

Victory: 04.10.2026

Promotion: United Toughness Alliance
Date: April 10, 2026
Location: Moda Center — Portland, Oregon

Preview

The United Toughness Alliance goes back on the road as they start to do a Victory lap across the US on the road to Victorious. See your favorite UTA superstars as they come to your hometown.

Results

Introduction

Segment

The screen is black.

Then the sound begins first.

A dull, echoing hum.

The kind that feels less like music and more like memory.

One image fades in.

Chris Ross storming down the ramp last week with murder in his eyes.

Another.

Maxwell Jett standing in the ring, smug, venomous, waving that picture around like he had no soul left to lose.

Then the tearing.

The photograph ripped apart in his hands.

Chris Ross losing all control.

The package cuts faster now.

Ross throwing the UTA Championship into the ring.

Ross diving in after Jett.

Jett slipping away.

Ross pacing like a caged animal.

Valentina Blaze at ringside, trying to calm the storm.

Jett circling.

Talking.

Smiling.

Dragging the champion deeper and deeper into rage.

Then the match itself.

Chris Ross finally getting his hands on him.

Forearms. Lariats. Headbutts. Raw violence.

Jett surviving.

Targeting the shoulder. Targeting the knee. Picking Ross apart piece by piece.

The music underneath the package swells.

We see Ross on his knees.

We see Valentina on the apron, concern all over her face.

We hear her shouting.

Valentina Blaze: "Chris! Chris!"

Ross surges forward.

Jett sidesteps.

And then—

The moment.

Chris Ross crashing violently into Valentina Blaze and knocking her from the apron to the floor.

The music drops out completely.

Only the sickening silence of shock remains.

Ross looking down in horror.

Valentina motionless on the floor.

Jett rushing in from behind.

The schoolboy.

A fistful of tights.

The referee counting.

ONE.

TWO.

THREE.

The shot freezes on Maxwell Jett with the UTA Championship in his hands.

Then another freeze frame.

Chris Ross at ringside, not even looking at the title, only kneeling beside Valentina Blaze with panic written all over his face.

A final title card slams onto the screen.

LAST WEEK: CHRIS ROSS LOST THE UTA CHAMPIONSHIP.

LAST WEEK: VALENTINA BLAZE PAID THE PRICE.

Smash cut to black.

Then—

"THIS... IS... VICTORY!"

The opening theme blasts through the arena as the screen erupts into the full Victory intro package.

Pyro explodes across the stage in violent sheets of gold and white.

The camera swings wide over a roaring Moda Center crowd in Portland, Oregon, signs bouncing, fans on their feet, the energy in the building electric after the stunning ending to last week's show.

More pyro erupts from the stage corners.

The Victory logo crashes across the screen.

Quick shots of stars flash in rhythm with the music.

Chris Ross. Maxwell Jett. Hakuryu. Susanita Ybanez. Athena Storm. Emily Hightower. Maxx Mayhem. Selena Vex. Eric Dane Jr.

The final burst of pyro explodes as the camera settles at ringside.

John Phillips and Mark Bravo are already standing at the desk, the crowd loud behind them.

John Phillips: "Ladies and gentlemen, welcome to VICTORY! We are live from the Moda Center in Portland, Oregon, and I don't mind telling you right now—there is a different feeling in the air tonight."

Mark Bravo: "Yeah, because last week was chaos, JP. Absolute chaos. Maxwell Jett is walking around with the UTA Championship after stealing the biggest win of his life, Chris Ross lost the title in the middle of one of the most emotional main events we've seen in a long time, and Valentina Blaze got wiped out in the middle of all of it."

John Phillips: "Chris Ross had Maxwell Jett beat in a fight. I believe that. I think everybody watching believed that. But Jett never wanted a straight fight. He wanted to drag Chris Ross into anger, into pain, into heartbreak... and that is exactly what he did."

Mark Bravo: "He turned the whole thing into a psychological car wreck and then looted the scene for the championship. That's what happened. He got in Chris' head. He stayed there. And when Ross accidentally collided with Valentina Blaze..."

Bravo shakes his head.

Mark Bravo: "That was it. One second. One opening. One cheap grab of the tights. New champion."

John Phillips: "We still do not know where things stand emotionally between Chris Ross and Valentina Blaze after what happened. We only know that one week ago, Victory ended with Chris Ross kneeling beside Valentina on the floor while Maxwell Jett stood in the ring holding the UTA Championship."

Mark Bravo: "And if you think that's not hanging over this whole show tonight, you are out of your mind."

John Phillips: "But this is Victory, and as always, the road keeps moving forward. We have huge matches tonight with major championship implications, and the Fighting Championship picture is going to come into even sharper focus."

Mark Bravo: "This one's loaded. No filler. No wasted motion. People are fighting for spots, fighting for momentum, and fighting for the right to march into Victorious."

John Phillips: "Tonight, Selena Vex goes one-on-one with Maxx Mayhem in a Fighting Championship Qualifier."

Mark Bravo: "That one's got upset potential all over it. Selena Vex is dangerous when she's locked in, but Maxx Mayhem fights like every match owes him blood."

John Phillips: "Also tonight, Emily Hightower faces Athena Storm in another Fighting Championship Qualifier."

Mark Bravo: "That is a serious test for Emily Hightower. We know Athena Storm is explosive, physical, and proud, but Emily has been building real momentum and tonight might be the biggest chance of her career."

John Phillips: "Bianca Page takes on Kaida Shizuka."

Mark Bravo: "Bad night to blink in that one. Bianca's got the poise, Kaida's got the brutality, and I don't think either woman is showing up to play nice."

John Phillips: "And Eric Dane Jr. goes one-on-one with Dante Rivera."

Mark Bravo: "That one could get wild in a hurry. Eric Dane Jr. lives in chaos, and Dante Rivera's the kind of guy who'll drag you into deep water and make you drown in it."

John Phillips: "And later tonight, the winners of our first two qualifying matches will meet to determine who moves on to Victorious in the Fighting Championship picture."

Mark Bravo: "So for two people tonight, this isn't just about winning once. It's about surviving twice. That changes everything."

John Phillips: "An enormous night ahead here in Portland—"

Suddenly both men stop.

John puts a hand to his headset.

John Phillips: "Wait a second..."

Mark Bravo: "We're being told something is happening backstage right now."

John Phillips: "We need to get out of here. Take us backstage—right now!"

Rampage

Segment

The camera jerks hard as we cut away from ringside and head backstage.

It is already chaos.

A folding table is upside down in the middle of the hallway.

A crate of bottled water has been split open, plastic bottles rolling in every direction.

A production case is on its side with cables spilling out like guts.

And in the center of it all—

Chris Ross.

He has completely lost it.

Chris Ross: "WHERE IS HE?!"

Ross hurls a chair into the cinderblock wall and it clatters violently down the hallway.

His hair is wild. His breathing is ragged. His eyes are red with fury and something even uglier underneath it.

He kicks over another table, sending papers and clipboards flying into the air.

Chris Ross: "MAXWELL! MAXWELL!"

A pair of backstage assistants scatter out of the way as Ross storms forward like a man hunting through the wreckage of his own mind.

He grabs a road case and shoves it so hard it slams into a wall with a deafening bang.

Chris Ross: "GET OUT HERE!"

A terrified young backstage hand freezes near a lighting cart.

Wrong place. Wrong second.

Ross whips toward him instantly.

Chris Ross: "You!"

The kid barely gets his hands up before Ross is on him.

Chris grabs him by the front of the shirt and drives him up against the wall so hard the poor guy's sneakers nearly leave the floor.

Chris Ross: "WHERE IS HE?! WHERE'S MMJ?!"

The kid's eyes go wide with panic.

Backstage Hand: "I—I don't know! I swear to God, I don't know!"

Chris Ross: "DON'T LIE TO ME!"

Ross jostles him once against the wall, the young staffer completely helpless in his grip.

Backstage Hand: "I don't know! I don't know where he is!"

Ross stares at him for one ugly, trembling second.

Then he throws him down.

The kid crashes to the floor and scrambles backward on his hands, terrified.

Ross doesn't even look at him again.

He turns and storms off down the hallway, shoving through equipment, kicking over a trash can, sending its contents exploding across the concrete.

Chris Ross: "MAXWELL!"

The camera struggles to keep up as Ross disappears around the corner, still smashing anything unlucky enough to be in his path.

Then we cut back to ringside.

John Phillips and Mark Bravo are standing now, both men visibly shaken by what they've just seen.

John Phillips: "My God..."

Mark Bravo: "Chris Ross has absolutely snapped."

John Phillips: "That was not anger. That was not frustration. That was a man in full emotional freefall, and I don't know what happens if he finds Maxwell Jett tonight."

Mark Bravo: "He's not thinking straight, JP. He's not even close. Last week cost him the UTA Championship, it put Valentina Blaze on the floor, and right now all that rage has got nowhere to go except straight through anything in front of him."

John Phillips: "And that poor backstage assistant just got caught in the middle of it. Chris Ross is beyond reason right now."

Mark Bravo: "Which means somebody better find Maxwell Jett first, because if Ross gets his hands on him before security does, this show is gonna come apart at the seams."

The crowd is buzzing now, unsettled, anxious.

The commentators try to reset, but neither man looks convinced that order is coming back anytime soon.

John Phillips: "We knew tonight would begin with the shadow of what happened last week. I just don't think anybody expected it to get this volatile this fast."

Mark Bravo: "No, and I don't think we've seen the end of it either."

Then—

BLACK FLAME hits.

The crowd erupts instantly.

John Phillips: "Oh no."

Mark Bravo: "No, no, no—he's coming out here."

Chris Ross storms through the curtain.

No pose. No pause. No playing to the crowd.

He is furious beyond language, marching with that same broken, violent purpose from earlier, jaw clenched tight enough to crack teeth.

John Phillips: "Chris Ross is headed to the ring and he does not look any calmer now than he did backstage."

Mark Bravo: "He looks worse."

Ross barrels down the ramp, ignoring the fans, ignoring the noise, eyes fixed straight ahead like he has reached the point where destruction is the only thing keeping him upright.

At ringside, he doesn't slow down.

He veers straight toward the commentary area.

John Phillips: "Guys—guys, move!"

Ross gets both hands under the edge of the commentary table and flips it violently forward.

The monitors, papers, and headsets go crashing everywhere in a burst of sparks and noise.

Mark Bravo: "Move! Move!"

John Phillips and Mark Bravo scramble out of the way as Ross grabs one of the desk monitors and hurls it aside like it weighs nothing.

He kicks a rolling chair away, then snatches another monitor and spikes it to the floor.

The crowd is losing its mind.

Chris Ross: "MAXWELL!"

Ross storms around the wreckage of the desk, grabbing at anything he can throw, shove, or break.

One hand rips loose a cable bundle.

Another sends a small equipment case tumbling over the floor mats.

John Phillips: "This is completely out of control!"

Mark Bravo: "Nobody can talk to him right now! Nobody!"

Ross suddenly spots a metal folding chair near the timekeeper's area.

He snatches it up in one hand.

Then with the other, he grabs a microphone.

The crowd noise swells again because everybody knows this is about to get even worse.

Ross turns toward the ring.

He marches to the apron, rears back, and slings the folding chair under the bottom rope into the ring.

The chair skids across the canvas and spins to a stop near center ring.

Ross follows right behind it, sliding under the bottom rope with the microphone still in hand before rising to one knee, then to his feet.

His chest is heaving.

The ring is his now.

The rage is still climbing.

Chris Ross rises slowly in the center of the ring, microphone in one hand, the metal folding chair hanging at his side in the other.

His chest is heaving.

His face is flushed red.

But it is the eyes that say everything.

There is something dark in them tonight.

Something ugly.

Something old.

The crowd noise rolls over him in waves, but Ross barely seems to hear any of it.

He lifts the microphone.

Chris Ross: "I know I've never been a very patient man..."

His voice is low.

Tight.

Measured only by force.

Chris Ross: "But I try. God knows I try."

He paces once, chair still gripped tightly in his left hand.

