

World Tour: Puerto Rico '26

Promotion: United Toughness Alliance
Date: June 19, 2026
Location: José Miguel Agrelot Coliseum (Choliseo) — San Juan, Puerto Rico

Preview

International Affair is over. The All or Nothing rumble changed the UTA landscape completely. Now, the superstars look forward and march on as the world tour continues.

Results

Introduction

Segment

The screen is black.

For a moment, there is only the sound of distant crowd noise.

Then, a single image flashes across the screen.

Maxwell Jett standing tall at International Affair.

Then another.

The All or Nothing Rumble erupting into chaos.

Then another.

Championships changing hands. Careers shifting direction. Alliances exposed. Bodies crashing over the top rope. The UTA landscape being rewritten one elimination at a time.

A deep voice cuts through the darkness.

Voiceover: "International Affair is over."

The footage quickens.

Susanita Ybanez defeating Amy Harrison.

Marie Van Claudio turning on Susanita after the match.

The Empire kneeling around MVC.

Hakuryu surviving war.

Graham Keel standing with gold.

Jacoby Jacobs being thrown from the Rumble.

Savior Hawkins making himself known.

Bobby Dean walking away with the International Championship.

Yoshii with the United States Championship.

Trey Mack watching from a distance, his eyes fixed on the prize.

Voiceover: "The All or Nothing Rumble changed everything."

The music begins to rise now. Heavy drums. Fast cuts. The roar of the crowd grows louder and louder.

Voiceover: "Champions were crowned. Enemies were made. Debuts shook the foundation. And tonight, the World Tour continues."

The screen explodes into a sweeping aerial shot of San Juan, Puerto Rico. The city lights shimmer against the night sky. The camera glides over the coastline before cutting to the outside of the José Miguel Agrelot Coliseum, where fans are packed around the entrance, waving signs, flags, and UTA merchandise.

Pyro erupts from the stage inside the arena.

The camera cuts live to the packed house at the Coliseo. The crowd is electric, on their feet, screaming as fireworks burst across the entrance stage.

The UTA World Tour graphics flash across the screen.

WORLD TOUR

Friday, June 19, 2026

José Miguel Agrelot Coliseum — San Juan, Puerto Rico

The camera sweeps across the crowd as fans hold up signs:

THE RUMBLE CHANGED EVERYTHING

THE EMPIRE HAS A QUEEN

FIVE FALLS START TONIGHT

YOSHII COUNTRY?

SAVIOR HAS ARRIVED

Finally, the shot settles at ringside where John Phillips and Mark Bravo are seated at the commentary desk.

John Phillips: "Ladies and gentlemen, welcome to the next stop on the UTA World Tour! We are live from the sold-out José Miguel Agrelot Coliseum in San Juan, Puerto Rico, and after what happened at International Affair, I don't think anything in UTA feels the same!"

Mark Bravo: "It doesn't feel the same because it isn't the same, John! The All or Nothing Rumble blew up the title picture, friendships, rivalries, power structures, all of it! Everybody walked into London thinking they understood where they stood. A whole lot of people walked out realizing they were wrong."

John Phillips: "Tonight, the fallout begins in a major way. We have championship action, personal grudges, singles debuts, and the first steps toward what could be a historic run for one of UTA's most dangerous new champions."

Mark Bravo: "And we are starting with consequences. That's what tonight is about. International Affair gave people new opportunities, but it also gave people new targets on their backs."

The broadcast cuts to a match graphic.

SELINA SANTORINO vs. DARREN VALIANT

John Phillips: "Selina Santorino made an immediate impression at International Affair, and tonight she steps into singles competition against Darren Valiant."

Mark Bravo: "That's not an easy first stop. Darren Valiant is not interested in being someone else's highlight reel. Selina may have arrived, but tonight she has to prove she belongs."

The next graphic flashes.

UTA FIGHTING CHAMPIONSHIP
FIGHTING CHAMPIONSHIP RULES
GRAHAM KEEL vs. KAINE

John Phillips: "And then, the UTA Fighting Championship is on the line. Graham Keel begins what he has called his countdown of five."

Mark Bravo: "Five defenses. Five fights. Five people trying to take that championship from him before he can make it mean something bigger. And the first man in front of him is Kaine. That is not a warm-up. That is a car crash waiting to happen."

The next graphic appears.

JACOBY JACOBS vs. SAVIOR HAWKINS

John Phillips: "We will also see the singles debut of Savior Hawkins, who entered the All or Nothing Rumble and immediately made people take notice."

Mark Bravo: "Including Jacoby Jacobs, who has not forgotten being eliminated in London. First Class does not take embarrassment well, and Jacoby is coming into this match looking for payback."

John Phillips: "Savior Hawkins may be new to UTA, but tonight he finds out very quickly what happens when you get on the wrong side of First Class."

The next graphic hits the screen.

VALKYRIE KNOXX vs. BIANCA PAGE

John Phillips: "Valkyrie Knox faces Bianca Page."

Mark Bravo: "And do not forget what we saw at International Affair. The Empire has changed. Marie Van Claudio is no longer being dragged around by Amy Harrison. She is leading. Valkyrie Knox is standing with her. Amy Harrison is standing with her. That makes Valkyrie dangerous before the bell even rings."

John Phillips: "Bianca Page has been in the middle of chaos for weeks, and tonight she has a chance to walk into that storm and beat Knox."

The final match graphic fills the screen.

UNITED STATES CHAMPIONSHIP
YOSHII vs. TREY MACK

The crowd roars at the sight of the graphic.

John Phillips: "And in our main event, the United States Championship is on the line. Yoshii defends against Trey Mack."

Mark Bravo: "Trey Mack wants gold back in The Empire. That's the mission. That's the pressure. And after what happened in London, you know The Empire wants to leave Puerto Rico with more power than they arrived with."

John Phillips: "But standing in his way is Yoshii, the United States Champion, and a man who is not going to be moved easily."

Mark Bravo: "Moved easily? John, moving Yoshii at all should come with a warning label. Trey Mack is one of the best in UTA, but tonight he is trying to take a championship from a mountain."

The camera returns to the live crowd. The noise continues to build.

John Phillips: "San Juan is ready. The World Tour rolls on. International Affair is behind us, but the aftershocks are just beginning."

