

World Tour: Brazil '26

Promotion: United Toughness Alliance
Date: July 3, 2026
Location: Farmasi Arena — Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Preview

The United Toughness Alliance embarks on an epic World Tour for 2026.

Results

Introduction

Segment

The screen is black.

A low, heavy rhythm begins to build.

The first image appears.

Rio de Janeiro.

The lights of the city. The coastline. The roar of Brazil waiting beneath the music.

Then the footage begins to cut faster.

Savior Hawkins standing tall after his singles debut.

Kaine staring forward, expression empty, violence behind his eyes.

Sol Azteca flying through the air, twisting her body with impossible grace.

Valkyrie Knox stepping out from behind Marie Van Claudio, cold and confident.

The footage changes.

International Affair.

Susanita Ybanez fighting for more than victory.

Marie Van Claudio standing beside her.

Then the turn.

The attack.

The betrayal.

Susanita left broken while Marie Van Claudio showed the world exactly what she had become.

The rhythm grows louder.

Yoshii raises the United States Championship high above his head.

A graphic flashes.

OPEN CHALLENGE

Then the music dips lower.

Maxwell Jett appears, clutching the UTA Championship like it is the only thing keeping the world from collapsing around him.

Mike Best steps through the curtain.

The Hall of Fame ring.

The stare.

The promise.

Chris Ross appears for one split second.

The Reaper of Harrisburg.

Always there.

Always looming.

The final shot is Maxwell Jett again, the UTA Championship over his shoulder, but this time the confidence in his eyes does not look quite as certain.

The screen cuts to black.

WORLD TOUR: BRAZIL '26

The black screen explodes into the live shot inside Farmasi Arena in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

The building is alive.

Fans are on their feet. Signs are in the air. The noise rolls through the arena as red, white, and gold pyro erupts from the stage and rains sparks down across the entrance way.

The camera sweeps across the sold-out crowd before cutting to ringside.

John Phillips: We are live from Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, and welcome to another stop on the United Toughness Alliance World Tour!

Mark Bravo: Johnny, Farmasi Arena is rocking tonight. This crowd is ready, this card is loaded, and there are a whole lot of people walking into this building with scores to settle.

John Phillips: Five matches are scheduled tonight, including two championships on the line, an open challenge, one of the most personal grudge matches we have seen all year, and a main event that could completely change the direction of the UTA.

Mark Bravo: That main event is the one everyone is talking about. Maxwell Jett defends the UTA Championship against Mike Best. Maxwell has survived chaos before, but tonight feels different. Tonight feels like the walls are starting to close in.

John Phillips: Mike Best made his intentions clear the moment he arrived in UTA. He is not here for nostalgia. He is not here to shake hands. He is here for the UTA Championship.

Mark Bravo: And Maxwell knows it. He can act arrogant, he can hide behind First Class, he can talk himself into believing he has everything under control, but Mike Best is not just another challenger. Mike Best is a problem.

John Phillips: And he may not be Maxwell Jett's only problem.

Mark Bravo: That's the thing. Even if Maxwell survives Mike Best tonight, Chris Ross is still out there. The Reaper of Harrisburg has made it clear that he has not forgotten about the UTA Champion. Maxwell is defending the title tonight, but he is also defending himself from every direction.

The camera cuts to a graphic for the UTA Championship main event.

UTA Championship

Maxwell Jett defends against Mike Best

John Phillips: That match comes your way later tonight, but it is far from the only combustible situation on this card.

The graphic changes.

Grudge Match

Marie Van Claudio vs. Susanita Ybanez

John Phillips: Marie Van Claudio goes one on one with Susanita Ybanez, and Mark, this one may be as personal as it gets.

Mark Bravo: What Marie did at International Affair was disgusting. There's no dressing it up. There's no spinning it. Susanita fought, Susanita survived, and Marie Van Claudio repaid her with betrayal and brutality.

John Phillips: Marie Van Claudio has aligned herself with Amy Harrison and Valkyrie Knoxx, and The Empire has only become more dangerous since that night.

Mark Bravo: But tonight Susanita finally gets Marie in the ring. Not in a hallway. Not from behind. Not after the match. Face to face. And if Susanita has been carrying even half the anger I think she has, Marie may find out that betrayal comes with a bill.

The graphic changes again.

No Disqualification

Sol Azteca vs. Valkyrie Knoxx

John Phillips: We will also see Sol Azteca meet Valkyrie Knoxx in a No Disqualification match.

Mark Bravo: And that stipulation should worry everyone who cares about Sol Azteca. Valkyrie Knoxx is dangerous enough under normal rules. Take the rules away, and now you are giving someone tied to The Empire permission to do damage.

John Phillips: Sol Azteca has never been afraid to take risks, and tonight she may need every bit of that courage.

Mark Bravo: Courage, speed, toughness, and eyes in the back of her mask. Because when The Empire is involved, one opponent can turn into three real quick.

The next graphic appears.

Singles Match

Savior Hawkins vs. Kaine

John Phillips: Savior Hawkins will also be in action tonight as he goes one on one with Kaine.

Mark Bravo: Savior Hawkins has been trying to carve out his place here in UTA, and every match matters when you are trying to prove you belong. But Kaine is not the kind of man who gives you space to prove anything. He makes you earn every breath.

John Phillips: Hawkins has momentum, but Kaine is as dangerous and unpredictable as anyone on this roster.

Mark Bravo: Momentum is great until somebody like Kaine stops it cold.

The graphic changes once more.

United States Championship

Open Challenge Match

Yoshii defends against TBD

John Phillips: The United States Championship will be defended as Yoshii continues his open challenge.

Mark Bravo: That is what being a champion should look like. Yoshii is not waiting for someone to be handed a shot. He is putting the title out there, daring someone to come take it.

John Phillips: We do not know who will answer the challenge.

Mark Bravo: And that is what makes it dangerous. When the door is open, anybody can walk through it.

The camera cuts back from the graphics and returns to the live crowd. The noise swells again as the fans chant for UTA.

John Phillips: Rio de Janeiro is ready. Farmasi Arena is ready. The United Toughness Alliance World Tour rolls on tonight in Brazil.

Mark Bravo: We have grudges. We have violence. We have championships. We have an open challenge. And we have Maxwell Jett trying to prove that he is still the man at the top of the mountain.

John Phillips: The question is, by the end of tonight, will he still be standing there?

The camera pulls back to a wide shot of the arena as the lights sweep over the crowd.

Mark Bravo: No more talking about it, Johnny.

John Phillips: World Tour: Brazil '26 starts now!

The camera turns toward the entrance as the fans rise, waiting for the first arrival of the night.

Savior Hawkins vs. Kaine

Match

The camera returns to ringside inside Farmasi Arena as the Rio de Janeiro crowd continues to buzz from the opening moments of the show.

John Phillips: We are set for singles action here on World Tour: Brazil '26, and this is a big opportunity for Savior Hawkins.

Mark Bravo: It is, but it is not an easy one. Kaine is tough. Kaine is dangerous. Kaine does not stay down easy. Savior Hawkins wants to keep moving forward here in UTA, but tonight he has to get through The Revenant to do it.

The arena lights suddenly cut out.

For a moment, Farmasi Arena is swallowed by darkness.

Then white orbs begin to dance across the building, drifting over the crowd as streaks of gold slice through the dark. A deep navy glow pulses through the arena as the opening of "Healing Pool" by Safest Ledge begins to build.

The fans rise with the music, the anticipation growing louder with every beat.

John Phillips: Listen to this ovation for Savior Hawkins.

Mark Bravo: The kid has connected quickly, Johnny. There is something real about him. The people feel it.

The first explosive hit of the song lands.

White and gold pyro erupts across the stage as Savior Hawkins bursts through the curtain, full of energy, dressed in blue, white, and gold. He runs to the edge of the stage, arms out wide, soaking in the reaction from the Brazilian crowd.

Savior points out toward the fans, then plants his feet.

He draws back an invisible bow.

Savior Hawkins: SHOWTIME!

The crowd shouts it with him as another flash of gold sparks frames him on the stage.

John Phillips: Savior Hawkins picked up a big win in Puerto Rico against Jacoby Jacobs, and now he tries to follow that up here tonight against Kaine.

Mark Bravo: That is the important part. One win is great. Two wins starts to become momentum. But Kaine is the kind of opponent who can stop momentum cold if Savior gets careless.

Savior starts down the ramp, moving fast, tagging hands along the aisle as the fans reach over the barricade. He hops up briefly onto the barricade on one side, leaning into the front row as the crowd roars around him.

He taps his chest once, then points across the building before jumping back down and continuing toward the ring.

John Phillips: Savior has said he is not what's new, he is what's next. Tonight is another chance to prove that is more than just a phrase.

Mark Bravo: And against Kaine, he better prove it with focus. All the energy, all the connection with the crowd, all the confidence in the world means nothing if Kaine turns this into his kind of fight.

Savior circles around ringside, giving the fans one more burst of attention before turning sharply toward the ring. He sprints forward, slides under the bottom rope, and pops quickly to his feet.

The music swells again as Savior climbs the nearest turnbuckle.

He stands tall above the crowd, the lights flashing white and gold behind him. Once again, he pulls back the invisible arrow, holding the pose for a beat as the fans cheer.

John Phillips: Savior Hawkins looks ready, but you can see it on his face now. The smile is gone. The focus is here.

Savior drops down from the turnbuckle and moves into his corner.

The showmanship fades.

He begins bouncing lightly on the balls of his feet, hands raised, shoulders loose, eyes locked on the entrance way. The energy that brought him to the ring tightens into something sharper.

Mark Bravo: That is what I like right there. He knows the party is over. Kaine is coming, and Savior Hawkins is going to need every bit of that focus tonight.

Savior rolls his neck once, takes a controlled breath, and waits.

Savior Hawkins continues to pace in his corner, eyes fixed on the stage.

The white and gold lights fade.

The energy in Farmasi Arena shifts.

A low distortion growls through the speakers.

Then the arena drops into a blood-red glow.

The opening of "Dead Bite" by Hollywood Undead hits, and smoke begins to pour across the stage.

John Phillips: And here comes Kaine.

Mark Bravo: You feel the room change when this man walks out. Savior Hawkins came out here with light, energy, and fire. Kaine brings something else entirely.

Through the smoke, Kaine crawls out onto the stage, low to the ground, skeletal face paint glowing under the lights. He stays there for a moment, almost motionless, before slowly pushing himself up to one knee.

The camera gets close as Kaine's eyes lift toward the ring.

Toward Savior.

Then Kaine rises.

John Phillips: Kaine is a cult hero of the East Coast indies, a man who has built his name on chaos, pain tolerance, and the ability to keep getting up when most people would stay down.

Mark Bravo: That is what makes him dangerous. You can hit Kaine. You can hurt Kaine. But stopping him is another thing completely.

Kaine begins the walk down the ramp, slow and deliberate. He does not slap hands. He does not play to the crowd in the normal way. He stalks forward beneath the red lights as the smoke trails behind him.

Savior watches from the ring, his bouncing footwork slowing for half a second as he studies the man coming toward him.

John Phillips: This is going to be a very different test for Savior Hawkins. Kaine is not flashy for the sake of flash. He is reckless, resilient, and he thrives when things get ugly.

Mark Bravo: Savior wants this to be sharp. Clean. Technical. Momentum-based. Kaine wants to drag him into the kind of fight where every exchange feels like it costs something.

Kaine reaches ringside and stops at the bottom of the ramp.

He looks up at Savior.

Then he throws his head back.

Kaine: DEAD BUT ALIVE!

The shout cuts through the arena as the crowd responds with a loud reaction, some cheering, some unsettled by the intensity.

Kaine slides under the bottom rope and into the ring.

He rises slowly, never taking his eyes off Savior Hawkins.

The referee steps between them as Savior moves out of his corner, calm but focused. Kaine tilts his head, a faint grin cutting through the skeletal paint.

John Phillips: Two very different kinds of intensity in that ring right now.

Mark Bravo: Savior Hawkins wants to prove he is what's next. Kaine wants to prove that next still has to survive right now.

Kaine backs into his corner as the music fades.

The red lights lift.

The bell is coming.

The referee checks with Savior Hawkins.

Savior nods.

The referee turns to Kaine.

Kaine does not nod.

He just stares through Savior from across the ring, skeletal paint still glowing under the arena lights.

John Phillips: There is the bell, and we are underway. Savior Hawkins against Kaine here in Rio de Janeiro.

Mark Bravo: This is exactly the kind of match Savior needs if he wants to build real momentum. Not easy. Not clean. Not against someone who is going to give him anything.

Savior steps out of his corner first, hands raised, light on his feet. Kaine leaves his corner slower, shoulders loose, head tilted slightly as he watches Hawkins move.

The two circle.

Savior feints a step in.

Kaine does not bite.

Savior shifts to the side, looking for an angle. Kaine tracks him, cutting off the space without rushing.

John Phillips: Savior is going to want to use that movement early. Kaine is not someone you want to stand still in front of.

Mark Bravo: No, because Kaine is comfortable when things get ugly. Savior needs pace. He needs rhythm. He needs to make Kaine react instead of letting Kaine drag him into the mud.

Savior steps in and reaches for a collar-and-elbow tie-up, but Kaine shoves him backward before it can settle. Hawkins rolls with the force, catching himself near the ropes.

Kaine grins faintly.

Savior nods once, more focused than frustrated.

They come together again.

This time Savior ducks under Kaine's reach, slips behind him, and catches a quick waistlock. Kaine immediately throws a back elbow, but Savior releases and pivots away before it connects.

Kaine turns.

Savior catches him with a sharp kick to the thigh.

Another.

Then a quick forearm across the jaw.

John Phillips: Hawkins using speed early, picking his shots.

Savior hits the ropes and comes back fast.

Kaine steps forward and blasts him with a pump kick.

Savior hits the mat hard.

Mark Bravo: And that is what happens when Kaine times you.

Kaine does not go for a cover.

He looks down at Savior, then drops hard with a running senton across the chest.

Savior folds from the impact, rolling slightly onto his side as the crowd reacts.

John Phillips: Heavy impact from Kaine, and just like that Savior Hawkins is on the defensive.

Mark Bravo: Kaine is not wasting motion. He is not trying to out-wrestle Savior. He is trying to make every breath hurt.

Kaine grabs Savior by the arm and pulls him up. Hawkins fires a quick shot to the body. Then another.

Kaine absorbs both.

Savior throws a forearm.

Kaine answers with one of his own that knocks Hawkins back into the corner.

Kaine charges.

Savior slips out of the way at the last second, causing Kaine to hit chest-first into the turnbuckles.

Hawkins immediately hooks him from behind and snaps him backward with a quick suplex variation, floating through to a cover.

John Phillips: Savior with the first cover of the match!

Referee: One!

Kaine kicks out with force before the two count, throwing Savior off him.

Mark Bravo: Not even close, but smart by Savior. Make Kaine spend energy. Make him kick out. Do not let him just enjoy the punishment.

Savior gets back to his feet first, already moving. Kaine rises to one knee, and Hawkins catches him with a flying forearm that rocks him backward.

Kaine does not go down.

Savior hits the ropes again.

A second flying forearm lands.

Kaine staggers this time, one hand reaching for the ropes.

The crowd begins to build with Savior.

John Phillips: Hawkins starting to build momentum!

Savior points toward the opposite ropes and takes off again.

He comes back looking for the third forearm, but Kaine suddenly surges forward and catches him mid-motion, driving a knee into the ribs.

The air leaves Savior's body as he drops to the mat.

Kaine grabs him by the head and drags him toward the center of the ring.

Mark Bravo: That is the problem. Savior gets the people behind him, he starts to feel that surge, and Kaine is right there to turn the lights out.

Kaine kneels over Savior, grabbing him by the jaw and forcing him to look up.

Kaine: Pain is proof.

Kaine pulls Savior up and whips him hard into the corner.

Savior hits back-first against the turnbuckles.

Kaine backs up.

Then charges across the ring.

He launches himself into the corner with a diving cannonball, crushing Savior against the buckles.

Hawkins collapses forward to the mat as Kaine rolls backward and rises to his knees, screaming out to the crowd.

Kaine: DEAD BUT ALIVE!

The Rio crowd responds loudly as Savior rolls toward the ropes, clutching his ribs and trying to pull himself back up.

John Phillips: Kaine has taken control, and Savior Hawkins is finding out exactly how tough The Revenant can be.

Mark Bravo: This is where Hawkins has to be careful. This cannot become about pride. He cannot just keep throwing himself into Kaine and hoping heart wins the exchange. He needs to think his way back into this.

Kaine stalks toward Savior as Hawkins grabs the middle rope, breathing hard, eyes narrowing as he tries to steady himself.

Savior gets one foot under him, still holding the middle rope.

Kaine reaches down and grabs him by the hair, pulling him away from the ropes before the referee steps in and warns him.

Referee: Watch the hair, Kaine!

Kaine releases just enough to avoid the count, then drives a hard forearm across Savior's upper back.

Savior drops to one knee.

Another forearm lands.

Then another.

John Phillips: Kaine is just hammering away at Savior Hawkins now.

Mark Bravo: This is where Kaine is comfortable. He does not need this to be pretty. He does not need it to be technical. He wants to make Savior question whether he really wants to keep moving forward.

Kaine pulls Savior up and sends him into the ropes.

Savior comes back and Kaine lowers his head, looking to send him over.

But Hawkins sees it coming.

He plants his feet, stops short, and snaps a kick up into Kaine's chest.

Kaine stumbles back a step.

Savior follows with a quick forearm.

Then another.

Kaine answers with a sudden shot to the ribs, cutting Savior off again.

Hawkins doubles over, and Kaine grabs him around the waist.

John Phillips: Kaine looking for something big here.

Kaine lifts for a snap dragon suplex, but Savior twists in the air, lands awkwardly on one knee, and scrambles forward before Kaine can fully connect.

The landing jars him.

For a split second, Savior's hand goes toward the leg.

Then he forces it away.

Mark Bravo: There was a little hesitation there from Savior.

John Phillips: We saw Jacoby Jacobs target the leg back in Puerto Rico. Savior said he was fine afterward, but moments like that make you wonder.

Kaine notices it.

His head tilts.

Savior sees him seeing it.

The expression on Hawkins' face changes instantly.

Not pain.

Not fear.

Something sharper.

Annoyance.

John Phillips: Savior did not like Kaine noticing that at all.

Kaine steps forward, but Savior beats him to the strike, catching him with a fast kick to the side of the head.

Kaine drops to one knee.

Savior explodes forward with a flying forearm.

This one finally knocks Kaine flat.

The crowd comes alive as Savior pushes back to his feet, breathing hard, shaking out the leg once before forcing himself into motion.

Mark Bravo: That might have woken something up in Hawkins.

John Phillips: Savior trying to build now!

Kaine rises near the ropes.

Savior charges and connects with another flying forearm, knocking Kaine back against the cables.

Hawkins grabs the wrist and sends Kaine across the ring.

Kaine rebounds.

Savior drops down.

Kaine steps over.

Savior pops up as Kaine hits the opposite side and leaps, catching him with a beautiful dropkick that sends The Revenant rolling toward the corner.

John Phillips: Great elevation from Hawkins!

Savior is back up quickly now.

He runs in and lands a sharp forearm to Kaine in the corner.

Another.

Then he backs up, sprints forward, and drives a knee into Kaine's chest.

Kaine staggers out of the corner.

Savior hits the ropes.

He comes back and catches Kaine with the final flying forearm, rolling through on impact as Kaine hits the mat.

John Phillips: Divine Blitz may be starting to come together here!

Mark Bravo: Savior did not get all of it the way he wanted, but he got enough to change the match.

Savior scrambles into the cover, hooking the near leg.

Referee: One!

Referee: Two!

Kaine kicks out.

Savior rolls to his knees, nodding to himself.

No frustration yet.

Just focus.

John Phillips: Two count only, but Savior Hawkins has found a way back into this.

Mark Bravo: And that is what he had to do. Not panic. Not get dragged all the way into Kaine's fight. Find the opening, change the pace, and make Kaine deal with him.

Savior pulls Kaine up, but Kaine suddenly drives his shoulder into Savior's midsection and forces him backward into the corner.

The air leaves Hawkins again.

Kaine backs up and throws a heavy chop across Savior's chest.

The sound cracks through the arena.

Savior absorbs it, jaw tightening.

Kaine throws another.

Savior grabs the top rope with both hands, refusing to drop.

Kaine smiles through the pain.

Kaine: Still alive?

Savior lifts his eyes.

Savior Hawkins: Still next.

The crowd pops.

Savior fires a forearm.

Kaine fires one back.

Savior hits another.

Kaine answers again.

The two begin trading shots in the corner, the crowd rising with every strike.

John Phillips: Hawkins and Kaine trading now!

Mark Bravo: This is dangerous for Savior. He can win a fight, but Kaine lives for this kind of exchange.

Kaine gets the better of it with a hard headbutt that sends Savior slumping back against the turnbuckles.

Kaine steps back.

He charges.

Savior suddenly moves.

Kaine hits the corner hard.

Savior grabs him from behind and pulls him down into a quick roll-up.

Referee: One!

Referee: Two!

Kaine kicks out again.

Both men scramble up.

Kaine swings for a clothesline.

Savior ducks under it, hits the ropes, and comes back looking for another strike.

Kaine catches him with a flying knee strike.

Savior collapses to the mat.

John Phillips: Oh! Kaine caught him clean!

Kaine drops into the cover.

Referee: One!

Referee: Two!

Savior kicks out.

Mark Bravo: That was close, Johnny. That knee could have ended this thing right there.

Kaine sits up first, breathing heavily now.

He looks at Savior.

Savior rolls onto his side, blinking hard, trying to pull himself back into the match.

Kaine slowly rises.

Then he turns toward the corner.

John Phillips: Kaine may be thinking about putting this away.

Mark Bravo: Savior has to move. Whatever is left in the tank, he needs it now.

Kaine climbs through the ropes and starts up the turnbuckles, the red tint from the arena lights catching the skeletal paint across his face.

Savior pushes to one knee in the center of the ring.

Kaine stands on the second rope, looking down at him.

Then he climbs higher.

The crowd rises as Kaine steadies himself up top.

Kaine: DEAD BUT ALIVE!

Savior's eyes snap open.

Kaine launches.

Savior rolls out of the way at the last possible second.

Kaine crashes hard into the canvas as the crowd erupts.

John Phillips: Nobody home!

Mark Bravo: That was instinct from Savior Hawkins. Pure instinct.

Both men are down.

The referee checks on Kaine, then turns toward Savior as Hawkins rolls onto his back, chest rising and falling fast.

The crowd begins to clap.

Slow at first.

Then louder.

Savior hears it.

His hand reaches toward the mat.

He pushes himself up.

John Phillips: Farmasi Arena is trying to will Savior Hawkins back to his feet.

Mark Bravo: He has got an opening now. The question is whether he has enough left to use it.

Savior gets to one knee.

Across from him, Kaine is already stirring.

Of course he is.

John Phillips: Kaine missed big, but look at him. He is already trying to get back up.

Mark Bravo: That is why they call him The Revenant. You think you have the opening, and then the man starts rising again.

Savior pulls himself up using the ropes. His breathing is heavy, but his eyes are locked on Kaine.

Kaine pushes to his knees.

Savior steps forward.

Kaine suddenly grabs him around the waist and tries to pull him in, but Savior plants his feet and fires two sharp elbows down across the back of Kaine's head.

Kaine releases.

Savior backs up, hits the ropes, and comes flying forward with a forearm that catches Kaine under the jaw.

Kaine rocks backward but stays on one knee.

Savior turns and hits the ropes again.

A second flying forearm connects.

Kaine drops to both hands, shaking his head.

John Phillips: Savior Hawkins building again!

The crowd rises with him.

Savior points to the ropes one more time, then takes off.

He comes back fast.

Kaine surges up and swings wildly.

Savior ducks beneath the shot, keeps moving, rebounds again, and launches into the third flying forearm, driving Kaine flat to the canvas.

Mark Bravo: There it is! That time he got all of it!

Savior rolls through on impact and pops back up, the adrenaline taking over.

Kaine crawls toward the ropes, trying to pull himself up.

Savior measures him from the center of the ring.

Kaine reaches the ropes and uses them to get back to his feet.

Savior charges.

Kaine throws another pump kick.

Savior sidesteps it, catches Kaine from the side, and snaps him over with a quick exploder suplex.

Kaine hits the mat hard and rolls toward the corner.

John Phillips: Exploder by Hawkins! Kaine is in trouble!

Mark Bravo: Savior is making the adjustment now. He is not standing in front of Kaine anymore. He is hitting, moving, and changing levels.

Savior does not cover.

Instead, he sees Kaine in the corner and takes a breath.

He charges forward.

Kaine gets both boots up.

Savior catches them.

For half a second, Kaine's eyes widen.

Savior throws the legs aside and blasts him with a knee strike to the chest.

Kaine staggers out of the corner, doubled over.

Savior hooks him.

John Phillips: Savior has him hooked!

Hawkins lifts, turns, and drives Kaine down with Bitter Consequences.

The crowd pops as Savior rolls him over and hooks the leg.

Referee: One!

Referee: Two!

Kaine kicks out.

John Phillips: Kaine kicks out again!

Mark Bravo: That was a good win right there if it was anybody else. But Kaine is not anybody else.

Savior sits up, breathing hard.

There is a flash of disbelief on his face, but it does not last long.

He pushes it down.

Forward.

Always forward.

Savior gets to his feet and looks out to the crowd.

The fans feel it coming.

John Phillips: Savior Hawkins may be thinking Showtime.

Mark Bravo: This is the signal. This is where everybody in the building knows what he wants.

Savior steps back toward the corner.

Kaine is on hands and knees, trying to rise.

Savior raises his arm.

He pulls back the invisible arrow.

The crowd rises with him.

Savior Hawkins: SHOWTIME!

Savior charges.

Kaine collapses forward at the last possible second, and Savior's boot cuts through empty air.

The missed momentum sends Savior into the ropes.

He turns back—

Kaine explodes upward with a springboard cutter.

John Phillips: Cutter! Kaine caught him!

Savior hits the mat hard.

Kaine rolls over and drapes an arm across him.

Referee: One!

Referee: Two!

Savior kicks out.

The crowd erupts.

Mark Bravo: Savior Hawkins got out, but that was close. That was real close.

Kaine rolls onto his back, laughing through the pain.

It is not loud.

It is not sane.

But it is there.

John Phillips: Both men have taken big shots now. Savior went for the kill, Kaine had it scouted, and now this match is still alive.

Kaine slowly turns over and pushes himself up.

Savior does the same.

Both men are on their knees in the center of the ring.

Kaine strikes first with a forearm.

Savior answers.

Kaine hits another.

Savior fires back again.

The crowd grows louder with every exchange.

John Phillips: Back and forth in the center of the ring!

Kaine gets to one foot and cracks Savior with another shot.

Savior rises and answers with a forearm of his own.

Kaine swings wider this time.

Savior ducks under, slips behind him, and locks both hands around the waist.

Mark Bravo: Savior is behind him!

Kaine throws a back elbow.

Savior avoids it, keeps the grip, and muscles Kaine up just enough to drive him backward with a release German suplex.

Kaine lands hard but rolls through to a knee, refusing to stay down.

Savior sees him rising and shakes his head, almost impressed despite himself.

John Phillips: Kaine still trying to get up!

Mark Bravo: That is what Savior has to solve. He has hit Kaine with real offense, and Kaine keeps coming.

Kaine pushes to his feet and stumbles forward.

Savior catches him with a sharp kick to the midsection.

Then another.

Then he grabs Kaine by the wrist and pulls him in close.

Savior's eyes lift toward the crowd.

For a second, it looks like he is thinking about Invictus.

He starts to lift Kaine.

But Kaine slips down behind him.

Kaine locks an arm around Savior's neck and drags him backward.

John Phillips: Kaine looking for Soul Reaper!

Savior immediately fights the hands, twisting his body before Kaine can fully trap the wrist.

Kaine tries to sink lower.

Savior kicks off the mat, rolls his weight forward, and stacks Kaine's shoulders down.

Referee: One!

Referee: Two!

Kaine kicks out and both men scramble apart.

Mark Bravo: Great escape by Hawkins. If Kaine gets that thing fully locked in, this match changes fast.

Savior gets up near the ropes.

Kaine charges.

Savior lowers the top rope.

Kaine tumbles over, lands on the apron, and catches himself.

Savior turns around—

Kaine snaps a knee through the ropes into Savior's head.

Hawkins staggers backward.

Kaine grips the ropes, looking for a springboard back in.

He launches.

Savior catches him out of the air with a superkick.

Kaine crumples to the mat.

John Phillips: Savior caught him! Savior caught him clean!

The crowd explodes as Savior stumbles back into the corner, shaking out the cobwebs.

Kaine is down.

Savior looks at him.

Then to the crowd.

Then back to Kaine.

Mark Bravo: This is it. This is the opening.

Savior steps forward, slower this time.

He does not rush.

He waits for Kaine to pull himself up.

The crowd rises with him again.

Savior pulls back the invisible arrow.

Savior Hawkins: SHOWTIME!

Kaine gets to his knees.

Savior charges.

Kaine starts to move.

But Savior adjusts mid-step.

He cuts the angle.

And blasts Kaine square with Showtime.

John Phillips: Showtime connects!

Kaine drops flat.

Savior falls into the cover, hooking both legs.

Referee: One!

Referee: Two!

Referee: Three!

The bell rings as the crowd erupts.

John Phillips: Savior Hawkins does it! Hawkins picks up the win over Kaine!

Mark Bravo: That was not easy, Johnny. Kaine made him earn every inch of that one, but Savior Hawkins adjusted, he stayed composed, and he got the job done.

Savior rolls off Kaine and sits on the mat for a moment, breathing heavily.

The referee raises his arm as "Healing Pool" begins to play again.

John Phillips: Two singles matches. Two wins. Savior Hawkins continues to move forward here in UTA.

Mark Bravo: And that is the key word. Forward. He had moments in this match where Kaine could have pulled him into frustration, but Savior kept moving and found the finish.

Savior rises to his feet, still feeling the effects of the match. He looks down at Kaine, who rolls slowly toward the ropes, already trying to sit up.

For a moment, Savior gives him a small nod of respect.

Then he turns toward the crowd and raises both arms as Farmasi Arena cheers.

John Phillips: A strong win for Savior Hawkins tonight in Brazil.

Mark Bravo: Kaine is tough. Kaine is resilient. But tonight, Savior Hawkins was just a step ahead when it mattered most.

Savior climbs the turnbuckle, points out to the Brazilian crowd, and taps his chest once before pulling back the invisible arrow one more time.

The fans roar as the camera cuts to Kaine on the outside, leaning against the barricade, glaring back toward the ring.

Savior remains on the ropes, breathing hard but smiling now, the victory secured.

Champion's Complaint

Segment

The camera cuts backstage to the office of Scott Stevens.

Stevens stands behind his desk, phone in one hand, papers spread out in front of him, looking very much like a man trying to keep a live wrestling show from bursting into flames before the main event.

He lowers the phone from his ear, exhales, and reaches for one of the papers.

Before he can read it, the door swings open.

Maxwell Jett storms in.

The UTA Championship is over his shoulder.

The expression on his face is somewhere between outrage, disbelief, and the kind of personal insult usually reserved for bad hotel towels.

Scott Stevens: You ever knock?

Maxwell Jett: Champions don't knock, Scott. People knock for champions.

Stevens stares at him.

Scott Stevens: What do you want, Max?

Maxwell steps deeper into the office, adjusting the title on his shoulder as if Stevens has offended the belt by association.

Maxwell Jett: What do I want?

He laughs once.

