!]

GM: FLORES ROCKED HER THAT TIME!

BW: But she's still on her feet, Gordo!

[Flores turns, running to the ropes a fourth time, bouncing off towards Wallace...

...who pivots, grabbing Flores by the back of the head, and HURLS her through the ropes to the floor!]

GM: Trish tosses Flores to the floor! She'd had enough of that and-

[Skylar Swift dashes to the ropes, running towards Wallace who sidesteps as Swift barrels past it, diving headfirst through the ropes onto a standing Flores, knocking her down on the floor!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: AND A BIG DIVE TO THE FLOOR BY THE CANADIAN DREAM GIRL! OH MY!

[With Wallace having turned to watch Swift's dive, she quickly finds herself with arms wrapped around her waist...]

GM: Fujiwara hooks her from behind! She's looking for the German!

[But before she can deliver it, Xenia Sonova swings her around by the shoulder, delivering a quick one-two followed by a front kick that doubles over the Olympic gold medalist.]

GM: Sonova goes downstairs...

[Sonova seems poised to take advantage of it when Michelle Bailey grabs her and swings her around by the arm, burying a front kick of her own in the midsection.]

GM: And now it's Bailey doing the same.

[Bailey drops back to the ropes, leaping high and bringing her calf down on the back of Sonova's head!]

GM: OHH! AXE KICK!

[Bailey takes a quick look around to see if anyone would interfere with a pin attempt...

...and gets a forearm to the mouth from Trish Wallace... and a second... and a third, backing her across the ring into the ropes.]

GM: Wallace backs her to the ropes...

[Grabbing Bailey by the arm, Wallace whips her across the ring. Bailey rebounds off, ducking under a clothesline attempt. She hits the far side, coming back...

...and leaps into the air, taking Wallace down with a crossbody!]

GM: CROSSBODY! QUICK COVER! ONE! TWO!

[But Fujiwara is quick to intervene, grabbing a leg and pulling Bailey off of Wallace as the crowd groans.]

GM: Bailey looking for a quick win there but Ayako Fujiwara will have no part of it.

BW: And we may be about to get a rematch from Fight Night, daddy!

[The crowd buzzes as Fujiwara and Bailey square off, staring each other down as Trish Wallace rolls out to the floor.]

GM: Fujiwara and Bailey appeared to have struck up a friendship after their match in New York but-

BW: But there's no such thing as friendship when the World Title is involved, Gordo.

GM: That certainly could be true and- LOOK AT THIS!

[The crowd ROARS as Skylar Swift dives off the top rope onto both Fujiwara and Bailey, wiping them both out with a crossbody of her own!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[Swift quickly gets to her feet, looking around to see if anyone is incoming. Seeing no one, she pulls Bailey off the mat, whipping her into the corner.]

GM: Whips Bailey to the corner... and now she sends Fujiwara to the opposite corner!

[The Montreal native runs from one corner to the other, tumbling across the ring, throwing herself back into a handspring elbow on Bailey!]

GM: TUMBLING ELBOW ON BAILEY!

[She runs right back across the ring, cartwheeling and tumbling again...]



GM: AND A SECOND ONE ON FUJIWARA!

[Swift turns back, seeing that Bailey has dropped down to a sitting position in the corner. She barrels across the ring at top speed, dropping into a slide...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"  
"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: SLIDING FOREARM SMASH IN THE CORNER!

[Swift scrambles up, grabbing Bailey by the legs, dragging her from the corner before flipping over into a double leg cradle...]

GM: SWIFT TRYING TO CASH A TICKET TO REGINA, CANADA! ONNNNNNNE!  
TWOOOOOO!

[Fujiwara rushes from the corner, tumbling into a cartwheel of her own...

...and drops a thunderous double kneedrop down onto the midsection of the Canadian Dream Girl!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: TAKING A PAGE OUT OF HER MOTHER'S PLAYBOOK TO BREAK UP THE PIN AND SAVE THE MATCH!

[Clutching her midsection, Swift rolls out to the floor as Fujiwara grabs Bailey off the canvas, pulling her up and into a waistlock...]

GM: Ayako looking for the German and-

[With Bailey and Fujiwara tied up in the ring, Margarita Flores climbs back in, rushing towards them with her arm cocked and ready...]

GM: FLORES WITH THE LARIAT!

[But Fujiwara bails out, spinning to one side as Bailey spins to the other, causing Flores to whiff and go flying past the duo...

...who link hands, charging Flores in tandem...]

GM: OHHHH! AND THEY TAKE FLORES RIGHT BACK OUT TO THE FLOOR!

BW: It's a smart move, Gordo. Flores is the biggest competitor in the match with arguably the best one hit weapon. If she hits the lariat, she's going to Mosaic Stadium for the biggest match of her life. The more they can keep her out of the ring, the better chance the rest of them have of winning.

GM: Flores is out...

[Bailey grins at Fujiwara who points across the ring to where Trish Wallace is up on the apron...]

GM: Ayako directing traffic and... OHH! Bailey sends Wallace back down to the floor with a running front kick to the chest!

[Bailey ends up with her leg over the middle rope, in a vulnerable position as Sonova scrambles up on the apron, hooking Bailey around the head and neck...

...and uses her right leg to sweep out Bailey's leg still on the mat, throwing her down to the canvas!]

"THUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUD!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: SONOVA SUPERNOVA PUTS HER DOWN!

[Sonova twists back towards the ring as Fujiwara advances quickly, snatching Sonova around the head and neck, looping an arm up under Sonova's armpit...

...and HURLS her over the top rope, throwing her down with a head and arm suplex!]

GM: OHHH! Suplex by the Olympic gold medalist!

[Fujiwara pops back to her feet, throwing a scanning glance for anyone else incoming. Seeing no one, she leans down, wrapping her powerful arms around Sonova's waist...]

GM: DEADLIFT!

[A struggling Sonova kicks and flails as Fujiwara powers her up, holding her in front of her chest...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[From behind, Trish Wallace SLAMS a hard forearm down between the shoulderblades of Fujiwara, forcing her to drop Sonova down on the mat...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

[Wallace lets loose a wild cry at the end of the barrage of clubbing forearms, leaving Fujiwara in a puddle on the canvas. She quickly turns, hitting the ropes, leaping as high as her five foot three 166 pound frame will allow...]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: BIIIIIG BACKSPLASH!

[Wallace rolls over, flipping Fujiwara to her back, diving across the torso.]

GM: Wallace hooks a leg! She's got one! She's got two! She's got-

[From out on the floor, Margarita Flores snatches Wallace by the ankle, yanking her under the ropes to the floor...]

"CLAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAANG!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[...and HURLS her backwards into the ringside railing!]

GM: WALLACE HITS THE STEEEEEEL!

[A fired-up Flores climbs up on the apron, ducking through the ropes where Xenia Sonova hooks her around the neck in a Muay Thai clinch...]

GM: KNEES! SONOVA WITH SOME SERIOUS KNEES TO THE HEAD AND FACE OF HER FRIEND, MARGARITA FLORES!

[The powerful Flores HURLS Sonova backwards, creating some distance as Sonova charges back in immediately...]

“OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

GM: BIIIIIIIG BOOOOOOOOT!

[Flores’ massive kick to the mouth flips Sonova inside out, dumping her down on the canvas. The La Feria native quickly dives on top of her, pulling a leg close.]

GM: FLORES COVERS FOR ONE! SHE GETS TWO! SHE GETS-

“OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

GM: SWIFT WITH THE DIVING SAVE!

BW: The action’s non-stop in this one, Gordo.

GM: You’re absolutely right, Bucky. The pace is frenetic in there and it’s making it a little hard to keep track of.

[Swift stomps Flores a few times as the big Texan rolls to her back. Swift tosses a look around the ring and spots Ayako Fujiwara regaining her feet.]

GM: Ayako coming back up after those clubbing forearms from Trish Wallace and... RIGHT BACK DOWN WITH A HEADSCISSORS FROM SKYLAR SWIFT! OH MY!

[The Canadian Dream Girl, having successfully used a spinning headscissors to drop Fujiwara to the mat where the Olympian rolls to the floor, turns her focus back on a rising Flores. She quickly twists around, swinging her arm up...]

GM: OHH! Spinning back elbow to the jaw of a kneeling Flores!

[Flores puts a hand down on the mat, staying on a knee as Swift grabs her by the wrist, pulling her to her feet...

...and YANKING her into a short-arm elbowstrike to the jaw!]

GM: Swift throwing elbows, hoping that one of these will be enough to get her on the road to the Battle of Saskatchewan and that big shot at the Women’s World Title. What a story that would be for the Canadian Dream Girl who has had a rough year here in the AWA and is hoping that 2017 turns out better. To battle for the World Title in her home country would be a major accomplishment for this young lady.

[With Flores staggered, Swift breaks off, dropping back into the ropes...

...where Michelle Bailey boosts herself up, snapping a boot into the back of Swift’s head!]

GM: Ohh! And just when Swift had her focus on Flores and winning this thing, another of the women in this match makes her pay!

BW: It's gotta be so hard to get a clear strategy in this one, Gordo. Every time you turn around, someone's gunning for ya.

[With Swift stumbling forward, Bailey slips through the ropes, snatching a waistlock from behind...]

GM: And now it's Bailey looking for the German Suplex! SHE LIFTS-

[But Swift wraps her legs around the torso in mid-lift, stopping it cold and reversing her momentum, tucking her head and rolling down and through into a cradle!]

GM: OH! SHE GETS ONE! SHE GETS TWO! SHE GETS-

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: Near fall right there for Skylar Swift!

[Bailey scrambles up, falling back against the ropes for a boost of speed...]

GM: PUMP KICK!

[The bicycle kick catches Swift FLUSH in the chest, sending her falling backwards...

...into the waiting arms of Ayako Fujiwara who HOISTS Swift into the air, dumping her down on the back of her head and neck with a German Suplex!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: RELEASED GERMAN SUPLEX BY MISS GERMANY HERSELF!

[Fujiwara gets to her feet, shouting something in Japanese as Swift rolls out to the floor...

...and the Olympic gold medalist locks her eyes on the dazed and rising Margarita Flores.]

GM: Fujiwara moving in on Flores now and-

[The crowd audibly gasps as Fujiwara wraps her powerful arms around Flores' waist.]

BW: She can't do it, Gordo! There's no way she can get her up!

[The Philly crowd is all about it though, screaming and shouting as Fujiwara attempts to hoist the 176 pounder up into the air...]

GM: FUJIWARA TRYING TO GET HER UP!

[A wide-eyed Michelle Bailey watches, gleefully cheering on Fujiwara as the Olympic gold medalist attempts to lift Flores in the German Suplex...]

GM: SHE'S GOT HER OFF THE MAT!

[Flores' eyes go wide as Fujiwara holds her a few inches off the canvas, her feet dangling...

...and she SLAMS an elbow back into Fujiwara's jaw!]

GM: Flores trying to fight her way out of it!

[A second elbow forces Fujiwara to put her back down on the canvas and a third one breaks her free. She lowers her head, dashing towards the ropes, bouncing off...]

“WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!”

“OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

[...and runs RIGHT into a spinning roundhouse from Bailey!]

GM: GOOD GRIEF!

[Flores’ eyelids flutter as she stumbles backwards... then falls through the ropes to the outside.]

GM: Flores falls to the floor! And we’re back down to Bailey and Ayako Fujiwara in the ring!

[Fujiwara wiggles her fingers, slowly moving behind Bailey who has her back turned to the Olympic gold medalist...

...but Trish Wallace slides into the ring, spins Fujiwara around, lifts her up onto her shoulders...]

GM: WALLACE FROM BEHIND!

“THUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUD!”

“OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

GM: SAMOAN DROP! SAMOAN DROP!

[Wallace leans back, applying a pin attempt.]

GM: ONNNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOO! THR-

“WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!”

“OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

GM: SOCCER KICK! SOCCER KICK BY BAILEY ON WALLACE!

[Bailey dives on top of Wallace as Shari Miranda drops down to count.]

GM: ONNNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOO! THR-

[Bailey goes flying out of the ring as Xenia Sonova yanks her clear from the floor!]

GM: SONOVA PULLS OUT BAILEY!

[Sonova drops Bailey with a pair of leg kicks to either side...

...and then DRILLS her with a kneestrike that snaps back her head, dumping Bailey in a heap on the floor. She scrambles up on the apron, ducking through the ropes as Ayako Fujiwara comes to greet her.]

GM: Side kick by Sonova to the midsection... ohhh! And a front kick snaps Fujiwara’s head back!

[With Ayako wobbling, Sonova hooks her around the head and neck, looping an arm up under her armpit...]

BW: Da Svidanya and don’t get any on ya!

[But the attempt at a uranage slam is cut off by Fujiwara snapping an elbow into the side of the jaw once, twice, three times...

...and then pivots, lacing her arms around Sonova for a back suplex, lifting her into the air...]

GM: Fujiwara lifts her up and-

“OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

[...and brings her CRASHING down across a bent knee!]

GM: BACKBREAKER!

BW: Absolutely brutal!

[Fujiwara rolls her over, looking for a cover...]

GM: She gets one! She gets two! She gets- no! Sonova slips out at two!

[Fujiwara claps her hands together in frustration before getting to her feet, marching towards the corner where she promptly steps up on the midbuckle. She leans over, grabbing the top rope with both hands as she bounces on the ropes once... twice... and then leaps up, kicking out her legs as she CRASHES down onto Sonova with a splash!]

GM: OHH! CORNER SPLASH! THAT COULD DO IT!

[The Olympic gold medalist nods emphatically along with the count.]

GM: ONNNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOO! THR-

[But a big 176 pound elbowdrop from Flores breaks up the pin attempt!]

GM: Ohhh! And Flores gets there JUST in time!

[Flores quickly pulls Fujiwara off of Sonova, tossing her bodily back into the buckles where the Olympian crashes into the corner before stumbling out towards a waiting Flores...]

GM: Flores lifts her up... big slam perhaps and-

[The La Feria, Texas native drops backwards, hurling Fujiwara up into the air, and sending her crashing down on the canvas!]

“OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

GM: FALLAWAY SLAM BY FLORES!

[And the six foot one brawler shows off her agility by kipping up to her feet to a big reaction from the Philly crowd!]

GM: Flores is up... and she's got her eyes on Mosaic Stadium and a collision with Kurayami for the Women's World Title, fans!

BW: She's still got to find a way to put someone away and NOT get it broken up by one of the other five in this match.

[Flores locks her eyes on Xenia Sonova, nodding her head as she looks out on the crowd, slowly raising her arm...]

GM: She's calling for the lariat, Bucky!

BW: And if she hits it, she's heading to the Battle of Saskatchewan with a shot at the title!

[Flores beckons Sonova up with her off arm, waiting for her to get to her feet...

...when there's suddenly a concerned buzz from the crowd!]

GM: HEY!

[Flores suddenly flops over onto her chest as our camera cuts to reveal Harley Hamilton dragging her to the outside...]

GM: THAT'S HARLEY HAMILTON!

BW: Where the heck did SHE come from?!

[Hamilton grabs Flores by the hair, SMASHING her face down into the ring apron to groans from the crowd!]

GM: We told you they'd had a run-in on the Pre-Game Show and...

[Hamilton backs off for a running start before swinging her boot up into the jaw of Flores, knocking the Texan down on the floor!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: RUNNING BOOT TO THE MOUTH BY HAMILTON!

[A smirking Hamilton looks down on Flores, shouting at her before she heads towards the entrance ramp, arms spread wide...]

GM: There are no disqualifications in a match like this, fans! Hamilton's actions - while vile - are not punishable by the referee who is shouting at Hamilton get out of here!

[With Flores down, Sonova gets up unattacked by the lariat, looking around...

...and gets a boot in the gut from a recovered Trish Wallace who snatches a front facelock, slinging an arm over her powerful neck.]

GM: Suplex perhaps!

[Wallace pauses at the peak of the lift, holding Sonova upside down as the crowd noise gets louder... and louder... and louder with the duration of the hold.]

BW: Look at the power on ol' T-Bone!

GM: She's got her up there, straight as an arrow and... wow!

[The "wow!" exclamation comes as Wallace lowers her arm, striking a single bicep pose before she beckons the Philly crowd to cheer louder... which they happily oblige...]

GM: Sheer power and strength on the part of Trish Wallace and...

[...until finally, Wallace leaps into the air, adding extra “oomph” to the stalling suplex!]

GM: SUPLEX CONNECTS! Wallace rolls to cover!

[The referee dives to the canvas, counting once... twice... and...]

GM: OH! BAILEY PULLS OUT WALLACE!

[Wallace ends up in front of Michelle Bailey who peppers her with a quick trio of elbow strikes before spinning around for a back elbow that Wallace ducks under...]

GM: Ducks the elbow and-

[As Wallace comes up, she snatches an off-balance Bailey...]

GM: -SUPLEX ON THE FLOOOOOOR!

[Bailey BOUNCES off the barely-padded concrete from Wallace’s signature T-Bone suplex. Wallace gets back up, pointing up at the ring where Ayako Fujiwara is getting back to her feet...]

GM: Wallace crawls back in - she’s coming for Ayako!

[Wallace approaches Fujiwara from behind, wrapping her powerful arms around the Olympic gold medalist’s torso...]

GM: Wallace hooks her!

[With a grunt of effort, Wallace lifts Fujiwara up off the canvas, holding her in the waistlock as Fujiwara struggles and strains to free herself...]

...and ends up back down on the mat, breaking free, and ending up applying a waistlock of her own!]

GM: FUJIWARA HOOKS HER!

[She too lifts Wallace into the air but the Minnesota native is struggling to get loose from the get-go...]

GM: Now it’s Ayako looking for the German Suplex!

[Miss Germany attempts to get the powerhouse into the air but Wallace physically rips her arms apart, reversing again...]

GM: Wallace back in position, trying to get her up into the air and-

[The crowd cheers as Skylar Swift slides back in, racing across the ring, leaping into the air...]

GM: BEAUTIFUL DREAMER!

“WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!”

“OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

[The tornado roundhouse kick aimed at the head of Ayako Fujiwara misses its target as Fujiwara slips free, dropping to a knee as Swift accidentally DRILLS Trish Wallace between the eyes with it!]

GM: SHE MISSED! SHE MISSED!



[A shocked Swift looks down on Wallace, cupping her hands to her mouth in disbelief...]

...which is when Fujiwara swoops in from behind, snatching a waistlock. Swift swats at the hands grasping her but it's to no avail...]

"THUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUD!"  
"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: GERMAN SUPLEX BY AYAKO!

BW: SHE'S GONNA DO IT AGAIN!

[Rolling through it, Fujiwara ends up back on her feet, still grasping Swift...]

"THUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUD!"  
"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: A SECOND ONE CONNECTS!

[This time, Fujiwara lets go, climbing to her feet, shouting in Japanese at the crowd as she pumps her arms...]

GM: Fujiwara's got Swift down! She's in trouble! Could Ayako Fujiwara be about to cash her ticket to Mosaic Stadium at the end of this month? Could she be about to earn another shot at the Women's World Title?

[Fujiwara turns back towards Swift, ready to finish her off...]

...when suddenly Laura Davis is on the ring apron, pointing and shouting at Fujiwara!]

GM: What the...?!

BW: The All-Around Athlete is here!

[Fujiwara angrily turns towards Davis, shouting at her as the referee moves to get her off the apron.]

GM: Get her down from there, referee!

BW: She's trying, Gordo, but no one tells Laura Davis what to do!

[An irate Olympic gold medalist stomps over across the ring, still shouting at Davis who is arguing with the referee...]

...and she DRILLS Davis with an elbowstrike, knocking her to the floor to big cheers!]

GM: Ohhh! What a shot by Fujiwara!

[Standing over her, Fujiwara shouts at Davis who is on the floor...]

GM: Look at this!

[As Fujiwara turns, Trish Wallace leaps into the air... sort of... and delivers a low dropkick to the knee of the turning Ayako!]

GM: OH! THE KNEE! THE KNEE!

[The dropkick to Fujiwara's injured knee causes her to cry out, rolling out to the floor as Wallace looks a little concerned in her direction. She points to Fujiwara, asking the official if she's okay...

...which is when Xenia Sonova rushes her from behind, throwing a spinning heel kick between the shoulderblades that knocks Wallace through the ropes and out to the floor!]

GM: SONOVA SENDS WALLACE OUT AS WELL!

[Out on the floor, Laura Davis dusts her self off as Fujiwara gets to her feet, looking to get back into the ring...

...and Davis THROWS her shoulder into the back of Fujiwara's knee!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: SHE CLIPPED HER! SHE CLIPPED THE KNEE!

[Fujiwara goes down in a heap, howling in pain...]

BW: Gordo, look in the ring! Look at-

[As Sonova turns around, Skylar Swift rushes her, leaping into the air, twisting around and FLATTENS Sonova with a tornado roundhouse!]

GM: BEAUTIFUL DREAMER!

[Swift dives on top of the downed Sonova as we see Michelle Bailey rushing to Ayako Fujiwara's aid in the background, sending Davis scurrying away.]

GM: ONNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOO! THREEEEEEEEEEEE!

"DING! DING! DING!"

[The crowd ROARS as Skylar Swift rolls off Sonova, a huge smile on her face as she throws an arm into the air. The referee grabs her by the wrist, pointing to her as the Canadian Dream Girl gets to her feet to celebrate.]

GM: And can you believe it, fans?! The Canadian Dream Girl is heading home to fight for the Women's World Title!

[Swift clutches her hands to her chest, a glisten in her eye as she realizes what's ahead of her. Around the ring, there are disappointed faces as they realize the match has ended. Margarita Flores is back on her feet, grimacing as she wipes a trickle of blood from her mouth. Michelle Bailey is in the aisle, hands on her hips as she looks back down the ramp having chased Laura Davis away from the still-downed Ayako Fujiwara. Trish Wallace slams her hands down on the apron in frustration, glaring up at the ring at Swift who grins.]

GM: A tough night for five of these women who truly gave it their all but in the end, it's Skylar Swift heading to the Battle of Saskatchewan... to Mosaic Stadium to fight for the Women's World Title.

BW: It's gonna be a rough homecoming, Gordo. I hope she's ready for it.

GM: I know she will be, Bucky. And look at this now...

[Trish Wallace rolls back into the ring, climbing to her feet, staring across at Swift.]

BW: We might have a little Wallace/Swift rematch right here.

[Wallace walks across the ring towards Swift, eyes boring into her...

...and then lifts a clenched fist in front of her that Swift happily smashes with her own fist. Wallace nods, grabbing Swift's wrist and lifting her arm as the fans cheer. Michelle Bailey is the next one in, moving towards Swift to speak with her as AWA officials help Ayako Fujiwara off the floor.]

"You got the shot... now go and take her out."

[Swift smiles at Bailey, reaching out to place a hand on her shoulder with a "you've still got it." Bailey grins before exiting the ring, moving to help Fujiwara back up the ramp.]

GM: A great show of support from some of her fellow competitors but Michelle Bailey said it best... Skylar Swift, you've got the shot!

BW: Now we'll see what she can do with it.

GM: Fans, let's go backstage where I'm told another member of the AWA Women's Division is looking on.

[We fade backstage at the Wells Fargo Center with Victoria June watching the monitors as Skylar Swift celebrates her victory in the Six For A Shot match. The Afro Punk isn't dressed to compete, sporting flowers twisted up in her famous blonde Afro, a Hawaiian style sarong skirt over a leather bra top with a flower blooming over each conical point. June has dotted her freckled face with sunflower designs. She looks shocked at the result but overjoyed.]

VJ: Let's go, Canada! Yeah, do the thing! DANG Skylar, that's how you feel, huh?

[It's at this point that June's mini-celebration is interrupted by the intrepid AWA report, Mark Stegglet.]

MS: Victoria June, can I get a moment with you? How do you feel about Skylar Swift getting the win and a shot at Kurayami for the AWA Women's World title?

VJ: Ah feel great for Skylar, Mark. She's been through so much with that crazy Charisma and now her weirdo Harley Quinn doctor pal, Leah White. She deserves this. She's earned it and God bless her.

MS: But you've been very vocal about wanting a title shot against Kurayami yourself. But with Julie Somers being named Number One Contender and now Skylar Swift getting herself a title shot, it feels like despite your recent success you may find yourself getting pushed down the line. What if one of them wins the title? You may find yourself having to work your way right back up to a title shot.

[June twists her face at Stegglet.]

VJ: Seriously, Mark? That's what you're asking me? Do you know who ah am, sugah? Ah don't care what happens with Wonder Woman and Swifty there. If they can beat that big nasty then beat her. When ah get mah shot, no matter who's the champion ah'm gonna take mah shot and ah'm not throwin' away that shot! Shout out to that Hamilton fella. Ah'm not the one who cares who's in front of me. Ah'm on a high, Mark, since ah beat up on that nasty Cinder and saw Ricki shave her own head to freedom.

[She touches her blonde afro.]

VJ: Sometimes ah wonder about a big chop mah damn self. But look, Vicky June here is open for business against anybody, anytime, anywhere ...

"... meowwwwww... "

[The camera pans back a little to find that Molly Bell has snuck up behind Victoria June, startling her a bit. Molly is dressed in a T-shirt featuring a redesign of the Sailor Moon logo, except to feature her own name, along with her collar and some black leggings. Her hair is still a bright pink from Fight Night, and her cat face makeup is applied. She sheepishly grins as she waves to Mark Stegglet.]

VJ: You again, huh?

[Molly nods gleefully.]

MB: Meow! Sooooo... I think you and me got off on the wrong paw, nyaaa? I mean... maybe just me. I was so sleepy and I didn't know that interview was happening last month, and... oh gosh, we both did some wrong things. There's no need to get purrrsonal! We should be pawsitive!

[Molly nods her head firmly.]

VJ: Look, sugah, you're a cute little thing and, hey, you seem harmless enough, but me and Mark are in the middle of talking about the Women's World Title. We're talking about Kurayami... you remember her, right, Ms. Kitty?

[Molly hisses in response.]

VJ: Watch out now. Kurayami just about spayed you and you know how ah handle out of control brats.

[Stegglet grimaces.]

VJ: Ah don't want to see you get hurt, little kitty. So, why don't you run along and let Mark and ah get back to that serious business we're talking about, okay?

[Molly looks really sad at this dismissal, her eyelids fluttering as she mopes away. June shakes her head.]

VJ: ...man, and they think ah'm the weird one.

[June chuckles.]

VJ: Anyways, where were we, Mark?

[With a horrific sound that sounds like a snarling hiss storm, Molly Bell comes rushing in from off-camera, leaping into the air, taking a swipe at June. She grabs hold of June's plentiful afro, swinging her back and forth as Mark Stegglet tries to back out of view.]

VJ: YOU CRAZY LITTLE- GET OFF ME!

[Molly snarls and hisses again, freeing one hand from June's hair to take a swipe at her face. June shoves her back, eyes flaring as she moves towards her.]

VJ: I'M GONNA-

[Stegglet jumps back in, trying to intervene.]

MS: LADIES! LADIES, PLEASE! CONTROL YOURSELVES!

[Molly is in a standing crouched position, almost as if she's curled up in a ball to protect herself. Her teeth are bared, glaring at June who is breathing heavily, checking her cheek for signs of blood.]

VJ: Look, ah was all set to let things go with you, you little...

[She trails off.]

VJ: But if you want to fight, little kitty... you'll find out THIS cat got claws too. And I don't back down from any fight... even one against someone... like you.

[Molly blinks, her body language slowly untensing, her face becoming puzzled.]

MB: Like... like me? What's wrong with being like meow?

[Molly looks crestfallen, then begins to pout. She almost looks on the verge of tears.]

MB: W-well... if... if that's... the way you f-feel... I guess...

[Suddenly, Molly hisses.]

MB: I GUESS WE'RE GONNA FIGHT TONIGHT, NYAAAAAA!

[And Molly scampers away, leaving June and Stegglet behind. June stares after the cat.]

VJ: Good thang ah always carry mah gear with me. Don't wander off on me, Mark. This shouldn't take long.

[June strides away with Stegglet looking on in surprise.]

MS: I think we just added another match for later tonight! Fans, we're going to take our first break of the night but when we come back, it'll be the No Countouts battle between Alphonse Green and Atlas Armstrong! Don't you dare go away!

[Fade to black.

We fade up on the logo for the television network known by its fans as "The X" - Fox Sports X. Standing next to it is Terrence Howard of "Empire" fame.]

"They tell me that Lucious Lyon ain't the toughest man on Fox anymore. Hah! I'll believe that when I see it!"

[Cut to a shot from SWLL's LUCHA LUCHA LUCHA where El Caliente snaps off a death-defying dive over the top rope, over the corner ringpost, and onto a prone figure. A voiceover not belonging to Terrence Howard provides the hype.]

"Enter the world of lucha libre!"

[Then to a shot of the GFC - a recent shot with Ivan Petrov knocking Rufus Harris out to win the GFC Heavyweight Title.]

"Or maybe you prefer a little bit of MMA!"

[On to Tiger Paw Pro's WrestleGalaxy as Yoshinari Taguchi exchanges stiff slaps with the man AWA fans would know as Nenshou.]

"Travel to the Land of the Rising Sun for some puroresu action!"

[A highlight reel level head kick from a European looking kickboxer drops a Japanese one.]

"The hottest new action on The X belongs to SKB - Super K Boxing!"

[And finally to a shot of Ryan Martinez lighting up Supreme Wright's chest with a series of machine gun chops.]

"Saturday nights bring you all the action of the American Wrestling Alliance!"

[We cut back to Terrence Howard, wincing and rubbing his own chest as if he could feel Martinez' chops.]

"Alright, alright... those boys are pretty bad too. But can they sing?"

[Howard laughs as we cut back to the logo for The X. Howard delivers the closing line.]

"Fox Sports X. Come get some."

[We fade to black...

The "ACCESS 365" graphic appears on the screen, as we see Theresa Lynch and a production assistant, judging from the headset he is wearing and the clipboard in his hand that both of them are looking over, deep in discussion.]

"WHERE IS SHE?"

[Both Theresa and the production assistant look up, as the tall drink of Texas water that is Margarita Flores strides up to them. She has her cowbell in hand, letting the bullrope drag behind her, and she still looks hot from what happened to her in the Six for a Shot match.]

MF: Where is Harley Hamilton? (To the production assistant.) You! Did you see where Harley went?

PA: She... She came by mi-... Minutes ago, bu- But I don't kno-

MF: Spit it out! Theresa, you know where she's gone?

TL: Margarita, I know you're hot; I saw what she did to you, but you need to breathe. Calm down. We saw her minutes ago, but, I'm guessing, if she's not around back here, she's probably left, knowing you'd be after her. Whatever receipt you've got for her, it's going to have to wait for a-

"SMAAACCKKK!!!"

[That, folks, was Flores slapping the top of a production crate in frustration. Both Theresa and the production assistant are, naturally, taken aback, the PA visibly jumping in shock. Flores looks down at the floor, taking in a couple of loud, deep breaths. Eventually, she looks up.]

MF: You're right, Theresa, you're right... Harley might have gotten away this night... But she's going to get hers... (Notices the camera that is still recording.) You, Mr. Cameraman, I want you to get in close for this... And I want you to pass this message along to Harley... Harley, wherever you are when you see this, you got away this time. You got your cheap shot in and you cost me my shot at the Women's title and at Kurayami.

But you can't run forever... In fact, in under two weeks from now, when we are back in Center Stage for the next Power Hour, consider this an invite... Consider this a challenge... Come look me in the eye and say what you need to say... To my face!

[With another flash of the ACCESS logo, we end up backstage in the interview area where Mickey Cherry stands in front of the absolutely astonishing Atlas Armstrong. The pair are dressed in identical silver outfits: Mickey in a metallic silver suit, black shirt and piano key tie and Armstrong in his silver cloak. Cherry clutches his brass-handled cane with white knuckles. Atlas, meanwhile, stands behind him, posed akimbo, looking like a hulking statue of the Titan for which he is named.]

MC: Alphonse Green, you dirty little Paducah pole cat, your day of reckoning is here! Do you hear me? You're gonna get yours today! Liberty or Death right here in the City of Brotherly Love, you're going out to find out there's no love for you, Jack! No love at all! Atlas Armstrong should have a perfect record! No losses. No draws. But thanks to your sneaky little ways, that's not the case, is it! So we're gonna fix that, Daddy! Do you hear me? We're gonna fix it... because Atlas Armstrong is gonna take you all the way up and put you all the way down! My man... the Incredible... the Amazing... the Astonishing... the Impossible... the ALMIGHTY Atlas Armstrong is gonna...

[Armstrong stalls Mickey Cherry with a hand on his shoulder. Gently, he moves Cherry to one side as he steps forward to speak. Atlas speaks?]

AA: I got this one, Mickey.

[He stares at the camera, shrugging his face.]

AA: Alphonse Green, daddy. I get you. You're the little punk who doesn't like getting sand kicked in his face. You're the little punk that won't move over when it's time for the big dogs to eat. You're the little punk who checks himself out in the mirror and believes that 98 pounds of him is something wonderful and special.

You know something, dude, you're the poster child for the world of today with its participation trophies, its everyone's a winner mentality. You're the little punk that thinks you can be anything you want and should be anything you want just by showing up and that's why... THAT'S WHY... those little inhumanoid pukes in the audience always want to ride with Gang Green. Because they're sick and twisted and as useless as you!

[Armstrong steps in front of Cherry, completely blocking him out of the shot. He opens his silver cape to reveal his astonishing physique with a double biceps pose.]

AA: But it doesn't matter what you believe you are. It doesn't matter what they believe you are. Here's the truth, Alphonse. You're stepping into the ring with Atlas Armstrong at Liberty Or Death with no count outs. So you can't run. You can't hide. I don't care how long it takes to chase you down, you little twerp, but I'm going to chase you down. And when I do get my hands on you, I'm going to hurt you. And I'm going to show the world the truth.

[He flexes his pecs, making them dance.]

AA: Puny man, you can't measure up to Atlas on any level. I don't care that you're the King of Battle Royals. I don't care that you're one of the most popular ex-champions in the company and I don't care that your forearm off the top might be damn phenomenal. It doesn't matter to me because maybe just maybe you're good enough to get past ordinary men. But you're in the ring with the Almighty Atlas Armstrong and you already know that's a whole different kettle of fish. No

count outs? No chance. I'm gonna drop the Heavens on you, dude. I promise you that.

[Mickey Cherry peaks out from behind Atlas, looking up at his 6'8 charge in awe.]

MC: That was beautiful, baby! Beautiful! You forgot one thing, Atlas, baby!

AA: What's that?

MC: When he's laying on the canvas after you've beaten him to a pulp! I'm gonna get in that ring and beat him to a pulp for what he did to me! Liberty or death? Baby, you're gonna give him both! You're gonna set his spirit free by killing his career! Hahahahahahaha! Let's go, baby! Let's go!

[Armstrong and Cherry walk out of view as we cut to "Sweet" Lou Blackwell, who is standing in front of a Liberty or Death logo.]

SLB: Mickey Cherry with words bigger than his belt size but I'm guessing his threats won't mean a thing to this man - one of the many contenders to the Television Championship, but right now he's on the outside looking in. Please welcome Alphonse Green!

[Green walks into view, Green's wearing a pair of aviator sunglasses, a leather jacket, and a pair of green and white zubaz pants. Green looks up, looking off camera as "Sweet" Lou begins the interview.]

SLB: In a few short minutes, Alphonse, you've got a tall task ahead of you when you step into the ring, and I do apologize because Mickey Cherry insisted that I have to say this.. you're going to step in the ring here at Liberty or Death with the self-proclaimed Impossible... The Incredible... The Uncanny... The Astonishing... The Amazing... Atlas Armstrong.

[Green looks down, scratching his head.]

AG: Boy, those are a lot of nicknames. Gee, I wonder who else came up with a lot of silly nicknames when he was startin' out in the AWA, some of which where true... at the time, and some of which may have slightly been exaggerated.

[Blackwell raises an eyebrow.]

SLB: Gee, I couldn't imagine who you might be talking about.

[Green looks back up, a grin on his face.]

AG: I admit, some of them, especially the "King of the Battle Royals" didn't quite age that well...

[Green's grin slowly turns into a slightly miffed look on his face.]

AG: ...and there's somethin' related that I'll address when the time is right. There's a certain reason that I, personally, ain't too happy about but I ain't supposed to go into details, or else. Whatever that might mean.

[Green scratches his head again. When he stops scratching his head, the grin returns.]

AG: BUT! First things first! Tonight, it's me vs. the man of many nicknames, Atlas Armstrong in a match that might actually be in his favor! No countouts, it'd be ideal for him to beat me from pillar to post while his little brayin' donkey pal Mickey Cherry jumps around like a five year old that ate three bowls of Frosted Flakes! I



don't blame him! Frosted Flakes are good, and a part of a very balanced breakfast! Armstrong oughtta know about balanced breakfasts, that dude looks like he can put away three or five every dang mornin'!

Dang it, Sweet Lou, now I'm hungry.

[Blackwell smirks.]

SLB: Well, there's gonna be plenty of time to eat after the match.

[Green nods his head.]

SLB: You just said that you think this no countout match may work in his favor, do you have a plan to turn it in your favor?

AG: Well, it ain't gonna be much of a surprise to hear this from me, but I'm just gonna play it by ear and take things as they come. I can be like Spider-man, jumpin' off of walls, makin' th' big lug dizzy as he tries to swat me out of the air. We might brawl all the way through the back, through the concession stands, through the souvenir stands all the way on out the front doors of the arena! He might think he gets the advantage when he picks me up and throws me from here all th' way to the Alleghany River!

[Green starts chuckling.]

AG: Armstrong'll strut back to th' arena thinkin' that he's gotten rid of me for good. He'll be thinkin' about that television title when he walks past the Phillie Phanatic, who just so happens to be in th' arena signin' autographs for all the kids. He'll have this big smile on his face when suddenly..

[Green slams his fist into his open palm.]

AG: The Phanatic drives one of those little wooden baseball bats into the back of his dang head, and off comes the head and here comes good ol' Alphonse Green. I'll grab him by one of his tree trunks he calls an ankle, drag it back to the ring, and get the three counts.

SLB: Wait a minute. That scenario's impossible. Armstrong is strong but he can't throw you a few hundred miles to the other side of the state, and even if he could.. how would you be able to pull that sneak attack off?

[Green snaps his head towards Blackwell, then snaps it towards the camera, a grin on his face.]

AG: I make the impossible.. possible. And that's what's gonna happen to Atlas Armstrong by the end of the night. They're gonna call him.. the Possible, the Somewhat Credible, the Unfunny, the Fairly Decent, and the Kinda Good I Guess Atlas Armstrong. I'll make him think about what he's done so far as I ride off to my next destination, the AWA Television Title. It's time... to ride... with Alphonse Green!

[Green stares at the camera for a moment, before sliding out of view. Sweet Lou looks on as Green leaves, and then turns towards the camera.]

SLB: Alphonse Green not lacking any confidence going into an important match-up with the rising star Atlas Armstrong - now let's go down to the ring to Rebecca for the introductions!

[We fade from backstage to the ring.]

RO: The following contest will be conducted under NO COUNTOUTS rules and has a twenty minute time limit. Introducing first...

[The crowd's reaction starts buzzing in anticipation as the lights dim a bit.... Hit it, Freddie!]

# Tonight... I'm gonna have myself a real good time.  
# I feel Alllllllll---iiiiii---iiiiii-vvvveee  
# And the world, turning inside out.... yeaahh.  
# I'm floating around... in ecstasy.. so don't. Stop. Me. Now. # Don't. Stop. Me..

[And bursting out onto the aisleway on cue is Alphonse Green to a chorus of cheers as Queen's "Don't Stop Me Now" kicks in.]

RO: Coming down the aisle... hailing from Paducah, Kentucky... weighing in at one hundred and ninety-four pounds... here is...

ALPHONNNNNNNSE.. GREEEEEEEEEN!

[The crowd roars in approval as Green pauses at the top of the aisle, closing his eyes and spreading his arms out to soak in the cheers. Green is still as baby-faced looking as ever, although his jawline and cheeks are starting to be more defined as he gets older. His dark blonde hair is stringy and curly, extending down towards his shoulders. Green's wearing a black leather jacket with the letters A.G. ripped into the back, and his wrestling gear consists of an odd combination of colors: Kentucky Wildcat blue, and dark green stripes representing Gang Green running across seemingly random portions of his trunks. He has a pair of white boots on as well.]

GM: The former World Television Champion is in the house and... well, he's hoping to get things back on track here tonight in Philadelphia.

BW: Green hasn't exactly had the easiest time of things since his return. I know he's been frustrated but a win tonight against the unpinned Atlas Armstrong would go a long way to getting him back on track, Gordo.

GM: It certainly would and these fans love them some Alphonse Green!

[Green slowly saunters down the aisle, soaking in the cheers. Once Green reaches the ringside area, he runs up the steps to the apron, grabs the top rope, and launches himself over the top rope and into the ring. He leans up against the ropes, removes his jacket, and throws it over the top rope for the ringside attendant to retrieve. The music dies down as Rebecca continues.]

RO: Annnnnnnnd his opponent...

[Andrew Lloyd Webber's iconic theme to "Jesus Christ Superstar" plays over the PA system as the arena spotlights converge on the top of the stage.]

RO: From Big Sur, California... weighing 298 pounds... he is accompanied to the ring by his manager Mickey Cherry...

He is the ASTONISHING...

THE AMAZING...

THE INCREDIBLE...

THE IMPOSSIBLE...

THE ALLLLLLLMIIIIIGHTYYYYY...

ATLAAAAAAS ARRRRRRRRMSTRONNNNNNNNG!

[Mickey Cherry emerges first, swaggering down the aisle in the same gaudy outfit we saw moments ago. Atlas emerges behind him, the duo striding down the aisle towards the ring as the fans let him have it.]

GM: And if Gang Green is in full effect here tonight in the City of Brotherly Love, you'd have to also say that the Atlas Nation is stuck beyond the city limits.

BW: Armstrong's got his biggest fan with him though here tonight.

GM: Who's that?

BW: Him.

[Upon reaching the ring, Mickey Cherry removes Armstrong's cloak, revealing his amazing 6'8, 298 pound physique. Armstrong strikes a few poses as the camera cuts to various fans in the crowd to catch their reaction: wild jeers from an overweight middle-aged man with his beaming wife next to him, a pair of teenage girls with "ATLAS" written inside of a small heart on each cheek, and a young boy giving a big ol' thumbs down.]

GM: Atlas Armstrong certainly is an impressive physical specimen, Bucky.

BW: The guy is put together like few others are, Gordo. He's got the arms, the chest, the legs, the back... he's the total package inside that ring.

GM: And Mickey Cherry's hoping Atlas can get the win here tonight and make a splash big enough for them to ride all the way to the top of this business.

[Armstrong is still posing as referee Davis Warren steps to center ring, addressing both competitors before he signals for the bell.]

"DING! DING! DING!"

GM: The bell has sounded and we're underway in this special No Countouts match that came about after these two battled to a double countout on the Preview Power Hour back at Memorial Day Mayhem.

BW: That won't happen tonight!

GM: It certainly won't and- what's this little ferret doing now?! Get him down from there!

[Mickey Cherry is standing on the apron near Alphonse Green, running his mouth a mile a minute in his obnoxious high-pitched squeal. Green grimaces, turning to shout at Cherry in kind.]

GM: We've got a bit of a war of words going on between Alphonse Green and Mickey Cherry now. Cherry's mouth is writing a check that his body couldn't even cash against a seven year old, in my opinion...

[But with Green distracted, Armstrong gets a running start, leaping into the air, drawing his powerful arm back...]

GM: SUPERMAN PUNCH!

[...but Green dives clear, causing Armstrong to miss!]

GM: NOBODY HOME!

[But Armstrong pulls up JUST before he smashes his mighty fist into Mickey Cherry who squeaks in terror before wiping his brow in relief. Armstrong apologizes to his manager...

...and then gets dropkicked between the shoulderblades, a blow that sends the musclehead crashing into Cherry, knocking him off the apron to the floor!]

GM: OHH! AND DOWN GOES CHERRY!

BW: That's assault, Gordo! Green should be arrested for going after Mickey Cherry and-

[And the former World Television Champion dives to the canvas, dragging Armstrong down in a schoolboy!]

GM: ONNNNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOOO! THREEEEEEEE-

[But to the dismay of the Philly fans, Armstrong lashes out with his mighty legs, sending Green FLYING out of the pin attempt and almost through the ropes himself. He catches himself on the ropes, a surprised look on his face.]

BW: Incredible power on the part of Atlas Armstrong saves his bacon right there, Gordo.

GM: It certainly did... and I think Alphonse Green was caught off-guard a bit by the power in those legs, Bucky.

BW: It may be an upper body business but Atlas don't skip leg days, daddy!

[Green quickly scrambles up off the canvas, taking aim as Armstrong rolls to his knees, pushing up onto one...

...when Green surges forward, throwing himself into a second dropkick, catching Atlas on the chin and knocking him right back down!]

BW: Tremendous basement-level dropkick by Green, Gordo, and this is exactly what Alphonse Green has to do if he wants to stand a chance against Atlas Armstrong. He's gotta move quick, he's gotta strike fast, and he's gotta keep him down.

GM: Green quickly on the move, slingshots over the top to the apron...

[Turning around with a grip on the top rope, Green slingshots himself right back over the ropes, dropping a leg across the collarbone of Armstrong!]

GM: Ohhh! Slingshot legdrop finds the mark! And Green with another quick pin attempt!

[Green reaches back, trying to hook one of the powerful legs but just barely gets a grip on it before Armstrong PRESSES him out of the cover at the count of two!]

GM: Whoa my! Armstrong kicking out with some SERIOUS authority right there!

[And again, Green shows a look of concern as he scrambles back up, measuring the rising Armstrong...]

GM: Green's on the move again, to the ropes...

[Leaping into the air, Green throws himself into a spinning heel kick, catching Armstrong flush and sending the powerhouse tumbling through the ropes and out to the floor!]

GM: TO THE FLOOR GOES ARMSTRONG! What a kick by Alphonse Green who certainly has Gang Green in full effect here in Philly, showing their support for the former Television Champion who would love to get back into the mix for that title here in 2017.

[Green gets back up, throwing a glance to the floor where Armstrong is struggling a bit to get back to his feet...]

BW: He's gotta keep on him, Gordo. This isn't the time for that sportsmanship garbage you're so fond of. Get out there and stay on him. There are no countouts so you can be out there all night if necessary.

[With a shout of "WHO WANTS TO RIDE WITH ALPHONSE GREEN?!" that gets cheers from the AWA faithful, Green runs to the far ropes, bouncing off to build up speed as he steams across the ring to where Armstrong is coming to his feet on the floor...]

GM: GREEN'S GONNA FLY!

[...and he hurls himself between the top and middle ropes towards a standing Armstrong who reaches up to greet him...]

GM: CAUGHT?! ARE YOU KIDDING ME?!

[With Armstrong's powerful arms wrapped around a shocked Green's torso, the Big Sur native pops his hips and LAUNCHES Green across the ringside area, sending him bouncing off the barely-padded concrete!]

"THUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUD!"  
"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: MY STARS! A DEVASTATING OVERHEAD THROW OUT ON THE FLOOR!

BW: Gordo, there's been a lot of online chatter as of late about who is the strongest competitor in the AWA - is it Max Magnum? Is it Blake Colton? Is it someone who we'll see in the Stampede Cup, Danny Morton? Is it any number of guys who could stake their claim to that spot? Well, I think Atlas Armstrong may have just set the bar right there, daddy!

GM: An impressive show of strength by the big man from Big Sur! He's rolling back in... and... is he telling the referee to count Green out?

[Armstrong waves a dismissive hand towards Green, still obviously a little wobbly from the early offense but the referee shakes his head.]

GM: Davis Warren reminding Atlas Armstrong that there are no countouts in this one and- watch it now!

[An irate Armstrong gets right up in the official's face, shouting at him as Warren backs a few steps away, pointing to the AWA logo on his shirt.]

GM: There may not be countouts in this one but there certainly are disqualifications and Armstrong's gotta watch himself out there. A little self control is needed for sure...

[Armstrong continues to shout at the referee, pointing angrily out to the floor as Mickey Cherry does what a jackal like him would do... he backs his client's play even though it's blatantly against the match's stipulation.]

GM: Now Cherry AND Atlas Armstrong are shouting at the referee. This is ridiculous, Bucky! They're the ones who asked for this No Countouts stipulation and now they're trying to get the referee to ignore it!

BW: That seems fair to me, Gordo. They asked for the stipulation - they should get to waive it if they feel that's appropriate.

GM: That's now how this works and you know it!

[With Armstrong still shouting at the official, bullying him back into the corner, Alphonse Green has managed to stir off the floor, pulling himself up on the apron as the crowd begins to buzz with anticipation. The former Television Champion grabs the top rope with both hands, waiting as Cherry squeaks a warning to Armstrong who turns and moves towards Green...]

GM: Green's on the apron... SPRINGBOARD!

[Green comes sailing through the air, catching Armstrong across the collarbone with a flying clothesline, flattening the Big Sur powerhouse!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: HE GOT ALL OF THAT! GREEN COVERS AGAIN!

[He again struggles to rein in one of Armstrong's large legs as the referee drops down to count.]

GM: ONNNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOO!

[But again, Armstrong powers out of the pin attempt, breaking it up at two. Green pops up to his knees, grimacing at the official who holds up two fingers as Cherry barks instructions and Armstrong rolls under the ropes to the floor to jeers from the Philly crowd.]

GM: And after that springboard flying clothesline, Atlas Armstrong may be rethinking wanting this match at all, Bucky. That undefeated streak of his could be short for this world if Green is able to keep this up.

BW: Look at Mickey Cherry - the brilliant manager that he is - racing to his man's side, trying to give him some advice to get things back on track.

[And with Cherry and Armstrong huddled up on the floor, Green's eyes light up just before he dashes to the ropes, bouncing off to build up speed...]

GM: GREEN ON THE MOVE!

[The former champion HURLS himself between the ropes in a tope dive a second time...

...and this time he CREAMS Mickey Cherry who somehow managed to shove his man aside and out of Green's path!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: MICKEY CHERRY GETS WIPED OUT BY ALPHONSE GREEN!

BW: What a tremendous sacrifice by a manager for his charge, Gordo! Mickey Cherry saw Green coming and he shoved Atlas out of the way to save him.

GM: You ever make a sacrifice like that in your managerial days?

BW: Can't say that I did.

GM: Not that brave?

BW: Courage is a matter of perspective, Gordo. You call it bravery, I look at it as Mickey Cherry just left his client out there all alone for who knows how long after that near-200 pounder wiped him out.

GM: An excellent point as Green comes off the mat, looking down on Cherry with a big smile on his face. That wasn't his intended target but that's gotta feel pretty good after Cherry antagonized him for-

[But with Green looking at Cherry, he misses the fact that Armstrong is on his feet and on the move...]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: CLOTHESLINE TO THE BACK OF THE HEAD BY ATLAS ARMSTRONG! OH MY!

BW: It's like getting clubbed with a '78 Pinto, daddy!

[Armstrong sneers at the downed Green as the Philly crowd jeers... most of them at least. It's Philly so... you know.]

GM: Armstrong pulling Green up now, looking to take advantage of this situation. He shoves him back inside the ring... and in he comes after him...

[Armstrong grabs Green before he can get too far away, dragging him back to his feet again where he promptly scoops him up for a bodyslam...

...and then removes one arm completely, twisting it up to flex.]

GM: One-armed bodyslam shakes the spine of Alphonse Green!

BW: And he even took the time to put on a little show with that pose while he did. Atlas Armstrong is truly a man of the people, Gordo.

GM: I'm sure he is. But that slam's got Green reeling now, grabbing at the lower back... and Armstrong's not done with him either...

[Stalking a crawling Green like a big game predator, Armstrong snatches the back of the tights, pulling him up and shoving him bodily into the nearest set of turnbuckles. He grabs the arm, whipping Green across to the opposite corner.. and comes thundering in after him with a big clothesline!]

GM: OHH! What a clothesline...

[And with Green still in the corner, Armstrong hooks him under the arm...

...and HURLS him three-quarters of the way across the ring with a stunning biel throw!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

BW: Impressive! Most impressive!

[Armstrong pauses, flexing his biceps to jeers from the Philly crowd as Green struggles to get off the mat, grabbing at his lower back as Armstrong approaches.]

GM: Atlas coming in on Green once again... Green trying to get up before he gets there...

[Green grabs hold of the ropes, trying to get on the move. He shoves off, winding up a big haymaker...

...but Armstrong catches him coming in and presses his 194 pound frame overhead with ease!]

GM: LOOK AT THE POWER!

[Armstrong holds Green overhead, not even grimacing as he walks out towards the middle ring, keeping Green aloft with ease...

...and then THROWS him down in a spine-shaking press slam!]

"THUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUD!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: MAMMOTH SLAM BY ARMSTRONG!

[Green arches his back, crying out in pain as he rolls to his hip.]

BW: Green's back has gotta be begging for relief right about now, daddy. He's taken several hard shots and slams on it and... whew... that was a rough one right there.

GM: A very rough landing from... I don't know... maybe ten feet in the air.

[Armstrong takes his time, a swagger in his step as he moves across the ring towards the downed former World Television Champion.]

GM: Armstrong sure is proud of himself, Bucky.

BW: Why shouldn't he be, Gordo? He's undefeated! He's beating up his opponent right now! And look at him! He's built like a Greek God! He's etched out of stone! The women are lined up for miles just to get a glimpse of him!

GM: Alphonse Green now, trying to create some distance by rolling out to the apron... perhaps in search of a breather.

BW: You could lock him in an oxygen tent right now and he still wouldn't be able to outlast Atlas Armstrong.

GM: We'll see about that.

[Approaching the ropes, Armstrong reaches over the top, leaning down to pull Green up to his feet and right into a powerful front facelock.]

GM: It looks like Armstrong plans to bring Green in the hard way, Bucky.

BW: Another hard slam down on that back is comin' his way.

[The powerhouse elevates Green, holding him straight up for a moment...



...but a struggling Green slips out, dropping down on his feet behind a shocked Armstrong as the fans cheer!]

GM: Green's on the loose... hooks him... to the ropes... and rolls him back!

[The rolling reverse cradle ends up with Armstrong's shoulders to the canvas...]

GM: ONNNNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOOOOO! THREEEEEEEEEEE-

[But the powerful Armstrong kicks out at the last moment, his massive legs propelling Green the distance of the ring, sending him FLYING over the top rope...

...where he just BARELY grabs hold of the top, sliding back onto the apron!]

GM: What a kickout and what a counter by Green!

[A desperate Green slaps his forearm once, grabbing the top rope as Armstrong starts to get up...

...but a high-pitched shout stops Armstrong as he falls back to the mat, grabbing the referee's wrist as he does, pulling Davis Warren down to a knee!]

GM: What the...?!

BW: Armstrong's got the ref and-

GM: AND MICKEY CHERRY'S GOT THE LEG!

[A disheveled Mickey Cherry is indeed clinging to Alphonse Green's ankle, preventing him from leaping to the top rope for The Main Course!]

GM: Green's trying to kick him off and-

[Green angrily jerks his leg away, turning and grabbing Cherry by the jacket lapels before he can flee...

...and to the roar of the Philly crowd, Green LIFTS Cherry to the apron, holding onto his tie with one hand as he threatens him with a clenched fist!]

GM: He's got him now! Mickey Cherry may be about to regret that-

[Coming off the mat, Armstrong moves quickly to defend his manager, leaping into the air, and SLAMMING his fist into the side of Green's head!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: SUPERMAN PUNCH BY ARMSTRONG!

[Green's eyelids flutter but Armstrong grabs him before he can fall off the apron. He snatches the front facelock again, lifting Green into the air, and throwing him down with a suplex turned into a slam!]

GM: Ohh! Another rough landing for Green who may be out cold after that Superman Punch and... what's this now?

[Armstrong pumps his arms up and down a few times before he lifts Green off the mat, hoisting him up across his massive shoulders...]

GM: He's got him up! Backbreaker is applied!

BW: Green's gonna be broken in half if he doesn't-

[Armstrong pulls down with all his might as Green lets loose a scream...]

"DING! DING! DING!"

[Armstrong lets go of Green, dropping him sloppily down on the mat. He smirks as the crowd jeers and Rebecca Ortiz makes it official.]

RO: Here is your winner by submission... ATLAS ARRRRRMSTRONNNNG!

[Armstrong snatches his hand away from the official, waiting for Mickey Cherry to arrive to raise his hand in triumphant.]

GM: Atlas Armstrong with an impressive win tonight here in Philly and you've gotta think that may put him into contention for a championship here in the AWA.

BW: Beating a former champion always gets eyeballs on you, Gordo.

GM: Alphonse Green with a tremendous effort here tonight but he comes up a little short thanks to the interference of Mickey Cherry. You've gotta think if he'd been able to execute The Main Course, he might very well be the one with his hand raised right now, Bucky.