Mark Bravo: "New champions. New grudges. New problems. Same UTA chaos."

John Phillips: "And we start right now!"

The camera cuts from commentary to the entrance stage as the lights shift and the first entrance of the night begins.

And Still

Segment

The crowd is still buzzing, loud and restless, ready for the first stop after International Affair to truly begin.

Then the lights cut down.

A single white spotlight hits the stage like a red-carpet flash.

The opening riff of "Gold Standard" hits the speakers, cocky arena rock bleeding into heavy trap drums.

The reaction is immediate.

Boos pour down from every corner of the Coliseo.

John Phillips: "Oh, here we go."

Mark Bravo: "Ladies and gentlemen, please rise if you hate this man."

John Phillips: "The UTA Champion, Maxwell Jett, making his first appearance since surviving the All or Nothing Rumble at International Affair."

Mark Bravo: "Surviving? John, he walked out of London still the centerpiece of this company. That's not survival. That's excellence with witnesses."

Maxwell Jett steps through the curtain.

The UTA Championship rests over his shoulder, polished and gleaming beneath the spotlight. Jett wears the belt like it is not merely a title, but proof that everyone else in the building has already lost the argument.

He stops at the top of the stage.

Slowly, he turns his head from one side of the arena to the other.

The boos get louder.

Maxwell smiles.

Not politely.

Not warmly.

Like a man listening to his favorite song.

Behind him, Jacoby Jacobs and Darran Darrington step out on either side, dressed in expensive streetwear and wearing the kind of grins that make it obvious they think the boos are beneath them.

Together, First Class stands at the top of the ramp.

The champion in the middle.

The money on both sides.

The arrogance filling every inch of the frame.

John Phillips: "Maxwell Jett does not come alone. Jacoby Jacobs and Darran Darrington are with him, and First Class has been insufferable since the moment they became official."

Mark Bravo: "You say insufferable. They say exclusive."

John Phillips: "I'm sure they do."

Jett adjusts the UTA Championship on his shoulder, then looks directly into the hard camera.

He mouths two words.

Keep going.

The boos intensify.

Jacoby laughs and points toward the crowd, saying something off-mic to Darran. Darran shakes his head, amused, like the entire island has failed some kind of entrance exam.

Maxwell begins his walk to the ring.

Slow.

Unhurried.

Every step carrying the confidence of a man who believes this building exists because he agreed to enter it.

He passes a fan at ringside holding a sign that reads JETT GOT LUCKY.

Max stops.

He lowers his sunglasses just enough to read it.

Then he looks at the fan, looks at the championship, and gives a small shrug that says more than words could.

Jacoby leans toward the fan and laughs.

Jacoby Jacobs: "That luck got a belt, though!"

Darran pats the faceplate of the championship as Jett continues forward, drawing another wave of boos from the crowd.

John Phillips: "You can feel the temperature in this building changing. Maxwell Jett walked out of International Affair still UTA Champion, but he did so after the most chaotic match this company has seen in years."

Mark Bravo: "And that is why he's smiling. Everybody else got tossed around, thrown out, embarrassed, or rearranged. Maxwell Jett is still champion. That's the only statistic he cares about."

Jett reaches the ringside area and stops at the base of the steps.

He looks at the ring.

Then back out to the crowd.

The boos continue.

He lifts the UTA Championship off his shoulder and raises it just high enough for the cameras to catch the gold.

The reaction gets louder.

Maxwell closes his eyes for a moment, soaking it in.

When he opens them, the smirk is bigger.

John Phillips: "He loves this."

Mark Bravo: "Of course he does. Hate still means they're paying attention."

Maxwell steps onto the apron, wipes his boots deliberately, then slips through the ropes into the ring. Jacoby and Darran follow behind him, each taking a corner of the ring like they have a right to stand there.

Jett climbs to the second rope.

He holds the UTA Championship up with one hand.

The Chaliseo rains boos down on him.

Maxwell mouths something toward the crowd that the camera just barely catches.

I'm better than you.

He drops down from the ropes and turns toward the center of the ring.

A ringside attendant hands him a microphone.

Jett takes it without looking at the attendant.

The music fades.

The boos do not.

Maxwell Jett stands in the center of the ring, UTA Championship now draped over his shoulder again, microphone in hand.

Jacoby Jacobs stands to his right.

Darran Darrington stands to his left.

First Class owns the ring.

The people of San Juan make it very clear what they think of that.

The boos grow louder.

Maxwell lifts the microphone slowly.

He tries to speak.

The crowd drowns him out.

He lowers the microphone.

Smiles.

Waits.

The boos keep coming.

Maxwell Jett stands in the center of the ring, microphone in hand, the UTA Championship resting across his shoulder.

The boos continue to rain down.

Jacoby Jacobs leans against the ropes with a grin, looking out at the San Juan crowd like they are all beneath his tax bracket. Darran Darrington shakes his head slowly, laughing under his breath at the noise.

Maxwell lifts the microphone again.

Maxwell Jett: "Are you done?"

The question is barely out of his mouth before the crowd gets louder.

A wave of boos crashes through the Coliseo.

Maxwell lowers the microphone and nods.

He expected that.

He wanted that.

He turns slightly, letting the sound hit him from every side, then looks back toward Jacoby and Darran with a smirk.

Mark Bravo: "Wrong question."

John Phillips: "The UTA Champion may be enjoying this, but this crowd in San Juan is letting him hear it."

Maxwell lifts one hand, palm out, pretending to calm the crowd down.

It does nothing.

The boos get even louder.

Maxwell waits.

And waits.

And waits.

He checks an imaginary watch on his wrist.

Jacoby laughs.

Darran points toward the crowd and says something off-mic, clearly amused by how angry they are getting.

Finally, Maxwell snaps the microphone back up.

Maxwell Jett: "Enough."

The crowd keeps booing.

Maxwell's smile fades just enough to show irritation beneath the polish.

Maxwell Jett: "No, no, no. I said enough."

The boos swell again.

Maxwell looks out across the arena with pure contempt.

Maxwell Jett: "You people had your little moment. You got to make noise. You got to pretend your opinions matter. You got to sit there in your seats and boo greatness because that is the closest most of you will ever get to touching it."

The boos become deafening.

Maxwell smiles again.

There it is.

That sharp, smug, awful smile.