Maxwell Jett: I want to know why I am defending the UTA Championship tonight against Mike Best.

Scott Stevens: Because you're the UTA Champion.

Maxwell blinks.

Maxwell Jett: That's your answer?

Scott Stevens: That's the answer.

Maxwell Jett: No, no, no. See, that's not an answer. That's a bumper sticker. That's what you say when you don't have an actual explanation prepared for the most important man in your company.

Stevens sets the papers down and folds his arms.

Scott Stevens: The champion is expected to defend his title.

Maxwell Jett: Against people who have earned it.

Maxwell taps the faceplate of the championship.

Maxwell Jett: Not against people who show up, say a few magic words, and get handed a main event because everyone in the building gets sentimental every time they hear a famous last name.

Scott Stevens: Mike Best didn't get handed anything.

Maxwell Jett: He's been here for about five minutes, Scott.

Scott Stevens: Maybe in UTA.

Stevens steps around the desk now, his tone sharpening.

Scott Stevens: But believe me, Mike Best has earned this shot with the blood, sweat, and tears he's put into this business.

Maxwell rolls his eyes.

Maxwell Jett: Oh, spare me the Hallmark documentary.

Scott Stevens: I'm serious.

Maxwell Jett: Of course you are. That's the problem. Everybody around here gets very serious when it comes time to give somebody else a shot at my championship.

Maxwell starts pacing in front of the desk.

Maxwell Jett: Do you understand what my life is right now?

Scott Stevens: Expensive?

Maxwell Jett: Dangerous, Scott.

He points toward the hallway.

Maxwell Jett: I have people like Mike Best, who have not earned anything in this company, suddenly gunning for me.

He points to himself, almost offended by the concept of being challenged.

Maxwell Jett: And then I have people like Chris Ross, a deranged lunatic, attacking me in my hotel.

Stevens' expression tightens at the mention of Ross.

Maxwell Jett: Do you know how hard it is to find peace when a man who looks like he sleeps in a police report is trying to turn every room I enter into a crime scene?

Scott Stevens: I already took care of Chris.

Maxwell stops pacing.

Maxwell Jett: You took care of Chris.

Scott Stevens: Yes.

Maxwell Jett: That sentence does not fill me with the confidence you seem to think it should.

Stevens takes a breath, trying not to lose his patience.

Scott Stevens: I personally called Chris Ross this morning.

Maxwell stares at him.

Maxwell Jett: Congratulations on using a phone.

Scott Stevens: And I told him directly that he is barred from the building tonight.

Maxwell's face shifts, but only slightly.

Not relief.

More like suspicion wearing designer clothes.

Maxwell Jett: Barred.

Scott Stevens: Barred.

Maxwell Jett: From the building.

Scott Stevens: From the building.

Maxwell Jett: And you believe that works on Chris Ross?

Scott Stevens: Security has been told. Production has been told. If Chris Ross shows up tonight, he will not get inside.

Maxwell looks toward the office door, then back to Stevens.

Maxwell Jett: Scott, respectfully, and I mean that in the loosest legal sense of the word, Chris Ross does not strike me

as a man who hears “barred from the building” and says, “You know what? Fair enough.”

Scott Stevens: He won't be here.

Maxwell Jett: Great. So my choices are either defend my championship against Mike Best, a man you apparently think is owed the world because he bled in other companies, or trust that Chris Ross suddenly developed respect for administrative policy.

Maxwell gives a slow, sarcastic nod.

Maxwell Jett: Wonderful. Fantastic. Very reassuring. Truly, I feel held.

Stevens steps closer.

Scott Stevens: Max, I'm going to make this very simple.

Maxwell raises his eyebrows.

Scott Stevens: You are the UTA Champion.

Scott Stevens: Mike Best is your challenger tonight.

Scott Stevens: Chris Ross is barred from the building.

Scott Stevens: And you should probably be preparing for your match instead of standing in my office complaining about it.

Maxwell looks offended.

Maxwell Jett: Complaining?

Scott Stevens: Complaining.

Maxwell Jett: I am not complaining. I am raising concerns as the company's most valuable asset.

Scott Stevens: Then your concerns have been heard.

Stevens gestures toward the door.

Scott Stevens: Go get ready.

Maxwell stands there for a beat, jaw tight, the championship still gleaming over his shoulder.

He wants another line.

He wants another angle.

He wants one more way to make this someone else's problem.

But Stevens is not giving it to him.

Maxwell Jett: Fine.

Maxwell adjusts the title again, smoothing one hand across the faceplate.

Maxwell Jett: But when I go out there tonight and defend this championship under protest, I want that documented.

Scott Stevens: Duly noted.

Maxwell Jett: And when I embarrass Mike Best, I want you to remember this conversation.

Scott Stevens: I'm sure you'll remind me.

Maxwell points at Stevens with two fingers, then turns toward the door.

Maxwell Jett: You know, for someone who claims to understand greatness, you have a very irritating habit of putting greatness in unnecessary danger.

Scott Stevens: Max.

Maxwell pauses at the door.

Scott Stevens: Get out of my office.

Maxwell gives him a tight smile.

Maxwell Jett: There it is. Leadership.

He opens the door and steps out into the hallway, the UTA Championship still over his shoulder.

Stevens watches him leave, then looks down at the papers on his desk.

He exhales again, heavier this time.

Scott Stevens: One normal night.

He shakes his head.

Scott Stevens: Just one.

The camera holds on Stevens for a moment before fading out.

You Earned It

Segment

Backstage.

The camera finds Bobby Dean sitting proudly atop his refurbished mobility scooter.

The UTA International Championship rests across his lap.

He is polishing it with a small cloth.

Very carefully.

Almost lovingly.

Bobby Dean: You keep shinin', buddy.

The scooter squeaks.

Bobby pats the handlebar.

Bobby Dean: You too.

Suddenly—

Mikey Unlikely bursts into frame.

Not walks.

Bursts.

Arms wide.

WrestleZone Championship over one shoulder.

Designer sunglasses.

Perfect suit.

Enough energy for three human beings.

Mikey Unlikely: THERE HE IS!

Bobby nearly jumps.

Mikey Unlikely: The International Champion himself! The Sultan of Survival! The Duke of Dumb Luck! The King of London!

Bobby blinks.

Bobby Dean: I thought kings had crowns.

Mikey points dramatically.

Mikey Unlikely: AND humility! Folks, that's why America loves him!

Bobby looks around.

Bobby Dean: Are folks here?

Mikey ignores the question completely.

Mikey Unlikely: Bobby Dean, my dear sweet friend, why—WHY—

He throws both hands into the air.

Mikey Unlikely: Is your championship sitting on your lap like you're taking it to get an oil change?!

Bobby looks down.

Bobby Dean: I don't want it fallin'.

Mikey clutches his chest.

Mikey Unlikely: Listen to this. Listen. The man survives sixty-nine competitors—

He pauses.

Looks at Bobby.

Mikey Unlikely: Yes, Bobby, I included myself again. You're welcome.

Bobby smiles.

Bobby Dean: Appreciate that.

Mikey continues without missing a beat.

Mikey Unlikely: Wins the International Championship on the grandest stage imaginable...

He gestures dramatically.

Mikey Unlikely: And now carries it like somebody loaned him a casserole dish!

Bobby considers that.

Bobby Dean: My aunt never got her casserole dish back.

Mikey removes his sunglasses.

Slowly.

Mikey Unlikely: Every conversation with you is an adventure.

Before Bobby can answer—

Eric Dane Jr.: More like a tragedy.
The atmosphere changes.
Junior steps into frame.
Expensive.
Perfect.
The contract already in his hand.
Mikey sees it and groans audibly.
Mikey Unlikely: OH, FANTASTIC.
He throws his arms wide.
Mikey Unlikely: The Human Resources department has arrived.
Eric ignores him.
Eric Dane Jr.: Bobby.
Bobby Dean: Hey, Eric.
Eric Dane Jr.: Do you honestly believe you belong here?
Bobby thinks.
Actually thinks.
Bobby Dean: Well...
Long pause.
Bobby Dean: They gave me a locker.
Mikey bursts into laughter.
Mikey Unlikely: HE'S GOT YOU THERE, KID!
Eric's expression doesn't change.
Eric Dane Jr.: You know what I mean.
He points at the title.
Eric Dane Jr.: Champions like him earn greatness.
He gestures toward Mikey.
Eric Dane Jr.: People like me are born into expectations.
Then Bobby.
Eric Dane Jr.: People like you get lucky.
Silence.
Bobby looks down.
Eric softens his tone.
Almost sympathetic.

Eric Dane Jr.: And that's okay.

Mikey immediately stops smiling.

Because he knows exactly what Junior is doing.

Eric Dane Jr.: Not everyone is supposed to stand at the top.

He unfolds the contract.

Eric Dane Jr.: Sooner or later, I cash this in.

He taps the paper.

Eric Dane Jr.: Maybe for his title.

He points to Mikey.

Eric Dane Jr.: Maybe for yours.

Bobby stares at the contract.

Eric notices.

Eric Dane Jr.: So here's my advice.

He steps closer.

Eric Dane Jr.: When that day comes...

Beat.

Eric Dane Jr.: Hand me the championship.

Bobby blinks.

Bobby Dean: Do I hand it face first or sideways?

Eric almost smiles.

Mikey explodes.

Mikey Unlikely: BOBBY!

Bobby turns.

Bobby Dean: What?!

Mikey Unlikely: THE ANSWER IS NEITHER!

Bobby Dean: I was just askin'!

Eric chuckles.

Eric Dane Jr.: See? He understands.

Mikey straightens his jacket.

Smiles.

The dangerous Mikey smile.

Mikey Unlikely: Junior.

Eric looks at him.

Mikey Unlikely: Do you know the difference between you and me?

Eric Dane Jr.: Enlighten me.

Mikey places a hand against his own chest.

Mikey Unlikely: I became famous.

He points at Eric.

Mikey Unlikely: You inherited a mailing address.

The crowd watching erupts.

Mikey keeps going.

Mikey Unlikely: I sold merch. I made movies. I rose to the top.

He points at the contract.

Mikey Unlikely: You carry paperwork like it's an emotional support animal.

Another huge reaction.

Junior's jaw tightens.

Mikey steps beside Bobby.

Mikey Unlikely: And this man?

He pats the International Championship.

Mikey Unlikely: This beautiful, confused, casserole-protecting human being?

Bobby smiles.

Mikey Unlikely: He walked into London with absolutely nobody believing in him...

Beat.

Mikey points at Bobby.

Mikey Unlikely: INCLUDING HIMSELF.

Bobby nods.

Bobby Dean: That's true.

Mikey spins back toward Junior.

Mikey Unlikely: And he STILL walked out with more championship gold than you!

The crowd explodes.

Eric folds the contract.

Eric Dane Jr.: Enjoy your little comedy act.

Mikey grins.

Mikey Unlikely: Buddy, if I wanted comedy, I'd ask how many lawyers helped you dress this morning.

Junior glares.

Then leaves.

Silence.

Bobby watches him go.

Bobby Dean: He still might want my title.

Mikey throws an arm around Bobby's shoulders.

Mikey Unlikely: Of course he does!

He gestures dramatically.

Mikey Unlikely: EVERYBODY wants championships!

He lifts his own.

Mikey Unlikely: People have wanted this beautiful piece of gold since the moment I touched it.

Beat.

Mikey lowers his voice.

More sincere.

Mikey Unlikely: The question isn't whether he wants it.

He taps Bobby's championship.

Mikey Unlikely: The question is whether you finally understand that you earned it.

Bobby is quiet.

Bobby Dean: I think I'm tryin'.

Mikey smiles.

Bright.

Warm.

Still larger than life.

Mikey Unlikely: Baby, that's all any of us are doing.

The scooter suddenly—

HONK.

Mikey points immediately.

Mikey Unlikely: SEE?!

He looks straight into the camera.

Mikey Unlikely: Even the vehicle believes in the power of positive self-image.

Fade out.

You Wanted Pain?

Segment

The broadcast cuts backstage.

Not to the normal interview area.

Not to the UTA backdrop.

The camera opens inside the loading dock of Farmasi Arena in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Concrete walls. Exposed pipes. Harsh overhead lights. Black road cases are stacked against one wall, their metal edges scratched and worn from years of travel. A forklift sits silent in the background. Somewhere beyond the closed loading doors, the low sound of traffic hums beneath the distant roar of the crowd inside the arena.

Emily Hightower stands in the middle of it.

The UTA Women's Championship rests over one shoulder. The UTA Hardcore Championship rests over the other.

She looks comfortable here.

David Hightower stands beside her, calm and still, eyes forward. Buck Hightower leans against a concrete support column with his arms crossed, jaw tight, looking like he has been waiting all night for someone to give him a reason. Dakota Hightower stands near the stacked production cases, quieter than the rest, watching everything.

Melissa Cartwright stands a few feet away, microphone in hand.

She does not look quite as comfortable as she does in the regular interview area.

John Phillips: We are backstage inside Farmasi Arena in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, where Emily Hightower requested time before Sol Azteca's match later tonight.

Mark Bravo: Of course she did. Emily does not want the clean interview set this week. She wants concrete, steel, bad lighting, and every reminder that tonight is supposed to hurt.

Melissa lifts the microphone.

Melissa Cartwright: Emily, last week Sol Azteca defeated Selena Vexx for her first victory in UTA. Tonight, she faces Valkyrie Knox in a No Disqualification Match. You asked for this time. What do you have to say?

Emily looks down at the two championships.

Then into the camera.

Emily Hightower: One win.

She lets the words sit in the cold air.

Emily Hightower: That is all it took.

She gives a short, humorless laugh.

Emily Hightower: Sol Azteca wins one match, and suddenly everyone wants to act like the ground moved. Suddenly she proved something. Suddenly these people start chanting louder, the cameras start following closer, and everybody wants to pretend she is one brave little step closer to me.

The crowd can be heard booing from inside the arena.

Emily turns her head slightly toward the sound.

Emily Hightower: Listen to them.

She smiles faintly.

Emily Hightower: They really believe it.

Melissa Cartwright: Sol did what you said she had not done. She won a match.

Emily's smile fades.

Emily Hightower: She beat Selena Vexx.

A beat.

Emily Hightower: Good for her.

She touches the Women's Championship.

Emily Hightower: I am still the UTA Women's Champion.

Then she touches the Hardcore Championship.

Emily Hightower: I am still the UTA Hardcore Champion.

Then she points toward herself.

Emily Hightower: And I am still the woman who choked Sol Azteca unconscious.

The boos grow louder from inside the arena.

Emily lets them come.

Emily Hightower: That is the part everybody keeps trying to decorate. They want to make it poetic. They want to say she survived me. They want to say I could not make her quit. They want to say she did not break.

Emily steps closer to the camera.

Emily Hightower: Fine.

She nods once.

Emily Hightower: Let us talk about that.

David watches her carefully.

Emily Hightower: Sol keeps talking about chains.

She taps the Hardcore Championship with two fingers.

Emily Hightower: Pain.

Another tap.

Emily Hightower: Survival.

Another tap.

Emily Hightower: She keeps telling everyone I could not break her.

Emily looks toward Buck and Dakota, then back to Melissa.

Emily Hightower: So tonight, she gets Valkyrie Knox.

The crowd reacts inside the arena at Valkyrie's name.

Melissa Cartwright: In a No Disqualification Match.

Emily smiles again.

Emily Hightower: Exactly.

Buck pushes off the concrete column, amused now.

Emily Hightower: No disqualifications. No pretty little boundaries. No referee stepping in because someone got thrown into the wrong piece of steel. No clean little wrestling match where Sol can wrap herself in pride and pretend honor is armor.

Melissa Cartwright: Are you saying this match was made because of you?

Emily's eyes narrow.

Emily Hightower: I am saying management likes consequences when they can sell them as opportunity.

She adjusts the Women's Championship higher on her shoulder.

Emily Hightower: Last week was charity.

Her expression hardens.

Emily Hightower: This week is punishment.

The word lands cold.

Dakota glances toward Emily for half a second. Buck smiles like he approves. David remains still.

Melissa Cartwright: Valkyrie Knox is connected to The Empire. After everything that has happened with Marie Van Claudio, Amy Harrison, and Susanita Ybanez, are you concerned that Sol may not just be dealing with Valkyrie tonight?

Emily lets out a small, dismissive sound.

Emily Hightower: Concerned?

She says the word like it does not belong anywhere near her.

Emily Hightower: No.

Emily shifts the UTA Women's Championship higher on her shoulder.

Emily Hightower: Valkyrie Knox represents The Empire. That means she understands something Sol keeps pretending not to understand.

Melissa Cartwright: What is that?

Emily looks directly into the camera.

Emily Hightower: Power does not apologize for being power.

The crowd boos from inside the arena.

Emily does not blink.

Emily Hightower: The Hightowers understand that. The Empire understands that. Sol Azteca is the one still standing in the middle of the ring pretending being alone makes her noble.

Buck speaks from behind her.

Buck Hightower: Being alone just makes you easier to hurt.

Emily's smile returns slightly.

Emily Hightower: Exactly.

Melissa Cartwright: So if The Empire gets involved tonight?

Emily gives a small shrug.

Emily Hightower: Then Sol can learn another lesson.

A beat.

Emily Hightower: Valkyrie has people. Sol has chants.

The boos grow louder.

Emily Hightower: That is not unfair. That is the world.

David's voice comes in quietly beside her.

David Hightower: People call it numbers when they are on the wrong side of them.

Emily nods once, approving.

Emily Hightower: Sol wants to talk about pain. She wants to talk about survival. She wants to talk about how I could not break her.

Emily taps the Hardcore Championship with two fingers.

Emily Hightower: Fine.

She looks into the camera again.

Emily Hightower: Tonight, she gets Valkyrie Knoxx. No disqualifications. No clean little boundaries. No referee saving her from the reality that some women do not come alone.

Melissa Cartwright: You are calling this punishment.

Emily's expression hardens.

Emily Hightower: Because that is what it is.

The word lands cold.

Dakota glances toward Emily again. Buck smiles like he approves. David remains still.

Emily Hightower: Last week was charity.

A beat.

Emily Hightower: This week is punishment.

Melissa Cartwright: Sol said last week that she would take away every excuse.

Emily's jaw tightens.

She heard it.

She hated it.

Emily Hightower: I know what she said.

Emily slowly raises one finger.

Emily Hightower: One.

Then she lowers it.

Emily Hightower: One win does not erase one loss.

David speaks quietly.

David Hightower: Sometimes people confuse movement with progress.

Emily nods without looking away from the camera.

Emily Hightower: Sol moved. That is all. She moved from zero to one. Now everybody wants to pretend one is close to me.

She lifts both championships slightly.

Emily Hightower: It is not.

Melissa Cartwright: You said last week Sol belonged at the bottom of the line. If she beats Valkyrie Knox tonight in No Disqualification, does that change your mind?

Emily looks at Melissa.

The question hangs there.

Buck's eyes shift toward Melissa like he does not appreciate the question even being asked. Dakota watches Emily. David remains calm, but his attention sharpens.

Emily Hightower: No.

The answer is immediate.

Cold.

Emily Hightower: It means Sol Azteca beat Valkyrie Knox.

A beat.

Emily Hightower: That is all.

Melissa Cartwright: Even in No Disqualification?

Emily turns toward her fully now.

Emily Hightower: Especially in No Disqualification.

She taps the Hardcore Championship.

Emily Hightower: Do you know why?

Melissa does not answer.

Emily Hightower: Because everyone wants to turn pain into proof.

She steps closer.

Emily Hightower: Pain is not proof. Pain is just pain. Surviving it does not make you special. It does not make you chosen. It does not make you next in line.

She looks into the camera again.

Emily Hightower: It means you hurt and you kept moving.

Emily's voice lowers.

Emily Hightower: I have done that my whole life.

The boos soften for half a second, not into cheers, but into attention.

Emily does not let the moment become sympathetic.

Emily Hightower: The difference is I kept moving until I had these.

She lifts both titles slightly.

Emily Hightower: Sol keeps moving and expects applause.

The boos return.

Melissa Cartwright: Will you be watching tonight?

Emily looks around the loading area.

Concrete.

Steel.

Crates.

Hard light.

Emily Hightower: Of course.

She looks back at Melissa.

Emily Hightower: I watched last week to see if Sol could win a match.

A beat.

Emily Hightower: Tonight, I am watching to see if she can survive one without pretending survival means she is ready for me.

The crowd boos in the distance.

Emily seems to enjoy the sound.

Emily Hightower: And Sol?

She looks directly into the camera now, speaking to her.

Emily Hightower: You keep bragging that I could not break you.

Her voice lowers.

Emily Hightower: Let's see what somebody else can do.

Buck laughs under his breath.

Buck Hightower: Valkyrie might do us all a favor.

Emily glances toward him.

Emily Hightower: No.

Buck looks at her.

Emily Hightower: She does not need to do me a favor.

Emily's eyes return to the camera.

Emily Hightower: She only needs to remind Sol that not every hard match comes with a moral victory.

Melissa Cartwright: And if Sol wins?

Emily's expression tightens.

Not enough to show fear.

Enough to show annoyance.

Emily Hightower: Then she wins.

Melissa waits.

Emily continues.

Emily Hightower: And then she can stand in the ring, hold up another finger, let Brazil chant for her like that changes anything, and tell herself she is closer than she was.

Emily tilts her head.

Emily Hightower: But I will still have two championships.

She touches the Women's Championship.

Emily Hightower: I will still have one win over her.

She touches the Hardcore Championship.

Emily Hightower: And she will still have to live with the fact that the last time she had me in a fight, she could not answer the referee.

The boos roll through the arena again.

Emily steps closer, nearly filling the frame.

Emily Hightower: This is not a reward, Sol. This is not a ladder. This is not your next brave chapter.

She points toward the concrete floor beneath her.

Emily Hightower: This is where people find out whether one win was a beginning...

Emily pauses.

Emily Hightower: ...or an accident.

Melissa lowers the microphone slightly as Emily turns to leave.

Then Melissa speaks again.

Melissa Cartwright: Emily, one last question.

Emily stops.

David stops with her.

Buck looks irritated. Dakota's eyes move to Melissa.

Melissa Cartwright: You said if The Empire gets involved, Sol can learn another lesson. Are you saying you would allow that to happen?

Emily turns back slowly.

The smile that comes next is thin.

Emily Hightower: Allow?

She looks down at the Women's Championship.

Then at the Hardcore Championship.

Emily Hightower: Melissa, everyone in this division keeps making the same mistake.

She looks into the camera.

Emily Hightower: They think this is about fair.

A beat.

Emily Hightower: It is not.

The crowd boos again.

Emily Hightower: If Valkyrie comes alone, Sol has to beat Valkyrie alone. If The Empire comes with her, then Sol has to survive The Empire too.

Emily steps closer.

Emily Hightower: That is not my problem.

Her eyes harden.

Emily Hightower: That is Sol's problem.

David watches her carefully, almost pleased with the answer.

Emily Hightower: And if Sol wants to keep telling everyone she is ready for me, then she can stop asking the world to make the road clean first.

Melissa Cartwright: So no help from the Hightowers?

Emily's expression sharpens.

Emily Hightower: Sol does not need my help.

A beat.

Emily Hightower: She needs my attention.

She shifts both championships on her shoulders.

Emily Hightower: Tonight, she has it.

Emily turns back toward the exit.

This time, Melissa does not stop her.

David follows beside Emily. Buck walks past the camera next, shoulder nearly brushing it as he goes.

Dakota is last.

She pauses near a monitor where the match graphic has appeared.

NO DISQUALIFICATION MATCH
SOL AZTECA vs. VALKYRIE KNOXX

Dakota watches it for a beat longer than the others.

Then she turns and follows her family.

The broadcast cuts back to ringside.

John Phillips: Emily Hightower calling tonight punishment, not opportunity. And she made something else clear too. If The Empire tries to help Valkyrie Knoxx, Emily is not going to stop it.

Mark Bravo: Emily is treating every obstacle like part of Sol's lesson. Valkyrie, No Disqualification, The Empire, all of it. She wants Sol to prove she can survive the worst version of the match.

John Phillips: Sol Azteca took away the first excuse last week by earning her first UTA win. Tonight, she faces Valkyrie Knoxx with no disqualifications, The Empire looming, and Emily Hightower watching.

Mark Bravo: One win did not impress Emily. Let's see what two would do.

The match graphic fills the screen.

NO DISQUALIFICATION MATCH
SOL AZTECA vs. VALKYRIE KNOXX

Sol Azteca vs. Valkyrie Knox

Match

The broadcast returns to the arena as the match graphic fills the screen.

NO DISQUALIFICATION MATCH
SOL AZTECA vs. VALKYRIE KNOXX

The Rio crowd is already loud beneath the graphic, the kind of restless noise that comes before a match everyone knows could get messy fast.

John Phillips: Welcome back to UTA, streaming live from Farmasi Arena in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, and this next match has become one of the most important moments in Sol Azteca's pursuit of Emily Hightower. Sol picked up her first UTA win last week, and tonight Emily has moved the line again.

Mark Bravo: That is what Emily does. She said one win did not prove anything, so now Sol has to step into No Disqualification against Valkyrie Knox. And Valkyrie does not come with just a reputation. She comes with The Empire behind her.

John Phillips: Sol is healthy, focused, and coming in with momentum. No lingering injuries. No excuses. But No Disqualification changes everything.

Mark Bravo: Exactly. One hundred percent still has to survive steel, numbers, and the kind of fight Valkyrie wants to drag her into.

The graphic fades.

The lights in the arena drop.

A cold blue glow spreads across the stage. Silver cuts through it. Then black.

The opening hit of Valkyrie Knox's music shakes through the building, heavy and ominous. The crowd reacts with a wave of boos and scattered noise, the kind reserved for someone dangerous enough to be respected even while being hated.

Valkyrie Knox steps through the curtain.

She is alone.

For now.

She wears black and silver, wrist tape tight, jaw set. There is no grin on her face and no wasted motion in her entrance. She stops at the top of the ramp, looks out over the arena once, then turns her eyes directly toward the ring.

Ring Announcer: The following contest is a No Disqualification Match scheduled for one fall! Introducing first... representing The Empire... VALKYRIE KNOXX!

The boos grow louder at the mention of The Empire.

Valkyrie starts down the ramp.

John Phillips: Valkyrie Knox has been standing with The Empire through everything involving Marie Van Claudio, Amy Harrison, and Susanita Ybanez. Even when she comes out alone, that association hangs over the match.

Mark Bravo: And in a No Disqualification Match, that matters. The referee can watch all he wants. If The Empire decides to appear, there is not much he can do about it.

Valkyrie reaches ringside and pauses.

She looks beneath the bottom rope, then toward the timekeeper's area, then toward the steel steps. Chairs. Cables. Barricades. Steel. She takes inventory without smiling.

Then she slides into the ring and rises near the ropes.

The lights shift.

Gold burns through the blue.

The Aztec sun appears on the video wall.

The crowd in Rio rises.

Sol Azteca's instrumental music hits, percussion and rhythm rolling through the arena. The reaction comes fast and loud, not quite hometown, but familiar in a different way. She is not Brazilian. She is not in Mexico. But inside Farmasi Arena, there is still a current of Latin American pride running through the noise, and the people understand a fighter being made to prove herself one step at a time.

Sol steps through the curtain.

The cheers grow louder.

She wears a clean, whole mask, bright under the lights. Her shoulders are loose. Her eyes are focused. There is no sign of hesitation, no visible damage left over from anything that came before.

She is ready.

Sol stops at the top of the ramp and looks toward Valkyrie.

Then she looks toward the empty space on the stage where Emily Hightower has made a habit of appearing when Sol is in trouble.

Ring Announcer: And her opponent... from Puebla, Mexico... she is The Aztec Sun... SOL AZTECA!

The Rio crowd pops again.

Fans along the aisle reach for her before she even starts moving.

Crowd: SOL! SOL! SOL!

Sol hears it.

For a second, she lets the sound hit her. Not a smile exactly, but something close enough to show that she feels the crowd behind her.

Then her eyes return to the ring.

Sol starts down the ramp.

She taps hands on both sides as she walks, moving through the noise with purpose. The chants follow her down the aisle, loud enough that the camera catches fans shouting from the barricade in Portuguese and Spanish both, the sound blending into one name.

John Phillips: Listen to this crowd in Rio. Sol Azteca may not be home, but there is something about her that this audience has absolutely connected with.

Mark Bravo: Shared fire, John. Shared rhythm. Shared understanding. They know what it means when someone keeps moving the line on you and expects you to stop climbing.

Sol reaches ringside and pauses near the steel steps.

She looks at the chair folded near the timekeeper.

Then at the barricade.

Then at Valkyrie.

No disqualification.

She knows what Emily called this.

Punishment.

Not opportunity.

Not reward.

A test designed to make one win look like an accident.

Sol climbs the steps and enters the ring.

Valkyrie steps forward.

Sol steps forward too.

The crowd rises with them as the space between both women disappears.

The referee moves between them, making sure both competitors hear him.

Referee: No disqualifications. One fall. Pinfall or submission in the ring. You both understand?

Valkyrie nods once.

Sol nods once.

The referee looks from Valkyrie to Sol, then backs away.

Sol's eyes stay locked on Valkyrie.

Valkyrie's eyes stay locked on Sol.

The Rio crowd keeps chanting.

Crowd: SOL! SOL! SOL!

John Phillips: No disqualification. Sol Azteca. Valkyrie Knox. And no telling who else may become a factor before this is over.

Mark Bravo: One win did not impress Emily Hightower. Let's see what two would do.

The referee calls for the bell.

DING DING DING!

Valkyrie moves first.

She steps into the center and offers the collar-and-elbow tie-up.

Sol meets her.

They lock up hard.

Valkyrie immediately drives forward, using her power to force Sol backward. Sol plants her feet, twists her hips, and tries to angle out, but Valkyrie keeps pressure on her. Sol's back hits the ropes.

The referee watches closely, but there is no clean break forced here.

Valkyrie releases on her own.

Then drives a forearm into Sol's ribs.

Sol bends slightly but fires back with a forearm of her own.

Valkyrie takes it.

Sol throws another.

Valkyrie answers with a knee to the midsection, grabs Sol by the wrist, and sends her hard across the ring.

Sol rebounds.

Valkyrie steps in for a shoulder tackle.

Sol rolls with it, landing on one knee instead of flat on her back. Valkyrie comes forward again, but Sol catches her arm and takes her over with a quick arm drag.

Valkyrie rolls through and rises.

Sol catches her with a second arm drag, then keeps the wrist and transitions into a standing arm wringer.

The crowd cheers.

John Phillips: Sol using speed early!

Mark Bravo: That is smart. Do not let Valkyrie turn this into a collision contest right away.

Valkyrie grimaces, then drives Sol backward into the corner with raw force.

Once.

Twice.

Sol releases the arm.

Valkyrie backs up half a step, then drives her shoulder into Sol's midsection.

Again.

Again.

Sol grabs the top rope and tries to pull herself upward, but Valkyrie hooks her around the waist and throws her out of the corner with a rough belly-to-belly suplex.

Sol hits the mat and rolls through to the ropes.

Valkyrie covers quickly.

Referee: One!

Sol kicks out.

Valkyrie pulls her up by the wrist and whips her into the opposite corner. Sol runs up the turnbuckles, twists, and comes off with a crossbody.

Valkyrie catches her.

The crowd reacts.

Valkyrie turns and drives Sol down with a powerslam.

Referee: One!

Referee: Two!

Sol kicks out.

John Phillips: Valkyrie caught Sol out of the air!

Mark Bravo: That is the danger. Sol can fly, but Valkyrie only has to catch her once to change the match.

Valkyrie rolls to the outside.

The crowd buzzes.

She lifts the apron and looks underneath, then pulls out a steel chair.