Chris Ross: "I know I've never been the best at keeping my cool. I know."

He stops dead center again.

Raises the microphone a little closer.

Chris Ross: "But if that son of a bitch Maxwell Jett doesn't get his God damn ass down here right now..."

The crowd roars.

Ross's lips curl with contempt.

Chris Ross: "I swear upon everything..."

He lifts the chair slightly.

Chris Ross: "I will destroy every God damn person that comes into this ring until he does."

The crowd reacts with a mix of shock and feverish energy.

Ross turns slowly, staring at the stage.

Waiting.

Daring.

But there is no Maxwell Jett.

No music.

No movement through the curtain.

No swagger.

No champion.

Just Chris Ross alone in the center of the ring, getting angrier by the second.

Chris Ross: "God damn it..."

He steps toward the ropes, voice rising.

Chris Ross: "Get your ass down here, right FUCKING now!"

The profanity rings clean through the arena.

No censor catches it.

Not in time.

And somehow that makes it worse.

You can hear how real it is.

You can hear how badly he means every word.

Ross waits again.

Still nothing.

His grip on the chair tightens.

His breathing sharpens.

Chris Ross: "You son of a bitch... if I have to come find you..."

Nothing.

Ross's face twists with raw grief and rage.

Chris Ross: "Do you realize what you did Max.... That picture was the one piece I had left of Lauren... the woman who kept me grounded. The one who made me sane... Everytime I come out here... I look for her knowing she's nowhere to be found... Max... I'm not a sociopath like you... I actually have a heart..."

You can see his emotion.

Chris Ross: "I didn't think anyone else would ground me like she did but then came Valentina.... And now... She's injured and can't even compete you son of a bitch... Do you know what happens to me in the darkness?"

He snarls.

Chris Ross: "VALENTINA IS HURT!"

The crowd roars again.

Chris Ross: "YOU STOLE MY TITLE!"

He takes another step toward the ropes, practically foaming now.

Chris Ross: "I'M GOING TO RIP YOUR GOD DAMN HEAD OFF!"

Scott Stevens: "Whoa... whoa... whoa! Chris! Hold up!"

The voice cuts through the chaos from the stage.

The camera swings up the ramp.

Scott Stevens steps out onto the stage in a suit, hands raised, expression serious.

Behind him, security begins flooding out from the back and forming up in a line.

The crowd instantly boos.

John Phillips: "Scott Stevens is out here now."

Mark Bravo: "And he brought security with him, because I don't think even Scott's crazy enough to come out here alone right now."

In the ring, Ross points the chair toward the stage like a weapon.

Chris Ross: "Not now, Scott. I swear, I'll wrap this chair around your damn head too!"

Stevens does not flinch.

Not outwardly, anyway.

Scott Stevens: "I don't doubt you, Chris. I really don't..."

He glances back at the growing line of security, then back to the ring.

Scott Stevens: "But I got to tell you... Maxwell Jett is not here tonight."

The arena erupts in heavy boos.

Ross goes berserk instantly.

He kicks the bottom rope. He hurls the chair against the mat once, then snatches it right back up. He paces in a tight, furious circle like he might come apart from the inside.

John Phillips: "That is the last thing Chris Ross wanted to hear."

Mark Bravo: "No kidding. That just took a bad situation and poured gasoline all over it."

Ross stomps toward the ropes on the hard-cam side, glaring up at Stevens with murder in his eyes.

Security immediately tightens formation and starts creeping forward.

Scott Stevens: "Don't do anything rash now, Chris."

Stevens takes a careful step forward on the stage, choosing every word.

Scott Stevens: "Everything so far... salvageable. Forgotten, even. But I'm going to need you to come out of that ring now and head to the back so we can get the show started."

Ross just stares at him.

Like he cannot believe another human being would say something that stupid out loud.

Chris Ross: "The show, Scott?"

He laughs once.

It is a terrible sound.

Chris Ross: "The fucking show?"

This time the censors catch it a beat too late, the audio clipping awkwardly after the word is already halfway across the building.

Chris Ross: "I'll give you a damn show."

Ross spikes the microphone to the mat.

Then he moves.

Fast.

He storms to the ropes and steps through to the apron in one violent motion before dropping to the floor.

Stevens immediately points down the ramp.

Scott Stevens: "Go! Go now!"

The security team rushes forward all at once.

Ross meets them halfway with the chair.

CRACK.

The first guard drops instantly after taking the chair across the shoulder and side of the head.

CRACK.

The second one gets blasted across the ribs and folds to the ramp in pain.

John Phillips: "My God!"

Mark Bravo: "Chris Ross is dismantling security!"

A third guard lunges in and tries to grab the chair arm.

Ross drives a knee into his stomach, then clubs him across the back with the chair as he stumbles away.

Another rushes from Ross's blind side—

Ross swings backward and catches him flush across the chest.

The man tumbles down the ramp in a heap.

The whole scene turns into a wreck in seconds.

Security bodies are sprawled across the aisle.

One rolling, clutching an arm.

Another flat on his back, gasping.

Another crawling toward the barricade to get out of the line of fire.

Ross stands in the middle of them all, breathing like a monster, chair still in his hands.

John Phillips: "He is uncontrollable right now!"

Mark Bravo: "Nobody is getting through him! Nobody!"

Ross slowly lifts his eyes up the ramp.

Scott Stevens is still on the stage.

Still backed by more personnel, but no longer pretending he has any real control over this situation.

Chris stands halfway up the ramp among the wreckage he just created and points directly at Stevens.

We can't hear every word over the roar of the crowd.

But the camera catches enough.

Chris Ross: "THIS ISN'T OVER!"

Ross jabs a finger toward the back.

Then toward his own chest.

Then back at Stevens again.

Every bit of his body language says the exact same thing.

This is far from finished.

John Phillips: "Chris Ross has snapped in a way we have not seen in a very, very long time."

Mark Bravo: "And honestly? I don't know how you put this genie back in the bottle now. Maxwell Jett isn't here, Valentina Blaze is hurt, Ross thinks the whole world's against him, and security just got torn apart on the entrance ramp."

John Phillips: "Scott Stevens wanted the show started. Well, the show has started all right—inside absolute chaos."

Mark Bravo: "And the scariest part? Chris Ross still looks like he's got plenty left."

The camera holds on the destruction.

Security everywhere.

Scott Stevens frozen on the stage.

Chris Ross halfway up the ramp, chair in hand, still seething, still glaring toward the back like he might tear through the building itself if that's what it takes to find Maxwell Jett.

Let's Make it Big

Segment

We cut backstage where Melissa Cartwright stands in front of a Victory backdrop, microphone in hand, doing her best to project calm professionalism after the absolute disorder we have just witnessed.

Beside her, dressed like the moment was always supposed to belong to him, is Eric Dane Jr.

He looks immaculate.

Smug.

Perfectly comfortable.

Like chaos is something that happens to other people.

Melissa Cartwright: "Eric, after everything we just saw out there with Chris Ross, I have to ask—what are your thoughts?"

Eric exhales through his nose and gives a small shrug.

Eric Dane Jr.: "Sucks to be MMJ."

He smirks.

Eric Dane Jr.: "Been in that spot before. Not fun."

He straightens his jacket cuff and glances off for half a second before turning right back into the camera lens like it personally invited him here.

Eric Dane Jr.: "But this isn't about him. It isn't about Chris Ross. It's definitely not about whatever emotional support group is gonna need to be formed after that little meltdown."

He taps his own chest with one finger.

Eric Dane Jr.: "This is about Eric Dane Jr. and how at Victorious... I'm gonna be wearing gold again."

Melissa Cartwright: "Do you mean Bobby Dean's Hardcore Title, which... last I checked... isn't actually an active title or real in any real sense?"

Eric slowly turns toward her.

Then, with all the unearned confidence in the world, he gently places two fingers against her mouth.

Eric Dane Jr.: "Shhh."

Eric Dane Jr.: "Shush your pretty little mouth."

Melissa immediately pulls back, clearly annoyed.

Eric Dane Jr.: "You heard Bobb-o. It's totally a real, totally active championship..."

He flashes that arrogant Dane grin.

Eric Dane Jr.: "And at Victorious, it's coming home to Daddy Dane."

Melissa groans openly.

Melissa Cartwright: "Well... before any of that, you do have a match tonight against Dante Rivera in what many are calling a warm-up for Victorious."

Eric Dane Jr.: "Who?"

Melissa Cartwright: "Dante Rivera."

Eric Dane Jr.: "Yeah, yeah. Devin Roth. Match tonight. Whatever."

He waves a dismissive hand.

Eric Dane Jr.: "Scott Stevens is just trying to prove a point by booking me a week before my big win against some no-name guy."

Melissa Cartwright: "You mean Dante Rivera?"

Eric Dane Jr.: "Does it really matter, Melissa? Really?"

He gives her a look like she is the one being unreasonable.

Eric Dane Jr.: "Some guy they feed to the stars to pad our wins. That's his job, and he'll do it very well tonight."

Eric smooths his shirt front and flashes another grin into the camera.

Eric Dane Jr.: "The fact of the matter is I'm ready. I'm more than ready. Bobby, though?"

He laughs to himself.

Eric Dane Jr.: "Well..."

HONK HONK.

The sound cuts right through the segment.

Eric stops mid-thought.

Melissa blinks.

The camera pans just in time to catch Bobby Dean rolling into frame on his trusty mobility scooter with the biggest smile imaginable on his face.

Eric Dane Jr.: "Well, speak of the devil. There's Bobb-o."

Bobby Dean: "ERIC! MISSY!"

Melissa Cartwright: "Melissa."

Eric Dane Jr. and Bobby Dean: "Whatever."

Melissa closes her eyes for one long second, already regretting being here.

Eric Dane Jr.: "Whatcha doing here, Dean-a-rino?"

Bobby Dean: "Well, Eric, I was thinking."

Eric Dane Jr.: "Oh boy."

Bobby Dean: "Do you know where to get one of those cool shopping carts and trashcans full of weapons for our hardcore match?"

Eric pauses.

Then slowly, very slowly, a wicked smile starts to spread across his face.

Eric Dane Jr.: "You know what, Bobby? I was thinking too."

Bobby lights up immediately.

Bobby Dean: "Yeah?"

Eric Dane Jr.: "Remember last week when I said we should do something that really stands out?"

Bobby Dean: "Yeah!"

Eric Dane Jr.: "What if..."

He steps closer, painting the picture with his hands.

Eric Dane Jr.: "Instead of some boring old hardcore match where we break things we bought from Home Depot over each other..."

He uses exaggerated air quotes.

Eric Dane Jr.: "That some pimply-faced kid in the back already 'gimmicked'..."

He smirks wider.

Eric Dane Jr.: "We do something really big."

Bobby's eyes go huge.

Melissa's expression changes too, though for very different reasons.

Bobby Dean: "Yeah? Like what, Eric?"

Eric leans in like he is about to unveil the greatest idea in wrestling history.

Eric Dane Jr.: "Imagine this, buddy..."

Eric Dane Jr.: "Bobby Dean..."

Eric Dane Jr.: "Eric Dane Jr..."

Eric Dane Jr.: "Hardcore Championship..."

He spreads his arms with theatrical flourish.

Eric Dane Jr.: "LADDER MATCH."

Bobby Dean gasps.

Not a polite gasp.

A full, heartfelt, child-on-Christmas-morning gasp.

Bobby Dean: "OH... MY... GOD!"

Bobby Dean: "I love it!"

Eric grins with all the confidence of a man who knows exactly what he is doing.

Eric Dane Jr.: "I knew you would."

Bobby Dean: "Let's do it, Eric!"

Eric Dane Jr.: "Great, Bobby. I can't wait."

Bobby Dean: "Me either! I'm gonna tell everyone!"

Bobby hammers the horn again.

HONK HONK!

Then he zips off down the hallway on the scooter, thrilled beyond reason, nearly clipping a production crate on the way out as he disappears around the corner.

Melissa slowly turns back toward Eric.