Maxwell Jett: "And now the UTA Champion is going to speak."

He adjusts the championship on his shoulder, making sure the camera catches the faceplate.

Maxwell Jett: "I told every single person in this company exactly what was going to happen at International Affair."

He begins to pace slowly.

Maxwell Jett: "I told the boys in the back."

Maxwell Jett: "I told management."

Maxwell Jett: "I told every washed-up legend, every desperate newcomer, every bitter almost-star, every internet expert, every idiot holding a sign, and every single person watching around the world."

He stops and points to the title.

Maxwell Jett: "I told you I would walk into the All or Nothing Rumble as the UTA Champion..."

He raises the belt slightly off his shoulder.

Maxwell Jett: "...and I would walk out the exact same way."

Another wave of boos.

Maxwell nods slowly, as if accepting applause.

Maxwell Jett: "And look at that."

He lifts the championship higher.

Maxwell Jett: "Promise kept."

Jacoby applauds exaggeratedly beside him.

Jacoby Jacobs: "That's the champ!"

Darran nods, pointing toward Maxwell.

Darran Darrington: "Told y'all."

Maxwell lowers the championship back to his shoulder and gives the camera a long, satisfied look.

Maxwell Jett: "And that is the difference between Maxwell Jett and Chris Ross."

The mention of Ross gets a reaction from the crowd.

Maxwell's grin sharpens.

Maxwell Jett: "Chris Ross makes threats."

Maxwell Jett: "Chris Ross throws tantrums."

Maxwell Jett: "Chris Ross stomps around backstage, punches walls, scares production assistants, and calls it intensity because that sounds better than admitting he is a grown man with the emotional discipline of a flipped pickup truck."

Jacoby bends over laughing.

Darran has to turn away for a second, grinning.

Maxwell Jett: "But me?"

Maxwell taps the championship.

Maxwell Jett: "I deliver."

The crowd boos.

Maxwell Jett: "Every promise I make, I keep."

Maxwell Jett: "Every warning I give, I prove."

Maxwell Jett: "Every time I tell you people I am better than the man you believe in..."

He pauses, letting the crowd fill the space with hate.

Maxwell Jett: "...I make you watch me be right."

John Phillips: "That is one version of history."

Mark Bravo: "It's the champion's version, John. That makes it the official version until somebody takes that title from him."

Maxwell turns slowly in the ring, looking out over the packed arena.

Maxwell Jett: "Seventy people."

He holds up his free hand, counting with his fingers for emphasis.

Maxwell Jett: "Seventy."

Maxwell Jett: "Every shape, size, style, sob story, comeback tour, nostalgia act, flavor of the month, and feel-good fraud UTA could possibly throw into one match."

He laughs to himself.

Maxwell Jett: "And when the smoke cleared..."

He spreads his arms.

Maxwell Jett: "I was still here."

The boos return in force.

Maxwell Jett: "You can boo it."

Maxwell Jett: "You can cry about it."

Maxwell Jett: "You can rewrite it on your message boards and whisper whatever little excuses make you sleep better at night."

He points directly into the hard camera.

Maxwell Jett: "But the record books are not going to say Maxwell Jett got lucky."

He shakes his head.

Maxwell Jett: "They are not going to say Maxwell Jett barely survived."

He steps closer to the ropes, leaning slightly over them toward the hard cam.

Maxwell Jett: "They are going to say that in London, England, at International Affair, Maxwell Jett walked into the most dangerous match in UTA history as champion..."

He slowly lifts the championship again.

Maxwell Jett: "...and walked out untouched by reality."

John Phillips: "Untouched by reality may be the most accurate thing he has said so far."

Mark Bravo: "Careful, JP. He has a notebook for this kind of disrespect."

Maxwell turns away from the ropes and starts pacing again, building steam now.

Maxwell Jett: "People want to talk about who did what. Who threw out who. Who lasted how long. Who had a moment. Who made a name. Who surprised the world."

He scoffs.

Maxwell Jett: "Cute."

Maxwell Jett: "Really. Adorable."

He points at the championship again.

Maxwell Jett: "You know what I did?"

He pauses.

Maxwell Jett: "I beat the match."

The crowd boos hard.

Maxwell nods, pleased with himself.

Maxwell Jett: "I beat the system."

Maxwell Jett: "I beat the odds."

Maxwell Jett: "I beat every single person who thought for one second that my championship reign was going to end because UTA decided to turn its title picture into a human traffic accident."

Jacoby steps forward, hyping him up.

Jacoby Jacobs: "Talk to 'em!"

Darran Darrington: "They hate facts!"

Maxwell looks toward them, then back out at the crowd.

Maxwell Jett: "And I know what some of you are thinking."

He changes his voice slightly, mocking the fans.

Maxwell Jett: "But Max, you didn't eliminate everybody."

He makes a face of exaggerated concern.

Maxwell Jett: "But Max, other people were involved."

Maxwell Jett: "But Max, that isn't exactly how it happened."

He stops.

The smirk returns.

Maxwell Jett: "Shut up."

The crowd erupts.

Maxwell Jett: "Winners do not explain."

Maxwell Jett: "Champions do not footnote greatness."

Maxwell Jett: "History does not care about the feelings of people who lost."

He lifts the UTA Championship one more time.

Maxwell Jett: "And every single person who entered that match and did not leave with this?"

He holds the belt higher.

Maxwell Jett: "Lost."

Massive boos.

Maxwell stands in the middle of it, absolutely glowing.

Maxwell Jett: "So welcome to the post-International Affair era of UTA."

He lowers the title back to his shoulder.

Maxwell Jett: "Same champion."

Maxwell Jett: "Same standard."

Maxwell Jett: "Same uncomfortable truth."

He looks dead into the hard camera.

Maxwell Jett: "I am better than Chris Ross."

He turns slightly, scanning the crowd.

Maxwell Jett: "I am better than every man and woman who stepped into that Rumble."

He looks to Jacoby and Darran, then back to the hard cam.

Maxwell Jett: "And as long as this championship is on my shoulder, every single one of you is going to have to keep paying money to be reminded of it."

The boos nearly swallow the building again.

Maxwell lowers the microphone for a moment, soaking in the hatred with a satisfied smile.

First Class stands behind him, laughing and nodding, as the UTA Champion lets San Juan rage around him.