John Phillips: And now the No Disqualification part begins.

Valkyrie slides the chair into the ring and follows it.

Sol is already moving, pushing up from the canvas.

Valkyrie grabs the chair and raises it.

Sol steps inside the swing before Valkyrie can bring it down, landing a kick to the thigh, then another to the ribs.

Valkyrie keeps hold of the chair and tries to shove it forward into Sol's chest, but Sol ducks under and hits the ropes.

Sol rebounds with a dropkick.

The chair crashes into Valkyrie's body.

Valkyrie goes down.

The crowd cheers as the chair clatters to the mat.

Sol gets up fast, grabs the chair, and waits for Valkyrie to rise.

Valkyrie gets to one knee.

Sol swings.

Valkyrie rolls clear.

The chair strikes the canvas.

Valkyrie pops up and drives a boot into Sol's midsection. Sol drops the chair. Valkyrie grabs it and jams the edge into Sol's ribs, then brings it down across her back.

Sol drops to her hands and knees.

Valkyrie throws the chair aside and covers.

Referee: One!

Referee: Two!

Sol kicks out.

Valkyrie does not argue.

She grabs Sol by the mask and jawline, not tearing at the mask, just forcing Sol's face up.

Valkyrie Knox: This is what no rules means.

She pulls Sol up and sends her throat-first across the middle rope.

The referee warns her, but there is no count that can end the match.

Valkyrie presses one knee between Sol's shoulder blades and pulls back on the top rope, choking Sol against the middle strand.

Referee: Come on, Valkyrie. Let her breathe.

Valkyrie holds it for a few more seconds before releasing.

Sol falls backward, coughing once, then rolling toward the center of the ring.

John Phillips: Valkyrie Knox using the ropes, using the chair, using everything the stipulation allows.

Mark Bravo: And that is what Emily wanted. She wants to know if Sol can stay composed when the match stops being clean.

Valkyrie drags Sol up again.

Sol fires a forearm.

Valkyrie answers with one of her own.

Sol fires another.

Valkyrie rocks her with a harder one.

Sol staggers, then ducks a clothesline, hits the ropes, and comes back with a tilt-a-whirl headscissors that sends Valkyrie rolling across the ring.

The crowd comes alive.

Valkyrie rises near the corner.

Sol charges.

Running double knees connect.

Valkyrie slumps to a seated position.

Sol pulls her out and covers.

Referee: One!

Referee: Two!

Valkyrie kicks out.

Sol stays on her, trying to pull Valkyrie into position for a submission, but Valkyrie kicks free and rolls to the floor.

Sol follows.

Valkyrie is waiting.

She grabs Sol as she steps down and drives her back-first into the barricade.

The front row recoils.

Valkyrie grabs Sol again and whips her toward the steel steps.

Sol reverses.

Valkyrie crashes hip-first into the steps and stumbles away.

Sol rushes forward and leaps off the steps, catching Valkyrie with a flying forearm on the floor.

The crowd roars.

John Phillips: Sol Azteca takes Valkyrie down on the outside!

Mark Bravo: That is the Sol Emily does not want to acknowledge. She can take the rough fight and still find openings.

Sol gets to her feet and pulls Valkyrie up, but Valkyrie shoves her backward into the apron. Sol absorbs the impact and fires a kick to the side of Valkyrie's leg.

Then another.

Valkyrie drops to one knee.

Sol backs up, charges, and goes for a running kick.

Valkyrie catches her.

Valkyrie rises with Sol trapped and turns, driving Sol spine-first against the apron edge.

Sol drops to the floor.

Valkyrie rolls her back inside.

Before following, Valkyrie looks under the ring again.

This time, she pulls out a short length of chain.

The crowd reacts immediately.

John Phillips: Oh no.

Mark Bravo: That is not subtle. Everybody knows what that chain means in this story.

Valkyrie looks at the chain in her hand.

She wraps part of it around her fist.

She does not smile.

She just understands what it is supposed to do.

She slides back into the ring.

Sol is already pushing up to one knee.

She sees the chain.

For half a second, her eyes lock on it.

Not fear.

Recognition.

The memory is there, but it does not freeze her. Not tonight.

Valkyrie steps closer.

Valkyrie Knox: Emily said you like pain.

Sol rises to her feet.

Valkyrie swings the chain-wrapped hand.

Sol ducks.

Valkyrie turns.

Sol fires a kick into Valkyrie's ribs.

Valkyrie absorbs enough of it to stay standing and drives her shoulder into Sol, forcing her back into the corner. The chain-wrapped hand comes up again, and Sol grabs Valkyrie's wrist with both hands, fighting to keep it away from her face.

The crowd gets louder as they struggle.

Then the stage lights change.

Harsh white.

Rusted red.

The crowd turns.

Emily Hightower steps through the curtain.

The UTA Women's Championship rests over one shoulder. The UTA Hardcore Championship rests over the other.

David Hightower walks out beside her.

Buck and Dakota follow.

They stop on the stage.

They do not walk down.

They do not interfere.

They watch.

John Phillips: There is Emily Hightower.

Mark Bravo: And look when she comes out. Sol is fighting off a chain, Valkyrie is in control, and Emily wants a front-row seat from the stage.

In the ring, Valkyrie notices Emily.

She glances toward the stage, then back to Sol.

Valkyrie Knox: She came to watch you break.

Sol's eyes move past Valkyrie.

She sees Emily.

She sees both championships.

She sees David, Buck, and Dakota behind her.

Emily shifts the Women's Championship higher on her shoulder, making sure Sol sees it.

For a moment, the building feels smaller.

Valkyrie in front of her.

The chain between them.

Emily above her on the stage.

Sol's breathing steadies.

Her grip tightens on Valkyrie's wrist.

Valkyrie tries to force the chain down.

Sol stops it.

The crowd rises.

John Phillips: Sol is holding her off!

Mark Bravo: And she is looking right at Emily.

Sol pulls Valkyrie forward and drives a knee into her midsection.

The chain drops to the mat.

Sol kicks it away.

Then she fires a forearm across Valkyrie's jaw.

Valkyrie staggers.

Sol looks back at Emily.

Another forearm.

Another look.

Another shot.

Valkyrie backs into the ropes.

John Phillips: Sol is fighting Valkyrie Knoxx, but every strike is aimed at Emily Hightower!

Mark Bravo: Valkyrie is the body in front of her. Emily is the reason behind it.

Sol grabs Valkyrie by the wrist and sends her across the ring.

Valkyrie rebounds.

Sol catches her with a spinning heel kick.

Valkyrie goes down.

Sol rises and looks toward the stage.

Emily's face hardens.

Buck takes half a step forward, but David's hand comes up low.

Buck stops.

Sol sees that too.

She points toward Emily.

The crowd erupts.

Valkyrie pushes up behind her and grabs the chair again.

Sol turns just in time.

Valkyrie swings.

Sol ducks under.

The chair hits the top rope and bounces awkwardly in Valkyrie's grip. Sol jumps and catches Valkyrie with a dropkick that sends the chair into Valkyrie's chest.

Valkyrie falls backward.

Sol covers.

Referee: One!

Referee: Two!

Valkyrie kicks out.

Sol rolls away and gets back to her feet quickly. She is breathing hard, but clear-eyed. She is not fighting like someone clinging to survival. She is fighting like someone counting the seconds until the next problem arrives.

And then it does.

The crowd changes before Sol sees why.

Marie Van Claudio and Amy Harrison come through the curtain.

The Empire.

They are not coming for Emily.

They are not looking at the Women's Championship.

Their eyes are on the ring.

Their eyes are on Valkyrie.

John Phillips: Wait a minute. Here comes The Empire.

Mark Bravo: And they are heading straight for the ring. They are not here for Emily Hightower. They are here to help Valkyrie Knox.

Emily remains on the stage.

She turns her head slightly, watching Marie and Amy move past her. David watches them too, calm but attentive. Buck looks ready to step into their path, but Emily lifts one hand and stops him.

She lets them go.

John Phillips: Emily is not stopping this.

Mark Bravo: Why would she? Emily called this punishment. If The Empire wants to make the punishment worse, Emily is going to let them.

Marie and Amy make their way down the ramp.

Not slowly.

Not casually.

They are coming with purpose.

Inside the ring, Valkyrie sees them and pushes herself up with the ropes.

Sol sees them too.

Marie points toward Sol.

Marie Van Claudio: Get her up!

Amy moves around one side of the ring while Marie heads for the other.

The referee turns, trying to keep track of everyone, but there is nothing he can call. No disqualification means The

Empire can get as close as they want unless someone stops them.

Sol looks from Amy to Marie.

Then to Valkyrie.

Then up the ramp at Emily.

The numbers are coming.

The ring is about to stop being Sol versus Valkyrie.

It is about to become The Empire's trap.

Sol understands it before anyone says it.

Valkyrie charges.

Sol ducks under and catches her with a sharp kick to the ribs.

Valkyrie doubles over.

Amy slides a chair into the ring from the floor.

Marie climbs onto the apron, shouting for Valkyrie to turn around.

Sol sees the chair slide in.

She sees Marie on the apron.

She sees Amy starting to climb up the other side.

John Phillips: The Empire is trying to give Valkyrie the opening!

Mark Bravo: And Sol knows she has seconds. Finish the match or get swallowed.

Valkyrie grabs the chair as she rises.

Sol does not wait.

She steps in and kicks the chair back into Valkyrie's body, knocking the air out of her. Amy gets one knee onto the apron, but Sol turns and blasts her with a forearm through the ropes.

Amy drops back to the floor.

Marie steps through the ropes.

The referee moves toward Marie, trying to keep her back on instinct even though there is no disqualification to enforce.

That is the window.

Valkyrie swings wildly with one arm.

Sol ducks.

Valkyrie turns.

Sol jumps.

Corona Strike.

The kick lands flush.

Valkyrie collapses backward onto the chair near the center of the ring.

The arena erupts.

Sol drops into the cover immediately and hooks the leg deep.

Marie shoves past the referee.

Referee: One!

Marie lunges toward the cover.

Referee: Two!

Sol pulls tighter.

Amy reaches back under the bottom rope, trying to grab Sol's boot.

Referee: Three!

DING DING DING!

The crowd explodes.

Ring Announcer: Here is your winner... SOL AZTECA!

Thats Two

Segment

Sol does not wait for the referee to raise her hand.

She rolls off Valkyrie and moves immediately toward the far side of the ring. Amy Harrison slides under the bottom rope after her, but Sol is already through the ropes and down to the floor.

Marie Van Claudio turns toward her from inside the ring, a step too late.

Sol backs away along the barricade, eyes sharp, one hand lifted enough to tell them she sees everything.

John Phillips: Sol got out! She got the win and got out before The Empire could turn this into a beating!

Mark Bravo: That is smart. That is growth. Sol saw the numbers forming, finished Valkyrie, and escaped before someone else's fight swallowed her.

Inside the ring, Marie stands over Valkyrie, furious that the save came too late. Amy gets back in beside her, glaring toward Sol from the ropes.

Emily Hightower remains on the stage.

She has not moved.

She did not interfere.

She simply watched The Empire try to help Valkyrie and watched Sol beat them to the finish anyway.

Sol looks first at The Empire in the ring.

Then up the ramp at Emily.

The Rio crowd is on its feet, the chant already starting around her.

Crowd: SOL! SOL! SOL!

Sol raises two fingers.

The crowd roars.

John Phillips: Two wins.

Mark Bravo: And this one came with Emily Hightower watching, The Empire circling, and Valkyrie Knox trying to drag

Sol into deep water.

Emily sees the two fingers.

Her face hardens.

She slowly lifts a microphone from the stage.

Emily Hightower: Two wins does not erase one loss.

Her voice is cold.

But the amusement is gone.

Sol leans back against the barricade for half a second, breathing hard from the match, then lifts her microphone with her free hand.

Sol Azteca: Then I will take away every excuse.

The crowd erupts.

Emily's jaw tightens.

Before Emily can answer, Marie lifts her own microphone from inside the ring.

Marie Van Claudio: Excuses?

Marie laughs, looking from Sol to Emily.

Marie Van Claudio: Look at both of you. Arguing over who gets to stand at the front of the line while The Empire is already in the ring.

The boos rise again.

Emily's eyes snap from Sol to Marie.

For the first time, Emily's attention is split.

Sol sees it.

She does not rush back.

She does not give The Empire a second chance.

She backs farther along the barricade with two fingers still raised, taking the win with her before anyone can take the moment away.

Marie points at Sol from inside the ring.

Marie Van Claudio: Keep walking, little sun. You got lucky once.

Amy smirks beside her, still near Valkyrie.

Sol stops.

The Rio crowd buzzes around her.

She looks at Marie.

Then at Amy.

Then at Valkyrie, still recovering near the mat.

Sol does not climb back in.

She does not let pride make the decision for her.

She already made the decision when she beat Valkyrie before they could stop her.

Sol raises the two fingers higher.

Sol Azteca: Two.

The crowd erupts.

Sol points toward the ring.

Sol Azteca: That is not luck.

Then she points up the ramp toward Emily.

Sol Azteca: And it is not finished.

Emily's face tightens even more.

David leans slightly toward her and says something the microphones cannot catch.

Emily snaps her head toward him, irritated, then looks back toward the ring, where Marie still stands with Amy and Valkyrie.

Then Emily looks back toward Sol.

No smile.

No amusement.

Only anger.

Marie's eyes stay on Sol, but only for a moment.

The crowd suddenly shifts.

A different reaction begins to rise from the side of the stage.

Marie turns her head.

Amy turns too.

Even Valkyrie, still down near the chair, looks toward the entrance.

Susanita Ybanez steps through the curtain.

The Rio crowd erupts.

Susanita does not have music.

She does not need it.

She stands on the stage a few feet away from Emily Hightower and the Hightowers, her eyes locked directly on Marie Van Claudio.

John Phillips: Wait a minute! Susanita Ybanez is here!

Mark Bravo: And look at Marie's face. That grudge match is still coming tonight, and Susanita is not waiting backstage while Marie keeps running her mouth.

Emily looks sideways at Susanita, irritated by the extra body on her stage.

Susanita does not look at Emily.

Not yet.

Her whole world is the ring.

Her whole world is Marie.

Marie lifts the microphone again, her expression twisting into something smug and cruel.

Marie Van Claudio: Oh, look. There she is.

The boos grow louder.

Marie Van Claudio: Susanita Ybanez. Still standing. Still angry. Still pretending she did not learn her lesson at International Affair.

Susanita walks forward slowly, stopping at the top of the ramp.

She raises a microphone of her own.

Susanita Ybanez: I learned exactly who you are.

The crowd reacts.

Marie's smirk fades just slightly.

Susanita Ybanez: At International Affair, you did not prove you were strong. You proved you were afraid.

The Rio crowd pops again.

Amy steps closer beside Marie, jaw tightening.

Marie's eyes narrow.

Marie Van Claudio: Afraid?

Marie laughs, but it is sharper now.

Marie Van Claudio: Susanita, I dropped you because you were useful until you were not. That is not fear. That is leadership.

Susanita Ybanez: No.

Susanita takes one step down the ramp.

Susanita Ybanez: That is betrayal.

Another step.

Susanita Ybanez: And tonight, I am not coming to ask why.

She stops.

Her eyes harden.

Susanita Ybanez: I am coming to make you pay for it.

The crowd erupts.

Marie steps forward, almost daring Susanita to keep walking.

Amy moves with her.

Valkyrie pulls herself up in the background, one hand on the ropes.

John Phillips: The Empire is still in that ring, and Susanita is standing out here alone.

Mark Bravo: Alone, maybe. But not backing down.

Sol looks from her place near the barricade toward Susanita.

Susanita finally glances down toward Sol.

For a brief moment, the two women lock eyes.

Sol raises two fingers again.

Not toward Emily this time.

Toward Susanita.

A reminder.

Take the win.

Do not give them the trap.

Susanita sees it.

Her jaw tightens.

Every instinct in her body wants to run to that ring and start the fight now.

But she stops herself.

She looks back at Marie.

Susanita Ybanez: You want me angry before the bell.

Marie does not answer.

Susanita Ybanez: You want me reckless.

Susanita lowers the microphone slightly.

Susanita Ybanez: You already took one moment from me.

She lifts the mic again.

Susanita Ybanez: You do not get this one.

The crowd cheers as Marie's expression darkens.

Susanita points directly at Marie.

Susanita Ybanez: Later tonight, there is no Amy saving you. No Valkyrie saving you. No Empire standing between us.

A beat.

Susanita Ybanez: Just you.

The crowd swells louder.

Susanita Ybanez: And me.

Marie steps closer to the ropes, almost trembling with anger now.

Marie Van Claudio: Then enjoy walking right now, Susanita. Because later tonight, I finish what I started.

Susanita lowers the microphone.

She does not rush the ring.

She does not give Marie what she wants.

Instead, Susanita turns slightly, looking toward Sol in the crowd.

Sol nods once.

Susanita nods back.

Then Susanita backs away from the ramp, never taking her eyes off Marie.

John Phillips: Susanita Ybanez just stared down The Empire, but she did not let Marie bait her into a fight before their grudge match.

Mark Bravo: That is the part that should worry Marie. Susanita is angry, but she is not out of control. She is saving it.

Sol backs toward the barricade opening near the crowd.

Security tries to make room, but the Rio fans are already reaching for her. Hands stretch over the rail. People are shouting from every direction. The chant gets louder, more rhythmic, more like a wave than a cheer.

Crowd: SOL! SOL! SOL!

Sol looks around.

This is not Puebla.

This is not Mexico City.

This is not home in the strictest sense.

But there is enough recognition in the noise to make it feel close. Brazil may speak a different language than she does, but Farmasi Arena understands defiance. It understands pride. It understands a fighter refusing to let someone with power decide how high she is allowed to climb.

Sol slips through the opening in the barricade and into the people.

The roar gets bigger.

John Phillips: Sol Azteca is leaving through the Rio crowd!

Mark Bravo: That is perfect. The Empire owns the ring right now. Emily owns the stage. Sol just took the people.

Sol moves up the steps through the lower bowl, touching hands as she goes, still holding up two fingers. Fans crowd around the aisle, shouting her name, patting her shoulders, raising their phones to catch the moment.

In the ring, The Empire watches.

Marie does not look amused anymore.

Amy stands beside Valkyrie, eyes following Sol through the crowd.

Then Marie looks past Sol.

Back toward Susanita.

Susanita is still near the stage, still watching Marie, still refusing to blink first.

On the stage, Emily Hightower stares down the entire scene with both championships in her possession, but the control she had earlier in the night is not there anymore.

Sol stops halfway up the aisle in the stands and turns back.

The camera catches all of it.

The Empire in the ring.

Emily Hightower on the stage.

Susanita Ybanez at the top of the ramp, eyes locked on Marie.

Sol Azteca in the Rio crowd, two fingers raised high.

John Phillips: Sol Azteca has her second UTA win, and she got it in No Disqualification against Valkyrie Knox.

Mark Bravo: But look at the picture now, John. The Empire tried to turn this into a numbers game. Emily Hightower stood back and let it happen. Sol saw the trap, beat Valkyrie, and left through the people before anyone could take the moment from her. And Susanita Ybanez just reminded Marie Van Claudio that The Empire still has another fight waiting tonight.

John Phillips: Emily said one win did not erase one loss.

Mark Bravo: Now Sol has two. Susanita is coming for Marie. And nobody in The Empire is smiling the way they were a few minutes ago.

The final shot holds on Sol in the crowd, two fingers raised as the Rio fans chant around her.

In the ring, The Empire watches.

Near the stage, Susanita Ybanez stares directly at Marie Van Claudio.

On the stage, Emily Hightower stares daggers through everyone.

Sol won the match.

Then she disappeared into the people before anyone could take the moment from her.

What's Next?

Segment

The camera cuts backstage to Melissa Cartwright standing in front of the UTA interview backdrop.

The energy from the arena can still be heard through the walls, a steady rumble bleeding into the hallway as crew members move equipment in the background.

Melissa Cartwright: Ladies and gentlemen, please welcome my guest at this time, fresh off his victory earlier tonight over Kaine... Savior Hawkins.

The camera widens as Savior Hawkins steps into frame.

He is still in his blue, gold, and white gear, sweat drying on his brow, the physical signs of the match still visible in the way he carries himself.

There is a slight tightness in his movement.

Nothing he wants acknowledged.

Nothing he is going to admit.

But enough to show that Kaine made him earn every second of the win.

Savior straightens as he reaches Melissa.

The smile comes quickly.

Warm.

Grateful.

Maybe just a little too quick.

Melissa Cartwright: Savior, congratulations. Earlier tonight, you defeated Kaine in what was a very physical match. That now makes two singles victories in UTA for you. How are you feeling right now?

Savior takes a breath and nods, letting the question settle.

Savior Hawkins: I feel good, Melissa.

He pauses, then gives a small, honest laugh.

Savior Hawkins: Tired. Sore. Definitely sore.

He rolls one shoulder, then quickly stills himself again.

Savior Hawkins: But good.

His expression sharpens slightly, the competitor taking over from the approachable smile.

Savior Hawkins: Kaine is not easy. Nobody who steps in the ring with him gets to walk out untouched. He makes you fight through the kind of punishment that tests what you really believe about yourself.

Savior glances briefly toward the direction of the arena.

Savior Hawkins: And tonight, I had to prove I could survive that. Not just survive it, but answer it.

Melissa Cartwright: You said in San Juan that your first win was step one. Tonight, with a second singles win, does this feel like another step forward?

Savior nods immediately.

Savior Hawkins: Absolutely.

Then he catches himself and slows down.

Savior Hawkins: But I have to be careful with that, right?

He looks back to Melissa.

Savior Hawkins: Two wins is not a championship. Two wins is not a legacy. Two wins does not mean I get to walk around here like I own the place.

A beat.

Savior Hawkins: But it does mean something.

His voice becomes firmer.

Savior Hawkins: It means I am here. It means I can win here. It means when the lights are on, when the crowd is loud, when things get difficult, I can keep moving forward.

Melissa watches him carefully, then raises the microphone again.

Melissa Cartwright: That brings me to the bigger question. You came into UTA with a lot of excitement and a lot of confidence. You have now won your first two singles matches. What is your goal here?

Savior looks down for half a second.

The smile fades.

Not completely.

Just enough for the answer to feel heavier before he says it.

Savior Hawkins: My goal?

He looks back up.

Savior Hawkins: My goal is to become undeniable.

Melissa gives him room to continue.

Savior Hawkins: I know that sounds big. Maybe too big for somebody who just got here. But I did not come to UTA to be a nice story. I did not come here to be the exciting new guy people clap for until the next exciting new guy shows up.

The warmth starts to return, but the intensity stays underneath it.

Savior Hawkins: I respect this locker room. I respect the champions. I respect the people who built their names here long before I walked through the door.

He leans slightly toward the microphone.

Savior Hawkins: But respect does not mean I am here to wait forever.

That line hangs for a second.

Savior realizes how sharp it came out.

He blinks, then softens his voice.

Savior Hawkins: What I mean is... I know there is a process. I know you have to earn your place. That is what I am trying to do.

He taps two fingers lightly against his own chest.

Savior Hawkins: One match at a time. One win at a time. One night at a time.

Melissa Cartwright: When you say "undeniable," are you talking about championships?

Savior does not hesitate.

Savior Hawkins: Yes.

Then, after a beat, he nods again.

Savior Hawkins: Yes, I am.

The answer is honest enough to surprise even him a little.

Savior Hawkins: I'm not going to stand here and pretend I do not think about titles. Of course I do. Every competitor should. Every person in this company should want to be the reason people buy a ticket, turn on the stream, chant their name, and believe they are watching something special.

His eyes focus directly into the camera.

Savior Hawkins: That is what I want.

A slight pause.

Savior Hawkins: Not because I think I deserve it today.

Savior Hawkins: Because I know I can get there.

Melissa nods.

Melissa Cartwright: There are a lot of dangerous names ahead of you if that is the path you are choosing.

Savior smiles again, but this time it is smaller.

Savior Hawkins: Good.

He lets that sit.

Savior Hawkins: That is why I came here.

The crowd noise swells faintly from the arena, and Savior's expression changes with it, like the sound pulls something brighter out of him.

Savior Hawkins: I said it when I arrived. I meant it then, and I mean it more now.

He looks straight into the lens.

Savior Hawkins: I'm not what's new.

A beat.

Savior Hawkins: I'm what's next.

Melissa smiles.

Melissa Cartwright: Savior Hawkins, two singles matches, two singles victories here in UTA. Congratulations again.

Savior Hawkins: Thank you, Melissa.

He starts to step away, then stops and turns back slightly.

Savior Hawkins: And to anyone watching...

He lifts one hand, almost beginning the invisible bow taunt, but he stops before fully doing it.

Instead, he taps his chest once.

Savior Hawkins: I'm going to keep earning it.

He gives Melissa one more respectful nod and walks out of frame.

Melissa watches him go.

The camera lingers just long enough to catch Savior a few steps down the hallway.

His smile fades when he thinks he is clear of the shot.

He presses one hand briefly against the wall, taking a controlled breath.

Then he straightens.

Forward again.

Always forward.

The broadcast cuts away.

The Method Finds the Moment

Segment

The camera cuts backstage to one of the quieter corridors of Farmasi Arena.

Not the interview backdrop.

Not the locker room hallway.

Somewhere deeper in the building, where the arena noise is muted behind layers of concrete and curtain.

A white folding chair sits in the middle of the corridor.

Beside it stands Eli Creed.

White shirt.

Sleeves rolled.

Hands clasped calmly in front of him.

That faint, unsettling smile already in place.

Behind him, standing in silence, is Lindsey Lothario.

The old Lindsey would have filled the frame before anyone asked them to.

The pose.

The smirk.

The sparkle.

The demand that every camera understand it had been blessed.

This Lindsey is different.

Still unmistakably Lindsey Lothario.

Still composed. Still dangerous. Still aware of exactly where the lens is.

But quieter now.

Sharper.

Like every movement has been stripped down until only intent remains.

Eli Creed: My name is Eli Creed...

He looks into the camera.

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

A low wave of boos can be heard from the arena as the feed plays on the big screen.

Eli smiles like they are thanking him.

Eli Creed: What a beautiful night this has become.

He gestures softly, almost fondly, toward the distant sound of the show.

Eli Creed: Championships vacated. Champions questioned. Challengers appearing from shadow and ego and desperation. Everyone reaching for something shiny enough to make them forget what they are missing inside.

Lindsey's eyes remain forward.

Still.

Listening.

Eli Creed: That is what gold does, you know.

He tilts his head slightly.

Eli Creed: It reflects.

Eli Creed: It does not heal.

A beat.

Eli Creed: Bobby Dean holds the International Championship and wonders if he belongs.

Eli Creed: Maxwell Jett holds the UTA Championship and hides behind performance, associates, and panic dressed as arrogance.

Eli Creed: The Tag Team Championships sit vacant, and suddenly every team in this company believes opportunity has called their name.

Eli's smile softens.

Eli Creed: But opportunity is not a calling.

Eli Creed: It is a test.

He slowly turns and looks at Lindsey.

Eli Creed: Lindsey understands that now.

The camera shifts slightly toward Lindsey.

Lindsey does not pose.

They do not blow a kiss.

They do not demand the spotlight.

They simply step forward.

Lindsey Lothario: I used to think the worst thing that could happen to me was being ignored.

The words come measured.

No theatrical rise.

No playful edge.

Just the statement.

Lindsey Lothario: Then I learned the worst thing that can happen...

Lindsey looks directly into the camera.

Lindsey Lothario: Is being seen clearly before you are ready.

Eli nods gently, almost proud.

Eli Creed: Break.

Lindsey takes another step.

Lindsey Lothario: Bend.

Eli's smile grows.

Eli Creed: Build.

For a moment, neither speaks.

The corridor feels smaller.

Then footsteps enter from off-camera.

Kairo Bey walks into frame.

The Neon Ace is not in full entrance mode. No strobes. No music. No big salute from the second rope.

Just Kairo in the hallway, dressed for the night, shoulders relaxed but eyes alert.

He looks at Eli.

Then Lindsey.

Then the white folding chair sitting between them.

Kairo Bey: This a bad time?

Eli turns toward him with warmth so practiced it almost feels real.

Eli Creed: Kairo.

Kairo raises one hand slightly.

Kairo Bey: Usually when somebody says my name like that, they either want advice, money, or to tell me I'm not living up to my potential.

Eli's smile does not change.

Eli Creed: Which one frightens you most?

Kairo gives a small grin, but his eyes stay serious.

Kairo Bey: None of them.

He glances toward Lindsey.

Kairo Bey: But I'm guessing this is not about money.

Lindsey remains quiet.

Kairo looks back to Eli.

Kairo Bey: So what's the lesson tonight?

Eli steps toward the chair and rests one hand on the back of it.

Eli Creed: The lesson is that the world rewards movement, but it rarely questions direction.

Kairo exhales, amused despite himself.

Kairo Bey: That sounds expensive.

Eli Creed: It was. People paid a great deal of money to hear it before they hated me for being correct.

Kairo's grin fades a little.

Kairo Bey: And this has what to do with me?

Eli studies him carefully.

Eli Creed: You move beautifully.

Kairo's eyebrow lifts.

Eli Creed: Effortlessly. Creatively. You turn angles into opportunities. You make the crowd feel as if the next second belongs to them because you might do something impossible inside it.

Eli's voice stays soft.

Eli Creed: But lately, Kairo...

A pause.

Eli Creed: Where has all that movement taken you?

Kairo's jaw shifts.

Kairo Bey: Careful.

Eli lifts both hands slightly.

Eli Creed: I'm not attacking you.

Kairo Bey: No. You're doing that thing where you wrap it in a blanket first.

Lindsey finally speaks again.

Lindsey Lothario: He is asking the question you already ask yourself.

Kairo looks at Lindsey.

Kairo Bey: And you're answering questions now?

That lands.

For the smallest moment, the old Lindsey flickers.

The eyes sharpen.

A hint of a smirk almost appears.

Then it is gone.

Lindsey Lothario: I'm done dancing around the ones that matter.

Kairo studies them.

Not mocking now.

Concerned.

Kairo Bey: Lindsey, you hear yourself?

Lindsey Lothario: Clearly.

Kairo Bey: That's what worries me.

Eli gently moves between them, not blocking, but redirecting the energy like a man stepping into a group therapy session he believes he controls.

Eli Creed: Kairo, you mistake peace for captivity because you have never stopped moving long enough to tell the difference.

Kairo Bey: And you mistake control for healing because people keep letting you talk.

The crowd inside the arena reacts audibly to that.

Eli smiles again.

Eli Creed: Good.

Kairo Bey: Don't do that.

Eli Creed: Do what?

Kairo Bey: Act like every time somebody pushes back, it proves your point.

Eli's expression remains calm, but something colder moves behind it.

Eli Creed: Resistance is not proof.

A beat.

Eli Creed: It is the beginning.

Kairo steps closer now.

Kairo Bey: No. See, that's where you lose me.

He points lightly toward Lindsey without taking his eyes off Eli.

Kairo Bey: Because I remember Lindsey before you started calling every bruise a breakthrough.

Lindsey's face tightens slightly.

Kairo Bey: They were loud. They were annoying sometimes. Yeah. Absolutely.

A tiny ripple of reaction from the crowd.

Kairo Bey: But they were alive.

Lindsey looks at him now.

Kairo Bey: They owned every hallway they walked down because they refused to let anybody tell them they were too much.

Kairo's voice lowers.

Kairo Bey: And I don't know what you call this...

He gestures between Eli and Lindsey.

Kairo Bey: But I don't think making somebody smaller is the same thing as making them stronger.