BW: Coulda, woulda, shoulda - he lost and Armstrong won. Period.

[Armstrong stands tall, looking out on the crowd with a big double bicep pose as Cherry lays the badmouth on Alphonse Green.]

GM: There's no call for that. Not the verbal beating by Mickey Cherry or this ridiculous musclefest in the ring.

BW: Hey, Atlas must pose, Gordo.

[Gordon sighs.]

GM: Fans, we're going to take a quick break but when we come back, we'll the AWA World Television Title on the line so don't you dare go away!

[Fade to black.]

Cut to a college library where two students have a physics textbook open.]

STUDENT #1: So what's question 10?

STUDENT #2: "Matter that produces and/or emits ionizing energy can be described by what adjective?"

[Student #1 looks up from the book and slams it shut. Cutaway as he stands up, now suddenly wearing Derrick Williams' gold "Future" coat from SuperClash VIII through the miracle of editing. He takes out his phone and presses a "play" button.]

[A wide shot of the entire library as the student spreads his arms to the chorus of Imagine Dragons.]

"RADIOACTIVE... RADIOACTIVE..."

[Cut to a sushi chef with a white towel over his head and a kimono with a Claw Academy logo. To Volbeat's "A Warrior's Call," he bursts through curtains to serve a platter of sashimi to a table.]

In a gym, a woman does sit-ups in and out of frame to "You've Got Another Thing Coming" by Judas Priest. After her third sit-up, her face is spontaneously painted with a black and yellow 'S'. She cups her hands to her mouth and howls.

A man and two school-aged children step through the automatic glass door of a big box retailer to "Black Skinhead" by Kanye West. They are all in hooded fighter's robes, and they stoically nod at the camera in unison as they pause by the shopping carts.

A woman prances through a maze of cubicles to "I'm The Best" by Nicki Minaj, twirling a red braid and balancing a cup of coffee.

A civic worker in a visibility vest tries to move a dead tree branch into a truck to "Brian Boru's March" by The Chieftains. With part of the branch under his arm and his other hand, you'd swear he was giving the branch an armbar.

On a playground, a little girl with a distinct scowl stomps up to home plate to "Another One" by Night Club. She swings her bat wildly at the ball resting on a tee.]

STUDENT #2: [voice] Yeah, I think that's right.

[Cut back to library. Student #1 still has his arms open, but now to the sounds of library ambience. Someone in the background coughs. He sits back down.]

STUDENT #1: Okay... uh... Question 11?

"AWA: Be Your Entrance."

"The Official AWA Playlist, available now on Apple Music and Spotify."

Click The Link!

[Fade to black...

And with a flash of the ACCESS 365 logo into President Castillo's office we go. El Presidente himself is seated behind his desk alone, working at some paperwork on his desk when a loud "THUD!" is heard.]

JC: Enter!

[The door swings open to reveal John Law, personal security for Javier Castillo, standing in the frame. Castillo looks up and looks genuinely pleased to see whoever is outside.]

JC: Ah, Mr. Kendrick. And Miss Hayes! Show them in, John.

[Castillo, in a rare display, greets the couple warmly. Kerry Kendrick enters the office in his leather jacket and jeans. Sandra Hayes is in a women's size AWA-branded "Foundation" t-shirt and tight black leggings, her black hair tied tightly on the back of her scalp.]

JC: Kerry, I have to ask, since you hail from Philadelphia: Are the fans here always so... vulgar?

[Kendrick sneers, waving a dismissive hand.]

KK: This city ain't worth it. Those people in the stands? All beered up on a federal holiday? They're the worst collection of humanity outside the federal penal system.

These people booed Santa Claus, Javier. As a guy from Philly, trust me when I say it isn't worth trying to give them what they want.

[Castillo shrugs with a smile.]

JC: I always give the people what they want, Kerry. So... I take it you and your lovely companion are enjoying the action so far?

[Castillo turns his smile... a little more sleazy than when directed to Kendrick... towards Hayes who bats her eyelids as she leans forward, palms on Castillo's desk.]

MSH: Of course, Javier. We're especially interested in the outcome of the World Title match.

[Kendrick nods, edging closer as well.]

KK: Gotta say, I'm rooting for the Champ. If I know Johnny, he's going to go the distance, no matter how Bret Grayson stretches his tendons and ligaments. Basically, I'm looking for a good, LONG match tonight.

[Castillo smiles at the upcoming World Title challenger.]

JC: Johnny Detson still being sore from tonight's defense would certainly be a boon to you when you challenge for the World Championship in Saskatchewan, wouldn't it?

[Kendrick smirks slightly.]

KK: Why Javier... I hadn't thought of that.

[Castillo and Kendrick exchange a brief, knowing chuckle. Hayes smiles at Castillo again.]

MSH: Mr. Castillo, if I may: people at the network were overjoyed at Fight Night's ratings... really a hit with all the demographics... but they expressed concern that the AWA World Champion was largely absent. And it's my opinion that the AWA World Champion should be...

[She runs her glittery silver manicured nail down Kerry Kendrick's chest.]

MSH: ...always ready to defend the title, a student of multiple disciplines, charismatic, devilishly handsome, wickedly intelligent, and a team player closer in age to our key demographic.

Someone who can be the Foundation upon which the AWA can be built.

[Castillo eyes Hayes for a moment before running a hand through his slicked black hair.]

JC: I see. I'll see what I can do.

[Kendrick smirks, sliding an arm over Hayes' shoulders.]

KK: She is something, isn't she, Javier?

[Castillo's eyes come to rest on Hayes again.]

JC: She certainly is. We should talk again. In Regina.

[He claps his hands together before spreading them wide in an inviting gesture.]

JC: Until then... enjoy the fireworks tonight.

[And with another flash of the ACCESS 365 logo, we end up backstage in the Wells Fargo Center where Theresa Lynch stands beside the World Television Champion Terry Shane. Shane has his father's entrance robe on, unfastened, with the Title firmly buckled around his bare mid-section showing off his toned physique. Shane's jet black hair is combed straight and drops to just about shoulder length.]

TL: What a night we have had so far and we still have so much more to come. Still ahead we are going to see the Steel Cage match between the World Tag Team Champions Next Gen when they put the titles on the line against the men they took the straps from, System Shock. Then we have Johnny Detson putting his World Title on the line against the man who defied the odds in the Running of the Bulls, Bret Grayson, to earn a shot of a lifetime! We also have our Main Event of the evening when Hannibal Carver and Ryan Martinez look to settle the score once and for all when they collide in an epic showdown that has the wrestling world buzzing. If that wasn't enough...

[Theresa chokes up for a moment.]

TL: My own flesh and blood. My own brothers. Jack and James...

[Theresa pauses, trying to collect her thoughts and fight back the emotion as Terry Shane sort of pats her shoulder and Theresa catches herself, looking up at Shane.]

TL: And then you, Terry Shane, are just moments away from defending your title against the Title Hunter himself, TORA. Terry... let's hear what TORA had to say earlier tonight about your match with him this evening.

[We fade to pre-recorded footage in the backstage area of the Wells Fargo Center where TORA is sitting upon a step rapping his knuckles on the wall over and over. The knocking echoes throughout the empty area.]

T: Are you listening, Terry Shane? Do you hear that knocking? The knocking that has been following you night after night, since I returned to the AWA?

[TORA raps the wall harder this time, causing the echo of the knocking to last longer. TORA pauses until the echo has fully disappeared.]

T: When you look in the mirror, does each knock remind you that this so-called best version of yourself is no better than every other version of Terry Shane? Does each knock remind you that when you open your eyes in the morning, it could very well be the last time you will be a champion?

[TORA quickly slams the side of his fist into the wall, as a deeper knock echoes. TORA laughs for a moment.]

T: Don't deny it, Terry. I saw it with my own eyes. As you stood mere inches from my face, claiming that I've been crying for attention, that I've been kicking and screaming, I saw the confidence fade from your eyes. You puffed out your chest and called me a failure...

[TORA pauses and his eyes seem to become wider.]

T: I DIDN'T FAIL! The AWA FAILED! THE AWA FAILED! They failed when they decided I should sell merchandise. The AWA FAILED when they decided I was too small! THE AWA FAILED ME!

[TORA pauses once again.]

T: But you were right, Terry, my first time in the AWA was not full of accolades. I didn't win a Rumble to earn a title shot, just to come up short. And as you bragged about what you have done there was no conviction in your voice. It's as if with each of your statements, you knew this best version of yourself is destined to fail, just like you have done in the past.

As I stood there I realized - you're scared, Terry.

[TORA is replaced by the footage from the April 22nd edition of Power Hour. Terry Shane is holding the World Television Championship high in the air and as he turns around TORA drills the CAGE championship between the eyes, knocking Terry Shane flat to the mat.]

T: Scared because you are haunted by that night.

[The footage rapidly rewinds and replays in slow motion from the moment TORA drills the CAGE championship between the eyes, knocking Terry Shane flat to the mat.]

T: Haunted by a single moment.

[Again the footage rapidly rewinds and replays in slow motion from the moment TORA drills the CAGE championship between the eyes, knocking Terry Shane flat to the mat.]

T: HAUNTED BY ME!

[The footage fades back to the Wells Fargo Center as TORA again slams the meaty portion of his fist into the wall.]

T: Tonight, Terry... your nightmares become a reality. As I will collect that World Television Championship belt and show you that your best self...

...is no different than every other version of yourself.

[TORA slowly knocks the wall twice with his knuckles and as the echo fades, so does the image of TORA...

...cut back to Theresa Lynch and Terry Shane standing near a monitor where they just watched and listened in on TORA.]

TL: We know TORA is always in great physical condition and ready for a war anytime he steps in the ring and it appears he has finally put all the screws and bolts together as he targets the World Television Title you have around your waist.

[Shane shakes his head.]

TS: Theresa, I'm not sure TORA really ever has all the screws fastened together but I'll give credit where its due. TORA is an incredible athlete. He's gifted in the ring, above it, and flying outside of it. Anyway you look at it he is the best in the business at what he does. There's a reason TORA has had success in Japan, Mexico, heck I heard even won a cup of tea and crumpets in England with the Queen at ringside, at least that's what he tells folks.

TORA is a Champion in his own right and in his own mind, but when the Lord was handing out common sense all he had left was some pocket change and a used tissue the day TORA was born.

[Theresa smiles as Shane continues.]

TS: It's that lack of common sense that caused him to show up one night and smash one of his titles over my head.

It's that lack of common sense that has him chasing titles all over the globe when the only ones that truly matter are right here in front of him.

It's that lack of common sense that forces him to take the high risks that he does because between the ropes in the ring on flat ground he can't compete with men like myself. He's not in my class. I won't deny that in the air he's a million dollar rocket ship headed for the moon and sometimes it gets there and sometimes, well, it detonates before it ever gets off the ground and explodes into a million little pieces.

[Theresa's eyes widen at this notion.]

TS: But this isn't Tiger Paw Pro, Theresa.

This isn't Fusion-One.

This isn't Southwest Lucha Libre.

This isn't TORA's fantasy island.

This is the American Wrestling Association and this is where the best athletes in the world gather to test themselves against the elite wrestlers of our industry. All of that other noise and nonsense TORA has going on means nothing within these walls. Right now there is only one Champion and one title that matters and its around MY waist.

All anyone can talk about as of late is this.

[Shane slaps the World Television Title around his waist.]

TS: Kaz Konoe.

[Shane holds up a finger in his other hand.]

TS: Michael Aarons.

[And another.]

TS: Alphonse Green.

[And another.]

TS: Shane Locke.

[And another.]

TS: Whaitiri, Larry Wallace, Atlas Armstrong... I've run out of fingers, Theresa, and more importantly I've run out of patience. The only men who aren't talking about Terry Shane and the World Television Title are afraid to step into the ring with me as they saw what I did to Mahoney. They saw what I did to Curtis Kestrel. Heck, I beat up Kerry Kendrick so bad that he's now reenacting the first year of my career and I've gotta admit, he's really committed to playing the role of the Ring Leader and even dusted off some of my old baggage. I'm sure it's only a matter of weeks before he has a band of misfits called the Self Made Gang following him around doing his dirty work.

[Theresa smirks.]

TS: What I'm building here is more than just a title reign, Theresa. I am building my legacy. I am defining my own path in wrestling lore and only a fool would think I am going to let TORA blemish a single chapter in my history book.

A lot of men have put a stamp on this title and tried to use it as a stepping stone to something else and it got them nowhere. Men like Shadoo Rage in the AWA. Men like Jake Shaw in the EMWC. Me? I'm not going anywhere. I'm not chasing anyone or anything.

History is chasing me.

History is being made every time I step into the ring.

History is being written with every successful defense I have of this Title.

And tonight, TORA, as the countdown begins for you to launch another mindless, reckless, foolish attack on me that's all you're ever going to be.

Three.

Two.

One.

[Shane makes a mocking explosion motion with his hand.]

TS: History.

[And we fade from the backstage area out to the ring where Rebecca Ortiz is standing.]

RO: The following contest is set for one fall with a ten minute time limit and is for the AWA WORRRRRRRRLD TELEVISION TITLE! Introducing first...

["Fall of The Archons" by Danny Cocke begins to play and as it does a figure begins to walk to the ring.]

RO: He is the challenger. He hails from Osaka, Japan by way of Duluth, Minnesota, and weighs in at 170 pounds... he is the Tiger Paw Pro CAGE Champion... and the FUSION-1 Openweight Champion...

HE! IS! TOOOOOOORAAAAAAA!

[TORA stops at the top of the entrance stage and looks to the right and then the left before extending both his arms to the side. The current TPP CAGE Champion is wearing black tight wrestling pants with orange kick pads, the CAGE Championship belt resting upon his waist. Resting upon his right shoulder is a the FUSION-1 Openweight Title. An orange mask with ragged black stripes covers the majority of his face. He throws his head back, absorbing the jeers of the AWA faithful.]

GM: Pro Wrestling's resident Title Hunter these days, TORA, is heading towards the ring with two current championships looking to add a third here tonight.

BW: You gotta be impressed by a guy who is picking up gold in every promotion he wrestles for, Gordo. That takes a special type of talent to do that.



GM: Well, TORA is indeed a special type of talent. We've seen that for years now... although the talent he has become is a far cry from the talent he once was in my opinion.

BW: Yeah, he's a lot better now that he stopped kissing babies and caring what these fans think about him.

[TORA turns towards the fans and pulls off the orange mask, revealing a black mask with ragged orange stripes upon it. He extends the orange mask towards a child in the front row. As the youngster reaches for it, TORA pulls it back and tears it in half, a smile forms upon his lips as he tosses the halves into the crowd.]

GM: And once again, TORA decides to play with the emotions of the fans here in Philly...

BW: Hah! Here in Philly, I think some people actually liked that, Gordo.

GM: You could be right. We heard Kerry Kendrick mention earlier that this is the city that once booed Santa Claus so tearing up a souvenir meant for a young child might be right up their alley.

[TORA slides the F-1 Openweight championship before sliding into the ring himself. He glares at the crowd as he unstraps the CAGE Championship belt, handing it to the referee as he moves towards the corner.]

RO: Annnnnnnnnnd his opponent...

[Static. Then cheers.]

TO: He hails from Independence, Missouri... weighing in at 212 pounds... he is the AWA WORRRRRRRRLD TELEVISION CHAMPIONNNNN...

TERRRRRRRRYYYYYY SHAAAAAAAAAANE!

[The curtain parts and Terry Shane walks into view, "Dance of the Knights" by Sergei Prokofiev blasting over the PA system. Shane is as we saw him moments ago, walking with down the ramp with purpose towards the ring where TORA is crouched low, beckoning him forward with both hands.]

GM: The Television Champion on his way to the ring, Bucky, and he's got a burr under his saddle, I do believe.

BW: These two had quite the fight on the last Power Hour... even with Kaz Kanoe getting involved as well.

GM: Konoe another AWA competitor looking for his World Television Title opportunity in the future - but will it be against the champion Terry Shane or his challenger here tonight, TORA?

[Shane shrugs off his robe, handing it to a ringside attendant as he stares up from the floor at a waiting TORA. He removes the title belt as well, planting a kiss on the faceplate before he sets it down on the ring apron...

...and then comes through the ropes in a hurry, moving quickly towards TORA who is coming just as fast towards him!]

GM: HERE WE GO!

[The champion and challenger collide in a flurry of fists as the bell sounds!]

"DING! DING! DING!"

GM: THE FIGHT IS ON FOR THE WORLD TELEVISION TITLE!

[A few more fists land before TORA rakes his fingers across the eyes, causing Shane to stagger backwards towards the ropes, rubbing urgently at his eyes.]

GM: Ohh! TORA goes to the eyes and-

[TORA steps forward, pivoting slightly...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

[A series of rapid-fire knife edge chops has Shane stunned before TORA winds waaaaaaaay back...]

...and drops to a knee while throwing a thunderous palm strike uppercut that tips Shane backwards over the ropes, sending him down to the floor!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: A LONG HARD FALL TO THE FLOOR FOR THE WORLD TELEVISION CHAMPION!

[TORA steps away, throwing his arms into the air, shouting angrily at the jeering Philly fans. He stomps around the ring, throwing a glance out to Shane who is trying to get up off the floor as TORA runs to the ropes, rebounding off, racing across the ring...]

...and drops into a headfirst baseball slide, snatching a front facelock, twisting around, and taking Shane down with a high velocity tornado DDT!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: TORA WITH AN INCREDIBLE MOVE TO THE FLOOR!

BW: I don't think he got all of that, Gordo. TORA wanted to drive Shane's skull into the barely-padded floor out there... but he didn't quite execute it cleanly. It was a hard takedown but I don't think it had the impact he was looking for.

GM: If it had, Terry Shane might be unconscious right now but he certainly seems to be in the land of the light right now as... wait a second!

[Storming over towards the timekeeper's table, TORA yanks the timekeeper out of his seat, throwing him down to the floor to jeers.]

GM: What the heck is he doing?!

BW: This kid's out of control, Gordo! We've seen the footage from Japan! We know he's just not the same guy he was when he was here before - much to Terry Shane's dismay right about now.

[TORA snatches up the chair that the timekeeper was sitting on, folding it up as he marches around the corner with it.]

GM: Hang on now! This is NOT a No Disqualification match! This is not Eternally Extreme five nights from now! This may be Philly but this is NOT Extreme!

BW: TORA might be thinking otherwise, Gordo!

[The referee urgently slides to the floor, planting himself between TORA and Shane - a move that actually gets booed by the Philly faithful.]

GM: Well... the fans aren't too happy about this one apparently.

BW: Hey, it's Philly! They want to see a fight!

[TORA exchanges hostile words with the referee before angrily throwing the chair over his head, sending it spinning through the sky before bouncing down on the canvas.]

GM: TORA gets rid of the chair...

[With Shane kneeling, TORA lunges at him, smashing a fist down between the eyes once... twice... three times. He drags Shane off the floor by the hair, stomping towards the apron, smashing his head down into it!]

GM: Headfirst off the apron! TORA taking the fight to Terry Shane and... the referee's trying to get these two back into the ring. He's not even counting right now...

[TORA shoves Shane under the ropes into the ring, throwing a glare at the referee as he climbs up on the apron, grabbing the top rope with both hands...]

GM: TORA slingshots in...

[...and lands on the middle rope, springing into the air with a moonsault down onto Shane's torso!]

GM: OHH! MOONSAULT!

BW: High risk, high reward! TORA going for the win!

[Hooking a leg, TORA holds on tight as the referee slides back in.]

GM: He's got one! He's got two! He's got-

[Shane kicks out, breaking up the pin attempt.]

GM: Shane slips that shoulder up, just a two count there. But TORA is wasting absolutely no time here, going right back after the champion.

[The challenger drags the third generation grappler up to his feet, shoving him back into the corner again. He squares up, throwing quick and hard palm thrusts punctuates with a loud "HAA!" on each...]

"HAA!"

"HAA!"

"HAA!"

"HAA!"

"HAA!"

[...and then twists around, swinging an elbow back up into the chin!]

GM: Ohh! Snapmare out of the corner now and...

[TORA leaps high into the air, smashing his feet into the back of Shane's head with a dropkick!]

GM: Right on target... and another cover by the challenger!

[Again, the referee slaps the mat twice before Shane lifts the shoulder again.]

GM: Again, Shane's out in time - another two count for TORA.

[TORA angrily stomps across the ring, shouting at some jeering ringside fans before spinning back towards Shane who is trying to get up off the mat.]

GM: Terry Shane struggling to get to his feet...

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

[And a big knife edge chop splashes across the chest of Shane, sending him spinning back into the corner.]

GM: Back against the buckles again...

BW: This isn't where you want to be with someone as comfortable with a fight as TORA, Gordo.

[Grabbing the top rope, TORA swings his foot up, repeatedly kicking Shane in the stomach, forcing him to slump down low enough for the challenger to move up to boots to the face!]

GM: Over and over, TORA is kicking the champion right upside the head!

[The referee protests, shouting for TORA to get out of the corner as TORA drives Shane down to a knee in the corner.]

GM: Shane's in some serious trouble here! The referee's gotta get TORA back!

[The official steps in, physically shoving TORA back to a mixed reaction from the Philly crowd.]

GM: Oh! Watch it there, ref! It's one thing to count but quite another to get physically involved!

BW: There's no call for that, Gordo. Scott Ezra's gotta keep his hands off the wrestlers.

GM: I've gotta agree with you there, Bucky...

[TORA runs across the ring to the adjacent corner, bouncing off and running in strong...]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: RUNNING KICK TO THE SIDE OF THE HEAD!

[Shane collapses backwards, falling to his rear in the corner against the ropes as TORA stands over him...]

"SLAAAAAAAAAP!"

[A short, sharp slap across the face earns some jeers from the crowd before TORA steps up on the ropes, planting his boot on the top of Shane's head, taunting the crowd.]

BW: Hah! He's using him as a stepladder! He's standing on Shane's head!

GM: There's no call for this, Bucky! None at all!

[Hopping down on the mat, TORA grabs Shane by the ankle, dragging him out to mid-ring, dropping into a lateral press as he grinds his forearm across Shane's cheekbone.]

GM: TORA going for the title again - he gets one! He gets two! He gets-

[Shane's shoulder snaps off the mat, breaking up the pin just in time again!]

GM: Another two count... and TORA down on his knees, glaring at the official. It's not his fault you didn't get the three!

BW: That ain't how he sees it!

[TORA hops up from the kneeling position to his feet, pointing a threatening finger at Scott Ezra. He stands, hands on his hips as he looks at the official, gesturing to the downed Terry Shane.]

GM: A momentary respite for the World Television Champion who has been completely unable to get on track here, fans. Terry Shane came in to the ring, got into a brawl with TORA - which might not have been the smartest move - and is now in a fight to keep the gold around his waist.

[The 170 pounder from Minnesota pulls Shane to his feet, tugging the champion into a front facelock. With a grunt of effort, he pulls him up...

...and then lays him out, throwing him gutfirst across the top rope!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: TERRY SHANE GETS HUNG OUT TO DRY BY TORA!

[Spinning away, TORA runs to the adjacent ropes, bouncing back off...]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[..and connects with a running high kick to the side of Shane's head, sending him spinning away and off the apron to the floor!]

GM: Back out to the floor goes the World Television Champion thanks to that big running kick and the title is certainly in jeopardy right now.

BW: Not right now right now is isn't. Shane's out on the floor and TORA can only win the title inside the ring, Gordo.

GM: You're right about that and as the referee starts a ten count on Terry Shane, TORA needs to get him back inside if he hopes to make history tonight here in Philadelphia.

"FIVE MINUTES HAVE EXPIRED! FIVE MINUTES REMAIN!"

GM: We've hit the halfway point in the time limit... and now TORA is barking at Shane, telling him to get up... and that time limit call seems to have lit a spark under the challenger who realizes that time is not on his side here tonight.

BW: Albano ain't the only one with a song lyric or two in his pocket, right?

GM: This isn't karaoke night, Bucky, this is Liberty Or Death and the World Television Title is at stake in this one-sided match so far!

[Inside the ring, TORA paces a bit, waiting for Shane to pull himself back up to his feet...]

GM: TORA on the prowl, waiting for Shane to stir out on the floor..

[And as the Television Champion starts to rise, TORA dashes to the ropes, bouncing back off in a hurry...]

GM: TORA, TORA, TOOOOORRRRAAAAAA!

[The high flying man from Minnesota leaps high into the air, his arms fully extended from his sides as he SOARS gracefully over the top rope, crashing down onto Terry Shane to the ROAR of the crowd!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: TORA TAKES TO THE SKIES WITH BIG BENEFITS HERE IN PHILLY! AND LIKE HIM OR NOT, THAT PUTS THIS CROWD ON THEIR FEET!

BW: He hits that incredible dive, Gordo... but whether or not it'll have a benefit remains to be seen because he hit the floor very hard as well and right now, they're BOTH laid out at ringside!

[With the crowd still buzzing over that death-defying dive, the referee starts a double count on both competitors.]

GM: Remember, the title cannot change hands on a countout. If TORA wants the gold, he's gotta get himself AND Terry Shane back inside that ring before we get to ten.

BW: And TORA's fighting another enemy in this one too, Gordo - the clock. We're over six minutes into this. Time is ticking down rapidly for TORA's chance to become the champion.

GM: The referee's count is up to three... neither man stirring on the floor like this. You certainly would hate to see this matchup end in this fashion but you'd also understand it after that tremendous impact on that dive by TORA.

[The crowd is still stirring, cheering on their favorite as they wait to see if either man is going to be able to get up and beat the count as the referee gets to five.]

GM: We're halfway there now... halfway to a double countout and... wait a second! TORA is sitting up, fans! TORA is sitting up on the floor!

BW: But that ain't enough, Gordo! He's gotta get up, get in, and get Shane in there with him!

GM: TORA trying to get off the floor, rolling to a knee as the count is up to six...

[TORA struggles to get to his feet, nearly falling back down before he catches his balance. A loud "SEVEN!" rings out as TORA throws a quick look towards the ring

before quickly leaning over, grabbing Shane by the arm, dragging him off the floor...]

GM: The count is up to eight! Both men are up now! TORA's trying to drag Terry Shane back to the ring and...

[The crowd cheers as TORA rolls Shane under the ropes, causing the referee to pause his count. TORA quickly pulls himself up on the apron, grabbing the top rope...]

GM: Shane's in, TORA's out but not for long!

[He leaps into the air, dropping shins first on the top rope which springs him forward into a somersault...

...where he drops a thunderous leg across the chest of Shane!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

BW: What do you even CALL that?!

GM: I have no idea but is it enough!

[With his leg still across Shane's torso, TORA stretches to grab a leg but can't quite get there as the referee counts once... twice... ]

GM: THRE- NO! NO! SHANE GETS THE SHOULDER UP AGAIN!

BW: TORA couldn't get the leg, Gordo. He couldn't hook the leg from that position and it cost him the title right there in my opinion!

GM: You could be right... but he thinks he had it! He's on his feet SCREAMING at referee Scott Ezra!

[TORA brushes past the referee, walking over towards the ropes...]

GM: TORA's over here by us now and...

[The crowd reacts with a mix of cheers and boos as TORA lifts the steel chair he threw into the ring earlier and that the referee had shoved to the apron back into his hands.]

GM: He's got a steel chair!

BW: Don't do it, kid!

GM: TORA has completely lost his cool here and he's looking to take someone's head off with that steel chair!

BW: Not just someone. Terry Shane!

[TORA slaps the chair against the canvas a few times, ignoring the shouts of the official who is trying to stop him...]

GM: Terry Shane let his emotions get the best of him here tonight and came in here looking for a fight instead of focusing on the sweet science he excels at... and while if TORA uses that chair, it may not cost him the title, it may very well cost him his physical health!

[TORA shouts at the referee, waving him aside as Shane starts to come up off the mat. The crowd is buzzing at the scene, waiting to see if the chair is actually used on the champion...]

“TWO MINUTES REMAIN! TWO MINUTES!”

GM: We’re down to two minutes left in the time limit of this one but it may not matter! It may not matter at all if TORA uses that chair!

[As Shane staggers to his feet, TORA steps closer but the referee makes a lunge, grabbing the chair. TORA puts up a brief struggle but lets go as the referee pulls it away, swinging to discard it...

...which is when TORA steps forward, looking to drive one through the uprights!]

“OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

GM: LOW BLOW! LOW BLOW! TORA KICKED HIM DOWN UNDER AND-

[Shane crumples to the canvas, clutching his groin as TORA shoves him back down to the mat, diving across, hooking both legs this time...]

GM: TORA WITH THE COVER!

BW: The referee’s out of position though! He’s still getting that chair out to the timekeeper and-

GM: Now he see the cover!

[The referee races across the ring, leaping into the air over the pinning predicament, crashing down on the canvas...]

GM: ONNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOO! THREEEEEEEEEEEE-

“OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

GM: SHANE KICKS OUT! SHANE’S STILL ALIVE!

BW: If it hadn’t been for that damn referee, we’d have a new champion, Gordo! He was horribly out of position!

GM: Thanks to TORA and that steel chair! That’s the reason Scott Ezra was out of position and-

[TORA lets loose a frustrated bellow as he gets to his feet, shoving the official aside as he walks back to the timekeeper, leans through the ropes, and snatches the chair again...]

GM: And now TORA’s got the chair again! We’re getting close to the one minute mark and-

[TORA winds up with the chair, rushing past the official as Shane stirs to a knee...]

GM: HE’S GONNA CLUB-

[The crowd ROARS as Scott Ezra takes a chance and GRABS the chair before TORA can swing it!]

BW: WHAT THE-?!



GM: EZRA GRABS THE CHAIR! HE'S TRYING TO SAVE SHANE FROM BEING CLUBBED OVER THE HEAD WITH IT!

[The off-balance TORA is unable to keep his grip as Ezra yanks it away. TORA turns, angrily shouting at the referee as Ezra rushes to get rid of it again...

...and a kneeling Shane takes his shot!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: LOW BLOW ON TORA!

BW: THAT NO GOOD-

GM: TURNABOUT IS FAIR PLAY AND SHANE JUST MADE TORA PAY FOR HIS LOW BLOW EARLIER!

[With TORA doubled up, Shane drags him down into a schoolboy...]

"ONE MINUTE REMAINS!"

GM: The referee drops down to count... NO! SHANE'S NOT GOING FOR THE COVER!

[In fact, the World Television Champion turns the schoolboy right into the spinning toehold!]

GM: SPINNING TOEHOLD! THE SHANE FAMILY HOLD IS APPLIED!

[The crowd is ROARING now as TORA cries out, arms slamming down on the canvas as he thrashes about on the mat...]

GM: TORA'S LEG IS TRAPPED! THE PRESSURE IS ON!

[Shane spins around again, leaning down lower this time as he grips the ankle for torque...]

GM: TORA'S TRYING TO HANG ON BUT SHANE'S GOT IT LOCKED IN IN THE MIDDLE OF THE RING! THERE IS NO WAY OUT FOR TORA! THERE IS NO WAY OUT FOR THE CHALLENGER!

[TORA grabs at his mask, pulling on it as he lets loose another scream of pain.]

GM: TORA's ripping and clawing at his own mask as Shane twists that knee around a third time, doing some ripping and tearing of his own but at the ligaments and tendons in that leg as-

"THIRTY SECONDS!"

GM: Thirty seconds left in the time limit! TORA still trying to hang on! Still trying to-

[And with one more scream of pain, TORA slaps the canvas repeatedly and Scott Ezra waves for the bell.]

"DING! DING! DING!"

GM: SHANE WINS! SHANE WINS!

[The champion lets go of the hold, falling down to his rear end, breathing heavily as the referee stands over him, pointing to him as Ortiz makes it official.]

RO: Here is your winner... and STILL AWA WORRRRRRRRLD TELEVISION CHAMPION...

TERRRRRRRRYYYYYYYY SHAAAAAAAAAAAAANE!

[The Philly fans (mostly) cheer for Shane as he is handed the title which he happily hugs to his chest as the referee raises his arm in triumph.]

GM: TORA dominated the bulk of this match, fans, but Terry Shane got that spinning toehold - the great equalizer - locked in and that was the difference in this one.

BW: Both of these guys let their emotions get the better of them, Gordo. TORA made some mistakes because his temper got going. Shane shouldn't have even been in a fight like this at all against a guy like TORA. But I've gotta wonder if this result would've been different under a different set of rules, you know? Something that would let TORA get a little closer to what he was able to do in Japan.

GM: Well, I'd say the young man certainly did enough here tonight to earn another shot at the title down the road but there are a lot of contenders in that division gunning for Terry Shane so we'll see who's up next for the World Television Champion in the days and weeks to come. Fans, right now, we're going backstage to Sweet Lou Blackwell who is standing by with a very special guest!

[We cut back to the locker room area where Sweet Lou Blackwell is standing alongside "The Spitfire" Julie Somers who is dressed in a white T-shirt with "SPITFIRE" across the front in red lettering, a pair of red shorts and tennis shoes. Her wavy brown hair is pulled behind her head in a ponytail.]

SLB: Thanks, Gordon. This young lady, one of the top stars in the AWA Women's Division, was in Mexico a couple of weeks ago to promote Estrellas En El Cielo and, from what I gather, the fans in Mexico were excited to meet you, Julie.

[Somers smiles.]

JS: Not as excited as I was to meet them, Lou. It's a beautiful country with beautiful people and I can't wait to go back in September. But for all of my fans here in America watching, I want to start by saying Happy Fourth of July to everyone!

[Blackwell grins.]

SLB: A holiday here in America with a lot of our fans having the day off... including you it seems as you're not scheduled to compete here tonight.

[Julie nods.]

JS: I really wish I could have been part of the Six For A Shot tonight, but it seems coincidentally that something gets put together while I'm promoting another show... or maybe it's not a coincidence at all.

SLB: Are you saying that Javier Castillo...?

[Lou trails off as Julie holds up a hand.]

JS: We're going to get to El Presidente, Lou. But before we do, I want to wish Skylar the best of luck against Kurayami at the Battle of Saskatchewan.

[She lets loose a deep breath.]

JS: But truth be told, I should have been a part of that match. Yet it seems, every time I make it clear what I want, there's somebody telling me that I don't stand a chance.

When I finally spoke out and said that I wanted to be more than a manager, that I wanted to do what was in my blood, and that's wrestle, I got my chance against Charisma Knight. I lost, but I didn't listen to those who told me I couldn't beat her.

I got back into that ring with her again, beat her and then realized my dream of wrestling at SuperClash, the grandest stage of them all. Then I proved my first victory was no fluke and I beat Charisma again.

And I don't think I need to repeat what went down against Erica Toughill, but those who doubted I could beat her on her terms, I proved it could be done.

[Somers nods, staring into the camera.]

JS: And now that I want a shot at Kurayami and the AWA Women's title, I'm being told, once again, that the odds are against me.

[She shakes her head.]

JS: Javier Castilo says he'll take things under advisement. Well, how about you take this under advisement, El Presidente?

I know, in my heart, I have what it takes to become the AWA Women's Champion, and I know, in my heart, that Kurayami can be beaten. And no matter how much anyone believes otherwise, I know, in my heart, I can be the one who beats Kurayami.

Even knowing that certain matches are already set, I'm going to say this: Just put me in any type of match against Kurayami and I'll prove, once again, that I can overcome the odds.

[Blackwell smiles, nodding... and then his expression sours as someone walks into view. Dressed in a tight black gown showing curves in their appropriate locales, Veronica Westerly has arrived with the God of War, Polemos, in tow.]

JS: Miss Westerly.

[Westerly smirks.]

VW: Depending on my mood, yes. Miss Somers, I have been asked by Javier to pay you a visit and to thank you for your hard work in promotions down in Mexico on behalf of the company. Our partners down there were quite pleased and we appreciate your efforts.

[Westerly pauses, leaving them in silence for a moment.]

JS: That's it?

VW: Was there more you were looking for?

[Somers grimaces.]

JS: If you guys are so grateful for my efforts in Mexico, how about you give me what I asked for - a match against Kurayami.

[Westerly nods.]

VW: Oh, Javier did have a message to pass along about that as well. After much consideration, Mr. Castillo has determined that he is... unsure... about putting you in the ring with Kurayami...

[Somers glowers in her direction.]

VW: ...however, Chris Blue informed Javier earlier today that he has no such problem with it. In fact, if you agree to it, you and Kurayami will meet at Eternally Extreme 2 in five days...

[Somers brightens up, looking anxious.]

VW: ...in a tag team match.

JS: A... what? A tag match?

[Westerly nods.]

VW: That's right. Upon your agreement, it will be Kurayami and a partner of her choice taking on Julie Somers and a partner of your choice at Eternally Extreme 2. A match with Kurayami... just like you wanted.

[Somers grimaces, shaking her head.]

JS: That's not what I wanted at all... you know it... Castillo knows it... everyone knows it.

[Somers pauses, biting at her lower lip.]

JS: But you know what? I'll take it. You tell Blue he's got a deal.

[Somers nods.]

JS: And you tell Castillo that when I beat Kurayami in the middle of that ring in South Philly... he won't have any more excuses not to put me in the ring with her again... one on one. Understood?

[Westerly nods.]

VW: I will make sure he gets your message... Spitfire. Now, if you'll excuse me, I have other pressing matters to attend to out in the ring.

[Westerly turns to exit as Blackwell looks on excitedly.]

SLB: Wow! A tag team match in five days! Julie, I gotta know... who's gonna be your partner?

[Somers pauses with a slight smile and gives a little shrug.]

JS: I don't know.

[And she turns to exit, leaving a questioning Blackwell behind as we fade to black...

...and then fade up on a rising sun coming up over a crystal blue lake. A voiceover begins.]

"The future."

[The sun continues to climb via time lapse footage.]

"It is said that the future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams."

[The sun reaches its peak, dazzling as it lights up the water below.]

"At the Korugun Corporation, our dreams are the same as yours."

[Cut to a shot of children playing in a very green meadow.]

"To live... to love..."

[To a shot of two elderly people smiling as they hold hands.]

"To make the most out of every moment we are blessed with."

[To the crack of a baseball bat and a cheering crowd.]

"To the joys of community... of family... of kinship..."

[To a young toddler walking out into the surf on a beach only to be scooped up by a nervous father who lifts him high in the air.]

"To all of life's promise... and potential."

[To a spaceship rocketing off its launchpad towards the sky.]

"To pushing the boundaries of what is expected..."

[To a space shot of Earth below.]

"To bringing our futures into the present."

[The Korugun Corporation logo slowly crawls over the curvature of the Earth.]

"Korugun. To life and all that it offers."

[And we slowly fade to black...

...and then back up to the ring where the dark lady of the AWA, Mrs. Veronica Westerly-Temple, is standing in the middle of the ring. She's dressed as we saw moments ago - her dark hair is slicked back, and her lips have been painted a deep crimson. And the ever-present Eye of Tyr, hanging on a black metal chain, dangles from around her neck.]

VW: At Fight Night On FOX, I promised you fans that you would see the end of the Lynch family. Brother versus brother, with only one man emerging.

So, without further ado...

[As Westerly gestures to the entrance way, the heavy machine gun like drums of Judas Priest's "Painkiller" blare over the loudspeakers. And as the fans begin to boo loudly, out steps the man who betrayed his family, James Lynch.

Lynch wears a long black leather duster, open to show his bare chest beneath. As he strides past the camera, we see that on the back of the duster is a white skull wearing a black cowboy hat and a red bandana. He's wearing a pair of long wrestling tights, that are currently covered in black leather chaps, held up by a black belt with a silver belt buckle. Both of Lynch's hands are covered in black gloves, while the lower half of his face is covered in a black bandana with a white

skull design. Lynch's long, dirty blond hair is pulled back into a tight ponytail and his brown eyes stare straight ahead, their gaze cold and merciless.]

GM: Your eyes do not deceive you, fans. That IS James Lynch. Now if you're a long-time AWA fan, that may be VERY hard to believe that the family man... the loving son... the devoted brother... is out here with that she-devil and ready to battle his own blood.

BW: Careful, Gordo... that "she-devil" could stick Albano out here with me permanently and have you hosting your own podcast.

GM: Like anyone wants to listen to a bitter former wrestling announcer go on and on about the good ol' days.

[Lynch makes his way to the ring slowly and first takes off the long duster. Next to be removed are the chaps, revealing that his black tights have a pair of crossed six shooters done in white on the left hip, and a pair of red branding irons on the right. On the backside is the flag of Texas in a blood red color. Lynch's black and red boots have the classic "cowboy" design so common for wrestlers from his home state.

Lynch pulls down his bandana but leaves it hanging around his neck, as his cold, dead eyes stare straight ahead at the entranceway.]

BW: I can't believe I'm about to say this, Gordo. I actually want to see a Lynch wrestle!

GM: You mean you want to see one brother fight another brother?

BW: Yeah, it's gonna be great!

GM: Give me a break.

[As "Painkiller" dies down, Lynch and Westerly confer for a moment. Lynch looks uncertain about something, but Westerly mouths the words "this needs to happen."]

VW: And now, Jack Lynch... it's time to face the music.

[But there is no music. No music at all. And for a long moment, there is no Jack Lynch.]

BW: I think he's not even here, Gordo! The coward didn't even show up!

GM: Jack Lynch is here. I saw him myself earlier today but he was very uncomfortable with the idea of-

[Until finally, the curtain is pulled aside, and the Iron Cowboy emerges.]

BW: Hey, just a minute! What's this all about?!

GM: That's what I was about to say. Jack Lynch seemed very uncomfortable with this whole situation when I spoke with him earlier today. And it looks like Jack Lynch is keeping to his word. He said at Fight Night that he would not wrestle his brother. I think he's repeating that same sentiment.

[Why does Gordon say this? Because when Jack Lynch emerges, he's in street clothes - he's wearing a white, button down shirt, a pair of blue jeans, and his iconic white cowboy hat, the one given to him by his mother, Henrietta Ortiz Lynch.

Jack Lynch makes his way to the ring and enters. He glances briefly at his brother, but then turns to Veronica Westerly, staring balefully at the woman.]

JACK: I already told ya... there ain't no way I'm fightin' Jimmy.

You wanna do somethin' about it? You go ahead. You wanna fine me, ya wanna fire me? Whatever ya do...

Ain't nothin' gonna make me fight my blood.

[Westerly shakes her head.]

VW: Look at you, the big, noble hero.

[She pauses... until a smirk forms on her face.]

VW: You're so predictable.

[She points to James Lynch who is standing near the corner now.]

VW: It took a lot to get James to agree to this. Even after everything you did to him, James is still reluctant.

But when I came to the AWA, I said one of the things I was going to do was destroy you and your family, Jack Lynch.

So if you won't fight James... and James won't fight you.

Well then...

[She sighs, shrugs... and starts to exit.]

GM: What? That's it?

BW: Oh, come on! I want to see this one go down!

[Suddenly, Westerly comes to a halt, a smile turning into a laugh.]

VW: Didn't think it would be that easy, did you? You didn't think that Korugun - that I - would be ready for you to turn tail like the coward that you are?

[James goes to say something to Veronica but she's on a roll now.]

VW: I KNEW you would do this, Jack Lynch. I knew. And I was ready.

[She pauses, gesturing towards the entrance.]

VW: Let's bring out someone who has NEVER had a problem fighting you.

Someone who can't wait to get in this ring and put an end to you.

There's quite a list, isn't there? But the man I have in mind is special. We've been WAITING for this opportunity, Jack.

[This gets Jack to raise an eyebrow, in a manner suggesting that he has a bad feeling about this.]

VW: A man who knows you very well. He's made your life a living hell. He has been waiting and waiting to come back here, back to the place that he was ever-so-

close to having in the palm of his hands, except for a wanna-be cowboy named Jack Lynch. And he has not been idle, oh no.

You DO know that Korugun has their hands all over Japan. And you DO know the name of the man who has been dominant in every promotion on the island since emerging there almost two years ago?

[The crowd is now buzzing, as they know who fits this description. Jack Lynch's eyes dilate, as he knows who fits this description... an expression of a man who knows he's being ambushed. He spins around...

...and sure enough, a six-foot nine, three hundred ten pound Black Tiger is stepping over the top rope with a mean glare in his eyes as the fans roar in excitement!]

GM: DEMETRIUS LAKE! THE "BLACK TIGER" IS HERE!

BW: WE AIN'T SEEN HIM IN ALMOST TWO YEARS, GORDO! NOT SINCE HE LOST HIS HAIR TO DAVE BRYANT!!

[Dark-skinned and fire-eyed, the former NFL lineman and self-styled "King Of Professional Wrestling" towers over everyone in sight. He wears a long gold-colored pleated ring jacket, red trunks, and gold-and-red boots. His hands, and particularly his thumbs, are heavily taped. His voluminous afro and conical beard, once cut down by Dave Bryant have regrown. Demetrius Lake covers the span of the ring in a stride and a half, and goes nose-to-nose with Jack Lynch as the crowd goes crazy for the shocking return.]

GM: DEMETRIUS LAKE IS FACE TO FACE WITH JACK LYNCH! He's been wrestling overseas the last couple of years and has been dominant!

BW: The last time they fought, Lynch barely made it out of that match in one piece, Gordo! With everything going on... no way he can face Lake while having to worry about Korugun too! It took everything he had, physically and mentally, when he had one hundred percent focus devoted to Lake for over a year!

GM: This has to be the worst possible surprise for Jack Lynch! He's completely lost focus on his brother!

[Westerly's grin is now completely giddy, seeing her enemy in shock. She circles Jack, taunting him.]

VW: Oh, did you forget someone very important? Did you think we didn't have our eyes on the kind of star power we'd need to go mainstream here in North America? We've been waiting for just the perfect time to...

[The evil monologue is cut short by the deep, bold Midwestern-accented voice of the "Black Tiger", who has never been extremely patient with other people talking when he had something to say. He's ten feet from the mic, and you can still very clearly hear him over the hot crowd.]

"GIMME THAT MICROPHONE."

[Westerly seems briefly annoyed but shakes it off and obliges. Lake doesn't spare her a glance for an instant; his gaze is locked on Jack Lynch, and vice versa.]

DL: You knew this day would come, Jack Lunch! I will make this very brief. Korugun made me a lot of promises, for a long time. And I have waited for only one reason-



[But before we can hear that reason, Jack Lynch lifts his own mic, interrupting with one cold, blunt statement.]

JL: You couldn't beat me in New York, and when you couldn't beat Bryant either, you said you were leaving!

[Lake nods.]

DL: Exactly! That is the one and only reason. I am a man of my word. I might lie when my word is not given, but when it is, I live up to it. That's what Hamilton Graham taught me on the very first day. Remember that. Remember what I just said.

[That last bit causes Jack to look puzzled. James is making 'get on with it' hand motions, but Westerly is just smirking.]

DL: So tonight is the night! I told Veronica Westerly that the time had come. That I would give my word to Korugun, that I would come to Liberty Or Death and do what I love to do most... take out a Lynch.

That when I was finished, I would leave a Lynch laying in a pool of blood, gall, and regret, no question about it. And that's almost all I got to say!

[Jack raises his fists, shouting into the mic.]

JL: Well, come on then... gimme your best shot!

[Lake shakes his head.]

DL: 'Almost' all I got to say! The last thing I got to say is this...

...put down your fists, Jack, I ain't here for you!

[And with a loud THUNK, Lake pivots...

...and drives his taped thumb into the throat of James Lynch with a swift looping roundhouse!]

GM, BW, and VW: WHAT?!

[The crowd explodes as James hits the canvas clutching his throat, on the receiving end of a vicious Tiger Strike! Lake starts putting the boots to the turncoat Lynch as Jack seems to be deciding whether or not to intervene. Veronica Westerly goes ballistic, and tries to physically pull Lake off, which goes as well as you'd expect.]

GM: LAKE JUST DEVASTATED JAMES!

BW: WHY?! WHAT'S GOING ON! THAT'S THE WRONG ONE!

[Demetrius Lake pounds James with a hammerfist, dropping to his knees to lay some punishment on the younger Lynch. But at that point, a group of men in suits have arrived at ringside; they reach in, grab James by the boots, and pull him out of the ring to relative safety. Westerly bails out as well, yelling instructions to the security crew as they carry James away from ringside as fast as they can, leaving only Jack Lynch and Demetrius Lake in the ring. Both men stare at each other, as there's no love lost between these two.

The crowd is absolutely roaring at both what they've seen...

...and what may be still to come as these two long-time rivals stare each other down in the center of the ring in Philadelphia.]

JL: Normally, you do somethin' like that to my brother, and we'd have a problem...

[The two men continue to stare daggers at one another.]

JL: But I'm thinkin' that tonight, Jimmy needed someone to knock some sense into him. But still, I gotta know.

You and me? We gonna have a problem tonight?

[Lake sneers at Lynch.]

DL: You're still a low down, egg-suckin' dog, Jack Lunch. But I did what I came out here to do tonight. So if you walk away right now, then that's all it has to be, as far as I'm concerned.

[Lynch starts to speak, and then thinks the better of it. He nods his head, and then backs away, exiting the ring. Now alone in the ring, Lake turns to address the AWA faithful.]

DL: The truth is this... for over a year, the Korugoons have been talkin'. Yaaaak yaaaaak yaaaaak! They made me all kinda promises. Promises, promises, promises. But the one they kept comin' back to was this: we'll make you the biggest star in the world.

WE... make YOU...?

[Lake explodes in anger, wagging his finger at the camera to punctuate every word.]

DL: I AM, AND HAVE ALWAYS BEEN, THE ONE TRUE KING OF PROFESSIONAL WRESTLING!

I AM, AND HAVE ALWAYS BEEN, THE ATH-E-LETE OF THE DAY, THE MAINSTREAM DREAM, AND THE STAR OF EVERY SHOW I AM ON!

You think you need to make ME? I BEEN MADE! Don't nobody have what I have! I spent two years in Japan whuppin' everyone I got my hands on, because I gave my word. I would be the AWA World Champion today, putting the AWA on a fiscal plane beyond your reach, if I had taken my word back. I had the world in my hand, and I let it drop... because on the very first day, Hamilton Graham told me that a professional wrestler must always keep his word.

But on the very last day, I gave my word to Hamilton Graham that who-so-ever took him out of the sport he loved, I WOULD DO THE SAME TO THEM!

And when I wipe you off the face of professional wrestling, I'll pick the whole world right back up in my hand. Because I am Demetrius Lake, the Only True King Of Professional Wrestling, and there ain't nobody I won't whip.

[That is all the self-professed King has to say. Lake drops the microphone and steps out over the top rope to the loud approval of the capacity crowd.]

GM: Wow! Demetrius Lake has returned to the AWA here in Philly and... well, he just declared WAR on the Korugun Corporation for what they did to Hamilton Graham last year!

BW: I... I... I...

GM: My partner's in shock! He came here tonight expecting to see Jack Lynch face his own brother but instead, we get the return of Demetrius Lake and a good ol' fashioned whuppin' on James Lynch!

BW: This isn't funny, Gordo! This is terrible!

[With a smile on his face, Jack Lynch pulls himself up on the apron, stepping back inside the ring. He watches as Lake disappears through the entrance curtain, raising the mic to his mouth...]

JL: Well... the hype says you never know what's gonna happen at an AWA show and I reckon we just saw that again. I never thought we'd...

[Jack is still speaking as the fans begin to react to the sight of someone rappelling from the ceiling, soaring downward on a cable towards the ring...]

GM: OH MY GOD! OH MY GOD! IT'S SUPERNOVA!

BW: WHAT?! HE'S FIRED! ARREST THAT MAN!

[But as 'Nova hit the canvas behind an unaware Jack Lynch, he quickly unhooks his cable, steps forward, snatching Lynch in an inverted facelock...]

GM: WHAT THE-?!

[...and DRIVES the back of his head into the canvas with an inverted DDT!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: SUPERNOVA JUST LAID OUT JACK LYNCH! WHY?!

BW: Oh, this night just got good again, daddy!

[Supernova sits up, staring down at the motionless Lynch...

...and as a sea of security suddenly comes pouring into view, Supernova quickly exits the ring, hurdles the ringside railing, and beats a retreat through the fans in the Wells Fargo Center!]

GM: Supernova's in the crowd! He's making a run for it but... but... what in the HELL has he just done?!

BW: He put Jack Lynch down like James Lynch oughta... like Demetrius Lake oughta!

GM: What a wild scene this is in Philly! The fans are going nuts! This is out of control! Fans, we've got security all over- NO! I DON'T KNOW WHERE HE'S GOING! GET AWAY FROM-

[We cut to ringside where a security guard has roughly pulled Gordon Myers to his feet, shouting and pointing towards the crowd as we abruptly cut to black...

...and then fade up on a shot of dirty sand. There's an old brownish tinge to it, almost a stain from long ago. A bare, dark-skinned foot plops down in the middle of it in slow motion, sending sand everywhere as the sound of raucous roaring crowd fades in.]

"In ancient times... it was the Coliseum of Rome..."

[Cut to an overhead shot of the historical landmark... almost like a drone shot zooming around before coming back down on the sand to find the aforementioned owner of the dark-skinned foot doing battle with another in gleaming silver armor, twirling and wheeling with glistening blades in both hands.]

"Two warriors thrust together in mortal combat. A battle for all that they had and all that they were."

[The two clash together, grimacing and grunting with effort as they struggle to land a final blow...

...and then we abrupt cut to the glittering colorful world of the Global Fighting Championship Hexagon with two fighters in a similar position, grappling for an advantage.]

"Today... it's the GFC."

[Quick cuts to a big right hand sending a smaller fighter spinning wildly backwards into the mesh of the steel cage... a spinning roundhouse dropping someone like their legs have been cut out from under them... an armbar forcing a quick tapout.]

"Warriors of all shapes and sizes... all creeds and colors... men and women alike..."

[On cue, we get a glimpse of a blonde using a judo throw to yank someone down to the mat, locking in an armbar and getting a quick tapout... then a woman with the Brazilian flag on her fighting shorts using a series of kneestrikes to draw blood and leave an opponent unconscious on the ground...]

"They fight for money... they fight for honor... they fight for glory..."

[A series of shots of GFC champions celebrating wins with their titles held overhead. Helpful graphics let us know their names. Patty Pennington. Nicco Torres. Leandro Barbosa. Ricardo Sanchez. And of course, Rufus Harris.]

"They fight... for the GFC."

[The GFC logo comes spinning into view with all the details on the next major GFC event coming soon...

...and we fade back backstage, where we find Theresa Lynch with "The Spitfire" Julie Somers, the two standing before an AWA backdrop.]

TL: Julie Somers, despite pleading your case to face Kurayami, it looks like it's going to be a tag team match instead at Eternally Extreme. I'm sure plenty of fans would like to see you challenge the AWA Women's World Champion, but now, I imagine the question they would have for you - despite you only finding out about the match a short time ago - is who you are going to select to be your partner.

JS: Theresa, there are quite a few women here in the AWA who I respect. You know I've teamed twice with Victoria June. I wouldn't mind teaming up with Margarita Flores or Ayako Fujiwara. Heck, I'd be happy to call upon Kelly Kowalski, and a part of me is thinking I need to call upon a legend like Michelle Bailey.

[She takes a deep breath.]

JS: But if this is the way Korugun is going to play the game, I may need to think outside the box on this one. It may be time to get somebody that nobody expects and...

[A chill fills the area, as both Theresa and the Spitfire turn to a shabby looking interloper in a plain, black, sleeveless t-shirt and a scalp with a thin layer of salt-and-pepper stubble. Somers instinctively places herself in front of Theresa Lynch, but the third person says...]

ET: I'm not here to start anything.

[Theresa rests a hand on Julie's shoulder.]

TL: She's okay, Julie. She's fine.

[Somers eyes up Ricki Toughill warily, the wars between the two foremost on her mind.]

ET: I'm glad you're both here because... this is for you, Theresa.

[Toughill produces what looks like a flower from a paper bag.]

ET: I got this for you. I know you take a lot of noise from the wrestlers for who your family is, myself included, but I know you're going through a lot with them right now, and... and believe me I know it's no fun when you don't know where you stand with your own family. And you do a good job asking the right questions. I mean, you asked me the right question at the right time at Fight Night. So... I appreciate it.

[Theresa Lynch twirls her gift in her fingers.]

TL: Well, it's... that's very nice.

ET: Yeah, I'm sorry I couldn't find a real yellow rose. That's chocolate, it's all they had at Walgreen's. And... uh... Julie...

[Toughill has some serious difficulties looking Somers in the eye.]

ET: I know that you and I... we, uh... I wanted to say that I was sorry.

I know about the tag match coming up at Eternally Extreme 2 and thought that you might need someone at your side who can handle themselves in a fight.

[Somers relaxes her stance a bit but keeps a wary eye on her recent rival.]

JS: It's not that simple, Erica. You've hurt a lot of people. You tried to end my career on more than one occasion. And then you let Cinder loose, made me and Victoria believe she was a partner we could rely upon. I don't doubt you're sorry, but that's not enough to be my tag team partner.