Maxwell Jett stands in the center of the ring, UTA Championship over his shoulder, basking in the hatred pouring down from San Juan.

Jacoby Jacobs and Darran Darrington stand behind him, both grinning like they are watching money appreciate in real time.

Maxwell Jett: "And as long as this championship is on my shoulder, every single one of you is going to have to keep paying money to be reminded of it."

The boos nearly swallow the building again.

Maxwell lowers the microphone for a moment, soaking in the hatred with a satisfied smile.

Then—

The arena lights flicker.

Once.

Twice.

The massive screen above the entrance cuts to black.

The crowd noise shifts immediately.

Boos turn into murmurs.

Murmurs turn into anticipation.

Maxwell's smile fades.

He slowly turns toward the stage.

On the screen, through static and darkness, a single image appears.

A reaper.

Hooded.

Motionless.

Staring out over the arena.

The Choliseo explodes.

John Phillips: "Wait a minute."

Mark Bravo: "Oh, no. Maxwell, you might want to start walking."

The opening of "Black Flame" by Bury Tomorrow tears through the sound system.

The crowd erupts.

Maxwell Jett immediately snaps upright, eyes wide, shaking his head before anyone even steps through the curtain.

Maxwell Jett: "No."

He turns toward Jacoby and Darran, then back to the stage.

Maxwell Jett: "No, no, no."

The cheers get louder.

Maxwell steps toward the ropes, pointing at the entrance.

Maxwell Jett: "NO!"

He raises the microphone again, almost shouting over the music and the crowd.

Maxwell Jett: "This is not happening!"

The screen flashes with images of the streets of Harrisburg. Red, white, and blue police lights flicker across the tron like a crime scene caught in slow motion.

The crowd roars louder.

Maxwell Jett: "Cut it! Cut his music! I am not done speaking!"

Jacoby steps toward Maxwell, saying something off-mic, trying to calm him down. Darran moves closer to the ropes, eyes locked on the entrance way.

Then Chris Ross steps through the curtain.

The building comes alive.

Ross stands at the top of the ramp, jaw tight, eyes locked on Maxwell Jett. There is no showboating. No wasted movement. No smile. Just the cold, ugly focus of a man who did not come out to make a point.

He came out to make contact.

At his side is Valentina Blaze.

Valentina looks out at the ring, then at Maxwell, with a sharp expression that says she has heard more than enough.

The cheers for Ross and Blaze roll through San Juan.

John Phillips: "Chris Ross is here! The former UTA Champion is on his way to the ring, and he is not alone!"

Mark Bravo: "Valentina Blaze right there with him, and look at Maxwell Jett. The man just went from holding court to looking for an emergency exit."

Maxwell backs away from the ropes, pacing now, furious and rattled all at once.

Maxwell Jett: "No! Absolutely not! You do not get to do this!"

Ross starts down the ramp.

Valentina walks beside him, her eyes never leaving the ring.

The crowd chants for Ross as he moves forward, each step heavy and deliberate.

John Phillips: "Maxwell Jett spent the last several minutes rewriting history, acting like International Affair was his own personal masterpiece."

Mark Bravo: "And here comes one man who definitely remembers the unedited version."

Maxwell points toward the stage with the microphone.

Maxwell Jett: "You stay right there, Chris! You hear me? You stay right there!"

Ross does not slow down.

Maxwell Jett: "This is my time! This is the champion's time! You do not get to interrupt me because you lost, because you failed, because you could not do the one thing I have done every single day since I won this title!"

Ross keeps coming.

Valentina glances at the fans along the barricade as they cheer, but her focus quickly returns to First Class.

Jacoby steps in front of Maxwell slightly, trying to look braver than he probably feels.

Darran moves to the other side, jawing toward Ross from inside the ring.

Darran Darrington: "Nah, keep walking. See what happens."

Jacoby Jacobs: "This ain't your moment anymore, Ross!"

Ross reaches ringside.

He stops at the bottom of the ramp and looks up into the ring.

Maxwell stands behind Jacoby and Darran now, championship still over his shoulder, but his grip on the microphone is tighter than before.

Maxwell Jett: "You don't get in this ring unless I say you get in this ring."

Ross looks at him.

Then at Jacoby.

Then at Darran.

Then back at Maxwell.

Without taking his eyes off the champion, Ross reaches out toward ringside.

A crew member hands him a microphone.

The crowd roars.

Ross holds the microphone at his side for a moment, letting the music fade.

The cheers remain.

Valentina steps up beside him, arms folded, staring a hole through First Class.

John Phillips: "Chris Ross has a microphone, and Maxwell Jett has absolutely no interest in hearing what he has to say."

Mark Bravo: "That makes two of us. I want to hear it, but I also want to be behind reinforced glass when he says it."

Ross slowly climbs the steel steps.

Valentina follows close behind.

Maxwell immediately backs another step away, holding up one hand.

Maxwell Jett: "No. No, no. Referees? Security? Somebody? Do your job!"

No one comes.

The crowd cheers louder.

Ross steps through the ropes and enters the ring.

Valentina slips in behind him.

First Class shifts together, forming a loose line across from them.

Jacoby Jacobs on one side.

Darran Darrington on the other.

Maxwell Jett in the middle, UTA Championship over his shoulder, trying very hard to look like he is still in control.

Chris Ross stands across from him.

Valentina Blaze stands beside Ross, eyes narrowed, ready.

The crowd is thunderous now.

For a long moment, nobody speaks.

Ross lifts the microphone.

Maxwell raises his own immediately, cutting him off before a word can leave his mouth.

Maxwell Jett: "Careful."

The crowd boos.

Ross does not blink.

Valentina smirks faintly.

First Class stands across from them, the tension tightening by the second.

Ross keeps the microphone raised.

The building waits.

Ross keeps the microphone raised.

The building waits.

Maxwell Jett stands across from him, chin lifted, UTA Championship on his shoulder, trying to look like the interruption has not rattled him.

It has.

Maxwell Jett: "Careful."

The crowd boos again.

Chris Ross stares at him.

Valentina Blaze, standing just beside Ross, does not say a word.

She only smirks.

Ross slowly turns his head, looking out at the people of San Juan. The cheers begin to rise before he even speaks.

Then Ross looks back at Maxwell.