For the first time, Lindsey's composure cracks just enough to show the statement landed somewhere deep.

Eli sees it immediately.

He places a hand gently on Lindsey's shoulder.

Lindsey does not shrug it off.

Eli Creed: Kairo...

His tone is soft.

Almost sad.

Eli Creed: That was beautiful.

Kairo's eyes narrow.

Eli Creed: Truly.

Eli Creed: But beauty is not always truth.

Eli turns slightly toward Lindsey, speaking to Kairo while looking at them.

Eli Creed: The person you remember was exhausted.

Eli Creed: Desperate.

Eli Creed: Performing survival as glamour.

Lindsey's jaw tightens, but they do not interrupt.

Eli Creed: I did not make Lindsey smaller.

He looks back to Kairo.

Eli Creed: I removed what was begging to be seen...

A beat.

Eli Creed: So what was dangerous could finally be felt.

Kairo shakes his head.

Kairo Bey: You really believe your own stuff.

Eli Creed: Of course.

Eli's smile returns.

Eli Creed: That is why it works.

The silence that follows is uncomfortable.

Then Eli steps away from the chair and gestures to it.

Eli Creed: Sit.

Kairo looks at the chair.

Then at Eli.

Kairo Bey: No.

The answer is immediate.

Clean.

Eli nods, as if that too was expected.

Eli Creed: Not tonight.

Kairo Bey: Not ever.

Eli's smile lingers.

Eli Creed: That is what everyone says before the break.

Kairo takes a step forward, anger rising now.

Kairo Bey: I'm not one of your sessions.

Eli Creed: No.

Eli's voice drops just slightly.

Eli Creed: You are a man standing at the edge of a very bright room, terrified that if the lights ever go out, no one will know where to find you.

Kairo goes still.

That one lands.

Not because Kairo wants it to.

Because it finds something.

Lindsey watches him carefully.

Eli Creed: You call yourself The Neon Ace.

Eli Creed: You say you switch on the spotlight.

Eli leans slightly closer.

Eli Creed: But what are you when the power fails?

Kairo looks at him for a long second.

Then the grin comes back.

Smaller.

Tighter.

Kairo Bey: Still faster than you.

The crowd pops.

Eli chuckles softly.

Eli Creed: Good.

Kairo Bey: I said stop doing that.

Kairo backs up one step, eyes still on Lindsey now.

Kairo Bey: Lindsey.

Lindsey looks at him.

Kairo Bey: You ever want to talk without him translating your soul for you...

Kairo nods once.

Kairo Bey: You know where to find me.

Lindsey says nothing.

But their eyes follow him.

Kairo looks back at Eli one last time.

Kairo Bey: And you?

He points lightly toward the chair.

Kairo Bey: Keep your furniture out of my path.

Kairo turns and walks away down the corridor.

The camera holds on him for a moment as he disappears around the corner.

Then it returns to Eli and Lindsey.

Eli watches the empty hallway with that same calm smile.

Lindsey Lothario: He will not sit.

Eli looks toward Lindsey.

Eli Creed: Not yet.

Lindsey's expression is hard to read.

Lindsey Lothario: He meant what he said.

Eli Creed: So did I.

Eli slowly folds the chair.

The metal legs snap together with a clean, sharp sound.

Eli Creed: Kairo Bey is moving very quickly.

He lifts the chair with one hand.

Eli Creed: And sooner or later...

Eli looks directly into the camera.

Eli Creed: Every fast man meets a wall.

Lindsey steps beside him.

Not behind him.

Beside him.

For just a moment, that feels important.

Eli Creed: When he does...

Eli smiles.

Eli Creed: We will help him understand the impact.

The camera holds on Eli and Lindsey in the quiet corridor.

The distant arena noise rises slightly.

Then the segment fades out.

Marie Van Claudio vs Susanita Ybanez

Match

The camera returns to ringside as the energy inside Farmasi Arena shifts. The crowd is still loud, still restless, still carrying the tension from everything that has already happened tonight.

John Phillips: We are set now for what was scheduled to be a grudge match between Susanita Ybanez and Marie Van Claudio.

Mark Bravo: And "grudge match" might not even be strong enough, John. This is personal. Marie Van Claudio betrayed Susanita at International Affair. She stood over someone who had trusted her, someone who had fought beside her, and made it clear that The Empire comes before everything else.

John Phillips: Earlier tonight, Susanita made it clear she wasn't looking for answers anymore. She was looking to make Marie pay.

Mark Bravo: The question is whether Marie Van Claudio was ever going to meet Susanita one-on-one in good faith.

The lights drop.

A heavy drumbeat begins to pulse through the arena.

Red light washes over the stage as the crowd rises with anticipation.

The violin cuts through the drums, sharp and emotional, as the fire on the video wall begins to grow.

John Phillips: Here comes Susanita Ybanez!

A sudden growl rumbles through the speakers.

Then an explosion of sound and light.

Susanita Ybanez steps out onto the stage.

The reaction is immediate.

The fans in Rio roar for her as she stands under the red lights, eyes locked forward, every part of her expression carrying the weight of what Marie did to her.

No smile tonight.

No hesitation.

Just purpose.

John Phillips: Susanita Ybanez, "La reina silencios," the first woman from South America to earn a UTA contract, and tonight she wanted Marie Van Claudio in that ring.

Mark Bravo: Look at her face. That is not nerves. That is not emotion getting the better of her. That is someone who has waited all night for this walk.

Susanita takes one step forward.

Then another.

She has not even left the stage.

And then the attack comes.

Amy Harrison appears from the side and blasts Susanita from behind.

The crowd erupts in boos.

John Phillips: What the hell?! Amy Harrison from behind!

Mark Bravo: I knew it! I knew Marie wasn't going to let this start clean!

Susanita drops to one knee, stunned, and Amy immediately clubs her across the back again.

From the other side of the stage, Valkyrie Knox storms into view and drives a heavy boot into Susanita's ribs.

Susanita rolls onto her side as the boos grow louder.

Then Marie Van Claudio walks out.

She does not run.

She does not look surprised.

She walks out like this was always the plan.

John Phillips: And there is Marie Van Claudio!

Mark Bravo: Look at her. She is directing traffic. She set this up.

Marie stands over Susanita, pointing sharply down at her.

Marie Van Claudio: Keep her down.

Amy grabs Susanita by the hair and pulls her halfway up.

Valkyrie steps in and drives another knee into Susanita's midsection, folding her back down to the stage.

The fans boo louder, a wave of anger rolling through Farmasi Arena.

John Phillips: This is disgusting. This match has not even started!

Mark Bravo: That is the point, John. Marie did not want a match. She wanted Susanita isolated before the bell.

Susanita tries to crawl forward, one hand reaching toward the ramp.

Marie steps on that hand.

Susanita cries out as Marie leans down, cold and composed.

Marie Van Claudio: You wanted me?

Marie presses harder with her boot.

Marie Van Claudio: Here I am.

She steps away and motions again.

Marie Van Claudio: Pick her up.

Amy and Valkyrie drag Susanita to her feet.

Susanita suddenly fires a forearm into Amy's face.

The crowd pops.

She turns and catches Valkyrie with another shot.

For a heartbeat, Susanita fights through the numbers.

Then Marie steps in and slaps her across the face.

The sound cuts through the boos.

Susanita staggers.

Valkyrie grabs her from behind and throws her down hard onto the stage.

John Phillips: Susanita tried to fight back, but there are just too many of them!

Mark Bravo: This is The Empire. This is what they do. They take the match away from you before it can even happen.

Marie stands above Susanita again, breathing hard now, the calm starting to crack into something nastier.

Marie Van Claudio: You should have walked away when you had the chance.

Amy stomps Susanita near the shoulder.

Valkyrie drops down and drives forearms into her back.

Marie directs both of them with sharp gestures, making sure the punishment stays focused.

John Phillips: Marie is orchestrating this. Every shot, every stomp, every second of it.

Mark Bravo: This is not a loss of control. This is control. This is Marie sending a message to Susanita and to the entire division.

The boos suddenly shift.

A roar starts to build from the crowd.

Rosa Delgado bursts through the curtain.

Right behind her is Selena Vex.

John Phillips: Rosa Delgado! Selena Vex!

Mark Bravo: Here comes backup!

Rosa comes in first, driving straight into Amy Harrison with a hard rolling elbow that knocks Amy backward across the stage.

Selena Vex goes right after Valkyrie, throwing herself into the larger woman with a running clothesline and hammering away before Valkyrie can reset.

The crowd comes alive as Susanita rolls away, clutching her ribs and trying to recover.

John Phillips: Rosa and Selena are trying to save Susanita!

Mark Bravo: But look at Marie! She is already ordering The Empire to regroup!

Marie backs up a few steps, shouting over the noise.

Marie Van Claudio: Amy! Valkyrie! Now!

Amy shakes off the elbow and tackles Rosa into the side of the entrance structure.

Valkyrie absorbs Selena's shots, then catches her by the waist and drives her backward onto the stage with raw power.

Selena rolls away, grabbing at her back.

Rosa tries to fight back to her feet, but Amy is already on her again, throwing hard shots down at her.

John Phillips: Rosa and Selena came out swinging, but it still may not be enough!

Mark Bravo: The Empire has too much size, too much violence, and Marie is keeping them organized.

Susanita pushes herself up, sees Marie, and lunges.

She tackles Marie down onto the stage.

The crowd explodes.

Susanita hammers away at Marie with furious shots, all the betrayal and anger finally spilling over.

John Phillips: Susanita got to Marie!

Mark Bravo: That is what she wanted all night!

Marie covers up, trying to turn away as Susanita keeps throwing.

Amy sees it and immediately leaves Rosa, rushing over to pull Susanita off.

Rosa grabs Amy from behind and yanks her back, sending her stumbling.

Valkyrie shoves Selena aside and starts toward Susanita, but Selena grabs her by the hair and refuses to let go.

The entire stage becomes a brawl.

Susanita and Marie rolling and swinging.

Rosa and Amy trading strikes near the entrance.

Selena trying to hold Valkyrie back while Valkyrie powers her toward the edge of the stage.

John Phillips: This has completely broken down on the stage!

Mark Bravo: There is no match anymore, John. There may never have been one. This is a fight.

Valkyrie finally shoves Selena off and levels her with a running big boot.

Selena drops hard.

Rosa turns toward the impact, and Amy uses the opening to yank her down by the hair.

Susanita gets pulled off Marie by Valkyrie, who grabs her from behind and throws her down again.

Marie scrambles to her feet, furious now, hair out of place, composure gone.

Marie Van Claudio: End this!

The boos are deafening.

Valkyrie grabs Susanita.

Amy grabs Rosa.

Marie looks toward Selena, who is trying to get back up.

The Empire is regaining control.

Then the arena lights shift to fiery orange.

A rumbling bass drop hits like a roaring flame.

The crowd erupts again.

John Phillips: Wait a minute!

Mark Bravo: Here comes Valentina!

Valentina Blaze sprints through the curtain, tracing a quick spark through the air with her finger before charging straight into the fight.

Valentina Blaze: Light it up!

Valentina launches herself at Amy first, blasting her with a spinning back kick that knocks Amy away from Rosa.

Rosa drops to one knee, free at last.

Valentina keeps moving, catching Marie with a fast kick to the body before Marie can react.

Marie staggers backward.

The crowd roars as Susanita pushes herself up again.

John Phillips: Valentina Blaze has evened the odds!

Mark Bravo: Not just evened them, John. She hit that stage like gasoline on a fire.

Valkyrie turns toward Valentina.

Valentina does not back down.

She fires a kick into Valkyrie's leg.

Then another.

Valkyrie swings a heavy lariat, but Valentina ducks under and Selena Vex is there to catch Valkyrie with a shot from the side.

Rosa joins in, driving a rolling elbow into Valkyrie's jaw.

Valkyrie stumbles but does not go down.

Instead, she roars and shoves both women backward.

The brawl spreads across the full width of the stage.

Susanita charges Marie again and the two crash against the entrance wall.

Amy and Rosa spill toward the ramp.

Selena and Valkyrie trade wild shots near the stage edge.

Valentina darts between fights, throwing kicks wherever The Empire tries to regain control.

John Phillips: Bodies everywhere! This is absolute chaos!

Mark Bravo: The women's division is exploding right in front of us!

Marie manages to rake Susanita's face and shove her away.

Susanita comes right back, tackling Marie again as the crowd erupts.

They roll toward the center of the stage, both swinging.

Rosa grabs Amy in a front facelock and drives her backward.

Amy counters by shoving Rosa into the side of the video wall support.

Selena kicks Valkyrie low in the leg, and Valentina follows with a springing roundhouse that finally drops Valkyrie to one knee.

The fans roar at the sight.

Valkyrie looks up, furious.

Mark Bravo: They got Valkyrie down to a knee!

John Phillips: But can they keep her there?

The answer barely has time to arrive before officials pour through the curtain.

Referees, producers, road agents, and security flood onto the stage from every direction.

John Phillips: Here come the officials!

Mark Bravo: They have to get control before someone gets seriously hurt!

Security grabs Valkyrie first, needing three people to hold her back as she tries to lunge toward Selena and Valentina.

Amy is pulled away from Rosa, still shouting as Rosa tries to break free and get back to her.

Marie and Susanita are the hardest to separate.

Two officials pull Marie back.

Two more grab Susanita.

Susanita fights through them, reaching for Marie.

Susanita Ybanez: Marie!

Marie, being dragged backward, points at her with pure venom.

Marie Van Claudio: You should have stayed down!

Susanita struggles against the officials, still trying to get free.

Susanita Ybanez: I am not finished with you!

The crowd roars.

Valentina is held back now too, still shouting toward The Empire.

Valentina Blaze: Come on! Come on!

Rosa wipes at her mouth, furious, trying to pull away from security.

Selena Vex, breathing hard and holding her jaw, points toward Valkyrie.

Selena Vex: This isn't over!

Valkyrie snarls, trying to shove through the officials restraining her.

Valkyrie Knox: Kneel—or be broken!

Marie keeps backing away only because security is forcing her to.

She never takes her eyes off Susanita.

John Phillips: The match never happened. Susanita Ybanez never even made it off the stage before The Empire ambushed her.

Mark Bravo: Marie Van Claudio did not want a grudge match. She wanted a statement. But Susanita, Rosa, Selena, and Valentina just made it clear The Empire is not going to run this division without a fight.

The stage remains packed with officials trying to separate everyone.

Susanita is held near one side, still fighting to get free.

Marie is dragged toward the opposite side, shouting over the sea of bodies between them.

Amy and Valkyrie are restrained near her.

Rosa, Selena, and Valentina gather near Susanita, battered but still standing.

The fans continue booing The Empire and cheering the women who came to Susanita's aid.

John Phillips: We were supposed to get Susanita Ybanez versus Marie Van Claudio tonight.

Mark Bravo: Instead, we got a war on the stage. And something tells me this is only getting bigger.

The camera holds on Susanita and Marie still trying to get at each other through a wall of officials as the scene fades.

Path Closed

Segment

The camera cuts backstage to Melissa Cartwright standing in one of the arena corridors, microphone in hand.

Behind her, production crates line the wall. Crew members pass quickly in the background, careful to give a wide berth to the two men standing just a few feet away.

Kimo Fatu.

Keanu Fatu.

The PAS.

The Puipuiga A Stevens.

Twin mountains from the Stevens-Fatu-Barbosa bloodline, both standing with the kind of stillness that makes the hallway feel smaller around them.

Kimo stands with his arms folded, broad shoulders filling the frame, eyes forward, expression unreadable.

Keanu stands beside him, equally massive, but colder somehow. Quieter. Surgical. His gaze flicks toward the camera only once before returning to Melissa.

Melissa Cartwright: Kimo. Keanu. Thank you for giving me a moment.

Neither man answers.

Melissa holds professional composure, though the silence stretches just long enough to become uncomfortable.

Melissa Cartwright: Last week, the two of you picked up an impressive tag team victory, and now, after the shocking releases of Silas Grimm and El Fantasma Oscuro, the UTA Tag Team Championships have been vacated. A lot of teams are already looking at that opportunity. I wanted to ask—

Kimo slowly turns his head toward her.

Melissa pauses.

Melissa Cartwright: Do The PAS intend to pursue the vacant UTA Tag Team Championships?

Kimo looks at Keanu.

Keanu looks at Kimo.

No words pass between them.

None are needed.

Kimo turns back toward Melissa.

Kimo Fatu: Belts empty.

A beat.

Kimo Fatu: Path open.

Keanu's voice follows, clipped and cold.

Keanu Fatu: Open paths get taken.

Melissa nods, trying to draw more out.

Melissa Cartwright: So that is a yes?

Keanu stares at her.

Keanu Fatu: That is a warning.

The camera shifts slightly, catching the reaction of a passing staff member who immediately chooses a different direction down the hall.

Melissa Cartwright: The two of you have made a reputation in UTA as enforcers. As protectors. As men who carry out Scott Stevens' will when things need to be handled. But tag team champions? That would be something different. That would mean stepping into the spotlight yourselves.

Kimo's expression does not change.

Kimo Fatu: Spotlight burns.

He cracks his neck once.

Kimo Fatu: We still stand.

Keanu steps half a pace forward.

Keanu Fatu: We are not here for spotlight.

He looks directly into the lens now.

Keanu Fatu: We are here for control.

Melissa glances between them.

Melissa Cartwright: There are already established teams in UTA who may feel they deserve the first opportunity. Teams who have been fighting in this division longer. Teams who may not take kindly to The PAS stepping into the championship picture so quickly.

Kimo slowly unfolds his arms.

The motion alone changes the temperature of the hallway.

Kimo Fatu: They feel?

He lets the question hang.

Kimo Fatu: We break.

Keanu's eyes stay locked on Melissa.

Keanu Fatu: Feelings don't hold gold.

A slight pause.

Keanu Fatu: Hands do.

Kimo lifts one massive hand slowly, flexing it once.

Melissa keeps the microphone steady.

Melissa Cartwright: You mentioned control. Is that what the Tag Team Championships represent to you?

Keanu answers first this time.

Keanu Fatu: Championships are doors.

Kimo finishes the thought.

Kimo Fatu: We shut doors.

Keanu nods once.

Keanu Fatu: We open them when we choose.

Kimo Fatu: Gate shut.

Keanu Fatu: Path closed.

Melissa takes a small breath, sensing the interview is slipping less into conversation and more into declaration.

Melissa Cartwright: For anyone in the tag team division watching right now, what is the message?

Kimo and Keanu both look into the camera.

The silence hits first.

Then Kimo speaks.

Kimo Fatu: Run.

Keanu follows.

Keanu Fatu: Hide.

Kimo:

Kimo Fatu: Pray.

Keanu:

Keanu Fatu: Still found.

Melissa lowers the microphone slightly, but before she can close the interview, Kimo takes one step forward.

Not toward her exactly.

Toward the camera.

The frame fills with him.

Kimo Fatu: Vacant gold does not wait.

Keanu steps beside him.

Keanu Fatu: Neither do we.

The two men turn and walk away down the corridor, side by side, their footsteps heavy against the concrete floor.

Melissa watches them go, then turns back toward the camera.

Melissa Cartwright: A very clear message from The PAS. Kimo and Keanu Fatu are watching the vacant UTA Tag Team Championships, and if the rest of the division was not already on notice...

She glances once more down the hallway where the twins disappeared.

Melissa Cartwright: They certainly are now.

The camera holds on the empty corridor for a beat longer.

Then cuts away.

Fallout

Segment

The camera cuts backstage, where the chaos from the stage has clearly spilled into the hallway.

Officials hurry past the frame.

Security guards shout into headsets.

The distant roar of the crowd still rumbles through the building, reacting to what they have just witnessed.

The camera catches Susanita Ybanez being escorted down the corridor by Rosa Delgado, Selena Vex, and Valentina Blaze.

Susanita is furious.

Her hair is disheveled.

One hand presses against her ribs.

But she is still trying to turn back toward the stage.

Susanita Ybanez: Let me go.

Rosa Delgado: Not like this.

Susanita Ybanez: She attacked me before I even got to the ring!

Selena Vex: Yeah, and she had backup. That was the point.

Valentina Blaze: Breathe, Sue. Breathe.

Susanita stops walking suddenly and turns toward Valentina.

Susanita Ybanez: I am done breathing. I am done waiting. I am done letting Marie Van Claudio hide behind The Empire.

Valentina nods, not disagreeing.

Valentina Blaze: Then we make sure she can't hide next time.

Before Susanita can answer, shouting erupts from the opposite end of the corridor.

The camera whips around.

Marie Van Claudio is being held back by officials, with Amy Harrison and Valkyrie Knox nearby.

Marie is still yelling, still trying to force her way through the wall of security.

Marie Van Claudio: You want me, Susanita?! You had me! You just could not survive long enough to do anything about it!

Susanita immediately tries to surge forward.

Rosa and Valentina catch her.

Susanita Ybanez: Come say that without them!

Marie laughs, bitter and sharp.

Marie Van Claudio: Without them? Look around you!

Marie gestures toward Rosa, Selena, and Valentina.

Marie Van Claudio: You needed help too!

Selena Vex: She needed help because you jumped her three-on-one before the bell, genius.

Amy Harrison steps forward, smirking.

Amy Harrison: Funny how everyone gets so dramatic when The Empire does what The Empire does best.

Rosa Delgado: Run from a fair fight?

Amy's smirk fades.

Amy Harrison: Watch your mouth.

Valkyrie Knox steps beside Amy, massive and stone-faced.

Valkyrie Knox: Or I close it.

Valentina steps forward now, eyes locked on Valkyrie.

Valentina Blaze: Try.

The officials between both groups tense immediately.

The corridor is ready to explode again.

Official: Keep them apart! Keep them apart!

Susanita points past the officials directly at Marie.

Susanita Ybanez: You do not get to take this from me.

Marie Van Claudio: I already did.

Susanita fights against Rosa and Valentina's hold again.

Susanita Ybanez: No. You took the match. You did not take the fight.

Marie's expression hardens.

Marie Van Claudio: You really think this ends with one match?

She steps as close as security will allow.

Marie Van Claudio: Susanita, I am going to make sure every time you hear my music, every time you see my face, every time you think you are finally close to getting even...

Marie points at herself.

Marie Van Claudio: You remember that I made you look weak.

Susanita goes still.

That lands differently.

Not because Susanita believes it.

Because Marie knew exactly where to aim.

Susanita Ybanez: Weak?

Her voice drops.

Susanita Ybanez: I got up.

She steps forward again, slower this time.

Susanita Ybanez: You brought Amy. You brought Valkyrie. You brought The Empire. You jumped me before the bell. You had me down on that stage.

Susanita taps her own chest.

Susanita Ybanez: And I got up.

The anger in the hallway shifts. Rosa, Selena, and Valentina stand with her now, not pulling her back quite as hard.

Susanita Ybanez: That is what scares you.

Marie's eyes narrow.

Susanita Ybanez: Because you hit me with everything except the truth, and I still got to you.

Marie lunges forward.

Security catches her.

Marie Van Claudio: I am not scared of you!

Susanita Ybanez: Then prove it.

The hallway erupts again, everyone shouting over everyone.

Amy tries to push through toward Rosa.

Valkyrie leans against two officials like they are barely there.

Selena is yelling back at Amy.

Valentina keeps one hand on Susanita's shoulder while still daring Valkyrie to make a move.

Then a voice cuts through the chaos.

Scott Stevens: Enough!

Scott Stevens storms into frame, furious, already pointing at both groups before he fully reaches them.

Scott Stevens: Enough! I have had it with people turning my show into a damn riot!

The noise lowers, but only barely.

Scott Stevens: You want to fight? Fine. You want to tear each other apart? Fine. But you are not doing it in my hallways, and you are damn sure not deciding when matches start and when they do not.

He points at Marie first.

Scott Stevens: You.

Marie straightens, still breathing hard.

Scott Stevens: You robbed this crowd of a match.

Then to Susanita.

Scott Stevens: And you.

Susanita looks at him, still seething.

Scott Stevens: You want Marie Van Claudio?

Susanita Ybanez: Yes.

Scott Stevens: Good. Because now you are going to get her.

The hallway quiets another degree.

Marie's expression shifts.

Marie Van Claudio: I already had a match tonight. She did not make it to the ring.

Scott Stevens: And that is why this is not happening tonight anymore.

Boos can be heard from the arena as the fans watching on the screen react.

Scott Stevens: But this does not go away.

Stevens points between both sides.

Scott Stevens: Next week, Susanita Ybanez and Marie Van Claudio will meet in the ring.

Susanita's eyes stay locked on Marie.

Scott Stevens: And to make sure we actually get a match this time...

He turns toward Amy and Valkyrie.

Scott Stevens: The Empire is barred from ringside.

Amy immediately protests.

Amy Harrison: Excuse me?

Valkyrie Knox: No.

Scott Stevens: Yes.

He points toward Rosa, Selena, and Valentina.

Scott Stevens: And that goes for them too. Rosa. Selena. Valentina. None of you at ringside.

Valentina Blaze: Scott—

Scott Stevens: No. I am done negotiating with chaos tonight.

Susanita steps forward.

Susanita Ybanez: I do not need anyone.

Marie laughs under her breath.

Susanita Ybanez: And neither will she.

Stevens nods once.

Scott Stevens: Then we agree.

He looks back to Marie.

Scott Stevens: One-on-one.

Marie's jaw tightens.

Scott Stevens: And if anybody gets involved, if anybody from either side steps through that curtain, touches a referee, jumps a barricade, breathes too hard near that ring...

He pauses, making sure everyone hears it.

Scott Stevens: There will be suspensions.

Amy rolls her eyes.

Amy Harrison: How dramatic.

Scott Stevens: Test me.

Amy's expression cools, but she says nothing else.

Stevens looks between both groups again.

Scott Stevens: Now get them separated. Opposite sides of the building. I do not want them near each other again tonight.

Security starts moving immediately.

Marie is pulled backward with Amy and Valkyrie, but she keeps staring at Susanita.

Marie Van Claudio: You wanted me alone?

Marie smirks, but there is tension underneath it now.

Marie Van Claudio: Be careful what you ask for.

Susanita does not blink.

Susanita Ybanez: I asked for justice.

A beat.

Susanita Ybanez: But I will settle for you.

The crowd roars from inside the arena.

Marie is dragged further down the corridor.

Susanita remains where she is, chest rising and falling, Rosa on one side, Selena on the other, Valentina just behind her.

Stevens watches the separation unfold, still visibly frustrated.

Scott Stevens: One normal segment.

He shakes his head.

Scott Stevens: That is all I ask for.

Stevens walks out of frame as officials continue clearing the hallway.

Valentina steps beside Susanita.

Valentina Blaze: You good?

Susanita keeps staring down the corridor where Marie disappeared.

Susanita Ybanez: No.

She finally turns to Valentina.

Susanita Ybanez: But next week, I will be.

Rosa nods.

Rosa Delgado: Then we let you handle it.

Selena Vex folds her arms.

Selena Vex: I hate that plan, just for the record.

Susanita allows the smallest hint of a smile.

Susanita Ybanez: Noted.

Valentina looks down the hallway one more time, then back to Susanita.

Valentina Blaze: Next week, she has nowhere to run.

Susanita nods slowly.

Susanita Ybanez: Good.

The camera holds on Susanita's face, anger settled now into something colder and more focused.

The segment fades out.

Open Challenge

Segment

The arena lights flicker as high-energy "Wolf Totem" by The HU feat. Jacoby Shaddix blasts over the PA system. The fans immediately erupt into a massive pop, cheering wildly as the curtain parts.

Out walks Yoshii, a massive grin plastered across his face. The UTA United States Championship belt rests proudly on his right shoulder, catching the arena lights. He's slapping hands with the fans lining the aisle, high-fiving kids, and even pausing to do a little bow for an enthusiastic group in the front row.

Directly behind him, marching with a brisk, hyper-rigid intensity, is Jed Dye. Jed is wearing an aggressively outdated, perfectly pressed tan suit with an oversized collar. He has his arms rigidly at his sides, stepping strictly in line as if pacing out a fire drill. He glares at the smiling fans with deep, professional suspicion, completely ignoring the hands reached out for high-fives.

John Phillips: Listen to this ovation! The fans here in Rio absolutely adore the United States Champion, Yoshii! He brings an unbelievable energy every single time he steps through that curtain.

Mark Bravo: And look at his... “manager” right behind him. Jed Dye looks like he’s auditing a tax office, not walking down a wrestling ramp. But hey, you can’t argue with the results. Under Jed’s strict “guidance,” Yoshii has reached the absolute top of the UTA.

Yoshii steps up the steel steps and climbs onto the turnbuckle, hoisting the United States Championship high in the air. The crowd roars. Yoshii flashes a peace sign and a giant smile.

Jed Dye immediately gets into the ring, walks straight past Yoshii, and aggressively snatches a microphone away from the ringside announcer. He checks the microphone twice, tapping it sharply with his index finger.

Jed Dye: Fact. Noise levels in this arena are currently exceeding recommended decibel safety parameters. Silence! Cease your vocalizations immediately.

The crowd loudly boos Jed’s demand. Yoshii looks around the arena, still smiling, nodding along to the music, completely misinterpreting Jed’s vibe. Jed walks over, grabs Yoshii by the arm, and repositions him exactly three feet to his left, facing the hard camera.

Jed Dye: Better. My client—and the reigning, undisputed pinnacle of the UTA United States division, Yoshii—stands before you today not by chance, but by meticulous, calculated strategy. Under my direct, daily administrative guidance, Yoshii has achieved a state of total in-ring dominance. Look at him. He is a finely tuned machine of pure, unadulterated execution. There is not a single entity in that locker room who possesses the structural capability to challenge his current standing.

Yoshii smiles warmly, holds up his title belt to the crowd, and proudly says into Jed’s microphone:

Yoshii: Yoshii... very happy! Eat big food, hit very hard! For all fans!

The crowd cheers loudly for Yoshii’s sweet but brief statement. Jed immediately pulls the microphone back to himself, looking slightly annoyed at the deviation from his script.

Jed Dye: Yes, thank you, Yoshii. He means his metabolic caloric intake is optimized for maximum impact. Now, let us address the reality of the situation. Because my client is so demonstrably superior, the creative hierarchy of the United Toughness Alliance has struggled to find suitable opposition. Which is why, effective immediately at this exact local time—

Suddenly, a hush begins to fall over a section of the crowd near the entrance portal.

Walking calmly down the stairs of the Farmasi Arena, is Hakuryu. He is flanked closely by his manager, Sinja. The top power ranked UTA contender wears a cold, stoic expression, his eyes locked dead on the ring.

The crowd whispers and points as Hakuryu and Sinja calmly hop over the barricade and take seats directly in the front row, right at ringside. Hakuryu folds his arms, staring straight through Jed Dye.

Yoshii’s face lights up some. He waves at Hakuryu from the ring, clearly trying to be happy to see him. Jed Dye, however, narrows his eyes, adjusting his glasses with one finger as he glares down at the front row.

Jed Dye: Well, well. Look what we have here. I see we have some guests joining us in the spectator tier. I must say, I am incredibly pleased to look down and see Hakuryu and Sinja. It warms my heart to see you out here, showing the

massive, undeniable respect for someone of... your same kind.

The arena lets out a collective “Ooooh” at the subtle, underhanded jab. Hakuryu's expression doesn't change, but Sinja leans forward, her eyes narrowing angrily at Jed. Yoshii looks a bit confused by Jed's tone, turning to look at his manager.

Jed Dye: No, really! It has been entirely obvious to everyone in management how big of a fan of Yoshii you truly are, Hakuryu. I mean, all these constant appearances you keep making? It's clear you're just trying to get close enough to secure Yoshii's autograph. Don't worry, if you wait by the tour bus after the event, I might allow him to sign a complimentary promotional 8x10 for you. If you behave.