[Ricki's face takes on more of a pleading look.]

ET: Look I made, mistakes, but all I want is a second chance.

JS: Kayla Cristol?

[Ricki shakes her head.]

ET: I put her on the shelf for two months and she came back a better wrestler.

JS: Roxy Roller! She trusted you!

[Ricki throws her arms out in protest.]

ET: Yeah, and now she's number one contender for the CCW Women's Championship!

JS: Lori Wilson. You put her out of the business!

[Ricki sighs.]

ET: Let's be real, Julie: straining every ligament in her ankle put Lori Wilson out of the business. I just gave her bruised ribs to remember me by.

[The contrite and meek Toughill begins to disappear and the fiery Toughill begins to reemerge.]

ET: And if you aren't interested in accepting my help, Julie, then accept my advice! You said you once looked up to me, so if anything I ever said or did meant anything to a young Julie Somers, then you will accept my advice:

The first time I fought Kurayami, and she hit that Hinotama on me, I thought my heart stopped! She hit me so hard, like I have never been hit before! I may be a violent sadistic thug, but I play by a code. I NEVER intentionally set out to put someone out of the business, not like Kurayami did when she power bombed me against that ring apron three years ago and broke my back!

[Julie grimaces at the thought of it as Toughill nods.]

ET: I've been in the ring with you and about a hundred other different wrestlers--men and women. And you, Spitfire, you gave me the best match of my life at SuperClash! You gave me the fight of a lifetime and something that I'm proud to be a part of. But I've been in the ring with Kurayami and I am telling you right now that if you think you can use the same gameplan against the She-Wolf you used against me, you are in for a serious wake-up call, Julie.

[Somers bites her lip.]

JS: Let's just say I do make you my tag team partner at Eternally Extreme. How do I know that...

[Toughill interrupts.]

ET: ...that I wouldn't use what might be my last appearance in the AWA to take out Kurayami no matter what the cost?

[Toughill gives a deflated sigh.]

ET: You don't know that. Because that's what I'd do. I'd derail your challenge for the Women's Championship by putting my own need for closure ahead of you.

[Somers holds up her hand.]

JS: Not what I was going to say, Erica. It's not just that Kurayami is the Women's Champion. It's not just that you've faced her before.

It's about Korugun. The way they've been setting their own rules, all with this idea that what they are doing is for the best for the AWA, I'm thinking about a lot more than just who's the champion.

I'm thinking about rising up to the occasion and proving that those of us who built this company, made it what it is today, are those who aren't afraid to speak their mind. Not somebody who sulks around backstage.

Sorry, Erica, but you're not the one I want to be my partner.

[Toughill shrugs.]

ET: I had to try.

[Toughill reaches into the paper bag. She pulls out a second foil-wrapped chocolate flower.]

ET: I got two just in case you said, 'yes.' Ah, what the hell.

[Ricki Toughill flicks the chocolate at Somers, who catches it.]

ET: Thanks for listening, Julie.

[She's about to leave, but Somers, after staring at the chocolate flower for a moment, gestures to her.]

JS: Ricki.

[That's enough to draw Toughill's attention.]

JS: Thanks for the offer.. and don't stop trying.

[Ricki gives a slight nod to Somers before walking out of view...

...and we fade to a flash of the ACCESS 365 logo, taking us into the office of Javier Castillo where El Presidente is on his feet as Veronica Westerly walks swiftly into view, James Lynch and Pemos right behind her.]

VW: Javier, I-

[Castillo angrily interrupts.]

JC: YOU! You told me you could handle this.

VW: I can! I-

JC: You TOLD me you had this under control!

VW: Javier, please, I-

[Castillo raises a hand.]

JC: Do you know how much money I - WE - spent on Lake?

[Silence.]

JC: DO YOU?!

[She is still looking down, obviously humiliated by what happened in the ring.]

VW: Yes.

JC: And for what? So he could drop your man there like a bad habit and leave the other one standing?

[James goes to protest but ends up coughing, grabbing at his throat where Lake struck him with the Black Tiger Strike.]

JC: You have wasted Korugun money. You have wasted Korugun time.

And most importantly, Veronica...

[He steps forward, putting his clenched fist under her chin, lifting it so she meets his eyes.]

JC: You have embarrassed me.

[She blinks a few times, fearing the worst in this moment.]

JC: Can you be trusted? Can you be relied on?

VW: Of course I can. I've proven that.

JC: Not tonight you haven't.

[Castillo sighs, turning away. He walks across the ring, his hands coming to rest on his desk. He stands in silence for a few moments.]

JC: And then Supernova shows up as well. This is... this is...

[He shakes his head, his eyes locked on the large black rusted key hanging from a metal hook on his desk.]

JC: I asked you to bring him to me tonight. Is he here?

[Westerly's face twists from fear to... something else.]

VW: He is.

[Castillo closes his eyes, nodding.]

JC: Good. I will speak to him later. And you.

[Westerly nods, Castillo's back towards her still. She reaches out a hand towards him.]

VW: Javier, I'm sorry.

[Castillo nods again.]

JC: I know you are. Now... go.

[With a nod and a grasping of empty air, Westerly turns and makes her exit with James Lynch and Polemos following behind her..]

...and we cut out to the ring where "Blitzkrieg Bop" is playing over the PA system and Victoria June is approaching the ring.]

GM: Alright, fans... some tension backstage between Veronica Westerly and Javier Castillo over what's happened already here tonight in Philly... but this special added matchup came about because of some tensions as well. For the past few weeks, we've repeatedly seen Molly Bell and Victoria June cross paths backstage and they just don't seem to get along, Bucky.

BW: Well... no one likes a cat, Gordo.

GM: Oh brother. Don't let Molly Bell hear you say that.



"I HEARD THAT! YOU APOLOGIZE RIGHT MEOW!"

GM: Too late.

[Molly Bell is shouting at Bucky Wilde from inside the ring as June climbs the ringsteps.]

GM: Victoria June is on a hot streak as of late. Of course, the last time we saw her, she defeated Cinder in that Hair versus Hair match at Fight Night On FOX... and that cemented her status as the Number Two Contender to the Women's World Title. She says the World Title is her goal.

BW: Beating Molly Bell isn't going to get her there, Gordo.

GM: Bucky, you sound like you're taking Molly Bell as lightly as Victoria June is.

BW: SHE'S A CAT!

[Gordon chuckles.]

GM: Bucky, she may have some... unique... qualities but she's also an accomplished competitor. We've seen her defeat the likes of Kayla Cristol and even with an offbeat personality, that means she's a legitimate challenge to anyone she gets in the ring with.

BW: We'll see about that.

GM: Both competitors are in the ring now after their respective entrances and...

[Molly Bell seems to have taken an interest in the turnbuckles. First, she swats at the top one a few time, a curious expression on her face... then she starts rubbing her face on it...]

BW: This is the top flight world beater you want me to take seriously?

GM: Molly Bell certainly has an unusual outlook on life but that doesn't mean... now what's she doing?

[Bell stretches her arms up towards the sky, arching her back for an extended period as she steps out of the corner...]

BW: Getting in a little pre-match stretch?

GM: Not the kind of stretching we're used to seeing for sure.

[Referee Shari Miranda asks Molly if she's ready to go and gets a big yawn and nod in response.]

"DING! DING! DING!"

[Molly audibly yelps at the sound of the bell before she swipes lazily towards the official who steps back.]

GM: Alright, this one's set to go here in Philly and... uh oh.

[Molly steps towards June but yawns again...

...and then slowly sinks to the mat, curling up into a ball.]

GM: You've gotta be kidding me.

BW: Is she taking a nap?!

GM: It would appear so and... fans, I believe Molly Bell has fallen asleep in the middle of the ring here in Philadelphia.

BW: An accomplished competitor, huh?

GM: I really don't know what to say and... well, look at Victoria June.

[June looks at the official who shrugs. The Afro Punk shouts across the ring at her opponent.]

"HEY! GET UP, LITTLE KITTY!"

[But Bell does not respond, apparently in a deep sleep already as June chuckles. She grabs her stomach, doubling over with laughter as many in the crowd echo that sentiment.]

GM: June heading over there... please be gentle, Victoria. Don't take advantage of this poor creature.

BW: Poor creature?! Next you're going to tell me that Omega is-

[Gordon abruptly interrupts.]

GM: A top flight competitor? Yes, yes he is!

BW: That's not what I was going to-

GM: June's trying to get Molly up to start this match...

[June leans down, grabbing Molly by the arm, attempting to haul her to her feet and gets a howl and a hiss in response before letting go. Bell simply curls back up at her feet as June looks down, hands on her hips, and a big smile on her face.]

GM: Molly wants no part of anything but nap time right about now.

[June laughs loudly again, gesturing at Molly to the referee who mimes rolling her over...]

GM: It looks like Shari Miranda is suggesting June just pin Molly and get it over with.

BW: Seems like a good idea.

GM: June can't believe this is the situation she's in but...

[June leans down to grab Bell and roll her over..

...when Bell yelps loudly, snatching a handful of afro, and dragging June down into a small package!]

GM: WHAT?!

[The shocked referee drops down, slapping the mat once... twice... and...]

GM: SHE GOT HER! OH MY STARS! OH MY STARS! I CAN'T BELIEVE IT!

BW: WHAAAAAAT?!

GM: MOLLY BELL JUST SCORED ONE OF THE BIGGEST UPSETS OF THE YEAR, FANS! SHE BEAT VICTORIA JUNE! SHE BEAT HER IN THE CENTER OF THE RING WITH THAT AIRTIGHT SMALL PACKAGE!

[Bell rolls to her knees, smiling as the referee raises her hand as Victoria June sits up, a shocked expression on her face.]

GM: Victoria June can't believe it and neither can I! We kept talking about her taking Bell too lightly and... well, now she just got beat! How about that, Bucky?

BW: She's shocked, you're shocked, everybody's shocked!

[June slams a hand down into the canvas in frustration before straightening up, a smile on her face.]

GM: And while Victoria June just got caught by Molly Bell... at least it looks like she's taking it in stride, fans.

[June nods her head as Bell celebrates her win.]

GM: Right now, we're going to take you back to the locker room area where Theresa Lynch is standing by with someone who likely has a lot on his mind after what's already gone down here tonight in Philadelphia - Jack Lynch. Theresa?

[Cut to backstage where Theresa Lynch is standing with her older brother, Jack. The Iron Cowboy has a hand at the back of his neck and is rubbing it. There's an angry expression on his face.]

TL: Thanks, Gordon. After everything that has happened tonight, everything with Veronica Westerly and Demetrius Lake and...

[Theresa draws a deep breath, exhaling slowly.]

TL: James...

[Her head shakes.]

JL: Look 'Reesa, ya don't have to say anything about Jimmy. I know how hard it is. Hell, after all he's done, the whole damned world knows what our family is goin' through right now.

And the fact of the matter is, I only got one thing to say to ya, Jimmy.

[He turns slightly, pointing to the camera.]

JL: I know, better than any other man alive, what happens when you get in the ring with Demetrius Lake. I know exactly what he's capable of, and I know how bad you're gonna be feelin' the next day.

But Jimmy? Ya made your bed. Time for you to lie in it.

You wanna be on your own? You wanna be your own man... well, now you're gonna find out what happens when ya ain't got your big brother around to pull your fat outta the fryer.

[Jack shrugs.]

JL: Maybe Lake will knock some sense into you. And if he does? Then give me a call. But when it's you and Lake in the ring?

You're on your own.

[Brother and sister look at each other for a moment, and a silent understanding passes between them, as they both nod.]

TL: But there is something else, someone else, to talk about – Supernova.

[The King of Cowboys nods his head.]

JL: Supernova.... I get it.

You're blamin' me for what my brother did. And more than that, you're mad that none of us stood up for you and your name.

None of us came out and said "ain't no damn way that's Supernova." None of us who know ya best ever came out and tried to clear your name.

Hell... some of us even believed it was you.

[Jack nods.]

JL: So I get it.

But if you think I'm just sit around and let ya kick my ass for it. If ya think what ya did tonight ain't gonna get answered? Well, as the song says:

Ya got another thing comin'.

[Lynch runs a hand through his hair and leans forward, looking into the camera.]

JL: If you're the man ya used to be, then you're gonna want somethin' more satisfyin' than jumpin' on me when I ain't expectin' it. You're gonna want a fight in that ring. And 'Nova? If it's a fight ya want...

You got it.

[Theresa interjects before her brother can leave.]

TL: Unfortunately, that's easier said than done. Supernova has been fired from the AWA. So, that match... that fight as you said... can't happen on an AWA show.

[Lynch nods his head.]

JL: Well 'Reesa, that's true. But it just so happens that we're in a city that's about to host a whole night of fights. A whole night of no holds barred, anythin' goes fights. Just the kinda thing I think Supernova might be lookin' for.

And after tonight, I know it's what I'm lookin' for. So Supernova?

[The camera focuses in on Lynch's face.]

JL: I'll see your ass at Eternally Extreme!

[His challenge made and with nothing left to say, the Iron Cowboy walks away as Theresa stares slack-jawed after him and we fade to black...

...and then back up. We see two young kids - a boy and a girl - standing at the barricade at an AWA live event. They are on their feet, screaming and shouting for the action in the ring. We can hear a bell and soon, Travis Lynch is standing in front

of them, giving them both a high five with the AWA National Title belt hanging over his shoulder. The young man turns towards the camera.]

“Wow! I wish I could be the champion!”

[There’s a voiceover.]

VO: Now you can!

[And with a flash of light, the young man has a replica of the National Title hanging over his shoulder. The boy yelps with glee, slapping the title belt with a big grin on his face. The voiceover continues as we see the title belts one by one.]

VO: Okay, maybe you can’t be the champion but you can own your own version of the same title belts you see on TV each and every week!

The National Title, the World Television Title, the Tag Team Titles, even the World Heavyweight Title can be yours!

Kids sizes and adult sizes available.

[A quick shot of a grown man holding the World Title in the air, smiling broadly.]

VO: Oh, and don’t think we forgot about you...

[FLASH!

And now the little girl from the start of the ad is holding her own version of the Women’s World Championship.]

“I can be a champion too!”

[Cut to a three shot of the adult and the two kids each holding up their title belts.]

VO: Available now at retail stores everywhere and AWAShop.com!

[Fade to black...

...and then fade back up on the backstage area where we see Sweet Lou Blackwell standing in front of a Liberty Or Death backdrop.]

SLB: What a night we've seen so far, and plenty more action where that came from. We've got our clash of the Rumble's iron men to come in just a few moments as Raphael Rhodes and Sid Osborne do battle one-on-one. Speaking of, Raphael, Dana Kaiser, come on in here...

[Raphael Rhodes and Dana Kaiser enter frame, Rhodes with his head down and the hood of his light blue sweatshirt over his head, and has changed out into his ring gear already. Kaiser is far more attentive, and is wearing a sleeveless light blue T-shirt and black leggings.]

SLB: ...Dana, it appears as though Raphael is quite focused on the matter at hand.

DK: You're quite right, Mr. Blackwell. We know what Sid Osborne can do in Rumbles. We've seen his endurance when there's multiple people in that ring, when your gameplan has to change at a moment's notice because your opponent might not be the same from second to second. But tonight, Mr. Blackwell, is a completely different scenario.

[Kaiser pats Rhodes on the shoulder.]

DK: Tonight, Sid Osborne is going to have to show the world what it's like to wrestle just one man. And there won't be a lot of distractions, like in a Rumble. Now I'm not saying Sid Osborne ran and hid in that Rumble, because he didn't... but he won't have any places to hide tonight. If Sid Osborne has any flaws in his plan?

[Rhodes smacks his chest with his hand.]

DK: Raphael Rhodes will expose them. If Sid Osborne has any weaknesses in his arsenal?

[Rhodes smacks his chest again.]

DK: Raphael Rhodes will exploit them. If Sid Osborne comes into this match and gives literally any second of an opening?

[Rhodes smacks his chest a third time.]

DK: Raphael Rhodes will barge through that opening, and he'll clamp down on you like a bear trap. He is the most well-conditioned athlete in the AWA, Mr. Blackwell, and he knows how to use that conditioning to break a man down to nothing but his heart and his soul. The question is, does Sid Osborne have the heart and soul to beat Raphael Rhodes? The answer, Mr. Blackwell... is no.

[Rhodes pulls his hood down, eyes drifting towards the camera, as Blackwell moves the microphone to Rhodes.]

RR: You have your chance to make your name at the expense of mine own, lad. Aim for my heart, take your shot, and pray your aim is true. If you miss, your next prayer better be that I leave you with your jaw intact, so you can make your living telling the world what it's like to fight Raphael Rhodes and fail.

[Rhodes puts his hood up, as both Rhodes and Kaiser exit the frame.]

SLB: Strong words from both Raphael Rhodes and Dana Kaiser. Now, let's go over to Mark Stegglet who has the other side of this much-anticipated matchup! Mark?

[We cut elsewhere in the backstage area where Mark Stegglet is standing by.]

MS: Thanks, Sweet Lou... I'm about to be joined by a man who in a very short time will face the greatest test in his young career in the firm of Raphael Rhodes.

[Into the frame walks Sid Osborne. He rubs his forehead as he begins to speak.]

SO: It's amazing, I didn't know the book was already out. I don't think I even knew the book was being written.

MS: I'm sorry, the book?

SO: Well, yeah. The Sid Osborne biography that apparently you and Rhodes got advance copy of.

[Stegglet looks puzzled.]

SO: Unless you've followed my career every step of the way so that you can say that THIS match is the biggest deal of my entire career?

MS: Well, anyone stepping into the ring with Raphael Rhodes would be in for--

[Stegglet is cut off as Osborne raises an index finger.]

SO: Much like how Rhodes apparently knows me, a person who he has never even been formally introduced to, so well that he can say that I am JUST like how he used to be.

[Osborne turns to face the camera directly.]

SO: I hate to be the bearer of bad news here, but neither of you even have the smallest clue as to what the hell you're talking about.

For one, there's the idea... not even the idea... the statement that Raphael Rhodes is the biggest test of my entire career. This seems pretty curious to me, since...

[Osborne turns to Stegglet.]

SO: Mark. Wouldn't you say that Max Magnum is someone that everyone here has been impressed by? Even fearful of?

[Stegglet nods.]

MS: Certainly, he's cut a swath in a short ti--

[Stegglet is cut off again with a raised index finger.]

SO: That is exactly what makes what you said make no actual sense to me. Here's this big monster everyone's running scared from. They all don't want him to get his hands on them and put the big hurt on them.

[Osborne smirks.]

SO: And then there's me. Not only was I not afraid. Not only did I not run.

[Osborne taps his left hand on his right wrist repeatedly.]

SO: But I put your big nightmare on the shelf. Something that no one else has done. So in light of that fact, you trying to tell me or anyone else that tonight is the biggest challenge of my life is...

[Osborne shakes his head.]

SO: It's a joke. A sad one.

Not to say that I think Rhodes is a pushover or tonight'll be a walk in the park. I know it won't. I've already spent time with him in that ring. I've seen what he can do. See, these are things I have in mind because I've verified them as fact.

Not some crap about knowing the entirety of someone's life after, what? Seeing me talk on a television show a grand total of once?

MS: You're of course referencing his comments in response to your interview with my colleague, Theresa Lynch.

[Osborne nods.]

SO: At least there was a nugget of truth. Something to the effect of don't I think she hears that enough on Twitter or whatever platform boring clowns post their baseless opinions on.

You're right, Raph. I don't think about that. Not for one second. I don't have the luxury to waste brain cells on anything like that. Because I don't have an agent to

cry to when the AWA comes to Europe and don't think to send a limo. From your first night back, I knew we had zero in common. Just due to the fact that you were miffed you didn't get a signed invitation from this company because they were ON THE SAME CONTINENT as you!

[Osborne laughs, shaking his head.]

SO: The level of entitlement that it takes to say that, and the black hole of self awareness it takes to not be embarrassed by it said it all to me. Because while you were stamping your feet I was in this company, yet passed over because I didn't check off all their boxes as to what a TV star looks like.

Because unlike you, I didn't whine to an agent or manager that I couldn't afford in the first place.

[Osborne waves his index finger to indicate the negative.]

SO: I took my spot, whether they liked it or not. And they most certainly did not. I stepped up, daring anyone to stop me.

[Osborne nods.]

SO: Tonight, it's your turn.

Step up... and shut me up.

[Osborne glares into the camera as we fade out to the ring where Rebecca Ortiz is standing.]

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

[The sounds of Pennywise's "Revolution" rips to life over the PA system.]

RO: From Las Vegas, Nevada... weighing in at 260 pounds...

He is the SIN CITY SAVIORRRRRRRR...

SIIIIIIIIIIID OSBORRRRRRRRRRRNNNNNNE!

[Sid Osborne appears through the entrance tunnel in a black hoodie with "SHUT ME UP" written on the back in what appears to be duct tape. He unzips the hoodie as he walks the ramp to a pretty loud reaction from the Philly crowd. Underneath it, we can see the thick torso of the Sin City Savior in a shiny jet black double single with silver trim that goes down to mid-thigh.]

GM: The Sin City Savior set for action here tonight in what should be one heck of a matchup, Bucky.

BW: I've been looking forward to this one since it was signed. Osborne's got a lot of hype behind him and if you wanted someone to serve as a measuring stick of where someone stands in this business - Raphael Rhodes would be a good choice for that.

[Osborne slides under the bottom rope, discarding the hoodie to reveal a thick torso covered in tattoos. He settles back into the corner as Ortiz continues.]

RO: And his opponent, he is accompanied to the ring by his trainer and advisor, Dana Kaiser... weighing 217 pounds, and currently residing in Minneapolis, Minnesota... RAPHAEL RHOOOOOOOOOOODES!



["Pedestrian At Best" by Courtney Barnett begins to play as Raphael Rhodes barges through the entrance, with Dana Kaiser right behind him. Rhodes has on a light blue sleeveless hoodie, along with simple light blue leg-length tights, along with white kneepads and boots. Across the seat of the tights is the Union Jack. Kaiser wears a light blue sleeveless T-shirt, along with black leggings, and carries a white towel around her neck, along with a bottle of water and Rhodes' mouthguard case.]

GM: Raphael Rhodes with no shortage of intensity, Bucky.

BW: Has he ever lacked in it, Gordo?

GM: He certainly hasn't. He has said in prior interviews that he sees a lot of his past self in Sid Osborne. I wonder what his goal is for the match tonight.

BW: I'm not quite sure. There's a lot that could be driving Rhodes' desire to want this match. Could be the desire to teach Sid how to avoid the mistakes he made, or... he could just want to take him out. You never know with Raph.

[Rhodes stops at the ring stairs, with Kaiser handing him his mouthguard. He pops it into his mouth, confirming it's properly in place, before taking off his sweatshirt and climbing into the ring. As the music fades, Rhodes rolls his shoulders and glares across the ring.]

"DING! DING! DING!"

[At the sound of the bell, Raphael Rhodes confidently steps to the middle of the ring, pausing there as he extends his hands towards Sid Osborne, beckoning the Sin City Savior forward...]

GM: Well, Raphael Rhodes letting Sid Osborne know right away that he is NOT intimidated by the young rookie from Las Vegas.

[...and Osborne obliges, marching to center ring to stand just beyond reach for Rhodes.]

BW: The feeling appears to be mutual, Gordo.

[Unlike the stoic Rhodes, Osborne is running his mouth in his opponent's direction, thankfully unable to be picked up by the mic...]

GM: Seems like Sid Osborne didn't finish talking backstage, Bucky. He's got more on his mind and-

[Soon, Raphael Rhodes has heard enough, whipping his hand around quick as lightning towards the side of Osborne's head...

...perhaps doing exactly what Osborne was hoping for as he dodges the slap, grabs the arm, and drags Rhodes down to the canvas in a Fujiwara armbar!]

GM: WHOA! Where did THAT come from?!

BW: Osborne caught the slap - heck, he might have PROVOKED the slap, Gordo!

GM: It's said that Sid Osborne was one of the most cerebral competitors to ever step into the Combat Corner. He was always trying to get into his rivals' heads, always trying to outthink them.

[Osborne cranks back on the trapped arm as Dana Kaiser looks on with concern, grabbing at the bottom rope with a "COME ON, RAPH!" as Rhodes claws at the canvas, searching for an escape from the early submission attempt!]

GM: Osborne with the armbar locked in, trying to get a submission in the opening moments of this one and what an upset that would be - even with Rhodes' extended time away from the AWA, Bucky.

BW: Absolutely. Osborne is always inviting people to shut him up - well, he's gonna shut up a LOT of people if he picks up a win here.

GM: He certainly would. Now that armbar is on but it's not applied with the expert-level skill of someone like a Jeff Matthews so Rhodes may be able to-

[Abruptly shoving up to his knees, Rhodes quickly pivots to scissor Osborne's arm between his legs, pulling him down into a crucifix!]

GM: Now that's a counter and-

[Rhodes doesn't attempt to keep the shoulders down though, adapting the crucifix to immobilize Osborne as he starts throwing elbows aimed at the ear of the Sin City Savior!]

GM: And now it's Osborne who needs a way out and fast! Rhodes is pounding away at the side of the head, right down on that ear!

[Osborne manages to pull his arm free, looping it around Rhodes' neck, twisting him down onto his shoulders...]

GM: ONE! TWO!

[...but Rhodes kicks free, the two men spinning away from each other, racing to get to their feet first as the Philly fans cheer!]

GM: Osborne makes it to his feet first, goes downstairs with a knee to the gut...

[Grabbing Rhodes by the head, Osborne throws him into the closest set of ropes - a short distance that has Rhodes bounce back quickly into a back elbow up under the chin.]

GM: Elbow takes him down...

[Osborne winds up the same arm, dropping to his knees and driving his elbow down into the throat of Rhodes, causing the Brit's legs to kick up into the air. Osborne jams his forearm into the side of Rhodes' face, applying a lateral press and snatching a leg for a two count before Rhodes kicks out.]

GM: Kickout at two... and I would've been surprised if that was enough to keep Raphael Rhodes down for a three count, Bucky.

BW: You ain't the only one.

GM: Of course, this match came about because these were numbers one and two in the Memorial Day Rumble at the end of May. From there, Raphael Rhodes took issue with some words from Sid Osborne on the all-new Power Hour and laid down the challenge for this one.

[Osborne pulls Rhodes up off the mat, shoving him back into the corner before winding up...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"  
"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"  
"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

[The trio of chops leaves Rhodes reeling as Osborne grabs him by the wrist, whipping him from corner to corner. The Sid City Savior lowers his head, barreling in after him...]

GM: Osborne coming in strong and-

[Rhodes tugs the ropes, pulling himself clear as Osborne slams chestfirst into the corner...]

GM: Ohh! Osborne hits the buckles... Rhodes hooks him up...

[With Osborne in an inverted facelock, Rhodes SMASHES the point of his elbow down into the sternum of the Sin City Savior, depositing him down on the canvas.]

GM: Down goes Osborne off the forearm...

[Osborne though quickly rolls to his chest, pushing up to all fours to try and get back up before Rhodes can...]

GM: AHHH!

BW: HE FISH HOOKED HIM!

[Snatching his fingers into the corner of Osborne's mouth, the Brit pulls back hard, yanking the Sin City Savior to his knees...

...and DRILLS him across the cheekbone with a hooking right forearm!]

GM: OHH!

[He winds up, throwing a second right forearm...]

GM: Crossfaces by Rhodes, battering the cheekbones of the Sin City Savior!

[Rhodes swings from the other way, the left arm smashing across the eyesocket, causing Osborne to flatten out on the canvas, his arms up over his head as Rhodes stands over him.]

GM: Down goes Osborne after some absolutely punishing forearms to the side of the head and across the face.

BW: That's Rhodes looking to hurt this kid, Gordo. Raphael Rhodes isn't one for slickness in there. He's not one for fancy flips and dives. He likes to hurt his opponents and make sure they know they were in there with Raphael Rhodes.

[On cue, Rhodes violently stomps the back of Osborne's head, smashing his face into the canvas.]

GM: Good grief. That'll send you to the plastic surgeon.

[Rhodes backs off as the referee kneels to check on Osborne, taking a long walk around the ring as Dana Kaiser looks on approvingly, applauding her husband's performance so far.]

GM: The referee says Sid is good to continue... and that's all Rhodes needs to hear, pulling Osborne off the mat by that spiky hair..

[A stiff European uppercut snaps Osborne's head back, sending him falling into the ropes where he wraps his arm over the top to stay on his feet.]

GM: Osborne trying to stay on his feet...

[Leaning into Osborne, Rhodes swings his right knee up into the midsection of the Vegas native once... twice... three times before grabbing the wrist, firing Sid across the ring to the far side...]

GM: Rhodes rockets him in, Sid bouncing back out...

[Rhodes simply kicks him in the gut on the rebound, doubling up Osborne into perfect position for Rhodes to snatch a cravate, twisting the neck of the Sin City Savior...]

GM: Raphael Rhodes, a third generation grappler...

BW: His whole family was in the business, Gordo. His grandfather... both of his parents. His uncle... his brother... his sister... some cousins. This business is in the blood of the Rhodes' family.

[With the cravate locked in, Rhodes swings a pair of knees up into the skull of Osborne before switching his grip, flipping him over into a seated position...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[...and DRILLS Osborne between the shoulderblades with a stiff soccer kick!]

GM: Big kick directly to the spine!

[Osborne arches his back, grimacing in pain as Rhodes dashes to the ropes in front of the Sin City Savior, bouncing back off with a soccer kick aimed at the chest...

...but Osborne leans back, causing Rhodes to whiff on the kick, falling off-balance towards the ropes!]

GM: Swing and a miss by Rhodes, Osborne on the rise...

[Rhodes wheels around, running towards Osborne again...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[...and runs right into a knife edge chop that BLASTS Rhodes right off his feet to the canvas!]

GM: What a chop by the Sin City Savior!

BW: Back and forth these two go, Gordo.

[Rhodes comes up again...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[..and stumbles backwards, clutching at his chest as Dana Kaiser pounds her fist down on the apron, shouting to Rhodes who grimaces, straightening up with a

rapidly-reddening welt on his chest. He stomps towards Osborne and shouts  
"COME ON!" at his young opponent. Osborne smirks, giving a nod... of respect?]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[The three skin-blistering chops sends Rhodes stumbling backwards, dropping down to a knee as Osborne stands over him, shouting...]

"That enough for you?"

[...but Rhodes surges to his feet, throwing himself into a double leg takedown that brings the crowd up!]

GM: OHH! WHAT A TAKEDOWN!

[The former MMA fighter effortlessly slides into mount position, pinning Osborne to the canvas as he rears back...]

GM: OHH! BIG ELBOW FROM THE TOP!

[The clubbing elbow catches Osborne between the eyes, flattening him out as Rhodes postures up and drops a second one that has Osborne frantically trying to cover up. The British grappler grabs the wrist of one of the arms protecting his face, giving it a slight twist before he rolls over Osborne's face so that both men are lying on their backs on the mat at which point Rhodes rolls to his side, twisting the wrist as he uses the hold to pull Osborne up to his feet.]

GM: Rhodes showing off the grappling skills he's so well-known for, using that wristlock to force Osborne to his feet and back into the corner..

[With Sin City Sid pushed into the buckles, Rhodes suddenly lets go, going downstairs with a left and right forearm to the midsection that stuns Osborne before taking the stairs to the penthouse for some devastatingly stiff forearm strikes across the face, forcing the referee to step in, calling for a break.]

BW: Whew, Rhodes is lighting this kid up in the corner, Gordo.

GM: He certainly is... and no matter how much time Raphael Rhodes spent away from the AWA, he did not lose his ability or reputation as one of the hardest hitters in the AWA locker room.

[Rhodes is forced several steps back as Osborne reels against the buckles. The referee gives Rhodes a stern talking to but Rhodes disregards the official as he charges back in...

...right into a raised boot from Osborne!]

GM: Ohh! And again, the action continues to go back and forth in this one! Neither man has been able to get a sustained run on offense as Sid catches him coming in... oh, and he **THROWS** him back to the buckles!

[With Rhodes reeling now, Osborne lowers his head and charges, driving his shoulder into the the midsection of Rhodes, a blow that seems to momentarily

knock the wind out of the British grappler as he slumps against the ropes, partially doubled over as Dana Kaiser looks on with concern from the floor.]

GM: Sid Osborne looking to make a big impression on the front office here tonight, fans. He grabs a handful of hair on Rhodes and...

[Holding Rhodes' head in place, Osborne DRILLS him between the eyes with a hard front kick to the forehead... and another... and another. The kicks are fast and plentiful as they repeatedly bounce off the skull of the third generation grappler before the official steps in and forces another break. Osborne angrily stomps away, letting loose a loud "YAAAAAAH!" as he walks out towards the middle of the ring.]

GM: Both these men giving it their all in this one as we're a couple of minutes shy of the ten minute mark in this twenty minute time limit affair.

[Osborne backs to the far corner, pointing across the ring with both hands as the Philly fans cheer him on. He barrels across the ring, stepping up on the middle rope...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"  
"OHLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLL!"

[...and BLASTS a kneestrike up into the chin of Rhodes, snapping his head back!]

GM: GOOD GRIEF!

BW: Rhodes is dazed after that one for sure, Gordo! He may be out on his damn feet!

[Osborne shakes his head, shouting "I'M NOT WITH YOU YET!" as he walks to the opposite corner again, slaps the turnbuckle a few times, and then spins to barrel across a second time...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"  
"OHLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLL!"

GM: PALM STRIKE!

[The running palm strike uppercut again SNAPS Rhodes' head backwards as Osborne stays in the corner, leaning over the ropes as Rhodes starts to slump down lower. The Sin City Savior grabs him by the hair, shaking his head.]

GM: It looked like Rhodes was about to go down from that palm strike, fans, but Sid Osborne will have no part of that! He's keeping Raphael Rhodes on his feet and you gotta think he's looking for the magic bullet to keep this AWA veteran down for the count.

[Osborne pulls Rhodes a step or two out, dragging him into a double underhook...]

GM: Sid hooks him up... and OVER he goes with a butterfly suplex!

[But Osborne doesn't let go, rolling through the suplex to apply a butterfly submission!]

GM: Oh! And nicely done right there, wrenching the arms, putting pressure on the neck.

BW: This is a simple hold, Gordo, but very painful. You can see the arms being pulled towards one another, almost like a double chickenwing. But with Rhodes sitting down, Osborne can put all of his 260 pounds on the back of the neck, lean

on him, and not only punish the neck but cut off some of the air on Rhodes as well as he drives his chin down into his own chest.

GM: Dana Kaiser with some obvious concern outside the ring. This couple has made no secret out of their desire to get into the National Title picture here in the AWA. He's currently ranked number five on that list but a loss here to Osborne might see Rhodes fall out and Osborne step in, Bucky.

BW: That's the reality of the situation for sure. This one might have a bit of personal grudge involved with it but for these two, this is also about getting your name in the minds of the matchmakers. Making sure that people know that you're coming for championship gold. The competition in all of the AWA's divisions is so hot these days, one loss could have a major impact on your title hopes.

[Rhodes denies that he wants to submit as Osborne continues to lean on him, hoping to wear him down in addition to putting him into a possible submission.]

GM: And as we talked about, we're closing in on the halfway point of the time limit for this one as Osborne looks to wear down Raphael Rhodes... take some of the tremendous wind out of the sails of the man who Dana Kaiser claims is the best conditioned athlete in the AWA.

BW: It's hard to argue when you see what he did at the Rumble, Gordo.

GM: A fair point, Bucky, to be sure.

[With a grimace and a grunt, Rhodes muscles up, trying to pull his arms apart and break the hold applied by Osborne.]

GM: And Rhodes is making a move, Bucky. You can see him trying to pull his arms towards his chest, trying to separate those locked hands on Osborne who is desperately trying to keep them together...

[Rhodes' shout gets louder as he pulls... and pulls... and pulls...]

GM: He's almost there!

[Rising to his feet, Osborne is struggling to keep the hold applied...

...when he suddenly abandons it and DRIVES his knee into the skull of the seated Rhodes, knocking him flat!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: KNEE TO THE HEAD! THAT COULD DO IT!

[Osborne flings himself on top of Rhodes, wrapping up a leg.]

GM: ONNNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOO! T-

[But Rhodes fires a shoulder up off the mat, breaking up the pin.]

GM: Two count only... and look at this! Osborne to the mount, taking a page out of Rhodes' playbook!

[With his 260 pounds holding down the smaller Rhodes' frame, Osborne tees off from the top...]

GM: Fists are flying from the Sin City Savior, pummeling Rhodes down into the canvas and-

[Rhodes catches one of the sloppy punches, grabbing the wrist and elbow, twisting it as he somehow manages to flip Osborne over onto his back, rising as he does, and while keeping the grip on the wrist...

...he STOMPS Osborne's face!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: GOOD GRIEF!

[Rhodes drops down to his knees, diving across Osborne's chest as the referee counts again...]

GM: And a two count the other way this time! What a seesaw matchup this one has been, Bucky.

BW: An evenly matched pair of two of the best in the world.

[Rhodes gets to his feet, grabbing a handful of hair as he hauls Osborne up, hooking him from the side...]

GM: Rhodes lifts him up... and DROPS him down with a back suplex!

[The Wigan native rolls to the side, his forearm jammed up against Osborne's cheekbone as he applies a lateral press.]

"TEN MINUTES HAVE GONE BY! TEN MINUTES REMAIN! TEN MINUTES!"

GM: And there's the time limit call as Sid kicks out at two. We're halfway to the limit in this one as these two extraordinary competitors battle it out. Sid Osborne looking to silence some of his critics here in this one as Rhodes looks to continue his climb up the rankings as he takes aim at the National Title which could be in the hands of either Maxim Zharkov or Jordan Ohara before this night is over.

BW: Can you imagine Rhodes against Zharkov? What a fight that would be.

GM: What about Rhodes against Ohara? That would be a tremendous matchup.

BW: Sure, if you want to see Ohara's pretty face mangled.

[From his knees, Rhodes slams a hammerfist down between the eyes... and a second one forces Osborne to roll to his chest, trying to cover up...

...which is when Rhodes pushes up to all fours, throwing some vicious knees at the exposed ribcage on the Sin City Savior!]

GM: Knee after knee driven up into the ribs of Osborne and that'll take some wind out of Sin City Sid too, Bucky.

BW: If a man can't breathe, he can't fight.

[Rhodes grabs one of the arms protecting Sid's head, twisting it back into a hammerlock, cranking up on the limb as he kneels down on the small of the back, pinning Sid to the mat.]

GM: And if that butterfly lock earlier was painful, take a look at this one. Torquing the trapped arm in the hammerlock, keeping his knee on the lower back to make sure Sid can't get free...



[Rhodes holds this position for a few moments before sliding himself to his feet, stepping closer to the head and then kneeling down on the arm, trapping it between his leg...]

GM: What's he doing now? A kneeling hammerlock perhaps and-

[With a sneer, Rhodes reaches towards the head of Osborne...]

...and sinks his fingers into the nostril's of the Sin City Savior, pulling back on his nose and yanking his head back as well. Shouts of pain from Osborne are heard as the referee immediately calls for a break!]

GM: He's ripping and tearing at the face of Sid Osborne, fans!

BW: What did I say earlier? He likes to hurt people, Gordo. If he ever writes a book, that'll be the name of it - "I Like To Hurt People."

GM: The referee laying a count on Rhodes... three... four... and he just BARELY breaks it in time.

BW: He knew exactly how much time he had to break. Don't get it twisted as the kids say these days.

GM: The only thing being twisted right there was the face of Sid Osborne.

[Rhodes takes a walk around the downed Osborne, circling his prey as he sizes him up for his next move. The Wigan native looks a little surprised as Sid almost straight away starts coming back up off the mat.]

GM: Osborne trying to get to his feet... it's tough to keep this kid down, fans. He just keeps on coming...

[As Osborne reaches a knee, Rhodes grabs him by the hair, swinging a pair of knees up into the sternum...]

GM: Two hard kneestrikes to the chest by Raphael Rhodes, a former Rumble winner in his own right.

[Using the grip on the hair, Rhodes pulls him the rest of the way up to his feet before snapping off a European uppercut that snaps Osborne's head back as he staggers back into the ropes, pushing off them...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

GM: Ohh! Osborne fires back with a knife edge chop!

[Rhodes stumbles back this time, a surprised look on his face. He grabs at his own chest, wiping a hand across it before winding up...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

GM: Goodness! Rhodes returns fire with an overhand chop of his own!

[Osborne staggers but steadies himself..]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

[...and lights up Rhodes with another knife edge chop. The third generation grappler steps back, takes aim...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

GM: Another overhead chop! These two are really laying it in on one another, looking to do maximum damage with those strikes!

[With a grimace, Osborne winds up...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

[The crowd groans as Rhodes steps back, his chest turning several shades of red as Osborne nods, moving in towards him..

...which is when Rhodes lunges at him, smashing his skull between the eyes of Osborne!]

GM: OHHH! HEADBUTT!

BW: And nobody stands up to that!

[Which is a point well proven when Osborne crumples down to his knees, dropping to all fours...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

[...where Rhodes BURIES a soccer kick into the ribs, flipping Osborne over onto his back. A hard stomp to the gut follows, forcing Osborne to sit up slightly which is when Rhodes circles behind him and drops down to a knee, jamming the other one between the shoulderblades as he locks his hands under Sid's chin and YANKS back!]

GM: Goodness! A brutal exchange of chops there ends up with Rhodes applying a very painful-looking chinlock, Bucky.

BW: You know, a lot of competitors would use a chinlock like this as a chance to catch a breather for themselves - not Raphael Rhodes. He's got the knee in position, the hands locked, and he's ripping Sid's head back with so much force, you'd think he was trying to turn him into a Pez dispenser!

[The referee kneels down, checking to see if Sid wants to quit but there is no quit in the young man from Las Vegas who shouts a refusal as Rhodes pulls back even harder with Dana Kaiser, his wife, looking on approvingly from the floor.]

GM: Dana Kaiser has to like what she's seeing out of her husband right about now, Bucky.

BW: Absolutely. Rhodes looks like he's never skipped a beat since his days fighting in the first AWA cage match way back at No Escape so many years ago. Gordo, I was so young then.

GM: You? What about me?

BW: You've always been an old codger.

[Gordon chuckles as Rhodes fails to get the submission again, switching tactics by grabbing the arms and pulling them out to the sides, planting his foot on the back of Osborne...]

GM: Rhodes changing the chinlock to a... looks like some type of modified standing surfboard!

BW: Hang ten, Gordo!

GM: Back in my day absolutely. But Rhodes isn't looking for a big wave right now, he's looking to make Osborne submit and what a humbling thing that would be for someone with an ego the size of the Sin City Savior.

BW: The kid truly believes he's the best in the world, Gordo. So yeah.. losing by submission and having to admit someone was better than him... that would be a tough night at the office.

[Rhodes keeps the hold applied, shouting "ASK HIM!" to the official who obliges but Sid's "NOOOOOO!" tells the whole story.]

GM: Osborne refusing to give up, still trapped in this surfboard though...

[Rhodes "rows" the arms back, putting even more pressure on the limbs as Sid grimaces in pain, shouting another refusal to give up.]

GM: The Sin City Savior's got a lot of fight in him - that's for sure. A lesser competitor might've given up to this hold long ago.

[But with Rhodes' foot on his back, Sid Osborne somehow manages to get his leg underneath him, pushing to a knee...]

GM: He's trying to get up, fans! And this Philly crowd is loving it!

[The Philly fans love an underdog story and Osborne is providing it as he climbs up off the mat, Rhodes still trying to hang on to the arms as he now has both feet down on the mat...]

GM: Rhodes is trying to hang on... trying to- whoooooa! Sid reverses it!

[The crowd cheers as it's now Sid Osborne holding the arms of Rhodes in a standing surfboard... minus the foot in the back...]

...but Sid quickly breaks it, leaping up, hooking his hands on the chin of Rhodes, pulling him back onto two raised knees!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: OSBORNE CRACKS THE BACK OF RHODES AND AGAIN, THAT MAY TURN THE TIDE IN THIS ONE!

[Both men are sprawled out on the canvas for several moments, the fans roaring for the efforts of both competitors...]

GM: What a battle this has been here in Philly between Raphael Rhodes and Sid Osborne, fans!

BW: And it's not over yet, Gordo! These two are getting back to their feet!

[Sid's the first one to get there, moving in on Rhodes...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

[...who drills him with a knife edge chop of his own, spinning Osborne away from him. The Sin City Savior, partially doubled over, is seething with anger, flushed skin]

telling the tale as he takes several deep breaths, and with a loud roar, he rushes Rhodes who seems caught unprepared for the onslaught...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

[A pair of knife edge chops land before he grabs the hair, smashing a trio of forearms into the side of the head, and then just switches to bare knuckled punches to the side of the head, ending up with Rhodes' back against the ropes...]

"FIVE MINUTES REMAIN! FIVE MINUTES!"

GM: Five minutes to go in the twenty minute time limit for this one as Sid shoots him across...

[The crowd cheers as a big running clothesline puts Rhodes down on the canvas!]

GM: Osborne hits a clothesline... and he's shouting at Raphael Rhodes, demanding that he get back to his feet!

[It doesn't take long for Rhodes to oblige but a stampede Sid runs him down a second time with another clothesline, turning to give a roar to the fired-up Philly crowd!]

GM: Sid Osborne's got a second wind... a burning desire to put Raphael Rhodes down for the count... and many in the Wells Fargo Center are right there with him, Bucky!

BW: The crowd seems pretty split on this one... Sid's staying on the attack too...

[As Rhodes struggles to his feet, Osborne grabs him by the arm, whipping him with extreme force towards the corner, dropping to his own knees from the effort as Rhodes SLAMS into the buckles, lifting into the air, and dropping to his tailbone against the corner...]

GM: Tremendous Irish whip there by the Sin City Savior!

BW: Nothing but sheer impact to the spine of Rhodes who may be regretting making this challenge right about now, Gordo. Sid Osborne's got all the momentum on his side with under five minutes to go!

[Osborne gets to his feet, marching to the corner opposite Rhodes. He turns, leaning back in the buckles, his hands on the ropes before he yanks himself out, barreling across the ring...]

GM: CANNONBALL IN THE CORNER! OHHHH MY!

BW: TWO HUNDRED AND SIXTY POUNDS WITH INCREDIBLE IMPACT ON THE TORSO OF RHODES!

GM: Osborne pulls him out! He covers!

[The referee dives down to count.]

GM: ONNNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOO! TH-

"OHOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO!"

GM: KICKOUT! KICKOUT! AND NOW IT'S RAPHEL RHODES SHOWING HIS RESILIENCY!

[Osborne buries his face in his arms down on the mat for a moment.]

BW: Now's not the time to get frustrated, kid. Stay on him!

[The Sin City Savior pushes back to his feet, dragging Rhodes off the mat with him. Dana Kaiser can be heard shouting suggestions to her husband as Osborne lifts him up and slams him down!]

GM: Scoop and a slam by Osborne... and he's heading up top, fans!

[Osborne ducks through the ropes, the crowd buzzing as the man known as Sin City Sid starts to climb the corner...]

GM: Dana Kaiser is shouting to her husband, warning him that Sid's going up top! She is obviously concerned with how this match is going right about now.

BW: Can you blame her?

GM: Absolutely not. Sid Osborne slowly scaling the turnbuckles, perhaps looking for that high impact frog splash he calls the Stage Dive!

[Osborne gets to the second rope, taking a deep breath before stepping one foot up top...

...and looks up to find Raphael Rhodes on his feet and approaching quickly.]

GM: Rhodes is up and- ohh! Big right hand! And another one!

[Osborne wobbles, hanging onto the top rope to prevent a hard fall to the outside. The Wigan native steps up to the second rope, smashing a forearm into the jaw of the Sin City Savior!]

GM: Raphael Rhodes climbing up inside the ring, hammering away at Sid Osborne... trying to keep him off that top rope...

[Rhodes winds up again, throwing another haymaker that finds the mark as the crowd gasps at a near fall off the buckles by the Las Vegas native.]

GM: Osborne's hanging on for dear life and-

BW: Gordo, I hear we've got about three minutes left in this one.

GM: Three minutes and change to go, that's right.

[Rhodes steps up a foot on the top rope, reaching out to grab Osborne by the hair...

...but Sid slaps the grasping hand away, grabbing a handful of Rhodes' hair instead and SLAMS his fist fast and furious between the eyes!]

GM: RIGHT HANDS! RIGHT HANDS BY OSBORNE!

[And a big looping haymaker sends Rhodes flying backwards, crashing down on the canvas...]

GM: DOWN GOES RHODES! SID'S TRYING TO GATHER HIS SENSES!

[The crowd is roaring now for the Sin City Savior as he steps to the top rope...]

GM: SID'S UP TOP!

[The 260 pounder leaps into the air, pumping his arms and legs...]

GM: FROG SPLASH!

[...and CRASHES down on empty canvas as Raphael Rhodes rolls to the side JUST in time!]

“OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

[A weary Rhodes shoves Osborne from the side, rolling him onto his back...

...and collapses across him, an arm draped over his chest.]

GM: ONNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOO! THREEEEEEEEEE-

“OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

GM: SHOULDER UP! SID GETS THE SHOULDER UP!

BW: Wow! Big kickout by Osborne! I thought Rhodes had him there, Gordo!

GM: You're not alone in that. Rhodes now, pushing up to his knees, looking down at Osborne... he looks like he can't believe the Sin City Savior is still in this thing.

[He does, in fact, look shocked... but as the call of “TWO MINUTES REMAIN!” rings out, the expression changes drastically to one of anger. He climbs to his feet, reaching down...]

GM: What's he...?!

[The crowd groans as Rhodes grabs hold of one of the holes in Sid's ear that usually has a gauge in it, slipping his finger through the hole...]

GM: OH MY GOD!

[...and violently twists the ear, causing Osborne to cry out as Rhodes YANKS him off the mat by his own ear!]

GM: A sickening display on the part of Raphael Rhodes who gets Osborne up off the mat and-

[Pulling his finger out of the ear, Rhodes snaps off his signature blow, an open-handed slap aimed at the other ear of Osborne...]

“WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!”

“OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

“WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!”

“OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

[The sounds come from the slap landing, spinning Osborne around to where he LUNGES with a straight right hand that snaps Rhodes' head back, leaving him glassy-eyed as Osborne grabs at his own ear, shouting something that we miss thanks to a quick-triggered censor.]

GM: Fans, we apologize for that and-

[Osborne shakes off the slap just enough to whip Rhodes towards the ropes but the Wigan native reverses, ducking down as Osborne rebounds...]

GM: Sid comes off instead... SUNSET FLIP!

[The Sin City Savior leaps over Rhodes, attempting to drag him down to the mat...

...but instead, Rhodes kneels down on the shoulders, reaching back, hooking both legs, and leaning all the way forward to fold Osborne nearly in half!]

GM: REVERSED! CRADLE! ONNNNNNNE! TWOOOOO! THREEEEEEEEEEE!!!

"DING! DING! DING!"

[Rhodes lets go, falling off to all fours as Osborne kicks out JUST after the bell. Dana Kaiser claps outside the ring as Rhodes pushes up to his knees, breathing heavily with a slightly bemused expression on his face.]

GM: Nice win there for Raphael Rhodes, continuing his winning ways since making his AWA return... and a hard-fought win at that.

BW: Definitely, Gordo. Sid Osborne came into this one trying to prove a point and I'd say - even though he lost - he proved it.

GM: He definitely proved he belongs here in the big time with the quality of competitor like Raphael Rhodes.

[Rhodes gets to his feet, allowing the referee to raise his hand...

...when Rhodes suddenly gets flattened from behind by a running forearm to the back of the head!]

GM: OHH! WHAT THE-?!

[The crowd breaks into jeers at the sight of three men in the ring stomping Raphael Rhodes into the canvas.]

GM: That's Logan Blackburn! And Arminius and Destro Star! These three have been competing together as a trio down in Mexico and we saw these two luchadors come to Blackburn's aid at the Memorial Day Rumble too! But what the heck is this all about with Rhodes?!

BW: I have no idea but after a hard-fought match like Rhodes just went through, he doesn't stand a chance against three fresh competitors!

[Blackburn orders his luchador compadres to pull Rhodes up, each holding the struggling Brit by the arms...]

GM: Blackburn's got them holding Rhodes up between them and-

"SLAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

GM: OHH! THE DIRTY ROTTEN SCOUNDREL GOES UPSIDE RHODES' HEAD!

[Blackburn gestures to Arminius and Destro Star who each step on the back of Rhodes' knees, forcing him down on his knees as Blackburn takes aim...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[...and SUPERKICKS Rhodes right in the chin, snapping his head back and sending him down to the mat as Dana Kaiser looks on with concern.]

GM: Raphael Rhodes is being victimized in a three on one attack... and he's got no allies in that locker room, Bucky.

BW: Not at all. Rhodes has always been a bit of a loner and his negative experience in the Southern Syndicate hasn't made him any more of a people person.

[Blackburn looks down at Rhodes, a grin on his face as he gives a high five to Arminius and one to Destro Star...

...and then gestures to the rising Sid Osborne.]

GM: Uh oh. Osborne's got a problem now as well, I think.

[But Blackburn stops Arminius from going after Osborne...

...and then gestures to the downed Rhodes.]

GM: Oh brother.

BW: Oh, he's going to let Osborne join in and REALLY do a number on Rhodes.

[Blackburn gives his sleaziest smile to Osborne, gesturing to the downed Rhodes a second time as Osborne cracks his knuckles, stepping up to the plate...

...and then PIVOTS and DRILLS Blackburn with a right hand!]

GM: RIGHT HAND BY OSBORNE

[The crowd ROARS as the Dirty Rotten Scoundrel drops to the mat! Arminius and Destro Star charge towards Osborne who tries to fend them off with haymakers...]

GM: Osborne's taking on both of these luchadors who will be in the Stampede Cup later this month and-

[He grabs Arminius by the mask, tossing him through the ropes where the luchador lands on the apron. He turns back to Destro Star, booting him in the gut, and SPIKES him with a snapping DDT!]

GM: OHHHH!

[But as Osborne gets to his feet, Arminius leaps into the air, springing off the top rope, connecting with a spinning leg lariat to the back of the head that nearly knocks Osborne out of the ring!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: WHAT A SHOT OUT OF ARMINIUS!

[The masked man helps Blackburn to his feet and the duo moves in on Osborne, stomping and kicking the Sin City Savior into the canvas to the jeers of the crowd!]

GM: We still have no idea why this is happening but Blackburn, Destro Star, and Arminius are looking to take out Raphael Rhodes and now Sid Osborne as well!

[A few more stomps and kicks follow before Blackburn calls a halt to it, raising his partners' arms to even louder jeers.]



GM: A brutal attack by Logan Blackburn and his Luchador thugs! They've laid out Rhodes! They've laid out Osborne! What a horrible ending to what was an excellent match between those two.

BW: But all anyone's going to remember is Blackburn, Arminius, and Destro Star with their arms raised.

GM: I don't believe that for a moment. Fans, we're going to need some help out here and while we get some, let's take a look at some very special footage recorded earlier this week of the Women's World Champion, Kurayami, in Japan.

[We fade to footage marked "OSAKA - JAPAN" where we get a panning shot of a large crowd watching wrestling. A large Tiger Paw Pro banner hangs near the entryway. The voice of Salvatore Albano is heard on voiceover.]

"While the AWA Women's World Champion Kurayami has been on American soil for less than a year, the fans here in the States are already aware of what she's capable of. The fallen bodies of the likes of Betty Chang and Lauryn Rage tell that story quite vividly.

But for fans in Japan... they've known the wrath of Kurayami for a long time now."

[Cut to a shot of the ring where Kurayami has an opponent pressed overhead, walking around the ring with her..

...and then drops her gutfirst on the canvas!]

"The combat art of joshi is revered in Japan - yet often shunted to the side in promotions that only feature women's wrestling while the major promotions like Tiger Paw Pro and Total Japan Pro Wrestling focus on men's competition.

However, when a competitor like Kurayami is in town - all the rules go out the window."

[A massive spinning backfist causes a foe to go toppling through the ropes to the floor as Kurayami bellow...

...and we cut to a shot of former Tiger Paw Pro Global Crown Champion, Yoshinari Taguchi sitting backstage in an arena somewhere. As he speaks in Japanese, subtitles appear at the bottom of the screen.]

YT: "It's tradition for men to compete in one company and women to compete in another. In Japan, it is very rare for the two to mix on the same show. It takes a special talent to make that happen. Miyuki Ozaki has done it. Melissa Cannon, from America, has done it.

And then there's Kurayami."

[Cut back to the ring where Kurayami rampages across the ring, squashing a helpless foe under her bodyweight. The voiceover of Taguchi continues.]