Chris Ross: "Hey, Max..."

Maxwell's eyes narrow.

Chris Ross: "Shut the fuck up."

The Choliseo comes unglued.

The crowd explodes into a deafening roar, people jumping out of their seats as Ross lowers the microphone just enough to let the reaction crash over the ring.

Maxwell's mouth opens slightly, offended beyond belief.

Jacoby Jacobs throws his hands out like Ross just violated some sacred law.

Darran Darrington steps forward, shouting off-mic, pointing at Ross like he is demanding an apology on behalf of expensive men everywhere.

Valentina's smirk widens.

John Phillips: "Well, Chris Ross did not waste any time getting to the point."

Mark Bravo: "That may be the loudest this building has been all night, and Maxwell Jett looks like somebody just spilled gas station coffee on his designer jacket."

Maxwell raises his microphone quickly, trying to regain control.

Maxwell Jett: "Excuse me?"

The crowd keeps roaring.

Maxwell Jett: "No, no, no. You do not get to talk to me like that."

Ross does not move.

Maxwell points at the championship on his shoulder.

Maxwell Jett: "Do you understand me? You do not get to stand in my ring, in front of my audience, on my television time, and talk to me like I am some washed-up, knuckle-dragging failure from Harrisburg."

Boos pour in.

Maxwell steps forward, anger sharpening his voice.

Maxwell Jett: "I am the UTA Champion."

He taps the faceplate.

Maxwell Jett: "That means when I speak, you listen."

Ross lets the words sit there.

Then he slowly lifts the microphone again.

Chris Ross: "No."

The crowd pops.

Maxwell blinks, insulted by the simplicity of it.

Chris Ross: "What you are..."

Ross takes one slow step forward.

Jacoby and Darran immediately tense up.

Valentina stays where she is, eyes flicking between First Class with calm confidence.

Chris Ross: "...is lucky."

The crowd reacts again.

Maxwell shakes his head immediately.

Maxwell Jett: "Lucky?"

Chris Ross: "Yeah."

Ross steps forward again.

Chris Ross: "Lucky."

Maxwell's smirk tries to return, but it does not quite make it all the way across his face.

Chris Ross: "You're lucky I didn't get my hands on you in London."

The crowd cheers.

Chris Ross: "You're lucky there were so many bodies in that match that you could run, hide, duck, crawl, slide, and slither your way through every second that got too real for you."

Maxwell starts to object, but Ross cuts right over him.

Chris Ross: "You're lucky every time somebody got close enough to knock your teeth down your throat, something else happened. Somebody got in the way. Somebody got tossed. Somebody got distracted. Somebody gave you one more second to breathe."

Ross points directly at the UTA Championship.

Chris Ross: "Maxwell, you're lucky that you're standing here as the UTA Champion."

The cheers swell.

Maxwell's jaw tightens.

Jacoby steps closer to Maxwell's side, shouting toward Ross.

Jacoby Jacobs: "That's the champ you talkin' to!"

Darran nods aggressively.

Darran Darrington: "Put some respect on it!"

Ross finally turns his head toward them.

Just slightly.

Enough to shut both men up for half a second.

Chris Ross: "I'll get to both of you."

The crowd roars again.

Valentina lets out a small laugh under her breath.

Maxwell shifts the title higher on his shoulder, trying to re-center himself.

Maxwell Jett: "You are delusional."

Ross looks back at him.

Maxwell Jett: "You lost. You failed. You are standing across from me because you cannot accept the fact that I did what you could not do."

Ross doesn't bite.

He slowly looks around the ring.

First to Jacoby.

Then Darran.

Then Maxwell.

Then Valentina beside him.

Then back out to the crowd.

The noise begins to build again, because everyone in the building can feel where this is going.

Ross raises the microphone.

Chris Ross: "You think you won? "

He turns back to Maxwell.

Chris Ross: "You know what I saw? fear..."

The crowd rises.

Maxwell's expression changes.

Not much.

Just enough.

Chris Ross: "You were scared the entire time..."

Ross takes one more step forward.

Chris Ross: "You weren't just scared of me..."

Another step.

Chris Ross: "You were scared of losing your relevancy.."

Maxwell backs up half a step before catching himself.

Jacoby and Darran move with him, trying to keep the line between Ross and the champion.

Valentina steps forward now too, shoulder to shoulder with Ross.

Chris Ross: "But in the end..."

The crowd is thunderous.

Ross lowers his voice.

That makes it worse.

That makes it colder.

Chris Ross: "Nothing changes... "

He takes one final step, close enough now that First Class has no choice but to stand their ground.

Chris Ross: "You and your crew is still on the Reaper's list..."

The Choliseo erupts.

Maxwell Jett grips the UTA Championship tighter.

Jacoby Jacobs and Darran Darrington shift their feet, readying themselves.

Valentina Blaze keeps her eyes locked on First Class, still smirking.

Chris Ross does not lower his stare.

The ring is split in two.

First Class on one side.

Chris Ross and Valentina Blaze on the other.

And the UTA Champion suddenly has nowhere to hide.

The noise inside the Choliseo continues to rise as Ross stares through Maxwell Jett, ready to make good on every threat hanging in the air.

Maxwell clutches the UTA Championship tighter, trying to keep his composure while Jacoby Jacobs and Darran Darrington stand on either side of him.

Then—

The arena lights dim.

A voice cuts through the sound system.

"Something special 'bout me, you can already tell the energy is different."

The crowd instantly shifts.

Confusion.

Recognition.

Then a massive reaction begins to swell.

"Confidence is at the highest level, I don't ever see it dippin'."

Ross turns toward the stage.

Valentina's smirk fades into curiosity.

Maxwell Jett looks around, completely thrown.

Jacoby and Darran exchange a look.

"Try me if you wanna, guarantee though you gon' wish you hadn't did it."

John Phillips: "Wait a minute."

Mark Bravo: "No way."

"That's a war that you could never win, but hey, I like the optimism."

“WOO!”

The opening words of “Pandemonium” by NF resonate through the venue, and the Choloiseo erupts as the Son of GOD, Michael Lee Best, steps slowly onto the stage.

John Phillips: “That’s Mike Best!”

Mark Bravo: “The UTA Hall of Famer! What the hell is he doing here?”