Hakuryu simply rises slowly from his chair. He doesn't say a word. He just raises one hand, pointing a single, definitive finger directly at the UTA United States Championship on Yoshii's shoulder, reminding everyone of his recent Zaps claiming the throne was stolen from him.

Yoshii, still thinking everything is friendly, nods and waves again, holding the belt up proudly to show Hakuryu.

Jed Dye: But you'll have to wait in line like the rest of the peasants, Hakuryu. Because right now, we are executing a directive. To prove that absolutely no one is on my client's level, starting this very evening, at this very moment... the United States Championship Open Invitational is officially active!

Jed spins around, facing the entrance stage, throwing his arm out in a grand gesture.

Jed Dye: If there is anyone in that locker room who possesses the sheer, delusional bravery to step into the square with a machine under my guidance, walk down that ramp right now. The clock is ticking. Step forward!

The arena music cuts out completely.

The crowd falls into a tense, anticipatory silence.

Yoshii shifts his stance, his cheerful smile instantly vanishing as his fierce in-ring competitor instincts take over. He drops into a ready stance, clutching the United States title tightly in his left hand, his eyes locked on the curtain.

Beside him, Jed Dye stands completely rigid, arms crossed, staring intently at the entrance stage, waiting to see who—if anyone—is daring enough to answer the call.

John Phillips: An open invitation! The US Champion is ready for all comers right here tonight!

Mark Bravo: And Hakuryu is watching it all unfold from inches away. Who is going to walk through that curtain?!

The camera cuts between a hyper-focused Yoshii, a stone-faced Hakuryu at ringside, and the empty entrance ramp as the segment fades to black.

Yoshii vs. TBD

Match

The camera holds on the empty entrance ramp.

Inside the ring, Yoshii stands ready, the United States Championship clutched in his left hand. His smile has faded into focus now, the open challenge no longer a celebration, but a fight waiting to happen.

Jed Dye remains beside him, arms crossed, chin lifted, staring toward the curtain like a man who believes he has just issued an impossible administrative task.

At ringside, Hakuryu sits motionless in the front row.

Sinja stands nearby, quiet and watchful.

Hakuryu does not speak.

He does not gesture.

He simply watches Yoshii.

John Phillips: Yoshii's United States Championship Open Invitational is officially active, and now we wait to see who answers.

Mark Bravo: And let's not forget the other story here. Hakuryu is sitting in the front row, eyes on the champion, studying every inch of Yoshii before this match even begins.

The silence stretches.

Jed Dye slowly raises the microphone back to his mouth.

Jed Dye: Predictable. Cowardice confirmed. I will now formally document this roster-wide failure to respond to—

The lights cut him off.

A sweep of bright spotlights rolls across Farmasi Arena like a red-carpet premiere.

The crowd reacts immediately, a wave of recognition and excitement building as glam-rock energy with modern kick drums hits the speakers.

John Phillips: Wait a minute!

Mark Bravo: Somebody is answering the call!

"Gold Teeth Grin" hits fully, and Darren Valiant steps through the curtain.

The reaction rises.

Darren stands at the top of the ramp in a sleeveless jacket, jaw set, chin high, wearing the kind of confidence that borders on obnoxious but somehow still pulls the crowd with him.

He looks out over Rio.

Then points to himself.

Then points straight at the ring.

Like he is claiming real estate.

John Phillips: Darren Valiant! The Spotlight Specialist is answering Yoshii's open challenge!

Mark Bravo: That is a bold decision, John. Darren Valiant is fast, sharp, and he can turn any exchange into a highlight, but Yoshii is six-foot-four, nearly six hundred pounds, and holding the United States Championship for a reason.

Inside the ring, Yoshii's face lights up again.

He points at Darren and nods enthusiastically, clearly pleased that someone has stepped forward.

Jed Dye does not look pleased.

Jed turns slowly toward Yoshii, whispering something urgently while gesturing toward Darren like he is presenting a liability report.

Yoshii just nods, smiling, then raises the United States Championship to show Darren what is on the line.

Darren begins down the ramp.

He does not rush.

He lets the moment find him.

Halfway down the aisle, Darren breaks into a quick shadow-boxing combination, snapping punches into the air before spinning into a clean superkick pose for the cameras.

The fans pop as camera flashes and phone lights catch him mid-pose.

John Phillips: Darren Valiant is a walking highlight reel. Razor-sharp timing, sudden counters, sudden superkicks, and a finisher that can happen out of nowhere.

Mark Bravo: That is the danger for Yoshii. Darren does not need to overpower him. He needs one opening, one slip, one moment where Yoshii turns the wrong way. Valiant Shift can steal a match in an instant.

Darren resumes the walk, smirking as the crowd noise builds around him.

At ringside, he slows near Hakuryu.

For a moment, Darren glances down at the front row.

Hakuryu looks back up at him.

No expression.

No reaction.

Just observation.

Darren's smirk widens slightly, but he says nothing. He turns back toward the ring and keeps moving.

John Phillips: Hakuryu did not even blink.

Mark Bravo: He is not here to get involved. Not right now. He is watching Yoshii, watching Darren, watching how this champion responds under pressure. That may be more dangerous than interference.

Darren reaches ringside and climbs onto the apron.

He looks through the ropes at Yoshii.

Yoshii gives him a respectful nod.

Darren points to the United States Championship, then taps his own chest.

Jed Dye immediately steps between them from inside the ring.

Jed Dye: For the record, your participation constitutes informed consent to catastrophic physical compression.

Darren leans slightly over the top rope, looking at Jed.

Then he smirks.

Darren Valiant: I don't just steal the show.

The crowd rises with him.

Darren Valiant: I rewrite it.

Darren slingshots himself cleanly through the ropes and lands inside the ring, popping instantly to his feet.

He throws both arms wide as the crowd noise surges.

Yoshii laughs warmly and claps once, clearly enjoying the confidence.

Jed looks horrified.

John Phillips: Darren Valiant looks ready for the moment.

Mark Bravo: He better be. Yoshii likes the fans, he likes the fun, he likes the spectacle, but once that bell rings and

someone starts hitting him, the fun goes away fast.

The referee steps in and takes the United States Championship from Yoshii.

Yoshii releases the title after one final look at it, then rolls his shoulders and steps toward the center of the ring.

Darren backs into his corner, removing his sleeveless jacket and tossing it to the floor.

He bounces lightly on the balls of his feet, eyes sharp, smile still there.

The referee raises the United States Championship high.

The Rio crowd roars.

At ringside, Hakuryu leans back in his chair, arms folded.

Still watching.

Still studying.

Sinja's eyes move from Darren to Yoshii, then back to Hakuryu, waiting for any sign.

There is none.

John Phillips: The United States Championship is on the line. Yoshii defends against Darren Valiant, and Hakuryu has a front-row seat.

Mark Bravo: The challenger wants the spotlight. The champion wants to keep rolling. And the White Dragon is watching every second.

The referee hands the championship to the timekeeper.

Darren crouches slightly, ready to move.

Yoshii plants himself like a wall in the center of the ring.

The bell is coming.

The referee checks with Darren Valiant.

Darren nods, rolling his shoulders, still bouncing lightly in the corner.

The referee turns to Yoshii.

Yoshii nods once, then lifts both massive hands and claps them together.

Yoshii: Yoshii!

The crowd answers with a loud cheer.

Jed Dye stands on the outside now, immediately pointing toward Darren and shouting instructions that may or may not be useful.

Jed Dye: Maintain central ring geography! Force inefficient lateral movement! Do not allow him to utilize theatrical footwork!

Yoshii looks over at Jed.

He smiles.

Then gives him a thumbs up.

John Phillips: Jed Dye already issuing strategy before the bell.

Mark Bravo: I have no idea if Yoshii understood any of that, but he seemed happy to hear it.

Across the ring, Darren smirks and points at Jed from the corner.

Darren Valiant: You always talk this much?

Jed's eyes widen like Darren has just violated several sections of a contract.

Jed Dye: Insolence noted.

The referee calls for the bell.

DING DING DING!

Darren moves first.

He circles quickly, light on his feet, keeping distance between himself and the champion. Yoshii stays near the center of the ring, turning with him, calm but ready.

John Phillips: Darren Valiant knows he cannot let Yoshii grab him early.

Mark Bravo: Absolutely not. Darren needs speed, angles, and timing. If Yoshii gets those hands on him, the whole match changes.

Darren darts in with a quick low kick to Yoshii's thigh.

Yoshii looks down at the leg.

Then back at Darren.

Darren backs away with both hands raised, smiling like he knows exactly what he is doing.

He circles again, then steps in and lands another quick kick to the same leg.

This time Yoshii steps forward.

Darren immediately slips away, moving toward the ropes.

John Phillips: Darren using quick strikes early, trying to chop down the base.

Mark Bravo: That is smart. You do not move Yoshii all at once. You make him adjust. Make him turn. Make him chase.

Darren feints another kick.

Yoshii reaches for him.

Darren ducks under the grip, spins behind Yoshii, and fires a quick dropkick to the back.

Yoshii stumbles one step forward.

Only one.

Darren lands on the mat and immediately pops up, throwing his arms wide as the crowd cheers.

Darren Valiant: Spotlight, baby!

Yoshii turns around.

Darren's smile tightens slightly.

Mark Bravo: That dropkick moved Yoshii about eighteen inches.

John Phillips: But Darren is not discouraged.

Mark Bravo: He better not be. If you start thinking about how much offense it takes to move Yoshii, you are already in trouble.

Darren hits the ropes and comes back with speed.

He ducks under a wide Yoshii chop, rebounds off the opposite side, and comes back faster.

Yoshii turns.

Darren leaps for a crossbody.

Yoshii catches him.

The crowd reacts as Darren's eyes go wide.

John Phillips: Oh no.

Mark Bravo: Bad place to be.

Yoshii holds Darren across his chest like he weighs nothing.

Darren kicks his legs, trying to shift his weight.

Yoshii smiles.

Yoshii: Big catch!

Then Yoshii throws Darren overhead with a side belly-to-belly suplex.

Darren hits the mat hard and bounces, selling the impact through his whole body as he rolls toward the ropes.

John Phillips: Massive throw by Yoshii!

Mark Bravo: Darren got caught, and Yoshii made him pay for it.

Darren pulls himself up near the ropes, one hand on his lower back, eyes blinking as he tries to shake off the impact.

Yoshii steps toward him.

Darren suddenly drops to the mat and rolls under the bottom rope to the floor.

He lands on his feet, immediately waving one hand like he needs a second.

Darren Valiant: Okay. Okay. New plan.

The crowd laughs and cheers.

Jed Dye storms around the corner of the ring, pointing at Darren.

Jed Dye: Retreat detected! Cowardice documented! Return to the ring and accept compression!

Darren turns toward Jed.

Darren Valiant: You say "compression" a lot, man.

Jed starts to respond, but Yoshii leans over the top rope and waves happily at Darren.

Yoshii: Come back! Yoshii fight!

Darren looks up at Yoshii.

Then at the United States Championship resting on the timekeeper's table.

The smile returns.

He slides back into the ring.

John Phillips: Darren took a second to reset, and that might be exactly what he needs.

Mark Bravo: That was not cowardice. That was survival. You get thrown like that by Yoshii, you take a breath if you can.

Darren and Yoshii reset in the center.

Darren raises one hand, offering a test of strength.

The crowd buzzes.

Yoshii looks at the hand.

Then at Darren.

Then he smiles and raises his own hand.

Mark Bravo: I do not know about this one.

John Phillips: Darren Valiant offering a test of strength to Yoshii?

Darren reaches up.

Yoshii reaches down.

They clasp one hand.

Then the other.

For half a second, Darren strains dramatically, face twisting, knees bending as Yoshii barely moves.

Then Darren suddenly drops backward, planting both boots into Yoshii's midsection and monkey-flipping himself through.

Yoshii does not go over.

But Darren lands behind him.

Yoshii turns around.

Darren catches him with a picture-perfect dropkick to the chest.

Yoshii takes a step back.

Darren kips up, hits the ropes, and comes back with another dropkick.

Yoshii takes another step back.

Darren rises again and charges.

Yoshii steps forward and absorbs the third dropkick, catching Darren's legs against his body.

Darren's confidence vanishes instantly.

Darren Valiant: That was not the plan.

Yoshii holds both legs, then drops backward, slingshotting Darren chest-first into the corner.

Darren hits the turnbuckles hard and staggers backward.

Yoshii grabs him from behind and lifts him into a massive Samoan Drop.

The ring shakes.

Yoshii rolls into the cover.

Referee: One!

Referee: Two!

Darren kicks out.

John Phillips: Darren Valiant kicks out, but Yoshii has taken control early.

Mark Bravo: And that is the uphill climb. Darren can make Yoshii move, but every time Yoshii gets hold of him, Darren takes the kind of impact that empties the tank.

At ringside, Hakuryu remains seated.

His eyes follow Yoshii as the champion pushes back to his feet.

Sinja leans slightly toward him, but Hakuryu does not respond.

He keeps watching.

Studying the footwork.

The balance.

The way Yoshii turns after impact.

The way Darren is forced to create space before he can create offense.

John Phillips: Look at Hakuryu. He has not moved from that seat.

Mark Bravo: That is what makes this unsettling. He is not cheering. He is not reacting. He is learning.

Back in the ring, Yoshii pulls Darren up by the wrist.

Darren fires a quick forearm to the jaw.

Yoshii absorbs it.

Darren fires another.

Yoshii absorbs that too.

Darren looks out at the crowd, then winds up dramatically.

He throws a third forearm.

Yoshii answers with one sumo chop across the chest.

Darren flies backward and hits the mat, rolling all the way to the opposite side of the ring.

Mark Bravo: That sounded like a tree falling.

John Phillips: Darren may have just learned that trading strikes with Yoshii is not the best option.

Yoshii steps forward, but Darren rolls toward the ropes again, pulling himself up with one arm.

He is hurting.

But the smirk comes back.

Not because he is fine.

Because he refuses to look like he is not.

Darren Valiant: Good shot.

Yoshii smiles and nods.

Yoshii: Thank you!

Darren blinks, then almost laughs despite himself.

Darren Valiant: You're welcome?

Yoshii steps in again.

This time Darren drops low and clips behind Yoshii's knee with a sharp kick.

Yoshii buckles slightly.

Darren immediately follows with a superkick to the midsection, then grabs Yoshii by the head and snaps him down with a jumping DDT variation.

Yoshii does not spike cleanly, but he goes down to one knee and then to both hands.

The crowd rises.

John Phillips: Darren found the opening!

Mark Bravo: That is the burst offense. That is what Darren does. Sell big, take punishment, and then explode when the timing appears.

Darren hits the ropes fast.

He comes back and lands a Fameasser-style legdrop bulldog across the back of Yoshii's head, driving him fully to the canvas.

Darren rolls him over with effort and hooks the leg.

Referee: One!

Referee: Two!

Yoshii kicks out with force, sending Darren rolling backward.

Darren lands near the ropes, eyes wide, then quickly turns that shock into a grin for the crowd.

Darren Valiant: Alright. Big man has lift.

John Phillips: First real near fall for Darren Valiant, and he is starting to prove this was not a reckless challenge.

Mark Bravo: Darren can win this. That is the thing. He can absolutely win this if he keeps creating moments and avoids getting flattened.

Jed Dye rushes along the outside, slapping the apron with both hands.

Jed Dye: Yoshii! Reestablish dominance! Immediate gravitational correction!

Yoshii pushes himself up, shaking his head.

Darren rises too, still moving quickly, still keeping distance.

The champion and challenger square off again as the Rio crowd builds around them.

At ringside, Hakuryu finally shifts slightly in his chair.

Not much.

Just enough.

His eyes narrow on Yoshii.

The study continues.

Darren circles again, confidence starting to build after the near fall.

Yoshii gets to his feet slower, one hand briefly touching the back of his head where Darren drove him into the mat.

Darren sees it.

He points to his own temple, then to Yoshii.

Darren Valiant: Timing, big man.

Darren moves in quickly, looking for another sharp kick to the leg.

This time, Yoshii does not let him have it.

The United States Champion steps forward through the kick, absorbing it against the thick meat of his thigh, and swings one massive arm across Darren's chest.

The sumo chop lands with a crack that echoes through Farmasi Arena.

Darren's whole body snaps backward before he drops flat to the mat.

John Phillips: Oh! Yoshii just shut that down in a hurry!

Mark Bravo: That is exactly what Darren could not afford. He got a little rhythm, started to feel good, and Yoshii reminded him that one clean shot can erase a whole comeback.

Darren rolls to his side, clutching his chest, sucking in air.

Yoshii looks down at him.

The smile is gone now.

Not angry.

Serious.

Competition has fully replaced fun.

John Phillips: This is the shift we talked about earlier. Yoshii enjoys the crowd, he enjoys the atmosphere, but once the match gets real, he gets real too.

Mark Bravo: And Darren just found that line.

Yoshii reaches down and pulls Darren up with both hands, lifting him almost effortlessly from the canvas.

Darren fires a quick right hand to the ribs.

Then another.

Yoshii absorbs them both.

Darren tries to slip away, but Yoshii grabs him by the wrist and pulls him back with raw power, yanking him directly into another sumo chop.

Darren collapses again, this time rolling all the way toward the corner.

Mark Bravo: Darren is selling those shots like his soul is leaving his body, and honestly? I believe him.

John Phillips: Those are not normal strikes. Yoshii is putting all that size behind every blow.

Jed Dye paces on the outside with both hands clasped behind his back, nodding sharply like an inspector watching a successful demolition.

Jed Dye: Excellent. Structural confidence restored. Proceed with compression protocol.

Yoshii turns slightly toward Jed.

Yoshii: Compression?

Jed Dye: Yes! Precisely! Apply mass until resistance ceases!

Yoshii thinks about it for a moment.

Then nods.

Yoshii: Yoshii sit.

Jed points excitedly toward Darren.

Jed Dye: Acceptable translation!

Yoshii moves toward the corner where Darren is trying to pull himself up.

Darren reaches the second rope, turns, and sees Yoshii coming.

He quickly throws a boot toward Yoshii's midsection.

Yoshii catches it.

Darren's eyes widen again.

Darren Valiant: You gotta stop catching stuff.

Yoshii pulls Darren out of the corner by the leg and lifts him into the air, turning him sideways before dropping him with a huge front powerslam.

The ring shakes under the impact.

Yoshii hooks the leg.

Referee: One!

Referee: Two!

Darren kicks out.

John Phillips: Darren Valiant stays alive, but Yoshii is starting to take control in a big way.

Mark Bravo: Darren is game. Darren is talented. Darren might even be able to win this thing if he gets the perfect opening. But Yoshii is making him pay full price for every mistake.

Yoshii gets back to his feet, bringing Darren with him.

Darren tries to create space with a quick elbow.

Yoshii shakes it off and pulls him into a bearhug.

The crowd reacts as Yoshii locks his arms around Darren's ribs and squeezes.

Darren's face twists immediately.

John Phillips: Yoshii Hug!

Mark Bravo: That may sound friendly, but there is nothing friendly about nearly six hundred pounds crushing the air out of your body.

Darren's feet kick above the mat as Yoshii squeezes harder.

The referee checks in close.

Referee: Darren, do you want to give it up?

Darren Valiant: No!

Yoshii shakes him once, tightening the hold.

Darren yells out, then starts firing short elbows down into the side of Yoshii's head.

One lands.

Then another.

Yoshii keeps the hold.

Darren reaches back, grabs at Yoshii's head, and drives a forearm across the bridge of the nose.

Yoshii finally loosens his grip just enough.

Darren slips down behind him, lands on his feet, and stumbles backward into the ropes.

He does not get far.

Yoshii turns and charges.

Darren ducks low at the last second, pulling the top rope down with him.

Yoshii hits the ropes chest-first.

But he does not go over.

He rebounds backward, turns, and catches Darren with a headbutt that stops him cold.

John Phillips: Sumo headbutt!

Darren drops to one knee, completely stunned.

Yoshii backs up.

Then steps forward and delivers a savate kick to the chest.

Darren flips backward from the impact and lands near the center of the ring.

Mark Bravo: That was violent. Darren tried to use the ropes, tried to use leverage, and Yoshii just ran through the problem.

Yoshii covers again.

Referee: One!

Referee: Two!

Darren gets a shoulder up.

The crowd cheers the kickout, but Darren is clearly hurting now.

He rolls onto his stomach, one arm wrapped around his ribs.

Yoshii kneels beside him, breathing heavier than before but still in control.

John Phillips: Darren Valiant keeps kicking out, but every kickout costs him more.

Mark Bravo: And look at Yoshii. He is not rushing. That is veteran champion awareness. He knows he has the size. He knows he has the control. Make Darren spend energy fighting out of bad spots.

At ringside, Hakuryu watches the cover, the kickout, and Yoshii's pacing after it.

Sinja leans slightly forward, eyes on Darren now.

Hakuryu's gaze does not leave Yoshii.

He watches how the champion breathes.

How long he takes to rise.

How quickly he repositions his feet.

How much force he uses when he does not need to hurry.

John Phillips: Hakuryu is seeing a very different side of Yoshii now.

Mark Bravo: And that might be why he came out here. The fun-loving champion is easy to see. The dangerous champion is what Hakuryu wants to understand.

Yoshii pulls Darren toward the corner.

Jed Dye immediately perks up.

Jed Dye: Yes! Corner containment! Maximum surface impact! Proceed!

Yoshii drags Darren up and whips him hard into the turnbuckles.

Darren hits back-first and slumps there, trying to keep himself upright.

Yoshii backs across the ring.

The crowd rises because they know what may be coming.

John Phillips: Yoshii may be setting up the Yoshii Splash!

Mark Bravo: If Darren gets crushed in that corner, this open challenge might be over.

Yoshii lowers his center of gravity.

Then he charges.

A runaway freight train moving across the ring.

Darren sees him coming.

At the last second, Darren drops and rolls out of the corner.

Yoshii crashes back-first into the turnbuckles, but the impact is not clean enough to put him down.

Darren scrambles to his feet and hits the ropes, trying to capitalize.

He comes back fast.

Yoshii turns out of the corner.

Darren leaps for a jumping DDT.

Yoshii catches him around the waist before Darren can pull him down.

The crowd gasps.

Darren's arms hang around Yoshii's neck, realizing he has been stopped mid-move.

Darren Valiant: Oh, come on.

Yoshii powers Darren up, turns, and plants him with another crushing front powerslam.

Darren folds on impact.

John Phillips: Yoshii stopped the DDT cold!

Mark Bravo: That is the size difference. Darren has speed and timing, but Yoshii has answers that come from being almost impossible to move when he is planted.

Yoshii rises and looks toward the crowd.

The cheers grow.

He lifts both arms.

Yoshii: YOSHII!

The crowd shouts with him.

Darren lies near the center of the ring, one arm over his ribs, breathing hard.

Yoshii steps over him and heads toward the corner.

John Phillips: Yoshii may be thinking about ending this.

Mark Bravo: If he gets up to that second rope, Darren is in serious trouble.

Jed Dye moves to the corner on the outside, pointing upward.

Jed Dye: Ascend carefully! Controlled mass descent! Victory is statistically imminent!

Yoshii grips the top rope.

He places one foot on the bottom rope.

Then another.

Darren begins to stir.

At ringside, Hakuryu leans forward slightly.

For the first time, his posture changes.

He watches Yoshii climb.

Not Darren.

Yoshii.

Every movement.

John Phillips: Hakuryu just leaned forward.

Mark Bravo: Because this matters. This is not just a move. This is the champion's closing sequence. Hakuryu wants to see how it happens.

Yoshii pulls himself higher, reaching the second rope.

Darren rolls slowly away from the corner, still dazed, still trying to find enough space to survive.

Yoshii looks down.

The champion raises his arms above him.

Yoshii: YOSHII!

The crowd roars.

Darren keeps rolling.

Yoshii hesitates for half a second, realizing Darren is no longer directly beneath him.

Jed Dye screams from the floor.

Jed Dye: Abort descent! Adjust coordinates!

Darren suddenly pops to life and scrambles toward the ropes, forcing Yoshii to reconsider.

Yoshii carefully steps back down from the second rope rather than risk missing the Yoshii Bomb.

Mark Bravo: Smart by Yoshii. Do not launch nearly six hundred pounds at empty canvas.

John Phillips: Darren bought himself time, but he is still in trouble.

Yoshii drops back to the mat and turns toward Darren.

Darren is on one knee near the ropes.

Yoshii steps forward, reaching down for him.

Darren suddenly springs up with a superkick.

Spotlight Kick!

It catches Yoshii under the jaw.

Yoshii staggers backward one step.

Then a second.

But he does not fall.

Darren looks at him, stunned.

John Phillips: Spotlight Kick connects!

Mark Bravo: But Yoshii is still standing!

Darren takes a breath.

Then another.

He hits the ropes and comes back with everything he has left.

Yoshii steps forward at the same time.

Darren leaps—

Yoshii catches him again.

This time there is no smile.

No pause.

Yoshii turns and drives Darren hard into the mat with a side belly-to-belly suplex.

Darren lands hard and rolls to his back, staring up at the lights.

John Phillips: Yoshii stops him again!

Mark Bravo: Darren keeps finding sparks, but Yoshii keeps smothering the fire.

Yoshii stays seated for a moment after the throw, catching his breath.

Then he pushes himself back to his feet.

Darren rolls toward the corner, trying to find the ropes, trying to find anything.

Yoshii follows.

At ringside, Hakuryu settles back again, expression unchanged.

The study continues.

Darren reaches the corner and grabs the bottom rope, trying to drag himself upright.

Yoshii follows with heavy steps, each one giving Darren less space, less time, less oxygen.

John Phillips: Darren Valiant has had moments in this match. He has made Yoshii adjust, he has created openings, and he has come close enough to make this crowd believe.

Mark Bravo: But close is not enough against Yoshii. You have to keep him down, and Darren has not found a way to do that yet.

Yoshii reaches down and pulls Darren up from the corner.

Darren suddenly grabs the middle rope with both hands, refusing to be moved.

Yoshii pulls again.

Darren hangs on.

Jed Dye storms around the outside, pointing at Darren like he has personally violated physics.

Jed Dye: Rope dependency! Unsanctioned anchoring behavior! Remove his grip, Yoshii!

Yoshii reaches in again.

Darren releases one hand and fires an elbow into Yoshii's jaw.

Yoshii absorbs it.

Darren fires another.

Yoshii absorbs that too.

Darren grabs the top rope, pulls himself up just enough, and snaps a boot up under Yoshii's chin.

Yoshii staggers back a step.

Darren pulls himself to the second rope, then launches forward with a diving elbow drop across Yoshii's chest.

Yoshii stumbles backward but stays on his feet.

John Phillips: Darren keeps trying to build something, but Yoshii will not go down!

Darren hits the ropes.

He comes back fast.

Yoshii swings a massive sumo chop.

Darren ducks under it, rebounds off the opposite side, and comes back with a dropkick to the knee.

Yoshii drops to one knee.

The crowd rises.

Mark Bravo: There! That is the opening!

Darren scrambles up, eyes wide, adrenaline taking over.

Yoshii is on one knee, shaking his head.

Darren backs into the corner.

He slaps his own knee once.

Then again.

John Phillips: Darren may be thinking Spotlight Kick again!

Jed Dye sees it and panics.

Jed Dye: Cranial threat detected! Raise defensive mass! Raise defensive mass!

Darren charges.

Yoshii begins to rise.

Darren leaps into the Spotlight Kick.

Yoshii catches the leg.

The crowd gasps.

Darren hops on one foot, staring at Yoshii.

Darren Valiant: I was really hoping you wouldn't do that.

Yoshii pulls him in.

Darren jumps with the momentum, twisting his body and catching Yoshii around the head.

John Phillips: Wait! Darren countering!

Darren tries to swing through into the Valiant Shift.

For a split second, he has Yoshii turned.

For a split second, the United States Championship feels like it is slipping.

But Yoshii plants his feet.

The turn stops.

Darren's eyes widen.

Mark Bravo: Yoshii blocked it!

Yoshii reaches back with both arms and crushes Darren against his body, stopping the reverse DDT before it can fully snap.

Then he powers Darren up and drives him down with a thunderous Samoan Drop.

The ring shakes.

Darren arches off the mat, both hands going to his back.

John Phillips: Darren went for the Valiant Shift, and Yoshii stopped it with pure power!

Mark Bravo: That was Darren's best chance. That move can win a match out of nowhere, but Yoshii had just enough base, just enough size, and just enough awareness to shut it down.

Yoshii rolls to his knees.

He is breathing hard now.

Darren is down, staring at the lights, chest rising and falling fast.

Yoshii crawls into the cover.

Referee: One!

Referee: Two!

Darren kicks out.

The crowd pops.

John Phillips: Darren Valiant is still alive!

Mark Bravo: He is, but look at him. That kickout may have been instinct more than anything else.

Darren rolls to his side, blinking hard, trying to force his body to obey him.

Yoshii gets back to his feet.

This time, there is no hesitation.

No delay.

Yoshii pulls Darren up and sends him hard into the corner.

Darren hits the turnbuckles and slumps there.

Yoshii steps backward across the ring.

The crowd knows.

Jed Dye knows.

Hakuryu knows.

At ringside, Hakuryu leans forward again, hands folded, eyes locked on Yoshii's movement.

John Phillips: Yoshii is going back to the corner. This may be the Yoshii Splash setup.

Mark Bravo: And Hakuryu just leaned forward again. He is watching every detail of this.

Yoshii lowers his center of gravity.

Darren pulls himself upright, barely.

Yoshii charges.

The United States Champion barrels across the ring like a runaway truck.

At the last possible second, Yoshii turns and crushes Darren between his massive frame and the turnbuckles.

Darren's body jerks from the impact before he collapses down into the corner.

John Phillips: Yoshii Splash! Darren got crushed!

Mark Bravo: That may be it. Darren has taken too much.

Darren is folded in the corner, barely moving.

Yoshii steps away, breathing heavily.

Jed Dye points to the corner with both hands, almost vibrating with administrative excitement.

Jed Dye: Ascend! Controlled mass descent! Complete the retention procedure!

Yoshii grabs the ropes.

The crowd begins to rise.

Yoshii places one foot on the bottom rope.

Then the other.

He climbs carefully to the second rope, the ring shifting beneath his weight.

Darren is still trapped below him, face-up, chest exposed, body drained from the fight.

Yoshii steadies himself.

At ringside, Hakuryu does not blink.

Sinja's eyes move from Yoshii to Darren, then to the United States Championship at the timekeeper's table.

John Phillips: Hakuryu has a front-row view of the champion's finishing sequence.

Mark Bravo: And if Hakuryu ever gets that title match he seems to want, he will remember every second of this.

Yoshii raises both arms high above his head.

Yoshii: YOSHII!

The crowd shouts with him.

Then Yoshii leaps.

All five hundred eighty-three pounds come crashing down across Darren's chest with the Yoshii Bomb.

The arena erupts as Yoshii stays seated across Darren and hooks both legs into the cover.

Referee: One!

Referee: Two!

Referee: Three!

DING DING DING!

The crowd roars as "Wolf Totem" hits again.

Ring Announcer: Here is your winner... and STILL UTA United States Champion... YOSHII!

John Phillips: Yoshii retains! Darren Valiant answered the open challenge, gave the champion a fight, but in the end, Yoshii was just too much!

Mark Bravo: Darren had speed. Darren had timing. Darren even had a moment where the Valiant Shift almost happened. But Yoshii stopped him, crushed him, and retained the United States Championship.

Yoshii rolls off Darren and sits on the mat for a moment, catching his breath.

The referee brings him the United States Championship.