"Kurayami isn't just a pro wrestler. She's a force of nature. An earthquake... a volcano... a typhoon... all in one form. She doesn't just defeat an opponent... she overwhelms them. Very few have ever been able to stand against her and pose a serious challenge."

[Another sequence shows some rapid-fire cuts of Kurayami delivering powerbomb after powerbomb to helpless foes. Albano's voice returns.]

"On this trip, Kurayami has come home as champion. She proudly displays the title belt everywhere she goes - a signal to the world that her power is unsurpassed even in America and that her dominance has yet to be tested."

[Kurayami thrusts the title belt over her head, letting loose a roar as another defeated opponent lies at her feet.]

We fade to a shot backstage where Kurayami is addressing the media, the title belt over her shoulder. She is just finishing an answer in Japanese when her accented English breaks through.]

K: Before we finish, I have a message... a message for those at home who think they can challenge me for this...

[She slaps the title belt.]

K: I don't care who wins your little match at Liberty Or Death. All of you are great competitors... but none of you are a match for me. At the Battle of Saskatchewan, the Hunter is coming for you... and when I'm done, you'll end up just like everyone I've faced on this tour has...

Broken.

[She gets up abruptly, letting loose a bellow into the camera as we cut to black.]

We fade through black as a familiar tune begins to play. One with an ear for music might recognize it as "One More Saturday Night" by the Grateful Dead playing very softly.

An equally-familiar voice is heard booming over it.]

"And for the first time in well over a decade, professional wrestling... \_real\_ professional wrestling has made its' home in the Lone Star State here in Texas. We are \_live\_ in Dallas, Texas at the WKIK Studios for what promises to be..."

[The words trail off as the music takes over and we catch a glimpse of the aforementioned WKIK Studios. It's a bluish gray standard television studio set where you can see the AWA logo splashed across the wall above a small television monitor.]

That shot dissolves to a panning shot of the WKIK Studios. Smackdab in the center of the studio is your standard wrestling ring... red, white, and blue ropes from top to bottom with the matching turnbuckles in the corner. The hard camera also shows a parade of flags on the back wall... everything from the USA to Canada to Mexico to Japan to the UK to Italy and some points in-between.

There are sets of bleachers set up on three sides of the ring, raising up about six rows. Not very high but enough to see over the people in front of you. The fourth side of the ring is clear, leaving a direct view for the announcers standing behind the announce desk we saw earlier.

A voiceover is heard.]

"The AWA began in a studio...

...and now each and every Saturday, it returns to a studio."

[Cut to the Power Hour logo splashed across the screen.]

"New format. New home. The same great AWA action.

The all-new Power Hour - don't you dare miss it."

[Fade to black...

Fade up to a television studio somewhere offsite once again, at an announce desk sits David Rogers, the former voice of the Universal Wrestling Federation. Behind him is a video wall, bearing the logo of the late, great UWF. Greeting the camera with a smile as the shot tightens up from wide to a medium shot on him, Dave nods.]

DR: Good evening once again wrestling fans, David Rogers here to bring you an update on the specially signed UWF World Heavyweight Championship Match. Coming to you from Mosaic Stadium as part of the Battle of Saskatchewan on July 22nd and 23rd, live on pay per view, the UWF returns to life for one night, and one night only.

[The giant UWF logo disappears behind Dave, replaced by the Battle of Saskatchewan logo and the match graphics featuring the images of Juan Vasquez on one side and Youth Gone Wild on the other. "NIGHT TWO" is positioned underneath the BoS logo.]

DR: The second evening of this massive, spectacular event will see the last man to carry the UWF's version of the World Heavyweight Championship, Juan Vasquez, step into the ring to defend the championship against perhaps the most popular wrestler to ever compete in the long history of the promotion, two-time World Champion Youth Gone Wild.

This match promises to be an epic clash between one of the top wrestlers in the world today and one of the most exciting stars of the past. With the added incentive of one of the most fabled prizes in the history of wrestling at stake, it's a battle you can't miss.

[The graphics change again behind Dave, lingering on an image of Youth Gone Wild from his early days, holding the championship title over his head.]

DR: Youth Gone Wild's UWF career began as an original member of the promotion's roster and from the very beginning his electric, high risk wrestling style made him one of the first heroes the UWF fans ever witnessed.

[A mix of old footage labelled "Courtesy: UWF" rolls, with highlights of his matches against Serge Annis and ending with Wild hitting a Wildflyer moonsault to the delight of the crowd to capture his first title.]

DR: And it was just over twenty years ago, on April 19th, 1996 that Wild became just the second man to carry the UWF Championship when he defeated the inimitable "Epitome of Evil" Serge Annis for the title. It was this match that truly kicked off the legendary feud between these two men, a feud that helped to carry the young company for the next few years on and off.

[More footage displays now, of Wild as a competitive champion facing off against the likes of Annis, Brewster Cogburn, the masked threat Apocalypse, Scott Daniels among others. It jumps ahead to the staredown between Wild and the British Wonderkid in early 1999 on PPV.]

DR: A few scant years later on the 3rd of January in 1999 that Youth Gone Wild again climbed the mountain, regaining the World Championship in a bitter battle against former friend Alex Kidd. Their match that night saw Wild defeat the only three-time Champion to himself become World Champion for the second time, one

of just a handful of competitors to ever do that. That match went on to be voted the best match of 1999 at the end of the year.

[The graphics return to a single shot of Youth Gone Wild now.]

DR: At times throughout his long career in the UWF, Youth Gone Wild managed to capture a variety of championships. From the United States to Cruiserweight Titles, and a reign as World Tag Team Champions with the same Alex Kidd, Wild remained a threat as well as a fan favorite through the years.

Today, at the age of thirty-eight one has to wonder if perhaps there's one more thrilling contest left in the Hall of Famer. One more run to the top, with a chance to become just the second three-time World Champion.

[Now the graphics switch to an image of Juan Vasquez, wearing the UWF Championship belt around his waist.]

DR: Because it won't be easy. While Wild made the UWF home for his entire career, it was a very different road for Juan Vasquez. Making his debut at Gold Rush in 2005, it was as high profile as you could get walking into the company as a special referee during the main event.

[The graphics disappear and footage replaces it of Vasquez wearing black pants and a referee's shirt, walking out to a huge ovation from thousands of people. Cut to the end of the match, Juan counting to three and awarding the title to one Alex Martinez, then footage of him crossing paths with other top talents including Martinez, Luke Kinsey, Scott Daniels and others.]

DR: Making an instant impact, Vasquez quickly rubbed people the wrong way but didn't let it stand in his path towards becoming one of the biggest stars the UWF had under contract. His Stiff Right Cross became legendary, and the damage inflicted at his hands quickly piled up.

[We move through footage of the wild brawl between Juan and Alexander Epstein through the arena; the devastating shot to put down Brianna Landis on accident; and the impossibly violent breaking of Epstein's leg at the hands of Vasquez.]

DR: But it was a rivalry with Trey DaMann that grabbed headlines and attention throughout the wrestling world, one that lasted for years as the two found themselves intertwined again and again...

[To the horrors of the Gold Rush crowd Juan executes a Black Dahlia on Trey DaMann in the main event, only to see DaMann end up with the win and championship title. Vasquez looks on in disgust and anger, then we flash ahead to the main event of Heaven & Hell now and the war between them.]

DR: And on one cold night in December in Arlington, Texas, just a night removed from a hellacious war with his best friend, it was Juan Vasquez who etched his name into the history books. Redeeming himself in the eyes of the fans and adding another world championship to his resume.

[The footage behind Dave shows as Juan delivers a Stiff Right Cross and then drapes himself over DaMann's body while he cradles his broken hand to win the championship.]

DR: Juan Vasquez, one of few men in the rarified air of being able to claim world titles from three different promotions, and the final man to wear the UWF Title.

[The match graphics return over Dave's shoulder now, back to showing the BoS logo.]

DR: Juan Vasquez. Youth Gone Wild. One time. Coming to you in just a couple of weeks on Pay Per View. Don't miss out on this spectacle, the Battle of Saskatchewan!

[We fade from David Rogers down to ringside in the Wells Fargo Center where Gordon and Bucky are seated.]

GM: Much thanks to our colleague David Rogers for a dive into the history of the two men who will meet on Night 2 of the Battle of Saskatchewan. The UWF returns for one night only with Youth Gone Wild challenging former AWA World Champion Juan Vasquez. Yes, you heard me correctly. Ever since it was announced on Fight Night, the world has been wondering. Yes, Juan Vasquez will be in attendance in Mosaic Stadium to defend the UWF World Title.

[Myers grimaces.]

GM: And to be honest with you, there are a lot of people in that locker room... in that front office... and even at this table who aren't happy about it. After what he put the AWA through in 2016... after the recklessness that could've brought this whole thing crumbling down... there's not many people who are happy about it. But in this business, sometimes you do things that aren't the best for people... but are the best for business. And I am told that this decision... this partnership... is best for business.

[Gordon shrugs.]

GM: And so we look forward to July 22nd and 23 in Regina, Canada... to the Battle of Saskatchewan... to that UWF World Title match between two legendary Hall of Fame competitors... and to the Stampede Cup. Now, in just a few moments, we're going to see two tag teams come down here to compete. Both of those teams are in the tournament. Both of those teams are seeded and advance straight to Night 2. But tonight is not about the Stampede Cup. Tonight is about becoming the Number One Contender to the AWA World Tag Team Titles. That's what we're about to see. That's what's at stake. And that's what this match... on this night... is all about. Rebecca, take it away!

[We fade to the ring where we can hear "Don't Tread On Me" by the Damn Yankees is playing over the PA system as Joe Flint and Charlie Stephens are walking around the ring, barking at the ringside fans while waving their flags.]

RO: The following NUMBER ONE CONTENDER'S MATCH is set for one fall with a thirty minute time limit! Introducing first... already in the ring at this time... weighing in at 522 pounds...

JOE FLINT and CHARLIE STEPHENS...

THE SOLDIERS OF FORRRRRRTUNNNNNNNE!

[Flint shouts at a pair of ringside fans waving a "G.I. JERK!" sign back and forth as the music fades.]

RO: Annnnnnnnnnd their opponents...

[And with that, the lights go down in the arena and cutting blue lasers "drip" from above with a rain like effect as a smoke machine starts jettisoning a white cloud. A crash of thunder and then an electronic-synth beat hits, rising in crescendo and drops...

...into "You're The Best" to a loud cheer from the gathered crowd. Running around comes a barefoot "Cannonball" in his familiar white gi. He snaps out a sidekick and falls into a horse stance. Rising from the gathering fog, right behind him, is Downpour. His masked head is bowed and as his upwards motion tops, he snaps up an arm to the sky, Connors with a "KEEE AIIII!" punch accompanying another crash of thunder.]

RO: At a combined weight of 383 pounds... the team of "Cannonball" Lee Connors and Downpour... THE SHOOTING STARRRRRRRS!

[Downpour is dressed in a full shimmery dark blue body suit, cut through with silver jags. His mask is full face, silver eyes and a full "hair" of silver and black tassels coming from the back and down onto his shoulders. He has similar tassels hanging from his boot tops and wears a paneled "skirt" that looks like water drops of varying sizes. The two pause and then make their way down to the ring, reaching out to exchange claps with fans of all ages.]

GM: The Shooting Stars heading down the ring, set to do battle with the Soldiers of Fortune in this match to determine the Number One Contenders to the World Tag Team Titles... and this should be an outstanding matchup, Bucky.

BW: Both teams have been on a hot streak as of late... both teams looking for that all-important momentum heading into the Stampede Cup tournament at the end of the month.

GM: And of course, both teams have their eyes on the ultimate prize - the World Tag Team Titles that will be on the line in just a short while inside that steel cage hanging above the ring.

[Connors climbs up on the apron, grabbing the top rope and somersaulting over the ropes into the ring with a loud "HAAAA!" Joe Flint menaces him with the flagpole as Connors strikes up a defensive stance.]

GM: Whoa! Look out! This one almost got started right there!

[Downpour steps through the ropes behind Connors, pointing a threatening finger towards Flint...]

GM: But now Downpour's there to get his partner's back...

[Connors turns around to speak to his partner...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

[The crowd collectively gasps as Downpour lashes out with a stiff-fingered thrust to the throat on Connors, sending him coughing to his knees!]

GM: WHAT THE HELL?!

[The AWA faithful is buzzing as Downpour twists around, snapping Connors' head back with a rolling sole butt!]

GM: I don't... what in the world is going on here, fans?! Downpour has... he's stuck the blade right in the back of Lee Connors, his own partner!

[Joe Flint and Charlie Stephens look on in shock as referee Koji Sakai holds them back, looking stunned himself as Downpour puts the boots to Connors on the canvas, stomping him repeatedly!]

GM: Bucky, can you explain this to me?!

BW: Not at all, Gordo. Sometimes when a team splits, you see it coming... you know it's coming... but not this one. I didn't catch a whiff of this one going down at all.

GM: I know that sometimes people have issues off-camera as well so perhaps...

[Downpour pulls Connors up, smashing a spinning back elbow into the cheekbone, sending Connors spiraling away, falling to the mat. The luchador stands over him, staring down at him.]

GM: Downpour viciously and violently has attacked his own partner here tonight in...

[Gordon trails off as we cut to the top of the ramp where someone emerges from the entranceway, a white towel wrapped tightly around their head, running down the ramp in athletic pants with a frayed rope tied around his wrist.]

GM: What in the...?

BW: Who the heck is that, Gordo?!

[The Towel Guy slides headfirst under the bottom rope as Downpour rushes him, swinging a leg up in a superkick...

...but the Towel Guy catches the foot, spinning back to sweep the leg out from under him!]

GM: WHOA!

[As Downpour hits the mat, he rolls quickly under the ropes to the floor, quickly backpedaling up the ramp as the Towel Guy points a threatening finger at him before turning to kneel next to Lee Connors, helping him sit up on the mat.]

GM: I'm... what? What in the world is going on?

[Downpour pauses at the top of the ramp, grabbing at his mask...

...and yanks it off to reveal a grinning Chaz Wallace, throwing the mask aside as Chet comes jogging out to join him, looping an arm over his brother's shoulders, mic in hand.]

GM: What the...?! The Idols?! The Wallaces were behind this?!

BW: Brilliant! Chaz Wallace was dressed up like Downpour and you all fell for it!

GM: "You all?!" You fell for it too!

BW: Nah, I knew all the time!

[Chet Wallace lifts the mic.]

Chet: Sorry for the Trick Or Treating come early, boys... but we needed to get your attention... one... more... time.

[Connors shouts angrily down the ramp.]

Chet: You see... we signed the contracts... we made the deal. We can't face you guys again...

[Chet pauses.]

Chet: ...on an AWA show. But in five days... in South Philly...

[Chaz smirks as his brother laughs.]

Chet: ...that rule doesn't apply!

[Chaz leans towards the mic.]

Chaz: And neither do any other rules! So, boys... I suggest you pack your gear...

[Chaz looks down.]

Chaz: I'll leave this in a safe place for ya, Downie... but pack it up, head down the road, and get ready for the fight of your lives...

Chet: Or maybe we should say... the CLIMB of your lives.

[Cue the high five. Good one, boys.]

Chet: Because at Eternally Extreme, we're challenging the two of you...

[They look at one another dramatically...]

Chet/Chaz: ...TO A STAIRWAY TO HELL MATCH!

[Cue another high five and the Wallaces take their leave, leaving Connors and the barely-dressed Downpour behind to discuss the challenge.]

GM: A shocking scene unfolding here in Philly - a sneak attack by the Wallace twins and apparently a challenge issued for Eternally Extreme in five days' time. So, this Number One Contender's match falls apart before it even goes down... and now we'll see the title showdown between the two teams that the Soldiers and the Shooting Stars were hoping to challenge down the road - the challengers, System Shock, and the champions, Next Gen! Moments ago, our cameras caught up with the challengers - let's hear what they have to say just a few minutes before their steel cage showdown!

[The scene cuts back to backstage area where you can see the Liberty of Death backdrop behind the classic setup of the Steel Cage wall, and standing in between are tonight's Challengers, System Shock. Riley Hunter is still in his Borg-inspired gear, last seen at Fight Night and next to him, "The Future" Derrick Williams, in his System Shock gear.]

DW: And here we go... tonight, in this dump of a city, we end this little experiment. Tonight, Riley and I get back our World Tag Team Titles, and get ready for a nice run into the Stampede Cup, where we win THAT and become the Mooselips Tag Team of the Year.

So no Philadelphia, there'll be no horse punching if Next Gen win, because they won't. And the cage will be up, so save your batteries. Tonight, there's no excuses.

[He shakes the cage in front of him.]

DW: Because this...?

[Riley Hunter speaks up for the first time, also wrapping his fingers inside the steel mesh.]



RH: This is our referee tonight! This is who decides the outcome of this match! You, us, and a half-ton of steel decide who is the best tag team in the world!

[Williams nods, giving the cage a slap.]

DW: Yeah, we're okay with this. After dealing with an "overzealous" enforcer, this works out better for us. No Rumble beforehand, no DQ's, just the four of us stuck in this cage. It wasn't supposed to come to this, guys. You were supposed to be a defense. Step one on a road that ends in Saskatchewan. Now you can call it an excuse but point of fact, one mistake changed everything up.

[Hunter runs his hand along the mesh of the cage.]

RH: Fact, boys: You cannot argue that in every outing we have competed in, Duke and I have wrestled... perfectly. Howie, Daniel... you're good. But you're not... "System Shock good." You're not "Seven Stars" good. You're not "The Future of this sport" good.

[Williams chuckles.]

DW: You said it yourself, Harper... I had you. A better ref, and we aren't even having this conversation right now. But after that correction we thought we would get it all put away. But how does it feel, guys? That you hold those titles not on your own merits, but because some people in this place's way of "looking out for you" is to trash you when they don't get their way. Because in any other match, no ref in the business stops what was going on, and no enforcer interjects themselves in the match as much as Law did. He cost us that match, and you two know it.

[Hunter nods.]

RH: So let's... forget the law, because look what playing by your rules has gotten us. We're out two tag team title belts, fellas, and it's time to collect. And really, we can't let our friends at Mooselips down. Not when they're looking on. Do you think they want Daniel Harper and Howie Somers representing them?

[Williams sneers.]

DW: Little Danny isn't even old enough to drink Mooselips in every state and province.

[Hunter chuckles.]

RH: Don't worry, Howie, I'm sure there will be a call from the makers of Mike's Hard Lemonade in your voicemail after tonight. Duke and I will prove tonight that Next Gen is the Keystone Light of the AWA tag teams.

[Williams leans closer to the mesh, his face nearly touching it.]

DW: Last week, as Harper still struggles to pick himself up off the mat, we showed what we really are. We gave you a reminder of what we are and why we were the most dominant faction in this company. The dominant Faction that should be at the forefront of everyone's thoughts. We sat back and let things play out, and look what it's gotten us. It's time for us to step back into the spotlight.

First, Riley and I take BACK what's ours... we take BACK those Tag Titles. Later, Max puts Ohara out of our misery. Then... then we start running this place again.

[Hunter claps his partner on the shoulder.]

RH: Thank you for keeping the belts clean and polished, fellas. And until we leave you flat on the mat watching us walk up the aisles with those belts, remember this: that ring is Axis country, and to us, it's gold. Good... night... now.

[And we fade away from Hunter and Williams to live footage of Sweet Lou Blackwell backstage standing with the AWA World Tag Team Champions, Next Gen. Howie Somers is to Blackwell's left and he wears a navy blue singlet with the letters "NEXT GEN" printed across the front in white lettering, navy blue kneepads and wrestling boots. To Blackwell's right is Daniel Harper, who wears similar attire, but his singlet, kneepads and boots are white and the singlet has navy blue lettering. Each member of Next Gen has a World Tag Team belt slung over his shoulder.]

SLB: We are moments away from the World Tag Team Title STEEL CAGE bout here at Liberty or Death! Next Gen will be facing the former champions, System Shock. Now, Daniel Harper, two weeks ago, you were on the receiving end of not just Instant Karma, not just the East German Suplex, not just the Future Shock, but all three of those moves in the six-man tag team match at Fight Night. I have to say, after taking all that in succession, some might be surprised you're still standing!

[Harper bites his lip.]

DH: I'm not gonna deny it, Sweet Lou. I'm still feeling a bit sore from taking all that punishment. And all of it goes back to that one moment when I didn't see Maxim Zharkov make the tag. When I didn't pay attention to Derrick Williams coming into the ring as the legal man. When that left me open for The Axis to finish me off.

[He takes a deep breath.]

DH: I may still be standing, Sweet Lou, but there's a part of me that's asking whether I may have let success go to my head. How I thought too much about being one of the youngest wrestlers to win an AWA title. Winning that title after being not just in AWA, but in wrestling, period, for two-and-a-half years.

And now, I have to join my friend and partner in defending these belts inside a steel cage. And that part of me is asking whether I'm up to the task, whether I'm walking right into a situation that favors System Shock. After all, this is no ordinary match -- it's one of the most dangerous matches you can enter.

My mother once told me about how she once wrestled inside a cage and risked it all to win a match. But that same part of me is saying that I'm not ready to do that. That my lack of experience means I'm not willing to take a chance like that, that I may even play not to lose.

[He takes another deep breath.]

DH: Yeah, there's a part of me that believes that.

But you know what?

[That's when we notice a spark in his eyes and he raises his voice.]

DH: There's another part of me that reminded myself that you don't let one setback define you!

System Shock, I am not going to let what went down at Fight Night hold me back! I may be sore, I may be a little rocked, but I've got more than enough inside of me to come back from that, just like I've done it before -- and my partner here, too!

For two-and-a-half years, my friend and I made it our goal to become the AWA World Tag Team Champions! Now that we've achieved it, we're not going to let the belts slip away, even if the situation may favor you!

[He slaps the tag team belt over his shoulder.]

DH: I will not be defined by what happened at Fight Night! No, what will define me, what will define my partner, what will define Next Gen is when we go into one of the most dangerous matches in wrestling and walk out, still the AWA World Tag Team Champions!

[He gesture toward Somers. Blackwell turns to face him.]

SLB: I guess that's Daniel's way of letting you know it's your turn, Howie. Two weeks ago, you talked about confidence, and it sounds like Harper's hasn't wavered. I take it the feeling is mutual?

[Somers gives a quick nod.]

HS: You got that right, Sweet Lou. The confidence is still there, still intact, still tells me that we can come out on top.

I do want to go back to one thing Daniel brought up, though. I did hear some talk in the locker room about people wondering if maybe it was too much, too soon, for somebody as young as he is, and that maybe I would have been better off looking for another partner who wouldn't let his guard down like he did.

But let me remind everyone about a few things, Sweet Lou.

[He turns and points to the camera.]

HS: When Daniel's mother approached me more than two years ago about making her son my tag team partner, there was never a doubt in my mind that her son could handle himself.

When we were still trying to find our place in the tag team ranks, there was never a doubt in my mind that we would find our place, and that I still had the right person by my side.

And when we got jumped by Slaughterhouse before our first-ever shot at the tag team belts, there was never a doubt in my mind that we would get another shot, and I still knew I had the right partner.

[He slaps the belt over his shoulder.]

HS: And after we finally won these belts, I knew I was right to have faith in my friend and partner. Even after that setback at Fight Night, I still have that faith.

Even if System Shock is now riding at an all-time high after the outcome of that six man, I still have the faith that Daniel Harper and I are going to walk out of that steel cage with the tag team belts in our possession.

But let's make one thing clear, System Shock. No matter the outcome, there will be no more excuses. No technicalities about a referee. No complaining about a special enforcer. No looking for a third man to bail you out if things don't go your way.

Instead, the only thing that will matter is that the steel cage, dangerous as it may be, will prove which team is truly worthy of being the AWA World Tag Team Champions.

And I have all the faith in the world that my friend and I are going to be that team.

[He gestures to Harper.]

HS: What was it my sister once said?

[Harper gives a quick smile and points off camera.]

DH: Gentlemen, to the ring!

[Somers smiles back and gives a quick nod, then Next Gen departs the set.]

SLB: Confidence from Next Gen as they are about to enter the cold confines of a steel cage! Can they pull it off? Let's go to ringside and find out!

[We fade from backstage out to the Wells Fargo Center arena bowl where we see a steel cage has been lowered in place over the ring, the referees and officials at ringside scurrying to secure it as Rebecca Ortiz raises the mic in the middle of the ring.]

RO: The following STEEL CAGE MATCH is scheduled for one fall with a sixty minute time limit and is for the AWA WORRRRRRRRLD TAG TEAM CHAMPIONSHIPS!

[Big cheer!]

RO: Introducing first... they are the challengers...

[The music fades as the arena lights go dimmer and glowing dry ice fog pours from around the entrance curtain. The stuttering voice of the AI SHODAN fills the arena as two figures gradually manifest in the fog...]

"How dare you, insect?"

"How dare you interrupt my ascendance?"

"You are nothing."

"A wretched bag of flesh."

"What are you compared to my magnificence?"

[The spotlights turn on the two figures in the entryway:

Riley Hunter, holding a nunchuck in each of his outstretched fists.

Derrick Williams, his forearm held in front of him, the word "AXIS" printed on the sleeve of his satin jacket.

"Those Who Fight Further" by The Black Mages plays over the sound system, and Williams and Hunter swagger their way down the aisle.]

RO: They are the challengers. At a total combined weight of 473 pounds... representing The Axis...

"THE FUTURE" DERRICK WILLIAMS...

"THE AMERICAN NINJA" RILEY HUNTER...

SYSTEMMMMM... SHOCK!

[The boos pour down for the Axis duo as they make their way down the ramp, arrogant smirks all around.]

GM: Former World Tag Team Champions looking to become TWO-TIME World Tag Team Champions if things go their way here tonight.

BW: I got a feeling after what we saw at Fight Night On FOX - this is their night, Gordo!

GM: You're referring to that six man tag team victory that night in New York City. It certainly gave this duo some much needed momentum heading into this steel cage showdown!

[Reaching ringside, Riley Hunter pauses to wrap his fingers in the mesh of the cage, giving it a few hard yanks before nodding to Derrick Williams who quickly climbs the ringsteps, ducking through the ropes into the cage, jogging in place a bit and then jumping up and down.]

GM: Williams perhaps burning off some nervous energy before this one gets underway. This is a high stakes situation for both of these teams.

[Williams and Hunter settle back to their corner, huddling up one more time as Rebecca Ortiz continues.]

RO: Annnnnnnnnnd their opponents...

["Wake Up" by Story of the Year plays over the PA system.]

RO: From Boston, Massachusetts, and El Paso, Texas respectively... at a combined weight of 495 pounds... they are the AWA WORRRRRRRRLD TAG TEAM CHAMPIONSSSSSSS...

HOWIE SOMERS... DANIEL HARPER...

THEY ARE... NEXT! GENNNNNNNNNNNNNN!

[A huge cheer rings out through the Wells Fargo Center as Harper and Somers emerge from the entranceway. Both men are dressed as we saw them moments ago, smiling at the roaring crowd as they make their way down the aisle after exchanging a high five at the top of the ramp.]

GM: And here come the champions of the world, set to do battle with the same men they beat to win these titles... twice now actually.

BW: Only one of those counted, Gordo... and that one was controversial.

GM: What was controversial about it?

BW: I'd rather not say.

GM: Is it John Law you don't want to make angry or Javier Castillo?

BW: No comment.

[Somers and Harper make their way down the aisle towards the cage-enclosed ring, slapping a few hands en route before climbing up the ringsteps, ducking through the ropes to big cheers from the crowd.]

GM: Next Gen has certainly worked their way into the hearts of the AWA faithful and now listen to this ovation for them!

BW: It's great, Gordo. Just fantastic. But it won't mean a thing if they can't hang on to those titles here tonight. Winning them is one thing. Keeping them is quite another.

GM: The belts are handed off to the official... and after some last moment conversations, it looks like it's going to be Riley Hunter starting things off against Daniel Harper...

[Williams and Somers duck out to the apron on both sides of the ring.]

GM: And that makes it a good time to point out that this is not under Tornado Rules. They DO have to tag in and out to compete in this match... and Derrick Williams is already running his mouth in Daniel Harper's direction.

[Harper turns to look at Williams, returning verbal fire as the official steps to the middle and signals...]

"DING! DING! DING!"

[And as the bell sounds, Riley Hunter comes tearing out of the corner like a bull loosed from the chute, his eyes locked on Daniel Harper who is bickering angrily with Derrick Williams, the perfect distraction as Hunter leaps into the air, pumping his leg for his signature attack...]

GM: INSTANT KARMA OUT OF THE GATE!

[...but Harper just BARELY avoids it, sending Hunter CRASHING kneefirst into the turnbuckles! He stumbles backwards off the impact into Daniel Harper who wraps his arms around Hunter's waist, charging him into the buckles chestfirst and then rolling him back into a cradle!]

GM: ROLLING REVERSE CRADLE! HARPER LOOKING FOR THE WIN!

[The count hits once... twice... thr- almost!]

GM: KICKED OFF!

[Harper goes sailing towards his own corner where he leaps up, landing on the midbuckle. He springs off, twisting around to catch a rising Riley Hunter with a crossbody!]

GM: CROSSBODY OFF THE SECOND ROPE!

[Harper snatches a leg as the referee counts...]

GM: ONNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOO! THR-

[Hunter again just barely kicks out in time, obviously thrown off his game by Harper's sudden flurry of offense.]

BW: Harper took a page out of Hunter's aerial tactics arsenal with that crossbody there... and Riley Hunter is reeling early on in this one.

[Both men scramble up off the mat again, looking to get an edge on the other. Harper takes a wild swing at Hunter who ducks under it, throwing a series of rapid-fire palm strikes to the ribcage of Harper, followed by a spinning back elbow that sends him falling into the ropes...]

GM: The action is hot and heavy here in the opening moments of this cage match, both men looking for an early win.

[Hunter grabs Harper by the wrist, looking for an Irish whip...]

GM: Big whip - no, reversed by Harper!

[The whip sends Hunter to the ropes instead. He bounces off towards Harper who ducks down for a backdrop but the approaching Hunter turns his own back, using Harper's doubled-over form as a platform to backflip over him, landing on his feet behind Harper. He promptly goes low, swinging a kick to the back of Harper's legs, sweeping them out from under him...]

GM: Legsweep by Hunter...

[The American Ninja strikes a quick pose before hurling himself into the air, backflipping as he does...]

...and CRASHES down across Harper's chest with a standing Shooting Star Press!]

GM: SHOOTING STAR CONNECTS!

[Harper snatches a leg, cradling it tightly...]

GM: ONNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOO! THR-

[The crowd cheers as Harper's shoulder pops up, breaking free of the tight cradle!]

GM: And a near fall on Harper as well! This one has barely been going a minute and the action is at a frenzied level!

[As Harper comes to his feet, Hunter is waiting to meet him, throwing a backhand blow to the cheekbone that sends Harper stumbling back, falling to a knee. Hunter breaks away, sprinting to the far ropes, rebounding back at high speed...]

GM: Hunter coming off the ropes and-

[The crowd cheers as Harper takes flight, lashing out with both legs...]

GM: Ohhh! What a dropkick by Daniel Harper! He wipes out Riley Hunter with that one!

[Derrick Williams angrily slaps the top turnbuckle, shouting to Hunter who is down on the mat, grabbing at his jaw.]

GM: A tremendous dropkick by Daniel Harper puts Riley Hunter in a bad way early on in this one... and that slows down the frenetic pace immediately.

BW: Hunter's a man of movement... a man of motion. He's the American Ninja but that dropkick stopped him cold.

[Climbing to his feet, Harper takes aim and drops to his knees, DRIVING the point of his elbow down across the chest of Hunter, causing his legs to kick up into the air before Harper applies a lateral press.]

GM: Harper gets one! He gets two! But that's all.

[Harper climbs right to his feet...]

...and then points to his corner where an eager Howie Somers is waiting to get into the match. A big cheer goes up from the crowd as Harper pulls Hunter off the mat into a front facelock, dragging him across the ring to the corner where he slaps his partner's hand.]

GM: There's the tag to Howie Somers, the big man of Next Gen...

[Somers steps in, steps up on the second rope, and then leaps off with a double axehandle across the back of Riley Hunter, putting the smaller man down on the canvas.]

GM: Simple but effective right there... and it's not often you see Somers leave his feet, fans. He's definitely not a high flying type of competitor.

BW: He jumped off the second rope there, Gordo. He's not breaking any high jump records.

GM: What I mean is that when he DOES do it, you can expect it to be impactful - like that devastating slingshot splash they used to win the titles.

BW: A move that is completely negated by this steel cage. They cannot do that slingshot in this environment so if they hope to retain the titles, they're going to need a different tactic.

GM: Howie Somers, six foot five... 265 pounds... out of Boston, Mass is looking to do some early damage here to the Seven Star Athlete... maybe take some of the wind out of him.

[Somers helps Hunter up to his feet, throwing a big right hand aimed at the midsection that lifts Hunter up off the mat before he flops back down onto his knees.]

GM: Down goes Hunter again. Everything Somers does in there comes with so much "oomph"... so much impact.

BW: "Oomph", huh? Is that a technical term? He ain't the best play by play man on the planet for nothing, fans.

[Gordon chuckles as Hunter gets to his feet. Somers grabs him by the hair, winding up to deliver an overhead elbowsmash down between the eyes, again knocking Hunter off his feet and down on the canvas.]

GM: Down goes Hunter again... and this match has not started off the way that System Shock was hoping, Bucky.

BW: Absolutely not. You saw the gameplan. Williams distracted Harper and Hunter went for the killshot at the bell. If he'd hit that Instant Karma, there's a decent chance we'd have new World Tag Team Champions right now.

[We cut out to seats beyond the railing to a well-dressed group of businessmen.]

GM: And there's a decent chance that System Shock would be the official spokepeople for Mooselips Beer. Some of our great sponsors joining us here tonight in Philadelphia just a few weeks before the Battle of Saskatchewan brought to you by Mooselips Beer and Tourism Saskatchewan. Remember, fans... they're looking for the best tag team in the world to help promote their beer and this match could go a long way to determining who earns that gig.

BW: And those lovely sponsorship paychecks. Hey, they pay in American money, right?



GM: I have no idea and as Somers continues to pound on Riley Hunter... he pushes him back into the corner... and there's another tag to Daniel Harper.

[Harper steps back in, joining his partner in throwing a pair of boots to the gut of Hunter, causing him to slide down to a knee near the buckles.]

GM: Daniel Harper, the very rare fourth-generation competitor, has got Hunter, pulling him out to the middle of the ring now...

[Harper snags a front facelock, looking to take Hunter over with a suplex...]

GM: Suplex coming up... lifts him up and- no! Hunter slips out over the top!

[Behind Harper, Hunter reaches around, snatching the wrist, yanking him out for a ripcord...]

"GET OVER-"

[...and pulls Harper towards him who SMASHES a European uppercut into the underside of Hunter's jaw, cutting off his Harpoon Instant Karma!]

GM: A second attempt at the Instant Karma by Hunter gets stopped short... and look at this now!

[With Hunter stunned, Harper snares a cobra clutch...]

GM: And now it's Harper looking to make a major impact just about five minutes into this match!

BW: We've seen the cobra clutch suplex out of him before, Gordo! It's devastating!

GM: Can he get it here?!

[But just before Harper fully secures the hold, Hunter snaps an elbow back into the side of the head to halt him. A second one breaks Hunter free as he dashes straight ahead to the ropes, ducking a clothesline on the rebound so he can come off again with more speed...]

GM: Hunter off the ropes... INTO THE AIR WITH A TAKEDOWN!

[The rana takedown gets a cheer from a portion of the Philly crowd as Hunter scrambles up off the mat, trying to take advantage before Harper recovers.]

GM: Harper back up... ohh! Running big boot to the chest!

[The blow sends Harper back into the corner where Derrick Williams quickly goes to secure him, wrapping an arm around the torso as Hunter barrels in against, burying his shoulder into Harper's midsection...]

GM: Ohh! And Hunter goes downstairs on the champion! Come on, ref! Get him to let go of-

BW: There are no disqualifications in a cage match, Gordo! Williams can hang onto him as long as he wants!

[The crowd ROARS!]

GM: Or as long as Howie Somers will let him!

[The crowd cheers as Somers storms the ring, running past the referee to DRILL Williams with a running haymakers that knocks Williams into the mesh and down to the apron. He turns and BLASTS an incoming Riley Hunter as well, sending him ass over teakettle across the ring...]

GM: SOMERS IS TAKING OUT SYSTEM SHOCK!

[But before he can go further, referee Pete "Blue Shoes" Miller steps in, waving his arms, trying to force Somers to go back to his corner to jeers from the AWA faithful.]

GM: There are no disqualifications - that much is true - but it looks like Pete Miller is going to try to keep some order in this one and not let it turn into Pier Six brawl!

[Somers angrily stomps across the ring back to his corner as Derrick Williams grabs Harper from out on the apron...

...and Harper SMASHES him with a right hand to the jaw!]

GM: OH! What a shot by Harper!

[Harper shakes his hand angrily as he glares down at Williams...

...and has no idea that Riley Hunter is coming quickly from behind, leaping into the air, lacing his leg over the back of Harper's neck, and riding him down facefirst into the canvas!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

BW: Harper got distracted by Derrick Williams and Riley Hunter makes him pay for it, daddy! You gotta love the teamwork of System Shock!

GM: Williams and Hunter held those titles for a little over three months and are looking to get them back here in Philly before BOTH of these teams head to Mosaic Stadium at the end of the month for the Battle of Saskatchewan and the Stampede Cup.

BW: Both of them are seeded teams too, we learned this week, so they'll both advance to the second round on Night 2... heck, they could square off there again, Gordo. Wouldn't that be something?

GM: One of the hottest tag team rivalries in recent memory here in the AWA... and Hunter makes the tag to Williams for the first time.

["The Future" comes through the ropes, immediately stomping Harper a few times as he rubs at his jaw where Harper drilled him.]

GM: And with Harper down from that... whatever you call it... this one has completed shifted in System Shock's direction.

[Williams pulls Harper up to his feet, shoving him back into the System Shock corner. He leans over, grabbing the middle rope, repeatedly slamming his shoulder into the midsection of one-half of the World Tag Team Champions!]

GM: And now it's Williams who is driving his 270 pound frame into the ribs of Harper, trying to take some of the juice out of the young man from El Paso, Texas...

[Williams reaches out, slapping Hunter's hand.]

GM: Quick tag to Riley Hunter...

[Hunter and Williams each grab an arm on Harper, pulling him out of the corner and then throwing him violently back in!]

GM: Ohh! That'll shake you from follicle to fingertip!

[Hunter snatches a single underhook, flinging Harper up and over to the canvas, floating over into a pin attempt.]

GM: And you can see System Shock is wasting no time tonight, getting another two count there.

BW: The titles are on the line, Gordo - and a lot of people are saying this could be the final title showdown between these two teams. If it is, the stakes are higher than ever... especially with those Mooselips suits out at ringside waiting to see who comes out on top of this.

GM: It was Mooselips, you may recall, who requested this matchup under these steel cage rules to determine a clear winner. They have a vested interest in seeing who comes out on top in this one.

[Hunter, back on his feet, pulls Harper up to join him and whips him the short distance to the corner before charging in, leaping up, and snapping his foot off the back of Harper's head!]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"  
"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: ENZUIGIRI ON TARGET! DOWN GOES HARPER AGAIN!

[A smirking Hunter gets up, slapping his partner's hand. Williams steps through, eyeballing a kneeling Harper...]

GM: Williams on the attack... grabbing Harper by the hair... ohh! Hard elbowstrike to the ear area! And another! And a third!

[Harper is dazed and down on his knees as Williams tees off, turning to look across the ring at Howie Somers who shouts several times, slamming his hands down on the turnbuckle as he encourages his partner.]

GM: Derrick Williams throwing a look at Howie Somers...

BW: No time to get distracted, kid. Let Somers make all the noise he wants, you keep your eye on the prize.

[Williams yanks Harper up to his feet, grabbing a handful of hair...]

"WATCH THIS, SOMERS!"

[...and Williams runs across the ring, dragging Harper with him...]

"CLAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAANG!"  
"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[Somers grimaces as Harper goes sailing into the air, his head SMASHING into the side of the cage!]

GM: OHH! HEADFIRST TO THE STEEL CAGE!

[Harper collapses facefirst to the canvas, arms covering up over his head as the arrogant Future looks across at Howie Somers whose face is covered with concern for his fallen partner.]

GM: Howie Somers looking on... obviously worried for his friend...

BW: And his title.

GM: He wouldn't be in the AWA if he wasn't worried about losing those prestigious World Tag Team Titles, Bucky.

[Somers again shouts to his partner as Williams smirks, leaning down to drag Harper up off the canvas again. He points to the opposite side of the cage, throwing another look at Somers before charging in...]

"CLAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAANG!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: HARPER MEETS STEEL AGAIN!

[And again, Harper collapses in a heap on the canvas, arms over his head as the Philly crowd gets on the case of Derrick Williams who walks slowly around the downed Harper as the referee checks on him...]

GM: Two times Daniel Harper hits the wall of this steel cage - his face slamming into that unforgiving skin-tearing metal...

[Williams shouts "GET UP!" at the downed Harper as the Texas native slides his arms under him, rolling over onto his back and...]

GM: Oh jeez.

BW: He's been split like a dinner check!

[The Philly crowd is also split by the sight of blood... many in the building actually cheering the sight of the crimson flowing down the skull of the champion.]

GM: Daniel Harper has been busted wide open, fans! The blood is flowing inside the cage here in Philly!

BW: Who needs Chris Blue?! We're already going to the extreme!

[Williams kneels down on Harper, grabbing a handful of hair as he draws his fist back...]

GM: Right hand! Driving those knuckles into that cut forehead, trying to split that wound open even more!

[Williams smashes his fist home a second time!]

GM: Another one! Right into the forehead again! The blood is really starting to come down now!

BW: And that wound is right above the eye, Gordo. That blood is going to run right into the eye and... well, it'll sting like hell most of all but it definitely will obscure Harper's vision. And you know what they say - if a man can't see, he can't fight.

[Williams lands a third punch before the referee demands that he break off his attack. The Future climbs to his feet, checking out the blood on his own knuckles as the referee kneels down to check on Harper's condition.]

GM: Pete Miller taking a look at that cut. Making sure he doesn't have to stop this thing.

BW: If he does, System Shock regains the titles, right?

GM: If he chooses to stop it because Harper can't defend himself, then yes.

[Miller comes away, waving for the match to continue and continue it does as Williams rushes forward and stomps Harper in the forehead before he can get off the mat.]

GM: Harper put right back down by Williams...

[Williams leans over, slapping the hand of Riley Hunter.]

GM: And in comes the American Ninja once more...

[Hunter dashes to the ropes as Williams takes up a spot near the downed Harper, pushing his own partner up into the air on the rebound...

...and sending him right down into a flying splash on the prone Harper!]

GM: Ohhh! Nice doubleteam by the challengers... and now it's Hunter with a cover on Harper for one... he's got two... he's got-

[Harper lifts the shoulder off the mat, earning cheers from the crowd as Hunter pushes to his knees, glaring down at the bloodied Harper.]

GM: The Seven Star Athlete is up on his feet now, pulling Harper up with him...

[Glowering at his opponent, Hunter pushes him up against the middle of the ropes. He squares up, throwing a pair of overhand chops followed by a Mongolian chop to both sides of the neck...]

GM: Hunter going to work on the ropes...

[Breaking to his left, Hunter hits the adjacent ropes, rebounding back with a running elbowstrike that spins Harper to the side, facing Hunter as he hits the far ropes, coming back again...

...running past Harper as he leaps up, snatching the head and neck, and DRIVES him down with a flying neckbreaker!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: A series of devastating strikes by Hunter tied into a bow with that neckbreaker!

BW: And now you may start to see the strategy I expected tonight.

GM: What's that?

BW: Harper took three devastating blows to the neck at Fight Night, Gordo. He took Zharkov's German Suplex. He took Hunter's Instant Karma which can have a whiplash-like effect. And he took Williams' Future Shock... all in a row. I'm surprised he's walking right now but that HAD to have an effect on his neck, Gordo. It HAD to!

GM: You could be right about that. Daniel Harper did undergo some physical therapy this week, I'm told. It was a truly devastating series of moves by the Axis

en route to their win over Next Gen and Jordan Ohara - the very men they're facing here tonight in Philadelphia.

[Hunter watches as Harper rolls out to mid-ring, down on his chest. The Seven Star Athlete hits the ropes, rebounding off with a quick, snap legdrop across the back of the neck. He pops up, hitting the ropes a second time and repeating the move...]

GM: Back to back legdrops by Hunter, two hard shots to the neck like you were saying, Bucky...

[...and as he rebounds a third time, Hunter throws himself into a front flip, landing HARD on the back of the neck!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[Hunter smirks as he flips Harper onto his back, lunging across for a lateral press.]

GM: Hunter makes another cover - he gets one! He gets two! He gets- no! Harper gets the shoulder up.

[Hunter gets to his feet, hands on his hips as he looks angrily down at the bloodied Harper.]

GM: Riley Hunter took aim at the back of the neck and hit some very hard shots there... and now he makes the tag to bring Derrick Williams back into the mix.

[Williams steps through the ropes, gesturing to Hunter who nods, dragging Harper up off the mat. Hunter whips Harper to the ropes, burying a spinning back kick into the midsection to double him up...

...and Derrick Williams sends him flying with a running kneelift!]

GM: OHHH! Nice combination teamwork by System Shock... but there will be no cover by Williams who drops an elbow down on the throat... and another...

[He climbs off the mat, swinging his arms around, and drops a third down on the chest, rolling into a lateral press without bothering to hook a leg.]

GM: Williams covers... and another two count for System Shock. Daniel Harper continues to stay in this match despite going through a lot of punishment inside this punishing steel cage.

[Williams climbs to his feet, again throwing a look at Howie Somers who continues to cheer on his partner despite Harper's current bloodied status. The Future leans down, dragging Harper to his feet...

...and then breaks to the ropes behind Harper, coming back strong and FLATTENING him with a clothesline to the back of the head and neck!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: You want to talk about working the neck of an opponent - goodness!

[Williams locks eyes with Somers before dropping to his knees, flipping Harper to his back again...]

GM: Another pin attempt by Williams...

BW: Man, I wish this kid would hook a leg sometimes.

GM: Harper's out at two again... and you're right, Bucky.

BW: I don't know if he'd have gotten him by hooking the leg but I know he stood no chance without doing it.

[Williams again grabs Harper by the head, rearing back and throwing two big right hands to the cut forehead as blood continues to flow down the face of the young man from El Paso, Texas.]

GM: Daniel Harper all of 21 years old in there... battling to survive against two very tough competitors and a very stiff challenge to the World Tag Team Titles that Next Gen has held for only about a month now. And I'm being told we're approaching the fifteen minute mark of this one hour time limit. Plenty of time left for these two teams to battle to a conclusion.

[Climbing back to his feet, the Future grabs Harper by the arm...

...and WHIPS him strongly into the neutral corner where Harper's back SLAMS into the turnbuckles before he slumps down to the canvas, leaning against the corner!]

GM: Powerful whip by Derrick Williams. You don't traditionally think of Williams as a power-based competitor, fans... but he's actually the heaviest man in this match at 270 pounds.

[With the bloodied Harper seated in the corner, Williams grabs the top rope, pressing his boot against Harper's face, shoving his upper body through the ropes and pressing Harper's face up against the steel mesh!]

GM: Oh, come on!

BW: Like we said, Gordo - no disqualifications in this one.

GM: He's pressing his face into that skin-tearing metal! The man is already busted open - what more does Williams want?!

[Hanging onto the top rope, Williams puts his boot against Hunter's face with a loud "THIS ONE'S FOR YOU, EL CHOLO!"...

...and RAKES his boot across the face, driving the skin into the steel mesh as the crowd groans!]

GM: BOOTSCRAPE INTO THE STEEL!

[Williams hangs on as Somers shouts across the ring at him, the Future SCRAPING skin on metal again with a second bootscape!]

GM: This is getting hard to watch, fans!

[With Harper's blood now dripping from the mesh, Williams leans over the ropes, taunting the ringside fans...

...and does a third bootscape, leaving the bloodied Harper motionless against the steel as Williams breaks away, running to the far ropes, rebounding back...]

GM: Williams to the ropes and-

[The 270 pounder leaves his feet, swinging them up between the ropes with a dropkick into the side of Harper's head that SLAMS his face violently into the mesh

yet again as Pete "Blue Shoes" Miller grabs his head with both hands, looking on in horror!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: GOOD GRIEF!

[Williams grabs Harper by the ankle, dragging him back out into the ring. He settles into a quick lateral press, again not bothering with a leg hook as the referee drops down to count...]

GM: ONNNNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOOO! TH-

[But Harper's shoulder just BARELY pops up off the canvas in time as Williams angrily hammers a fist down into the mat, glaring at Miller who holds up two fingers.]

GM: Two count only - a very near fall there as Harper's been put through the proverbial wringer by System Shock - but a two count nonetheless.

BW: Harper's a bloody mess right now, Gordo. He looks like a victim from pick your favorite slasher flick.

[Williams climbs to his feet, turning towards Howie Somers who is now shaking the cage, shouting "HAR-PER! HAR-PER!" as the crowd chants along with him. The Future flashes signs of annoyance at the ruckus as he turns back to Harper, dragging him back up to his feet.]

GM: Williams trying to find a way to finish off Daniel Harper and secure the World Tag Team Titles for he and Riley Hunter...

[He again turns to look at Somers, pointing at him this time as he leaps up, snatching the three-quarter nelson on Harper...]

...who tiredly shoves Williams into the air, causing him to CRASH down on his back to cheers from the Philly crowd!]

GM: HARPER SHOVES HIM OFF! WILLIAMS WENT FOR THE FUTURE SHOCK AND HARPER SHOVED HIM OFF!

[Harper collapses to his knees as Williams writhes in pain on the canvas, Riley Hunter looking on in disbelief.]

GM: We've got bodies down in the ring and Howie Somers is beside himself waiting for that tag!

[Somers steps up on the middle rope, bouncing up and down and shouting at his partner!]

GM: Somers is BEGGING for that tag! Harper on his hands and knees, starting the long crawl across the ring... can he get there before Williams gets to his feet and stops him?

[The crowd is ROARING now, urging Daniel Harper to get across the ring as Williams sits up on the mat, cradling his lower back as Riley Hunter screams at him to intervene.]

GM: Harper's on the move and you can hear Riley Hunter shouting a warning to Derrick Williams! He wants him to cut off Harper before he can get to Somers.



BW: He's right next to you, kid! Just roll over!

[And that's exactly what Williams does, rolling to his side and grabbing the ankle of Daniel Harper, trying to prevent him from getting to his corner. Somers is hanging onto the tag rope, stretching out his hand as far as he can as Harper struggles to get free from Williams, just out of his partner's reach!]

GM: Harper's trying to get there but Williams is trying to stop him! Derrick Williams is hanging onto that leg for dear life and- oh! Harper with a hard kick to the mouth! And another!

[The crowd cheers as Harper kicks away with his free leg, trying to battle his way loose of Williams' grasp...]

GM: Harper's so close, fans! He's so close to making that tag and-

[Instead though, Williams traps Harper's leg between his own, leaning back long and far and...]

GM: There's a tag but it's on the wrong side for Next Gen!

[Riley Hunter slips through the ropes, rushing across the ring, leaping into the air...

...and SMASHES a forearm into the jaw of Howie Somers!]

GM: OHH! COME ON!

[Somers comes storming through the ropes but the referee quickly cuts him off...

...which allows Hunter to pull his partner to his feet just before the duo each grab a leg on Harper, dragging him back across the ring to jeers from the AWA faithful!]

GM: And just like that, Hunter and Williams pull Daniel Harper back across the ring, all the way as far as you can get from his corner where Howie Somers is angrily trying to get in there.

BW: The big goof lost his cool and it cost him... and Harper! And it could cost them the titles too, Gordo!

GM: It certainly could. Emotions are running very high in this one. We've mentioned how high the stakes are. The Tag Team Titles. The promotional deal with Mooselips Beer with all those executives down at ringside. Perhaps the final clash between these two teams with the titles on the line.

[With the referee still dealing with Howie Somers, Williams and Hunter pull Harper to his feet. Hunter grabs him by the arm, pulling him into a double chickenwing as he steps out towards the middle of the ring as Williams takes aim...]

GM: Get Williams out of there, ref!

[Turning back towards the action, Blue Shoes immediately starts shouting to get Williams out of the ring but instead, the Future goes into a spin, arm cocked and ready...]

GM: ROLLING ELBO-

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: HE MISSED! HE MISSED! WILLIAMS CLOCKS HIS OWN PARTNER!

[A shocked Williams gets ushered out of the ring by Blue Shoes as Hunter goes down in a heap and Harper spins, falling to his knees on the mat, crawling across the ring towards a waiting Somers who has his arm stretched as far as he can...]

GM: Harper's crawling on his hands and knees, looking to get that tag...

BW: Hunter went down like a ROCK after that rolling elbow!

GM: He's down but not out... and Daniel Harper's got a window of opportunity here to get to his corner, make that tag, and unleash Howie Somers on both Hunter AND Williams!

BW: But can he get there?!

GM: Harper's trying! The kid is trying! These fans are behind him and Daniel Harper is giving his all to get across that ring and make that tag!

[The crowd is absolutely roaring now, on their feet urging Harper forward as the bloodied Texan tries to get to his eagerly waiting partner whose fingers are wiggling with anticipation as he extends his arm as far as it'll humanly go...]

GM: So close now! Just a few more inches! The kid's almost there! He's almost-

[The crowd EXPLODES at the sight of Harper slapping Somers' outstretched hand!]

GM: TAG!

[Somers comes tearing through the ropes, sprinting across the ring towards Derrick Williams who is coming back in...

...and runs him right down with a clothesline!]

GM: CLOTHESLINE ON WILLIAMS!

[Williams rolls under the ropes next to the cage as Somers turns his focus back to Riley Hunter who is trying to struggle off the mat after the accidental rolling elbow that caught him flush!]

GM: Somers is dragging Hunter up off the mat and-

[Somers sprints towards one side of the cage, dragging Hunter with him...]

"CLAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAANG!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[...and HURLS him facefirst into the steel mesh!]

GM: THE SEVEN STAR ATHLETE HITS THE STEEL!

[Hunter bounces off, staggering back towards Somers who whips around, charging the opposite direction...]

"CLAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAANG!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[...and CHUCKS the American Ninja into the opposite wall of the cage!]

GM: AGAIN! AGAIN HE GOES INTO THE STEEL! OH MY!

[Hunter bounces back towards Somers again who pivots, pointing to a third side of the cage to a huge cheer...]

"CLAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAANG!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: THREE IN A ROW FOR RILEY HUNTER!

[As Hunter bounces back again, Somers scoops him up, slinging him over his shoulder...]

GM: What's this now?

[With a loud "DOOOOOOOOOO!", Somers races towards the fourth wall of the cage and HURLS Hunter into the side of it headfirst!]

"CLAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAANG!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: LIKE A HUMAN LAWN DART, HUNTER GOES SKULLFIRST INTO THE CAGE!

[Hunter goes falling backwards, flailing his arms as he crashes down to the mat, arms over his head...]

GM: HOWIE SOMERS HAS TAKEN RILEY HUNTER TO THE WOODSHED HERE IN PHILADELPHIA!

[Somers lets loose a roar, looking out at the cheering crowd.]

GM: Somers is on fire, Bucky!

BW: He needs to stay on Hunter though! He's got him in trouble and- oh god, no.

[The crowd "ohhhhhhhs" at the sight of a massive laceration on the forehead of the Seven Star Athlete!]

GM: Oh my stars... Riley Hunter has been BADLY busted open here in the cage! He's bleeding profusely and-

[A fired-up Somers grabs Hunter under the armpits, lifting him into the air, and HURLING him into the neutral corner!]

GM: SOMERS PUTS HIM IN THE CORNER!

[Leaning over, Somers grabs the middle rope, laying in some heavy shoulder tackles to the body of Hunter...]

...and then steps up to the midbuckle, raising his fist into the air!]

GM: SOMERS ON THE MIDDLE ROPE!

[And he starts raining down blows, the crowd starts to count along.]

"ONE!"

"TWO!"

"THREE!"

"FOUR!"

"FIVE!"

"SIX!"

"SEVEN!"

"EIGHT!"  
"NINE!"  
"TEN!"

[Somers hops down from the middle rope, blood streaming down the head of Riley Hunter as Somers grabs him by the arm, whipping him from one corner to the other where Hunter SLAMS into the buckles, stumbling back out as Somers scoops him up into his powerful arms...

...and DRIVES him straight down into the canvas with a powerslam!]

GM: POWERSLAM! THAT COULD DO IT RIGHT THERE!

[The referee dives to the mat to count.]

GM: ONNNNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOOO! THR-

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[A running STOMP to the back of the head by Derrick Williams breaks up the pin attempt JUST in time!]