Mike Best stands at the top of the ramp, staring out into the chaos with the calm arrogance of a man who believes every building becomes more important the second he walks into it.

He bobs his head to the music, taking his time, soaking in the reaction from a crowd that is going absolutely insane.

Inside the ring, nobody knows what to do.

Maxwell looks offended.

Ross looks suspicious.

Valentina watches carefully.

Jacoby and Darran are frozen somewhere between confused and impressed.

John Phillips: “First Class has no idea what Mike Best is doing here. Chris Ross and Valentina Blaze don’t know what Mike Best is doing here. Frankly, Mark, I don’t think anyone knows what Mike Best is doing here.”

Mark Bravo: “That might be exactly how he likes it.”

Mike begins to saunter down the ramp.

Not walk.

Saunter.

Every step deliberate.

Every movement full of veteran arrogance and the kind of confidence that does not ask permission to enter a moment.

He reaches the middle of the ramp, then stops and turns toward the nearest camera.

Mike raises his hand and flips the bird directly into the lens.

The camera zooms in tight.

Displayed prominently on that same hand is his UTA Hall of Fame ring.

The crowd explodes again.

Mark Bravo: “There it is! There is the Hall of Fame ring, and there is Mike Best reminding everybody exactly who he is in the most Mike Best way possible.”

John Phillips: “The always polarizing veteran making sure that camera gets every bit of that message.”

Mike lowers his hand and continues toward the ring.

Maxwell steps toward the ropes, microphone still in hand.

Maxwell Jett: “No, no. Absolutely not. This is not an open-door policy for every retired ego case with jewelry.”

The crowd boos Maxwell, but Mike does not even look at him yet.

Ross’s eyes stay locked on Best.

Valentina shifts slightly beside Ross, ready for anything.

Mike reaches the apron.

He grabs the bottom rope, drops down, and rolls smoothly under it into the ring.

The second he stands, every set of eyes follows him.

Maxwell.

Jacoby.

Darran.

Ross.

Valentina.

The entire arena.

Mike Best stands in the middle of the storm like he belongs there more than anyone else.

Maxwell raises the microphone again.

Maxwell Jett: "Listen, Mike, whatever you think this is—"

Mike walks right past him.

As he does, he rips the microphone straight out of Maxwell's hand.

The crowd erupts.

Maxwell is left standing there, stunned, hand still slightly raised where the microphone used to be.

Maxwell Jett: "Excuse me?!"

Mike does not stop.

He continues walking across the ring, straight through the tension, straight past the champion, straight into Chris Ross's face.

The music fades.

The crowd remains loud, buzzing, waiting.

Mike lifts his arm, microphone held sideways near his mouth.

He looks Chris Ross directly in the eyes.

Ross does not blink.

Neither does Mike.

The entire building seems to hold its breath.

Mike Best: "This is over, Chris."

The reaction is immediate.

A confused wave rolls through the crowd.

Ross's eyes widen slightly.

Not fear.

Not shock exactly.

Something closer to disbelief.

Valentina's expression sharpens.

First Class, somehow, looks even more confused than before.

Mike Best: "You and Maxwell..."

Mike keeps his eyes on Ross.

Mike Best: "You're done."

Jacoby looks at Darran.

Darran looks at Maxwell.

Maxwell, still irritated over the stolen microphone, mouths something off-mic that looks very much like, What?

John Phillips: "Mike Best just said Chris Ross and Maxwell Jett are done?"

Mark Bravo: "First Class looks like they just got left out of their own group chat."

Mike finally turns away from Ross.

He lowers the microphone into a more normal position as he faces the UTA Champion.

Maxwell straightens up, trying to recover his arrogance.

Mike's eyes settle on the UTA Championship.

Then on Maxwell.

Mike Best: "Maxwell here has a much bigger problem."

The crowd buzzes louder.

Maxwell gives a sharp, offended laugh.

He points at himself, mouthing the words clearly enough for the camera to catch.

Oh yeah?

Then he mouths the rest.

What's that?

Mike smiles.

Not warmly.

Not kindly.

Like he has been waiting for Maxwell to ask.

Mike Best: "The Son of GOD is here..."

The crowd erupts.

Mike steps closer to Maxwell.

Mike Best: "And he is going to—"

Ross has heard enough.

Chris Ross explodes forward and slams a heavy forearm-elbow into the back of Mike Best's skull.

The shot lands with a sickening crack.

Mike drops to one knee.

The arena erupts in chaos.

John Phillips: "Ross just blasted Mike Best!"

Mark Bravo: "He didn't let him finish the sentence!"

Ross does not wait to see Mike hit the mat.

The second Best drops, Ross charges straight toward First Class.

Maxwell's eyes go wide.

Jacoby and Darran scatter instantly.

Maxwell ducks through the ropes, clutching the UTA Championship as he bails to the floor.

Jacoby slides out one side.

Darran drops to the floor on the other.

First Class wants no part of Ross in that moment.

John Phillips: "First Class is getting out of dodge!"

Mark Bravo: "That is not retreat, John. That is high-level executive evacuation."

Ross reaches the ropes, shouting down at Maxwell as the champion stumbles backward near ringside, still holding the title tight.

Valentina steps forward behind Ross, eyes on First Class as they regroup on the outside.

But behind Ross—

Mike Best pushes up from one knee.

His expression has changed.

The arrogance is gone.

Now there is only anger.

Ross turns.

Mike charges.

Best drives forward and buries his shoulder into Ross's gut, forcing him backward into the ropes.

The crowd explodes again as the two veterans collide.

John Phillips: "Mike Best is back up!"

Mark Bravo: "And now it's Ross and Best!"

Ross swings down with a clubbing forearm.

Mike fires back with a hard right hand to the ribs.

Ross shoves him.

Mike shoves back.

The two men crash against the ropes, tangled up in a violent struggle as they start swinging at each other with ugly, close-range shots.

Valentina moves toward them, but keeps herself clear as the fight spills sideways along the ropes.

Outside the ring, Maxwell Jett backs up the ramp with the UTA Championship clutched against his chest.

Jacoby and Darran hurry after him, both shouting from a safe distance now that they are no longer in the ring.

Jacoby Jacobs: "Y'all crazy!"

Darran Darrington: "This ain't got nothin' to do with us!"