Melissa Cartwright: "A ladder match, Eric? Really?"

Eric just smiles.

Eric Dane Jr.: "Yep."

He gives the camera one last impossibly smug look before casually walking off, leaving Melissa standing there with the unmistakable expression of someone who has just watched a disaster get scheduled in real time.

Hold it All

Segment

We cut backstage to a narrow concrete corridor somewhere deeper in the Moda Center.

Scott Stevens stands there rubbing both temples like the building itself is giving him a migraine.

Beside him is a nervous production assistant holding a headset and trying very hard not to become the next casualty of tonight.

Scott Stevens: "What about Ross?"

The production assistant shifts awkwardly.

Production Assistant: "I think he's leaving, Mr. Stevens. I saw him go into his locker room."

Scott Stevens: "Well, is he getting his stuff and leaving, or is he just in the locker room?"

The poor kid looks completely lost.

Production Assistant: "Uh... I dunno actually."

Scott closes his eyes for a second.

He looks like a man one sentence away from a stroke.

Scott Stevens: "Well, go see!"

Production Assistant: "You want... me... to go check on him?"

Scott Stevens: "Yes, damn it! Go!"

The PA does not need to be told twice.

He hurries off down the hallway, clearly terrified of the assignment but even more terrified of saying no.

Scott lets out one long, exhausted sigh and turns—

only to stop dead.

Amy Harrison is standing right there.

Behind her, like a wall closing in, are Clovis Black, Trey Mack, and Valkyrie Knox.

Scott Stevens: "Oh, Jesus."

Scott is visibly startled.

Amy, on the other hand, looks delighted.

Amy Harrison: "So... Scott..."

Scott Stevens: "What, Amy?"

Amy tilts her head with mock sympathy already dripping off every word.

Amy Harrison: "Seems that Chris' lady friend is gonna be out a while, huh?"

Scott groans immediately.

Scott Stevens: "Yes, Amy. Valentina Blaze is injured pretty bad."

Amy smiles.

It is not a kind smile.

Amy Harrison: "What are you going to do about her Fighting Championship match at Victorious?"

That lands.

You can see from Scott's face that, somehow, in the middle of Chris Ross tearing apart the building, he had not even gotten that far yet.

Scott Stevens: "Well... I guess the opponent should be the person she be—"

Amy Harrison: "What?!"

She cuts him off immediately.

Amy Harrison: "You want to put a loser in the match? Someone who couldn't get the job done the first time?"

Scott's expression hardens now.

Scott Stevens: "What do you suggest, Amy, huh?"

Amy's smile widens just a little.

Then she gestures with one hand.

Valkyrie Knoxx steps forward, arms folded, expression cold and perfectly unreadable.

Amy Harrison: "The way I see it, Valkyrie here doesn't have a match at Victorious."

She takes a small step closer.

Amy Harrison: "She's a former Women's Champion... and one of the toughest women—"

Amy glances at Valkyrie, then back to Scott.

Amy Harrison: "No, people... in the UTA."

Scott looks from Amy to Valkyrie and back again.

Scott Stevens: "Why should I do you a favor and give her the match? Really? Why would I even consider the idea after everything you've done?"

Amy smirks.

Amy Harrison: "That's fair, Scott. Really."

Now he looks confused.

Scott Stevens: "It is?"

Amy Harrison: "Yeah. Sure is. I get it."

She shrugs, almost casually.

Amy Harrison: "You'd rather I have The Empire destroy EVERYONE in your little tournament before Victorious than do the right thing and give Valkyrie the spot."

Scott Stevens: "Now you listen here, Amy. I'm not going to be thre—"

Amy Harrison: "No, you listen, Scott!"

Her voice snaps hard enough to freeze the hallway.

Even Trey Mack stops smiling for a second.

Amy Harrison: "You think that little temper tantrum Chris Ross pulled earlier was bad?"

She steps in even closer.

Amy Harrison: "Wait 'til you see what happens if you don't do this."

Scott stares at her.

Stares at Valkyrie.

Stares at Clovis and Trey standing there behind them like backup to a threat that did not need to be spoken twice.

Then finally, his shoulders just... drop.

Scott Stevens: "You know what, Amy?"

Scott Stevens: "Whatever."

Amy's smile brightens.

Scott Stevens: "Fine. Valkyrie can have the spot."

Scott immediately pushes past Amy and the rest of the Empire, too stressed and too angry to even care what they think of him in that moment.

Amy turns slowly and watches him go.

Then she smiles.

That cold, satisfied smile of someone who just got exactly what she wanted.

Amy Harrison: "And just like that..."

She glances toward Valkyrie.

Then to Trey.

Then to Clovis.

Amy Harrison: "The Empire will soon hold it all..."

Fear A Reaper

Segment

We cut deeper into the backstage area, outside Chris Ross' locker room.

The same poor production assistant from earlier approaches the door like he is walking to his own execution.

He glances back once.

No help is coming.

He raises his hand to knock—

and the door opens before he can.

Chris Ross is standing there with his bag in hand.

Fresh shirt.

Still sweating.

Still angry.

Still looking like the hallway itself should be careful how it breathes around him.

Chris Ross: "What do you want?"

The PA nearly stumbles backward.

Production Assistant: "I was just... checking on you."

Ross stares at him for a beat with that same hard, flat glare.

Chris Ross: "You can tell your boss I'm leaving."

He shifts the bag on his shoulder.

Chris Ross: "But this is far from over."

Voice Off Camera: "That it is..."

Ross's eyes cut down the hallway instantly.

The camera pans wider.

Ace Andrews is standing there in that expensive suit and that smug little smile that always looks like it was tailored to fit the room.

Behind him stands Samuel Scythe.

Still.

Silent.

A mountain of bad intent in human form.

Ace Andrews: "Leaving so soon?"

Ace casually waves the production assistant aside and steps forward, forcing the kid to scramble out of the way.

The PA does not hesitate.

He hurries off down the corridor, wanting absolutely none of what this is becoming.

Chris Ross: "What do you want?"

Ace smiles wider, like he's delighted Ross skipped straight to the point.

Ace Andrews: "Only to help."

Ross does not blink.

Ace takes another measured step, hands relaxed, voice smooth as polished glass.

Ace Andrews: "A little birdy told me that our beloved champion will, in fact, be arriving tonight."

Ross immediately drops the bag.

Not dramatic.

Instinctive.

His shoulders tense. His jaw locks. His hands curl into fists.

Ace notices every bit of it.

And loves every bit of it.

Ace Andrews: "You see, Chris... they call you the Reaper of Harrisburg."

Ace gestures lightly, like he is naming a title of office.

Ace Andrews: "And tonight? I saw it. That rage. That violence. That energy."

He tilts his head, admiring Ross the way a collector might admire a dangerous antique.

Ace Andrews: "There's no denying it now."

Ace motions to the man behind him.

Ace Andrews: "Samuel here..."

Ace Andrews: "Well, Samuel is my Reaper."

Scythe says nothing.

He just stands there glaring forward with that dead, murderous focus that makes the silence feel intentional.

Ace Andrews: "And I don't believe for one second that it was simple coincidence that we arrived on the very same night you revealed your true self."

Ace's smile turns knowing.

Ace Andrews: "No, Chris. I think it was serendipity."

Ross looks like he is seconds away from grabbing Ace by the throat and testing the theory against a wall.

Ace just keeps going.

Ace Andrews: "We want what you want."

Chris Ross: "Oh yeah?"

Chris Ross: "What's that?"

Ace Andrews: "Justice."

That word hangs there.

Ace Andrews: "And we would very much like to help you get it."

Chris Ross: "I don't need help."

Chris Ross: "I can handle this on my own."

Ace nods slowly, as though Ross has just said the exact thing he expected.

Ace Andrews: "I know."

Ace Andrews: "Of course you can."

He glances back toward Samuel Scythe, then returns his attention to Ross.

Ace Andrews: "But every Reaper can sow so much more... together."

Ross does not answer.

He is done with the poetry.

Ace can see it.

And, unlike most men, he is smart enough not to overstay his own words.

Ace Andrews: "But let's not waste time. I know you don't care to talk."

He begins to step away, Samuel turning with him.

Ace Andrews: "Just know this..."

Ace Andrews: "MMJ is on his way."

Ross's face changes instantly.

The rage sharpens.

Focus replaces motion.

Ace Andrews: "And tonight..."

Ace's grin becomes chilling now, all polished arrogance and poisonous certainty.

Ace Andrews: "He will fear a Reaper..."

Ace pauses and gives Samuel a tiny glance.

Ace Andrews: "One way or another."

Ace turns and walks off down the corridor, Samuel Scythe following just behind him like a storm with a pulse.

Chris Ross does not move.

He stands there outside the locker room, bag at his feet, staring after them.

Thinking.

Breathing.

Seething.

And somewhere in that silence, with Maxwell Jett now confirmed to be on his way, the night becomes dangerous all over again.

Timing Without Purpose

Segment

The screen fades to black.

No arena noise.

No commentary.

No crowd.

Just the low hum of wind moving through an empty place.

Then the image fades in.

Not the Moda Center.

Not anywhere near Victory.

An undisclosed location.

Concrete floor. Exposed beams overhead. Light bleeding in through narrow windows high above. Dust floating through the air like the room itself is holding its breath.

Kairo Bey stands alone near center frame.

No neon.

No music.

No spotlight.

Just Kairo in plain black training gear, hands taped, shoulders loose but not relaxed, staring ahead like he is trying very hard not to show how much he is thinking.

Off to one side, just barely in frame at first, stands Troy Lindz.

Still.

Composed.

Braided hair tight. Muay Thai gear. Taped hands. Taped ankles. No theatrics. No posing. Just presence.

And between them—

Eli Creed.

White shirt. Sleeves rolled. Hands folded behind his back. Calm as ever.

Eli Creed: "My name is Eli Creed..."

He takes a slow step forward.

Eli Creed: "And I'm here to help."

Kairo lets out the faintest breath through his nose.

Not quite a laugh.

Not quite dismissal.

Kairo Bey: "You always start with that?"

Eli smiles softly.

Eli Creed: "Only when I'm telling the truth."

That answer sits there.

Kairo does not reply.

Eli begins to circle slowly, not like a predator, not like a coach, but somehow like both at once.

Eli Creed: "Troy once stood where you're standing now."

Kairo's eyes flick toward Lindz.

Troy says nothing.

They just stare forward, breathing slow, a finished version of something Kairo has only just begun to understand.

Eli Creed: "Not physically."

Eli Creed: "Not here."

Eli Creed: "I mean here."

Creed taps his own temple.

Eli Creed: "Conflicted."

Eli Creed: "Frustrated."

Eli Creed: "Aware of the talent... but not yet in command of the truth."

Kairo Bey: "And what truth is that?"

Eli Creed: "That talent without direction is just expensive chaos."

Kairo's jaw tightens slightly.

Kairo Bey: "I'm not chaos."

Eli Creed: "No."

Eli Creed: "You're worse."

That gets Kairo's attention.

His eyes narrow.

Kairo Bey: "Worse?"

Eli Creed: "You are discipline pretending it doesn't need structure."

Eli Creed: "You are timing without purpose."

Eli Creed: "You are electricity..."

He steps a little closer.

Eli Creed: "Still flickering."

Kairo looks away for a second, frustrated that the line lands at all.

Eli notices.

Of course he does.

Eli Creed: "That's the part you hate, isn't it?"

Eli Creed: "Not that I'm talking."

Eli Creed: "That I'm saying things you've already thought by yourself."

Kairo shakes his head once.

Kairo Bey: "You don't know me like that."

Eli Creed: "No."

Eli Creed: "I know patterns."

Eli Creed: "I know hesitation."

Eli Creed: "I know what it looks like when someone with gifts keeps arriving at the edge of something bigger..."

Eli Creed: "And keeps finding a reason not to step fully through."

Troy shifts slightly in the background.

Not impatience.

Recognition.

They have lived this part before.

Kairo Bey: "So what, I'm supposed to just become Troy?"