Yoshii takes it with both hands, smiles through the exhaustion, and lifts it high as the crowd cheers.

Jed Dye climbs into the ring quickly, clapping with sharp, efficient motions.

Jed Dye: Successful retention confirmed! Open Invitational performance metrics remain optimal!

Yoshii looks at him, then laughs.

Yoshii: Yoshii win!

The crowd cheers again.

John Phillips: Yoshii continues to roll as United States Champion.

Mark Bravo: But now look at ringside.

The camera cuts to Hakuryu.

He remains seated in the front row.

No applause.

No anger.

No reaction to the music.

Just that cold, patient stare.

Yoshii turns toward him from inside the ring.

The champion smiles, still breathing heavily, and raises the United States Championship in Hakuryu's direction.

It is not a taunt.

Not from Yoshii.

It is almost friendly.

A proud display.

Hakuryu slowly rises from his seat.

The crowd buzzes.

Sinja stands with him.

Hakuryu looks from Yoshii's face to the United States Championship.

Then back to Yoshii.

He brings his hands together in a quiet prayer formation.

His head lowers slightly.

Then he turns and begins to leave through the front row.

John Phillips: Hakuryu came out here, watched Yoshii defend the United States Championship, and now he is leaving without a word.

Mark Bravo: He saw what he needed to see. That is what scares me. He did not come out here to make noise. He came out here to learn.

Yoshii watches Hakuryu leave, still holding the championship high.

Jed Dye steps beside him, narrowing his eyes toward the departing Hakuryu and Sinja.

Jed Dye: Spectator departure noted. Respectful fear response likely.

Yoshii nods happily, not quite understanding the insult.

Yoshii: Hakuryu good watcher!

Jed slowly turns to Yoshii.

Jed Dye: ...Yes. Precisely. Good watcher. Dangerous watcher. We will discuss terminology later.

Yoshii lifts the United States Championship again as the crowd cheers.

Darren Valiant is helped to a seated position near the ropes, clearly disappointed but aware of how close he came to creating a moment.

Yoshii looks toward him, then walks over and offers one massive hand.

Darren looks at the hand.

Then at Yoshii.

He takes it.

Yoshii pulls Darren to his feet as the crowd applauds.

John Phillips: Great show of respect from the champion.

Mark Bravo: Darren Valiant earned that. He stepped into an open challenge with a champion twice his size and gave him everything he had.

Darren nods to Yoshii, still holding his ribs.

Yoshii nods back, then pats Darren on the shoulder with enough force to make Darren wince.

Darren Valiant: Ow. Respectfully.

Yoshii laughs warmly.

Darren rolls out of the ring, leaving Yoshii and Jed Dye standing tall inside.

The final shot holds on Yoshii with the United States Championship raised high, Jed Dye applauding beside him, and Hakuryu disappearing into the crowd without ever looking back.

John Phillips: Yoshii retains the United States Championship tonight in Brazil.

Mark Bravo: But Hakuryu was watching. And something tells me this issue is far from finished.

Accidental Booking

Segment

The camera cuts backstage to Scott Stevens' office.

It has been a long night.

That much is obvious before anyone says a word.

Stevens stands behind his desk, one hand on his hip, the other rubbing at the bridge of his nose. Papers are scattered across the surface. A headset sits discarded beside a half-empty bottle of water. On the monitor in the corner, the replay of the Susanita Ybanez and Marie Van Claudio stage brawl loops silently for production review.

Stevens looks at it for half a second.

Then reaches over and turns the monitor off.

Scott Stevens: I have got to stop asking for normal.

A production staffer stands near the door, clipboard in hand, looking like he would rather be anywhere else.

Scott Stevens: Tell me again.

Production Staffer: Sir?

Scott Stevens: Tell me again that nobody has seen Chris Ross tonight.

The staffer nods quickly.

Production Staffer: Nobody has seen him. We checked all talent entrances, the loading dock, production corridors, parking access, everything. Security has been doubled at every entrance. Ross is not in sight.

Stevens stares at him, searching his face for even a flicker of uncertainty.

Scott Stevens: You are absolutely sure?

Production Staffer: Yes, sir. Absolutely sure.

Stevens lets out a long sigh of relief.

Scott Stevens: Good.

He leans back against his desk for a moment, eyes closing briefly.

Scott Stevens: Good. One less fire.

The staffer glances toward the door.

Production Staffer: Do you need anything else?

Scott Stevens: A new career.

The staffer is not sure whether to laugh.

Scott Stevens: Go.

The staffer leaves quickly.

Stevens exhales again, straightens the papers on his desk with the defeated precision of a man trying to impose order on a night that keeps rejecting it.

Then the door bursts open.

Maxx Mayhem storms in.

Not politely.

Not carefully.

He bursts in like the door owed him money.

Wild eyes.

Restless grin.

Chaotic energy pouring into the room before the rest of him even clears the frame.

Maxx Mayhem: Scotty!

Stevens freezes.

His shoulders drop.

Scott Stevens: No.

Maxx Mayhem: You got yourself a problem.

Scott Stevens: I said no.

Maxx closes the door behind him, then immediately reopens it and peeks into the hallway.

Maxx Mayhem: You sure? Could be out there too.

He shuts it again.

Scott Stevens: Maxx, I do not have time for this.

Maxx Mayhem: That's the problem!

Maxx points both hands at him, like he has just solved a murder.

Maxx Mayhem: Time! You ain't got it! We ain't got it! The clock is tickin', Scotty-boy, and by my count, we are just three weeks away from One Last Stop.

Stevens slowly looks up at him.

Scott Stevens: I am aware.

Maxx Mayhem: Are you?

Maxx steps closer, lowering his voice like this is deeply serious business.

Maxx Mayhem: Because from where Maxx is standin', you have done absolutely nothin' to promote it.

Stevens blinks.

Maxx Mayhem: Not one match set.

He holds up one finger.

Maxx Mayhem: Not one beautiful collision of meat and regret.

Another finger.

Maxx Mayhem: Not one poster-worthy disaster.

A third finger.

Maxx Mayhem: Not one tastefully violent appetizer for the paying public.

Scott Stevens: Maxx, I have been dealing with Mike Best, Chris Ross, The Empire, Susanita and Marie trying to tear each other apart on my stage...

Stevens gestures broadly at the room, the building, the entire universe.

Scott Stevens: I am sorry if those things have taken precedence.

Maxx nods as though listening carefully.

Maxx Mayhem: I get it.

Beat.

Maxx Mayhem: I don't care who the president is.

Stevens closes his eyes.

Scott Stevens: Oh, God.

Maxx Mayhem: Exactly! Politics are messy. That is why Maxx stays informed by not knowing anything.

Stevens opens his eyes again, already regretting every second of this conversation.

Maxx Mayhem: But I am here to help.

Scott Stevens: Oh yeah?

Stevens folds his arms.

Scott Stevens: How's that?

Maxx starts pacing now, hands moving as fast as his thoughts.

Maxx Mayhem: See, I have been keepin' my eyes open. Very open. Some would say too open. Doctors, mostly.

He points toward his own eyes with two fingers.

Maxx Mayhem: And I don't like how much time my buddy Bobby has been spending with that guy.

Scott Stevens: What guy?

Maxx Mayhem: You know.

Maxx snaps his fingers, trying to summon the thought out of the air.

Maxx Mayhem: That guy. The one that looks like the guy from that movie.

Scott Stevens: What movie?

Maxx Mayhem: You know.

He waves one hand in a vague circle.

Maxx Mayhem: That one.

Scott Stevens: That does not help me.

Maxx Mayhem: With the guys.

Scott Stevens: Most movies have guys.

Maxx Mayhem: They go places.

Stevens stares at him.

Scott Stevens: They go places.

Maxx Mayhem: Yes!

Maxx claps once, thrilled that Stevens is following along even though Stevens absolutely is not.

Maxx Mayhem: And there's talkin'. And suits. And probably a helicopter. Or maybe not. Might have been a boat.

Stevens slowly sits down behind his desk.

Scott Stevens: Maxx.

Maxx Mayhem: Anyway, that guy.

Scott Stevens: Mikey Unlikely.

Maxx points at him.

Maxx Mayhem: That's the one!

Stevens leans back in his chair, exhaustion fully taking over.

Scott Stevens: You mean Mikey Unlikely, the WrestleZone Champion, who is literally an actor.

Maxx freezes.

He looks genuinely stunned.

Maxx Mayhem: Wait.

Beat.

Maxx Mayhem: He's in movies?

Stevens says nothing.

Maxx's eyes widen like the world has just become bigger and worse.

Maxx Mayhem: That explains so much.

Scott Stevens: Does it?

Maxx Mayhem: No.

Maxx immediately goes back to pacing.

Maxx Mayhem: But that ain't the point. The point is Bobby Dean is my buddy.

Scott Stevens: Since when?

Maxx Mayhem: Since I decided it was emotionally useful.

Scott Stevens: Of course.

Maxx Mayhem: And Bobby's got that International Championship sittin' on his lap like a shiny little therapy casserole, and this Mikey fella keeps buzzin' around him with that WrestleZone title and his face and his movie hair and his probably boat-helicopter energy.

Stevens rubs his temples.

Scott Stevens: Maxx, what do you want?

Maxx stops pacing.

Scott Stevens: Do you want to face Mikey Unlikely for the WrestleZone Championship?

Maxx goes completely still.

For once, silence.

Then his face slowly lights up.

Maxx Mayhem: Scotty...

He steps forward, awestruck.

Maxx Mayhem: That is a brilliant idea.

Scott Stevens: No, I was asking if—

Maxx Mayhem: Brilliant!

Maxx slaps both hands on the desk.

Maxx Mayhem: You couldn't have booked it better yourself!

Scott Stevens: I did not book it.

Maxx Mayhem: Humble too! Leadership, baby!

Stevens stands quickly.

Scott Stevens: Maxx, hold on.

Maxx is already backing toward the door, pointing at Stevens with both hands.

Maxx Mayhem: One Last Stop!

Scott Stevens: Maxx.

Maxx Mayhem: Mikey Unlikely!

Scott Stevens: Maxx.

Maxx Mayhem: WrestleZone Championship!

Scott Stevens: Maxx!

Maxx Mayhem: The movie man meets the Mayhem Machine!

He yanks the door open.

Scott Stevens: I have not made that official!

Maxx Mayhem: Too late! Verbal contract! Heard it with my ears!

Scott Stevens: That is not how contracts work!

Maxx Mayhem: Then why do they call them hear-ings?

Stevens opens his mouth.

Nothing comes out.

Maxx grins.

Maxx Mayhem: Exactly.

He darts out of the office before Stevens can stop him.

The door slams shut.

Stevens stands there, staring at the closed door.

For several seconds, there is only silence.

Then the production staffer from earlier cautiously pokes his head back in.

Production Staffer: So... should we add Mikey Unlikely versus Maxx Mayhem for One Last Stop?

Stevens turns toward him slowly.

The look on his face is pure disbelief.

Scott Stevens: Did you hear me say that?

The staffer hesitates.

Production Staffer: I heard enough that Maxx is already yelling it in the hallway.

From outside the office, Maxx's voice echoes faintly down the corridor.

Maxx Mayhem: ONE LAST STOP, BABY! MAYHEM GOES TO THE MOVIES!

Stevens lowers his head.

Scott Stevens: Put it on the damn card.

Production Staffer: Yes, sir.

The staffer disappears again.

Stevens sits back down behind his desk, staring into nothing.

Scott Stevens: I hate this job.

The camera lingers on Stevens as the faint sound of Maxx Mayhem cackling down the hallway carries through the wall.

Apparently, it is official.

At One Last Stop, Mikey Unlikely will defend the WrestleZone Championship against Maxx Mayhem.

The segment fades out.

One Last Stop

Segment

The screen fades to black.

For one second, there is silence.

Then the sound of a train brake screaming against steel cuts through the darkness.

A low, cinematic pulse begins underneath it.

White text appears on screen.

TEXT ON SCREEN: TWO LEGS DOWN.

Quick flashes.

The lights of London.

The chaos of International Affair.

The All or Nothing Rumble.

Championships changing hands.

Bobby Dean clutching the International Championship.

Maxwell Jett raising the UTA Championship with that smug, polished grin.

Chris Ross staring through the camera in earlier footage, rage barely contained.

The music rises.

TEXT ON SCREEN: AN INTERNATIONAL TOUR.

San Juan.

Mexico City.

Spain.

Argentina.

Brazil.

Every shot cuts faster than the last.

Yoshii standing tall with the United States Championship.

Savior Hawkins screaming "SHOWTIME!" with the crowd behind him.

Susanita Ybanez fighting through The Empire on the stage.

Marie Van Claudio pointing coldly as chaos unfolds around her.

Scott Stevens shouting orders backstage, trying to keep the entire company from tearing itself apart.

Voiceover: The United Toughness Alliance left home searching for answers.

Cut to Maxwell Jett looking over his shoulder, UTA Championship across his shoulder.

Voiceover: Instead, it found enemies.

Cut to footage from earlier weeks.

Chris Ross stalking through a backstage hallway.

Maxwell Jett being surrounded by First Class.

Mike Best stepping through the curtain at International Affair, the arena coming unglued.

Scott Stevens in his office, pointing firmly toward the door.

Scott Stevens: Chris Ross is barred from the building tonight.

The screen glitches.

TEXT ON SCREEN: ONE LAST STOP.

The music drops into a heavier beat.

Aerial footage of Toronto fills the screen.

The skyline.

The CN Tower piercing the night.

Traffic moving through downtown.

Then the exterior of Scotiabank Arena, lit like a battleground waiting to open its doors.

Voiceover: Before the UTA returns to the United States...

Cut to the empty arena bowl.

Seats waiting.

Lights sweeping over the ring.

Voiceover: Before the next chapter begins...

Cut to Maxx Mayhem cackling in Scott Stevens' hallway.

Maxx Mayhem: Mayhem goes to the movies!

Cut to Mikey Unlikely holding the WrestleZone Championship, smiling like the camera owes him money.

Cut to Bobby Dean polishing the International Championship in his lap.

Cut to Eric Dane Jr. holding his contract, eyes cold, future uncertain.

Voiceover: Every champion has a target.

Cut to The PAS standing in a corridor, silent and massive.

Kimo Fatu: Gate shut.

Keanu Fatu: Path closed.

Cut to the vacant UTA Tag Team Championships displayed under glass.

Voiceover: Every vacancy creates a war.

Cut to Eli Creed standing in a white-lit corridor.

Eli Creed: Break. Bend. Build.

Cut to Lindsey Lothario, colder now, standing beside him.

Cut to Kairo Bey staring them down.

Kairo Bey: Keep your furniture out of my path.

Voiceover: Every soul reaches a breaking point.

The music swells again.

Quick montage.

Valentina Blaze sprinting into a fight.

Rosa Delgado throwing a rolling elbow.

Selena Vex shouting across a hallway.

Valkyrie Knox shoving through officials.

Amy Harrison smirking through the chaos.

Susanita and Marie screaming at each other through security.

Voiceover: Every rivalry wants one more chance to explode.

Cut to Scott Stevens in his office, exhausted, looking up from his desk.

Scott Stevens: One normal night.

Smash cut to chaos from earlier in the tour.

Security flooding a hallway.

The Empire brawling on the stage.

Maxx Mayhem laughing as he backs out of Stevens' office.

Maxwell Jett protesting with the UTA Championship over his shoulder.

Mike Best staring ahead, focused and dangerous.

Chris Ross shown only in prior footage, his voice echoing over black.

Chris Ross: I don't care if I have to fight you... or him... or both.

Voiceover: But normal does not live here anymore.

The screen cuts to black again.

The beat stops.

One final train brake screams.

TEXT ON SCREEN: SATURDAY, JULY 25, 2026

TEXT ON SCREEN: SCOTIABANK ARENA

TEXT ON SCREEN: TORONTO, ONTARIO, CANADA

The music returns in full force.

The One Last Stop logo appears, metallic and cracked, with red and white light streaking behind it like headlights through rain.

Voiceover: After two legs of an international tour...

Voiceover: After every fight, every betrayal, every championship chase, every line crossed...

Rapid-fire flashes.

Maxwell Jett clutching the UTA Championship.

Mike Best walking toward the ring.

Chris Ross pacing in earlier footage, still the storm nobody can ignore.

Susanita rising from the stage.

Marie Van Claudio smiling coldly.

Mikey Unlikely lifting the WrestleZone Championship.

Maxx Mayhem laughing.

The vacant tag titles gleaming.

Scott Stevens staring into the storm he can no longer stop.

Voiceover: It is time for one final stop...

The logo slams forward.

Voiceover: Before the road leads home.

TEXT ON SCREEN: UTA PRESENTS

TEXT ON SCREEN: ONE LAST STOP: 2026

TEXT ON SCREEN: LIVE · SATURDAY, JULY 25 · SCOTIABANK ARENA · TORONTO

The final shot holds on the logo as the music cuts out.

Then, in silence, one last line appears.

TEXT ON SCREEN: THERE IS NO TURNING BACK.

Fade out.

Mike Best vs. Maxwell Max Jett

Match

The lights sweep across the Rio de Janeiro crowd as the noise begins to swell, the kind of buzz that comes before a main event with too much history, too much danger, and too many questions attached to it.

The camera cuts to ringside, where John Phillips and Mark Bravo sit behind the commentary desk.

John Phillips: Welcome back to World Tour: Brazil '26, and ladies and gentlemen, it is main event time. The UTA Championship is about to be defended as Maxwell Jett puts the title on the line against Mike Best.

Mark Bravo: And there are layers to this one, John. Mike Best asked for this match. Scott Stevens granted it. That alone gets my attention.

John Phillips: Mike Best made it very clear he came to UTA with the UTA Champion in his sights. Last week in Puerto Rico, he put himself right in the middle of Maxwell Jett's world, and tonight, Stevens has given him the opportunity.

Mark Bravo: Which sounds simple until you remember Scott Stevens and Mike Best are not strangers. They have history in High Octane Wrestling. Rivalry, respect, bad blood, all of it. So when Stevens grants Mike Best a UTA Championship match this quickly? I am not saying something is wrong. I am saying it is worth asking questions.

John Phillips: And on top of all of that, Scott Stevens has barred Chris Ross from the building tonight.

Mark Bravo: That may be the only reason this match can happen without the building collapsing. Chris Ross has made it very clear he wants Maxwell Jett. Not the title. Not the spotlight. He wants Jett hurt. Stevens has tried to remove that variable tonight.

John Phillips: Chris Ross is not here. He is not allowed in Farmasi Arena. That means, on paper, Maxwell Jett only has to worry about Mike Best.

Mark Bravo: On paper. But paper does not win wrestling matches, John. And when Mike Best is involved, the fine print usually has teeth.

The arena lights begin to dim.

A low rumble rolls through the sound system.

The crowd begins to react before the music fully hits, some cheering, some booing, all of them understanding exactly who is about to walk through the curtain.

Then "Pandemonium" by NF hits.

The reaction becomes enormous.

White strobes flash across the stage as Mike Best steps out from behind the curtain.

He stops at the top of the ramp.

No smile.

No wasted motion.

Just Mike Best, standing under the lights, eyes fixed on the ring like the championship is already in his hands and the rest of the night is a technicality.

John Phillips: And here comes the challenger. Mike Best, The Son of GOD, one of the most dangerous and accomplished names to ever step between the ropes.

Mark Bravo: He is dangerous because he can beat you a hundred different ways. Suplexes, submissions, strikes, chokes, shortcuts if he needs them. Mike Best does not wrestle like a man looking for applause. He wrestles like a man looking for control.

Mike begins walking down the ramp.

His pace is steady.

Measured.

He does not slap hands.

He does not look into the crowd for approval.

The fans reach toward him anyway, the noise following him down the aisle as the camera pushes in close on his face.

John Phillips: We saw Mike Best make an immediate impact when he arrived in UTA. He stood across from Maxwell Jett, he stood across from Chris Ross, and he made one thing very clear. He did not come here to wait in line.

Mark Bravo: That is the thing about Mike. You can call it arrogance, you can call it confidence, you can call it whatever

you want. But when he says he belongs in the title picture, his résumé makes it hard to laugh him out of the room.

Mike reaches the lower part of the ramp and pauses.

For the first time, his eyes move away from the ring.

He looks toward the commentary desk.

Then toward the crowd.

Then back to the ring.

The camera catches his hand briefly flexing at his side, like he is already feeling the match before the champion even appears.

John Phillips: Mike Best has called this direct. He said if he comes for the champion, he does it face to face.

Mark Bravo: And tonight he gets exactly that. No Chris Ross in the building. No chaos from The Reaper of Harrisburg. Just Mike Best and Maxwell Jett for the UTA Championship.

John Phillips: But you have to wonder what kind of condition Maxwell Jett is in mentally. For weeks now, Chris Ross has been the shadow over his shoulder.

Mark Bravo: Maxwell Jett is arrogant enough to say he does not care. He is also smart enough to know that Ross being barred from the building does not erase the fact that Ross exists. But that is the champion's problem. Mike Best is not here to give him therapy. Mike Best is here to take the championship.

Mike climbs the steel steps and steps onto the apron.

He pauses there, looking out across Farmasi Arena as the music continues to pound through the building.

Then he wipes his boots once on the apron and enters through the ropes.

Inside the ring, Mike walks straight to the center.

He does not climb the turnbuckle.

He does not pose for the fans.

He simply stands there, rolling his neck once, then loosening his wrists as if the entire building has narrowed down to one point.

The UTA Championship.

John Phillips: Mike Best looks locked in tonight.

Mark Bravo: That should terrify Maxwell Jett. Because when Mike Best is locked in, he is not just trying to beat you. He is trying to take you apart and prove he was smarter than you before the bell even rang.

Mike backs into his corner as the music begins to fade.

He leans against the turnbuckles, arms draped across the top ropes, eyes locked on the entrance way.

Waiting.

No smile.

No impatience.

Just focus.

John Phillips: The challenger is here. Maxwell Jett is next.

Mark Bravo: And the UTA Championship is on the line.

The camera holds on Mike Best in the corner, the crowd buzzing around him as the champion's arrival looms.

The camera remains fixed on Mike Best in the corner.

The challenger does not move.

He waits with his arms draped across the top ropes, eyes locked on the entrance way, the crowd buzzing louder with every passing second.

John Phillips: Mike Best is in the ring, and now we await the UTA Champion.

Mark Bravo: And this is where things get interesting, John. Chris Ross has been barred from the building by Scott Stevens, but Maxwell Jett is not walking into this alone. He still has First Class.

John Phillips: Jacoby Jacobs and Darian Darrington have aligned themselves with the UTA Champion, and we know Maxwell Jett is at his most dangerous when he has people around him willing to tip the scales.

Mark Bravo: That is exactly why I keep coming back to Stevens granting this match. Mike Best gets the shot. Ross gets barred. First Class is still allowed to walk down with the champion. Maybe it is all above board. Maybe it is not. But I am watching Scott Stevens' fingerprints on this very closely.

The arena lights shift.

A single spotlight hits the stage like a red-carpet flash.

The first cocky notes of "Gold Standard" hit the sound system, arena-rock swagger rolling into heavy trap drums.

The boos come instantly.

Then louder.

Then louder still.

Maxwell Jett steps through the curtain in a designer robe, the UTA Championship wrapped around his waist, his smirk already in place before the camera even finds him fully.

He stops under the spotlight and closes his eyes, letting the boos wash over him like applause.

Then he mouths two words toward the crowd.

Maxwell Jett: Keep it coming.

The crowd responds with more venom.

John Phillips: And here he is. Maxwell Jett, the UTA Champion. The Platinum Pretender, as arrogant as ever.

Mark Bravo: He does not just enjoy being hated, John. He studies it. He weaponizes it. Maxwell Jett knows exactly how to find the crowd's hope and snap it in half.

Behind Jett, Jacoby Jacobs steps through the curtain first, looking out at the crowd with a grin that says he believes every seat in the building should have cost more.

Darian Darrington follows beside him, arms out, jawing toward the fans in the front rows before pointing proudly toward the champion.

First Class flanks Maxwell Jett from behind as the champion begins his slow walk down the ramp.

Jett has zero urgency.

He moves like the building belongs to him.

Like Mike Best is waiting because Maxwell Jett has allowed it.

Like the UTA Championship is not something he is defending, but something everyone else should be grateful to look at.

John Phillips: Jett is accompanied by Jacoby Jacobs and Darian Darrington, and Mike Best has not taken his eyes off any of them.

Mark Bravo: He knows what this is. Maxwell Jett is a technical wrestler, a con artist, and a champion with backup. If Mike spends even one second watching the wrong man, Jett can steal the match right out from under him.

Jett slowly points at a fan in the front row and shakes his head as if personally disappointed in them.

Jacoby laughs at it.

Darian leans over the barricade, shouting something at the same fan before turning back toward Jett and applauding.

Maxwell reaches the bottom of the ramp and pauses.

He looks up into the ring.

Mike Best looks back down at him.

The crowd noise changes.

Less reaction.

More anticipation.

John Phillips: There is the look. Challenger and champion, eyes locked.

Mark Bravo: Two very different kinds of dangerous. Mike Best will hurt you because it gives him control. Maxwell Jett will hurt you because it proves he was right about you.

Maxwell slowly removes the UTA Championship from around his waist and lifts it with one hand, raising it toward Mike Best.

Mike does not react.

Jett's smirk tightens.

He expected something.

Anger.

A step forward.

Any sign the bait landed.

Mike gives him nothing.

Maxwell Jett: This close, Mike.

Jett taps the championship faceplate with two fingers.

Maxwell Jett: And still not yours.

First Class laughs behind him.

Mike Best finally shifts in the corner, stepping forward just enough to make the referee glance over his shoulder.

Jett immediately backs away from the apron with a grin, lifting both hands as if Mike is the unreasonable one.

John Phillips: Maxwell Jett starting early.

Mark Bravo: Of course he is. He wants Mike annoyed before the bell. He wants Mike reaching. Because if Mike Best reaches, Maxwell Jett gets to pull him into a trap.

Jacoby and Darian move to either side of Jett as the champion finally climbs onto the apron.

He does not enter right away.

Instead, he stands there with the championship held against his chest, looking over the crowd with theatrical disgust.

Maxwell Jett: You people are about to watch greatness, and somehow you still look underdressed.

The boos roar again.

Jett smiles.

Then, with sudden sharpness, he slides through the ropes and into the ring.

The moment his boots hit the mat, the referee steps between him and Mike Best.

Mike has already left the corner.

Jett backs away, climbing the second rope in the nearest corner and holding the UTA Championship high while sneering into the crowd.

John Phillips: The champion is milking every second of this.

Mark Bravo: That is Maxwell Jett. The spotlight is not enough. He wants to control the temperature of the room.

Jett blows an exaggerated kiss toward the crowd, then drops down from the second rope.

Jacoby Jacobs and Darian Darrington remain on the outside, each taking position near opposite corners like they belong there.

The referee notices immediately and points toward them.

Referee: Back it up. Both of you. Stay off the apron.

Jacoby places a hand over his chest, offended.

Jacoby Jacobs: Man, we ain't even do anything.

Darian Darrington: Ref already hating success.

Maxwell Jett turns toward the referee, jawing before the match has even begun.

Maxwell Jett: They are here for moral support. I know that is a difficult concept in this company, but try to keep up.

Mike Best steps out of his corner again.

This time Jett turns toward him.

The smile fades.

Only for a second.

Then it comes back sharper.

Maxwell Jett: What? You wanted me face to face?

Jett steps forward, lifting the title between them.

Maxwell Jett: Here I am.

Mike looks at the championship.

Then at Jett.

He does not say a word.

The referee moves in and takes the UTA Championship from Maxwell.

Jett resists for half a beat, keeping one hand on the strap as if the official has not earned the right to touch it.

Then he lets go.

The referee raises the UTA Championship high above his head.

The crowd erupts.

John Phillips: That is what it is all about. The UTA Championship on the line in our main event.

Mark Bravo: Mike Best asked for this. Scott Stevens granted it. Chris Ross is barred from the building. First Class is at ringside. And Maxwell Jett has to defend the championship against one of the most dangerous men he could possibly face.

Mike Best rolls his shoulders in his corner.

Maxwell Jett paces in the opposite corner, jawing toward the referee, then toward Mike, then toward the crowd.

Jacoby and Darian settle on the outside, watching closely.

The referee hands the championship to the timekeeper.

Maxwell Jett's eyes follow it all the way out of the ring.

Mike Best's eyes stay on Maxwell Jett.

John Phillips: Challenger ready. Champion ready. First Class lurking.

Mark Bravo: And no Chris Ross. At least, that is what Scott Stevens promised.

The referee steps back toward the center.

The bell is coming.

The referee looks toward Mike Best.

Mike gives the smallest nod.

The referee turns toward Maxwell Jett.

Jett is still talking.

Not loudly.

Not wildly.

Just enough for Mike to hear him.

Maxwell Jett: You asked for this, Mike. Remember that.

Mike Best does not answer.

The referee checks the outside, making sure Jacoby Jacobs and Darian Darrington are both on the floor and away from the apron.

First Class raises their hands innocently.

Nobody believes them.

John Phillips: There is so much surrounding this match, but now it comes down to this. Mike Best. Maxwell Jett. UTA Championship.

Mark Bravo: And this is not just another title defense. Mike Best is a legend walking into the UTA Championship picture, and Maxwell Jett is the man holding the crown right now. This is the kind of match that tells you whether the present can survive the past walking through the door.

The referee steps back.

The crowd rises.

DING DING DING!

The bell rings.

Neither man moves right away.

Mike Best stays in his corner, one hand still lightly on the top rope, eyes fixed on Maxwell Jett.

Jett stands in the opposite corner, chin up, smirk in place, but there is a different kind of focus behind it now.

No more entrance.

No more championship presentation.

No more speeches.

Just the champion and the challenger.

John Phillips: You can feel the atmosphere shift.

Mark Bravo: This is what a big fight feels like, John. Nobody is rushing because nobody wants to make the first mistake.

Mike steps out first.

Slow.

Measured.

Maxwell steps out after him, circling to his left, never letting his back fully turn toward the challenger.

The crowd buzzes as both men move toward the center.

They do not lock up.

Not yet.

Mike shifts his weight forward.

Jett immediately takes a half-step back.

The crowd reacts.

Jett points at his own temple.

Maxwell Jett: Smart wrestling.

Mike's eyes narrow.

Mark Bravo: That right there is Maxwell Jett. He is not ashamed to back away. He will call it strategy every time.

John Phillips: But Mike Best is not going to chase blindly. That may frustrate Jett early.

Jett circles again, this time edging closer.

Mike raises both hands, offering the tie-up.

Jett looks at the hands.

Then at Mike.

Then he slowly reaches up.

The moment they almost touch, Jett pulls away and ducks through the ropes, forcing the referee to step in.

The boos roll through Farmasi Arena.

Referee: Come on, Max. Let's wrestle.

Maxwell Jett: I am wrestling. You're welcome for the education.

Mike stands in the center of the ring, expression unchanged.

Jacoby laughs from the outside.

Jacoby Jacobs: That's ring IQ right there!

Darian Darrington: Champion stuff!

Jett slowly pulls himself back through the ropes, smirking toward Mike as if he has already won the first exchange.

John Phillips: Maxwell Jett using the ropes before contact is even made.

Mark Bravo: And Mike Best is not giving him the reaction he wants. That is important. Maxwell feeds on frustration. Mike is making him work for it.

They circle again.

This time, Mike closes the distance quicker.

Jett reaches for a collar-and-elbow, but Mike snaps into a quick standing headlock before Jett can set his feet.

The crowd pops at the sudden control.

Jett immediately grabs at Mike's wrist, then the waist, then the side of the head, trying to find the escape.