GM: OHH! WILLIAMS MAKES THE SAVE!

[Ignoring the protesting referee, Williams pulls Somers off the mat, opening up with a series of elbow strikes, battering Somers back across the ring to the ropes while the bloodied Harper and Hunter are down on the mat.]

GM: Williams whips him across... clothesline ducked by Somers...

[Somers hits the far ropes, rebounding back, and leaves his feet...]

GM: FLYING TACKLE FLOORS THE FUTURE!

[Somers pops up, throwing his arms apart with a massive roar as he looks out on the cheering fans.]

GM: Somers has dropped System Shock all around this ring!

[Somers pulls Williams back off the mat, whipping him across the ring as a bloodied and dazed Daniel Harper get to his feet, leaning against the buckles.]

GM: Williams hits the corner... Harper coming over to help his partner...

[Harper grabs Somers by the arm, falling to his knee from the effort of an Irish whip that sends Somers barreling across the ring, driving a thunderous shoulder into the midsection of the cornered Williams!]

GM: BIG SHOT DOWNSTAIRS BY NEXT GEN!

[Somers pulls Williams from the corner, snatching a front facelock as Harper does the same...]

GM: AND A DOUBLE SUPLEX BY THE CHAMPIONS!

[Somers gets up to his feet quickly, looking around at the cheering crowd as a bloodied Harper rises a little slower, gesturing to the downed Hunter.]

GM: And now Next Gen is turning their attention to Riley Hunter!

BW: Hunter's the legal man, Gordo. This is a smart move.

GM: Absolutely. Stay on the legal man. Get the win. Keep the titles.

[Somers pulls Hunter off the mat, Harper standing guard protectively as he keeps an eye on Williams. Somers walks out towards the middle of the ring, reaching his hands under Hunter's armpits...]

GM: Look out here! We've seen this powerbomb out of Somers before!

[...and lifts Hunter skyhigh, spinning him around in mid-lift...]

GM: POWERBOM-

[...but he lifts him a little too high, allowing Hunter to slip his legs around Somers' head, flipping back and tossing him down with a rana!]

GM: OHH! What a counter out of Hunter!

[The bloodied Hunter climbs up off the mat, wiping the blood from his eyes as Somers stirs a few feet away...]

...and then rushes forward, DRIVING a running boot into the chest, sending Somers flying backwards towards the ropes, bouncing back off towards Hunter who leaps into the air, pumping his knee...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: INSTANT KARMA!

[Daniel Harper, who is now in the corner, cringes from the impact of the blow as Somers collapses backwards, falling against the cage. Hunter holds up his hands, measuring Harper...]

...and then turns away, breaking to the ropes, bouncing back with speed...]

GM: INNNNNNSTANNNT KARRRRMAAAAAA!

[...but Somers yanks himself clear as Hunter leaps late, looking for maximum impact...]

"CLAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAANG!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: INTO THE CAGE! INTO THE STEEL MESH!

[Hunter cries out in pain, falling back as he grabs at his leg...]

...and Somers grabs him by the head, steadying him...]

GM: LARRRRIAAAATOOOOOO!

[But the American Ninja leans back far, causing Somers to whiff on the lariat over him, stumbling away as Hunter gives his knee a quick shake...]

[The standing lariat FLIPS the bloodied Hunter inside out, dumping him down on the canvas.]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"  
"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: INSTANT KARMA! AGAIN!

[Hunter immediately drops to a knee, crying out as he grabs at his leg and Somers falls backwards towards his corner where the bloodied Daniel Harper tags his way in!]

GM: Harper's back in!

[Harper comes in quick and kicks Hunter in the back of the knee, taking him down to the canvas!]

GM: And he's wasting no time at all in going after that knee that Hunter injured by driving it into the steel!

[With Hunter prone on the mat, Harper grabs the leg, stepping firmly to the mat and then bending the leg over Harper's own leg!]

GM: STEPOVER TOEHOLD!

BW: Wow! When's the last time you've seen that, Gordo?!

GM: I have no idea but from the sound of Riley Hunter, Harper's got it expertly applied in the middle of this cage in Philly!

[Hunter's screams of pain fill the air as Harper tries to force a submission out of him.]

GM: Harper's got that hold locked in and-

[Again, the crowd jeers as Derrick Williams charges in, smashing an elbow across the back of Harper's head, knocking him down and out of the hold!]

GM: And Williams saves the titles again! Derrick Williams saving his partner and... and the Future's ignoring the referee! Pete Miller trying to get him out of there but Williams is having no part of it!

[Williams pulls the bloodied Harper off the mat, leaning back into the ropes, going into a spin...]

GM: ROLLING ELB-

[But Harper manages to avoid it, catching Williams as he goes by...]

GM: COBRA CLUTCH...

[...and DUMPS Williams on the back of his head with a Cobra Clutch suplex!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: GOOD GOD ALMIGHTY! HARPER LAYS OUT WILLIAMS WITH THAT SUPLEX...

[The bloodied Harper turns away from Williams...

...and locks his eyes on the equally-bloodied Hunter, staring across the ring at him.]

GM: And here we go! Somers is down and hurt! Williams is down and hurt! We're down to Harper and Hunter and-

[Hunter shakes his head, begging for mercy as Harper steps towards him, fists balled up and ready to go...]

GM: Riley Hunter wants no part of Daniel Harper when he's like this! We've seen Harper's temper get the better of him before and-

[Hunter backs as far as he can...

...and bumps up against the turnbuckles, his eyes going wide as Harper keeps coming towards him!]

GM: Harper's got him trapped!

BW: Hunter's gotta do something, Gordo!

[Hunter twists around, grimacing as he hops up on the middle rope, trying to avoid putting a lot of pressure on the other leg. Harper keeps walking towards him as Hunter pulls on the mesh of the cage, dragging himself to the top turnbuckle...]

GM: Hunter's up top! He's having a hard time climbing with that bad knee but... wait a second!

BW: He's not done climbing, Gordo! He's still going!

[The crowd is buzzing as Hunter continues his climb, using his impressive upper body strength to drag his bodyweight up the side of the cage, trying to get out of Harper's reach...]

GM: Hunter, the former competitor on the American Ninja Warrior show, may be having flashbacks right about now as he uses that grip strength... the power in the forearms... the biceps... the triceps, literally dragging himself up the side of the steel cage!

[Harper reaches the corner, making a lunge for Hunter's foot but Hunter pulls it just out of reach as he does. The American Ninja keeps on pulling, dragging himself higher up the wall of the cage as Harper attempts to get his hands on him.]

GM: Harper's trying to get him but Hunter's too far up there and... oh no... oh no, don't do this!

[The crowd gets louder as Daniel Harper decides to pursue Hunter up the side of the cage, climbing the turnbuckles as Hunter gets closer to the top of the cage where the mesh gives way to a large metal support structure that was used to lower the cage from the ceiling.]

GM: Hunter's almost to the top of the cage and... now Daniel Harper is climbing this cage after him!

BW: Both of their partners are still down too, Gordo. This is the match!

GM: These are the legal men anyways, Bucky... so this is the match at the moment like you said.

[Harper gets to the top turnbuckle, taking a look up at Hunter who is sitting on the top of the support structure, steadying himself as he tries to catch a second wind.]

GM: Hunter's way up there now... and fans, this is NOT the usual gameplan for Daniel Harper. He is NOT a high flyer. He is NOT the guy who is on the top rope for

his team - neither of them are... but Daniel Harper's got an opportunity to finish this match for his team and damn it, he's gonna take it!

BW: You mean, he is not throwing away his shot?

GM: You got that right!

[Harper slips his fingers into the mesh of the cage and starts climbing up after Hunter who looks down in disbelief... ]

GM: Harper's climbing the cage! Hunter's up there in shock! He thought for sure he'd gotten away from Daniel Harper by going up there and-

[Halfway up the cage, Harper makes a grab for Hunter's dangling foot but Hunter pulls it away, moving swiftly into a standing position on top of the support structure, looking down on Harper...

...and then looks down into the ring where Howie Somers and Derrick Williams are both up, trading heavy blows in the middle of the ring!]

GM: Somers and Williams are up! Big elbow by Williams! Somers returns fire! These two are beating the hell out of each other, fans!

[The Philly fans are roaring for a total throwdown of fists that breaks out!]

GM: They came to see pro wrestling here in Philly and a hockey fight just broke out!

[Somers rocks and fires, landing a big right... and another... and another...]

GM: Somers has him on his heels and-

[Williams reaches out, raking the eyes of Somers!]

GM: OHH! RIGHT TO THE EYES!

[The Future smirks, twisting around, leaping into the air, snatching the three-quarter nelson...

...but the powerful Somers HOLDS WILLIAMS IN THE AIR!]

GM: WHAT THE-?!

BW: HE BLOCKED THE FUTURE SHOCK! SOMERS WITH THE POWER!

[The crowd is ROARING for the show of strength, Williams' eyes wide at the block of his signature move...

...and Somers suddenly rushes forward, still holding Williams aloft..]

"CLAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAANG!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[...and HURLS Williams into the side of the cage, causing it to shift violently at the impact which causes Harper to cling to the cage for dear life...

And as far as Riley Hunter goes...]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"



[..he loses his balance, landing crotchfirst on the top of the cage, his leg slipping through the metal support structure...

...and he flops backwards, dangling dangerously from the top of the cage, his leg twisted violently!]

GM: AHHH!

BW: HIS KNEE! RILEY'S KNEE!

[Hunter is SCREAMING in pain, grabbing at his knee as he hangs backwards off the top of the cage, dangling down near Daniel Harper who keeps on climbing as Howie Somers approaches Hunter, grabbing him by his blood-soaked hair, pulling him away from the cage...]

BW: NO! NO!

"CLAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAANG!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: THE BACK OF HUNTER'S HEAD GETS BOUNCED OFF THE STEEL!

[Somers smiles, pulling Hunter away from the cage again..]

"CLAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAANG!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: OFF THE CAGE A SECOND TIME!

[Hunter's arms fall straight down, hanging limply as his knee is twisted grotesquely up towards the top of the cage where Daniel Harper has finished climbing, leaning down as Somers shoves Hunter towards him...]

GM: Harper's pulling him up! He's pulling him up on the top of the cage! Hunter is bloodied! He's barely able to stand! Harper's got him on the top of the cage and...

[The crowd audibly gasps collectively as Harper pulls him into a front facelock, slinging Hunter's arm over his neck...]

GM: No, no, no, no!

BW: Gordo, this kind of craziness runs in the family!

GM: It truly does! Fans, many years ago, Stephanie Harper was in a cage match where she famously risked it all - coming off the top of the cage with her finisher on her opponent to get the win! Could history be about to repeat itself?

BW: Like mother, like son!

[Somers shakes his head up at Harper, shouting at him to not do whatever he's thinking of doing as Harper shifts his footing so that he's in the proper position...]

GM: Somers says not to do it! I'm sure if Stephanie Harper was here, she'd say not to do it too! But Daniel Harper is...

[Harper can be seen taking several deep breaths before he lifts...]

GM: NOOOOOOOOOOOO!

[...and both Harper and Hunter go up into the air, plummeting off the top of the cage down towards the canvas where a convenient landing area has been cleared of all competitors and the referee!]

"THUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUD!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: OHHHHHHH MYYYYYYYYYYY STARRRRRRRRRRRRRS!

[With ring-shaking and spine-busting impact, Harper and Hunter SLAM down into the canvas from high atop the steel cage, both men bouncing off the mat before coming to rest as Howie Somers buries his face in his hands, shouting in shock at the devastating superplex off the top of the cage!]

GM: SUPERPLEX OFF THE TOP OF THE CAAAAGE! THAT'S GOTTA BE IT!

[Somers moves over to his partner, kneeling to check on him but a bloodied and determined Harper weakly shoves him away as he rolls to his chest, dragging himself across the short distance to the downed Hunter..

...and flings his arm across the chest!]

GM: ONNNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOO! THREEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEE!

"DING! DING! DING!"

GM: NEXT GEN WINS! THEY KEEP THE GOLD!

BW: Gaaaaaaaah!

[Somers wastes no time in rolling his partner off of Hunter, kneeling down beside him to check on his physical wellbeing as Rebecca Ortiz makes it official.]

RO: Here are your winners... and STILL AWA WORRRRRRRRLD TAG TEAM CHAMMMMPIONNNNNNS...

NEXT GENNNNNNNNNNN!

[Somers raises a hand briefly before returning his focus to his partner and friend who risked everything to secure this win. Harper weakly tries to sit up but Somers quickly slips an arm under his, lifting him to a sitting position.]

GM: What a huge risk taken by Daniel Harper to secure this win, Bucky.

BW: That superplex off the cage was the difference maker. This match might've gone very differently if it wasn't for that... that and the apparent knee injury suffered by Riley Hunter.

[On the other side of the cage, Derrick Williams has moved to his partner's side, shouting for medical help as the crowd buzzes over what they just witnessed.]

GM: It was a war of attrition and we appear to have injuries on both sides of this one.

BW: And just a few weeks before the Stampede Cup too. If one or both of these teams have to withdraw due to injuries, Gordo, that'll completely change that tournament.

GM: It certainly would... and Howie Somers is helping his partner to his feet now as the referee hands them the titles.

[The crowd cheers as Somers puts one title over his partner's shoulder, placing the other one on his own.]

GM: A big victory tonight in Philly for Somers and Harper... celebrating that win now... oh, would you look at this?

[The crowd buzzes at the sight of a large novelty check being brought down the aisle to where the Mooselips Beer execs have gathered at the bottom of the ramp.]

GM: It looks like the Schutzmans have made their decision, Bucky.

BW: That's a real shame for Derrick and Riley, Gordo. They've been the tag team of the year for the first half of 2017 in my book and if anyone deserves a whole lot of Canadian beer money, it's these two.

GM: We assumed that the decision might be based on this match and in addition to the tag titles, it looks like Harper and Somers are about to get a nice payday as the official spokespersons for Mooselips Beer.

[Somers has managed to get his partner through the cage door and out to the floor, looking a little surprised by the gathering of execs. He pauses there until ushered to the side by some AWA officials who seem to be clearing a path.]

GM: Next Gen out here on the floor, celebrating their win... well, Somers is celebrating... I think Harper is still recuperating from the physical toll he put his body through in this one.

[And as Next Gen recovers and celebrates on the outside of the cage, the Schutzmans and their oversized novelty check enter the ring.]

GM: There you see the Schutzmans climbing in the ring now, looking to add some dollars to the bank account of one of these teams in just a few moments. Of course, we're so honored to have the Schutzmans here with us tonight as the official sponsors of The Battle of Saskatchewan later this month.

[Derrick Williams helps Riley Hunter off the mat as well, Hunter notably trying to avoid putting weight on one of his legs.]

GM: Riley Hunter seems to be having some trouble with that knee. That horrible sight of Hunter hanging upside down from-

[Seemingly ignoring both teams, Avery Schutzman addresses the crowd while the doddering Lorne Schutzman struggles to set up the easel upon which the cheque stands.]

AS: Greetings from Saskatchewan to the great city of Philadelphia!

[The notoriously hostile fans of Philadelphia decide to favor Avery Schutzman by remaining mostly quiet.]

AS: Boy, we sure had us a tag team showdown, didn't we?

[There are cheers for that proclamation. Avery Schutzman nods, beaming proudly at the two teams - System Shock still in the ring and Next Gen out on the floor.]

AS: And that's just a taste of what's in store when the AWA comes to Saskatchewan in two weeks' time when Mooselips Beer presents the Stampede Cup!

[Another big cheer goes up from the crowd as Howie Somers shouts "AND WE'RE GONNA WIN THAT TOO!" Schutzman chuckles.]

AS: I'm sure you'll do your best, young man... and I can't wait to see ya try!

But without further ado, it's time to announce Mooselips' top team and award them their prize!

[Schutzman pauses, presumably for drama's sake.]

AS: The team that best represented our brand and is most deserving of the prize we have for them... is...

...

...

SYSTEM SHOCK!

[The crowd reacts with shock of their own at this announcement as Williams' jaw visibly drops.]

GM: Excuse me, what?

BW: Oh, I knew they could do it, daddy!

[Derrick Williams manages to twist his shocked expression into a slight smirk. The bloodied Riley Hunter chuckles coldly to himself as he braces himself unsteadily on the wall of the cage, still trying to avoid putting weight on the injured knee.]

GM: But Next Gen has beaten System Shock three times running! They're the AWA World Tag Team Champions! How could he-

[Daniel Harper and Howie Somers start dismissively walking away. Avery Schutzman exits through the cage door to the floor to explain himself.]

AS: Fellas, I know you're the Tag Team Champions, and you're going into the Stampede Cup with all the momentum in the world, but really, we have no alternative. The prize belongs to Riley Hunter and Derrick Williams.

[Somers throws another dismissive gesture at Avery Schutzman as he leads Daniel Harper back up the ramp towards the locker room. The crowd is getting on the Schutzmans now as Avery shrugs, turning back towards the ring.]

AS: Well, you can't win 'em all, I suppose.

Uncle Lorne, why don't you show them what System Shock has won?

[A confused Uncle Lorne turns to look at Avery.]

LS: Huh?

[Next Gen are almost completely up the aisle, preferring to focus on their championship gold rather than the pomp and ceremony in the ring. They duck through the entrance curtain as Avery shouts a little louder.]

AS: Show them the prize, Uncle Lorne!

[Lorne suddenly nods with understanding, grabbing the mic off the easel, and turning to Williams and Hunter who are eagerly waiting.]

LS: The prize is...

[Lorne Schutzman pulls back the red velvet cloth covering the check.]

LS: ...Ten steaks!

[Time seems to stand still for a second upon the revelation of the prize; a chill seems to fill the arena.]

Derrick Williams' expression changes to concern. Riley Hunter's eyes go wide. The crowd buzzes as the realization sets in that the third man in the ring may not be "Lorne Schutzman." His posture straightens and the tone of his voice becomes deeper and more ominous when he says...]

"Oh my dear System Shock, you have been naive.

Fans of the AWA... Please attend carefully."

[Derrick Williams realizes what this means, and he bolts for the door, only to find that Avery Schutzman has latched and padlocked it from the outside. Riley Hunter begins screaming in abject terror.]

RH: "GET OUUUUUUT, DUKE! GET OUT OF HEEEEERE! GET OUUUUUUT!"

GM: Oh no, it can't be!

BW: No it is! It's him! It's...

["Lorne Schutzman" begins ripping at his face, pulling chunks of latex away. He tears his silvery mane of hair off his head. The crowd roars in recognition of the wild-eyed, hawk-faced middle-aged man with a head and beard of perma-stubble.]

BW: ...IT'S JACKSON HUNTER!

[Both Williams and Riley Hunter begin pulling themselves up the cage wall; Williams makes faster progress than his injured partner.]

GM: The Mastermind of the Axis! The Mad Prophet! The Velociraptor! He's been hiding in plain sight for months now!

[Jackson Hunter knocks the check to the ground, revealing System Shock's true prize duct-taped to it's back: a shovel with dozens of initials etched onto the blade. He tears the shovel away and takes a wild swing at Derrick Williams, missing him by inches as The Future goes over the top of the cage.]

GM: My stars, The Axis' former advisor is a man possessed! And his accomplice Avery Schutzman--if there even was ever a person named 'Avery Schutzman'--has locked that cage!

BW: He got booted from the Axis and now he's coming for blood!

[Another swing with the shovel and Williams drops several feet to the floor in a blind panic. He splats on the ground, struggles to regain his footing, then backtracks around the ring. Jackson Hunter tears off Schutzman's tie and suit jacket, and rips open the top buttons of his dress shirt.]

JH: YOU--[the audio track goes silent for several seconds]

GM: The King of the Seven-Second Delay strikes again! We apologize fans but--

[Jackson Hunter sees his cousin Riley almost out of the cage as well, and he runs over to take a wild swing with his shovel.]

"THUNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNK!"

"AHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[With a sickening thud, the elder Hunter cousin plants the shovel into the back of the American Ninja's leg, who tumbles ungracefully onto the ropes and to the mat.]

GM: My stars, how savage!

BW: Jax, that's your cousin! Your own flesh and blood!

GM: I'm still reeling from finding out that Jackson Hunter was hiding in plain sight for months! This was a trap to lure in System Shock, plain and simple!

[Jackson Hunter drags Riley Hunter to the middle of the ring by his damaged leg, making sure to shake and twist it as much as possible on the way while hyper-extending it. Riley raises his hands, pleading with his cousin.]

RH: "No! No no no no no! You can't!"

[The vengeance-crazed elder Hunter grapevines Riley's legs around his, setting up a deathlock.]

JH: "JUST WATCH ME!"

[Jackson Hunter elevates Riley Hunter and twists him into a wide-stanced Scorpion Deathlock.]

GM: THE MINDFLAYER! Jackson Hunter has put his own cousin, a man who has compared himself to a long-lost brother, into the Mindflyer!

BW: It's the same thing Riley Hunter did to him when The Axis gave Jax the boot...

GM: Oh, and the pain wracking the body of Riley Hunter has to be shocking! That already injured knee being tortured by Jackson Hunter with the whole world watching!

[The wild-eyed Jackson Hunter locks gaze with Derrick Williams outside the cage, who looks on helplessly as his partner claws at the canvas in vain, howling in blood-curdling agony in the Mindflyer. Williams looks like he wants to climb back into the lion's den to rescue his teammate, but is frozen in place when he realizes he could meet the same fate.]

BW: Wait a minute, Gordo, if Jackson Hunter was "Lorne Schutzman" this whole time, what does that mean for Mooselips' sponsorship of the Battle of Saskatchewan?

GM: Bucky, the story right now is this madman is dissecting his cousin and one half of the top rated teams in the world with the Mindflyer!

[Hunter leans back even further with the Mindflyer until the Seven Star Athlete's screams of agony slowly fall silent as he passes out from the pain.]

GM: I don't know where the key to this lock that has been put on the cage has gone, but if someone can hear me back there: Riley Hunter's well-being looks to be in serious jeopardy and we need help out here to get inside this cage!

BW: Oh dang, Gordo. I'm seeing it now. Jax even maneuvered System Shock into putting themselves in a cage. There would have been no rescue for them!

[Jackson Hunter releases the Mindflayer at last, stepping away from his cousin's broken, motionless form. He pulls a key out of his pocket and heads toward the door. The camera picks up what he says to Derrick Williams.]

"Basically... BOY..."

[The Axis' former advisor picks up his shovel and begins to unlatch the cage.]

"...RUN."

[As the door swings open and Hunter quickly descends the steps, Derrick Williams wisely makes a run from the shovel-wielding madman, tearing up the ramp as Jackson Hunter chases after, shovel being swung wildly, trying to give him his share of the "prize."]

BW: RUN FOR IT, FUTURE!

[Hunter takes one more big swing at Williams, narrowly missing a shot at his head as the Future gets through the curtain into the back. Hunter angrily stalks away, dragging the shovel behind him, staring out on the stunned crowd as we abruptly fade to black...

...and then up as The Tragically Hip's "Blow At High Dough" plays in the background as we fade to a field. A wrestling ring rests in the golden wheat as deep as the apron. The horizon in the distance spans the entire length of the screen in a straight line, and the setting sun paints the sky in a vivid mixture of blues, oranges, and yellows. Fade to a closer shot of the ring where the silver Stampede Cup stands, reflecting the vibrant prairie sunset. The instantly recognizable voice of Gordon Downie keens...]

"They shot a movie once..."

[Fade to System Shock, Derrick Williams and Riley Hunter, at the 55-yard line of the empty Mosaic Stadium, site of the Battle of Saskatchewan. They stand back-to-back, their right arms extended outward, palms open to the vibrant sky.]

"...in my hometown..."

[Fade to Daniel Ross and MISTER, both in "Ringkrieger" apparel. They stand in the middle of a gravel road that stretches in a straight line to infinity, hands clasped behind their back.]

"...Everybody was in it..."

[Fade to the War Pigs in full regalia and face paint on either side of a barbed wire fence; Havoc behind, Ripper in front. Ripper pounds his fist into his palm while Havoc unfurls his tongue.]

"...from miles around..."

[Bret Grayson slowly descends the steps of a small jet; his partner Takeshi Mifune is already on the tarmac, scanning the infinite horizon with his steely gaze.]

"...Out at the speedway..."

[In front of a rusted and ancient tractor, "Cannonball" Lee Connors and Downpour both kneel, eyes closed, deep in meditation.]

"...some kind of Elvis thing..."

[Chet and Chaz Wallace both stand in silhouette, posing against the setting sun.]

"...Well, I ain't no movie star..."

[Charlie Stephens extends his arm to light the cigar clenched in Joe Flint's teeth. As the lighter sparks, nine Snowbirds (Canada's answer to the Blue Angels) roar past in the sky behind him.]

"...But I can get behind anything..."

[Fade to Next Gen, Howie Somers and Daniel Harper, emerging from the hip deep wheat field to enter the ring in which the Stampede Cup rests... along with every other AWA team...]

"...Yeah, I can get behind anything."

[Just as the brawl is about to begin...]

V/O: The Stampede Cup returns this summer! The AWA in association with Mooselips Beer and Tourism Saskatchewan presents the Battle of Saskatchewan, live from Regina, Canada, July 22 and 23rd, only on Pay-Per-View!

[We fade from the promotional material...

...and with a flash of the ACCESS 365 logo, we find ourselves back inside the office of El Presidente himself, Javier Castillo. Castillo is sitting behind his large polished wooden desk, lightly tapping a finger on it as he grips a rusted metal key in his hand, grimacing. A knock on the door is followed by it swinging open. The voice of John Law is heard.]

JL: Veronica and-

[Castillo interrupts.]

JC: Show them in.

[Law nods, backing aside as Veronica slides gracefully into the room, a sneer on her face. A moment later, someone else enters the room behind her... a man who is instantly identifiable to long-time AWA viewers. The suit is his customary white, the only hints of color being a blood red handkerchief and necktie. The light reflects off his bald pate, as "Doctor" Harrison Fawcett enters the room. He nods at Veronica with a humorless smile before his gaze finally falls on Castillo.]

JC: Mr. Fawcett...

[Fawcett interrupts, a sneer of his own on his face.]

"D"HF: Ah. It's DOCTOR Fawcett, my friend. A minor thing perhaps, but a title I've earned nonetheless.

[Castillo nods, bowing his head slightly in apology.]

JC: Dr. Fawcett, I've been waiting a long time to meet you...

[El Presidente takes a moment, looking Fawcett up and down...]



JC: You look well. Certainly better than the photos and videos I've seen of you recently.

[Fawcett arches an eyebrow.]

JC: What? You don't think Korugun keeps tabs on our more... unique... associates... even our former ones?

[Fawcett nods his head in acceptance.]

JC: This... makeover. Korugun is to thank no doubt?

[Fawcett smirks.]

"D"HF: You know very well I was picked up off the street and rushed off to some fancy place where they shaved me, shorn me, and dressed me up for this moment. Unless...

[Fawcett smiles.]

"D"HF: There are things that your superiors choose to not share with even you?

[Castillo begins to sneer, catching himself at the last minute before he can reveal too much.]

"D"HF: Now, shall we cut through the niceties, Mr. Castillo? Why am I here?

[Castillo grins, nodding.]

JC: A man who likes to get down to business. I respect that. But if we're going to cut through the "niceties" as you put it... let's also cut the crap. You know very well why you're here.

[Fawcett smiles.]

"D"HF: I have heard rumors that your little power grab has not been the walk in the park you imagined it might be.

[Castillo shrugs with a dismissive wave of his hand.]

"D"HF: I heard you ordered her...

[He points to a nearby Veronica who is still sneering at the situation.]

"D"HF: ...to come find me and bring me to you.

[Fawcett pauses, waiting for an answer but Castillo gives him none.]

"D"HF: If things were going well for you, Mr. Castillo... you - and Korugun - would not have summoned me.

[Castillo sighs, turning his palms upwards.]

JC: I am... how you say... busted, Dr. Fawcett. Recent events have forced me to... re-evaluate the role of certain members of Korugun's division given the task of bringing order to the AWA.

[His eyes drift slightly towards Veronica before darting back to Fawcett.]

JC: I've spoken to several members of Korugun management who have told me that while your departure from the company was less than... civil... that you were at one time a great help. You once served Korugun well, Dr. Fawcett... and we see no reason why you can't again.

[Fawcett arches an eyebrow.]

"D"HF: What did you and your corporate handlers have in mind?

[Castillo grimaces... just slightly... barely perceptible... but it's there.]

JC: The business with Oni? It's forgotten. We have scoured the globe for him and he truly is missing.

[There's a twinkle in Castillo's eye for a moment.]

JC: I don't suppose you know where he is.

[Now the twinkle transitions to Fawcett, the corners of his mouth twisting up.]

"D"HF: What did you have in mind?

[Castillo smirks, clapping his hands together.]

JC: A role in the Special Projects division... answering directly to me. Miss Westerly here...

[He gestures to Veronica.]

JC: ...has been dealing with our personnel acquisitions as of late and she's done an excellent job... for the most part...

[Veronica cringes at the not-so-subtle reference to Demetrius Lake.]

JC: ...but everyone needs help, Dr. Fawcett. That's where you come in.

[Fawcett taps a finger on the desk in front of him.]

"D"HF: Special Projects. Answering only to you...

[He keeps tapping, obviously considering the offer carefully.]

"D"HF: ...and the compensation package?

[Castillo smiles.]

JC: A man after my own heart. You will find yourself beyond your usual comforts, my friend.

[Fawcett grimaces.]

"D"HF: My usual comforts included a house I worked very hard to build into my home over the years... seized by Korugun after-

JC: Yours once more.

[Fawcett nods.]

"D"HF: Stripped of all of my treasures no doubt.

[Castillo shakes his head.]

JC: Not all of them.

[Fawcett sits up in his chair, both hands on the desk now, a desperate curiosity and excitement washing over him.]

"D"HF: Really? You couldn't break him?

[Castillo gives a solemn nod.]

"D"HF: Well... that does change a great number of things.

[Castillo sits in silence a moment.]

JC: I trust you still have it. We were... surprised... it was not in the items indexed in the Manor.

[Fawcett smirks.]

"D"HF: I am a man who tries to prepare for... most... eventualities. It remains safe from prying hands.

[Castillo nods.]

JC: Then do we have a deal?

[Fawcett leans back in the chair, steepling his fingers as he looks at the ceiling.]

"D"HF: There are things in this world, Mr. Castillo, that are not meant to be controlled. You know of the famed Ark of the Covenant?

[Castillo's eyes drift to the side to a mannequin head set up on a shelf in his office, a certain medallion hanging on a chain.]

JC: I know the story.

"D"HF: Then you know that while the box contains unlimited power... that that power was never meant to be unleashed... and the mere effort to unleash it could mean the loss of countless souls.

[Fawcett says it as statement.]

"D"HF: I warn you, Mr. Castillo... if I am able to do what you ask... I am not one hundred percent confident that it can be controlled. By me or any other.

[Castillo looks over to Westerly who has slyly slid her hand up to cover the jewel hanging around her lovely neck.]

JC: If the time comes, we can control it. Besides, I have contingency after contingency prepared and planned... something you can also assist me with...

[He pauses.]

JC: ... in your spare time, of course. Now...?

[Fawcett leans forward again.]

"D"HF: The money is one thing. The house is another. But what I am interested in, Mr. Castillo, is compensation of a more... unusual... nature...

[Castillo pauses, staring a hole right through Fawcett.]

JC: You ask too much.

[Fawcett smiles, rising from his chair.]

“D”HF: Then I thank you for the clothes and the haircut and I take my leave.

[Fawcett turns to exit when Castillo slams a hand down on the table angrily.]

JC: SIT!

[Fawcett pauses, slowly turning back towards Castillo with a burning glare in his eyes.]

“D”HF: Amusing. I once gave orders to a KING spewed from the Earth. One that you consider lost and unable to be found. The very same opinion all who knew of His might held for countless millennia. Yet I am the one who brought him to the unassuming eyes of the world. Do not presume to give me ord-

[Castillo interrupts, holding up the rusted metal key, Fawcett’s eyes going wide at the sight.]

JC: I think I have what you’re looking for.

[Fawcett lustily licks his lips, nodding as he slowly sits back down.]

JC: Do what is asked of you... and do it well... and what lies behind this... heavily... locked door is yours to do with as you please when this is over.

[Fawcett nods, reaching out his hand, his eyes still wide as he grasps for the key... but Castillo pulls it back.]

JC: Only once the job is done. Understood?

[Fawcett clenches his hand into a fist, nodding as he draws it back.]

“D”HF: Understood.

[Castillo smirks.]

JC: Good. Then we have an accord?

[Fawcett nods.]

“D”HF: We do.

[The two shake hands over the desk for a moment, Westerly grimacing in the background at the sudden shift in the Korugun power structure.]

JC: Now, as a show of good faith, I have your first assignment - something very near and dear to my heart.

[Fawcett looks questioningly.]

JC: I need you to spoil Blue’s party next week.. a message from me to him...

[He smirks, clenching his fist on the table.]

JC: ...by any means necessary.

[Fawcett smiles, sitting back in his chair.]

“D”HF: I think I know just where to start.

[Castillo laughs. Fawcett laughs. Veronica doesn't. And with another flash of the ACCESS 365 logo, we end up back out in the ring where we see King Kong Hogan is standing, a pair of officials in the ring with him, trying to speak to him.]

GM: The return of Doctor Harrison Fawcett... and he's aligned himself with Korugun?! This deal is getting worse all the time. And speaking of Korugun, fans, during the break, King Kong Hogan walked out here to apparently address the crowd and... well, he's certainly not scheduled to.

BW: You want to tell him no?

GM: Thankfully, I don't have to. We've got two officials in there trying to get Hogan out so we can move on to our National Title match between Jordan Ohara and Maxim Zhark-

[A loud “THUMP!” sound comes as Hogan gets his hands on a microphone, swatting at it.]

KKH: It's been a long, long time since I've stepped foot in Philly...

[Hogan looks around at the crowd, wide eyed and wild.]

KKH: ...and now I remember why.

[The crowd jeers as Hogan chuckles to himself, trying to keep the mic out of reach of the two officials still trying to convince him to get out of the ring.]

KKH: But one thing I don't remember about Philly is that y'all don't have the courtesy to pick your dead up off the streets...

[Hogan goes still, staring dead in the eyes of the closest official who suddenly realizes what he's implying...

...and then finds himself HURLED over the top rope, bouncing hard off the apron before flopping to the floor. The other official bails out, hightailing it back up the ramp as Hogan waves mockingly.]

KKH: Bye bye baby! Bye bye!

[Hogan pushes off the ropes, spinning around in a circle.]

KKH: It's a big week for the AWA comin' to Philly for the first time... but it's a big week for me too. You wanna know why?

[The crowd really doesn't but that seems unlikely to deter Hogan.]

KKH: Yesterday was my birthday! HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO ME!

[Hogan nods emphatically as the crowd doesn't react to the news.]

KKH: Thank you so much for all your well wishes. I appreciate it... truly. Birthdays are special, special days... and my family and friends did everything they could to make it special for me. We had a party... we had cake... we had presents.

[Hogan smiles... an unsettling sight as we see some missing teeth.]

KKH: And I truly felt loved. Because all week long, people wanted to know... what do you want for your birthday?

[He leans against the ropes, staring into the camera.]

KKH: My momma asked me... "Lil' Davy... what do you want for your birthday?"

And I said, "Momma, what I want, you can't give me."

[He holds up his hand, fiddling with the silver band on his finger.]

KKH: My wife asked me... "Baby, what do you want for your birthday?"

And I said, "What I want, you can't give me."

[He smiles again, leaning down into a squat, holding his hand a couple of feet off the mat.]

KKH: Even my kids asked me, "Daddy, what do you want for your birthday?"

And I said, "Babies, what I want... you can't give me."

[He straightens up, dipping his hand into his jeans pocket.]

KKH: Because what I want...

[He pulls his hand into view, holding the Golden Spike.]

KKH: ...IS SUPREME'S EYE ON A [BLEEP]DAMNED SPIKE!

[He laughs manically as the crowd jeers.]

KKH: I WANT TO WRAP MY FINGERS AROUND IT, RIP IT OUT, AND SHOVE IT ON THIS SPIKE TO LIVE ON MY DESK FOREVER!

A reminder of the time when I went against the guy who saw himself as the best in the world...

[He makes a plucking gesture with his fingers.]

KKH: ...and when I was done he SAW NOTHING!

WHERE ARE YOU, SUPREME?! WHERE ARE YOU?! YOU LEAVE ME WITH YOUR LAPFOX! I DON'T WANT HIM! I'M NOT INTERESTED IN SOME HAS-BEEN WHO THINKS HE'S A MAN BECAUSE HE STOOD NEXT TO MEN! I'M NOT INTERESTED IN SOMEONE TRYING TO REMAIN RELEVANT OFF MY NAME... OR YOURS! I'M NOT INTERESTED IN-

[Cue a burst of pyro and Metallica's "One" as Jeff Matthews emerges onto the entrance stage to big cheers from the crowd...]

GM: SPEAK HIS NAME AND HE HAS ARRIVED!

[The Madfox stares down the aisle at the wild-eyed Hogan who throws the mic aside, waving an arm at him, beckoning him to the ring...]

...and Matthews obliges, tearing down the ramp towards the ring, diving headfirst under the bottom rope where Hogan drops to his knees, swinging a fist down like a hammer on the skull of Matthews!]

GM: OHH!

BW: He was waiting for him, Gordo!

[Still down on his knees, Hogan repeatedly slams down hammerfists on the back of Matthews' head, battering him down into the canvas as the crowd breaks into jeers!]

GM: Hogan baited Matthews into coming out here, Bucky, and-

[As Hogan pounds away at Matthews on the canvas, someone suddenly slides into the ring.]

BW: Hey, who's that?!

GM: I'm not sure!

[The crowd realizes who it is a moment before the announcers do, erupting in cheers as the mystery person pops to their feet and sprints right at Hogan and damn near caves his chest in with a penalty kick!]

GM: IT'S SUPREME WRIGHT!!!

[Dressed uncharacteristically in a green "COMBAT CORNER" T-shirt and black jeans, Wright now sports a full beard and wears a black medical eyepatch with two strings that wrap across his face just above and below his one good eye. Wright looks like a man possessed as he watches a stunned Hogan gets to his feet.]

BW: Is it?! Look at him!

GM: I'm looking and so is King Kong Hogan who may have been calling out Supreme Wright but I don't think he expected to see-

[Almost immediately, Wright is on Hogan, hitting him hard and fast with a flurry of slaps and open handed strikes to the head and body!]

GM: OH YEAH! Wright is taking it to Hogan!

BW: I thought he was gone! Hogan took his eye!

[Hogan tries to cover up the best he can, but Wright breaks through his defenses by grabbing a handful of hair and yanking Hogan's head down into a rising kneelift.]

GM: OH! A knee right to the face!

[The knee staggers Hogan, who now sports a bloody nose as a result. Wright then runs right at Hogan, smashing home a palm strike that turns Hogan's head and sends him falling through the ropes and out of the ring!]

GM: And there goes Hogan! He's leaving! He doesn't want any part of Supreme Wright!

[As a bloodied Hogan beats a hasty retreat, Wright helps Jeff Matthews to his feet. Matthews looks as surprised as Hogan did, giving a slight nod to Wright who then walks over to the microphone that Hogan dropped, picking it up off the canvas.]

SW: HOGAN!

[King Kong Hogan stops, turning his attention back towards Wright in the ring. The former World Champion's expression is as cold as ever.]

SW: I'll see you at Eternally Extreme.

[The crowd roars, as Hogan smiles and nods, having gotten what he wanted, before stepping through the curtains.]

GM: SUPREME WRIGHT IS BACK! He is back and he has struck back against King Kong Hogan with a vengeance!

BW: Is he nuts!? He wants Hogan at Eternally Extreme!? That can be any sort of match!

GM: I think Supreme Wright knows EXACTLY what he's doing, Bucky! Goodness!

[Wright exits the ring, Matthews trailing along beside him as we cut back to our announce duo.]

GM: A chaotic scene here in Philadelphia as Supreme Wright has made his return to the AWA... but I have to wonder in what condition. He does NOT look his usual self out here, Bucky.

BW: Absolutely not. He should go talk to his buddy Martinez. That kid knows a thing or two about coming back from injury too soon.

GM: And to top it off, Supreme Wright says he'll see King Kong Hogan at Eternally Extreme! Is that a challenge?! And what in the world would Supreme Wright do in the land of Extreme?!

BW: Sounded like a challenge to me. A challenge by a potentially injured man to walk right into the sick and twisted world that King Kong Hogan loves oh-so-much.

GM: We'll try to get more on that later in the night but fans, right now, we're just about set for our next title match of the night which will see the National Champion Maxim Zharkov defend the gold against Jordan Ohara. This one's been brewing since last year, fans, and it's finally going to happen right here tonight.

BW: I've been waiting for this one for a while, Gordo. Let's get to it!

GM: Jordan Ohara tells me he's in the shape of his young career for this match. Let's find out how he got that way!

[Fade to black.

The air raid sirens go off, introducing Nas' "Hero" as the cameras fade in.

#Chain gleaming, switching lanes, two-seating  
Hate him or love him for the same reason  
Can't leave it, the game needs him  
Plus the people need someone to believe in  
So in God's Son we trust  
'Cause they know I'ma give 'em what they want  
They looking for a hero  
I guess that makes me a hero#

Jordan Ohara's voice overlays the montage which follows.]



"Maxim Zharkov since you arrived in the AWA you have been dominating. You are the monster that nearly everyone fears. Massive. Unpinned. Ferocious. The Peacemaker lariat may be one of the most devastating moves in the business. The Gorynych will end you. The Last Son of the Soviet Union. They talk about you as if you were built in the lab and not made of mortal flesh. Everybody should fear you.

But I don't."

[Jordan, dressed in ragged Carolina blue sweats, rubs his hands with oils before he stands over a leather bag filled with chickpeas. He punches the bag, raises his hand and strikes the bag with the back of his hand and then slaps down his palm before he draws back and hits the bag with a reverse knife edge. He repeats the sequence over and over right hand and left hand: punch, backhand, palm slap, chop. Punch, backhand, palm slap, chop. Punch, backhand, palm slap, chop.]

"I'm from the Far East, too, and right here in America. My mother fought and bled for this country. My mother fought and bled for me. I may not be as big as you. I may not be as strong as you, Zharkov. But I know in my heart I'm better than you."

[The scene shifts to a shirtless Jordan running along beach Atlantic City boardwalk. He has a brace of pitbulls on a leash. The energetic animals pull at the leash, tugging him forward and he tries to keep up as they run and shift direction along the famous stretch of sand. Jordan is drenched in sweat as the dogs start to pull away from him.]

"When I say I'm the Once in a Millennium Talent, that isn't a catchphrase. That's the truth. And I intend to prove it every time I step in the ring. And tonight the biggest test of my career is right here with you. I need this. Professionally. Personally. "

[The scene shifts to an image of Jordan dragging a sledgehammer behind him as he approaches a spot on the beach. Jordan takes a firm grip on the sledgehammer. He raises it overhead and swings it down. Hard. Sand flies everywhere as he drags the hammer out. He takes another swing, dragging more sand out of the hole. He swings again and again and again. The hammer digs into the sand, sending shockwaves through Jordan's arms as he drags the head of the hammer out of the sand.]

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"You put me through Hell. Every time we've faced off you've hurt me. You've broken my body. You've broken my spirit. You put my mother in the hospital, you bastard. That's been fueling me. I was ten feet away from the carnage you unleashed on Daniel Harper. And I was helpless. I saw you look at me when you delivered the East German Suplex. Like I was next. I'm not next. I'm right now. Zharkov, I'm dangerous."

[Jordan hangs from an overhead bar in a nameless gym as a trainer slams a medicine ball into his mid-section over and over again. Jordan grunts from the impact, trying to keep his grip. After one hit too many he falls to the floor.

The image shifts to the exterior of the Philadelphia Museum of Art ... it is 72 stone steps away. Jordan shoulders a 100 pound bag of sand. He draws a deep breath and starts to run. He crosses the street with fans cheering him on. He hits the first step and then the second. About 10 steps up his pace starts to slow as the speed and weight weigh him down. He keeps laboring up, his breath ragged as he tries to keep up his pace.]

"You've taken everything I stand for and thrown it in the trash. You've destroyed everything. So I've got nothing left to lose. So I'm going to that ring to throw everything I have left at you. I am the Phoenix. I am the People's last hope. You and I are going to go to war. I won't let them down! I can't let them down!"

[Cut to Jordan hanging from the overhead bar as his trainer slams the medicine ball into his mid-section over and over again. Jordan grimaces under the impact, trying to keep his grip. The last hit though drops him to his hands and knees and he scrambles to retch into a bucket.

Cut to Jordan balancing a bench on his neck. A bowl of water is balanced at the edge of the bench. Jordan holds two bowls of water in each hand. He walks across the room, twisting and stepping to keep the water from sloshing over the sides and prevent dropping the bowls. He moves slowly and deliberately, his limbs trembling with the tension.]

"I'm never going to fade. I'm never going to break. Hit me! KEEP HITTING ME! I'm not going to run away. I'm not going to lay down. I'm walking into that ring and face the crown jewel of the Axis again. I'm doing it for these people who deserve a better champion. I'm doing it for my mother who raised me to never back down to fight for the people who can't fight for themselves and do things the right way."

[The montage switches to Jordan firing hard kicks into a stack of tires. He chops away at the stack, flinching as he has to absorb the recoil of his shots.

Cut to Jordan conditioning his hands with the bag. Now it is filled with sand. Punch. Backhand. Slap. Chop. Punch. Backhand. Slap. Chop. Punch. Backhand. Slap. Chop.]

Cut to Jordan shouldering the bag of sand again. He sprints across the street and hits the steps of the Museum of Contemporary Art. He sprints the first 30 steps before he slows. He keeps driving. 45 steps. His chest is heaving, lungs burning. 50 steps.]

"You stole the National Championship and held it in Russia. Well, right here in Philadelphia, I'm going to set it free."

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"You'll have to kill me to stop it."

[Jordan swings the hammer down into the sand again and again. He grunts as he pounds the sand harder and harder, gaining strength with every swing. The hole he is digging gets deeper and deeper, bigger and bigger.]

Cut to Jordan icing his ragged, bloodied hands.

The scene cuts back to the Atlantic City Boardwalk and Jordan is chasing the pitbulls as they run. Laboring with effort, he keeps up with them as they dart to and fro in the sand.]

"I have been training for this.

I am ready for Hell."

[Jordan flips tires through the backstreets of Philadelphia. He is ripped. His chest pops. His muscles ripple as he flips the big tire. A crowd of kids starts to gather around him, cheering him on.

The scene flips back to the gym, Jordan is absorbing more shots to the gut with the medicine ball. He flinches under the impact, but there is inhuman determination in his eyes. A crowd of fighters gathers round, watching each hit, impressed.]

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[Jordan moves smoothly, bench balanced on his neck, the bowls of water resting comfortably on the bench and his hands as he steps smoothly back and forth across the room.

Jordan gets run over with a clothesline by Beef Bonham. He hits the mat and pops back up to take another clothesline. He hits the mat and forces himself back up. He takes a third clothesline and hits the mat hard.]

"You can't beat me.

You can't kill me."

[Jordan gets run over with a clothesline by Beef Bonham. He hits the mat and pops back up to take another clothesline. He hits the mat and forces himself back up. He takes a third clothesline and hits the mat hard. He braces and kips up, challenging Bonham to bring him more. Another clothesline knocks him down again. Jordan kips up again.]

"I am the Phoenix. I will live forever."

[Jordan drags the pitbulls behind him as he continues to sprint the sand. A group of joggers follow far behind them. The pair of exhausted dogs resist running. Jordan comes to a stop as the animals curl up in the sand to rest.

THWACK! THWACK! THWACK! Jordan chops the tower of tires. He barely flinches. The tower of tires wobbles under the impact.

THWACK! THWACK! THWACK! Jordan chops Bonham's chest. Bonham cringes with each shot until he finally covers up and walks away. Onlookers in the gym cheer as Jordan roars in celebration.]

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"I am the Phoenix."

[72 steps. It seems like 720. Jordan sprints. The 100 pound bag shifts a little but his pace doesn't slow. 40 steps. His legs continue to pump he continues to drive. 55 steps. His breathing is ragged. Keep pushing Ohara. Keep pushing. 65 steps. Just a bit further. 67. 68. 69. 70.

With a shout. Jordan leaps up the last two steps to land on the flat walkway to the museum. He drops to his knees, shedding the 100 pound bag, throwing his arms up in the air. A crowd of onlookers surround him and cheer as the shot spirals away from above.]

"I will live forever!"

[We fade through black...

Backstage, in front of the Liberty or Death backdrop stands a monster of a man. The storied AWA National Championship rests on his shoulder. His red, sleeveless, satin fighter's robe displays his vascular arms and trimmed beard, but not much else.]

MZ: There have been many things that I have had, that no American could contemplate. Honor. Pride. Power overwhelming.

But what the Soviet way gave me, that the United States never could was certainty. You... America? You long for certainty. The certainty that keeps you warm in your bed and food in your belly.

I have always felt certainty. That Russia would always be there for me. I look at my flag, and I feel warmth. Safety. Generosity.

People look at your flag... and they feel a boot about to trample on them. They feel they are about to be exploited by a face with an insincere smile. They feel fear when they look at your stars and stripes.

Do you think I do not know fear? Doubt is the root of fear, and doubt is the antithesis of certainty.

I feel doubt in me when little Ohara strikes with the paw of a bear.

I feel doubt when this tiny American soars like a man half his size.

[Zharkov cradles the National belt closer to his chest.]

MZ: And though my certainty has been shaken, my resolve remains steeled. That I could wager two years undefeated and the National Championship, and lose it all in three seconds...

...Ah, exhilarating, is it not?

I wrestle like no man can best me. I am strength incarnate. At the "Fight Night," Ohara and his friends sampled the true strength of the Last Son of the Soviet

Union. Now, he has unlocked my potential. He has driven me to eliminate all margins of error. Yes, Phoenix, you could beat me... BUT YOU WILL NOT.

I am Tsar! I am Maxim Zharkov! I have never tasted defeat, and I never do so! With your country cheering you on, on your national holiday, I will leave you broken on the canvas, tovarisch!

And as I stand in front of the American people, and in front of their American flag, you will all acknowledge Soviet power!

And you will know that you cannot defeat the Tsar when the entire world sees...

...my fist...

...HELD...

...HIGH!

[Zoom in on Zharkov's shaking fist, slowly going out of focus as we fade back out to the ring where Rebecca Ortiz is standing.]

RO: The following contest is set for one fall with a thirty minute time limit for the AWA NATIONAL TITLE!

[Big cheer!]

RO: Introducing first...

[The spotlight hits the stage, illuminating 20 members of the Army Drill dressed in their Army blues. Military drums beat the time as the soldiers begin to move. Their bayoneted rifles are slung over their shoulders as they march around the stage in precise movements. They spin and twirl their rifles with masterful economic movements, coming to rest precisely before moving again and forming another pose. Their rifles twirl, the soldier pivots. The rifles stop. The soldiers move. The mastery and skill is impressive as they move into two lines on either side of the stage, their rifles spinning like batons as the drums come to a crescendo.

There is a long pause as the crowd cheers the military men before the beat changes and the music of the Once in a Millennium Talent hits.]

#I know I can  
Be what I wanna be  
If I work hard at it  
I'll be where I wanna be#

[Unexpectedly the soldiers leap and dance, their rifles working in time as they move to the beat of Nas' "I Can". The curtains part as Jordan Ohara leaps into view, dressed in shiny camouflage Carolina Blue tights, white boots with black tar heels and a winged ring jacket in white leather.]

RO: From Charlotte, North Carolina... weighing in at 225 pounds...

He is the Phoenix...

JORRRRRRRRRRDAAAAAANNNN OOOOOOOHAAAAAAARRRRRAAAAA!

[The crowd explodes as Ohara makes his way down to the ring. He climbs into the ring, onto the turnbuckles, and salutes the soldiers before he drops to the mat, staring down the ramp, waiting for his opponent to arrive.]

GM: Jordan Ohara tossing away his usual good spirits on this night. He is all business as he gets to the ring, ready for the fight of his life with the National Champion.

[Rebecca Ortiz continues.]

RO: Annnnnnnnnnd his opponent...

[A buzz rumbles among the fans just before the sound of a cannon firing heralds the arrival of the champion as the "Soviet March" roars through the arena.]

RO: From Magadan, Russia... weighing 141 kilos... he is the Tsar... and the AWA NATIONAL CHAMPIONNNNNNNNNNN...

THE LAST SON OF THE SOVIET UNION...

MAXXXXXXXXXXXIMMMMMMMM ZHARRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRKOVVVVVVVVVV!

[Zharkov bursts through the curtain, striding into the light, covered in a red satin sleeveless fighter's robe, hood drawn up over his bald head. His thickly eyebrowed and bearded face is mostly stoic, occasionally belying a disdain for the American spectators.]

GM: Maxim Zharkov had held that title since last SuperClash but he has been undefeated for two years now. Unpinned. Unsubmitted. Tonight, Jordan Ohara looks to change all that.

[Reaching ringside, Zharkov stares up into the ring where Ohara is standing. He sheds his fighter's robe, dropping it into a pool at his feet as he looks up at his challenger, climbing up from the floor to the apron, coming through the ropes as he unbuckles the National Title, thrusting it over his head as he lets loose a roar...

...which turns into a shout as Jordan Ohara rushes across the ring, throwing a right hand at the champion!]

BW: What the-?!

GM: OHARA COMING OUT SWINGING!

[Zharkov drops the title belt on the canvas as Ohara throws a second haymaker and a third, backing Zharkov the few feet back into the ropes...

...but as the bell sounds at the order of referee Koji Sakai, Zharkov rocks and fire in retaliation, throwing some powerful blows to the jaw of Ohara, backing the young challenger back across the ring!]

GM: We've got a fight on our hands! These men have been waiting to go one-on-one with the National Title on the line long enough and it's breaking down suitably here in Philly!

[Ohara battles back, throwing haymakers of his own, forcing Zharkov out to the middle of the ring...

...where both men begin exchanging blows, one for one as the Philly crowd goes wild for the fight unfolding!]

GM: FIST FOR FIST! BLOW FOR BLOW! THE CHAMPION AND HIS CHALLENGER ARE GOING TO WAR!

[The Philly fans are on their feet, screaming their voices hoarse as the six foot two Zharkov and the five foot ten Ohara trade blows in the middle of the ring!]

GM: WHO'S GOING TO GET THE BETTER OF THIS ONE?!

[Changing his stance abruptly, Ohara winds up...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: KNIFE EDGE CHOP BY OHARA!

[The blow stuns Zharkov, forcing the Tsar to stumble backwards as Ohara winds up again...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: MAKE IT TWO!

BW: He's got Zharkov on his heels in the early moments of this one!

[Zharkov stumbles back a few more steps as Ohara winds up again...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[...and lands a third brutal knife edge blow that knocks Zharkov all the way back into the ropes, arms hooking the top rope as Ohara keeps coming, ignoring the protests of referee Koji Sakai. Ohara grabs Zharkov by the arm.]

GM: Ohara grabs the wrist, shoots him- no, reversed!

[Ohara hits the far ropes as Zharkov goes into a spin...]

GM: PEACEMAKER!

[...but the crowd groans as Ohara ducks under it and keeps on running, leaving Zharkov off-balance off the missed discus lariat. The Phoenix hits the far ropes, rebounding back towards Zharkov as he spins, slightly off-balance still...]

GM: OHARA LEAPS!

[The crossbody catches Zharkov flush across the chest, taking him down to the canvas. The referee dives to count but the Tsar rolls Ohara off of him before a single count falls.]

GM: Ohara went for the cover but Zharkov was having no part of it, out before one!

[The National Champion is quickly to his feet, looking to strike as Ohara beats him there...]

GM: Ohara too fast for Zharkov... and a dropkick right on the chin!

[The high leap and long extension of Ohara's legs stuns Zharkov, sending him stumbling backwards again. The challenger scrambles back up, taking aim...]

GM: A second dropkick on the mark as well! Zharkov's on the ropes, Bucky!

BW: This is NOT going the champion's way - not yet at least!

[Ohara gets up, leaping up a third time...]

GM: DROPKICK! AND THAT ONE SENDS ZHARKOV TO THE FLOOR!

[The dropkick sends Zharkov tumbling through the ropes, falling down to the floor to cheers from the Philly fans.]

GM: The Phoenix is off to a hot start here tonight as he attempts to wrest that title from around the waist of Maxim Zharkov and REALLY ruin the Axis' night!

BW: I think that job's already been taken care of, Gordo.

GM: You could be right. We're hearing rumors of Riley Hunter being taken to a local hospital for knee trauma and... OHARA!