For the first time, Troy answers.

Troy Lindz: "No."

Troy Lindz: "That's the point."

Kairo turns toward them fully now.

Troy Lindz: "I didn't become somebody else."

Troy Lindz: "I became harder to kill."

That line hangs in the empty room.

Kairo studies Troy differently after that.

Less as Creed's mouthpiece.

More as evidence.

Eli Creed: "Break."

Kairo glances back toward him.

Eli Creed: "That's where everyone starts."

Eli Creed: "The moment your rhythm fails you."

Eli Creed: "The moment the crowd can't save you."

Eli Creed: "The moment your confidence stops sounding like certainty and starts sounding like noise."

Eli takes one more slow step closer.

Eli Creed: "Then..."

Eli Creed: "Bend."

Eli Creed: "Not surrender."

Eli Creed: "Not weakness."

Eli Creed: "Survival."

Eli Creed: "The wisdom to stop mistaking stubbornness for identity."

Kairo folds his arms now, defensive but listening.

Eli Creed: "And then..."

Eli Creed: "Build."

Eli Creed: "That's where Troy is now."

Eli Creed: "And that..."

He looks Kairo dead in the eye.

Eli Creed: "Is where you are trying very hard not to go."

Kairo Bey: "Maybe I don't need you to get there."

Eli Creed: "Maybe."

Eli smiles again, warm and unsettling all at once.

Eli Creed: "But if that were true..."

Eli Creed: "You wouldn't still be here listening."

Kairo doesn't answer.

Because he can't.

Because he is.

Eli turns away from him and takes a few slow steps, giving the silence room to work.

Eli Creed: "You think this is about control."

Eli Creed: "It isn't."

Eli Creed: "It's about clarity."

Eli Creed: "About taking all that style, all that timing, all that instinct..."

Eli Creed: "And removing every part of you that hesitates when pressure arrives."

He turns back.

Eli Creed: "I am not asking you to stop being Kairo Bey."

Eli Creed: "I am offering to make Kairo Bey inevitable."

Troy steps up now, just enough to stand properly beside Creed.

No grin.

No sermon.

Just certainty.

Troy Lindz: "You felt it already."

Troy Lindz: "That pull."

Troy Lindz: "That voice that says there's another gear in you if you stop protecting the old version of yourself."

Kairo looks from Troy... to Eli... then away.

Kairo Bey: "You two make it sound real pretty."

Eli Creed: "Pain always sounds prettier when it has purpose."

A long pause.

No one moves.

The room feels smaller now.

Eli Creed: "You don't have to answer today."

Eli Creed: "You are not Troy Lindz."

Eli Creed: "You are not a copy."

Eli Creed: "You are simply at the beginning of a journey that somebody else already survived."

Eli looks at Troy.

Then back to Kairo.

Eli Creed: "That should comfort you."

Kairo finally lets a small, humorless smile tug at one corner of his mouth.

Kairo Bey: "You really don't know when to quit, do you?"

Eli Creed: "No."

Eli Creed: "Because unfinished things bother me."

Eli begins to walk off.

Troy falls in beside him.

But before they leave frame, Creed stops without turning around.

Eli Creed: "Kairo."

Kairo looks up.

Eli Creed: "When the moment comes..."

Eli Creed: "Don't ask yourself whether you trust me."

Eli Creed: "Ask yourself whether you're tired of being almost."

Creed and Troy walk off into the dim light, leaving Kairo alone in the frame.

He does not call after them.

He does not follow.

He just stands there in the silence, taped hands at his sides, thinking.

Still resisting.

Still listening.

Still at the beginning.

Fade to black.

His Arrival

Segment

We cut away from the ring and head to the loading area outside the building.

A black SUV rolls into frame and comes to a slow, deliberate stop under the harsh white lights of the service entrance.

The engine idles for half a second.

Then the rear passenger door opens.

Out steps the UTA Champion.

Maxwell Max Jett emerges with all the smug confidence of a man who already assumes the camera was waiting for him personally.

A thousand-dollar suit.

Perfectly tailored.

Sharp lines. Expensive shoes. Not a hair out of place.

And in his hand—

The UTA Championship.

He doesn't sling it over his shoulder.

He carries it in one hand like a luxury item he purchased himself.

Jett closes the SUV door with his hip, adjusts one cuff, and looks up at the building with that same infuriating little smirk he always seems to wear when he knows someone else is about to have a very bad night.

John Phillips: "There he is."

Mark Bravo: "And look at him. Cool as ice. Like nothin' has happened all night."

Jett lifts the title slightly and glances down at the faceplate, admiring his own reflection in the gold for a second before beginning the walk toward the entrance.

No urgency.

No concern.

Just that same slow, self-satisfied swagger.

John Phillips: "That is the UTA Champion walking into the building after everything that has already transpired here tonight."

Mark Bravo: "Yeah, and the big question is simple. Has anybody told Maxwell Jett what kind of powder keg he's walking into?"

John Phillips: "Chris Ross has torn through this arena looking for him. He destroyed property. He assaulted security. He has been completely consumed by what happened last week, and now Maxwell Jett is finally here."

Jett reaches the service door, but before heading inside, he pauses just long enough to look directly into the lens.

That smug grin widens a little more.

Not because he knows something.

Because he assumes he does.

Mark Bravo: "Look at that face. Either nobody's warned him... or they did, and he thinks it's funny."

John Phillips: "Neither possibility makes me feel any better."

With the championship still in hand, Maxwell Jett steps through the entrance and disappears into the building.

The camera lingers for one beat on the now-empty doorway.

The mood changes instantly.

Because now he is here.

Eating Their Words

Segment

We cut back to ringside.

Then the music hits.

And the building comes alive.

John Phillips: "Wait a minute—listen to this reaction!"

Mark Bravo: "No way. No way. Don't tell me—"

Madman Szalinski's music pounds through the Moda Center and the crowd immediately rises to its feet.

The camera swings to the stage.

Out steps the Hall of Famer.

Madman Szalinski emerges wearing jeans, a black t-shirt, and that unmistakable trademark mask, the same one that has stared down champions, lunatics, legends, and entire locker rooms for years.

There is no suit tonight.

No formal Hall of Fame shine.

No comedy.

No side act.

Just purpose.

He takes a few steps out onto the stage and the expression in his body language says everything before he even gets to the ring.

Determined.

Focused.

And maybe just a little bit dangerous.

John Phillips: "Madman Szalinski is here, and if you know anything about the last two weeks, you know exactly why this reaction is as big as it is."

Mark Bravo: "Two weeks ago this man went into the Hall of Fame. One night later, he got planted in the middle of that ring by Silas Grimm after El Fantasma lost the tag titles. We have not heard from him since."

Madman starts down the ramp, not rushing, but not wasting time either.

Fans near the barricade reach for him and, in a moment that feels deeply human for a man called Madman, he slaps a few hands along the way—especially the young fans who are losing their minds just to touch him for a second.

John Phillips: "That is one of the most beloved weirdos in UTA history right there."

Mark Bravo: "And one of the toughest too. Don't let the mask and the madness fool you. Madman Szalinski was a problem in his day."

Madman reaches ringside and heads straight for the timekeeper's area.

He grabs a microphone.

Then he steps up onto the apron, pauses, and looks out over the crowd one time before entering through the ropes.

Inside the ring, the ovation only grows.

Madman walks to center ring and turns slowly in a circle, taking it all in.

The fans are chanting now.

Crowd: "MAD-MAN! MAD-MAN! MAD-MAN!"

He lowers the microphone for a minute and just soaks it in.

He nods once.

Twice.

You can feel how much it means.

Not because he needs applause.

Because he understands what this moment is.

And what comes next.

John Phillips: "Listen to this building. They love this man."

Mark Bravo: "Yeah, and the wild part is, I don't think they're just cheering for nostalgia here. I think they know

something's coming."

Madman finally raises the mic.

The crowd quiets, though not fully.

There is too much energy in the air for that.

Madman Szalinski: "Two weeks ago..."

He paces once.

Madman Szalinski: "I was laying in the center of this very ring..."

The fans hang on every word now.

Madman Szalinski: "One night removed from bein' inducted into the Hall of Fame."

He points down to the mat beneath his boots.

Madman Szalinski: "Right here."

Madman Szalinski: "El Fantasma had just lost the UTA Tag Team Championships..."

His voice tightens a little there.

Madman Szalinski: "And Silas Grimm went all Deebo on me."

The crowd boos hard at the mention of Grimm.

Madman lets it roll over him and nods like, yes, that happened, no use pretending otherwise.

Madman Szalinski: "That's what happened."

Madman Szalinski: "Ain't gonna stand here and lie to you. Ain't gonna make excuses. Ain't gonna tell you the old Madman had some secret trick up his sleeve that night."

He shrugs slightly, almost accepting it.

Madman Szalinski: "He got me."

The crowd noise dips. The honesty lands.

Madman Szalinski: "And when I was finally able to get up..."

Madman Szalinski: "And drag myself to the back..."

He stops pacing now.

His shoulders square.

Madman Szalinski: "Your boy Madman was told..."

He lowers the mic just a hair.

Madman Szalinski: "'Jeremy...'"

The crowd reacts instantly to the use of his real name.

John Phillips: "Listen to that—"

Madman keeps going, his voice building now.

Madman Szalinski: "'Jeremy... there's just nothin' you can do about it.'"

His intensity rises with every word after that.

Madman Szalinski: "They told me..."

Madman Szalinski: "That I knew I wasn't gonna be medically cleared to be physical."

Madman Szalinski: "They told me..."

Madman Szalinski: "That I knew my time in professional wrestling was done."

Madman Szalinski: "They told me..."

Madman Szalinski: "That I was lucky I even had the opportunity to be a manager at this point!"

The fans boo loudly again, this time less at a villain and more at the very idea of anybody telling Madman Szalinski that the story was over for him.

Madman lowers the mic.

Lets it breathe.

Lets the moment sit in the room.

Then he lifts it again with a tiny tilt of the head.

Madman Szalinski: "You know what I told 'em?"

The crowd already knows this is going somewhere good.

He waits.

Lets them lean in.

Madman Szalinski: "I told 'em they could all kiss my Parkersburg ass."

The crowd absolutely explodes.

John Phillips: "What a reaction!"

Mark Bravo: "That's a Hall of Famer talking right there!"

Madman paces now with more life in him, more fire, more old instability creeping back into the edges.

Madman Szalinski: "I jumped in the '95 Crown Vic..."

Madman Szalinski: "And I took myself to see the doctors."

Madman Szalinski: "And after two weeks..."

Madman Szalinski: "Of testin'..."

Madman Szalinski: "Proddin'..."

Madman Szalinski: "And pokin'..."

He slows down again.

Madman Szalinski: "You know what they told me?"

He waits again.

The camera moves in tighter now.

The fans are buzzing, half shouting answers, half just waiting for him to say it.

The shot comes in close on the mask.

On the eyes behind it.

And Madman finishes in a tone that is completely serious.

Madman Szalinski: "They told me..."

Madman Szalinski: "I was cleared."

The roof nearly comes off the Moda Center.

John Phillips: "OH MY GOD!"

Mark Bravo: "No way! No way! Madman Szalinski is cleared!"

Madman stands there and lets the noise hit him full force now.

This one is different.

This is not just cheering.

This is realization.

This is the crowd understanding what he is actually saying.

That a Madman Szalinski match is no longer memory.

It is possibility.

Madman Szalinski: "Now those same people in the back..."

Madman Szalinski: "The ones who said my time was up..."

Madman Szalinski: "The ones who said I'd never be cleared..."

Madman Szalinski: "Well..."

He taps his own chest once with the mic hand.

Madman Szalinski: "They're eatin' their words now..."

Madman Szalinski: "'Cause I got that paperwork that says different."

The pop keeps rolling.

Madman turns slightly toward the hard camera now, like he knows exactly who he is really talking to.

Madman Szalinski: "So Silas Grimm..."

The crowd boos again.

Madman Szalinski: "When you put your hands on me two weeks ago..."