Mike wrenches down and plants his weight.

John Phillips: Mike Best with the first clean hold of the match.

Mark Bravo: That is veteran control. Nothing flashy. Nothing wasted. He gets a grip and makes the champion deal with it.

Jett backs Mike toward the ropes, looking to shoot him off.

Mike holds on.

Jett tries again.

Mike drops his weight and twists, bringing Jett down to one knee while keeping the headlock tight.

Jett's smirk is gone now.

For the first time, the champion is working.

Maxwell Jett: Hair! Hair!

The referee checks immediately.

Referee: I don't see hair, Max.

Maxwell Jett: Then look harder!

Mike looks down at Jett, still holding the headlock.

Then he grinds it in a little tighter.

The crowd cheers.

John Phillips: Jett tried to complain his way out of that hold, and Mike just made it worse.

Mark Bravo: That is the difference when you are in there with a legend. The little tricks do not automatically work. Mike has seen every version of them.

Jett finally gets his feet under him and drives Mike backward into the ropes.

This time he shoots him off.

Mike hits the opposite side and comes back.

Jett drops down.

Mike steps over him and keeps moving.

Jett pops up for a leapfrog.

Mike stops short.

Jett lands awkwardly and turns around.

Mike catches him with a quick waistlock and snaps him backward with a clean belly-to-back suplex.

Jett hits the mat and rolls immediately toward the ropes, more shocked than hurt.

John Phillips: Mike Best read him perfectly!

Mark Bravo: Maxwell tried to run the classic sequence, and Mike just refused to be part of the choreography.

Jett sits near the ropes, one hand on the back of his head, staring at Mike.

Mike steps forward.

Jett immediately slides under the bottom rope and drops to the floor.

The boos return.

Jacoby and Darian move toward him quickly, forming a loose shield between Jett and the ring.

John Phillips: And Maxwell Jett goes to the outside.

Mark Bravo: Reset. Regroup. Talk to First Class. That is the champion's instinct, and honestly, that is why he is champion.

Inside the ring, Mike Best walks to the ropes and looks down at Jett.

Jett adjusts his wrist tape, then points up at him.

Maxwell Jett: That was cute. Very nostalgic. Did they teach that in 2009?

Mike leans over the top rope slightly.

Mike Best: Get in the ring.

The crowd reacts to the first words from Mike.

Jett smiles like he wanted the response.

Maxwell Jett: See? There he is.

Jacoby claps.

Jacoby Jacobs: Take your time, champ!

Darian Darrington: He been waiting years, he can wait ten more seconds!

The referee starts his count.

Referee: One!

Jett ignores it, pacing slowly on the floor.

Referee: Two!

John Phillips: Maxwell Jett trying to slow this match down after Mike Best got the better of the opening exchange.

Mark Bravo: And this is smart. The crowd wants a fight. Mike wants to get his hands on the champion. Maxwell wants everyone waiting on him.

Referee: Three!

Jett turns toward the announce desk and points at Mark Bravo.

Maxwell Jett: Tell them this is strategy.

Mark Bravo: I mean, he's not wrong.

John Phillips: He is also avoiding Mike Best.

Mark Bravo: Both things can be true.

Referee: Four!

Jett turns back toward the ring.

Mike has not moved from the ropes.

The two stare at each other.

Referee: Five!

Jett finally climbs onto the apron.

Mike steps back, giving him room.

That almost makes Jett hesitate.

He expected pressure.

Instead, Mike gives him space and waits.

Mark Bravo: That is a veteran move. Mike is not giving Jett the rope-break excuse. He is saying come back in and wrestle.

Jett slowly steps through the ropes.

The referee backs away.

The match resets.

This time, Jett's face is different.

Still arrogant.

Still smug.

But sharper now.

He knows Mike Best is not going to hand him the emotional mistake he wants.

Mike steps forward again.

Jett raises his hands.

They circle.

The crowd grows louder as they move toward each other.

This time, they lock up for real.

Collar and elbow in the center of the ring.

Mike drives forward first.

Jett plants his feet and shifts his hips, refusing to be moved easily.

For all the arrogance, for all the shortcuts, the champion can wrestle.

John Phillips: And there it is. Maxwell Jett standing his ground with Mike Best.

Mark Bravo: That is important too. We can talk about First Class, we can talk about the attitude, we can talk about the shortcuts, but Maxwell Jett is the man right now for a reason. He did not stumble into that championship.

Mike tries to turn him.

Jett pivots and hooks the arm, slipping behind into a hammerlock.

Mike reaches back, feeling for the grip.

Jett cranks it higher, then leans toward Mike's ear.

Maxwell Jett: Welcome to my era.

Mike lowers his head.

Then reverses with a sharp turn, rolling his shoulder through and catching Jett in a hammerlock of his own.

The crowd pops.

Jett grimaces, then reaches for the ropes.

Mike pulls him back before he can get there.

Jett's expression flashes with irritation.

John Phillips: Mike Best had the answer.

Mark Bravo: Of course he did. You do not survive as long as Mike Best has without answers.

Jett suddenly drops to one knee, rolls forward, and reverses the pressure into a wristlock.

He twists Mike's arm and immediately drives an elbow down across the shoulder joint.

Mike takes a step back.

Jett follows with a second elbow to the arm.

Then he yanks the wrist and pulls Mike into a short-arm knee to the ribs.

The crowd boos as Jett backs away with a smirk.

Maxwell Jett: Still here.

John Phillips: And that is the champion answering back.

Mark Bravo: That is exactly what Maxwell needed. Not a shortcut. Not First Class. Just a clean sequence that says, "I belong in this ring with you."

Mike straightens, one hand briefly touching his ribs.

Jett circles now, more confident than he was a minute ago.

Mike's eyes stay on him.

The crowd builds again, sensing the match settling into something deeper.

John Phillips: The first feeling-out process may be over. Both men have shown they can take control.

Mark Bravo: Now we find out who can keep it.

Mike Best steps forward.

Maxwell Jett steps forward too.

This time, neither man backs away.

Mike Best and Maxwell Jett meet again in the center of the ring.

No retreat this time.

No ducking through the ropes.

No slow circle to buy time.

Just champion and challenger, close enough now that the noise of Farmasi Arena feels like it is pressing down on both of them.

Maxwell Jett looks up at Mike Best and smirks.

Maxwell Jett: This is the part where you're supposed to intimidate me.

Mike says nothing.

Jett's smirk widens.

Maxwell Jett: Come on. Legend stuff. Give me chills.

Mike suddenly steps in.

Jett immediately drops low and shoots behind him, hooking Mike around the waist before the challenger can grab hold.

Jett lifts just enough to make Mike widen his base, then releases and slaps the back of Mike's head as he backs away.

The crowd erupts in boos.

Jett turns toward them, offended by the reaction.

Maxwell Jett: That was wrestling, you uncultured animals!

John Phillips: Maxwell Jett with the cheap slap off the waistlock, and that is exactly the kind of thing he does to get under the skin of an opponent.

Mark Bravo: It is also a test. He wants to know if Mike Best can keep calm when the champion starts disrespecting him.

Mike turns slowly.

Jett raises both hands, still backing away, still smiling.

Maxwell Jett: Easy. Easy. Don't pull a hamstring chasing the future.

Mike steps forward again.

This time Jett feints low, then pops up and catches Mike with a quick side headlock.

He grinds it in immediately, turning his body so the referee can see the control, then looks straight into the hard camera.

Maxwell Jett: Everybody at home, take notes. This is what greatness looks like before your favorite ruins it by trying hard.

Mike drives Jett toward the ropes.

Jett holds on tight, planting his feet.

Mike tries again.

Jett cinches harder and drops his weight, forcing Mike to work for the escape.

John Phillips: Maxwell Jett talking, but also keeping that hold applied tight.

Mark Bravo: That is what makes him dangerous. The mouth gets the attention, but the fundamentals keep him alive. He wants you annoyed enough to forget he can actually wrestle.

Mike finally gets both hands to Jett's waist and lifts.

Jett senses it and immediately drops to one knee, preventing the back suplex.

Then he shifts behind Mike, hooks the arm, and snaps him down with an arm wringer into a quick mat control.

The crowd boos again, but there is a grudging reaction beneath it.

Jett hears that too.

He smiles.

Maxwell Jett: I know. It's annoying when I'm right.

Jett drops a knee across Mike's shoulder and cranks the wrist back.

Mike grimaces, but quickly rolls through, getting to one knee.

Jett tries to keep the wrist.

Mike twists, steps over, and reverses into a front facelock.

The crowd cheers as Mike clamps down and begins to pull Jett toward the mat.

John Phillips: Mike Best reversing again!

Mark Bravo: That is why this is fascinating. Maxwell can wrestle. Mike can wrestle with anybody. Every time Jett thinks he has a layer, Mike has another answer.

Jett feels himself being dragged down and quickly posts on one hand.

Mike shifts his grip and snaps Jett over with a clean suplex.

Jett hits the mat and rolls toward the corner, clutching his lower back.

Mike follows, but Jett immediately grabs the bottom rope and points at the referee.

Maxwell Jett: Rope! Rope! Rope! Do your job before I file something.

The referee steps between them.

Referee: Back up, Mike.

Mike backs up after a beat.

Jett sits against the bottom turnbuckle, breathing through his nose, looking up at Mike with a little less amusement now.

Jacoby Jacobs walks closer on the outside, clapping loudly.

Jacoby Jacobs: Smart, champ! Make him wrestle your pace!

Darian Darrington: Mike looking frustrated already!

Mike glances briefly toward Darian.

Just briefly.

But Jett sees it.

The champion instantly slides forward and clips Mike behind the knee with a low kick.

Mike drops to one knee.

Jett pops up and drives a knee into the side of Mike's head.

Mike falls to one hand, and the crowd erupts in boos as Jett backs away, arms spread wide.

John Phillips: And there it is! First Class drew Mike's eyes for half a second, and Maxwell Jett pounced!

Mark Bravo: That is the champion. That is why he has the title. You give him half a mistake and he turns it into offense.

Jett steps over Mike and looks down at him.

Maxwell Jett: You're a legend, right?

Jett stomps Mike once in the shoulder.

Maxwell Jett: So do legendary stuff.

Another stomp.

Mike rolls toward the ropes, trying to create space.

Jett follows and plants a boot on the back of Mike's neck, pressing him down against the middle rope.

The referee immediately warns him.

Referee: Come on, Max! Get off the ropes!

Jett raises both hands like he is innocent while still using his boot to choke Mike across the strand.

Maxwell Jett: I'm not touching him with my hands!

Referee: One!

Referee: Two!

Referee: Three!

Referee: Four!

Jett steps away at the last possible moment.

Mike pulls himself back from the ropes, coughing once, more annoyed than hurt.

John Phillips: Maxwell Jett using the full count.

Mark Bravo: Classic champion's advantage. Break before five. Do damage before consequences. It is ugly, but it works.

Jett turns toward the crowd and slowly taps the side of his head.

Maxwell Jett: I'm not cheating. I'm maximizing.

The boos get louder.

Jett smiles like he just got exactly what he wanted.

He turns back toward Mike, who is now getting to one knee.

Jett grabs the wrist and twists the same arm he worked earlier, pulling Mike up into a hammerlock.

Mike tries to turn out, but Jett drives him shoulder-first into the corner.

Mike hits the turnbuckles and turns around.

Jett follows with a sharp running boot to the face.

The impact snaps Mike's head back.

Jett pulls him out of the corner and covers quickly, hooking the near leg.

Referee: One!

Referee: Two!

Mike kicks out.

Jett immediately sits up and holds two fingers right in the referee's face.

Maxwell Jett: That was three.

Referee: It was two.

Maxwell Jett: No, that was three in any country with a functioning education system.

The crowd boos again.

John Phillips: Maxwell Jett already arguing over the count.

Mark Bravo: That is part of the game too. Pressure the referee. Keep the match centered around yourself. Make everybody react to you.

Jett gets to his feet and pulls Mike up by the arm.

Mike suddenly fires a short forearm into Jett's ribs.

Jett's body folds for a second.

Mike fires another.

The crowd starts to build.

Jett backs up, and Mike rises with him.

Mike throws a knife-edge chop across Jett's chest.

The sound cracks through the arena.

Jett stumbles backward, eyes wide.

Mike throws another chop.

Jett backs into the ropes.

Mike grabs him and whips him across the ring.

Jett rebounds.

Mike lowers his base and launches him with a belly-to-belly suplex.

Jett crashes hard and rolls through, scrambling toward the corner.

John Phillips: Mike Best starting to turn this around!

Mark Bravo: And listen to this crowd! They know what they are watching. They know Mike Best is not here as nostalgia. He is here to win the UTA Championship.

Jett pulls himself up in the corner.

Mike charges.

Jett suddenly ducks between the ropes, forcing Mike to stop short again.

The referee steps in.

Mike's jaw tightens.

Jett smiles from between the ropes, breathing hard now but still smug.

Maxwell Jett: You hit hard.

A beat.

Maxwell Jett: For a guy from a museum.

Mike suddenly reaches past the referee, grabs Jett by the head, and yanks him out from between the ropes into the ring.

The crowd explodes.

John Phillips: Mike has had enough!

Mark Bravo: Jett kept poking, and he finally got the reaction!

Mike pulls Jett into a front facelock and lifts him for a snap suplex.

Jett floats over behind him.

Mike turns.

Jett jabs a thumb toward Mike's eye, hiding the motion from the referee with his own shoulder.

Mike recoils, one hand going to his face.

The crowd boos violently.

John Phillips: Oh come on! Jett went to the eyes!

Mark Bravo: Blatant to us, hidden from the referee. That is the Maxwell Jett special.

Jett immediately grabs Mike's arm, traps it, and drives him down with a hammerlock DDT.

Mike hits hard, shoulder and head driven into the canvas.

Jett rolls him over and hooks the leg, pressing his forearm across Mike's face for good measure.

Referee: One!

Referee: Two!

Mike kicks out.

The crowd cheers.

Jett kneels beside him, no longer arguing with the referee right away.

Instead, he looks down at Mike.

Then smiles.

Maxwell Jett: There we go.

Jett grabs Mike's arm again and drags him toward the center of the ring.

He plants one knee across the shoulder and starts bending the wrist back, isolating the arm with cruel precision.

John Phillips: Maxwell Jett going right back to the arm and shoulder.

Mark Bravo: And now we are seeing the champion's plan. If he can take away Mike's striking, take away the grip for those suplexes, take away the ability to cinch submissions, he starts making the legend wrestle with one wing.

Mike reaches with his free hand, trying to shift his hips.

Jett leans down closer.

Maxwell Jett: You wanted the champion.

He cranks the wrist harder.

Maxwell Jett: Congratulations.

Mike grimaces, but his eyes stay open.

Focused.

Angry now.

But not lost.

John Phillips: Maxwell Jett has taken over this match, but Mike Best is still very much in this fight.

Mark Bravo: This is where the champion has to be careful. He has control, but he cannot admire his own work too long.

Mike Best only needs one opening to make this very ugly.

Jett keeps the arm trapped as the crowd buzzes around them, First Class shouting from the floor and the UTA Championship waiting at ringside.

The main event has settled into Maxwell Jett's control.

For now.

Maxwell Jett keeps Mike Best grounded in the center of the ring, one knee pressed into the shoulder, both hands controlling the wrist.

Mike shifts his hips, searching for space.

Jett feels it and leans more weight down, trying to flatten him out.

Maxwell Jett: Stay there.

Mike does not.

He turns to one side, rolls through the pressure, and gets to one knee.

Jett hangs on to the arm, but Mike rotates under the grip, reverses the wrist, and suddenly Maxwell is the one bent at the waist.

The crowd pops.

John Phillips: Mike Best reverses the pressure!

Mark Bravo: That is not power. That is knowledge. That is years and years of being in every position imaginable and knowing where the exit is.

Jett's expression tightens as Mike controls the wrist.

Mike steps over the arm, spins through, and brings Jett down to a knee with a clean arm wringer.

Maxwell immediately rolls forward, kips just enough to relieve the pressure, and counters into a hammerlock.

The crowd reacts again, a little louder now.

John Phillips: Great counter by the champion!

Mark Bravo: And listen to this place. They hate Maxwell Jett, but they respect the wrestling. They know what they just saw.

Mike reaches back, grabs behind Jett's head, and drops to one knee, pulling Maxwell over his shoulder into a snapmare.

Jett lands seated.

Mike immediately wraps him in a rear chinlock.

Maxwell slips his chin free before Mike can fully cinch it, catches Mike's wrist, and rolls backward over his own shoulder, twisting out into a seated wristlock of his own.

The crowd applauds the exchange.

For a brief moment, it is not about who they like.

It is about the work.

John Phillips: Farmasi Arena appreciating what these two men are doing right now.

Mark Bravo: This is the big-match layer, John. Before the shortcuts, before the chaos, before the championship pressure boils over, you are seeing two world-class minds test each other hold for hold.

Mike rolls through again and pulls Maxwell into a headscissors on the mat.

Jett plants both hands, pauses, then bridges up with surprising control.

He twists his lower body, turns his hips, and slips free, immediately floating over into a front facelock.

Mike posts one foot.

Then the other.

He powers up just enough to force Maxwell backward.

Jett tries to hold the facelock.

Mike hooks the leg.

For a second, it looks like a suplex.

Jett blocks.

Mike tries again.

Jett blocks again, then spins behind and catches a waistlock.

Mike widens his base.

Maxwell tries to lift.

Mike does not move.

Maxwell shifts, ducks under, and rolls Mike forward into a quick pinning combination.

Referee: One!

Mike kicks out immediately and rolls through.

Both men get to their feet at the same time.

Maxwell shoots in.

Mike catches him in a front facelock.

Jett spins out.

Mike grabs the wrist.

Jett cartwheels through the pressure and lands on his feet.

Mike steps in and catches him with another headlock.

Jett pushes him off.

Mike hits the ropes.

Jett drops down.

Mike steps over.

Jett pops up.

Mike comes back.

Jett leapfrogs.

Mike stops short again, expecting the sequence.

This time, Jett lands clean, turns, and catches Mike's arm into a deep arm drag.

Mike rolls through and pops up.

Jett charges.

Mike catches him with an arm drag of his own.

Jett rolls to his feet.

Mike steps in.

Jett catches the wrist and pulls him into another quick pin.

Referee: One!

Mike kicks out and sweeps Jett's legs, dropping into a cover.

Referee: One!

Jett kicks out.

Both men scramble up again.

Mike ducks a clothesline.

Jett ducks a back elbow.

Mike turns.

Jett turns.

They stop, squared up in the center of the ring.

The crowd erupts.

John Phillips: What an exchange!

Mark Bravo: That is main event wrestling. That is the champion and the challenger showing exactly why this title is on the line between them tonight.

Mike Best looks at Maxwell Jett.

Maxwell looks back at Mike.

The boos soften for half a second, replaced by applause and that rolling sound of a crowd caught up in the match itself.

Even Maxwell hears it.

For a moment, he almost looks satisfied in a different way.

Not smug.

Validated.

Then the smirk returns.

Maxwell Jett: See? I told you people I was great.

The boos come roaring back.

John Phillips: And there he is again.

Mark Bravo: Maxwell Jett just cannot help himself.

Mike steps forward, but Maxwell raises a hand.

Maxwell Jett: No, no. Be honest, Mike.

Jett gestures around the arena.

Maxwell Jett: They forgot they loved you for about ten seconds because they were too busy realizing I'm better than advertised.

Mike's jaw shifts slightly.

Maxwell Jett: That bothers you, doesn't it?

Mike steps in and catches Jett with a quick forearm.

The crowd pops.

Jett staggers backward, one hand to his jaw.

He smiles.

Maxwell Jett: There it is.

Mike follows with another forearm.

Jett absorbs it against the ropes, then fires back with one of his own.

Mike answers.

Jett answers.

The crowd rises with every shot.

John Phillips: Now they are trading in the center!

Mark Bravo: This is dangerous territory for Maxwell. He can strike, but Mike Best can turn a fight ugly fast.

Mike gets the better of the exchange with a stiff forearm that sends Jett stumbling into the corner.

Mike moves in.

Jett suddenly reaches out and grabs Mike by the trunks, pulling him forward into the turnbuckles.

Mike stops himself before impact, but the referee's view is blocked for just a second by their bodies in the corner.

Jett uses that second.

He rakes Mike across the eyes with the laces of his wrist tape.

Mike recoils, turning away.

The crowd explodes in boos.

John Phillips: Oh, come on! After all of that, Jett goes right back to the eyes!

Mark Bravo: That is the champion's choice. He proved he could wrestle with Mike Best, and then the moment Mike started to win the fight, Maxwell went to the shortcut.

Jett grabs Mike from behind and drives a knee into the back of his leg.

Mike drops to one knee.

Jett immediately hits the ropes.

He comes back and drives a running knee into the back of Mike's head.

Mike drops forward to the mat.

Jett rolls him over and covers, hooking the leg tight.

Referee: One!

Referee: Two!

Mike kicks out.

The crowd cheers the kickout as Jett sits up, breathing harder now.

He looks toward the referee, then shakes his head.

Not a full argument this time.

He knows it was two.

He just hates that it was two.

John Phillips: Mike Best stays in it.

Mark Bravo: And now Maxwell Jett has a decision to make. He showed the world he can wrestle at Mike's level in spurts. But can he beat him without losing control of himself?

Jett gets to his feet and looks down at Mike.

The smirk is still there, but it is thinner now.

More forced.

Maxwell Jett: You had your moment.

He stomps Mike once in the shoulder.

Maxwell Jett: Now we go back to reality.

Jett reaches down, grabs Mike by the arm, and drags him toward the center of the ring.

Outside, Jacoby Jacobs and Darian Darrington watch closely but stay where they are.

No movement toward the apron.

No interference.

Not yet.

This is still Maxwell Jett's match to control.

And he knows it.

John Phillips: First Class is watching, but Maxwell Jett is doing this himself right now.

Mark Bravo: That might matter to him, John. The champion wants to prove he belongs across from a legend. He just also wants to prove it on his terms, and his terms always come with a thumb to the eye.

Jett drops down and traps Mike's arm again, turning the wrist outward and pressing his forearm across Mike's jaw.

Mike shifts underneath him, breathing through the discomfort.

The match slows again, but the tension does not fade.

Maxwell Jett has control.

Mike Best has patience.

And the UTA Championship hangs over every second.

Maxwell Jett keeps the arm trapped, forearm grinding across Mike Best's jaw as the crowd rumbles around them.

Mike shifts his legs, trying to turn his hips underneath the pressure.

Jett feels the movement and immediately slides his weight higher, pressing his chest down across Mike's shoulder.

Maxwell Jett: No, no, no. You stay where I put you.

Mike plants one boot against the canvas.

Then the other.

Jett cranks the wrist outward, trying to keep him flat.

Mike grimaces, but he keeps rising.

John Phillips: Mike Best trying to work his way back up, but Maxwell Jett has stayed on that arm and shoulder.

Mark Bravo: This is smart championship wrestling. Mike Best is dangerous everywhere, but if Jett can make that arm unreliable, he can change the entire match.

Mike gets to one knee.

Jett snaps a knee into the side of Mike's ribs.

Mike absorbs it.

Jett hits another.

Mike's grip loosens for a second, and Jett uses it to twist the arm again, stepping over and wrenching the shoulder back.

Mike lowers his head, breathing through it.

Then he reaches up with his free hand and grabs the back of Jett's head.

Jett's eyes widen just slightly.

Mike pulls him down and drives a short headbutt into Jett's chest.

Not pretty.

Not clean.

Effective.

Jett stumbles back a step, clutching his sternum.

John Phillips: Mike Best just created some space the hard way.

Mark Bravo: That is what Mike can do. If technique does not solve it fast enough, he will make it ugly.

Mike rises, still favoring the arm slightly.

Jett comes back in with a quick kick to the midsection.

Mike catches the leg.

The crowd rises.

Jett immediately reaches for Mike's face, but Mike turns away just enough to avoid another rake.

Mike pulls Jett in and dumps him overhead with a capture suplex.

Jett lands hard and rolls through to the ropes, kicking the mat in frustration as he scrambles away.

John Phillips: Capture suplex by Mike Best!

Mark Bravo: And look where Maxwell went. Right back to the ropes. Right back to the safest place in the ring.

Jett sits against the bottom rope, eyes locked on Mike.

Mike steps forward, rolling his sore shoulder once.

Jett lifts a hand and points toward the referee.

Maxwell Jett: Keep him back. You saw the closed fist. You saw it.

Referee: Get up, Max.

Maxwell Jett: Oh, I'm sorry. Are you officiating or auditioning for his fan club?

The referee leans down, warning Jett to get back into the match.

Jett nods as if he is listening.

He is not.

He reaches through the ropes and grabs the bottom strand with one hand, still buying time.

Mike waits in the center of the ring.

The crowd starts clapping, not for a comeback yet, but for the pressure of the moment.

John Phillips: Maxwell Jett has done this repeatedly tonight, but it feels different now. Mike is not chasing. He is making the champion come back to him.

Mark Bravo: That is the legend's patience. Mike Best understands that every second Maxwell spends stalling is a second Maxwell is admitting he needs the stall.

Jett slowly pulls himself up.

He adjusts his wrist tape.

He smooths his hair.

He takes one more breath.

Then he steps forward.

Mike meets him immediately with a knee to the body.

Jett folds.

Mike hooks him around the waist and launches him with a belly-to-belly suplex.

Jett rolls across the canvas, clutching his back.

Mike follows.

Jett gets up near the ropes and throws a wild forearm.

Mike ducks under it, catches Jett from behind, and throws him again with a belly-to-back suplex.

The crowd gets louder.

John Phillips: Mike Best starting to stack the suplexes!

Mark Bravo: This is where the match can get away from Maxwell fast. Mike Best can chain these together and leave you wondering where your air went.

Jett rolls onto his side, trying to get away.

Mike grabs him by the waist again.

Jett throws an elbow back.

Mike absorbs it and holds on.

Jett throws another.

Mike ducks his head and keeps the grip.

Then Mike snaps him backward with a German suplex.

Jett lands high on the shoulders and rolls through, ending up near the corner.

Jacoby Jacobs and Darian Darrington react on the floor, but neither man moves toward the apron.

Jacoby Jacobs: Champ! Champ, breathe!

Darian Darrington: You good, Max! You good!

Maxwell Jett does not look good.

He looks rattled.

He pulls himself into the corner and tries to sit up.

Mike Best stands across from him, breathing heavier now but fully in control for the first time in several minutes.

John Phillips: First Class is watching, but they have not gotten involved. Maxwell Jett has to survive Mike Best right now on his own.

Mark Bravo: And this is the problem. Maxwell can wrestle at an elite level, but Mike Best has gears that feel mean. When he starts throwing you around, the match stops feeling like a chess game and starts feeling like survival.

Mike moves in.

Jett grabs the middle rope with both hands, forcing Mike to reach down and peel him away.

Mike gets one hand on Jett's wrist.

Jett suddenly kicks upward from the corner, catching Mike in the shoulder he has been targeting.

Mike steps back, wincing.

Jett quickly pulls himself to his feet and kicks the shoulder again.

Mike staggers.

Jett grabs the arm, steps through, and snaps it down over his own shoulder, jolting the joint.

Mike drops to one knee.

John Phillips: Jett goes right back to the arm!

Mark Bravo: That is the champion's survival skill. He got thrown all over the ring, but he remembered the target.

Jett hits the ropes.

He comes back and drives a knee into the side of Mike's head.

Mike drops to the mat.

Jett does not cover immediately.

He rolls to the ropes instead, breathing hard, one hand on his lower back after the suplexes.

The crowd boos, but there is tension beneath it.

Both men have damage now.

Both men have targets.

John Phillips: This match is starting to take a toll on both men.

Mark Bravo: And that is what makes it feel important. Mike Best has hurt Maxwell's body. Maxwell Jett has hurt Mike's arm. Now the question is who can make their damage matter more.

Jett crawls toward Mike and finally makes the cover, hooking the far leg.

Referee: One!

Referee: Two!

Mike kicks out.

Jett rolls onto his back and laughs once.

It is not joy.

It is frustration wearing expensive clothes.

Maxwell Jett: Of course.

He sits up and looks toward the hard camera.

Maxwell Jett: This is what you wanted, right?

He points down at Mike.

Maxwell Jett: Your legend. Your hero. Your nostalgia act.

Jett pushes himself to his feet and stomps Mike in the damaged shoulder.

Maxwell Jett: Watch closely.

Another stomp.

Maxwell Jett: I'm going to update the archives.

Mike rolls toward the ropes, protecting the arm.

Jett follows, grabs the wrist, and drags Mike away from the ropes with effort.

He steps over the arm, twisting it into position.

John Phillips: Maxwell Jett may be looking for the Long Island Lock.

Mark Bravo: If he gets that armbar locked in, the damage he has done to Mike's shoulder becomes a major problem.

Jett tries to drop back into the armbar.

Mike immediately clasps his hands together before Jett can fully extend the arm.

Jett pulls.

Mike holds.

Jett plants a boot against Mike's face and pushes, trying to break the grip.

Mike's shoulders tighten.

The referee drops down beside them.

Referee: Mike, you want to give it up?

Mike shakes his head.

Jett grinds his boot harder against Mike's jaw.

Maxwell Jett: Tap before I make it permanent.

Mike refuses.

The crowd starts to build.

Slow at first.

Then louder.

Mike pulls his knees underneath him, still keeping his hands clasped.

Jett tries to extend again.

Mike rolls his weight toward Jett, stacking the champion's shoulders down.

Referee: One!

Referee: Two!

Jett releases to avoid the pin.

Both men scramble apart.

Mike gets to one knee, holding the arm.

Jett gets to his feet first and charges.

Mike suddenly explodes upward with a running full-weight lariat from close range.

Jett turns inside out and crashes to the mat.

John Phillips: Lariat! Mike Best just folded the champion!

Mark Bravo: That came from nowhere! Bad arm or not, Mike Best found a way to throw everything behind that shot!

Both men are down.

Mike rolls onto his back, clutching his shoulder.

Jett lies on the canvas, one arm across his chest, blinking up at the lights.

The crowd rises into a full roar now, the main event hitting another level.

John Phillips: Both men down in the UTA Championship main event!

Mark Bravo: This is the match Maxwell wanted to prove he belongs in, and this is the match Mike Best wanted to remind everyone who he is. Now they both have to get up.

The referee looks at both competitors and begins the count.

Referee: One!

Mike turns onto his side.

Referee: Two!

Jett rolls toward the ropes.

Referee: Three!

First Class watches from the floor, tense but still staying back.

Referee: Four!

Mike reaches toward the mat with his good arm.

Referee: Five!

Jett grabs the middle rope and starts pulling himself up.

Mike pushes to one knee.

Referee: Six!

The crowd claps in rhythm now.

Referee: Seven!

Jett reaches his feet near the ropes.

Mike rises in the center.

The referee stops the count.

Both men look across the ring at each other.

Jett's smirk is gone.

Mike's patience is still there.

But now there is fire behind it.

John Phillips: They are both up.

Mark Bravo: And now we see what they have left.

Maxwell Jett steps away from the ropes.

Mike Best steps forward from the center.

The crowd swells again.

The UTA Championship remains waiting at ringside.

And neither man is backing down.

Mike Best and Maxwell Jett step toward each other, both men breathing harder now, both men carrying the damage of the match.

Jett is near the ropes, one hand briefly touching his ribs after the lariat.

Mike is in the center, rolling the shoulder Maxwell has been targeting, trying to force feeling back into the arm.

The crowd rises with them.

John Phillips: This main event has started to turn into a war of attrition.