[The crowd ROARS as Ohara slingshots over the top rope, wiping out the National Champion with a crossbody that takes both men down onto the barely-padded concrete floor!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: OHARA TAKES DOWN ZHARKOV OUTSIDE THE RING!

BW: But as much as Ohara may want physical payback on Zharkov for what happened with his mother at Memorial Day Mayhem, he needs to keep this match in the ring tonight, Gordo.

GM: He can only win the title in the ring.

BW: But he could get crippled outside of it!

[The Phoenix rises to his feet on the floor, throwing up his arms to a cheer from the AWA faithful. He quickly leans down, dragging the Russian off the floor and shoving him back under the ropes into the ring.]

GM: Ohara puts Zharkov back in, scrambling up on the apron now...

[Ohara jogs down the apron, running right up the ropes, climbing with ease and quickness to the top rope...]

GM: Ohara's up top... set to fly...

[And as Zharkov gets to his feet, Ohara leaps off the top, bringing his hand down between the eyes of Zharkov with a flying Tomahawk chop that drops the champion cold!]

GM: FLYING CHOP OFF THE TOP! OHARA WITH THE COVER!

[The referee dives to the mat, actually making a two count this time before Zharkov muscles his way free of the lateral press.]

GM: Two count only right there.

[Quickly regaining his feet, Ohara dashes to the ropes again, bouncing back towards the rising Zharkov, leaping high into the air for a running Tomahawk chop that causes Zharkov to slip to a knee but no further.]

BW: Look at the resilience of Zharkov. Full-fledged leaping chop and it barely made a dent on the big man.



[Ohara grimaces at Zharkov not dropping back to the mat as he grabs the powerful arm by the wrist, cranking it around in an armwringer...]

GM: And Ohara - perhaps wisely- goes after the arm of Zharkov.

BW: Definitely wisely. If you take out the arm of Zharkov, you not only completely neutralize the Peacemaker but you may limit the effectiveness of some of his most punishing moves - the Gorynch, the Tsar Bomb, the East German Suplex among others.

[Ohara slams an elbow down on the bicep a couple of times before going back to the wristlock, trying to apply enough pressure to keep Zharkov down on a knee.]

GM: Ohara again trying to do some damage to the arm and...

[Ohara wrings the arm around again, stepping far to the side before throwing a thrust kick up under the chin, knocking Zharkov back down on his back as Ohara dives across him.]

GM: Ohara gets one! He gets two! And again, Zharkov kicks out.

[The challenger grimaces at the two count before slinging a leg over Zharkov's torso, winding up...]

GM: Big right hand down on Zharkov... and another!

BW: And this is rare ground for Ohara who usually isn't quite so aggressive in his matches. We're used to seeing some finesse out of Ohara... the armdrags... the speed, the quickness. He's so hot under the collar at Zharkov right now, he's looking for a fight and that's not going to work for him in my opinion.

GM: Can you really blame him though, Bucky? After everything Zharkov and his allies have done to Jordan Ohara over the past year or so. You think back to the beginnings of the Axis with the turns by Riley Hunter and Derrick Williams... both men betraying Jordan Ohara to join the Axis. You think about more recently, Zharkov's relationship with Korugun leading to Ohara trying to fight off several attacks by that group. And of course, Memorial Day Mayhem and Sgt. Maxine Ohara getting laid out. Of course, he wants some payback and no one can blame him for that.

[Ohara climbs off the mat, dragging Zharkov up with him. He walks swiftly to the corner, smashing Zharkov's head into the top turnbuckle angrily!]

GM: Ohh! Headfirst to the buckles!

[Zharkov bounces off, staggering away from Ohara who shakes his head, grabbing him by the back of the head again, marching across the ring...]

GM: And again to the corner!

[Ohara spins Zharkov around against the buckles, winding up...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[Another knife edge chop catches the Russian across the chest, causing him to cringe as he loops his arms over the ropes.]

GM: Bucky, Jordan Ohara is taking the fight to Maxim Zharkov so far in this one.

BW: It's impressive by the kid so far... but "so far" is the key phrase there, Gordo.

[Ohara steps up on the middle rope, grabbing Zharkov by the hair as he balances on one leg, swinging his foot up into the face repeatedly!]

GM: Ohh! Short kicks on the middle rope!

[The referee reprimands Ohara who hops down from his perch, arguing with the referee.]

GM: The Phoenix with some words for the referee - that's unusual for him.

BW: He's letting his emotions get the better of him, Gordo. He'd better watch himself in there.

[Ohara comes back in on Zharkov who suddenly twists, swinging an elbow back up under the chin of the incoming Ohara.]

GM: Oh! Hard shot up under the chin by Zharkov! And that one may have Ohara seeing stars!

[Zharkov tries to take advantage of the situation, grabbing Ohara by the head and neck and violently flinging him into the buckles.]

GM: Ohara thrown to the corner, Zharkov's got him trapped!

[Squaring up, Zharkov shouts "PUSHKAAAA!" as he slams an open palm thrust into the ribcage of Ohara... and again... and again... switching between hands with ease and equal power...]

GM: He's dominating Ohara in the buckles with those palm strikes!

[Ohara's entire body shudders with each blow landed, slightly dipping over as Zharkov grabs a handful of hair and SLAMS his palm into the chin, snapping Ohara's neck back and dumping him in a seated position in the corner as the Philly fans jeer.]

BW: He beat Ohara like he owed him money, sending him all the way down to the mat and-

[Zharkov defiantly ignores the protesting official, planting his boot on the throat of Ohara, hanging onto the ropes as he drives the sole into the windpipe. Ohara coughs and gags, kicking his legs as Zharkov attempts to rip the air from his body.]

GM: Ohara is struggling to breathe... and finally, Zharkov breaks the choke!

[With Ohara gasping for air on the mat, Zharkov drags him by the legs out of the corner towards the middle of the ring. He jumps up, moving away from Ohara to the ropes, bouncing back off...]

GM: ELBOW!

[But Ohara rolls to the side, causing Zharkov to slam down on the empty canvas with a missed elbowdrop!]

GM: Zharkov misses the elbow but the champion's right back up!

[He rears back the right arm again, looking for another elbowdrop!]

GM: ANOTHER ONE!

[But Ohara rolls to the side again, causing Zharkov to whiff a second time!]

GM: HE MISSES AGAIN!

[Zharkov stays on the mat this time, cradling his ribs as Ohara rolls to his feet, shouting at the Russian to "GET UP, YOU SON OF A-" before the audio briefly cuts out...]

GM: Zharkov slowly up to his feet...

[And Ohara rushes him, throwing a clothesline that muscles the 347 pounder over the ropes, dumping him out to the floor in a heap!]

GM: OUT TO THE FLOOR GOES OHARA!

[The momentum of the move takes Ohara over the top rope as well but the Phoenix hangs on to the top rope, thrilling the Philly crowd as he "skins the cat" and pulls himself back into the ring.]

GM: Ohara's back in... and Zharkov's starting to stir out on the floor.

BW: The Tsar is a very tough competitor - very tough champion - and it's going to take a lot to keep him down, Gordo.

GM: Ohara knows that and he's up to the challenge, I believe... what's this now?

[As Zharkov rises off the floor, Ohara steps up on the second rope halfway between the two ringposts...]

GM: Ohara not even bothering to go to the corner... he's climbing the ropes in the middle of the ring!

[The Phoenix puts one foot on the top rope, looking down on Ohara as the crowd buzzes with anticipation...]

...and then steps to the top, springing off towards Zharkov, arm stretched overhead!]

GM: TOMAHAWK CHOP TO THE FLOOOOOOR... CAUGHT!

[The crowd reacts as the powerful Zharkov lowers his head, somehow managing to catch Ohara over his shoulder...]

...and quickly backpedals three steps before DROPPING Ohara throatfirst across the steel barricade at ringside!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: OH MY STARS! OH MY STARS!

[Ohara flails violently on the floor, coughing and grabbing at his throat as Zharkov sits up, a smirk on his face as the fans look on with concern for the challenger. The referee promptly slides to the floor, rushing to kneel beside Ohara to check on his condition.]

GM: Jordan Ohara went for the high risk attack and it did NOT pay off there as Zharkov drops his throat RIGHT across the steel! RIGHT across the steel, Bucky!

BW: That's why they call it high risk, daddy! Ohara's throat hits the steel and he's in some SERIOUS danger now, Gordo.

[Zharkov climbs off the floor as Ohara continues to clutch his throat, coughing and gasping for air as the referee signals for the match to continue, rushing back into the ring.]

GM: Ohara's down... Zharkov's up... and just like that, this match has completely flipped in the opposite direction!

[The Tsar slowly walks around the downed Ohara, taking in the damage he did to his challenger as the ringside fans let him have it. Zharkov ignores the crowd, leaning down to grab the gasping Ohara by the hair, hauling him up to his feet, pulling him back towards the ring...]

GM: Zharkov pulling him back to the ring. He wants to end this in the middle for the whole world to see, no doubt.

[Zharkov slips Ohara's head under the bottom rope, his throat pulled back across it as the Tsar pulls the Phoenix towards him!]

GM: Another choke on the part of Zharkov!

BW: Not just a choke now, Gordo. Doing even more damage to that injured throat that he dropped across the barricade.

[Zharkov lets go at four, allowing Ohara to slump to the apron as the Russian rolls under the ropes to break the count. The National Champion climbs to his feet, his arms raised over his head as the fans jeer madly.]

GM: Listen to these Philly fans letting Maxim Zharkov have it. They do not like what he's doing here to Jordan Ohara and they want him to hear it.

BW: Well, it's a good thing that Maxim Zharkov has never given a damn what the fans cared about! In all his time in the AWA, Zharkov has done exactly what HE wants to do and not cared about the reaction of anyone else!

[Zharkov walks back towards the ropes, reaching over to drag Ohara off the floor and up onto the apron. Looping Ohara's arms over the top rope, leaving him fully exposed, Zharkov winds up...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

GM: CLUBBING BLOW ACROSS THE THROAT BY ZHARKOV!

[The merciless Russian winds up again...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

GM: Another one!

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

GM: A third!

[The referee again steps in, protesting loudly.]

BW: Zharkov's gotta be careful, Gordo. He wants the entire world to know he's a better wrestler than Jordan Ohara. A disqualification doesn't get him to where he wants to go.

[Zharkov glares at the official before winding waaaaaaaay back...]

“WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!”

[...and lands another clubbing blow to the throat, this one flipping Ohara backwards over the ropes, dumping him down facefirst on the canvas.]

GM: Zharkov just hammering home that forearm across the throat!

[Ohara lies on his chest, grabbing his throat as Zharkov again slowly walks around the ring, soaking up the jeers of the AWA faithful.]

GM: Zharkov’s got Ohara right where he wants him now... right at his feet...

[The National Champion circles back to Ohara, lifting him up by the wrist...

...and YANKS him into a short-arm clothesline!]

GM: Good grief! Zharkov flattened him BADLY with that clothesline!

[Still holding the wrist, Zharkov drags Ohara up a second time, and DRAGS him into a second short-arm clothesline, leaving Ohara in a heap on the canvas.]

GM: Back to back clotheslines by the National Champion and Jordan Ohara is laid out in the ring in a bad, bad way!

BW: The end may be near for Ohara, Gordo.

GM: Things do not look good for the young man from the Carolinas right about now.

[Zharkov walks around the dazed Ohara, looking out on the jeering crowd.]

GM: But Zharkov is wasting valuable time here tonight. He’s brutalizing Ohara with some of his offense but he’s not immediately following up on him. Perhaps enjoying this a little too much.

BW: Ohara’s been less a Phoenix and more an annoying buzzing fly to Zharkov for months now. You gotta let him savor using the swatter on this little bug.

GM: Zharkov making his way back towards Ohara now, dragging him up to his feet...

[Ohara suddenly swats the grasping hand away, swinging fast and hard...]

“WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!”

“OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

GM: BIG CHOP BY OHARA!

[The blow stuns Zharkov, forcing him to stumble back as the crowd cheers.]

“WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!”

“OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

[The second one knocks Zharkov back another couple of steps and Ohara suddenly gives a shout...]

“WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!”

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"  
"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"  
"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"  
"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"  
"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

[A flurry of chops from every direction and of every style leave Zharkov wobbly as Ohara switches to kicks to the side of the knee...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"  
"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"  
"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"  
"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"  
"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

[And with Zharkov really wobbly, Ohara drops back, going into a kata to wind up for one more chop...]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[...which is when Zharkov RUNS HIM DOWN with a massive clothesline!]

GM: GOOD GRIEF!

BW: Zharkov took everything Ohara had to throw at him right there and he STILL ran him down! Man oh man, this guy is a stud, Gordo! Maxim Zharkov is a future World Champion - there's not a doubt in my mind!

[Zharkov stands over Ohara, shouting at him in Russian...

...and then reaches down, wrapping his powerful arms around Ohara's torso...]

GM: Uh oh! ZHARKOV LIFTS!

[The Russian powerhouse deadlifts the 225 pound Ohara up off the canvas, letting him dangle in the gutwrench as he strides across the ring, the crowd buzzing with anticipation...

...and then HURLS him across the ring with a gutwrench suplex!]

GM: Ohhh! He BOUNCES Ohara off the mat with that suplex!

BW: We may be about to see an Olympic gold medalist in action later tonight but that was a gold medal worthy suplex right there, Gordo!

GM: It certainly was! Zharkov to his feet now... looking down on Ohara... perhaps starting to think about finishing him off. Perhaps thinking about how he can end the challenge of young Jordan Ohara!

[Zharkov takes his time walking around the ring again, throwing an occasional glance down at Ohara who is barely moving on the canvas. The Russian loops back towards him as the referee checks on Ohara.]

GM: Zharkov shoves past the referee, dragging Ohara up to his feet by the hair...

[The crowd groans as Zharkov lifts Ohara into the air, pushing him straight up overhead...]

GM: No, no, no!

[...and steps towards the ropes, throwing Ohara into the air where he lands  
throatfirst across the top rope!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: HIS THROAT HITS THE TOP! RIGHT DOWN ON THE ROPE!

[Ohara falls to the mat, clutching his throat with both hands as he flails violently on  
the mat, kicking his legs, twitching and shaking as Zharkov shoves past the referee,  
shoving Ohara down into a lateral press.]

GM: ZHARKOV COVERS!

[The referee dives to the mat to count.]

GM: ONNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOOOO! THR-

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: KICKOUT! KICKOUT JUST IN TIME!

[Zharkov angrily slams a fist down into the canvas, glaring at the official who holds  
up two fingers.]

GM: Zharkov thought he had Ohara after dropping his throat down on the top rope!  
He thought he had this won!

[The Tsar gets to his feet, angrily dragging Ohara off the mat, setting his staggered  
form up in mid-ring as he backs off, going into a spin...]

GM: PEACEMAKER!

[But Ohara ducks down, diving facefirst to the mat to avoid the discus lariat!]

GM: DUCKED BY OHARA!

[Ohara spins back towards Zharkov, winding up..]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[The knife edge chop lands, knocking Zharkov back a step...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[A second one lands as well as Ohara gives a shout, moving swiftly and violently...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

[The series of chops leaves Zharkov stumbled and with a bright red chest...

...but the mighty Russian surges forward, throwing a wild clothesline that Ohara  
ducks again...]

GM: DUCKED!

[Ohara goes into a spin of his own...]

“WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!”

“OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

GM: SPINNING CHOP! OH MY!

[The blow stuns Zharkov, sending him staggering in a circle as Ohara hooks him from behind, running towards the ropes...]

GM: Rolling reverse- no! Zharkov hangs on!

[Ohara pops back to his feet, charging the Russian who ducks his shoulder, lifting Ohara into the air...]

GM: Shoulder toss over... Ohara lands on the apr-ONNNN!

[Gordon’s exclamation comes as Ohara grabs the top rope, swinging a leg up to snap a foot off Zharkov’s head!]

GM: Ohara caught him with the boot upstairs... and look at this now!

[The fired-up Ohara snatches Zharkov in a front facelock, reaching over to grab the big Russian by the tights, trying to lift him into the air...]

GM: OHARA LOOKING FOR A SUPLEX TO THE FLOOR!

[Ohara struggles and strains, trying to get Zharkov up into the air!]

GM: CAN HE DO IT?!

BW: No way, Gordo! There’s no way!

[Ohara tries again, this time stepping up on the bottom rope to get more leverage...

...and he gets Zharkov into the air!]

GM: HE’S GOT THE TSAR UP!

[But only for a moment as Zharkov gets back down on the mat, the crowd deflating at the suplex attempt...

...and then the National Champion lifts Ohara into the air instead!]

BW: No problem for Zharkov!

[Zharkov leans forward, giving a shove...]

“OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

[...and DROPS Ohara facefirst on the barely-padded floor at ringside!]

GM: GOOD GOD ALMIGHTY! FACEFIRST TO THE FLOOR FOR OHARA!

[The Russian leans over the ropes, breathing heavily as he looks down at Ohara who is laid out on the floor after the tremendously hard fall!]



GM: There is no give on that floor! That padding is there to prevent catastrophe but anyone who has ever been on it will tell you that it doesn't give much on impact! Ohara took a very hard fall there and he's in serious trouble, fans. His title challenge is in serious trouble!

[With a deep breath, Zharkov drops down to the mat, rolling under the ropes to the floor as the referee shouts a reprimand to let Ohara get back into the ring.]

GM: Zharkov's going out after him, fans! We're about fifteen minutes into this thirty minute time limit and Maxim Zharkov is looking to finish off Jordan Ohara right about now!

[The Russian moves towards Ohara who blindly reaches up, using Zharkov's own leg to pull himself up to his knees...]

GM: Ohara's trying to get up and-

[Grabbing Ohara by the hair with both hands, Zharkov lifts him to his feet with ease... and SMASHES his own skull into Ohara's once... twice... three times...

...and then wraps his powerful arms around Ohara's torso...]

GM: No, no, no!

[...and HURLS Ohara several feet overhead and across the ringside area, sending him BOUNCING off the barely-padded floor!]

"THUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUD!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: OVERHEAD THROW BY ZHARKOV!

BW: WITH! EASE! He tossed Ohara like a bag of nothing!

GM: Zharkov is tossing Ohara every which way right about now... and you've gotta start to wonder how much Ohara has left in him, Bucky. He's taken some tremendously hard blows to the torso... to the throat... to the back now.

BW: Every once in a while, it looks like Ohara's going to fight his way back into it but Zharkov's had an answer for him every single time!

[Zharkov gets back to his feet, walking alongside the ring apron as Ohara rolls to his chest, trying to pull himself away from the Russian to get some time to recover but the Russian is having no part of that gameplan.]

GM: Zharkov hooks him by the tights, dragging him back up to his feet...

[The crowd gasps as Zharkov snatches Ohara in a rear waistlock!]

GM: WAISTLOCK! NOT ON THE FLOOR! NOT ON THE-

[But Ohara rifles his elbow back into the side of Zharkov's face once... twice... three times... four, five, six... just throwing as quickly as his body will allow, finally breaking free and spinning out behind Zharkov...]

GM: SHOVE FROM BEHIND!

"CLAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAANG!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: OHARA SHOVES HIM INTO THE POST!

BW: I think Zharkov hit his head! I think he hit his head, Gordo!

[Zharkov staggers backwards, certainly looking like someone who just suffered a blow to the head as Ohara - who fell to his knees after the shove - gets back up, swooping in behind him...]

GM: ARE YOU KIDDING ME?!

[The crowd ROARS as Ohara muscles Zharkov up in a back suplex, twisting him around in mid-lift...

...and DROPS him flat on his back on the barely-padded floor!]

"THUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUD!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: BOLT BUSTER ON THE FLOOOOOOOORRRRRR!

BW: HOW DID HE DO THAT?! HOW DID HE GET HIM UP FOR THAT?!

GM: TREMENDOUS HEART! TREMENDOUS GUTS! A WILL TO WIN LIKE FEW OTHERS POSSESS!

[But now both competitors are laid out on the floor, chests heaving as the referee starts a double count on both champion and challenger...]

GM: The referee laying down a double count. Remember, if they can't beat the count, the match is over and Zharkov will retain the title. The title does NOT change hands on a countout.

[The referee's count goes to "TWO!" as we get another shot of both men barely moving on the floor.]

GM: Ohara can't win the title unless both he AND Zharkov are back in that ring. He can win the match by countout but not the title.

[The count hits "FOUR!" as Ohara tiredly rolls to a hip, his arms flopping over onto the floor.]

GM: Ohara trying to get up... he's starting to stir out there on the outside of the ring after some hard falls. This kid's got guts like you wouldn't believe.

BW: Zharkov's trying to get up too though. He's up on an elbow.

GM: Zharkov took a devastating Bolt Buster out on the floor... right down on his back... it's honestly impressive he's even moving at this point.

[The referee counts "SIX!" as Ohara sits up on the floor, breathing heavily as he struggles up to a knee.]

GM: Ohara's trying to get up... he's almost there now...

[As "SEVEN!" rings out, Ohara gets to his feet, throwing a glance at the ring... and then moving towards Zharkov instead...]

GM: Ohara knows he needs to get Zharkov in! He's got a few seconds!

[At the count of "EIGHT!," Ohara drags Zharkov off the floor, flinging him under the ropes into the ring as Ohara gets up on the apron...

...and points to the corner to a HUUUUUUUGE ROAR!]

GM: OHARA'S GOING UP TOP!

[The Phoenix marches down the apron, stepping up on the second rope as he starts to climb from the outside...]

GM: Ohara on the second rope... now heading to the top!

[Inside the ring, Zharkov grabs at his lower back as he slowly stirs off the canvas, the referee stepping back to give him a wide berth...]

GM: OHARA'S UP TOP! ZHARKOV ON HIS FEET!

[The crowd ROARS as Ohara leaps into the air, pumping his arms and legs as he soars through the sky...]

GM: PHOENIX FLAME!

[...and the frog splash crossbody connects on Zharkov, toppling him down to the canvas!]

GM: TAKES HIM DOWN AND... OH MY STARS! OH MY STARS!

[The crowd ROARS in shock as Zharkov rolls through the Phoenix Flame, ending up back on his feet, holding Ohara across his chest!]

GM: ZHARKOV ROLLS THROUGH THE FLAME AND COMES OUT UNBURNT ON THE OTHER SIDE!

[The mighty Russian turns, showing the trapped Ohara off to the crowd!]

GM: HE'S GOT OHARA AT HIS MERCY AND-

[The crowd ROARS as Ohara suddenly drags Zharkov down to the mat, trapped inside an inside cradle!]

GM: CRADLE! CRADLE! ONNNNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOOOO! THREEEEEE-

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: KICKOUT! KICKOUT BY ZHARKOV!

[Both men scramble up, each trying to get there before the other...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: CHOP BY OHARA!

"THUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUD!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: FOREARM BY ZHARKOV!

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: ANOTHER CHOP!

"THUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUD!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: ANOTHER FOREARM!

[And with the crowd ROARING for the sudden showdown, the two men go to war!]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"THUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUD!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"THUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUD!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"THUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUD!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"THUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUD!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"THUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUD!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"THUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUD!"

GM: NO MORE OF A FIGHT - WE'VE GOT A WAAAAAARRRRRR!

[Zharkov snatches a handful of hair, unloading with a series of short forearms...]

"THUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUD!"

"THUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUD!"

"THUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUD!"

"THUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUD!"

"THUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUD!"

[A final one sends Ohara spinning away, falling to his knees. Zharkov steps forward, snatching a gutwrench, deadlifting him straight up and into powerbomb position where he lets loose a horrid scream, letting go with one arm as he grabs at his lower back...

...where Ohara snaps himself backwards, using a rana to take down Zharkov, cradling his legs!]

GM: ONNNNNNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOOOO! THREEEEEEEEEEEE-

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: AND AGAIN, THE NATIONAL CHAMPION JUST BARELY SAVES HIS TITLE!

[And again, the two men attempt to scramble up, a race to a standing position...]

GM: OHH! Boot to the gut by Zharkov!

[He grimaces as he steps forward, snatching a standing headscissors on Ohara. The Russian looks out on the crowd...]

"TSAR! BOMBAAAAA!"

[...with his jaw clenched, Zharkov lifts Ohara into the air...]

GM: He's got him up! Trying to get him up into the crucifix...

[But a wriggling Ohara slips out, landing on his feet behind Zharkov. The big Russian wheels around as Ohara steps in, his leg behind Zharkov's...]

GM: What's he...?!

[With a big step, Ohara shoves the upper torso, sweeping the leg out and DRIVING the back of the head down into the canvas!]

BW: WHAT THE HELL WAS THAT?!

GM: SOME KIND OF LEGSWEEP SLAM! HANGING ON FOR THE COVER!

[The referee dives to count!]

GM: ONNNNNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOOOO! THREEEEEEEEEEEE-

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: AGAIN! AGAIN ZHARKOV KICKS OUT TO SAVE THE TITLE!

[Ohara rolls off, burying his face in his hands for a moment!]

GM: I think Ohara thought he had him there! Jordan Ohara pulling something new out and going for it all!

[Ohara moves to a knee, looking down at Zharkov, shaking his head...]

GM: Ohara's back up... and I think he's GOING back up as well!

[With the Russian down on the mat, Ohara walks towards the ropes, stepping through. He slaps the top turnbuckle a few times, breathing heavily before he starts the climb...]

GM: And the Phoenix is looking to take flight again!

BW: He's gotta get up there before Zharkov gets up, Gordo! We already saw what Zharkov did to the standing version of the Phoenix Flame but if he can hit it on the National Champion when he's down on the mat, we may have a new champion!

GM: Ohara to the top rope... looking down on Zharkov!

[The Phoenix lifts his hands over his head, arms stretched to the sky before he leaps, pumping his arms and legs...]

GM: PHOENIX FLAAAAAAAAME!

"THUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUD!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: HE MISSED! HE MISSED! ZHARKOV GOT CLEAR IN TIME!

[And as Ohara rolls onto his back, clutching his ribs in pain, Zharkov rolls back, throwing an arm across the chest...]

GM: ONNNNNNNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOOOOOO! THREEEEEEEEEEEEEEEE-

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: SHOULDER UP! OHARA'S GOT THE SHOULDER UP! MY STARS!

[With a roar of frustration, Zharkov pushes up to his knees, breathing heavily as he glares at referee Koji Sakai.]

GM: Zharkov can't believe it! He thought he had him there... but Jordan Ohara will not stay down! He will not die! We heard him say it before the match, Bucky - Jordan Ohara will not die!

[Zharkov climbs off the mat, grabbing at his lower back as he steels himself for what's to come. He nods his head confidently, leaning down to drag a limp Ohara off the mat, pulling him into a standing headscissors...]

GM: Zharkov's got him hooked! He's got him set and...

[The Russian powerhouse grits his teeth, sucking down the pain as he lifts Ohara into the air...

...and pushes him up into the crucifix!]

GM: HE'S GOT HIM ALL THE WAY UP! THE TSAR BOMBA IS SET! THE TSAR BOMBA IS ON THE MOVE!

[Stepping towards the corner, Zharkov turns to face the ring, holding Ohara aloft...]

BW: TSAR! BOMMMMBAAAAAAA!

[...and DRIVES Ohara down on the back of his head and neck with the crucifix powerbomb!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[Zharkov folds up the legs, stacking Ohara up as he leans across!]

BW: IT'S OVER!

GM: ONNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO!  
THREEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEE

[But just before the hand slaps down...]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[...the shoulder flies up!]

GM: KICKOUT! KICKOUT! MY GOD IN HEAVEN, HE KICKED OUT OF THE TSAR BOMBA!

[Zharkov falls back, sitting on the mat, his eyes wide with shock!]

GM: NO ONE HAS \_EVER\_ KICKED OUT OF THE TSAR BOMBA! NEVER!

[Zharkov holds up three fingers to the referee who gives a shocked shake of the head, holding up two... and then holding up his hands, showing just how close the pinfall came!]

GM: It was THAT close, fans! THAT close to Zharkov fending off the challenge of Jordan Ohara! THAT close to Maxim Zharkov keeping his undefeated streak intact!

[A shocked Zharkov is still down on the mat when suddenly the crowd ERUPTS in jeers!]

GM: WHAT THE-?!

[The boos get louder as Muteesa, Polemos, and John Law come jogging down the aisle towards the ring. Javier Castillo stands at the top of the ramp, looking down towards the ring.]

GM: The Korugun soldiers are heading for the ring! They're coming to save the title for Zharkov!

[Zharkov struggles up to his feet as he hears the crowd roar, turning his head towards the ramp...]

GM: Polemos is in and-

[The crowd ROARS in shock as Zharkov goes into a spin and FLATTENS Polemos with a Peacemaker discus lariat!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: WHAT THE-?!

[Muteesa is in next, going straight for Ohara but Zharkov drills him with a pair of right hands, sending him flying through the ropes to the floor just as John Law slides in...

...and Zharkov grabs him by the head, sprinting across the ring, and HURLS the Korugun enforcer over the top rope to the floor!]

GM: WHAT THE HELL IS GOING ON?!

[Zharkov looks furiously up the ramp, staring at a shocked Castillo...]

"I fight... FOR ME!"

[There are actually some cheers that go up from the crowd at that as Zharkov turns angrily back towards mid-ring...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: PHOENIX KICK! PHOENIX KICK!

[The spinning back roundhouse BLASTS Zharkov in the jaw as he completely dead man flops onto his back. Ohara dives across, hooking both legs tightly!]

GM: ONNNNNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOOOO! THREEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEE!

"DING! DING! DING!"

[The crowd ERUPTS in one of the loudest moments of the night, fans literally jumping up and down in celebration!]

GM: OHARA WINS! OHARA WINS! WE'VE GOT A NEW CHAMPION!

[Ohara rolls onto his back, staring up at the lights as the ring announcer makes it official.]

RO: Here is your winner... annnnnnnnnnd NEWWWWWWWW AWA NATIONAL CHAMPIONNNNNNNNN...

JORRRRRRRRDAAAAAAAAAAAAAN OOOOOOOOOOOHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA!

[The crowd gets even louder as the referee helps Ohara to a seated position, a huge grin on the face of the new champion who steadies himself with his hands.]

GM: Ohara climbing to his feet... the new National Champion after such a long, hard battle to get there. The battles with the Axis... the betrayals of Riley Hunter and Derrick Williams... the quest to climb to the top of the AWA against all odds and he has made it! Jordan Ohara is your new National Champion and listen to these fans in Philly!

BW: Well, I can't say that I'm happy about it, Gordo, but it's one hell of a story for the 4th of July, ain't it? The son of a Marine battling the Last Son of the Soviet Union and America comes out on top.

GM: Which just shows that even in the darkest of days, there is a light waiting to be found - a good lesson for us all these days, I think, Bucky.

BW: Amen, Gordo.

GM: Jordan Ohara on the second rope now, celebrating this win... pointing to the fans who he loves so much. He does this all for them. He does everything for them and tonight, he's done what many considered the unthinkable. He has broken the undefeated streak of Maxim Zharkov and he has WON the AWA National Title, etching his name into history alongside men like Marcus Broussard... like Stevie Scott... like Calisto Dufresne... and so many others.

[The crowd begins to buzz as Ohara hops down off the middle rope.]

GM: Wait a second now.

[Ohara turns around, and as the euphoria of the moment runs its course, the reality seeps in.]

BW: Uh oh, Gordo! You know it wouldn't be this easy!

[Ohara sees that there is only one other man in the ring. The referee has been chased to the floor before he could award the AWA National Championship belt to the Phoenix. Zharkov, somewhat recovered from his pinfall defeat, stands with the belt in his hands.]

GM: But... Zharkov, maybe, doesn't even seem to believe what has just transpired himself!

BW: Oh, this could be a real bloodbath, Gordo. Ohara, you thought you had a beating laid on you during this match... wait'll you see what a Tsar does to you when he has nothing to lose.

[Ohara does not back down. The rivals stare each other down across the ring stoically. A close-up on Zharkov's scowling face reveals that through the perspiration...

...a single tear slides down his cheek from his eye. Zharkov thrusts the belt forward with both hands, and Ohara receives it with a surprised nod of acceptance.]

BW: WHAT?!

GM: SPORTSMANSHIP! MY STARS, WHAT SPORTSMANSHIP FROM THE LAST SON OF THE SOVIET UNION! My stars and garters, what a moment on this Fourth of July!



[Ohara leaps to the middle turnbuckle again, raising his National Championship belt for the world to see. Briefly cut to the entrance, where Javier Castillo is apoplectic at his army's failure to prevent this moment.]

GM: After over two years, Maxim Zharkov has finally been pinned to the canvas, one-two-three! The National Title has returned to the land of milk and honey, on July 4th, 2017! Jordan Ohara said, "I can," and he did!

[Ohara steps down from the turnbuckle, still elated, but wary of a new looming presence at ringside - neither Korugun-aligned, nor Axis-aligned.]

BW: That's... that's Blake Colton out there at ringside, Gordo...

GM: Jordan Ohara, proving all the doubters wrong... and all the credit in the world to the Tsar for not only putting up one heck of a fight, but showing us an honorable, noble side we have not yet seen.

[Ohara's concern for the newcomer at ringside is overridden by Zharkov, who pulls the new champion toward him boisterously to raise his arm in bittersweet admiration. Ohara accepts the gesture, the crowd buzzing loudly now...]

"CLAAAAAANG!"

[...only for Zharkov to fall forward to the mat...]

GM: No!

[...when he is stuck in the back of the head by a shovel...]

GM: Not him again!

[...a shovel covered with dozens of initials etched into the blade...]

GM: Jackson Hunter has struck again!

[...wielded by the man who brought Zharkov to the AWA.]

GM: The Scourge of the AWA has just taken out the former National Champion! Someone needs to stop this madman!

[Ohara has thoughts along those lines, but he finds himself doubled over by an axehandle strike from Blake Colton, who has now entered the ring.]

GM: The National Champion is now attacked by this sasquatch!

[Colton lifts Ohara into the air for a powerbomb...]

...then hikes him up even higher before dropping him forward with a monstrous elevated sit-out powerbomb!]

GM: OH MY STARS! FROM SEVEN FEET IN THE AIR! AFTER EVERYTHING OHARA'S ALREADY BEEN THROUGH TONIGHT!

[Hunter passes the shovel to Colton before slithering to the floor to pull the referee into the ring. He passes a card to Rebecca Ortiz and shouts at the timekeeper's position.]

BW: ...they're working together, Gordo...

GM: It certainly would appear that way.

[One swing from the massive Blake Colton and Hunter's shovel in the direction of the ring aisle convinces Javier Castillo to call his soldiers back in strategic retreat. The voice of Rebecca Ortiz over the public address briefly sounds...]

RO: Ladies and gentlemen, I have...

[...But she tails off unsure of what she's about to read. Hunter returns to the ring to direct traffic, but...]

GM: Oh my stars, Zharkov is back on his feet!

[Glassy eyed, but still lucid, Maxim Zharkov roars enraged at his former advisor's betrayal. He grabs him by the shirt collar and shakes him. Hunter screams for assistance.]

BW: How is he still standing!?

GM: It's bedlam out here at Liberty or Death! Even President Castillo seems to not know what is going on here!

[Castillo shouts to John Law.]

"He is not supposed to be here, maldita sea! What is happening?!"

[Colton hears Hunter's pleas and tears Zharkov off of him with alarming ease. Zharkov swings a massive fist to Colton, but Colton ducks, and scoops Zharkov off the mat.]

BW: That sasquatch just lifted Zharkov off the mat like he was a light-heavyweight!

[Hunter, gasping for breath on the ropes, looks at Colton and extends his arm to him, pointing his thumb downward. He stabs his thumb downward agitatedly to Colton. Colton nods.]

GM: What is this? What is this?!

[With Zharkov inverted, held belly-to-belly against Colton's giant torso, Colton hops into the air...]

GM: ...NO...

[...throwing his legs out from beneath him...]

GM: ...NO!!!

[...and lands in a seated position, transferring all of his and Zharkov's weight onto the Tsar's neck.]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[In what feels like horrifying slow-motion, Colton pushes Zharkov away from him, and the former National Champion crumples to the mat, more like an object than a living person.]

GM: MY GOD IN HEAVEN!

BW: Oh... oh my god, Gordon. Look at him.

[Ohara, rolling to his side on the mat - a previous victim of Blake Colton's power - looks on. His face is contorted by horror.]

The fans, all on their feet from the outcome of the titanic patriotic struggle, buzz with concern over the shocking twist.

At the entrance, Javier Castillo's jaw hangs open, his mind trying to piece together what this means.]

GM: Blake Colton and Jackson Hunter... I don't understand how this... what the hell did he do to Zharkov?

[Blake Colton rolls out of the ring and shouts up the aisle to the collected forces of Korugun.]

"WHO WANTS TO BE NEXT, BAHDS?"

[And in the ring, Jackson Hunter merely takes a couple of deep breaths, grits his teeth at the scene before him, and barks out a command to Rebecca Ortiz.]

"READ IT!"

[Ortiz, voice almost quivering, speaks over the microphone to the hushed arena.]

RO: Ladies and gentlemen...

...per the rules...

[She gulps hard.]

RO: ...of the Steal the Spotlight contract...

[The fans buzz, one shock after another.]

RO: ...The following contest, set for one fall...

...is...

...is for the AWA National Championship...

BW: WHAT?!

GM: ACK!!!

RO: ...Introducing first...

"RING THE BELL!"

[Having given the order, Hunter has already started stomping away at the fallen Jordan Ohara, when the bell rings.]

"DING! DING! DING!"

GM: ...this is...

[Ohara tries to crawl to the ropes, his match instincts beginning to kick in, but he finds himself dragged by the ankles to the middle of the ring.]

GM: I... I am in shock...

[Hunter laces Ohara's legs around his, and for the second time in the evening, turns an adversary into the Mindflyer.]

GM: Jackson Hunter... with that Mindflyer... Fight it, Jordan! Fight it!

BW: He's fading, Gordo.

[Ohara claws at the mat. He rips at his hair, trying to drown out the agony the hold is placing him in.]

GM: Come on, kid! Come on, kid!

[With one last effort, Ohara pushes himself off the mat in a last-ditch effort to break the Mindflyer...]

GM: He's going to break the hold! He's going to break the hold!

[With a final push, Ohara forces Hunter off his feet, breaking his stance and the hold. The fans roar in approval. The tide may still turn in Philadelphia...]

"O-HA-RA! O-HA-RA! O-HA-RA!"

[Colton turns around to see the commotion in the ring, allowing the EMTs to assist the fallen Zharkov by the ring apron. Hunter's eyes go wild, shocked at the Phoenix's resolve. The Axis mastermind snarls...]

BW: Oh, Ohara broke the stance, but he didn't break the Mindflyer hold, Gordo!

[...and Jackson Hunter rights himself and re-applies the hold. Ohara howls in agony as Hunter wrenches back maliciously.]

GM: He has to break this hold, fans! The National Champion has to prevent a perversion of justice!

BW: He can't, Gordo, he just can't do it.

[Ohara's arm reaches out in the direction of the motionless Zharkov, his previous adversary, like he's reaching for assistance...]

...but Ohara's arm goes limp, as the pain wracks his body...

...and he begins to go slack.

The referee has to yell instructions.]

"Jordan! Jordan! If you cannot respond, I will end the match, Jordan!"

[The Phoenix has joined The Tsar in being unable to fight back.]

"That's it! That's it!"

[The referee waves his arms frantically at the timekeeper.]

"DING! DING! DING!"

GM: There are no words, fans.

BW: Did that just happen, Gordo?!

[Hunter releases the hold and drops to his knees, cackling toward the rafters. Blake Colton grabs the National Championship belt and slides into the ring with it. With a shake of his head, the referee tries to raise Hunter's arm, but the Axis Mastermind is more interested in the physical gold. Cut to a series of reactions...

...Two twenty-something fans in black Dead Man's Party hoodies look at the ring, jaws agape in astonishment and surprise...

...Half-a-dozen fans in the lower bowl are furiously jeering. They throw the classic "thumbs down" gesture...

...A girl in a Carolina blue Phoenix t-shirt, no more than twelve, cups her hands to her mouth in horror..

...President Castillo watches from the entrance, frozen, his army rendered useless...

...and Jackson Hunter pressing the center plate of the National belt to his hawk-like face in a state of malicious joy.]

GM: I am... as flabbergasted as you, fans.

[Colton boosts Hunter up onto his broad shoulders and circles the ring for the world to see. Hunter cradles the National Title across his chest.]

BW: The landscape of the AWA has changed, Gordo. No other way to put it.

[A half-empty cup of soda is the cue for the conspirators Hunter and Colton to exit. Hunter dismounts the massive Colton's shoulders and turns to face the ramp. He offers Castillo a dainty, sarcastic wave. Blake Colton mouths the phrase, "gaze into the infinite." Hunter mouths, "see you in Regina."

And then they are both gone through the raucous, disconcerted crowd.]

GM: We... we have to take a moment to digest what has just taken place here. Jackson Hunter, who has re-emerged from his months-long exile has hijacked the AWA National Championship via his Steal the Spotlight contract...

BW: You saw that, right? Jackson Hunter said, "see you in Regina" to Javier Castillo. What in blazes is the Battle of Saskatchewan gonna be like? Wait! Is he Blake Colton's mystery partner?

GM: Bucky, the real story here is that Maxim Zharkov may be seriously injured by that Scoop Piledriver from Blake Colton, and Jordan Ohara may be in a similar state due to that Mindflyer that he was trapped in for a prolonged duration. We saw that hold do a number on Riley Hunter earlier tonight.

[Dr. Ponavitch is accompanied by a full team of trainers and EMTs. Jordan Ohara is slowly coming to.]

GM: Maxim Zharkov has not moved since that Scoop Piledriver was applied... I had hoped after SuperClash last year that I'd never again have to call that particular hold again - that reverse belly-to-belly variant that Jackson Hunter apparently taught to Blake Colton is extremely dangerous.

[The fans quietly chant.]

"O-HA-RA. O-HA-RA. O-HA-RA."

[Ohara becomes more concerned about the status of his rival as he sees the long spinal board brought out.]

GM: And Jordan Ohara... who should be celebrating as the new AWA National Champion is now surveying the carnage after this... heist was perpetrated by that... Chinook conspiracy. Fans, I'm... well, I am in shock... plain and simple. We need to allow some time for Zharkov to be helped out of here and... well, let's take a quick break.

[Ohara is held back from checking on Maxim Zharkov by the trainers attending to him. Just as Zharkov is about to be shifted onto the spinal board...

...the crowd roars as Zharkov's arm gradually raises, and weakly but defiantly shakes his fist into the air as we fade to black...

...and then up as The Tragically Hip's "Blow At High Dough" plays in the background as we fade to a field. A wrestling ring rests in the golden wheat as deep as the apron. The horizon in the distance spans the entire length of the screen in a straight line, and the setting sun paints the sky in a vivid mixture of blues, oranges, and yellows. Fade to a closer shot of the ring where the silver Stampede Cup stands, reflecting the vibrant prairie sunset. The instantly recognizable voice of Gordon Downie keens...]

"They shot a movie once..."

[Fade to System Shock, Derrick Williams and Riley Hunter, at the 55-yard line of the empty Mosaic Stadium, site of the Battle of Saskatchewan. They stand back-to-back, their right arms extended outward, palms open to the vibrant sky.]

"...in my hometown..."

[Fade to Daniel Ross and MISTER, both in "Ringkrieger" apparel. They stand in the middle of a gravel road that stretches in a straight line to infinity, hands clasped behind their back.]

"...Everybody was in it..."

[Fade to the War Pigs in full regalia and face paint on either side of a barbed wire fence; Havoc behind, Ripper in front. Ripper pounds his fist into his palm while Havoc unfurls his tongue.]

"...from miles around..."

[Bret Grayson slowly descends the steps of a small jet; his partner Takeshi Mifune is already on the tarmac, scanning the infinite horizon with his steely gaze.]

"...Out at the speedway..."

[In front of a rusted and ancient tractor, "Cannonball" Lee Connors and Downpour both kneel, eyes closed, deep in meditation.]

"...some kind of Elvis thing..."

[Chet and Chaz Wallace both stand in silhouette, posing against the setting sun.]

"...Well, I ain't no movie star..."

[Charlie Stephens extends his arm to light the cigar clenched in Joe Flint's teeth. As the lighter sparks, nine Snowbirds (Canada's answer to the Blue Angels) roar past in the sky behind him.]

"...But I can get behind anything..."

[Fade to Next Gen, Howie Somers and Daniel Harper, emerging from the hip deep wheat field to enter the ring in which the Stampede Cup rests... along with every other AWA team...]

"...Yeah, I can get behind anything."

[Just as the brawl is about to begin...]

V/O: The Stampede Cup returns this summer! The AWA in association with Mooselips Beer and Tourism Saskatchewan presents the Battle of Saskatchewan, live from Regina, Canada, July 22 and 23rd, only on Pay-Per-View!

[We fade from the promotional material...

...and then fade back up backstage where we find Mark Stegglet, looking quite frantic around as the camera fades up. For a moment, he says nothing but then his attention snaps to the camera like someone signaled him.]

MS: I... well, uh... welcome back to the Battle of- no, I'm sorry. Welcome back to Liberty Or Death. My apologies, fans, but... well, chaos is in the air here tonight in Philly. Our first time to Philly has been covered in chaos thanks to Jackson Hunter mostly. Jackson Hunter who has returned to the AWA, taking both Riley Hunter - his own cousin - and Maxim Zharkov out of action in one night... AND he's now the National Champion as well?! What in the...?

[Stegglet shakes his head.]

MS: Fans, this night is sure to have major ripple effects on the Battle of Saskatchewan. I've already been told that the early reports on Riley Hunter are bad - very bad... and that System Shock is almost certainly out of the tournament. We know that Dana Kaiser has been on the phone as well since the incident with Logan Blackburn, Arminius, and Destro Star. I tried to get a word with her and she told me she had business to take care of regarding the Battle of Saskatchewan also. And now... this?

[Stegglet sighs.]

MS: It's been a long night here in Philly and the night is not yet done. But right now, let's head over to my broadcast colleague Theresa Lynch who has two special guests. Theresa?

[Cut to another part of backstage where Theresa Lynch stands in-between Trish "T-Bone" Wallace and the "Dream Girl" Skylar Swift. Both Swift and Wallace are no longer in their ring attire over an hour following their Six For A Shot match to start off Liberty Or Death. Instead both women seemed more dressed for comfort and decompressing following a wild start to the show.]

TL: Thanks, Mark... First off, ladies... that was quite a performance you both put on earlier this evening. Trish, you single handedly stood down each of the women in the Six For A Shot challenge, literally going toe to toe and pound for pound with a who's who list of women in the AWA. You've got to feel pretty confident after a moment like that.

TW: It does feel good, especially after my last match. I was pretty frustrated with myself after what Kurayami did to me. Well, both of us. I think people are going to think twice about punking me out. But Dream Girl here...

[Trish hooks a thumb towards Skylar.]

TW: ...she's running back to Saskatchewan. She's got a shot at becoming a World Champ in her own country. I figure if she can go the distance with me like she did last month, she's got a shot at Kurayami and a shot at the title.

TL: She certainly does, Skylar, wow. Just wow. I think you flipped the entire Women's Division upside down with that win tonight. Congratulations are in order!

SS: Thanks Theresa, and thanks Trish. I knew going in I'd have my hands full. I mean, this girl right next to me is enough to keep you up at night when you know you're going to step into the ring with her but then you add Ayako, Michelle, and all the other girls on top and for what?

A chance to get your head ripped off by the Bloody She-Wolf of Tokyo?

[Skylar exhales.]

SS: That's a lot for a girl to absorb, Theresa.

TW: Yeah, but just remember if Kurayami can dish it out, she probably can't take it. A bully is a bully until they get five across the nose.

SS: And as hard it is it to put ALL of it aside...Kurayami in the ring...a shot at the title...wrestling in front of a home crowd in Canada...

That's LITERALLY the Dream of the Dream Girl, Theresa!

[Trish raises a finger.]

TW: First thing's first, Skylar: we got an open challenge from Doctor Freakface and Miss Hot Topic for Eternally Extreme 2.

[Theresa nods.]

TL: You sure do. Charisma Knight and Dr. Leah White have given you a bit of an ultimatum. They know how bad the two of you want to get their hands on them and they seem to be taking full advantage of it when they laid out a challenge to you both with the rules only to be determined after you accept the match. Those two could be stirring up all kinds of-

TW: Wacky.

SS: Weird.

TW: Kooky.

SS: Nutty.

[They pause.]

TW/SS: Crazy.

TL: Well, you two seem to be on the same page.

SS: We have to be. We are surrounded by Monsters.

TW: Literally and physically. I don't care what type of match those two think up because we'll be ready for anything and everything. As long as I can indulge in my aggressive side and break things, I'm good. They want an answer?

SS: We've got one for them.



[Both girls nod.]

TW/SS: We accept!

[Suddenly, the lights shut off.]

TL: Wait a sec...

[Theresa's voice is drawn out by some clanging and screeching noises.]

TL: Girls?

[A small light flickers. There's a faint buzz.]

SS: Theresa? Trish?

[The light flickers again. There's a millisecond glance at something propped up against a wall.]

TW: Whoawhoawhoa!

TL: Can we get some help?!

[A hanging light flutters on and off, a humming can be heard, to the tune of "Go Tell Aunt Rhody". When it stops, the lights come back on, behind the trio now stands two wooden tables propped up against the wall. The first one reads "Insert Swifty Here" painted in green and the other one reads "Drop T-Bone Here" in red. The camera pans back and you see Theresa Lynch, Skylar Swift, and Trish Wallace all staring at the tables.]

TL: I think you have your answer.

[Swift looks at the two tables... then over to Trish who smirks and shrugs.]

SS: I think we do. We'll see them Sunday night.

[And we fade from the backstage area...

...and up to a private luxury box somewhere in the arena, open on one side, overlooking the Wells Fargo Center. Colt Patterson is standing by.]

CP: I've said it before, and I'll say it again: clout makes the world go around. And here we are, a matter of minutes away from an AWA World Championship showdown: Detson vs. Grayson, the two-time Champion vs. the Olympic-grade Challenger. But I want to get a word in with the next man up on the contender's ladder..

[Patterson turns to the leather arena seats at the front of the suite, where Kerry Kendrick is seated, taking in the night's action...

...and also taking in Miss Sandra Hayes, who is lounging on his lap, her arms draped around his neck.]

CP: Yo, Foundation - not only did you have the clout to close off Muscle Beach for a private workout when we were in Los Angeles, but now you've got yourself a private box to take in the night's festivities. And you've got the best seat in the house to see who you are going to face when we go north of the border to the Battle of Saskatchewan.

KK: Colt, nine years ago, I spent a month's worth of pay just to sit in the nosebleeds at one Flyers playoff game.

[He points to spot at the opposite end of the arena.]

KK: ...Up there. And nine years ago, I was losing to Buddy Lambert and the Masked Maniac. Colt, I paid my dues. I worked my talent. I am, beyond any doubt, the best wrestler in the world today.

It's what I deserve, Colt. I invested in myself and now it's time to reap the dividends.

CP: Always bet on yourself and you'll never go wrong. Words of wisdom, champ. Or should I say... "soon-to-be-champ."

KK: Hey, like they say, dress for the job you want.

[Colt gestures to the woman on Kendrick's lap.]

CP: And of course, we have to address the secret to your success, your inspiration, your joy... what was it you called her?

MSH: I believe he called me a "hot stick of dynamite," Colt.

CP: That he did. Miss Sandra Hayes, I know a lot of our viewing audience were shocked to see you back in an AWA ring.

MSH: They really thought they could drive me away, and for a while they did. Oh, they were so happy to have me gone, weren't they? There will always be a sexist contingent of the AWA Universe who will always resent the achievements of a Self Made Woman. You could hear it in the voice of one of my former clients earlier tonight.

KK: He was so bitter. You can't spend your whole career complaining about how you got a raw deal.

MSH: I know, Kerry. And I couldn't just sit on the sidelines, watching a talent who is powerful, driven...

[She draws one of her manicured nails gently across Kendrick's cheek.]

MSH: ...Rugged, yet boyishly handsome, with a wicked killer instinct and razor-sharp intellect... I couldn't sit idly by as the AWA kept throwing him into matches trying to break his spirit by pitting him against his own teammates.

[Kendrick waves to the camera.]

KK: 'Sup Rex, 'Sup Callum.

MSH: And then that fiasco at SuperClash! I can't believe they'd squander a talent like this in a match against a baseball player, and that... person... who tried to foil my plans for a greater AWA!

So I made some phone calls... greased some tracks... left some doors unlocked here and there... and here we are.

[She picks up a baseball bat covered in pink glitter.]

MSH: Of course, there always comes a point where I have to step in and take an active role. And it was about time for my Kerry to address a... human resources issue.

[Hayes smirks at Patterson.]

KK: Colt, you're a guy who knows how to take care of your body. Would you put me in the same class as you?

CP: I'd say you're a man who knows the value of keeping in optimal condition.

MSH: And has he ever! This man is a paragon! Especially since "Fight Night on FOX," when he shed 170 pounds of unsightly fat.

[Patterson grins as Kendrick smiles.]

KK: Now... sugar... Ricki was special, okay? She needed an opportunity, and giving her a job gave me a sense of enormous well-being.

MSH: Hun, you're not a charity. "Foundation" refers to your position in the AWA hierarchy, not your position as a non-profit for cheap white trash with self-esteem issues. That's why you're sitting in a private box and everyone from Philly who isn't you is sitting out there.

KK: Good thing that I was able to trade in that old beater of a bodyguard for a Porsche Boxster, isn't it?

[They peck each other on the lips in a revolting display of public affection.]

KK: With Miss Hayes, there's no more bellyaching, no more burping after lunch, no more Björk on the car stereo and wailing along to it like a dying cat.

MSH: And we'll stop scratching checks to the estate of Freddie Mercury. You don't have to want it all anymore.

KK: You're right: I've got it all, gorgeous!

[Kendrick and Hayes' faces move ever closer together, about to make out again, when a female voice calls.]

"Miss Hayes! Don't move! There's something in your hair!"

MSH: [panicked] What?! What is it?!

[Pan up to reveal that in the VIP Lounge behind them, the voice belongs to...]

ET: MY HANDS!

[Ricki Toughill lunges for Hayes, but gets yanked back, inches away from grasping Hayes' silky black ponytail. Kendrick cradles his Siren closer to protect her as Toughill finds herself restrained in the grip of John Law.]

KK: Yeah, Rick. We had you figured for a cheap stunt like this.

[Toughill shouts at the stoic Law.]

ET: Take your hands off me and get a haircut, you hippie!

"Ah, ah, ah..."

[On the other side of Toughill, she is joined by Javier Castillo, still a little anger bubbling under the surface from what went down moments ago.]

MSH: Thank you for dispatching John Law, Javier, especially considering how busy tonight must be.

JC: Very busy, Miss Hayes... as you no doubt saw moments ago.

[Yep. Anger. He turns towards Toughill who is still trying to get away from John Law.]

JC: Miss Toughill, may I remind you of the current status of your employment? Your contract was scheduled for termination eight months ago, but someone interceded, is that not correct?

KK: And this is the thanks I get from you, Rick?

[Ricki looks nervously at Castillo who continues.]

JC: And... you remained employed by the AWA for as long as Mr. Kendrick approved. Now... I suspect that Mr. Kendrick has changed his stance.

MSH: Given that she attempted to bludgeon him a couple of weeks ago, I would hope so.

[Castillo shrugs.]

JC: And so, Mr. Kendrick... it comes down to your final say. In your estimation, is Erica Toughill in violation of her contract?

[Kendrick doesn't even look at his former bodyguard, preferring to look into Miss Sandra Hayes' eyes. They mirror each other's smirk.]

KK: Get rid of her, President Castillo.

JC: Indeed. Thank you.

[He turns back to Toughill.]

JC: Miss Toughill, your services are-

[Toughill interrupts, unable to break free from the grasp of John Law.]

ET: Dear President Castillo! I accept that I have to spend three hours in Wrestling Detention on a beautiful Independence Day for whatever it is I did wrong, but I think you're crazy for making me fight for opportunities only to pull the rug out from underneath me time and again!

I thought you'd appreciate me not going after Kurayami! I jumped through every hoop that this company put in front of me, I was so house trained! This company talks a big game about giving women the opportunity to be as big a star as the men, yet they had to be nagged to death to find a spot to put Julie and me on SuperClash!

[Castillo grimaces in Toughill's direction.]

ET: You talk a big game about opportunity, but you just keep tilting the playing field, Castillo. I have given so much of myself to this company after telling myself that I'd never be screwed by another promoter. I signed with the AWA to get away

from all the sleaze in pro wrestling, not to get embroiled in it! I've given fourteen years of my life to this sport... and I have no AWA accolades to show for it.

I'm not begging for anything I didn't earn. Don't let the last thing I'm remembered for be Fight Night. I spent the first three years of my career losing every match and I'm fine if I have to spend the next three the same way! Just... let me go out on my shield. Give me a warrior's ending.