Madman Szalinski: "You made the biggest God damn mistake of your life, son."

His body language changes here.

The looseness drains out.

The fun vanishes.

Now he is just focused.

Dead set.

Old danger wrapped in denim and a mask.

Madman Szalinski: "Come VICTORIOUS..."

Madman Szalinski: "You're gonna see why these people are losing their minds right now..."

Madman Szalinski: "And exactly why..."

Madman Szalinski: "They call me..."

He raises the microphone high over his head.

The crowd takes it from there.

Crowd: "MADMAN! MADMAN! MADMAN! MADMAN!"

He lowers the mic again, nodding once as the chant grows louder and louder.

Then, with no extra flourish, he drops the microphone to the mat.

THUD.

The music hits again.

Madman stands in the center of the ring, chest out, head high, the mask somehow making the moment feel even bigger.

John Phillips: "I cannot believe what we just heard!"

Mark Bravo: "A Madman Szalinski match in 2026? Against Silas Grimm? At Victorious? Brother, sign me up right now!"

John Phillips: "Two weeks ago many thought Silas Grimm had ended whatever physical future Madman Szalinski had left. Tonight, Madman just told the world that not only is he cleared..."

Mark Bravo: "But he's coming for Grimm's soul."

John Phillips: "Victorious just got a whole lot more unpredictable."

The camera lingers one last time on Madman Szalinski standing tall in the middle of the ring as the fans continue roaring for him.

A Hall of Famer.

A survivor.

And apparently...

Still very much a wrestler.

Coming Soon

Segment

The screen fades to black.

No commentary.

No arena noise.

Just a low hum.

Then—

A single sneaker squeaks across polished hardwood.

The shot fades in tight.

Not on a face.

Not on a full body.

Just a silhouette in the distance under dim gym lights.

Still.

Poised.

One leg slightly bent.

Hands on hips.

Like the final pose of a routine waiting for the music to hit.

Cut.

A close-up of fingers tightening the laces on a high-top sneaker.

Green.

Black.

White.

Cut.

A hand adjusts an MMA-style glove.

Then smooths a kneepad into place.

Cut.

A fast pan across pleated fabric.

Green and black.

A flash of white trim.

The camera slows.

And for just a second—

We catch the logo across the chest.

HORNETS.

Cut.

A bow tied into a blonde ponytail.

Then another.

Cut.

A gym mat.

A pair of feet plants.

Then suddenly the silhouette springs into motion.

Roundoff.

Back handspring.

Full twist.

Perfect landing.

The figure sticks it cold in the dark.

Cut.

A set of ring ropes.

Hands grip the top strand.

A blur of motion.

Springboard.

Twist.

Landing on both feet.

Too fast to fully see.

Just enough to feel.

Cut.

Now the silhouette again.

Same gym.

Same dim lighting.

Only closer this time.

The figure bounces lightly on the balls of her feet, then throws a playful little shadowbox combination.

A cartwheel.

A handspring.

A spring up to the second rope.

Then a sudden leap backward into a crisp, controlled landing.

The movement is cheerleader precision fused with wrestler timing.

Elegant.

Fast.

Dangerous.

Cut to black.

Then a voice.

Bright.

Bubbly.

Almost too cheerful for how sharp it sounds in the silence.

Voice: "OMG... like... if you blink, you are literally gonna miss me."

A beat.

Voice: "And that would be sooo embarrassing for you."

Cut.

A close-up of a smile.

Then a wink.

Then the camera finally pulls back.

Standing under the spotlight now in full color is a compact burst of game-day energy and polished athletic confidence.

Blonde twin ponytails with bows.

Green, black, and white cheerleader-inspired gear with HORNETS across the front.

Gloves. High-tops. Kneepads.

Bright smile.

Hands on hips.

All confidence.

All sparkle.

All motion waiting to happen.

Voice: "You can call me..."

She points to herself with both thumbs and beams.

Voice: "The Killer Bee."

She breaks into a quick run, hits the ropes, springboards to the top, and flips backward into a perfect landing in the center of the ring.

She sticks the pose and throws her arms wide like she just won nationals.

Voice: "And trust me..."

Voice: "When I get here?"

She tilts her head, sweet as can be.

Voice: "You're gonna feel the sting."

She blows a kiss toward the camera.

Then the screen slams to a bright graphic.

COMING SOON

BRITTANY REID

"THE KILLER BEE"

It's Official

Segment

We head backstage once again.

The camera catches Maxwell Max Jett walking through the corridor with the UTA Championship draped over one shoulder now, the gold gleaming beneath the overhead lights.

The thousand-dollar suit is still immaculate.

The smirk is still there.

The pace is unhurried.

Like the building belongs to him and everybody in it is just trying to keep up.

John Phillips: "There is the UTA Champion again, and I still do not know if anyone has actually gotten through to him about the danger he is in tonight."

Mark Bravo: "Or worse, maybe they have, and he thinks it's funny."

Jett reaches his locker room door and goes to open it—

Scott Stevens: "Max!"

Scott Stevens comes striding into frame, already looking stressed beyond belief.

Jett closes his eyes for half a second like the interruption itself is offensive.

Maxwell Jett: "Scott."

Scott Stevens: "You shouldn't be here tonight. I gave you the night off."

Jett slowly turns and gives Stevens a look that says the concept of being told what to do is adorable.

Maxwell Jett: "Well, that was your first mistake."

He adjusts the title on his shoulder.

Maxwell Jett: "See, Scott, I'm not particularly worried about what you think I should or shouldn't be doing."

Maxwell Jett: "I'm the champion."

He taps the faceplate with two fingers.

Maxwell Jett: "And tonight is the first night I get to show everybody in this company what an actual champion looks like."

Scott Stevens: "Max, listen to me. You need to go. You don't know what's happened so far tonight."

Jett actually laughs.

Maxwell Jett: "Scott, respectfully—well, not respectfully, actually—but in words simple enough for even this company to understand..."

Maxwell Jett: "I do not care what's been happening tonight."

Maxwell Jett: "The only thing on my mind is putting my stuff down..."

He gestures toward the locker room door.

Maxwell Jett: "And then going out there to address the people who paid to see me."

Scott Stevens: "Max—"

Maxwell Jett: "No, no, no. You've done enough talking for one evening, Scott. Let the star handle the live television part."

Jett turns, unlocks the door, and steps inside, shutting it behind him in Scott's face.

Stevens stands there fuming.

Then—

CLICK.

From inside the room, we hear Jett's voice immediately change.

Maxwell Jett: "What are you doing in here?"

And then all hell breaks loose.

A massive bang rocks the door.

Something crashes inside.

Furniture topples.

There is a huge commotion from behind the locker room door.

Scott Stevens: "What the hell?! Max!"

He grabs the handle and yanks.

The door won't open.

Scott Stevens: "Open the door! Open the damn door!"

From down the hall, two familiar voices come rushing into the scene.

The Rich Young GRAPPLRZ—Jacoby Jacobs and Darian Darrington—come into frame, dressed like men who think expensive streetwear counts as a personality trait.

They slow up when they see Stevens practically trying to rip the door off its hinges.

Jacoby Jacobs: "Yo... what is goin' on?"

Darian Darrington: "We were supposed to meet with Max."

Scott Stevens: "Get this door open!"

Both men exchange a look.

Then Jacoby shrugs.

Jacoby Jacobs: "Aight."

They start kicking at the door.

One shot.

Two shots.

Three.

The frame splinters.

Then finally the door bursts inward.

They rush in.

Stevens right behind them.

And the camera catches chaos in a room far too small for it.

Samuel Scythe is standing there holding Maxwell Jett by the throat with one massive hand, the champion half-lifted and seething as his polished image has very suddenly become a lot less polished.

Scythe's expression is terrifying.

Not loud.

Not theatrical.

Just murderous.

Jacoby Jacobs: "Yo, man! What are you doing?!"

Darian Darrington: "Let him go!"

Before either of them can do much more than shout, another body barrels into frame.

Chris Ross.

Ross storms into the room like a missile with no guidance system left at all.

He slams through both members of the GRAPPLRZ, knocking Jacoby into the wall and Darian sideways into a bench.

John Phillips: "Chris Ross found him!"

Mark Bravo: "And now everybody's here!"

Ross lunges for Jett—

but the GRAPPLRZ recover fast enough to grab him from behind and start hammering away, trying to pull him back before he can reach the champion.

Samuel Scythe sees the numbers shift and tosses Jett aside like discarded luggage.

Jett crashes against the lockers and drops to the floor in a heap, gasping and furious.

Scythe immediately steps forward and blasts into the pile, dragging Ross free just enough to start brawling with him in the middle of the room.

It is a violent mess.

Too many bodies.

Too little space.

Wall lockers rattling.

Equipment cases tipping over.

Forearms smashing into shoulders and heads with nowhere for the force to go but into concrete and metal.

John Phillips: "This is complete insanity!"

Mark Bravo: "That room is way too small for Samuel Scythe and Chris Ross to be trying to kill each other in it!"

Ross and Scythe collide like two wrecking balls, trading clubbing shots in the middle of the locker room while Jacoby and Darian try to jump in and out where they can.

Then Jett starts to come to.

He pushes himself up off the floor, one hand on his throat, tie half-torn loose, fury and humiliation mixing all over his face.

He sees the chaos.

Sees Ross.

And instantly makes it about himself again.

Maxwell Jett: "You put your hands on me?!"

He shoves into the fight swinging wildly.

Maxwell Jett: "Huh?! You wanna put your hands on the best in the damn world?!"

He throws forearms into the pile, not caring who exactly is in front of him so long as somebody is getting hit and the camera can see him doing it.

Now officials come rushing in from every direction.

Referees. Producers. Security.

The room somehow becomes even more crowded.

Scott Stevens: "STOP! STOP! BREAK IT UP! BREAK IT UP!"

It takes several officials to start pulling the bodies apart.

Ross is being held back by multiple people and is still screaming over all of them at Jett.

Samuel Scythe looks like a monster in a cage, chest pumping, trying to get loose and murder whoever is nearest.

Jacoby is yelling.

Darian is yelling louder.

Jett is straightening his jacket while trying to look like he wasn't just almost strangled to death thirty seconds ago.

Chris Ross: "I'M GONNA KILL YOU!"

Maxwell Jett: "Oh, please. If you were gonna do it, hillbilly, you should've done it before the professionals got here."

John Phillips: "This is out of control!"

Scott Stevens finally forces his way into the center of the frame, pointing wildly as he tries to be heard over all of them.

Scott Stevens: "Chris! Max! You two—you wanna beat the hell out of each other, then you can do it at Vict—"

Maxwell Jett: "Don't you dare finish that sentence."

That lands hard enough to stop even Stevens for half a beat.

Jett points a finger right at him.

Maxwell Jett: "Before you even start, let's make one thing crystal clear..."

Maxwell Jett: "I defend this title on my terms."

Maxwell Jett: "Not yours."

Ross surges forward against the officials holding him.

Chris Ross: "I don't give a damn about that title! I want your head!"

The two men immediately try to lunge toward each other again and have to be pulled apart even harder.

In the middle of all that movement, Darian Darrington sneaks a cheap shot into Samuel Scythe from the side.

It lands just enough to make Scythe snap his head toward him like a rabid animal catching scent.

Scythe charges instantly.

It takes three people to catch him before he can launch himself across the room.

Scott Stevens: "ENOUGH!"

That finally cuts through for a second.

Everybody is still thrashing and shouting, but Stevens manages to force words through the madness.

Scott Stevens: "I don't know why you three—"

He points at Jacoby, Darian, and then Samuel Scythe.

Scott Stevens: "—are even here, or how you got mixed up in this, but you cut that crap out right now!"

Jett, somehow already back to being insufferably composed, fixes his collar and smooths his lapel.

Maxwell Jett: "Don't talk to them like that."

Stevens turns slowly.

He genuinely cannot believe what he just heard.

Scott Stevens: "What the hell did you just say?"

Maxwell Jett: "I said..."

Jett steps closer.