Maxwell, still rattled, points back toward the ring as he retreats.

Maxwell Jett: "Get them under control! This is why alumni need visitor passes!"

In the ring, Ross and Best keep swinging.

Ross lands a forearm across the side of Mike's head.

Mike answers with a short elbow of his own.

They push off the ropes, then crash right back into them, neither man willing to give an inch.

The crowd is roaring now, the entire arena on its feet.

John Phillips: "This thing has completely broken down! Maxwell Jett is escaping, First Class is escaping, and Chris Ross and Mike Best are trying to tear each other apart!"

Mark Bravo: "Mike Best came out here to say Ross and Maxwell were done, and Ross decided Mike was done talking!"

Officials burst through the curtain and race down the ramp.

Referees.

Road agents.

Security.

They hit the ring fast, sliding under the ropes and forcing themselves between Ross and Best.

It takes three officials to pull Ross back.

Two more grab Mike Best around the waist and shoulders, trying to drag him away from the ropes.

Ross lunges forward again.

Mike tries to break free.

The two men swing over the bodies separating them, each still trying to land one more shot.

Chris Ross: "You should've stayed retired!"

Mike Best: "You should've kept your hands to yourself!"

The crowd roars as officials struggle to keep them apart.

Valentina stands near the corner, eyes darting between Ross, Best, and the retreating First Class on the outside.

At the top of the ramp, Maxwell Jett finally stops beside Jacoby and Darran.

He adjusts the UTA Championship on his shoulder, trying to recover the image of a champion in control.

But the camera catches the truth.

For the first time all night, Maxwell Jett looks relieved to be somewhere else.

Inside the ring, Chris Ross and Mike Best are still being restrained, still shouting, still trying to get through the wall of

officials between them.

John Phillips: "Mike Best is here! Chris Ross just made a violent statement! And Maxwell Jett may have escaped, but his night has somehow become even more complicated!"

Mark Bravo: "The Son of GOD just walked into UTA's title picture, Ross tried to knock his head off, and the champion ran like his luggage was already packed!"

The final shot holds on the chaos in the ring.

Officials separating Ross and Best.

Valentina watching carefully from the side.

First Class retreating up the ramp.

And the UTA Championship still in Maxwell Jett's hands as the entire World Tour stop in San Juan descends into pandemonium.

International Affair

Segment

Inside the ring, officials continue to pull Chris Ross and Mike Best apart.

Ross is being forced toward one side of the ring, shouting over the shoulders of referees and road agents. Mike Best is being held near the opposite ropes, jaw tight, eyes locked on Ross like he is already calculating the next opening.

Valentina Blaze remains near the corner, watching the chaos with a guarded expression.

At the top of the ramp, Maxwell Jett stands with Jacoby Jacobs and Darran Darrington, the UTA Championship clutched against his chest. First Class backs away from the scene, still shouting from a safe distance as the officials finally begin restoring some control.

John Phillips: "We need to get order back here. Chris Ross and Mike Best just exploded in the middle of this ring, and Maxwell Jett, somehow, has escaped with the UTA Championship still in his possession."

Mark Bravo: "That entire thing started with Maxwell Jett bragging about surviving International Affair, and it ended with Mike Best showing up, Ross trying to take his head off, and First Class running like the minibar caught fire."

Ross lunges forward one more time, but three officials keep him back. Mike Best shouts something off-mic, trying to break loose, but security forces him toward the ropes.

John Phillips: "International Affair changed everything. Tonight, we are already seeing the aftershocks. But before we move forward, we need to look back at exactly how we got here."

Mark Bravo: "Because London did not just give UTA new champions. It created a whole new mess, and everybody in that ring is standing in the middle of it."

The camera catches one final shot of Ross being restrained, Mike Best being held back, Valentina watching carefully, and Maxwell Jett retreating up the ramp with the championship.

Then the broadcast fades to black.

For a moment, there is no music.

No commentary.

No crowd noise.

Just darkness.

Then a single line appears in white text.

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIR

The sound of The O2 crowd fades in slowly. Distant at first. Then louder. Then overwhelming.

The image cuts to London.

The O2 lit in UTA red and gold. Fans packed to the rafters. Signs in the air. Flashbulbs exploding. The International Affair logo burns across the screen.

John Phillips: "There are nights that move a company forward."

Cut to the opening shot of the arena, the camera sweeping across the massive crowd.

John Phillips: "And then there are nights that tear the entire landscape apart and leave everyone else to rebuild from the wreckage."

Quick cuts begin.

Susanita Ybanez diving through the ropes.

Amy Harrison crashing into the floor.

Marie Van Claudio watching from ringside.

Valkyrie Knox standing like a guard dog behind her.

Mark Bravo: "International Affair was supposed to give us answers. Instead, it gave us betrayal, chaos, new champions, broken alliances, and Maxwell Jett somehow still holding the UTA Championship."

The music begins underneath the package now. Slow. Heavy. Cinematic.

Cut to Susanita Ybanez hitting La Estrella Negra on Amy Harrison.

The referee's hand hits the mat.

One.

Two.

Three.

The crowd explodes.

John Phillips: "Susanita Ybanez fought for freedom, pride, and justice against Amy Harrison."

The replay shifts.

Susanita celebrating.

Then Marie Van Claudio turning cold.

The betrayal.

German suplex after German suplex.

Valkyrie Knox attacking.

Amy Harrison and Valkyrie kneeling behind Marie.

John Phillips: "But the real shock came after the bell."

Mark Bravo: "Marie Van Claudio was not trapped by The Empire. She was The Empire."

Cut to Marie standing tall, Amy and Valkyrie behind her.

The crowd's boos echo over the image.

The music darkens.

Marie Van Claudio: "The Empire was never broken. It was waiting."

The screen flashes white.

Cut to Team Hakuryu versus Team Gunnar Van Patton.

Fast strikes. Heavy impact. Bodies flying across the ring.

Hakuryu unloading with precision.

Gunnar Van Patton barking orders.

The six-man tag breaking down into chaos.

John Phillips: "Earlier in the night, Hakuryu led his team into war against Team Gunnar Van Patton."

Cut to Hakuryu scoring the decisive moment.

Team Hakuryu standing victorious.

Mark Bravo: "And Hakuryu reminded everyone why, no matter the match, no matter the stakes, he remains one of the most dangerous competitors in UTA."