[Castillo pauses, eyeing Toughill in consideration before replying.]

JC: No. Are you finished?

[Toughill sighs.]

ET: Yeah.

[Toughill gulps hard and furtively runs the side of her hand under her eye to quickly mask any tears.]

ET: I am finished.

[She takes a couple of deep breaths and points to Hayes and Kendrick before declaring, defiantly...]

ET: ...but you haven't finished me.

[Castillo nods, gesturing towards the door.]

JC: Then, if you would please...

[Toughill breaks free from John Law, stomping out the door..

...and out of the AWA.]

KK: [calling after Toughill] Don't worry, Ricki! There will always be that job at Dunkin Donuts waiting for you!

[Sandra Hayes rests her head on Kendrick's shoulder and adds...]

MSH: Poor Ricki.

[Hayes and Kendrick snicker as they turn and face the arena.]

JC: If you'll excuse us... we have some business to attend to after our next match. Mr. Kendrick... Miss Hayes... we'll speak again in Regina.

[And as Castillo and Law make their exit, we fade backstage to where AWA World Champion Johnny Detson is standing in a back room, no interviewer, just him and the camera. He is dressed to wrestle in long gold tights with black boots and no shirt, the AWA World Heavyweight Title secured around his waist.]

JD: Bret Grayson.

[Detson chuckles and smirks.]

JD: Welcome... took a little longer to get here than you thought, huh?

[Detson nods.]

JD: Yeah, it usually does, but you're here now, aren't you? And what you did to get here...

[Detson whistles.]

JD: That, sir, was impressive. Not one, or two, but three competitors? No one is going to argue that you didn't earn your shot here for the AWA World Heavyweight title! Just like no one would ever question your pedigree... Olympic Gold Medalist. You overcame a broken ankle and won the gold medal. But that, Bret... that stuff is all in the past.

[Detson now glares at the camera.]

JD: Fight Night, you earned a shot at this, but that's all it is... a shot! This isn't the Olympics, this is the AWA... my home turf... and out there? That's my ring. And you are going up against someone who will do everything - and I do mean everything - to keep the title right where it is.

[Detson smiles as he slaps the belt.]

JD: You are every bit the underdog they've made you out to be, Bret Grayson. Castillo would come out of his ivory tower and have you believe in the mythos of Rocky Balboa, the greatest of underdogs, who defied the odds right here in this very city. But you see, Bret... Rocky Balboa? That's fiction. This...

[Detson unstraps the belt and holds it up to the camera.]

JD: ...is reality. And the reality of the situation is, you're walking in there the challenger, you're walking in there the underdog... I am walking out the champion. You're going to give it everything and you're going to fight - champions always do. But in the end, reality trumps fiction every single time. And if people want to believe in fairy tales for tonight... well, they're going to leave very disappointed.

[Detson smirks as he walks off...]

...and we fade into a shot backstage. There, we see the Olympic Gold Medalist, Bret Grayson standing in front of a black backdrop. Grayson is in his wrestling gear, with an American flag tied around his neck and draped over his shoulders like a cape. He stares directly into the camera with an intense look on his face.]

BG: My name is Bret Grayson. Tonight, I face Johnny Detson for the AWA World Heavyweight title.

But you already knew that.

[He continues to glare at the camera.]

BG: I'm THE most decorated amateur wrestler in the history of professional wrestling. A three-time state champion in Ohio. A four-time All-American at the University of Iowa. A two-time NCAA champion. 2003 World Champion. And 2004 Olympic Gold Medalist.

But you already knew that.

[He grins.]

BG: What you might not know, is that I'm considered the underdog against Johnny Detson.

[He frowns.]

BG: An underdog?

[Grayson shakes his head in disbelief.]

BG: How many underdogs do you know who have stepped into a ring with Takeshi Mifune, Jackson Haynes, and MISTER -three men who I GUARANTEE Johnny Detson would never step into a ring with willingly- all on the same night and better yet...defeat every single one of them?

Not too many, right?

[He chuckles.]

BG: How many underdogs do you know who can twist Supreme Wright into a pretzel?

Has suplexed Max Magnum out of his boots?

Was gifted and taught the most devastating submission hold in the history of professional wrestling: the Ankle Lock, from former World Heavyweight champion, Gabriel Whitecross, himself?

[The smirk disappears from Bret's face.]

BG: Because the fact is, I'm not an underdog at all. I'm formidable. I'm dangerous. I'm Johnny Detson's worst freakin' nightmare!

[A beat.]

BG: But he'll find that out soon enough.

[A brief smirk, but Grayson's all business now.]

BG: You may possess the AWA World Heavyweight title, Johnny Detson, but you're no champion. Twice. Two years in a row! ...the wrestlers and fans have had to see you steal that title from them. They've had to see you rob them of the opportunity to see a REAL World Champion hold that title.

...Well, I'm taking it back. I'm taking it back! I might not be the hero the people imagined or the man they envisioned to do it...I might not be a cowboy and I might not be a White Knight, I may not be a pillar of the AWA, but I sure as heck was an American Hero and you better believe on July 4th, this day of all days, that I'm the one that's going to do it!

[He nods to himself.]

BG: In 2004, I was able to carry the hopes and dreams of this nation on my back with a broken ankle and bring them back the gold. Well, I've got two good ankles now, Johnny, so I think I'll lift these people up, carry those hopes and dreams on my back again and bring home the gold one more time.

[Grayson then holds out his right hand, extending his open palm to the camera.]

BG: Put your hand to the screen, everybody.

[There's a fierce, determined look on Grayson's face.]

BG: Touch your hand to mine so I know the people of this nation, the fans of the AWA, the people of this WORLD are with me. Touch your hand to mine, because

right here, right now, I'm going to make you all a promise. I want you know that we're all in this together. To my wife and daughter at home. To the millions of people watching. With the big guy upstairs as my witness, I'm promising you all this:

Bret Grayson is walking into that ring with gold around his neck and when he walks out...it's going to be with gold around his WAIST.

I WILL defeat Johnny Detson.

I WILL be your next AWA World Heavyweight Champion.

[A beat.]

BG: And that...is as real as it gets.

[Fade out... and to the ring where Rebecca Ortiz is standing.]

RO: The following match has a sixty minute time limit...

...AND IS FOR THE AWA WORLD HEAVYWEIGHT TITLE!

[Huge cheers!]

RO: Introducing first... he is the challenger... from Youngstown, Ohio... weighing in at 243 pounds... he is an Olympic Gold Medalist...

BRET  
GRRRRRRRAAAAAYYYYSSSSOOOON!!!

[The lights drop down to nothing, plunging the arena into darkness to the loud buzz of the crowd. A low electronic buzz is heard; the opening section of "Final Countdown" by Europe. As the various industrial/synth sounds come up, small plumes of steam emit from around the entranceway. And then, the famous synthesizer riff begins, causing the crowd hype to build.

At last, as the voice from the song counts down from ten, the entranceway begins filling with thick white mist, like a smoke cloud.

At two, the entrance way floods with golden light, as if a rocket were taking off. And at zero, the light drops, replaced by red, white, and blue small spotlights playing through the now-receding mist, as a previously unseen trapdoor opens up, revealing... none other than Bret Grayson rising from beneath the stage. The Olympic gold medalist is kneeling, with his arms raised, gripping the United States flag over his head as he rises into view to big cheers from the patriotic Philadelphia crowd.]

#We're leaving together#  
#But still it's farewell#

GM: Bret Grayson is not a man we expected to see compete for the AWA World Title here tonight, Bucky. He is a tremendous athlete... a tremendous competitor... an Olympic gold medalist... but he is still a relative newcomer to the world of professional wrestling. But all that changed on Fight Night when Grayson defeated his tag team partner Takeshi Mifune who is sitting at ringside here tonight... then Jackson Haynes... then the monstrous MISTER... all in one gauntlet match with the winner earning this title shot.

BW: Getting here is one thing, Gordo. Winning the big one is something else completely.



GM: No doubt but if ever there was a man who was built to win the big one... it just might be Bret Grayson.

[Bret Grayson is a man in prime physical condition, with wide shoulders and well-defined muscles. He has black hair kept short but messily curled. He has hazel eyes and an epic-level smirk. He's wearing an amateur wrestling-style singlet with an American flag motif. Around his neck, he proudly wears his Olympic gold medal.]

# And maybe we'll come back#  
# To earth, who can tell?#  
# I guess there is no one to blame#  
# We're leaving ground#  
# Will things ever be the same again?#

[Upon arriving at ringside, Grayson walks around the ring and walks up to the steps. He steps through the ropes and then climbs up onto the second turnbuckle. With perfect timing, Grayson raises his arms and points to the sky as the chorus hits...]

# IT'S THE FINAL COUNTDOWN!

[... as the crowd sings along. The lights return to normal inside the arena, as Grayson nimbly hops off the second turnbuckle and retreats to a neutral corner, stretching as he awaits the arrival of Johnny Detson.]

RO: Annnnnnnnnnnnnnd his opponent...

[The opening notes to Led Zeppelin's classic "Kashmir" kicks in over the PA system, drawing jeers from the Philly fans.]

RO: From Hollywood, California... weighing in at 248 pounds... he is the AWA WORRRRRRRRRRLD HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMMMMMMPIONNNNNNN...

JOHNNNNNNNNYYYYYYYYYYY DEEEEEEEEEETSONNNNNNNNNNNNNNN!

[As the rock and roll classic continues to play, Johnny Detson walks into view, dressed in the same attire we saw moments ago in his backstage interview. Detson stares down the ramp at Grayson who waits for him against the far ropes, nodding his head.]

GM: Johnny Detson set to defend the title. One fall, sixty minute time limit... and Detson goes into this knowing that this man...

[We cut to a shot from the luxury box we saw not long ago where Kerry Kendrick and Miss Sandra Hayes are looking on.]

GM: ...will await the winner at the Battle of Saskatchewan.

BW: Kerry Kendrick gets the winner in Mosaic Stadium but Detson can't worry about that yet, Gordo. If he does, he won't have to worry about Mosaic Stadium... not at all.

[Detson is all business as he heads down the ramp towards the ring, unzipping his hoodie as he walks down the aisle, revealing the title belt secured around his waist.]

GM: Johnny Detson, of course, has been the AWA World Champion since March 17th when he defeated Ryan Martinez in controversial fashion to win the gold for the second time.

[The champion pauses in the aisle, glaring at a fan waving a "DETSON FEARS SUPERNOVA!" sign. "Fox's Favorite Son" has words for said fan as well before shaking his head with disgust, continuing his walk towards the ring...

...which is when...]

GM: OH MY GOOOOOOOOOOOD!

[The crowd ERUPTS as Bret Grayson goes TEARING across the ring, hurling himself recklessly into a somersault over the top rope, and completely levels the incoming World Champion!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: BRET GRAYSON! CAN YOU BELIEVE THAT?!

BW: He didn't learn that at the Olympics, daddy!

GM: He certainly did not! Bret Grayson takes to the sky, flying like we've never seen him fly before... completely taking out the World Champion with that somersault dive to the floor!

[Grayson climbs back to his feet, letting loose a roar to the Philly fans who quickly echo it...]

GM: The match hasn't started yet... the bell hasn't rung... but Bret Grayson just kicked off his challenge for the World Heavyweight Title with authority!

[The Olympic gold medalist circles around the downed Detson as the referee shouts from the ring, imploring Grayson to get back inside the squared circle...

...but Grayson has other ideas, grabbing Detson by the foot...]

GM: What's he...?

[The crowd ERUPTS a second time as Grayson suddenly and violently twists the foot gripped in his hands!]

GM: THE LIBERTY LOCK! THE LIBERTY LOCK OUT ON THE FLOOR!

[Detson cries out, screaming in pain as the referee slides to the outside, rushing towards Grayson who is emphatically twisting the ankle with all his might!]

BW: Like you said, Gordo... the match hasn't even started yet but Bret Grayson's trying to take Detson out before it even gets going!

GM: Detson's in horrible pain, screaming in agony and-

[The crowd ROARS as Detson starts slapping the ringside floor fiercely!]

GM: HE'S TAPPING OUT! BRET GRAYSON HAS JUST MADE JOHNNY DETSON TAP OUT!

BW: But out on the floor! Before the bell! It's not legal, Gordo!

GM: And that's exactly what referee Scott Ezra is explaining right now to the challenger. He's letting him know that this tap out needs to take place inside the ring after the bell has rung for it to count.

[Ezra continues to shout at Grayson who continues to torque the ankle, shouting loudly himself as Detson continues to slap the ringside mats. The referee grabs Grayson around the arm, trying to pull him off the World Champion!]

GM: Scott Ezra is trying to get Grayson to let go of Detson but... I'm not sure it's gonna work! Bret Grayson seems determined out there and for a guy who won the Olympic gold medal on a broken ankle, we know what his level of determination is like!

[A frantic waving of the arms towards the locker room brings a handful of AWA officials jogging into view, heading down the ramp to where Grayson continues to punish the ankle of Johnny Detson.]

GM: We've got some help out here now... looks like John Shock is coming out here... Adam Rogers too... a few more referees as well... maybe they'll have better luck at getting Grayson to back off.

[And they do. Rogers and Shock each grab Grayson physically, dragging him off of the downed World Champion who immediately pulls his leg up to his chest, clutching at his ankle as he howls in pain.]

GM: They get Detson free but who knows how much damage Bret Grayson just managed to do!

[Grayson breaks away from the officials, rolling back into the ring. He comes to his feet, marching across and pointing out to the crowd where Takeshi Mifune looks on with a slight smile.]

GM: Grayson with a shout out to his partner, Takeshi Mifune... and do you think Mifune planned this whole thing for Grayson?

BW: It DOES seem right up his alley.

[Grayson turns back towards Detson, giving a shout of "GET IN HERE, YOU COWARD!" as the crowd buzzes at the pre-match assault.]

GM: We've got officials at ringside... now the medical team coming out. Will this match even go on here tonight? Fans, we're going to take a quick break and get the answer to that question but we'll be right back - hopefully - with our World Title showdown! Don't you DARE go away!

[Cut to the floor where Detson is wailing in pain as we fade to black.

Cut to a college library where two students have a physics textbook open.]

STUDENT #1: So what's question 10?

STUDENT #2: "Matter that produces and/or emits ionizing energy can be described by what adjective?"

[Student #1 looks up from the book and slams it shut. Cutaway as he stands up, now suddenly wearing Derrick Williams' gold "Future" coat from SuperClash VIII through the miracle of editing. He takes out his phone and presses a "play" button.]

[A wide shot of the entire library as the student spreads his arms to the chorus of Imagine Dragons.]

"RADIOACTIVE... RADIOACTIVE..."

[Cut to a sushi chef with a white towel over his head and a kimono with a Claw Academy logo. To Volbeat's "A Warrior's Call," he bursts through curtains to serve a platter of sashimi to a table.

In a gym, a woman does sit-ups in and out of frame to "You've Got Another Thing Coming" by Judas Priest. After her third sit-up, her face is spontaneously painted with a black and yellow 'S'. She cups her hands to her mouth and howls.

A man and two school-aged children step through the automatic glass door of a big box retailer to "Black Skinhead" by Kanye West. They are all in hooded fighter's robes, and they stoically nod at the camera in unison as they pause by the shopping carts.

A woman prances through a maze of cubicles to "I'm The Best" by Nicki Minaj, twirling a red braid and balancing a cup of coffee.

A civic worker in a visibility vest tries to move a dead tree branch into a truck to "Brian Boru's March" by The Chieftains. With part of the branch under his arm and his other hand, you'd swear he was giving the branch an armbar.

On a playground, a little girl with a distinct scowl stomps up to home plate to "Another One" by Night Club. She swings her bat wildly at the ball resting on a tee.]

STUDENT #2: [voice] Yeah, I think that's right.

[Cut back to library. Student #1 still has his arms open, but now to the sounds of library ambience. Someone in the background coughs. He sits back down.]

STUDENT #1: Okay... uh... Question 11?

"AWA: Be Your Entrance."

"The Official AWA Playlist, available now on Apple Music and Spotify."

Click The Link!

[Fade to black...

...and as we fade back up, we see Johnny Detson on his feet... well, foot... in the corner of the ring, wincing in pain. He's very obviously trying to avoid putting weight on the other foot that Grayson tormented in the Liberty Lock.]

GM: Welcome back to Liberty Or Death, fans, where this World Title match appears set to go on despite the pre-match attack by Bret Grayson...

BW: Look at Grayson right now, Gordo. He looks like a caged tiger in there.

[Gripping the top rope with white-knuckled hands, Grayson pulls at it, like he's been chained into the corner as he waits for the bell to sound...]

GM: Grayson's ready to be unleashed in this battle for the World Heavyweight Title and Johnny Detson's in a bad way before this one even starts.

BW: I gotta admit, Gordo... I'm a little surprised that Johnny's even getting in there. Getting attacked before the match is a pretty easy way to get out of a title defense and-

GM: Are you saying Johnny Detson would exaggerate an injury to get out of defending his title?!

BW: I'd never say something like that! Just that... no one would've been able to blame him if he did call it a night.

GM: It's a valid point. I have to wonder if perhaps he was told that backing out of the title match at this point would constitute a forfeit of the match and the title. I don't know the answer to that but he IS in there and he IS going to defend the title and-

"DING! DING! DING!"

[The bell sounds and Bret Grayson goes barreling across the ring, running full speed at the cornered Detson who tries to cover up as Grayson pulls up short, swinging for the fences already...]

GM: Big right hands by the challenger, looking to make an early impact and perhaps shock the world tonight here in Philadelphia in front of a partisan red, white, and blue crowd on the 4th of July!

[Detson lifts his arms, trying to cover up as Grayson changes levels, coming downstairs with haymakers instead. As the World Champion lowers his arms to protect against those, Grayson grabs one...]

GM: Irish whip on the way and... oh! Detson fell! He fell a few steps into that whip!

BW: It's the ankle, Gordo! It's gotta be!

[Proving Bucky right, Detson immediately grabs for the ankle that was trapped in the Liberty Lock earlier. Spotting the weakness, Grayson pounces, snatching up the foot in his hand...]

GM: He's going for it again and- LIBERTY LOCK APPLIED A SECOND TIME!

BW: And this time it's legal, Gordo! He's gotta get out of this and he's gotta do it fast!

[Detson immediately rolls to his back, drawing his legs in and shoving off, sending Grayson flying backwards into the buckles.]

GM: Kickoff by the champion, saving the title for certain right there...

[Detson scoots backwards on his butt, trying to create some space as the challenger regroups and advances quickly on him.]

GM: Detson trying to catch a breather and figure out a new gameplan with the hobbled ankle but Grayson's not letting that happen, fans.

[Pulling Detson to his feet, Grayson shoves him back into the corner, again winding and throwing some big right hands that gets the crowd going!]

BW: There's been a lot of talk about this match being a real life Rocky moment here in Philly and with the way Grayson is throwing those big fists, that's exactly what it is! He's trying to knock the World Champion out like he's Clubber Lang, daddy!

GM: Grayson getting a warning from the official for the closed fists... pulling Detson out of the corner now...

[He quickly hooks a front facelock, slinging Detson's arm over his neck...]

GM: Pulls him out, sets him up, and takes him over with a textbook snap suplex! Grayson, of course, was an honorary Team Supreme member for a time... he's also

learned at the knee of Takeshi Mifune over the past several months... plus his initial training being done by one of the all-time great promoters and trainers, Henry Collier, up in the Minnesota area.

BW: Oh, he's definitely got the pedigree to be a future World Champion, Gordo. But is that future here tonight in Philly?

GM: He's off to a great start... look at this, rolling the champion back up... and he takes him over with a second snap suplex!

[Grayson rolls back to his feet again, the crowd stirring as he snaps Detson over a third time!]

GM: Rolling snap suplexes out of Grayson and he floats right into a cover, looking for the first pin attempt of the match!

[A two count follows before the champion slips the shoulder.]

BW: Two count there. Johnny Detson didn't become a two-time AWA World Champion by chance and luck. He's a tough competitor and if Grayson wants to take that title off him, he'll have to push himself to levels he's yet to approach as a professional wrestler.

GM: I believe those levels are there, Bucky... but can he get to them in this - his first shot at the World Title?

BW: A lot of pressure on Bret Grayson tonight. His first World Title match. His first co-Main Event slot. Live for the whole world to witness. A very tough spot for someone with so little experience to be in.

GM: But if ever there was a competitor new to the Main Event world who would likely thrive under the kind of pressure he's competing in for his entire athletic career, it's this man right here.

[Pulling Detson off the canvas, Grayson scoops him up for a bodyslam, twisting around towards the ropes...

...and SLAMS Detson into the ropes so that his leg hits the ropes on the way down!]

GM: Ohh! Grayson continuing to assault the lower body of Johnny Detson, taking another shot at the ankle and the knee of Detson there... and the World Champion is getting out of town, fans.

[The crowd jeers as Detson rolls under the ropes, gingerly putting weight on the attacked ankle as he slowly moves along the ring apron...

...which is Grayson's cue to step out on the apron in pursuit.]

GM: Grayson's having none of it though, quickly moving to the outside to go after the injured World Champion.

BW: This is the chance of a lifetime, Gordo. The title shot itself is the chance of a lifetime but to get it and have the champion in such a vulnerable state is REALLY the chance of a lifetime.

[As Grayson steps to the outside, we cut to a shot from inside the luxury box where Kerry Kendrick and Sandra Hayes seem to be taking notes as Hayes points down to the ring and Kendrick nods, quickly jotting something down on a legal pad that already has a few pages of writing on it.]

GM: And there you see Kerry Kendrick... the so-called Self Made Man... the so-called Foundation... and if he gets his way in Mosaic Stadium, he'll be the everyone-called World Champion.

BW: Sandra and Kerry are up there with a bird's eye view to do some scouting. They're going to be facing one of these men for the World Title in a little less than three weeks, Gordo.

GM: And if that opponent is still Johnny Detson, Kendrick's gotta be enjoying watching Grayson torture that ankle.

BW: And if it's Grayson, he's gotta be concerned at this elite level the Olympic gold medalist has been performing at for a few weeks now.

[Grayson has now dropped off to the floor, moving after Detson who is trying to create some space between he and his challenger... but again, Grayson's having no part of that strategy as he swoops in behind, wrapping his arms around Detson's waist...]

GM: Grayson hooks him!

BW: A German on the floor?!

[A panicked Detson desperately throws a back elbow, trying to get himself free but Grayson ducks under it, allowing Detson to swing around fully so that the two men are chest to chest...]

...which is when Grayson pops his hips and HURLS the World Champion overhead, bouncing him off the barely-padded floor with an overhead belly-to-belly throw!]

"THUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUD!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: BELLY TO BELLY ON THE FLOOOOOOOR!

[Detson rolls to his hips immediately, clutching his lower back in pain as Grayson comes up off the floor, looking extremely confident out on the cheering Philly crowd.]

GM: Grayson has been completely dominating Johnny Detson since that pre-match attack... which like it or not was incredibly effective.

BW: It definitely was. He took out the ankle, which really limits a lot of offense AND defense out of the World Champion... and now he's going to work breaking down the rest of the champion.

[Grayson walks over to Detson, pulling him off the mat, tossing him back under the ropes into the ring.]

GM: And a smart move there by Grayson. You can get a lot of damage done on the floor but you can't win the title out there and that's what this is about for both of these men - the AWA World Title.

BW: Gordo, we're about five minutes into this thing... not counting the attack before the bell... and Johnny Detson is in some serious danger here. We've seen Detson in trouble before but this is a big problem for the champion. He's gotta find a way to turn this thing around as quickly as he can or we very well might see a new champion crowned here tonight.

GM: You're absolutely right about that. Both men back in the ring now... Grayson stalking towards Detson who is trying to get to his feet in the corner...

[And again, Grayson yanks him up, shoves him back, and this time, steps up to the middle rope with his fist raised and ready to fly...]

"ONE!"

"TWO!"

"THREE!"

"FOUR!"

"FIVE!"

"SIX!"

"SEVEN!"

"EIGHT!"

"NINE!"

"TEN!"

[Grayson hops down, the crowd fired up now as the Olympic gold medalist pulls Detson from the corner, wrapping him up again, and LAUNCHES him halfway across the ring with a second belly-to-belly suplex!]

GM: And another overhead throw by the challenger! Detson just BOUNCING off the canvas!

BW: Bret Grayson is just tossing the champion around at will right now, Gordo. That pre-match attack really seems to have thrown Johnny Detson off his game and he desperately needs to regroup...

[Detson rolls under the ropes, coming to a stop on the apron. Grayson advances on him but the official steps in, waving him off, trying to give Detson an opportunity to get out from the ropes.]

GM: The official is holding Grayson back and... well, not any more!

[The crowd cheers as Grayson brushes past the official, moving towards the ropes where he drags Detson to his feet...

...which is when the champion jabs a thumb into the eye of his challenger!]

GM: Ohh! Detson goes to the eye and-

[As Grayson stumbles back, Detson slips back through the ropes, grimacing as he steps on the injured ankle, placing weight on it gingerly. He steadies himself as Grayson slowly spins in a circle back to him...]

GM: SUPERKI-

[But as Grayson covers his head, trying to block a potential thrust kick, Detson pulls up, revealing the superkick was a fake as he slams his foot into the kneecap of Grayson, putting him down on the mat...]

GM: Ohh! Grayson down to a knee after that leg kick by the champion who steps back...

[And this time, Detson really does aim a superkick at the jaw of Grayson...

...who catches the incoming foot in his hands to a HUGE cheer from the Philly crowd as he gets to his feet, defiantly shaking his head...]

GM: GRAYSON'S GOT THE FOOT AND-



[The crowd EXPLODES as he twists the foot, forcing Detson to turn and flop down chestfirst on the canvas!]

GM: ANKLELOCK! THE LIBERTY LOCK APPLIED AGAIN!

BW: Detson didn't get out of it this time! He's in trouble, Gordo!

GM: And as Bret Grayson twists and tortures that ankle, you've gotta wonder if the World Champion can hang on! That ankle has taken some tremendous punishment already - Detson screaming in pain, clawing at the canvas, stretching out to try and get to the ropes...

BW: The Liberty Lock is fully applied and Detson's gotta find a way out first or Grayson's going to break his damn ankle!

GM: Taught to him by the great Gabriel Whitecross - former World Champion and perhaps the man who used the anklelock to greater effect than any other in the history of our sport!

[Grayson screaming "TAAAAAAP!" at the champion who is just... well, screaming.]

GM: Detson's stretching out, those ropes are so close and yet so far! That may be his only way out and-

[With one more lunge, Detson manages to wrap his fingers around the rope, the crowd deflating at the near submission as the referee calls for a break.]

GM: He got there! He made it to the ropes and now the referee is calling for a break!

[Grayson hangs on for a few more seconds, earning the start of a five count from the official before he lets go. Moaning in pain, the World Champion quickly rolls under the ropes onto the apron, pulling his leg towards his chest as he tries to rub the pain away from his throbbing ankle.]

GM: Back out to the apron goes the World Champion, desperately looking for an opportunity to recover from the attack being put forth by Bret Grayson who is looking to shock the world tonight by going from Olympic gold to AWA championship gold!

[Grayson grimaces at Detson's escape, shaking his head at himself for letting it happen before a shout from his partner in the crowd seems to re-focus the Olympic gold medalist...]

GM: Takeshi Mifune, the Shadow Wolf, giving his partner some vocal advice from the crowd... encouraging him to stay on the World Champion... to not get frustrated...

BW: It looks like Grayson's going to take that advice too, he's moving in after Detson...

GM: Make that - he's moving OUT after Detson as Grayson steps out on the apron... what's he doing here?

[Detson is slowly trying to get off the apron as Grayson grabs the wrist, giving him an assist to his feet...]

...and with the crowd ERUPTING into a concerned buzz, as Detson faces the ring, grabbing onto the top rope with both arms, Grayson slips in behind him, wrapping his arms around the champion's waist!]

GM: WHAT THE-?!

BW: HE'S TRYING TO GERMAN SUPLEX DETSON OFF THE APRON TO THE FLOOR!

GM: That won't just end this match and the reign of Johnny Detson! That might end Detson's career, Bucky!

BW: Grayson's out to win the World Title, Gordo. We heard Detson say he's the one who will do whatever it takes to keep the title... maybe we're finding out who REALLY will do whatever it takes to be the World Champion.

GM: Detson's hanging on for dear life... and that may not be an exaggeration!

[Grayson grimaces, clenching his jaw as he tries to get enough leverage for the awkwardly-positioned suplex...]

GM: Grayson again looking to get him up and Detson again fighting it!

BW: Grayson's giving it everything he's got but the champion is hanging onto the top rope with his arms wrapped around it like he's a python, daddy!

GM: The World Champion is in desperate peril here in Philadelphia and-

[The referee steps closer, shouting at Grayson to abandon this reckless effort.]

GM: Detson's saying something to the referee, trying to-

[As Scott Ezra edges closer to Detson, the World Champion dares to take one arm off the ropes, grabbing Ezra by the collar and YANKING the official towards him so that they're practically face to face...]

GM: What the-?!

BW: Detson's got a hold of the official and-

[Ezra tries to pull himself free but the champion keeps his grip...

...just long enough to shield the official's vision as he swings his foot up backwards, catching Grayson in his Golden Globes!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: DETSON GOES LOW ON GRAYSON!

[Grayson crumples down to his knees on the apron, grabbing the ropes to keep from falling as Detson collapses through the ropes into the ring, the referee looking around puzzled!]

GM: The low blow on the Olympic gold medalist and Ezra didn't see any of it thanks to Johnny Detson!

BW: Perfect positioning of the referee by Detson! You gotta be impressed by that!

GM: I do?!

[Detson gets back to his feet on the inside, smirking at the jeering crowd as he pulls Grayson up to his feet on the apron...

...and charges down the length of the ropes, ROCKETING Bret Grayson skullfirst into the steel ringpost!]

"CLAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAANG!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: HEADFIRST TO THE STEEL!

[Grayson collides fiercely with the post, immediately slumping off the apron to the floor, his arms up over his head as the fans jeer the aggressive tactic from the World Champion!]

GM: GRAYSON SMASHES INTO THE POST AND DOWN TO THE FLOOR HE GOES!  
OH MY!

[Detson collapses against the turnbuckle, grimacing as he lifts his leg off the mat, shaking it a few times as the referee reprimands him.]

GM: We kept talking about Johnny Detson needing to find a way to get back into this and he may have just done exactly that, Bucky.

BW: Beautiful move! Beautiful timing! There's a reason this man is a two-time World Champion, Gordo! He knows how to survive and keep that title around his waist!

[Dropping to his back, Detson rolls out to the floor, still moving gingerly on the damaged ankle as he hobbles towards the still-downed Grayson.]

GM: And now it's the World Champion on the attack.

BW: He probably should be taking time to let his ankle recover but he knows this is his chance to put down the challenge of Bret Grayson and... oh god.

[The crowd groans as Detson pulls Grayson off the floor, revealing a nasty cut on the forehead of the challenger that is already spilling crimson down the face of the Ohio native!]

GM: Oh my... the challenger's skull has been busted wide open and- wow! That's a bad one, Bucky.

BW: Absolutely. This kid's melon got split open and... look out!

[Detson SMASHES Grayson's head down into the wooden timekeeper's table, sending people scattering as Grayson slumps down over the area.]

GM: Facefirst to the wooden table... and Detson's not done out here on the floor...

[Pulling Grayson off the table, Detson winds him up and SLAMS his head down onto the ring apron, leaving a bloody smear behind.]

GM: And again down facefirst - this time on the hardest part of the ring!

[Grayson slumps over the apron, sliding a few steps to his right as the World Champion stays in pursuit, moving slowly but with determination.]

GM: Again, he pulls Grayson's head up... goodness, that cut is bleeding profusely...

"CLAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAANG!"  
"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: FACEFIRST TO THE RINGPOST AGAIN!

[Grayson collapses against the post, arms limply trying to grasp at the steel to stay on his feet as Detson pauses himself, taking a momentary breather as the fans let him have it.]

GM: The World Champion trying to get a second wind here, trying to get the energy to put Bret Grayson down and down for a three count.

BW: And the longer this match goes, Gordo, the happier that Kerry Kendrick gets.

[Cut to the luxury box where Kendrick does have a big smile on his face, gesturing to something as Sandra Hayes jots down another note on the ever-growing scouting report on a legal pad between them.]

GM: He certainly does look pleased. Kendrick, of course, was declared the winner of the 2017 Rumble by Javier Castillo and therefore, he gets the title shot at the Battle of Saskatchewan against one of these two tremendous competitors.

[Back down to ringside, we see Detson grabs a bloodied and weary Grayson by the arm...]

GM: LOOK OUT!

[...and with a powerful whip, Detson sends Grayson rushing towards the nearby ringside barricade where Grayson takes flight, soaring over the railing, and CRASHING into the ringside seating where the fans are taking their leave quickly!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: DETSON SENDS HIM INTO THE CROWD!

[A hurting Detson waves a dismissive hand at Grayson before rolling back in, gesturing for the referee to count the challenger out.]

GM: Detson wants him to count him out.

BW: Smart move, Johnny! Get this one over with and move on to Canada!

[Detson nods as the referee steps towards the ropes, shouting "ONE!" into the Wells Fargo Center crowd.]

GM: Alright... Bret Grayson's now got a ten count to get back into the ring or this one's over and Detson retains the title. Not the best Rocky ending.

BW: You DO know Rocky didn't win the title the first time around, right?

[Detson shouts at the referee, imploring Scott Ezra to count faster. Ezra ignores him, calling out "TWO!"]

GM: The count is on and Bret Grayson, bloodied and hurting, is struggling to get up out of those chairs. The fans all around him are trying to pull him free...

BW: That's not fair! Somebody kick them out of the building!

GM: Grayson trying to get free... trying to get back into the ring as the referee gets up to four now.

[We cut to the crowd where Takeshi Mifune has made his way over from the adjacent section. He doesn't make a move to touch his partner, instead shouting at him in Japanese for several moments as the count reaches five.]

GM: Mifune is reading Grayson the riot act out there... and-

[Mifune's angry Japanese breaks into accented English.]

"GET! UP!"

[Grayson pushes his way out of the chairs finally, blood streaming down his face as he gets to his feet, giving a nod to his partner as he tries to get over the railing at the count of seven.]

GM: We're up to seven but Grayson's up! Grayson's trying to get back in there... trying to beat the count...

[And at the count of nine, Grayson rolls under the bottom rope where an irate Detson yanks him to his feet, burying a boot into the gut.]

GM: He's going for the Wilde Driver! He's going to finish this now!

[Detson goes to wrap up one of Grayson's arms but the challenger pulls it free, grabbing the legs and yanking them out from under the champion, putting him down...

...and then falls back, catapulting Detson into the air where he crashes facefirst into the buckles, stumbling back...]

GM: GRAYSON PULLS HIM DOWN! PIN ATTEMPT!

[Holding Detson in a makeshift sunset flip, Grayson hangs on as the referee drops down to count...]

GM: ONNNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOOO! TH-

[The crowd groans as Detson kicks out, breaking up the pin in time.]

GM: Two and change for the Olympic gold medalist, looking to strike AWA championship gold - the biggest gold of 'em all - right here in Philadelphia on America's birthday... ohh! Detson goes downstairs again!

[Having scrambled up to beat Grayson to his feet, Detson swings a foot - the healthy foot - into the gut, doubling up Grayson...

...and then CRACKS him with a kneelift, snapping Grayson's head back and putting him down on the canvas...

...and Detson immediately falls forward, catching himself on the ropes as he again grimaces, attempting to keep weight off the injured ankle.]

GM: A hard shot there by the champion but again, he hurts himself in the process. Detson struggling to stay on his feet at all... and again, so much of his offense and defense is limited thanks to the early damage done to the ankle.

[Pushing off the ropes, Detson drops down to his knees, jamming a closed fist down between the eyes near the cut on Grayson's forehead!]

GM: Ohh! Fistdrop on target... and a quick cover by the champion!

[Detson earns a two count before Grayson slips out.]

GM: Out at two...

[Hanging onto the blood-soaked hair, Detson SMASHES his fist down repeatedly, driving his knuckles down into the wound!]

GM: And he's pounding away at that cut, fans! Not that he could make it any worse at this point.

BW: It can always get worse, Gordo.

[After a half dozen punches land, Detson flips Grayson over onto his stomach, using his grip on the hair to rub Grayson's face back and forth on the canvas!]

GM: And now he's trying to rake Grayson's skin right off his face!

[The referee reprimands the illegal move so Detson pulls Grayson up by his bloody hair...

...and SMASHES his face down into the canvas!]

GM: Faceslam down into the mat!

BW: He's not done, Gordo!

[He pulls Grayson up a second time, ramming his skull down into the mat!]

GM: Make it two!

[A fired-up Detson drags Grayson up a third time...

...and SLAMS his head down into the canvas once more!]

BW: Third time's a charm... he hopes 'cause he's going for the cover again!

[The champion flips Grayson to his back, diving across again.]

GM: He's got one! He's got two! He's got- no! Again Grayson kicks out in time!

[Detson grimaces as he rolls off of Grayson to his rear, glaring out at the Philly crowd. He wearily pushes up to his feet, again wincing as he puts his foot down on the mat, leaning down to drag the bloodied Grayson to his feet...]

GM: He grabs the wrist, dragging him up...

[...and gives a quick yank of the arm, pulling Grayson into a short-arm back elbow, catching him under the chin and knocking him flat!]

GM: ...and he sends him right back down!

[Detson again lowers to the mat to cover, earning another two count.]

GM: And still Grayson's out at two!

BW: The gold medalist has got some guts, Gordo.

GM: No doubt about that. As we cross the fifteen minute mark in this sixty minute time limit, Johnny Detson is discovering that Bret Grayson may be a tougher out than he expected.

[Detson again grabs Grayson by the hair, smashing his fist methodically down into the cut, the crowd jeering every blow before the champion climbs back up, pulling Grayson up with him...]

GM: Both men up... and Detson SMASHES Grayson headfirst into the top turnbuckle!

[Detson switches up his attack, throwing knees to the midsection of Grayson against the buckles.]

GM: Downstairs goes the champion, trying to wear him down...

[Grabbing the arm, Detson whips Grayson across the ring, sending him crashing into the turnbuckles where he stumbles back out...]

GM: Detson with a boot to the gut! He's going for the Wilde Driver again!

[But as he gets into position, Detson quickly finds himself being lifted into the air and backdropped down onto the canvas to a big cheer!]

GM: BIG BACKDROP TAKES DOWN THE WORLD CHAMPION!

[Grayson collapses to his knees after the backdrop, leaning forward as crimson drips off his head onto the mat underneath him.]

GM: Both men are down after that one! Johnny Detson keeps going back to that Wilde Driver!

BW: Of course he does. He knows that if he hits that, it's over!

GM: But Bret Grayson knows it too and he's fighting with all he's got to stay out of it!

[Grayson slowly gets up off the mat as Detson does the same, the crowd cheering loudly now as they sense an opportunity for a title change.]

GM: Both men to their feet... both men trying to get the better of the other and get to- ohh! Big right hand by Detson... and Grayson returns in kind!

[The crowd cheers and jeers loudly as Grayson and Detson exchange heavy right hands...]

BW: We've got a slugfest!

[The announcers fall out for a moment as the two men batter one another until Grayson starts to throw them quicker and in succession...]

GM: Grayson with another one... and another... and another...

[But as Grayson starts to build momentum, Johnny Detson jabs a thumb into his eye to cut it short!]

GM: Oh! Right to the eye...

[Leaning down, Detson grabs Grayson around the torso, lifting him into the air, twisting slightly...]

...and DROPS Grayson throatfirst over the top rope!]

“OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

GM: OHHH! THAT MIGHT DO IT!

[Detson frantically flips over, diving across Grayson who rolls to his back clutching his throat!]

GM: ONNNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOOO! THREEEEEEE-

“OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

GM: KICKOUT! KICKOUT JUST IN TIME BY BRET GRAYSON!

[The crowd is buzzing for the near fall as Detson angrily shouts at the referee from his spot seated on the mat.]

GM: Johnny Detson thought he had him there. He went for something other than the Wilde Driver and he thought it might be enough.

BW: Grayson’s gotta be impressing a lot of people right now, Gordo. He’s taking a tremendous pounding after bleeding like a stuck pig and he’s still standing! Well, he’s not standing now... but you know what I mean!

GM: I certainly do... and as Detson gets to his feet, what else does he have in the arsenal to keep Detson down?

[The World Champion glares down at Grayson, leaning down to slowly pull down his kneepad, exposing the bare patella...]

GM: Detson looking for a kneedrop here perhaps and...

[With the kneepad down and Grayson measured, Detson instead does a little one footed hop over him...

...and then SMASHES his foot back to the cheek to jeers from the crowd.]

GM: Detson just taunting Bret Grayson with that kick there!

[A smirking Detson throws a look back, making sure that Grayson is still down as he approaches the corner...]

GM: Are you kidding me here? Is Johnny Detson seriously going up top!?

BW: With the bad ankle? Say it ain’t so, Johnny!

[Detson steps up on the rope...

...and immediately steps back down, leaning against the buckles with an anguished look on his face.]

GM: A rare mistake in strategy on the part of Johnny Detson... but can Bret Grayson take advantage of it?

[Detson angrily walks back towards the downed Grayson who is starting to stir, getting to his knees. The World Champion grabs him by the hair, pulling him up more...



...and gets dragged down in a small package!]

GM: SMALL PACKAGE! SMALL PACKAGE! ONNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOO! THRE-  
"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: KICKOUT! WE ALMOST HAD A NEW CHAMPION!

[Detson again goes to scramble to his feet, trying to get there before Grayson does, the crowd still buzzing over the near fall...]

GM: Both men up... Detson goes downst- CAUGHT!

[The crowd ROARS as Detson's boot to the gut to set up the Wilde Driver is caught...]

...and with a quick back heel trip, Grayson puts Detson on his back, the foot still trapped in his hands!]

GM: Grayson puts him down... looking for the Liberty Lock again and-

[But again, Detson desperately kicks him off, sending him crashing backwards into the turnbuckles...]

GM: Ohh! Detson slips out of the anklelock attempt again, quickly getting back up...

[Detson is quick to his feet, setting them under him as Grayson staggers out...]

GM: JOHNNYKICK!

[...but his superkick attempt too is caught!]

GM: CAUGHT AGAIN! GRAYSON TRYING TO GET THAT LIBERTY LOCK APPLIED!

[Detson tries to yank free as Grayson hangs on, the crowd cheering loudly for what may be coming next as Detson takes a pair of wild swings at the challenger...]

GM: Detson trying to fight his way out!

[But Grayson gives him a spin by the foot, swinging Detson around as Grayson lifts him up in his arms for a back suplex, twisting him around...]

"THUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUD!"  
"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: RED, WHITE, AND BLUE THUNDER BOMB!!!

[Hanging on tight, Grayson shouts loudly as the referee dives to count.]

GM: ONNNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOOOO! THREEEEEEEEEEEEEEEE-  
"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: KICKOUT! KICKOUT OF THE POWERBOMB!

[Grayson grabs his own bloodied head in his hands, falling back onto his back as the crowd is absolutely rocking at this point, sensing that an upset may be near.]

GM: Grayson came SO close right there! SO close to winning the World Title!

BW: And if he wants to do it, he's gotta get up... he's gotta get up and keep going. He can't stay down like this. He can't get frustrated or lose focus. You gotta fight and do this thing.

GM: You almost sound like you're cheering him on, Bucky.

BW: I may have gotten caught up in the moment a bit.

GM: These fans are rocking at this point! They are IN the moment! They want to see the upset! They want to see the title change hands tonight in Philly! The all-American upset!

[Grayson gets up off the mat, wiping the blood from his eyes as he pulls Detson off the mat, shoving him back into the corner...]

GM: The challenger's got him backed down... big right hand... another... a third!

[The crowd ROARS as Grayson throws three more, rapid-fire and with great impact rocking the World Champion...]

...and then suddenly leans down, lifting Detson off the mat and setting him down on the top turnbuckle...]

GM: Grayson sets him up top!

[Grayson winds up and throws again, landing two more haymakers as he moves to climb the buckles...]

...and Detson AGAIN rakes the eyes!]

GM: OH, COME ON! How many times can the World Champion go to the eyes in one damn match?!

BW: Until the referee DQs him, he can do it as many times as he wants, daddy!

[Detson leans forward, grabbing the blinded Grayson in a front facelock...]

...and kicks off the buckles, twisting around...]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: TORNADO DDT!

[With Grayson's skull SPIKED into the canvas, Detson crawls over, throwing an arm across...]

GM: ONNNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOOO! THREEEEEEEEEE-

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: ANOTHER KICKOUT! ANOTHER ESCAPE BY THE CHALLENGER!

[The crowd is ROARING now for the exchange of nearfalls.]

GM: Back and forth this one goes... both champion and challenger looking for the magic combination that'll put the other one down for three!

BW: We're over twenty minutes into this one, Gordo. And with the amount of blood pouring out of Bret Grayson, the Olympic gold medalist has gotta be running on fumes!

[Detson drags himself slowly off the canvas, stumbling a bit before he stabilizes himself, leaning down to grab the bloodied challenger, hauling him up to his feet...]

GM: Detson goes downstairs!

[Detson yanks Grayson into a standing headscissors again...]

GM: He's going for the Wilde Driver again! Can he get it this time?!

[Detson leans down to grab one arm, pulling it up...]

GM: He hooks one arm... he goes for the oth-

[And suddenly, Grayson stands straight up, hanging onto one of Detson's legs with his free arm...]

GM: LOOK AT THE POWER!

[...and starts walking around the ring with a struggling Detson hanging over his shoulder, blood still streaming down the gold medalist's face...]

GM: GRAYSON'S GOT HIM UP AND...

[Grayson steps out to the middle of the ring and with a massive bellow, he LEAPS into the air..

...and DRIVES Detson down into the mat, still on top of him!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[A weary Grayson hangs on to the leg, staying in the back press as the referee counts...]

GM: ONNNNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOOOO! THREEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEE-

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: KICKOUT! KICKOUT! MY GOD, WHAT A KICKOUT IN THE NICK OF TIME!

[As the crowd roars loudly for the near fall, we cut to the luxury box where Kerry Kendrick is literally on the edge of his seat, looking nervously down towards the ring where Bret Grayson sits up, blood streaming down his body as he breathes heavily...]

GM: Kerry Kendrick thought he was gonna have to face the gold medalist in the Great White North right there! I know he did!

[Grayson climbs slowly to his feet, looking down at Detson...]

GM: OH! Big right hand on Detson! And another!

[From a standing position, Grayson rains down a half dozen blows on Detson, keeping him on the canvas...

...and then points to the corner!]

GM: What the...?

BW: You've gotta be kidding me!

GM: Bret Grayson's got Johnny Detson down and perhaps on the verge of out! He's one big move away from winning the World Title here in Philadelphia on America's birthday and... he's heading to the corner!

BW: You said "one big move away"... well, Grayson's going for the biggest move he's got!

[The Olympic gold medalist reaches the corner, swiping the blood from his eyes and looking out on the Philly crowd before he steps to the second rope, the crowd getting louder as he does...]

GM: GRAYSON'S CLIMBING THE CORNER! GRAYSON'S GOING TO THE TOP ROPE!

[Grayson steps one foot onto the top turnbuckle, taking a few deep breaths before he places the other one alongside...]

GM: GRAYSON'S UP TOP! GRAYSON'S GONNA FLY!

[...and blindly, Grayson leaps into the air with a picture perfectly graceful moonsault!]

GM: MOONSAULT!

[Which hits nothing but canvas.]

"THUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUD!"  
"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: HE MISSED! HE MISSED! DETSON MOVES OUT OF THE WAY IN TIME... ON HIS FEET... PULLS HIM UP...

[And yet again, he buries a boot in the gut, doubling up Grayson as he hooks him up...]

GM: WILDE DRIVER!

[...and DRIVES him facefirst into the canvas!]

GM: ROLLS HIM OVER! HOOKS THE LEG!

[The referee dives to count once more.]

GM: ONNNNNNNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOO! THREEEEEEEEEEEEEEE!

"DING! DING! DING!"

GM: DETSON WINS! DETSON KEEPS THE TITLE!

[A relieved Johnny Detson rolls over, sitting up on the mat as the referee walks over and hands him the belt.]

GM: It was a hard-fought battle for Johnny Detson to keep the title here tonight... perhaps harder than even he anticipated, Bucky.

BW: Bret Grayson gave it one hell of a shot, Gordo... he just came up a little bit short.

GM: And when Grayson is sitting in the showers after the match tonight, he's gonna wonder if that moonsault was the right call.

BW: Absolutely.

[With the aid of the official, Johnny Detson gets back to his feet, holding the title up into the air as the ring announcer makes it official.]

RO: Your winner of the match... and STILL AWA WORLD HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPIONNNNNNNNN...

JOHNNNNNNNNYYYYYYYYY DEEEEEEEETSONNNNNNNNN!

[The music kicks in as Detson smiles, leaning against the ropes, shaking out his ankle as the fans cheer for Bret Grayson who is getting rolled from the ring, blood-soaked as he is helped down the aisle.]

GM: A great showing for the Olympic gold medalist... he'll be back again, that's for sure.

[Detson's is celebrating with the World Title as "Kashmir" plays over the PA once more. He slings the World Title belt over his shoulder, giving it a pleased slap as he looks out on the crowd...]

...which suddenly erupts in boos at the sound of the signature snarl of a big jungle followed by the sounds of "La Cama de Piedra" by Cuco Sanchez creeping across the PA system.]

GM: Well, there's no secret what that's all about... or who that means is coming to the ring.

[Indeed. Moments later, Javier Castillo slinks into view, a big smile on his face as his enforcer, John Law, walks behind him. Boos greet both men as they start down the ramp towards the ring where Detson visibly sighs as he steps back towards the corner, the belt still in place on his shoulder. Castillo and Law give Bret Grayson a wide berth as they pass him on the ramp.]

GM: Javier Castillo has had a busy night tonight with Demetrius Lake... with Jackson Hunter... with Doctor Harrison Fawcett.

BW: This has gotta be one of the most eventful nights in company history, Gordo.

GM: Amen to that. But what do you think Castillo wants with Johnny Detson?

BW: I'm sure it's just to congratulate him. Castillo runs the place. Detson's the champ. They've got a lot in common.

[Upon reaching the ring, Castillo climbs the steps, ducking through the ropes as John Law follows behind him, having retrieved a pair of mics. Law hands one mic to Castillo before walking to the corner...]

...and shoving the other into Detson's chest. Detson grimaces, taking the mic with a little nod.]

JC: Johnny, Johnny... my friend... congratulations! What a win! Korugun couldn't be prouder of our World Champion successfully defeating an Olympic gold medalist!

[He gives a big thumbs up.]

JC: It's truly something to be proud of, Johnny.

[Detson is silent, staring at Castillo across the ring.]

JC: But as proud as we are of you, Johnny... we've also got a problem.

[Detson arches an eyebrow.]

JC: Johnny, this isn't our only big show lately, you know. Just a week or so ago, we were in Madison Square Garden! We were LIVE on the FOX Network! We were on Fight Night!

Well... at least some of us were.

[Detson smirks, nodding his head.]

JD: I get where you're going with this.

JC: Do you, Johnny? I hope so. Because the number of calls I had to take from angry FOX executives when you walked out on that show...

[Castillo trails off as his smile starts to fade.]

JC: You have claimed for some time to be Fox's Favorite Son... and they do love you, Johnny. They do love you. And that's why they - and we - were so upset not to see you at Fight Night. That's why they - and we - were so disappointed by your actions. That's why they-

[Detson interrupts angrily.]

JD: They, they, they, they, they, they... I don't really care about the "they!" No, Javier... you want to talk? Let's talk about you!

[The crowd begins to buzz as Detson angrily looks across at Castillo who seems a bit surprised by the sudden outburst.]

JD: That is... if you have the time for the- what was that again? Blonde primadonna?

[Detson's accusation doesn't land as Castillo simply glares in response.]

JD: Because you see what happened at Fight Night has nothing to do with Fox, Javier... but it does have EVERYTHING to do with you!

[He points an accusatory finger as Castillo arches an eyebrow and the crowd starts to cheer a little.]

JD: You know... when we started this little relationship, you told me a lot of things... a lot of things I wanted to hear. But lately...

[Detson just shrugs.]

JD: You said you wanted me on top of the mountain here and that Ryan Martinez couldn't be the champ. But then you try to put me in another match with him? And when that didn't work.... you put me in the ring with Jack Lynch?

That wasn't anything but you trying to stack the odds for your little Tower match! You sacrificed me so that your lackeys could have an advantage in the cage!

[Castillo is stoic, not bothering to deny any of the charges.]

JD: And that James Lynch stuff? You didn't even let me know what was going on!

[Detson shakes his head with disgust.]

JD: Don't even get me started on the Masked Outlaw, Supernova stuff! "Trust me, Johnny." "We'll get the Outlaw, Johnny." "Everyone will go after the money, Johnny." "He can't win, Johnny."

How'd that turn out for you?

[El Presidente's gaze grows colder as Detson continues to rant in his direction.]

JD: It seems to me, Javier... that YOU are the cause of - and never the solution to - all of my problems. And what you're doing with...

[Detson pauses for a moment, glaring at Castillo, his nostrils flaring, as he slowly shakes his head.]

JD: ...what you did, what you've been doing, well, it's given me pause.

You see, I'm thinking about all the stuff that's been told to me over my time in this company.

Percy Childes told me he's get me to the next level.

Calisto Dufresne promised he could get me the title.

Brian Lau... he told me the James Gang would be there to protect the World Champ.

[He ticks down the people on his fingers, shaking his head as he reaches the end.]

JD: And I listened to every single one of them... AND I listened to you, maybe the most cunning of them all.

[Detson smirks at Castillo who shockingly is still silent during all of this.]

JD: But these past several weeks... thinking about things, seeing everything that's going on, knowing that I've already seen this movie and I know how it ends...

Well, I've been thinking maybe it's time that I STOP listening to others...

...and I START listening to myself.

[Detson goes to the corner and grabs his sweat jacket with the Korugun embroidery. He picks it up, staring at the Korugun logo on the front before he turns, walking back towards Castillo. John Law steps forward, giving Detson pause...]

JD: Watch yourself, big man. I'm not Riley Hunter or Derrick Williams.

[The crowd "oooooooohs" as Detson and Law exchange a stare for a few moments...

...and then Detson turns back to Castillo, holding up the jacket so El Presidente can see it.]

JD: This relationship? This arrangement? Javier, it's not working for me.

[The fans are buzzing loudly now, waiting for the other shoe to drop.]

JD: I'm not Korugun, boss man. I never have been.

[And to punctuate that statement, Detson drops the sweat jacket at Castillo's feet. He smirks, stepping back and staring at the title he now has in his hands.]

JD: And this relationship... I know it's not working for you either. You're already plotting your next move with Kendrick. Hell, I can't blame you, Javier. Corporate girlfriend. Easily controllable buffoon. What kind of mastermind would you be if you didn't try to trade me in for someone who'll put up with your crap?

[The crowd cheers as Castillo stews.]

JD: And that's fine, Castillo... and you know why? This...?

[Detson moves a finger pointing between Castillo and himself.]

JD: This has always been a marriage of convenience.

[Detson nods to himself one more time.]

JD: Javier, old pal... I guess what I'm trying to say is...

[Detson stops and gets dead serious as he glares at Castillo.]

JD: ...I want a divorce!

[With that, Detson drops the microphone straight down on the canvas and rolls out of the ring as the crowd surprisingly cheers the actions of the World Champion!]

GM: Are you kidding me?! Johnny Detson... wants a divorce?!

BW: This is... this is bad, Gordo.

[Detson backs down the ramp a bit, waving mockingly towards a fuming Castillo flanked by John Law. Detson gives one more smirk before turning his back to El Presidente, walking up the ramp and leaving his relationship with the Korugun Corporation behind as we fade to black...

...and then fade up on a rising sun coming up over a crystal blue lake. A voiceover begins.]

"The future."

[The sun continues to climb via time lapse footage.]

"It is said that the future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams."

[The sun reaches its peak, dazzling as it lights up the water below.]

"At the Korugun Corporation, our dreams are the same as yours."

[Cut to a shot of children playing in a very green meadow.]

"To live... to love..."

[To a shot of two elderly people smiling as they hold hands.]

"To make the most out of every moment we are blessed with."



[To the crack of a baseball bat and a cheering crowd.]

"To the joys of community... of family... of kinship..."

[To a young toddler walking out into the surf on a beach only to be scooped up by a nervous father who lifts him high in the air.]

"To all of life's promise... and potential."

[To a spaceship rocketing off its launchpad towards the sky.]

"To pushing the boundaries of what is expected..."

[To a space shot of Earth below.]

"To bringing our futures into the present."