Maxwell Jett: "You don't talk to my associates like that."

Now Stevens just stares at him.

Scott Stevens: "Your associates, huh?"

Maxwell Jett: "Yeah."

Jacoby, still half-held back by an official, can't help himself.

Jacoby Jacobs: "Yeah, Scott. Keep up. We're networking."

That gets a look from Stevens that could peel paint.

Then Scott looks over to Chris Ross.

Scott Stevens: "You want to get your hands on him?"

Chris Ross: "Oh yeah."

Scott shifts to Samuel Scythe.

Scott Stevens: "And you..."

Scott Stevens: "You just want to create chaos anywhere you go, huh?"

Scythe doesn't answer.

He just stares.

Breathing hard.

Looking like the answer is obvious.

Scott Stevens: "Fine."

He points at Jett and the GRAPPLRZ.

Scott Stevens: "We'll deal with the title rematch stuff later."

Scott Stevens: "At Victorious..."

Now he points to Jett, Jacoby, and Darian.

Scott Stevens: "You three..."

Then to Ross and Scythe.

Scott Stevens: "And you two..."

Scott Stevens: "Do this crap in the ring."

He looks around the room, already sick of himself for saying the next part but knowing it is the only way to stop this tonight.

Scott Stevens: "Three on two isn't very even..."

Scott Stevens: "So if you have a third, bring them. I don't care."

Scott Stevens: "I just need this to stop. Now."

The room reacts all at once.

Ross still snarling.

Scythe still looking ready to rip a hole through somebody.

Jacoby grinning because he thinks this just became a social event.

Darian puffing up like he got invited to the big table.

And Maxwell Jett...

Maxwell Jett smiles.

Not because things are calm.

Because he already sees how he can stand in the middle of this and make it about him.

Maxwell Jett: "There we go."

Maxwell Jett: "Now that..."

He adjusts the championship on his shoulder again.

Maxwell Jett: "Sounds like a marquee attraction."

John Phillips: "It's official! Maxwell Jett and the Rich Young GRAPPLRZ against Chris Ross, Samuel Scythe, and one more partner of their choosing at Victorious!"

Mark Bravo: "That is a disaster waiting to happen, and I cannot wait to see who shows up as the third man!"

The camera holds on the final image—everybody still separated, still furious, still barely restrained, with Scott Stevens in the middle of a scene he clearly regrets ever allowing to exist.

The match is made.

The chaos is only getting bigger.

Proving Grounds

Segment

The screen cuts to black.

A low, dramatic pulse begins under the silence.

Then quick flashes hit the screen.

A slammed door.

A bunk room.

A kitchen argument.

A weight bench.

Eight silhouettes standing under harsh light.

Voiceover: "Eight competitors."

Voiceover: "One house."

Voiceover: "One dream."

Cut to fast shots.

Someone taping their wrists in a bedroom mirror.

Someone storming out of a common room after an argument.

Two competitors getting in each other's faces during training.

A coach yelling from ringside.

A body crashing into the mat.

Voiceover: "This isn't just a show."

Voiceover: "This is survival."

Voiceover: "Because on Proving Grounds..."

Voiceover: "You don't just fight for wins."

Voiceover: "You fight to stay in the game."

The music builds.

We see flashes of life inside the house.

Trash talk in the living room.

Tension at the dinner table.

A late-night confessional.

Someone crying in frustration.

Someone else shadowboxing in the dark while the rest of the house sleeps.

Voiceover: "Eight competitors live together."

Voiceover: "They train together."

Voiceover: "They compete against each other."

Voiceover: "And week by week..."

Voiceover: "They find out who really belongs."

Now the pace quickens.

High-impact training clips.

Promo challenges.

In-ring drills.

Explosive match moments.

A competitor getting their hand raised.

Another staring at the floor in defeat.

Voiceover: "Pressure creates conflict."

Voiceover: "Conflict creates truth."

Voiceover: "And at the end of the season..."

Voiceover: "Only one earns a UTA contract."

The music cuts for one beat.

Silence.

Then one final hard hit.

The logo slams onto the screen.

UTA PROVING GROUNDS

8 COMPETITORS.

1 HOUSE.

1 CONTRACT.

Final voiceover, slower now.

Voiceover: "No more talk."

Voiceover: "No more promises."

Voiceover: "Welcome to Proving Grounds."

Final graphic:

AIRING NOW

Big Win

Segment

We cut backstage to the Hightower locker room.

The room is loud before we even fully enter it.

Not chaotic.

Not yet.

But full.

Full of the kind of energy that only comes after a fight, a win, and a whole lot left unsaid.

Emily Hightower is standing near an open metal locker, still sweating, still breathing a little heavier than normal, one wrist taped tighter than before and a cold bottle of water pressed briefly against the side of her neck.

Across from her, David Hightower is talking like the match went exactly how he wanted it to.

Buck is leaned back against the wall, arms folded, saying nothing.

Dakota sits on a wooden bench tying and untying the same wrist tape, watching everything.

David Hightower: "That's what I'm talkin' about right there!"

David Hightower: "Big win. Tough win. The kind that matters."

Emily keeps her eyes on the inside of the locker, jaw set.

Emily Hightower: "Mhm."

David Hightower: "That girl was fast, too. Real fast."

David Hightower: "But you got through her."

He points at her like this is the important part.

David Hightower: "That's what winners do."

Emily lowers the water bottle and slowly shuts the locker door.

Emily Hightower: "Y'all almost got me disqualified."

The room changes immediately.

David's smile stays in place for a second too long.

David Hightower: "Oh, here we go."

Emily Hightower: "No. Don't 'here we go' me."

She turns now, looking right at all three of them.

Emily Hightower: "I said stay out of it."

Emily Hightower: "Not once."

Emily Hightower: "Not twice."

Emily Hightower: "I said it over and over again."

Dakota opens her mouth first, voice softer.

Dakota Hightower: "Em..."

Emily Hightower: "No, Dakota."

Emily Hightower: "I love y'all, but no."

Buck shifts off the wall slightly.

Buck Hightower: "We were trying to help."

Emily Hightower: "That ain't help."

Emily Hightower: "Help is stoppin' somebody else from jumpin' in."

Emily Hightower: "Help is makin' sure nobody screws me over."

Emily Hightower: "What y'all did was make the referee look right at me like I couldn't win the damn match on my own."

David scoffs and throws both hands out.

David Hightower: "But you did win."

Emily Hightower: "That is not the point!"

That one barks out of her before she can soften it.

Even Buck goes still again.

Emily Hightower: "I don't want Athena Storm thinking she got beat because my family couldn't mind their own business."

Emily Hightower: "I don't want these people thinkin' I needed my daddy and my brother and my sister to bail me out."

Emily Hightower: "And I sure as hell don't want to lose a shot at something bigger because none of y'all can listen."

Dakota looks down for a second.

That one landed.

Dakota Hightower: "I know."

Dakota Hightower: "I shouldn't have touched the rope."

Emily looks at her.

That takes some of the edge off, but not enough.

Emily Hightower: "No. You shouldn't have."

Buck speaks next, direct as ever.

Buck Hightower: "I ain't apologizin' for watchin' your back."

Emily Hightower: "You can watch my back without gettin' in front of my fight."

David shakes his head like this is all nonsense invented by people too soft to survive.

David Hightower: "You're makin' this way bigger than it is."

Emily Hightower: "No, I'm not."

Emily Hightower: "You are, every time you decide you know better than me in my own match."

David steps toward her now.

Not violent.

But prideful.

David Hightower: "You got our name."

David Hightower: "That means somethin'."

Emily Hightower: "Yeah. It means I fight hard."

Emily Hightower: "It means I don't quit."

Emily Hightower: "It means I get up when somebody knocks me down."

Emily Hightower: "It does not mean y'all get to decide where the line is for me."

David's face hardens.

David Hightower: "That family got you this far."

Emily Hightower: "That family taught me how to fight."

Emily Hightower: "Now let me do it."

Silence.

Not a long silence.

But enough.

Enough for the room to feel smaller.

Enough for everybody in it to understand this is not a little disagreement anymore.

Dakota finally stands up from the bench.

Dakota Hightower: "She ain't wrong."

David turns his head toward her.

David Hightower: "Excuse me?"

Dakota Hightower: "She ain't wrong."

Dakota's voice stays calm.

That almost makes it hit harder.

Dakota Hightower: "She asked us to do one thing."

Dakota Hightower: "We didn't do it."

Dakota Hightower: "And it almost blew up in her face."

Buck glances toward Dakota, then to Emily, then back at David.

Buck Hightower: "She still won."

Emily Hightower: "Buck."

Emily Hightower: "That is not enough for me."

Now Buck really looks at her.

Not as a sister throwing a fit.

As a wrestler telling the truth.

Emily Hightower: "I don't want to just survive because y'all made a mess and I cleaned it up."

Emily Hightower: "I want to win clear."

Emily Hightower: "I want to know it was me."

Emily Hightower: "And I want everybody else to know it too."

Buck gives one slow nod.

Not agreement, exactly.

But understanding.

Buck Hightower: "Alright."

David can't believe what he just heard.

David Hightower: "Alright?"

David Hightower: "That's it? We just let people take shots at her and stand there lookin' stupid?"

Emily Hightower: "No."

Emily Hightower: "If somebody else jumps in, stop 'em."

Emily Hightower: "If somebody comes for me after the bell, stop 'em."

Emily Hightower: "If somebody tries to make me lose something dirty, stop 'em."

She steps closer to her father now.

Emily Hightower: "But if I'm fightin' my match?"

Emily Hightower: "You let me fight it."

David looks at her.

Really looks at her.

The stubbornness in his face never leaves, but there is something else under it now.

The recognition that his little girl is not asking for permission anymore.

She is laying down terms.

David Hightower: "You got a lotta opinions for somebody still wearin' my last name."

Emily Hightower: "Then be proud of how I use it."

That one hangs there.

David doesn't answer it.

Not because he can't.

Because if he does, he loses the room.

So instead he grunts, turns, snatches up a towel off the bench, and mutters as he walks toward the back of the room.

David Hightower: "Still think y'all are overreactin'."

Dakota exhales through her nose.

Buck shakes his head once.

Emily leans back against the locker, closing her eyes for a second.

Dakota Hightower: "For what it's worth..."

Emily opens her eyes.

Dakota Hightower: "You looked damn good out there."

Buck Hightower: "You did."

Emily nods once.

Emily Hightower: "I know."

That gets the faintest smile out of Dakota.

Even Buck almost smirks.

Then Emily looks past them both toward where David went.

Emily Hightower: "He's gonna do it again."

Dakota Hightower: "Probably."

Buck Hightower: "Yeah."

Emily pushes off the locker, grabs her bag, and slings it over one shoulder.

Emily Hightower: "Then I guess I'll have to keep sayin' it till he hears me."

She heads for the door.

Not angry now.

Resolved.

Behind her, Dakota watches thoughtfully.

Buck watches like a man trying to decide which side of a line he's about to be on.

And deeper in the room, David Hightower says nothing at all.

The win over Athena Storm moved Emily forward in the tournament.

But inside the Hightower locker room, another fight is only just getting started.

Anger Makes Your Enemies Happier

Segment

The camera returns to ringside, showing John Phillips and Mark Bravo seated at the announce desk. Papers are scattered in front of them, monitors glowing, both men wearing the look of people suddenly hearing something in their earpieces.

John Phillips: "Ladies and gentlemen, hold on—hold on a second. We're... we're getting word from the truck that something is happening backstage."

Mark Bravo: "Yeah, I'm seeing the stage manager waving like he's trying to flag down a helicopter. That's never a good sign, John."

John presses a hand to his headset, leaning forward.

John Phillips: "We're being told there's a commotion involving multiple UTA personnel—security is involved, and it sounds serious."

Mark Bravo: "After what went down earlier tonight? Yeah, I'd bet my last protein shake this is connected."

John Phillips: "Alright, production is telling me we've got a camera on the scene. Let's... let's get back there now."

The feed snaps backstage—and the hallway is a full-scale riot.