Mark Bravo: And that favors Mike Best if Maxwell cannot keep the target isolated. The longer this becomes a fight, the more Mike's experience and cruelty start to matter.

Jett moves first, snapping a quick kick toward Mike's damaged arm.

Mike pulls it back just in time.

Jett tries again, stepping in with a sharp forearm.

Mike blocks with his good arm and answers with one of his own.

Jett staggers back.

Mike follows.

Another forearm.

Then another.

Jett is forced backward toward the ropes, his eyes widening as the challenger starts to close the space.

John Phillips: Mike Best is starting to walk the champion down.

Mark Bravo: That is bad news for Maxwell. He wants angles. He wants traps. He does not want Mike Best in his face throwing heavy leather.

Jett throws a desperate thumb toward the eye.

Mike catches the wrist.

The crowd erupts.

Jett freezes.

Mike looks at the hand.

Then at Jett.

Mike Best: No.

Mike twists the wrist hard, forcing Jett down to one knee.

Jett shouts in pain, trying to roll through, but Mike keeps the grip and yanks him back into a short knee to the body.

Jett folds.

Mike keeps the wrist and pulls him into another knee.

Then another.

Jett drops to both knees, one arm wrapped across his midsection.

John Phillips: Maxwell went back to the eyes, and Mike Best was ready for him.

Mark Bravo: That might be the turning point. Jett has gotten mileage out of those shortcuts tonight, but Mike just took one away from him.

Mike grabs Jett by the head and pulls him up.

Jett fires a quick shot to the ribs, trying to get separation.

Mike absorbs it and snaps Jett over with a Northern Lights suplex.

He bridges.

Referee: One!

Referee: Two!

Jett kicks out.

Mike rolls through with him, maintaining waist control.

The crowd buzzes as Mike drags Jett back up.

John Phillips: Mike held on!

Mark Bravo: Suplex chain. This is where Mike Best starts making the match feel like a clinic with bad intentions.

Mike lifts Jett again, this time snapping him over with a belly-to-belly suplex.

Jett hits hard and rolls toward the corner, clutching his lower back.

Mike does not rush.

He walks after him.

That makes it worse.

Jett reaches the corner and pulls himself up, trying to breathe, trying to reset, trying to find any version of the match where he is still in charge.

Mike closes in and drives a knife-edge chop across Jett's chest.

The crowd reacts to the crack.

Jett drops to a seated position in the corner, face twisted in pain.

Mike grabs the top rope with his good hand, leans in, and starts driving short knees into Jett's body.

One.

Two.

Three.

The referee steps in and warns him.

Referee: Mike, get him out of the corner!

Mike backs away before the count can really begin.

He holds both hands up for half a second.

Then he turns and looks out at Jacoby Jacobs and Darian Darrington.

First Class is tense now.

They are not moving in.

But for the first time, they look less cocky and more concerned.

Jacoby Jacobs: Max, you good?

Darian Darrington: Shake it off, champ!

Mike looks down at them.

Then back at Jett.

He smiles for the first time.

Mark Bravo: That is not a friendly smile.

John Phillips: Mike Best knows he has the champion hurt.

Mike reaches down and drags Jett out of the corner by the ankle.

Jett tries to kick him away, but Mike steps through the legs and turns him over into a sharp, grinding half crab.

Jett immediately claws at the canvas.

The crowd rises again.

John Phillips: Mike Best now going to a submission!

Mark Bravo: And notice the strategy. Maxwell targeted Mike's arm, so Mike is going after the body and legs. Take away the base. Take away the escape routes. Make the champion crawl.

Jett reaches toward the ropes, but Mike sits back hard, pulling him away from them.

Jett's hand slaps the mat once, not a tap, just frustration.

Maxwell Jett: No! No, no, no!

The referee drops down beside him.

Referee: Max, do you give?

Maxwell Jett: Do I look like I give?

Mike leans back farther.

Jett's bravado cracks into a shout of pain.

The crowd pops at the sound.

John Phillips: Maxwell Jett is in trouble!

Mark Bravo: And this is where pride becomes dangerous. Maxwell does not want to look weak. He does not want to be seen suffering. But Mike Best is making everyone watch him suffer.

Jett plants both hands and starts crawling again.

Mike tries to drag him back, but the damaged shoulder limits how much leverage he can keep.

Jett senses it.

He twists his hips, turns slightly, and kicks backward into Mike's arm.

Mike grimaces, the hold loosening just enough.

Jett lunges forward and grabs the bottom rope.

Referee: Rope break! Mike, let it go!

Mike holds until two.

Referee: One!

Referee: Two!

Then he releases.

Jett pulls himself halfway under the bottom rope, chest heaving, hair falling across his face.

Mike backs away slowly.

John Phillips: Jett gets to the ropes, but Mike Best has changed the tone of this match.

Mark Bravo: The champion is not performing anymore. He is surviving.

Jett rolls to the apron, trying to create distance.

The referee checks on him.

Jett waves him off angrily, but his leg is clearly bothering him.

Mike reaches through the ropes and grabs Jett by the head.

Jett snaps a quick rope-assisted jawbreaker, dropping Mike throat-first across the top rope.

Mike staggers backward, coughing.

Jett stays on the apron, holding the middle rope to keep himself upright.

For a second, it looks like the champion may have stopped the momentum.

Mike turns back toward him.

Jett tries to sling himself through the ropes with a shoulder to the midsection.

Mike catches him in a front facelock.

The crowd explodes.

John Phillips: Mike caught him!

Mark Bravo: Maxwell thought he had the opening, and Mike just closed the door.

Mike drags Jett through the ropes and plants him with a snap DDT in the center of the ring.

Jett spikes into the mat and rolls onto his back.

Mike covers.

Referee: One!

Referee: Two!

Jett kicks out.

The crowd groans, then cheers the match continuing.

John Phillips: Near fall! Mike Best almost had the UTA Championship!

Mark Bravo: And Maxwell Jett is starting to run out of clean resets. Every escape is costing him more now.

Mike sits up beside Jett.

He looks at the referee, not arguing, just confirming the count.

Then he turns back to the champion.

Jett is rolling toward his stomach, trying to push up.

Mike grabs him around the waist again.

The crowd rises immediately.

John Phillips: Mike Best may be thinking another German suplex!

Jett grabs at Mike's hands, desperately trying to break the grip.

Mike lifts.

Jett lands behind him.

Mike turns.

Jett swings for a back elbow.

Mike ducks and catches him in a standing headlock.

Jett tries to push him off.

Mike refuses to move.

Instead, Mike transitions behind him, hooks both arms briefly, and dumps Jett with a sharp tiger-style suplex release.

Jett lands hard and rolls to his side, clutching the back of his neck.

John Phillips: Another suplex! Mike Best is taking control!

Mark Bravo: He is making this miserable for Maxwell. It is not one big move. It is the accumulation. Every throw takes a little more arrogance out of the champion's body.

Mike pushes himself up, shaking out the damaged arm again.

He walks toward Jett, who is now crawling toward the ropes.

Jett reaches out.

Mike steps on his hand.

The crowd reacts with a mix of cheers and gasps.

Jett looks up, furious and pained.

Maxwell Jett: Get off me!

Mike leans down slightly.

Mike Best: Make me.

The crowd pops.

Mike releases the hand only to pull Jett up again.

He hooks him around the waist, powers him up, and drives him down with a spinning spinebuster.

Jett hits hard.

Mike stays on him for the cover.

Referee: One!

Referee: Two!

Jett gets the shoulder up.

Mike sits back on his knees.

The crowd is fully behind the drama now.

John Phillips: Another near fall for Mike Best!

Mark Bravo: Maxwell Jett is still champion because he keeps surviving by inches. But Mike Best has moved this match into his world.

Mike rises slowly.

Jett rolls toward the corner, eyes glazed, chest heaving.

Jacoby and Darian stay on the outside, their confidence now visibly shaken.

Mike Best stands tall in the center of the ring, damaged arm hanging slightly lower than the other, but control clearly in his hands.

Maxwell Jett pulls himself up in the corner, trying to find the champion's swagger again.

It is not there.

Not right now.

Right now, the UTA Champion is looking at a legend who has started to take him apart.

John Phillips: Mike Best has control of the UTA Championship main event.

Mark Bravo: And Maxwell Jett needs an answer fast, because this is starting to look like Mike's kind of fight.

Maxwell Jett pulls himself up in the corner, one hand on the middle rope, the other pressed against the back of his neck.

Mike Best stands across from him, breathing steadily, damaged arm still hanging a little lower, but his eyes never leaving the champion.

Jett tries to force the smirk back onto his face.

It barely gets there.

Maxwell Jett: That all you got?

Mike steps forward.

Jett's expression flickers.

He knows the answer is no.

John Phillips: Maxwell Jett trying to talk himself back into control here.

Mark Bravo: That is usually where he lives, John. He controls the pace, controls the emotion, controls the conversation. But Mike Best has stopped listening.

Mike closes the distance and drives a shoulder into Jett's midsection.

Jett folds against the turnbuckles.

Mike drives another shoulder in.

Then another.

The referee steps closer, warning him to bring it out of the corner.

Referee: Come on, Mike! Out of the corner!

Mike backs away at three, holding up one hand.

Jett slumps forward, gasping.

Then Mike steps right back in, grabs him by the wrist, and whips him across the ring.

Jett hits the opposite turnbuckles hard, chest-first, and staggers backward.

Mike catches him from behind and launches him with a release German suplex.

Jett lands high on the shoulders and rolls over onto his stomach, kicking at the canvas.

John Phillips: German suplex! Mike Best is overwhelming the champion!

Mark Bravo: Maxwell is not getting reset time anymore. Mike is making every breath expensive.

On the outside, Jacoby Jacobs takes two steps toward the apron, hands on his head.

Jacoby Jacobs: Ref, check him! Check his neck!

Darian Darrington moves along the floor on the opposite side, watching Mike with increasing concern.

Darian Darrington: Max, roll out! Roll out, man!

The referee glances toward Jacoby and points firmly.

Referee: Stay back!

Jacoby freezes, palms up.

Jacoby Jacobs: I'm concerned for athlete safety!

Inside the ring, Mike ignores them completely.

He grabs Jett by the ankle and drags him back toward the center before the champion can crawl to the ropes.

Jett twists, trying to kick him away.

Mike catches the leg, steps through, and folds Jett into a sharp kneebar attempt.

The crowd rises as Jett immediately sits up in panic.

John Phillips: Mike Best going back to the leg! He is not letting Maxwell get away!

Mark Bravo: That is the mark of someone who knows exactly what he is doing. Jett keeps escaping to the ropes, so Mike is taking away the engine that gets him there.

Jett claws at Mike's hands, trying to pry his leg free.

Mike shifts his hips and torques the knee.

Jett shouts, the pain cutting through whatever arrogance he was trying to wear.

Referee: Max, do you submit?

Maxwell Jett: No!

Jett reaches out, but the ropes are too far away.

Jacoby starts pacing harder on the outside now, no longer pretending to be calm.

Jacoby Jacobs: Come on, Max! Turn! Turn!

Darian slaps the apron once, then immediately steps back when the referee looks over.

Darian Darrington: I ain't touching nothing! I ain't touching nothing!

John Phillips: First Class is starting to get anxious out here.

Mark Bravo: They are watching the plan fall apart. Maxwell Jett has been doing this mostly on his own, but Mike Best is starting to make them think about Plan B.

Jett rolls his body, trying to turn onto his stomach.

Mike keeps the leg trapped and transitions with him, shifting into a grinding single-leg crab.

Jett's chest hits the mat, and his hands slap down hard.

The referee drops low again.

Referee: Ask him!

Maxwell Jett: I said no!

Mike sits deeper into the hold.

Jett bites down on his own wrist tape, refusing to give the crowd the satisfaction of another scream.

It does not work.

The pain forces one out anyway.

John Phillips: Maxwell Jett is trapped!

Mark Bravo: And listen to this crowd. They can feel the UTA Championship starting to slip away from him.

Jett crawls.

Slowly.

Desperately.

One hand reaches forward.

Then the other.

Mike drags him back a half-step.

The crowd erupts.

Jacoby turns away, hands clasped over his head, then looks back because he cannot help himself.

Jacoby Jacobs: Max! Max, don't you dare!

Darian moves toward the corner again, eyes locked on the referee, but still does not step up.

The tension on the outside is beginning to boil.

Inside, Jett makes one final lunge.

His fingers graze the bottom rope.

Miss.

He pulls again.

This time he gets it.

Referee: Rope break! Mike, break it!

Mike holds until three.

Referee: One!

Referee: Two!

Referee: Three!

Then Mike releases and steps back.

Jett rolls under the bottom rope to the apron, clutching his leg, breathing hard.

Jacoby immediately rushes toward him.

Darian does the same from the other side.

The referee leans through the ropes, pointing at both men.

Referee: Back up! Both of you, back up!

Jacoby stops short, hands raised, but his eyes never leave Maxwell.

Jacoby Jacobs: We're just checking on our guy!

Darian Darrington: He got a right to breathe, ref!

Mike watches from inside the ring.

He sees the movement.

He sees the panic.

And he does not wait for the referee to restore order.

Mike reaches over the top rope, grabs Jett by the head, and starts dragging him back in.

Jett grabs the top rope with both hands, trying to anchor himself.

Mike pulls harder.

Jett's feet kick against the apron.

Jacoby takes another step forward.

The referee snaps toward him.

Referee: I said back up!

Jacoby freezes again, but his jaw is clenched now.

Darian paces, almost vibrating with the need to do something.

Mark Bravo: First Class is right on the edge, John.

John Phillips: They have not interfered, but they are getting closer and closer to that line.

Mike finally pulls Jett through the ropes and into the ring.

Jett stumbles forward on the bad leg.

Mike catches him immediately and hooks him for another suplex.

Jett throws desperate body shots into Mike's ribs.

Mike holds on.

Jett throws another.

Mike absorbs it and lifts.

Jett goes up.

Then down hard with a snap suplex in the center of the ring.

Mike floats into the cover.

Referee: One!

Referee: Two!

Jett kicks out.

Mike does not waste time.

He pulls Jett up again.

Jett is rubber-legged now, one hand instinctively reaching for Mike's damaged arm.

Mike catches him before he can attack it, transitions behind, and drops him with a Russian legsweep.

Jett hits the mat and rolls to his side.

John Phillips: Mike Best keeps finding answers. Every time Maxwell reaches for that arm, Mike cuts him off.

Mark Bravo: That is how you know the momentum has changed. Earlier, Maxwell dictated the target. Now he is reaching for it out of desperation.

Mike gets to his feet and looks down at Jett.

The champion is on his hands and knees.

Mike steps behind him and starts to pull the arms back, looking to trap him.

John Phillips: Mike may be looking for The Gilded Cage!

Mark Bravo: If he gets that chicken wing Muta lock cinched in, Maxwell Jett may have nowhere to go.

Jett senses the danger immediately.

His eyes go wide.

He kicks backward with his bad leg, flailing more than striking.

Mike keeps trying to thread the arm.

Jett crawls forward, clawing at the canvas, trying to stay loose before Mike can fully lock it in.

Jacoby and Darian move closer again on the floor.

The crowd boos them before they even touch anything.

The referee hears it and turns sharply.

Referee: Stay back! This is your last warning!

Darian throws his hands out, frustrated.

Darian Darrington: We ain't done nothing!

Jacoby Jacobs: Why you watching us? Watch the match!

That half-second of movement outside is enough to make Jett twist his body and roll toward the ropes.

Mike tries to hold on, but Jett slips free before The Gilded Cage can be locked.

Jett drops to the floor, landing awkwardly on his bad leg and stumbling into the barricade.

Jacoby and Darian immediately move toward him, but this time they stop just far enough away to avoid the referee's direct accusation.

John Phillips: Maxwell escapes to the floor before Mike can lock in The Gilded Cage.

Mark Bravo: And First Class is becoming part of the atmosphere now, even if they have not physically interfered. Their presence is forcing the referee to look, forcing Mike to account for them, forcing the match to carry their tension.

Inside the ring, Mike Best stands near the ropes, staring down at Maxwell Jett.

The champion leans against the barricade, one hand on his leg, one hand on his neck, breathing hard.

The smirk is completely gone.

First Class hovers nearby, anxious, restless, desperate to help but not yet crossing the line.

Mike looks from Jett to Jacoby.

Then from Jacoby to Darian.

Then back to Jett.

Mike Best: Bring him back.

Jacoby's mouth opens.

For once, nothing comes out right away.

Darian looks from Mike to Maxwell, then back to Mike.

The referee begins the count.

Referee: One!

Maxwell Jett stays on the floor, trying to recover.

Referee: Two!

Mike Best waits inside the ring, fully in control now.

First Class circles the champion like nervous bodyguards around a collapsing throne.

John Phillips: Mike Best is in control of the UTA Championship match, and First Class can feel it slipping away.

Mark Bravo: They are getting antsy. They are getting desperate. And the longer Mike Best controls this, the harder it is going to be for Jacoby and Darian to keep their hands to themselves.

Referee: Three!

Maxwell Jett stays on the floor, one hand on the barricade, the other pressed against his leg.

Jacoby Jacobs leans close, talking fast.

Darian Darrington keeps looking back at the ring, his body tense, his hands flexing at his sides.

Referee: Four!

Inside the ring, Mike Best does not pace.

He does not argue.

He waits.

That somehow makes it worse.

John Phillips: Mike Best is not chasing. He is not giving Maxwell Jett the escape route he wants.

Mark Bravo: And First Class knows it. They can feel this slipping. The longer Maxwell stays out there, the more desperate this gets.

Referee: Five!

Jett finally pushes away from the barricade, shaking his head like he is trying to clear the pain, the pressure, and the reality of the match all at once.

Jacoby pats him on the shoulder.

Jacoby Jacobs: You got this, Max. You good. You the champ.

Darian Darrington: We right here. We right here.

Referee: Six!

Maxwell looks up at Mike.

Mike stares back down at him.

No words.

Just the invitation.

Get back in.

Referee: Seven!

Jett limps toward the apron.

Jacoby moves with him.

Darian moves too.

The referee immediately steps toward the ropes, pointing down at them.

Referee: Back up! Let him in!

Jett grabs the bottom rope and starts to pull himself onto the apron.

Mike steps forward.

Jett's eyes widen.

Jacoby jumps onto the apron.

The crowd erupts in boos.

John Phillips: Jacoby Jacobs is on the apron!

Mark Bravo: Here we go. They couldn't help themselves.

The referee immediately turns toward Jacoby.

Referee: Get down! Get down right now!

Jacoby holds both hands up, backing along the apron but not stepping off.

Jacoby Jacobs: I'm just making sure he gets in safe! This is about safety!

On the opposite side, Darian Darrington slides under the bottom rope.

The crowd noise spikes even louder.

John Phillips: Darian is in the ring!

Mark Bravo: And now Mike Best has to take his eyes off the champion!

Mike turns as Darian steps forward.

Darian does not throw a punch.

Not yet.

He just gets between Mike and Maxwell.

Mike's expression changes.

Not surprised.

Almost disappointed.

Mike Best: Move.

Darian glances toward Maxwell on the apron.

Jacoby drops down from the apron and slides into the ring behind Mike.

The referee whips around and sees it.

Referee: Hey! Both of you, out! Out now!

Jacoby and Darian stand on either side of Mike Best.

Maxwell Jett rolls under the bottom rope and into the ring, staying low near the corner, still clutching his leg but now watching the numbers shift.

The boos are deafening.

John Phillips: First Class has entered the ring, and this official has completely lost control of the situation!

Mark Bravo: They have been getting closer and closer to the line, and now they just stepped over it.

Mike looks from Jacoby to Darian.

Then toward Maxwell.

The champion pulls himself up in the corner, smirk slowly returning as he sees Mike surrounded.

Maxwell Jett: Careful, Mike.

Jett straightens, using the turnbuckles for support.

Maxwell Jett: You wanted face to face.

He gestures toward Jacoby and Darian.

Maxwell Jett: Now you get the whole room.

Mike steps toward Maxwell.

Darian immediately moves in front of him.

Mike shoves Darian back with one hand.

Jacoby steps in from behind, and Mike turns fast enough that Jacoby stops short.

The crowd rises, sensing the fight about to explode.

John Phillips: Mike Best is outnumbered three to one!

Mark Bravo: And remember, Chris Ross has been barred from the building. There is nobody coming through that curtain. At least, there should not be.

The referee tries to step between them, but there are too many bodies now.

Referee: Enough! Out of the ring! I'm telling you right now!

Jacoby ignores him.

Darian ignores him.

Maxwell Jett limps out of the corner, staying behind his two First Class allies.

Mike backs up one step.

Then another.

Not out of fear.

Out of necessity.

First Class presses forward, forcing Mike Best back toward the ropes.

John Phillips: Mike is being pushed back to the ropes, and this thing is seconds away from breaking down!

Mark Bravo: The referee has to throw this out or get control right now. This is about to become a mugging.

Mike's back nears the ropes.

Darian steps closer.

Jacoby moves to the side.

Maxwell Jett stands behind them, one hand on his leg, the other pointing at Mike like he is giving the order without saying it.

The crowd is roaring now.

The referee is shouting.

First Class is closing in.

Mike Best lowers his stance, ready to swing first if he has to.

And then—

The lights go out.

Total darkness.

The roar of the crowd turns into a massive, confused explosion.

John Phillips: What the—

Mark Bravo: The lights are out!

Nothing can be seen.

Only the sound of thousands of fans screaming into the black.

The ring disappears.

The champion disappears.

Mike Best disappears.

First Class disappears.

And for several long seconds, Farmasi Arena is swallowed whole by darkness.

The darkness holds for one long second.

Then two.

Then the lights snap back on.

Farmasi Arena explodes.

Chris Ross is standing in the ring.

Chair in hand.

Mike Best is near the ropes.

Maxwell Jett is just in front of him.

Jacoby Jacobs and Darian Darrington are still closing in from either side.

For half a second, nobody moves.

Then Ross does.

John Phillips: CHRIS ROSS! CHRIS ROSS IS IN THE RING!

Mark Bravo: Scott Stevens barred him from the building!

BAM!

The chair comes down across Jacoby Jacobs.

Jacoby drops instantly, crumpling to the mat as the crowd roars.

Darian turns just in time to see it.

Ross swings again.

BAM!

The chair catches Darian Darrington and sends him spinning down to the canvas beside Jacoby.

John Phillips: Ross just laid out Jacoby! Ross just laid out Darian!

Mark Bravo: He is not here for them. He is here for Maxwell Jett!

Maxwell stumbles backward, eyes wide, trying to get away from the oncoming Reaper of Harrisburg.

Ross steps toward him and swings again.

At the last possible second, Maxwell moves.

He shoves Mike Best forward into the line of fire.

CRACK!

The chair smashes into Mike Best.

Mike drops to the mat, hit full-force as the crowd gasps.

John Phillips: Oh no! Maxwell moved and Mike Best took the chair shot!

Mark Bravo: Jett just put Mike in the way!

Chris Ross does not stop.

He does not apologize.

He does not hesitate.

His eyes stay on Maxwell Jett.

Jett backs away, horrified now, trying to create any space he can.

Ross swings again.

BAM!

This time the chair catches Maxwell clean.

The UTA Champion drops hard, falling among the wreckage of his own First Class allies.

John Phillips: Maxwell got nailed!

Mark Bravo: Chris Ross got what he came for!

The referee is already frantically calling for the bell.

Referee: Ring the bell! Ring the bell! Ring it!

DING DING DING DING DING!

The bell sounds over and over, but Ross is not finished.

The referee steps toward him, trying to restore some kind of order.

Referee: Enough! Enough! That's it! That's it!

Ross turns and drives the chair into the referee.

BAM!

The official goes down hard, folding to the mat as the arena comes unglued.

John Phillips: He got the referee too!

Mark Bravo: There is no order left! Chris Ross has destroyed everybody in that ring!

For a moment, the ring is nothing but bodies.

Jacoby Jacobs sprawled near the ropes.

Darian Darrington down beside him.

Mike Best flattened from the redirected chair shot.

Maxwell Jett crumpled near the center, championship dreams and swagger both smashed out of him for the moment.

The referee laid out.

And in the middle of it all stands Chris Ross.

Chair still in hand.

Chest rising and falling.

Eyes moving from one fallen body to the next.

Not confused.

Not out of control.

Completely certain.

John Phillips: Scott Stevens barred Chris Ross from the building tonight, and somehow he is standing in the middle of the UTA Championship match with a chair in his hands.

Mark Bravo: Barred or not, Ross does not care. That order meant nothing to him. The only thing that mattered was getting to Maxwell Jett.

Ross slowly lowers the chair.

He takes one step forward.

Then another.

He looks down at Maxwell Jett.

Then at Mike Best.

Then around at the rest of the destruction.

The crowd is roaring now, the noise washing over the scene in waves.

Ross lifts his head.

Chris Ross: Mic.

He does not ask loudly.

He demands it.

There is hesitation at ringside.

Ross takes one step toward the ropes with the chair still in his hand.

A microphone is handed up immediately.

John Phillips: Ross wants a microphone.

Mark Bravo: Of course he does. He did not come all this way just to swing the chair.

Ross takes the microphone in one hand.

Then, with the other, he unfolds the steel chair in the middle of the ring.

The metal snaps into place.

He sets it down among the bodies.

Jacoby to one side.

Darian to the other.

Mike Best down behind him.

Maxwell Jett in front of him.

The referee still motionless nearby.

Chris Ross sits.

Calmly.

Chair in the center of the ring.

Microphone in hand.

Surrounded by the destruction he caused.

John Phillips: Look at this scene.

Mark Bravo: Chris Ross is sitting in the middle of absolute wreckage like he owns the place.

The camera pushes in tighter.

Ross leans forward in the chair, microphone resting near his mouth, eyes fixed ahead as Farmasi Arena waits for him to speak.

Chris Ross sits in the unfolded steel chair at the center of the ring.

The microphone rests in his hand.

Around him, Farmasi Arena is still shaking from what just happened.

Jacoby Jacobs is down near the ropes.

Darian Darrington is still sprawled across the canvas.

Mike Best has rolled to his side, trying to recover from the chair shot Maxwell Jett forced him into.

Maxwell Jett, the UTA Champion, lies near Ross's feet.

The referee is down.

The match is over.

The chaos is not.

John Phillips: The UTA Championship match has been thrown out. Chris Ross has destroyed everyone in that ring.

Mark Bravo: Scott Stevens barred him from the building, John. He was not supposed to be here. He was not supposed to be anywhere near this main event. And now look at the ring.

Ross slowly leans forward in the chair.

His eyes settle on Maxwell Jett first.

Then they move to Mike Best.

Then back to the champion.

He raises the microphone.

Chris Ross: You know...

The crowd roars over him.

Ross waits.

He does not yell over them.

He sits in the middle of the wreckage and lets the noise die just enough for the next words to cut through.

Chris Ross: When I won the world title the first time...

Ross looks down at his own hands, then slowly lifts his eyes again.

Chris Ross: I did it for me.

Chris Ross: I did it to resurrect my dead career.

He leans back in the chair, a cold, humorless smirk pulling at his face.

Chris Ross: I did it because everybody said Chris Ross was finished. Washed up. Buried.

He glances around the ring.

Chris Ross: Funny thing about buried men...

Ross looks directly into the hard camera.

Chris Ross: Sometimes they come back with a shovel.

The crowd reacts loudly.

John Phillips: Listen to this man.

Mark Bravo: This is not just anger. This is a warning.

Ross turns his attention back to Maxwell Jett.

Chris Ross: Maxwell...

Then to Mike Best.

Chris Ross: Mike...

Then he looks between them both.

Chris Ross: I don't care if I gotta fight you.

Chris Ross: I don't care if I gotta fight him.

Chris Ross: I don't care if I gotta fight both of you at the same damn time.

Ross rises slightly from the chair, but only enough to lean forward harder into the microphone.

Chris Ross: Because when I win that belt again...

He points down at the fallen UTA Champion.

Chris Ross: I'm not doing it for me.

Chris Ross: I'm doing it for everyone else.

The reaction shifts, a loud surge rolling through the arena.

Chris Ross: For every person you stepped over.

Chris Ross: For every body you used as a shield.

Chris Ross: For every person in the back who got told to wait their turn while men like you two decided the world still revolves around your names.

Ross points the microphone slightly toward Mike, then toward Maxwell.

Chris Ross: You both made the same mistake.

He pauses.

Chris Ross: You pushed me aside.

Chris Ross: You pretended The Reaper of Harrisburg wasn't always watching from the shadows.

Ross slowly looks around the ring again.

Jacoby.

Darian.

The referee.

Mike.

Maxwell.

Chris Ross: Now look at all of you.

A crooked smile forms.

Chris Ross: You're part of my cemetery now.

Ross laughs.

Chris Ross: Hehehehe...

The laugh is low, ugly, and completely unsettling.

Chris Ross: Any time.

Chris Ross: Any place.

Chris Ross: Anywhere.

Ross slowly stands from the chair.

The crowd noise climbs with him.

He looks straight into the camera.

Chris Ross: If you're on my list...

Ross lowers his voice.

Chris Ross: You're not safe.

The arena is roaring now.

Ross lifts the microphone one last time.

Chris Ross: Fear the Reaper.

The crowd erupts.

John Phillips: Chris Ross has just sent a message to Maxwell Jett, to Mike Best, to Scott Stevens, and to the entire UTA!

Mark Bravo: And look! Look at the entrance!

The camera cuts to the stage.

Scott Stevens bursts through the curtain, furious, surrounded by security.

He is pointing toward the ring before he even reaches the ramp.

Scott Stevens: Get him! Get him now!

Security floods down the ramp.

Ross stands in the middle of the ring, steel chair unfolded behind him, microphone hanging at his side.

He does not run.

He does not panic.

He watches them come.

John Phillips: Scott Stevens is out here with security! Ross is trapped in the ring!

Mark Bravo: He should be trapped! He should not have been in the building in the first place!

Security reaches ringside.

Stevens is right behind them, livid, screaming orders.

The first wave slides under the bottom rope.

Ross turns toward them.

Then the lights go out again.

Total darkness.

The arena explodes into chaos.

John Phillips: Again! The lights are out again!

Mark Bravo: Where is he?! Where is Ross?!

For several seconds, there is nothing but blackness and noise.

Security can be heard shouting.

Stevens can be heard screaming over them.

Scott Stevens: Find him! Find him!

Then the lights return.

Chris Ross is gone.

The chair remains unfolded in the middle of the ring.

The microphone lies on the canvas beside it.

Security stands scattered and confused.

Scott Stevens is in the ring now, spinning in place, furious and disbelieving.

Jacoby Jacobs and Darian Darrington are still down.

Mike Best is only beginning to pull himself toward the ropes.

Maxwell Jett is still on the canvas, one arm draped across his face, the UTA Championship nowhere near his hands.

The referee is being checked on by another official.

The ring is nothing but aftermath.

John Phillips: Chris Ross is gone.

Mark Bravo: He came through the darkness, destroyed the main event, sat in the middle of the wreckage, and vanished before Scott Stevens could touch him.

Stevens kicks the unfolded chair over in rage.

The metal clatters across the mat.

The camera cuts to Maxwell Jett, still down.

Then to Mike Best, recovering near the ropes.

Then to Scott Stevens, standing in the middle of a ruined UTA Championship match, face red with fury.

The crowd continues to roar.

John Phillips: Maxwell Jett is still champion, but nobody is standing tall tonight.

Mark Bravo: No. Chris Ross made sure of that.

The final shot holds on the overturned chair in the center of the ring.

The microphone lies beside it.

The bodies remain scattered around it.

And World Tour: Brazil '26 ends in chaos.

Conclusion

CARD SUBJECT TO CHANGE

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