[The Korugun Corporation logo slowly crawls over the curvature of the Earth.]

"Korugun. To life and all that it offers."

[And we slowly fade to black...

...and we get a flash that says ACCESS 365 before we come up on a hallway backstage in the Wells Fargo Center. In this hallway stands two very familiar faces - eternally linked in the minds of pro wrestling fans. They are one of the current AWA owners and former EMWC owner, Chris Blue, and the last man to wear the EMWC World Title, Adam Rogers. The two appear to be deep in conversation when a third man wanders into view still fuming after what went down in the ring moments ago.]

CB: Hey Johnny.

[The AWA World Champion is obviously distracted, barely registering the greeting from one of the bosses. He throws a slight nod in Blue's direction, still walking with a limp in his direction.]

CB: I like what you had to say out there to Castillo, Johnny. That kind of brutal honesty on the mic is a lot of what the E so special. In fact... Eternally Extreme is coming up this weekend... why don't you come to the show?

[This one stops Detson, shaking his head.]

JD: Are you kidding me right now? Like I don't have enough on my mind? Besides, I HATED the EMWC for years! I never wanted to work there when it was open... why the HELL would I want to go to a show now?

[Blue smirks.]

CB: Johnny, don't kid yourself. Even the people who hated us wanted to work for us. And as far as why you'd want to go to the show is concerned...

[Blue's eyes drift back towards Adam Rogers who shrugs.]

CB: I think I've got a match for you that you've been waiting for a long time... something that a whole lot of people would be interested in seeing. Isn't that right, champ?

JD: I told you-

CB: Oh, sorry. Wasn't talking to you there.

[Detson's eyes scan from Blue over to Rogers, the final EMWC World Champion, who is leaning against the wall, looking at the AWA World Champion. The two stare each other down for a moment before Detson speaks again.]

JD: Alright. I'll see you at Eternally Extreme...

[He points a finger at Rogers.]

JD: BOTH of you.

[And then he stalks angrily away, shaking his head. The camera pans back to a grinning Blue.]

CB: It's gonna be a hell of a show, Natural.

[Rogers nods as we fade to a flash of the ACCESS 365 logo and into the office of Javier Castillo who sits behind his desk, a dark expression on his face. A knock at the door comes. Castillo sighs.]

JC: Enter.

[The door swings open to find John Law.]

JL: It's-

[A voice cries out "out of my way, lawdog" as Law gets shoved back against the door frame. Law grimaces before wrapping his paw around the throat of the intruder. A brief scuffle ensues before Castillo shouts.]

"ENOUGH!"

[With a sigh, he gestures towards Law who backs off reluctantly, allowing the other to enter.]

JC: Mr. Taylor... Outlaw...

[Bobby Taylor in black jeans, a white dress shirt, and a pair of cowboy boots walks into the room. John Law follows, not allowing Taylor to get too far out of an immediate reach.]

JC: To what do I owe the pleasure just five days before we meet again?

[Taylor nods.]

BT: Look, I've talked to Kevin and Big Rob earlier today and they told me you've been lighting up their phones like fireworks... offering all sorts of money to turn their backs on me... offering to drop a sack of cash in their laps if they even just tell you who our partners are...

[Castillo smirks with a shrug.]

BT: Not going to deny it? Good. I'd hate to think after all that's gone on between us that you'd try to lie to me too. Well, I'm here to tell you that you can make all the offers you want, those two are like family... and they're not going to budge.

[Castillo arches an eyebrow.]

JC: Like family? Like your brother, Shane, perhaps?

[Taylor angrily points a threatening finger at Castillo, Law nearly coming for him.]

BT: You leave my brother out of this.

JC: Or maybe your niece?

BT: Her too. Look, I know you think you know everything about me... I know your money and power has no limits how far you can reach... but you already marked yourself when you messed with Wes. If you go after anyone else in my family, I won't stop until you're a dead man, Castillo. You hear me?

[Castillo nods.]

JC: Your family is safe, Mr. Taylor. I have no interest in them. But I do have interest in making sure that everyone in this sport... far and wide... sees that Korugun has no fear of anyone's influence. I know who you know... I know who you could bring upon me...

[Castillo rises, staring Taylor in the eyes.]

JC: ...and I... am not... afraid. Korugun is not afraid.

BT: Leave Korugun out of this. This is personal now. Between you and me. This ain't about business anymore.

[Castillo shakes his head.]

JC: It's always about business... and it's always personal. There is no line for me to cross, Mr. Taylor. I want to take you out in that rat-infested hole down the road because you embarrassed me... and I want to take you out to show the world that Korugun can beat anyone... even on their own terms.

Now, unless you plan on telling me who your team is for Sunday night...

[Taylor smirks.]

BT: Not a chance.

[Castillo nods.]

JC: Then if you'll excuse me. I have one more piece of business to take care of here tonight. Mr. Law...?

[John Law steps in front of Taylor who eyes the enforcer up and down before turning to exit.]

BT: I'll see you Sunday night, Castillo.

[Castillo nods, waiting until Taylor steps out of the room before grabbing his cell phone and hitting a button.]

JC: It is taken care of. (pause) Yes... yes, he agreed.

[His jaw drops slightly.]

JC: You're coming yourself? Is that... necessary?

[Castillo pauses, his eyes showing something we've not often seen from him.]

Fear.]

JC: Yes. Yes, of course. I will see you Sunday. Thank you... sir.

[Castillo ends the call, looking around the room nervously as we get another flash of the ACCESS 365 logo, ending up backstage where we see Theresa Lynch, standing by with Supreme Wright. The two-time former AWA World Champion stands there, looking more intimidating than ever before, with a full beard and an eyepatch on his face. He looks like a man ready to go to war. Theresa however, seems to be more upbeat than usual.]

TL: Hi folks, I'm here backstage with Supreme Wright, who earlier tonight, made his return from injury in a big way! Supreme, I...

[Theresa stops and then looks at Wright with a smile that speaks about a thousand words.]

TL: Welcome back.

[Wright's face, as usual, doesn't betray a single emotion.]

SW: Thank you, Miss Lynch.

[The two seem to share a moment, but it's brief.]

TL: Now then, we saw you accept King Kong Hogan's chal-

[Before Theresa can finish her question, we see Jeff Matthews walking into view...]

JM: No, no, no!

[Matthews shakes his head as he approaches Wright and Lynch.]

JM: Supreme, it's not a good idea, man. This animal has shown no regard or respect to anyone. And considering the shape you are in, I think it's in your best interest to take care of yourself.

[Matthews' voice takes on almost a pleading tone as he jerks a thumb at himself.]

JM: Get back to 100% and let me fight this fight at Eternally Extreme.

Let me have the honor of fighting this beast in front of the EMWC fans that I fought in front of for so long.

Let me give him exactly the beating he needs.

[Wright shakes his head.]

SW: I appreciate your help, Mr. Matthews, but this is something I need to take care of myself. Hogan tried to take my eye. He tried to take my career from me. I can't let someone else fight this battle for me. If anyone understands that, I think you would.

[Matthews nods, a bit frustrated.]

JM: I get it. I'm just looking out for you. I remember what it's like to feel like no one is willing to have your back or fight the fights for you. If you insist on fighting this battle, at the least, allow me to be with you when you do fight him. I'll watch

your back and make sure no one else gets involved. Can you let me do that for you?

[Supreme nods in agreement and takes Matthews' hand, shaking it.]

SW: I'll see you Sunday night, Mr. Matthews.

[And with the two men shaking hands, we fade to another part of the backstage area where Mark Stegglet stands with the AWA's White Knight, Ryan Martinez. The former World Champion is already in his ring gear, and has a thoughtful, some might say pensive, expression on his face.]

MS: I have stood many times with you, and I've spoken to you before the greatest and most challenging matches of your career. And Mr. Martinez, I can't help but think back to a few years ago, when we were in Minute Maid Park, and you spoke about the man you're about to face for the second time tonight – Hannibal Carver.

[Martinez nods his head.]

RM: You're right, Mark. And in some ways, I hoped that I wouldn't have to fight Hannibal Carver again.

But the truth is... I always knew I would.

Last time, I beat Carver in one of the toughest matches of my life. But this is the last time I'm going to mention that. Because two years ago doesn't matter when it comes to tonight.

Tonight is something completely different.

MS: Many people are wondering why you are in a match against someone who is ostensibly on the same side as you are. Most of us would think that you and Hannibal Carver are on the same side.

[Martinez runs a hand through his hair and exhales slowly.]

RM: You don't have to tell me that people want to know why, Mark.

Everywhere I go, it's the same question. When I am out, fans stop me and ask me why I'm fighting Carver. When I'm at a show, my friends, people who've known me for years, ask why I wanted this match. I go home, and my partner wants to know why I'm getting in the ring with a dangerous man who's supposed to be on my side.

I've asked myself that question more than once.

And the answer, Mark, is simple – because I have no choice. It has to be this way. It can't be any other way.

Tonight, I have to face Hannibal Carver, and I have to win.

MS: Pardon me for saying this, but that still leaves open the question of why.

[Another nod from Martinez.]

RM: Because every time someone asks me why, there's something they're not saying, something that I see clear as day.

They want to know why I can't do things Carver's way.

Why can't I do what Carver does? Why can't I jump a man from behind? Why can't I cripple someone and rob them of their livelihood? Why can't I wrap a chair around someone's skull or cut into them until the blood sprays across my face? Why don't I just give in? Why don't I fight fire with fire?

Because, Mark... that isn't who I am.

[Martinez draws in a deep breath and exhales slowly.]

RM: Ever since the Tower of Doom, I've had a hard time getting anyone to listen to me. No one wants to be on my side.

Everyone wants to be Jack Lynch leaving Ebola Zaire with a permanent limp. Everyone wants to be Hannibal Carver swinging a chair. Everyone wants to be Supernova, coming down from the rafters and laying out Jack Lynch in some twisted act of revenge.

No one wants to do what's right. No one wants to fight with honor. No one wants to stand up and say "this is the line, and I will not cross it, even it costs me everything."

No one... except me.

Henry David Thoreau said that "any man more right than his neighbors constitutes a majority of one," and Mark, I'll go to my grave believing that. I believe in honor. I believe in doing things the right way.

I don't have a choice, Mark.

When Gordon Myers, all those years ago, looked at me with a smile and said "the AWA has found its hero," he invested in me all of the hopes and the dreams that he and the entire AWA galaxy has for a better tomorrow. When the fans took to calling me the White Knight, they gave me the privilege of standing up for all of the ideals that they hold close to their hearts. When the AWA locker room held the line while I was injured, they did so because they expected me to return and be the man that they know me to be.

The man that my father raised me to be.

[The camera pulls in close on Martinez' face.]

RM: I can't throw that all away just because Hannibal Carver wants to do it a different way.

So why fight Carver? Because, right now, when the AWA is at its lowest, when everyone looks dark and bleak, I have to be true to myself and to the things I believe.

And I have to be worthy of being the man I've always seen myself as.

I don't hate Carver, but I hate his tactics. I respect Carver, his career, his accomplishments and his commitment to fighting against Kurogun.

But I don't respect how he does it.

So tonight, we decide who is right. Tonight, we see if we can fight with honor, or if wading in the gutter is the only way.

But the years and the miles and the matches I've been through have already given me the answer.

I know what the right way is. And I know that it's my way. And I know that the only way to prove that to Carver, and to all those people who want to take the low road is by going in there and beating Carver one more time. And that's just what I'm going to do.

Count on it!

[With a nod, Martinez steps away, preparing to enter the ring and go to war...

...and we fade to another part of the locker room area. Seated on a bench staring thoughtfully into an open locker is Hannibal Carver. He finishes wrapping tape around his left hand before looking up.]

HC: Yeh know, this whole dumb kid thing?

[Carver tosses the roll of tape into the open locker.]

HC: Was really hoping that was a just a phase. Yeh know, like he would've grown out of it by now.

[Carver gets to his feet, putting a hand on the locker door.]

HC: Yeh and me, it's oil and water. We're never going to see the same way. I get that. Don't exactly take a genius to figure that one out.

Don't get me wrong, I ain't got one damn problem cracking yer noggin again. I'd be lying if I said that wasn't something I was looking forward to when I signed my name to that paper that brought me back here.

[Carver exhales, shaking his head.]

HC: But now ain't the time, Ryan. There's a lot more work to be done.

[Carver glances at the inside of the locker door. The camera changes its angle slightly, and we that three photographs are taped there.

On the bottom, Carver and Derrick Williams are laughing with beers in hand as they sit on a pair of road cases in a backstage area.

Panning up, we see the interior of the Rusty Spur. Carver, Jack Lynch, Travis Lynch and Bobby O'Connor are leaning against the bar... saluting the camera with beers hoisted high. Well, except for Bobby who has a glass of milk.

Finally, at the top, a photo of Carver in the ring. Instead of the ring we're used to seeing surrounded by countless screaming fans, it's a ring in a mostly empty ring. The only other person visible is the young man standing opposite of Carver as they appear to be sparring.

Eric Preston.

Carver turns slightly, noticing the camera seems to be fixated on the top photograph. He frowns and slams the locker shut loudly.]

HC: Yeh were the better man when it was time for me to knuckle up last time around. I'd like another shot at knocking yeh into next week, but there's a bigger enemy on the horizon. One that's already played their games and seen a lot of good people gone from here. It was bad enough when we were up against a fat man in a suit with a head full of greed... but now there's a whole corporation full of them. Trying to tell yeh, me and everyone else what to do. That don't sit right with me.

[Carver scowls.]

HC: And meanwhile yer still busy with yer tantrum over not being told about my invitation back to yer little party. Some things are bigger than yeh. I know that might hurt to hear, the perfect little prince from wrestling royalty... but that's the way it is.

[Carver bends down for a moment, and when he straightens back up there's unsurprisingly a can of beer in his hand. He cracks it open and takes a swig before continuing.]

HC: This is the part where everyone expects me to threaten yer life, right? Where I say I'm gonna leave yeh such a bag of bones and bruised entrails yeh'll never be worth a damn to anyone again?

[Carver nods with a smirk.]

HC: Sure as hell sounds like me. But the sad truth is, I need yeh. We all do. For this to work, for everyone that's been victimized to see their revenge in the light of day... it don't work unless we are all in this together kicking their heads in.

So.

[Carver takes a moment to calm the rage that seems to be rising just under the surface.]

HC: When this is done, I'll have beaten the common sense yeh so desperately need into that thick skull of yers. I will teach yeh to focus on this war instead of yer own damn pride. I will--

[A grin spreads across Carver's face.]

HC: Give yeh the beating yer daddy should've given yeh long ago so yeh could've grown to be half the man he is.

And after all that?

[Carver nods.]

HC: Yeh'll thank me. And we can get down to the real business.

[Carver lifts the beer as a salute, pouring the remainder into his mouth from up high before tossing the empty can to the side. He delivers a loud belch before speaking again.]

HC: See yeh out there, "champ".

[Carver grabs another beer from underneath the bench as we cut to a panning shot of the interior of the Wells Fargo Center, the crowd buzzing with anticipation for what comes next.

And then fade down to Rebecca Ortiz in the ring.]

RO: The following contest is set for one fall with a sixty minute time limit and is your MAIN EVENT of the evening!

[Big cheer!]

RO: Introducing first...



[Just then, the sound of the top of what sounds like a can is heard over the P.A. with the accompanying fizz of carbonation hitting the air. The familiar air raid siren is heard as the place becomes UNGLUED.]

Spotlights come to life, searching all over the capacity crowd as if they were searching for the perpetrator of a prison break. Just then, the familiar vocal line hits.]

"GONNA BE A BLACKOUT!!"

[ALL the lights come back on, and there stands a lone figure. Arms outstretched to the heavens, in one hand is an open can of Budweiser..]

...and the fans immediately pay tribute.]

"CAR-VER!" "CAR-VER!" "CAR-VER!"

"CAR-VER!" "CAR-VER!" "CAR-VER!"

"CAR-VER!" "CAR-VER!" "CAR-VER!"

"CAR-VER!" "CAR-VER!" "CAR-VER!"

[Carver leans towards the nearest camera as he walks the aisle.]

"Damn it all, I love yeh, Philly!"

[Ortiz continues.]

RO: From South Boston, Mass... weighing in at 260 pounds...

HANNNNNNNIBALLLLLLLL CARRRRRRRRRRVERRRRRRRRRR!

#'Cuz my town is big and my town is bright#  
#My town can work and my town can fight#  
#So don't stike no light and don't cause a red#  
#There's gonna be a blackout, blackout tonight#

[Carver comes quickly down the aisle, shedding his black hoodie before rolling under the ropes into the ring. He circles the ring once, nodding his head and scowling before climbing up onto the ring apron. He climbs to the second rope, pumping his fists and shouting along with the next lyric.]

#GONNA BE A BLACKOUT - BLACKOUT TONIGHT#

[The music fades as Rebecca continues.]

RO: Annnnnnnnnnd his opponent...

[The light tinkling of synth music can be heard, building in intensity, and then the drums kick in, the deep, bassy notes reverberating throughout the arena, as Thirty Seconds to Mars' "Vox Populi" blasts out over the Wells Fargo Center. The fans, begin to stomp their feet in unison to the drums. As the lyrics begin, the voice of Jared Leto is drowned out by the sound of the Philly fans singing along.]

#This is a call to arms, gather soldiers#  
#Time to go to war#

#This is a battle song, brothers and sisters#

#Time to go to war#

[A single spotlight shines over the entranceway, and there he stands...

The AWA's White Knight.]

RO: Hailing from Los Angeles, California... weighing 255 pounds...

He is the White Knight...

RYYYYYYYYYYANNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNN  
MARRRRRRRRRRRTIIIIIIIIINEZZZZZZZZZZZZ!

[The crowd noise intensifies as Martinez starts to walk the aisle towards the ring, wearing a long, white and red, sleeveless ring jacket, one that extends all the way to his ankles. The former World Champion is clean shaven, his dark hair cut short and slicked back. White gloves that extend from wrist to fingertips cover his hands, and before he enters the ring, he lifts his arms in the air, fingers splayed open, and hands locked together, to show the sword and shield logo done in gold and silver on the inside of his gloves.

Martinez enters the ring, and moves to the center, his eyes set in hard determination as he stares at his opponent. Without ever taking his eyes off of Carver, Martinez removes his ring jacket. Unsurprisingly, white is the dominant color in the White Knight's ring gear. On his right elbow is a long white elbow pad, which goes from just below his shoulder to the middle of his forearm. His long white ring pants have on the right leg t, a pair of silver swords imposed over a shield of gold, while on the left leg are the letters "RM" in red, and done in an ornate, stylized gothic style script. His boots are white with white laces, though the soles are a glossy black color.

The two men stare across the ring at one another, the crowd roaring...]

GM: A SuperClash Main Event about to go down here in Philly and-

[But before Gordon can apply final hype, he is interrupted by the sound of the signature snarl of a big jungle followed by the sounds of "La Cama de Piedra" by Cuco Sanchez creeping across the PA system.]

GM: Oh, come on now. How many times do we have to see this guy in one night?

BW: Hey, it's Javier Castillo's show and he'll do what he wants, Gordo.

GM: Obviously.

[El Presidente slides into view, his personal protector John Law close behind, as they make their way out onto the entrance stage. Castillo has a huge grin on his face and a mic in his hand as the duo doesn't stop on the stage but rather keeps walking towards the ring.]

GM: It looks like Castillo has something to say...

[Castillo raises the mic, still slowly walking as the music fades.]

JC: Gentlemen, gentlemen... a moment of your time por favor...

[He smirks as the fans jeer.]

JC: You see, Liberty Or Death has been an amazing night! Action! Excitement! Surprises! I think we've shown a certain former promoter that no matter what silly stunts he pulls in five nights... Javier Castillo puts on a better show, no?

[Carver and Martinez are both looking down the aisle from their respective corners.]

JC: But... just in case he is watching and he thinks he can do better... let's send him one more message...

Let's show him that he's not the only one who can go...

[He pauses, smiling evilly.]

JC: ...TO THE EXTREME!

[The Philly crowd cheers loudly! Castillo looks on, smiling even bigger.]

JC: See? They approve! So, our Main Event will now be Ryan Martinez against Hannibal Carver... in an EMWC RULES match which means... THERE ARE NO RULES!

[Another big cheer from the crowd as Castillo and Law are finally down to ringside now.]

JC: Now... with that said...

[Castillo promptly snaps his fingers at Law who digs under the apron, producing a steel chair which he hands to a waiting El Presidente...]

JC: LET'S FIGHT!

[...and he slides the chair under the ropes between the two men as referee Davis Warren signals for the bell!]

"DING! DING! DING!"

GM: A last moment change of plans by Javier Castillo as this match is now suddenly an EMWC Rules match! What does that even mean?

BW: You heard the man, Gordo... it means that there are no rules in this one! No countouts! No disqualifications! Everything is legal!

[With the chair in the ring between them, Martinez and Carver both look down at the weapon...

...then up at each other.]

GM: HERE! WE! GOOOOOOO!

[The two men dash out of their respective corners towards the middle of the ring where the chair is sitting...

...but instead of making a grab for it, they collide in a flurry of fists aimed at one another to a HUGE ROAR from the Philly fans!]

GM: THEY LOVE A GOOD FIGHT HERE IN PHILLY AND THAT'S EXACTLY WHAT THEY'RE ABOUT TO SEE!

[With the fans cheering them on loudly, Martinez and Carver continue to fling fisticuffs at one another as swiftly as they can manage...

...and then Ryan breaks off the fists, shifting his stance...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: KNIFE EDGE CHOP BY THE TWO-TIME FORMER WORLD CHAMPION!

[The blow stuns Carver but it's not long before he's recovered enough to reach out, swinging for the fences...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: CARVER WITH AN ELBOW IN KIND!

[Martinez stumbles back but steadies himself, winding up again...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: CHOP BY MARTINEZ!

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: ELBOW BY CARVER!

[The Philly fans are rocking for the exchange of strikes, getting louder and wilder with every blow land... and the enthusiasm of the fans seem to get to Carver and Martinez who start throwing harder... and faster...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

[And with the AWA faithful on their feet, screaming their lungs out for this exchange, Carver switches to another trusted weapon... his fists.]

GM: Oh! Big right hand by Carver! And another! The haymakers of the Boston Brawler are tough and effective as you can see by Martinez quickly getting driven back across the ring, right back into the corner...

[With Martinez' back against the buckles, Carver rains down blows on him, one after another as the referee shouts for Carver to step back.]

GM: He's all over the White Knight!

[Carver finally steps back, planting a kiss on his clenched fist before letting it fly yet again...

...a blow that Martinez blocks, quickly spinning Carver's back against the turnbuckles!]

GM: Martinez turns it around! He's got Carver trapped in the corner..

[The White Knight winds up, ready to land the first of his Machine Gun chops in the corner..

...but Carver slips a knee up into the gut, cutting him off!]

GM: Hannibal Carver knew those chops were coming and he knew exactly how to avoid them!

[Grabbing a handful of hair, Carver SMASHES Martinez facefirst into the turnbuckles, sending him falling down to a knee on the canvas. The Boston Brawler turns, walking back out to the middle of the ring where Javier Castillo slid the chair into the ring...]

GM: Uh oh! Carver's got the chair!

[Castillo applauds emphatically, nodding his head as Carver straightens up, lightly tapping the chair on the mat a few times as he walks towards a rising Martinez...]

GM: Martinez has no idea he's coming for him and-

[But before he reaches the corner, Carver makes a slight turn and tosses the chair over the ropes to the floor, sending it clattering to the concrete. He turns around angrily, shouting something in Castillo's direction that is quickly muted by a quick-triggered censor.]

GM: Our apologies for the language there, fans, but Hannibal Carver is making a bold statement there by refusing to use that chair.

BW: I don't get it, Gordo. Hannibal Carver's never met a weapon he doesn't like and now he's turning down LEGAL use of a steel chair?!

GM: Carver's not about to be made a puppet by Castillo or the Korugun Corporation if you ask me, Bucky.

[Carver turns away from Castillo towards a waiting Martinez...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[...who lets another knife edge chop fly, knocking Carver right off his feet and down to the canvas!]

GM: MARTINEZ CHOPS HIM DOWN!

[Carver is quick to regain his feet though as Martinez greets him by grabbing the wrist, whipping his rival across the ring to the corner...]

GM: Shoots him into the corner, Martinez backs off... he's going for the Yakuza, fans!

BW: Already?!

[Standing in one corner as Carver leans against the opposite, Martinez barrels across the ring towards his victim...

...who suddenly comes charging out of the corner, leaping into the air, taking Martinez off his feet!]

GM: FIERRO PRESS! FIERRO PRESS!

[The crowd ROARS for Carver as he unleashes a flurry of haymakers on the skull of Martinez!]

GM: Carver taking a page out of his old friend, Jack Lynch's, playbook! He's pounding Martinez down into the canvas...

[The referee warns against the clenched fists, forcing a break as Carver gets back to his feet... ]

GM: Carver's up, taking an earful from Davis Warren as Martinez struggles to get back up off the mat...

[But as the White Knight arrives to a standing position, Carver leaps up, snaring the three-quarter nelson...

...and gets shoved towards the ropes for his efforts!]

GM: Blackout countered by Martinez, shoving Carver into the ropes...

[With Carver on the ropes, Martinez rushes towards him, looking for a clothesline to take him over...

...but Carver drops down, yanking the top rope with him, and sends Martinez tumbling over the ropes to the apron!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: HARD FALL- NO! HE HANGS ON, LANDING ON THE APRON!

[Carver quickly gets up, backing to the ropes where he hops up onto the second as Martinez regains his footing on the apron...

...and the Boston Brawler leaps off the middle rope, extending his arm into a makeshift clothesline, taking Martinez off his feet and down HARD on the barely-padded floor!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: AND A FLYING CLOTHESLINE SENDS MARTINEZ TO THE FLOOR!

[With Martinez down on the floor and Carver down on all fours after the clothesline, the crowd cheers the showdown they've seen so far as Carver flattens out and rolls outside, attempting to go after the White Knight.]

GM: Both men out on the floor now. Remember, EMWC Rules in effect here... no countouts... no DQs...

BW: And if you don't think Carver's going to take full advantage of that, Gordo, I'll sell you my stake in the E!

[Carver promptly grabs the downed Martinez by the hair, dragging him up to his feet...

...and SMASHES his face into the ring apron!]

GM: Facefirst into the apron! No rules out there certainly plays to Hannibal Carver's advantage, Bucky. We've seen him in some pretty fierce battles over the years.

BW: Absolutely. If this turns into a fight, it's right up Carver's alley... and Carver's alley is not a place for White Knights.

[Carver keeps his grip on the hair, dragging Martinez along the apron towards the timekeeper's table...]

GM: Look out here! OHHH! FACEFIRST TO THE TABLE!

[Carver shrugs an apology towards Rebecca Ortiz who sees her open water bottle tip over, draining out on the floor. The Boston Brawler turns back towards Martinez, grabbing him by the wrist...]

GM: Martinez needs to find a way to get this back in the ring before this gets any...

"CLAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAANG!"

"OHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAHHH!"

GM: ...well, I was going to say before it gets any worse but the former World Champion just SLAMMED spinefirst into the ringside railing so I think I'm too late for that!

[Martinez is leaning against the railing, a bunch of AWA faithful leaning over to shout their support and slap their White Knight on the shoulders and back...]

...which is when Carver breaks into a sprint towards the barricade, fans bolting out of range as he draws a bead on Martinez...]

GM: Carver on the move and-

[The White Knight ducks low...]

"OHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAHHH!"

GM: BACKDROP OVER THE RAILING AND INTO THE CROOOOOOWD!

[Martinez leans back against the railing again, taking a chance to recover from the quick start before he straightens up, scrambling over the railing in hot pursuit of the Boston Brawler.]

GM: Uh oh! And this really IS going to the extreme, Bucky! They're going out in the crowd!

BW: We saw this earlier in the World Title match but unlike that one, they don't have to worry about a possible countout OR a disqualification... they can do whatever they want out there and that's not just EMWC style, Gordo... that's Philly style, daddy!

[Martinez is swarmed by members of the AWA faithful on all sides. The White Knight tries to make his way gingerly through the crowd, trying to get to where Hannibal Carver went into the seats...]

BW: Martinez might be regretting being the most popular guy in wrestling right about now. He's trying to get to Carver and these idiots are out here trying to get an autograph or a selfie!

[After a few more moments, Martinez wades into view, moving towards Carver who is stirring out of the steel chairs that make up the ringside seats. The White Knight reaches out for him, grabbing him by the wrist...]

...which is when Carver suddenly straightens up, spewing a mouthful of beer right in the eyes of Martinez!]

BW: BEER MIST! BEER MIST BY CARVER

[Martinez stumbles back, rubbing at his now-stinging eyes as Carver comes up holding a cup of beer in his hand... which he quickly drains before tossing it in the direction of the ring to a big cheer from the Philly faithful!]

GM: Looks like Hannibal Carver is pausing for a mid-match refreshment.

BW: At least he shared with Martinez.

[Still-blinded, Martinez stumbles back away from Carver, the fans parting as Carver advances on the White Knight, stepping up on the seat of a chair, giving a loud shout...

...and then LEAPS OFF the chair, taking Martinez down with a wild flying clothesline off the seats!]

“OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

GM: AND CARVER, THE WILDMAN, TAKES MARTINEZ DOWN TO THE FLOOR!

[The crowd around the two fan favorites are going nuts as Carver lets loose a roar before snatching a handful of hair...

...and SMASHING his fist down between the eyes!]

GM: Ohh! Hard shot on the floor by Carver! It was SuperClash VII in the Main Event in Houston, Texas when these two went to war over the World Title. On that night, Ryan Martinez came out the winner and Hannibal Carver left the company. But tonight, they come together again... not over gold but over a clear difference of opinion on how to fight this fight against the Korugun Corporation.

[A second and third pounding right hand finds the mark before Carver climbs off of Martinez, dragging the White Knight up with him...]

GM: Both men back up now... Carver grabs the wrist...]

“CLAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAANG!”

“OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

GM: INTO THE STEEL GOES MARTINEZ AGAIN!

[The White Knight grimaces, grabbing at his lower back as Carver takes aim, charging at him a second time...]

“WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!”

“OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

[...and gets chopped right off his feet by the former World Champion!]

GM: WHAT A CHOP BY MARTINEZ!

BW: You could feel that one land so hard, it might’ve put another crack in the Liberty Bell, daddy!



[With Carver down on the cement floor, the wild and rabid Philly fans encircle the duo once more, shouting their support for their favorites as Martinez leans down to pull Carver up...]

GM: What the-?!

[Gordon's exclamation comes as Carver takes a wild swipe at a fan as he gets up... or more specifically, what the fan is holding in his hand.]

GM: Carver just swatted a beer right into Martinez' face!

[Martinez stumbles back, again temporarily blinded by the sting of alcohol in his eyes. Carver grins as he gets to his feet, snatching a beer away from another fan and... yup, bottoms up.]

"HAN-NI-BAL!"

"HAN-NI-BAL!"

"HAN-NI-BAL!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"OH HHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[Martinez pauses the mid-match celebratory drink with a chop aimed at the throat of Carver, causing the Boston Brawler to drop the cup, coughing violently, spewing beer all around the surrounding fans... who probably already have spilled beer on themselves anyways so they don't flee the sudden shower.]

GM: Martinez caught him! Carver trying to clear his airways and...

[Grabbing Carver by the back of the tights, Martinez hurls him over the barricade and back into the area around the ring to some boos from the Philly fans.]

GM: Not a popular decision there by Martinez but he knows the best chance of victory for him is in the ring... not on the floor in all this chaos.

[The White Knight starts to follow after Carver and then seems to think better of, waving his arms, demanding the Philly fans part as he walks through the aisle between the two sections of seats.]

GM: Where's he going?

BW: Maybe he's decided to call it a night. Head down the road and see if the Phillies are still playing.

GM: Well, they're not. The Phillies were blanked by the Pirates 3-0 today.

BW: Typical.

[Martinez gets about twenty feet back from the barricade before he turns, waving his arms to clear the path again. The crowd begins to buzz as Martinez stands determined, taking a couple of deep breaths...

...and then runs!]

GM: MARTINEZ CHARGING THE RAILING!

[And just before he'd run it into it, the White Knight HURLS himself into the air, sailing over the barricade...

...and FLATTENS Carver with a flying clothesline!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: OH MY STARS! WHAT A MOVE OUT OF RYAN MARTINEZ!

BW: That's not the usual kind of thing we see out of Martinez, Gordo. He may be thinking he's gotta dig a little deeper if he wants to beat Carver here tonight in an EMWC Rules match.

GM: Well, so far... at least the weaponry hasn't come into play.

BW: The night's young, Gordo!

[Climbing back to his feet with a triumphant roar, Martinez drags Carver off the ringside floor, shoving him under the bottom rope into the ring. The White Knight rolls in after him, climbing to his feet to cheers...]

...which is when Javier Castillo slides a Singapore cane into the ring towards Martinez to louder cheers!]

GM: Castillo again trying to get these two to use some kind of a weapon... and I can only think it's an attempt to have these two heroes take EACH OTHER out and save him the effort!

BW: You could be right, Gordo... but it also could be Castillo doing it for his people! Doing it for the fans! He wants them to see EMWC Rules here tonight and that means tables and ladders and chairs...

GM: Oh my.

[The White Knight glares over at Castillo for a long moment before leaning down, picking up the Singapore cane to cheers from the Philly fans...]

GM: He's got it now! Martinez has got the cane in hand and... he's sizing up Carver! He's gonna use that cane on him!

[Martinez steps towards the rising Carver, nodding his head, waiting...]

...and then turns towards Castillo, snapping the cane over his knee and throwing the pieces out towards El Presidente who flinches and then glares coldly at the White Knight.]

GM: And for the second time in this match, either Martinez or Carver has turned down the weapon offered up by Javier Castillo! How about that?

BW: Well, Castillo's not happy about it... and neither are the fans, Gordo.

GM: Ahhh, Philly. They certainly have a different way of looking at-

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: ROLLING ELBOW! ROLLING ELBOW! MARTINEZ TURNED RIGHT INTO A ROLLING ELBOW!

[Carver dives across Martinez, cradling a leg!]

GM: ONNNNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOOOOO!

[But a still-fairly fresh Martinez kicks out at two, breaking the pin...]

...but immediately finds himself under assault, a thunderstorm of pounding fists aimed at his face and head that he frantically tries to defend himself against by raising his arms to deflect the blows!]

GM: CARVER'S POUNDING HIM INTO THE MAT!

[The referee shouts a warning but Castillo quickly shouts him down.]

GM: I think Davis Warren forgot that there are no rules in this one, fans. Castillo is quick to remind him though. Carver pulling Martinez off the mat now, whips him to the buckles...

[The former World Champion smashes into the corner, stumbling back out towards Carver who sidesteps, allowing him to wobble past before hooking a full nelson, lifting Martinez into the air, and sitting out so that he lands tailbone-first on the canvas!]

GM: DORCESTER DROP!

[Carver rolls to the side, throwing Martinez down for another pin attempt.]

GM: Covers again for one! He's got two! He's got- no! Two count only a second time for the Boston Brawler!

[But Carver keeps on going, getting right up to his feet, taking aim...

...and from a standing position, he swandives forward and SMASHES his skull into Martinez', causing both men to grab at their foreheads before Carver rolls into a third pin attempt!]

GM: Another try for Carver gets one! Two! But again, Martinez is out at two!

[Carver angrily claps his hands together, smashing a fist down into the mat as he gets to his feet, looking down at Martinez...

...and then sees Javier Castillo slide a steel chair into the ring again.]

GM: And again, Castillo introduces a steel chair, trying to tempt one of these two to get nasty as the match goes on.

[Carver stares down at the chair for a moment, looking over at Martinez who is trying to get off the mat...

...and then angrily shoves the chair with the toe of his boot, rocketing it back towards Castillo who narrowly avoids it as it slides under the ropes, nearly taking his head off!]

GM: WHOOOOOA MY!

[John Law angrily grabs the middle rope, attempting to get into the ring as the referee shouts him back...]

GM: John Law, Castillo's protector, trying to get in after that but Castillo and the referee are trying to stop him!

[Law glares at Carver who beckons him forward, daring him to get into the ring to fight with the Boston Brawler...]

GM: Carver says if John Law wants a piece of him, he's welcome to try!

BW: But Castillo says now's not the time. You know, we still don't know the team for Korugun for Sunday night, Gordo. You think John Law will be on it?

GM: Castillo is playing that one pretty close to the vest but I think there's an excellent chance of that, yes.

[Seeing that Law is going to stay on the floor, Carver turns his focus back towards the rising Martinez, grabbing him by the arm...]

GM: Carver whips him to- no, reversed by Martinez!

[Carver SLAMS back into the buckles as Martinez drops back into the opposite corner, charging across the ring, swinging his leg up...]

GM: YAAAAAAKUUUUUUZAAAAA!

[...but Carver has it well-scouted, sliding to the side and causing Martinez to hit the corner HARD and awkwardly, his leg extended and hitting the buckles. He stumbles back, grabbing at his leg...

...and the Boston Brawler drags him down into a schoolboy!]

GM: ROLLUP! ROLLUP! ONNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOO!

[The crowd responds with a mixed reaction as Martinez kicks out, breaking up the pin attempt!]

GM: Martinez slips the shoulder up in time! A near fall there...

BW: And it didn't even take a steel chair to the skull to do it.

[Carver quickly gets to his feet, fingers wiggling with anticipation as he crouches, trying to stay behind Martinez as the White Knight gets to his feet...]

GM: Carver's sizing him up! He may be looking to end it here!

[And as the former World Champion turns around, Carver leaps up, snaring the three-quarter nelson...]

GM: BLACKOUT!

[...but Martinez steps forward, lunging to the side, and HURLS Carver over the top rope, sending him CRASHING down onto the barely-padded floor at ringside!]

"THUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUD!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: OH MY STARS! OVER THE TOP TO THE FLOOR GOES CARVER! WHAT A COUNTER OUT OF THE WHITE KNIGHT! MARTINEZ SAW THE BLACKOUT COMING NAD HE WAS ABLE TO ESCAPE IT!

[A banged-up Martinez leans against the ropes, taking a breather as Carver rolls to a hip on the floor, cradling his lower back as Javier Castillo looks on, a big grin on his face.]

GM: Javier Castillo certainly likes what he's seeing out of this one as Hannibal Carver takes a horrible fall down to the floor... and Ryan Martinez is going out after him, I think.

[The crowd suddenly ROARS loudly!]

BW: He is, Gordo... but not in the way you'd expect!

GM: What's he...?! Where is he going?!

[The cheers get louder as the White Knight approaches the corner, taking a deep breath as he steps up on the second rope...]

GM: Are you kidding me?! This is NOT Ryan Martinez' area of skill, fans! This is NOT where you want to see him go if you're a fan of the former World Champion!

[Martinez steps both feet on the middle rope, then puts one up top as he stands tall, the crowd standing with him as he watches Hannibal Carver trying to get up off the concrete floor!]

GM: Carver trying to get back to his feet but he's got NO idea what's waiting for him once he gets there!

[The Boston Brawler stirs to his feet, cradling his back as he slowly turns back towards the ring...]

GM: LOOK OUT BELOW!

[...and Martinez HURLS himself sloppily off the top rope, stretching out his arms and legs as much as he can, and CRASHES down on top of Hannibal Carver!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: IT MAY NOT BE THE PRETTIEST DIVE YOU'VE EVER SEEN BUT IT WAS 255 POUNDS OF FLYING WHITE KNIGHT DOWN ONTO HANNIBAL CARVER! OHHHH MYYYYYY!

[A weary Martinez rolls off of Carver, a smile on his face as he pumps a fist emphatically to cheers from the Philly crowd.]

GM: Martinez with a death-defying dive to the floor... and that just might turn things back in the White Knight's favor in this back and forth battle between two long time rivals!

BW: And occasional allies.

[Using the ring apron for a boost, Martinez drags himself back to his feet before leaning down to drag Carver up with him...]

GM: HEADFIRST OFF THE APRON!

[Carver stumbles down the apron towards the timekeeper's table where people start to scatter as the fight gets too close for comfort.]

GM: Over by the timekeeper's area now... Martinez grabs Carver by the back of the head and-

[The crowd reacts as Carver extends his arms to the table, preventing Martinez from slamming his head down into it!]

GM: BLOCKED!

[A quick back elbow to the gut breaks off the faceslam attempt by Martinez as Carver grabs the White Knight's head.]

GM: OHH! MARTINEZ GETS A FACE FULL OF TABLE!

[And that might not be all as Carver keeps his grip on Martinez' hair, climbing up onto the timekeeper's table...]

GM: What's he... Carver's climbing on the table!

[With the Philly crowd roaring for this scene, Carver pulls Martinez up on the table with him...]

GM: Both men up on the table now!

BW: I'm just glad it's not our table, Gordo.

GM: You and me both, buddy. But Hannibal Carver's gotta feel a sense of deja vu here, fans. The last time he was on top of a table like this in the AWA, he was being piledriven THROUGH it!

BW: Imagine if he did the same thing to Martinez here tonight!

GM: No way, Bucky. There's no way he'd do that... and in fact, it looks like he's setting up for a suplex instead!

[Grabbing the front facelock, Carver attempts to hoist Martinez up!]

GM: Carver's gonna suplex him on the floor! He's gonna-

[But instead, the White Knight lifts Carver into the air, turning towards the ring and dropping him gutfirst over the top rope, sending him bouncing back inside the squared circle!]

GM: Ohh! What a counter out of the former World Champion!

[Martinez leans over the top rope for a few moments, breathing heavily at the fight so far.]

GM: We're over fifteen minutes into this absolutely war of attrition between Martinez and Carver as the former World Champion comes through the ropes, in hot pursuit of the Boston Brawler...

BW: Carver's trying to get out of there, Gordo. I think he might've gotten the wind knocked out of him with that suplex... and if a man can't breathe, he can't fight.

GM: I've heard that.

[Carver is on the verge of getting through the ropes when Martinez grabs him from behind, dragging him up to his feet in a rear waistlock...

...and lifts Carver into the air, DUMPING him down on the back of his head and neck with a German Suplex!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: GERMAN SUPLEX BY MARTINEZ! Rolls over... folds him up for the cover...

[A two count follows before Carver escapes the pin attempt.]

GM: Only a two count there... and Martinez is right back to his feet though, trying to stay on the attack...

[Pulling Carver off the mat, Martinez shoves him back into the corner...]

"MAR [CHOP!] – TI [CHOP!] – NEZ [CHOP!]"

"MAR [CHOP!] – TI [CHOP!] – NEZ [CHOP!]"

"MAR [CHOP!] – TI [CHOP!] – NEZ [CHOP!]"

"MAR [CHOP!] – TI [CHOP!] – NEZ [CHOP!]"

"MAR [CHOP!] – TI [CHOP!] – NEZ [CHOP!]"

GM: MACHINE GUN CHOPS!

[Martinez pauses, taking a breath, as the fans chant for more. Ever a man of the people, young Ryan obliges. This time, the barrage of chops is slower, as is the fans' chant.]

"MAR [CHOP!] – TI [CHOP!] – NEZ [CHOP!]"

"MAR [CHOP!] – TI [CHOP!] – NEZ [CHOP!]"

"MAR [CHOP!] – TI [CHOP!] – NEZ [CHOP!]"

"MAR [CHOP!] – TI [CHOP!] – NEZ [CHOP!]"

"MAR [CHOP!] – TI [CHOP!] – NEZ [CHOP!]"

[With the barrage of chops leaving Carver red-chested and winded, Martinez grabs him by the arm...]

GM: Big whip coming up... no, reversed!

[The reversal sends Martinez CRASHING backfirst into the buckles, staggering back out towards Carver who spins out of the corner...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: ANOTHER ROLLING ELBOW! IMPACT FOR DAYS ON THAT ONE AND-

BW: HE'S STILL STANDING!

[The crowd ROARS at the sight of their White Knight still on his feet, staggered but not fallen as Carver looks shocked at the sight of it.]

GM: Can you believe it?! Carver CRACKED him with a rolling elbow but Martinez WILL! NOT! FALL!

[An angry Carver snatches a handful of hair, pulling Martinez closer as he unloads with a series of elbowstrikes to the jaw...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"  
"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"  
"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

[Carver steps back, going into another spin as he looks to knock the dazed Martinez into the middle of next week...]

GM: ROLLING ELB-

"SLAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"  
"OHOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO!"

[...but Martinez lashes out, snapping an open-handed slap across Carver's face, stopping him cold!]

GM: MY STARS! WHAT A SHOT BY THE FORMER WORLD CHAMPION!

[And this time, it's Carver who is staggered but not dropped as Martinez nods his head in understanding, stepping closer as he draws back his right hand...]

"SLAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"  
"SLAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"  
"SLAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"  
"SLAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"  
"SLAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"  
"SLAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"  
"SLAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"  
"SLAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"  
"SLAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"  
"SLAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

[The open-handed strikes coming swiftly and severely from BOTH hands rock Carver back and forth, leaving him barely able to stand as Martinez steps back, burying a boot into the midsection...]

GM: MARTINEZ KICKS HIM DOWNSTAIRS! HOOKS HIM!

[The crowd ROARS as Martinez sets for the Brainbuster which would certainly put an end to this one, lifting Carver into the air...]

GM: HE'S GOT HIM UP AND-

[...but a struggling Carver battles back down to his feet, both men standing on the mat as Carver spins out, hooking the three-quarter nelson...]

GM: BLACKOU-

"THUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUD!"  
"OHOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO!"

[But Carver's attempt to end the match gets abruptly halted as Martinez lifts his rival in the air and DUMPS him on the back of his head and neck with a Backdrop Driver!]

GM: BACKDROP DRIIIIIIVAAAAAAAAAH!

BW: RIGHT ON THE NECK!

GM: COVER!



[Martinez flops over, diving across Carver's heaving chest!]

GM: ONNNNNNNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOOOO! THREEEEEEEEEEEE-

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: KICKOUT! KICKOUT! KICKOUT!

[Martinez rolls over onto his back, staring up at the lights of the Wells Fargo Center as Hannibal Carver just narrowly avoided defeat at the hands of the White Knight seconds ago!]

GM: WHAT A NEARFALL THAT WAS!

BW: Martinez thought he had him there, Gordo!

GM: It was SO close, I can hardly blame him for that!

[Martinez slowly climbs to his feet, grimacing as he walks back towards the corner... and gives his leg a big slap to cheers!]

GM: Ryan Martinez may be looking for the Excalibur here, Bucky!

BW: He couldn't get the Brainbuster so the Excalibur would be up next in the ol' tool box!

GM: Martinez in the corner... he's ready... he's waiting... he's watching as Hannibal Carver, fresh off being dumped on the back of his head and neck tries to get back to his feet...

[Martinez is waiting, crouching down now to increase the push-off power in his legs as he watches Carver slowly get to a knee, grabbing the back of his neck...]

GM: Carver trying to get to his feet... but he doesn't know what's waiting for him when he gets there! Deja vu for sure!

[Carver pushes up, slowly staggering in a circle to face Martinez...

...who abruptly is halted before he can come barreling out of the corner!]

GM: What the-?!

[The camera cuts to ringside where Javier Castillo has wrapped his hands around Martinez' ankle, preventing him from charging across the ring!]

GM: CASTILLO'S GOT THE ANKLE! HE'S GOT THE ANKLE AND-

[With Castillo holding the ankle of Martinez, the referee moves over to (gently) demand the AWA President let go of the White Knight...

...which is when John Law gets up on the apron, holding a steel chair in front of him...]

GM: LAW'S ON THE APRON WITH A CHAIR AND-

[Without hesitation, Hannibal Carver charges forward...

...and SMASHES the chair back into Law's face with a running elbowstrike, sending Law flying backwards off the apron as the chair goes clattering down inside the ring!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: CARVER DROPS LAW... AND HE'S GOT THE CHAIR!

[Carver stands tall, chair in hand, looking at it as Martinez manages to shake loose from Castillo who scampers away. Carver lifts the chair up in front of him, staring at it in thought as Martinez turns... sees the chair...

...and goes sprinting across the ring, leaping into the air!]

"CRAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAASH!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: EXCALIBUR INTO THE CHAAAAAAAIR!

[But the flying Yakuza sends Carver flying through the ropes, crashing out on the floor as Martinez angrily smashes his hands down into the mat in frustration at not being able to cover Carver!]

GM: Martinez thought he had him there but Carver went all the way out to the floor!

BW: Good news for him, Gordo. If Carver had stayed in the ring after the Excalibur kicked the chair back into his mush, I think this one would've been over!

GM: And it still might be! Martinez is going out there after him!

[A fuming Martinez drops to the floor where he throws a look at the downed Carver...

...and then looks over at Javier Castillo who is shouting his name while tugging the timekeeper's table away from the apron towards Martinez!]

GM: Wait a second! Castillo wants Martinez to use the table! He wants him to put Carver through the table!

BW: Why not?! Carver was going to use the chair on Martinez!

GM: You don't know that! He hadn't done a thing with the chair yet!

BW: Oh, you're trying to tell me that Hannibal Carver had a chair in his hands when it was legal to use it and he was just going to throw it aside?!

GM: It wouldn't be the first time!

[Martinez glares at Castillo for several uncomfortably long moments... and then waves him off to a mixed reaction from the Philly crowd, turning back towards Carver, dragging him up off the floor and shoving him back into the ring!]

GM: Martinez isn't gonna do it! He won't fall for Castillo's little tricks! He puts Carver back in and-

[A furious Javier Castillo stomps around the ring, pointing and shouting angrily at Martinez who stands there, glaring at the AWA President!]

GM: Castillo's reading Martinez the riot act out at ringside!

BW: Fitting considering all the riots the dumb kid has started!

[But as Castillo and Martinez trade words on the floor, John Law climbs into the ring, ignoring the protesting referee as he stomps across the ring, pulling Hannibal Carver up to his feet...

...and wrapping his massive paw around Carver's throat!]

GM: LAW'S GOT CARVER BY THE THROAT!

BW: Hannibal Carver's about to fight the Law and I've got news for you, Gordo. Spoiler alert! The Law won!

GM: CHOKESLA-

[But in mid-lift, Carver twists out, snatching the three-quarter nelson...]

GM: BLACKOUT! BLACKOUT!

[The crowd EXPLODES as Law's skull smashes into the canvas! Castillo's jaw drops out on the floor as a smiling Ryan Martinez rolls back into the ring as Carver shoves Law under the ropes to the floor!]

GM: JOHN LAW GETS TAKEN OUT AND... HERE WE GO!

[Carver gets to his feet, turning to face the White Knight who stares across the ring...

...and an old familiar dueling chant starts up once more.]

"LETS GO RYAN!"

"HAN-NI-BAL!"

"LETS GO RYAN!"

"HAN-NI-BAL!"

"LETS GO RYAN!"

"HAN-NI-BAL!"

"LETS GO RYAN!"

"HAN-NI-BAL!"

"LETS GO RYAN!"

"HAN-NI-BAL!"

[And with a smirk and a shrug, Carver rushes towards Martinez who is ready, willing, and able to meet the charge...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

[An elbowstrike from Carver lands flush, snapping Martinez' head backwards.]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

[A knife edge chop splashes across the chest of Carver, causing him to wince, grabbing at his already badly-welted pectorals!]

GM: We've got a fight on our hands once more!

[Carver winds and throws...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

[...as does the White Knight.]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

[Carver reaches out, grabbing a handful of hair...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

[...but Martinez slaps the hand away...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

[...and returns fire with some skin-splitting blows of his own. Carver winces, stumbling back...]

...and then throws himself at his rival, a whirlwind of fists landing from every angle and on every possible target!]

GM: THE FISTS ARE FLYING IN PHILLY!

[Martinez responds with some open-handed blows, aimed at the ear of his rival... expertly so... as if taught specifically with that target in mind...]

"SLAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"SLAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"SLAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"SLAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"SLAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"SLAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"SLAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"SLAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

[Carver stumbles back, grabbing at his ear as Martinez comes from the other side...]

"SLAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"SLAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"SLAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"SLAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"SLAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"SLAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

[The blows to the right ear sends Carver falling backwards as Martinez winds up again...]

...and Carver reaches out, snatching Martinez by the hair!]

"CRAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

[A sickening sound rings out as Carver SMASHES his skull into Martinez'!]

"CRAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"CRAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"CRAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

[Carver pulls his head back, blood now streaming from a wound on his forehead as Martinez staggers, trying to sink to a knee but Carver holds him up with one hand...

...and then leaps up, snaring the three-quarter nelson...]

GM: BLACKOUT!

[The crowd EXPLODES in a mixed reaction to Martinez' skull being driven into the mat! Carver flips him over, diving across!]

GM: ONNNNNNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOOO! THREEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEE!

"DING! DING! DING!"

[Carver rolls off Martinez, a smile on his face as he sits up on the canvas, obviously worn out from the wild brawl.]

GM: Nearly two years after going down in defeat to Ryan Martinez at SuperClash VII, Hannibal Carver has defeated the White Knight here tonight in a brutal battle held under EMWC Rules!

BW: They were under EMWC Rules but in the end, neither Martinez nor Carver shockingly took advantage of those rules... and I don't think Javier Castillo is too happy about it.

[In fact, Castillo appears to be absolutely fuming as he stares up at the ring where Carver lightly slaps Martinez' chest a few times before getting to his feet.]

GM: Carver soaking up the cheers from these Philly fans... he's certainly a man after their own hearts. A little rough around the edges and-

BW: Rough around the edges? He used to use a can opener on people's heads!

GM: Well, that Hannibal Carver is a thing of the past... and I think Javier Castillo is realizing that right about now.

[Castillo is still glaring up at the ring where Carver is standing...

...and then Carver reaches down, dragging Ryan Martinez up to his feet, putting a hand on his shoulder to steady the White Knight.]

GM: Can you believe this now? Hannibal Carver helping Martinez to his feet.

[Carver jabs a finger in the former champion's chest.]

"We're done fighting... for now... right?"

[Martinez tiredly nods his head.]

"Now? We fight..."

[Carver turns and points to Castillo.]

"...him."

[And on cue, Carver and Martinez both turn towards Castillo who steps back into John Law's protective shadow...

...and then angrily turns towards the locker room, giving a sweep of his arm towards the ring.]

GM: Uh oh! Castillo's calling for reinforcements and-

[The Philly fans start to boo loudly as Muteesa and Polemos come lumbering out through the curtain, walking quickly down the ramp to join Castillo and Law.]

GM: It looks like Carver and Martinez aren't done fighting here tonight!

[Polemos pulls himself up on the apron, stepping over the ropes as Carver rushes forward, greeting the big man with a flurry of haymakers to cheers from the crowd...]

GM: Carver's going for Polemos! Which means...

[Muteesa slides in, throwing a knife-edge chop at the throat of Martinez... and another... and another.. ]

GM: Muteesa bringing the thunder on Martinez!

[The Congolese Savage batters Martinez back into the ropes as Carver and Polemos trade right hands. John Law seems about to step into the ring when Javier Castillo extends an arm to stop him, shaking his head...]

GM: Castillo's not letting John Law join the fray and-

[Polemos slaps a big hand around the throat of Carver, dragging him out to the middle of the ring...]

GM: Polemos looking to chokeslam Carver!

[But before he can, Carver swings a right hand... and another... and another. Across the ring, Martinez is using his own chops to send Muteesa stumbling backwards...

...and then Martinez gestures to Carver who gives a nod, coming towards Martinez. He grabs the White Knight's wrist, charging Muteesa...]

GM: DOUBLE CLOTHESLINE TAKES MUTEESA TO THE FLOOR!

[The crowd is getting louder now as they see Martinez and Carver fighting side by side against the Korugun Corporation...

...and a second running clothesline takes Polemos over the ropes, dumping him to the floor at the feet of a fuming Castillo. The crowd ROARS as Martinez shouts in Castillo's direction before waving a hand towards Rebecca Ortiz, calling for the mic.]

RM: Castillo, you've seen us fight each other...

[Martinez shakes his head.]

RM: Now wait til you see us fight together!

[Big cheer!]

RM: And the way I hear it, Riley Hunter's going to be out of action for a long, long time... and you've got a spot empty in the Stampede Cup.

[Another big cheer as Martinez turns towards Carver.]

RM: What do you say we take that spot... partner?

[Martinez sticks out his hand to a ROAR from the crowd. Carver looks a little surprised, looking around at the cheering crowd...

...and then with a smirk, he accepts the offered hand, shaking it to a DEAFENING ROAR from the Philly crowd!]

GM: OH MY STARS! CARVER AND MARTINEZ ARE ON THE SAME PAGE... AND THEY WANT IN THE STAMPEDE CUP! FANS, WE'RE OUT OF TIME! WE'LL SEE YOU SUNDAY NIGHT JUST DOWN THE ROAD AT ETERNALLY EXTREME!

[Castillo glowers up at the unified front facing him down...

...and we fade to black.]