Theron Tkachuk is a monster barely contained, five security guards hanging off him like anchors as he lunges forward again and again. His boots scrape across the concrete, shoulders heaving, teeth bared, eyes locked on Hakuryu with a murderous, silent fury. One guard loses his grip and gets flung sideways into a stack of lighting cases, crashing hard and rolling across the floor.

John Phillips: "Theron Tkachuk is trying to break loose—he wants Hakuryu right now!"

Mark Bravo: "And Hakuryu's just standing there! He looks bored, John! BORED!"

Hakuryu stands perfectly still in the center of the hallway, scripture-covered chest rising and falling in slow, meditative breaths. His hands are folded loosely in a prayer position. His eyes are half-lidded, serene, untouched by the chaos around him. He doesn't flinch. He doesn't blink. He watches Theron with cold, superior calm, as if the Dire Wolf is nothing more than a noisy animal behind a fence.

But the real violence is happening just to the side.

Torunn Sigurjonsson has Sinja laid across a production box—his back arched over the metal surface, legs kicking helplessly as she crushes his throat with one massive hand. The box rattles under his weight, metal creaking as

Torunn leans in, jaw clenched, warpaint streaked, eyes burning with fury. Sinja's shakujo staff lies on the floor, rolling in a slow circle as his face turns red, then purple.

John Phillips: "Torunn's got Sinja pinned on that production case—she's choking the life out of him!"

Mark Bravo: "Four guards can't even get her off him! She's got him locked down like she's trying to break the table with his spine!"

Four security guards are desperately trying to pry Torunn back, but she's planted like a glacier, boots dug into the concrete, shoulders locked. She doesn't even look at Sinja—her glare is fixed on Hakuryu, hatred radiating off her like heat from a forge. Sinja's hands slap weakly at her wrist, his legs kicking in panic, his voice reduced to a strangled rasp.

The camera pulls back, capturing the full scope of the chaos: Theron raging against five men, Torunn crushing Sinja's windpipe across a production box, security shouting and failing to contain either of them, and Hakuryu standing in the middle of it all with the calm, superior stillness of a man who believes none of this can touch him.

It doesn't look like a backstage hallway anymore. It looks like a battlefield—and the Wolves are still trying to start another war.

Security is shouting. Torunn is still crushing Sinja's throat across the production box. Theron is ripping against five guards, boots scraping the concrete as he tries to break free. Hakuryu stands motionless in the center of the chaos, serene and untouched, watching the Wolves with cold superiority.

Then the hallway reacts before the camera even catches up—because Gunnar Van Patton storms into frame.

He limps hard, his right leg locked inside that massive brace, metal hinges clacking with every uneven step. His head is wrapped, stitches hidden under gauze, and every movement looks like it hurts—but the fury in his eyes burns hotter than any pain. Avril Selene Kinkade is right behind him, heels clicking sharply, her expression tight and focused as she keeps pace.

John Phillips: "Gunnar Van Patton is here! The WrestleZone Champion is marching straight into the middle of this chaos!"

Mark Bravo: "He shouldn't even be WALKING, John—and he's charging into a riot!"

Gunnar doesn't slow. He doesn't hesitate. He goes straight to Theron first.

Theron lunges again, dragging three guards with him, teeth bared, eyes locked on Hakuryu like a predator ready to tear into prey. Gunnar steps directly into his path, planting himself between Theron and the White Dragon.

Theron's chest heaves. His fists clench. His entire body shakes with the effort of holding back the urge to kill.

Gunnar Van Patton: "Dire. Attention!"

Theron's eyes flicker toward him—just for a moment.

Gunnar Van Patton: "Not like this. Not here. Not now. Ya hear me?"

Theron snarls, shoulders twitching, but Gunnar steps closer, almost chest-to-chest despite the size difference.

Gunnar Van Patton: "Stand down. That's an order."

Theron's breathing slows. His fists unclench. The five guards holding him nearly fall forward as the monster they were restraining suddenly stops resisting.

John Phillips: "Gunnar just shut Theron down with one command!"

Mark Bravo: "That's the alpha, John. That's the one of two men on earth Theron listens to."

Gunnar turns next—limping, grimacing, but moving with purpose—toward Torunn.

Torunn is still crushing Sinja's throat across the production box, her forearm flexed, her jaw clenched, her entire body radiating fury. Sinja's legs kick weakly, his face purple, his hands clawing at her wrist as four guards fight to pry her off.

Gunnar slams his palm onto the production box beside her, the metal ringing like a gunshot.

Gunnar Van Patton: "Úlfynja!"

Torunn's head snaps toward him.

Gunnar Van Patton: "Let. Him. Go."

She doesn't move at first. Her nostrils flare. Her eyes burn. She looks one heartbeat away from snapping Sinja's neck.

Gunnar Van Patton: "Did Ah stutter?"

Torunn's grip loosens by a fraction.

Gunnar Van Patton: "Release the little sh*t."

Torunn releases Sinja. He collapses sideways off the box, coughing violently as two guards drag him away.

Torunn steps back, chest heaving, eyes still locked on Hakuryu—but she obeys.

John Phillips: "Torunn stood down. Gunnar Van Patton just walked into this chaos and pulled his Wolves back from the edge."

Mark Bravo: "He's injured, he's limping, he's stitched together—but that's still the most dangerous man in this hallway."

Gunnar positions himself between his Wolves and Hakuryu, breathing hard, leg trembling under the brace, but standing tall all the same. Theron stands behind him, silent and seething. Torunn wipes her mouth with the back of her hand, still glaring daggers at the White Dragon.

Avril steps up beside Gunnar, adjusting her glasses, her expression unreadable—but the faintest hint of a smile curls at the corner of her lips.

The Wolves are contained. Barely. But contained.

The hallway is still vibrating with leftover chaos—Theron breathing like a caged animal behind Gunnar, Torunn wiping Sinja's spit and sweat off her hand, security regrouping and trying to catch their breath. Hakuryu hasn't moved an inch. He stands exactly where he was when Gunnar arrived, scripture-covered chest rising and falling in slow, meditative rhythm, eyes half-lidded with that same cold, infuriating calm.

And then he finally speaks.

Hakuryu: ??????????????????

Gunnar's head snaps toward him instantly. He doesn't need Sinja. He doesn't need context. He knows exactly what was said.

Gunnar Van Patton: "Call 'em dogs again. Go on. Ah dare ya."

Hakuryu's eyes lift just a fraction, acknowledging Gunnar for the first time.

Hakuryu: ??????????

Gunnar's jaw tightens. His nostrils flare. His entire posture shifts—no longer the commander calming his Wolves, but the soldier ready to break someone in half.

John Phillips: "Gunnar understood every word! Hakuryu just told him he's next!"

Mark Bravo: "And Gunnar looks like he's about to tear that brace off and go for his throat!"

Gunnar takes a step forward—limping, but with murder in his eyes.

Gunnar Van Patton: "Ya wanna go, holy man? This leg brace ain't gonna stop me."

Security reacts instantly. Three guards peel off from the Wolves and rush to intercept him, forming a wall between Gunnar and Hakuryu. Gunnar tries to push past them, but they brace hard, hands on his chest, shoulders, arms, anything to keep him from lunging.

Gunnar Van Patton: "Tonight, next week... It don't matter much to me. Ah'll break mah boot off in yer ass."

He shoves one guard aside with his good leg, but the brace on the injured one buckles slightly, forcing him to catch himself on the wall. The guards swarm tighter, trying to hold him back.

John Phillips: "Security is shifting to Gunnar now! They're trying to keep HIM from going after Hakuryu!"

Mark Bravo: "And look at Hakuryu—he's not backing up, he's not flinching, he's not even BLINKING!"

Hakuryu stands perfectly still, hands folded in prayer, eyes locked on Gunnar with that same cold, superior disdain. The faintest hint of a smirk touches the corner of his mouth—not amusement, but contempt.

Hakuryu: ??????????

Gunnar's eyes go wide with fury. He lunges again, and security barely manages to hold him back, boots scraping across the concrete as he tries to get at the White Dragon.

Gunnar Van Patton: "Broken? Ah reckon you can find out for yer damn self right now, just how broken Ah am."

Theron steps forward behind him, ready to join the fight, but Gunnar throws a hand back without looking—an instinctive command—and Theron stops cold.

Torunn snarls, fists clenched, but she stays behind Gunnar as well, eyes locked on Hakuryu like she's memorizing every inch of him for later.

The hallway is seconds away from detonating again—until a new voice cuts through the chaos like a blade.

Scott Stevens: "ENOUGH!"

And the entire hallway freezes.

Scott Stevens' voice slices through the hallway like a whipcrack, freezing every moving part of the chaos in place. Security stops shouting. Torunn stops advancing. Theron stops shifting his weight. Even Gunnar, still trying to push past the guards, turns his head toward the source.

Scott Stevens: "This... this right here is EXACTLY what I knew would happen."

He steps into frame, suit jacket half-buttoned, tie crooked from rushing, eyes blazing with a mix of fury and vindication. He points at the Wolves first, then at the wrecked hallway around them.

Scott Stevens: "I warned everyone. I said it. I said the second you three were in the same building as Hakuryu, this place would turn into a warzone. And look around—look at this mess! I was RIGHT."

Gunnar snarls, trying to shove past the guards again, but they hold him back. Theron's fists clench. Torunn's jaw tightens. Stevens doesn't flinch.

Scott Stevens: "And I'll tell you something else—this? This will NOT happen again. Not on my watch. Not at Victorious. Not EVER."

He jabs a finger toward Theron and Torunn.

Scott Stevens: "You two? You're DONE. I don't want to see you again tonight or at Victorious. Security, escort them out of here."

The crowd in the arena watching on the tron erupts in a mix of shock and outrage.

John Phillips: "Torunn and Theron are barred from Victorious! They won't be allowed in the building!"

Mark Bravo: "Stevens is dropping the hammer! He's not playing around tonight!"

Torunn steps forward, fury radiating off her like heat, but Gunnar throws an arm out, stopping her cold. Theron's breathing grows heavier, but he doesn't move. The Wolves are seething, but contained.

Stevens turns his attention now—slowly, deliberately—to Hakuryu.

The White Dragon hasn't moved. Not an inch. He stands with hands folded in prayer, eyes half-lidded, serene and superior. Sinja stands behind him, trembling violently, still clutching his throat where Torunn nearly crushed it.

Hakuryu lifts his chin just slightly, as if acknowledging Stevens' presence is a courtesy, not a necessity.

Stevens glares at him.

Scott Stevens: "And YOU—get out of my hallway."

Hakuryu doesn't bow. Doesn't nod. Doesn't acknowledge the order as anything more than a breeze passing by.

Hakuryu: ????????

Sinja flinches at the sound of his master's voice, then forces out the translation through a raw, shaking throat.

Sinja: "Clear... the... way..."

Hakuryu walks forward. Not fast. Not slow. Just inevitable. Security parts for him instinctively, as if compelled by something colder than fear. Sinja scrambles behind him, still shaking, still coughing, still terrified to be within arm's reach of Torunn.

Hakuryu never looks at Gunnar. Never looks at Theron. Never looks at Torunn. He simply walks past them, serene and untouched, as if the chaos was beneath him.

And as he passes, the camera catches Avril Selene Kinkade in the background.

She isn't shouting.

She isn't panicking.

She isn't even pretending to be upset.

She smiles.

A slow, sinister, knowing grin—like a cat that just ate the canary.

Eric Dane Jr. vs Dante Rivera

Match

John Phillips: "Up next, singles action as Eric Dane Jr. goes one-on-one with Dante Rivera."

Mark Bravo: "And let me tell you right now, Eric Dane Jr. absolutely hates that this match is happening. In his mind, this is beneath him. In his mind, tonight should be about Eric Dane Jr. and only Eric Dane Jr."

John Phillips: "That may be how he sees it, but Dante Rivera is not here to play supporting actor in anyone else's ego trip."

Mark Bravo: "Nope. Dante's the kind of guy who'll take your disrespect personally and then make you wrestle through

it."

The lights shift and a flashy, self-important energy rolls through the building.

Eric Dane Jr. steps onto the stage dressed like a man who absolutely believes he should have his own camera crew following him at all times.

Expensive entrance jacket.

Sunglasses.

That smug little look on his face like the crowd should be thanking him for arriving.

John Phillips: "And here comes Eric Dane Jr."

Mark Bravo: "A monolith of ego for absolutely no good reason."

Dane steps out and throws his arms wide, soaking in the boos like they are the natural soundtrack of greatness.

He takes a slow turn on the stage, jawing toward the hard camera before he even starts down the ramp.

Eric Dane Jr.: "Drink it in, Portland!"

The boos get louder.

John Phillips: "Eric Dane Jr. has spent weeks making everything around him about him. Title shots. Bobby Dean. Chris Ross. Susanita Ybanez. If there is a spotlight, Eric Dane Jr. believes it should belong to him."

Mark Bravo: "And if it doesn't, he'll just start yelling until people act like it does."

Eric struts down the ramp, pausing at one point to point at himself with both thumbs, then at the ring, then back at himself again as if the outcome is already signed and notarized.

He reaches ringside, climbs the steps slowly, and wipes his boots on the apron with exaggerated care before stepping through the ropes.

Inside the ring, he climbs the second rope and spreads his arms again.

Eric Dane Jr.: "You're welcome!"

Mark Bravo: "I swear, he thinks gratitude is a legal requirement."

Eric drops down and begins pacing the ring, shadowboxing with just enough sloppiness to remind you he thinks he looks cooler doing it than he actually does.

Then the mood changes.

"Rise Today" by Alter Bridge blasts through the arena.

The crowd comes alive.

John Phillips: "And here comes Dante Rivera!"

Dante bursts through the curtain full of energy, slapping hands with fans on both sides as he heads down the ramp.

He points to the sky for his family before locking his eyes onto the ring and breaking into a more direct pace.

John Phillips: "A passionate second-generation star, Dante Rivera has won over this audience with resilience, charisma, and fight."

Mark Bravo: "And that's exactly why Eric Dane Jr. is treating him like he doesn't matter. Because deep down, guys like Eric hate anybody the people actually believe in."

Dante reaches ringside, slides under the bottom rope, and pops to his feet quickly.

Eric gives him one dismissive glance, then actually looks away, like he's bored already.

Eric Dane Jr.: "This is my warm-up? Really?"

Dante Rivera: "You can keep talking. I'll do the wrestling."

The crowd pops for that.

Mark Bravo: "There we go. That's a good answer."

The referee steps between them and gives final instructions.

Eric barely pays attention.

Dante never stops staring at him.

DING DING

John Phillips: "And here we go."

Dante steps forward ready to engage.

Eric immediately backs into the ropes and raises a hand.

Eric Dane Jr.: "Whoa, whoa, whoa. Let's all just appreciate who's standing in front of you right now."

The crowd boos.

Mark Bravo: "Nope. We're already here."

Dante steps in again for the lock-up.

Eric ducks out to the side and points at his own face.

Eric Dane Jr.: "You don't get this for free, champ."

Dante Rivera: "You done?"

Eric Dane Jr.: "No, but you will be."

They finally tie up.

Dante immediately gets the better of it, driving Eric backward into the corner with straight-up strength and balance.

John Phillips: "Good opening power from Dante Rivera!"

The referee calls for the break.

Dante gives it clean.

Eric instantly cheap-slaps him across the face on the way out.

Mark Bravo: "There's the professionalism."

Dante's head snaps to the side.

Then right back.

Eric smiles.

Dante drills him with a forearm that wipes the smile clean off his face.

John Phillips: "Big forearm by Rivera!"

Eric stumbles backward and Dante is on him fast now—another forearm, then a whip to the ropes, then a flying forearm smash that drops Dane flat.

The crowd roars.

Mark Bravo: "Dante Rivera said enough with the monologue."

Eric scrambles up in a panic and Dante catches him with a deep arm drag, then another, sending Dane rolling toward the ropes with a much different expression now.

John Phillips: "Dante Rivera came ready tonight!"

Eric gets to the floor to regroup, pacing and shouting back toward the ring.

Eric Dane Jr.: "You got one move! Congratulations! Put it on a t-shirt!"

Dante simply points at the ring and motions him back in.

Dante Rivera: "Get back in here."

Eric rolls his eyes dramatically, slides back in, and this time comes in swinging.

He catches Dante with a quick kick to the gut, then unloads with a sharp elbow and a chop that looks nastier than it really is but still gets the job done.

John Phillips: "Eric Dane Jr. with the first real sustained offense of the match."

Mark Bravo: "He's not great, but he is relentless. I'll give him that."

Eric whips Dante hard to the corner and charges in with a cannonball that lands clean, then rolls out of it and spreads his arms like he just reinvented wrestling.

Eric Dane Jr.: "That's star power!"

The crowd boos.

Eric hooks Dante for a quick cover.

ONE!

Dante kicks out.

Eric immediately leans over him and talks trash.

Eric Dane Jr.: "You're here to lose, buddy. Do it with dignity."

He drags Dante up and lands a snap suplex, then another quick cover.

ONE!

TWO!

Dante gets the shoulder up.

John Phillips: "Rivera staying in it."

Eric rises and starts jawing with the crowd instead of staying focused on his opponent.

Eric Dane Jr.: "You people really thought this guy had a chance?"

Dante gets to a knee behind him.

Eric turns just in time to catch a body shot, then another, then a sharp forearm that backs him up toward the ropes.

Mark Bravo: "And there's Dante again. Every time Eric starts admiring himself, he gets hit."

Dante whips him across and catches him on the rebound with a tilt-a-whirl backbreaker.

The crowd comes alive again.

John Phillips: "Beautiful counter by Dante Rivera!"

Eric rolls to the apron, clutching his back, and Dante moves toward him—
but suddenly a familiar sound cuts through everything.

HONK! HONK!

Mark Bravo: "Oh no."

John Phillips: "You have got to be kidding me."

The camera swings toward the stage.

And there he is.

Bobby Dean.

Rolling down the ramp on his mobility scooter like this is the most natural thing in the world.

The crowd erupts in laughter and cheers.

HONK! HONK!

Bobby Dean: "ERIC!"

Eric freezes on the apron, face twisting in disbelief.

Eric Dane Jr.: "No. No, no, no. Bobby, not now!"

Bobby keeps rolling closer, grinning from ear to ear.

Bobby Dean: "I just wanted to ask you somethin' real quick!"

Eric Dane Jr.: "This is a match, you absolute catastrophe!"

John Phillips: "Bobby Dean has just rolled down here in the middle of Eric Dane Jr.'s match!"

Mark Bravo: "And I promise you, Bobby thinks this is a perfectly reasonable time to workshop something for Victorious."

Eric points furiously down the ramp.

Eric Dane Jr.: "Go away! We'll do this later!"

Bobby Dean: "But if it's a ladder match, do you think my scooter can count as a ladder if I park it next to the belt?"

The crowd roars laughing.

Mark Bravo: "That is an outstanding question."

Eric Dane Jr.: "No! No, it cannot count as a ladder! It's a scooter! It's barely a vehicle!"

As Eric is losing his mind at Bobby, Dante Rivera sees the opening.

He sprints in from behind and dropkicks Eric off the apron to the floor.

John Phillips: "Dante Rivera takes advantage!"

Mark Bravo: "That's what happens when you stop wrestling to yell at a man in traffic!"

Eric hits the floor hard and pops back up furious, but Bobby is right there beside him now, still on the scooter, still trying

to help in the dumbest way possible.

Bobby Dean: "Oh! You should maybe duck next time!"

Eric Dane Jr.: "Thank you, Bobby! Tremendous tactical note!"

Dante hits the ropes and launches through with a slingshot crossbody, wiping Eric out on the floor in front of Bobby.

The crowd is fully in it now.

John Phillips: "Dante Rivera is rolling now!"

Dante gets up, fires the crowd up, then grabs Eric and sends him back into the ring.

Bobby follows along at ringside, still keeping pace on the scooter like he belongs in the segment.

Bobby Dean: "I can still be in your corner if you want!"

Eric Dane Jr.: "I would rather wrestle in traffic!"

Mark Bravo: "I mean... technically he is."

Back in the ring, Dante climbs to the second rope and comes off with a standing moonsault onto Eric, then hooks the leg.

ONE!

TWO!

Eric kicks out.

Dante rises with momentum behind him now, pointing to the crowd and feeding off the energy.

John Phillips: "This match changed completely the moment Bobby Dean came down that ramp."

Mark Bravo: "Yeah, because Bobby Dean is basically a natural disaster with a horn."

Dante pulls Eric up and whips him to the ropes, looking for the rebound that sets up Borderline Breaker—
but Eric smartly hooks the ropes and kills the setup before it begins.

Dante charges anyway.

Eric backdrops him over the ropes—

but Dante lands on the apron.

The crowd pops.

Eric turns and walks straight into a springboard shoulder tackle that knocks him down again.

John Phillips: "Dante Rivera staying one step ahead!"

Dante is feeling it now.

He points to the top rope, thinking about going big—

and at ringside Bobby Dean chooses the worst possible moment to be helpful again.

Bobby Dean: "ERIC! If you need a timeout, I got granola bars in the basket!"

The crowd laughs again.

Dante looks over for half a second, amused despite himself.

Eric uses that second.

He scrambles up, hits the ropes, and knocks Dante off balance on the top turnbuckle.

Mark Bravo: "And now Bobby distracted Dante too!"

Eric climbs fast, hooking Dante high up on the ropes.

Not elegant.

Not especially safe-looking.

Very Eric Dane Jr.

He muscles Dante into position and lands a top-rope superplex that rattles the ring on impact.

John Phillips: "Huge superplex by Eric Dane Jr.!"

Both men are down for a second.

Eric rises first, breathing hard, hair disheveled, ego very much reassembled.

Eric Dane Jr.: "That's why they pay me the big fake money!"

Mark Bravo: "Big fake money?"

John Phillips: "He may still be rattled."

Eric drags Dante up, hooks him, and plants him with the NepoDriver—rope-assisted and ugly in all the right ways.

John Phillips: "NepoDriver connects!"

Eric doesn't go for the cover immediately.

Of course he doesn't.

Instead he kips up badly, nearly loses his footing, recovers, then points out to Bobby at ringside.

Eric Dane Jr.: "You see that? That's what an athlete looks like!"

Bobby Dean: "Pretty good! Still think the scooter could help though!"

Eric shakes his head in disgust, then finally turns back and pulls Dante up one more time.

He hooks him high, drops him with SD3—the Shooting Star DDT—and drives Dante into the mat.

John Phillips: "SD3! That's gotta be it!"

Eric falls across him for the cover.

ONE!

TWO!

THREE!

DING DING DING

John Phillips: "Eric Dane Jr. gets the win!"

Mark Bravo: "But for a few minutes there, Bobby Dean nearly turned this whole thing into a hostage situation."

Eric rolls off and sits up, pushing his hair back and glaring out at Bobby like this victory somehow still annoyed him.

Ring Announcer: "Here is your winner... ERIC DANE JR.!"

Bobby claps enthusiastically from the scooter.

Bobby Dean: "Good job, Eric!"

Eric Dane Jr.: "Stop encouraging me like we're friends!"

Bobby Dean: "We are friends!"

The crowd laughs as Eric gets his hand raised.

John Phillips: "Credit to Dante Rivera. He took advantage when the opportunity opened and gave Eric Dane Jr. more of a fight than Eric clearly expected."

Mark Bravo: "Yeah, but in the end, Eric Dane Jr. survives the warm-up. Now the bigger question is what happens when Bobby Dean and that mobility scooter are part of the actual problem at Victorious."

Eric stands in the ring jawing at Bobby Dean, who is still parked happily at ringside, completely unbothered and somehow even more excited for Victorious than before.

Conclusion

CARD SUBJECT TO CHANGE

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