The image freezes briefly on Hakuryu, then burns away into the All or Nothing Rumble graphic.

The music swells.

The screen fills with rapid-fire entrant shots.

Angela Hall.

Aaron Shaffer.

Theo Sparks.

Mini Perfection.

Bobby Dean rolling up in the battle chair.

Maxwell Jett entering with the UTA Championship.

John Phillips: "And then came the match that changed everything."

The words appear over the footage.

70 ENTRANTS.

EVERY CHAMPIONSHIP AT STAKE.

ALL OR NOTHING.

Cut to Mini Perfection being immediately thrown out by Maxwell Jett.

Cut to Mark Bravo removing his headset and heading to the ring.

Dahlia Cross throwing Mark over the top rope almost instantly.

Mark Bravo: "Still not funny."

John Phillips: "It was a little funny."

Mark Bravo: "John."

Cut to legacy returns.

Lisil Jackson.

Kentucky Tarzan.

Mike Best stepping onto the stage as the crowd loses its mind.

Mike greeting Bobby Dean at ringside.

Mike and Maxwell Jett staring each other down.

John Phillips: "Legends returned. Old ghosts walked back through UTA's doors."

Cut to Maxwell Jett dumping Mike Best from behind.

Mark Bravo: "And Maxwell Jett spent the entire night proving there is no low road he will not crawl down if survival is waiting at the end."

Cut to Valentina Blaze storming down the ramp.

She hits the ring and attacks Maxwell Jett immediately.

John Phillips: "Valentina Blaze returned with one target in mind."

Cut to Chris Ross later in the match being stopped by Bobby Dean on the scooter.

Bobby Dean: "Chris! Chris! Valentina came back tonight!"

Ross yanking Bobby Dean out of the chair.

Bobby being rolled into the ring, terrified.

Mark Bravo: "Bobby Dean spent half the match outside the ring, and somehow that became one of the greatest survival strategies in UTA history."

Cut to the Women's Championship story within the rumble.

Marie Van Claudio entering to thunderous boos.

Marie eliminating Zhalia Fears.

Athena Storm.

Sol Azteca.

Brittany Reid.

Valentina Blaze.

The crowd booing louder with every elimination.

John Phillips: "Marie Van Claudio tried to turn the rumble into The Empire's coronation."

Cut to Susanita Ybanez entering and immediately attacking Marie.

Susanita eliminating Amy Harrison.

Susanita eliminating Marie Van Claudio.

The O2 explodes.

Mark Bravo: "Susanita Ybanez made sure betrayal had consequences."

Cut to Kirsty McKinney immediately eliminating Susanita.

John Phillips: "But the rumble does not pause for justice."

Cut to Sean Jackson's entrance.

The opening hit of "In the Air Tonight."

The crowd rising in disbelief.

Sean Jackson stepping through the curtain.

Then the montage becomes brutal.

Jet Lawson gone.

Jaxson Ryder gone.

Savior Hawkins gone.

David Hightower gone.

Tyger II gone.

Hakuryu gone.

Madman Szalinski gone.

Trey Mack gone.

Brick Bronson gone.

Gideon Graves gone.

John Phillips: "Sean Jackson entered and delivered the most dominant elimination run of the night."

Mark Bravo: "Ten eliminations. Ten. That was not nostalgia. That was a warning shot from a Hall of Famer."

Cut to Lindsey Lothario eliminating Sean Jackson before he can get to Maxwell Jett.

Maxwell looking shocked and relieved.

John Phillips: "And once again, Maxwell Jett survived because someone else's fight got there first."

Cut to Chris Ross entering.

Ross forcing Bobby Dean into the ring.

Ross going straight for Maxwell.

Mikey Unlikely cutting him off.

Ross and Mikey brawling.

Ross finally getting Maxwell on the ropes.

Mikey dumping Ross over from behind.

The crowd gasping.

Chris Ross: "MIKEY!"

Mark Bravo: "Chris Ross had Maxwell Jett. He had him. And Mikey Unlikely made years of history matter more than revenge."

Cut to Maxwell flat on his back, laughing in disbelief that he survived.

Maxwell Jett: "I love history!"

Cut to the late entrants.

Clovis Black entering to the freight horn.

El Fantasma Oscuro 2 joining El Fantasma Oscuro 1.

Shannon Ray's red laser-dot entrance.

Valkyrie Knox entering to massive boos.

Rosa Delgado arriving at number seventy.

John Phillips: "By the time the seventieth entrant arrived, there were no more delays. No more countdowns. No more help coming."

Mark Bravo: "Just survival."

Cut to Kaida Shizuka being eliminated by Emily Hightower.

El Fantasma Oscuro 2 being knocked from the apron by Clovis Black.

Kirsty McKinney being eliminated by Emily.

Rosa Delgado being eliminated by Valkyrie Knox.

Clovis Black finally being eliminated by Yoshii after a violent swarm and collision near the ropes.

The music rises again.

Emily Hightower and Valkyrie Knox stand face to face.

The final two women.

The UTA Women's Championship on the line.

John Phillips: "Emily Hightower and Valkyrie Knox. The final two women. The winner would become UTA Women's Champion and secure a spot in the final eight."

Cut to the clash.

Valkyrie hitting short-arm lariats.

Emily fighting back.

Valkyrie nearly overpowering her.

Emily catching the opening.

Emily blasting Valkyrie off the apron.

Valkyrie hitting the floor.

The O2 explodes.

Ring Announcer: "Emily Hightower is the NEW UTA Women's Champion!"

Cut to Emily on her knees, exhausted, emotional, victorious.

Mark Bravo: "The Empire's last hope fell. Emily Hightower did it."

The screen flashes.

FINAL EIGHT.

Maxwell Jett.

Bobby Dean.

Yoshii.

El Fantasma Oscuro 1.

Graham Keel.

Silas Grimm.

Mikey Unlikely.

Emily Hightower.

John Phillips: "Once the final eight were set, every elimination created a champion."

Cut to Yoshii crashing into Silas Grimm and El Fantasma Oscuro 1 near the ropes.

Both men falling to the floor together.

Ring Announcer: "Silas Grimm and El Fantasma Oscuro 1 are the NEW UTA Tag Team Champions!"

Cut to Emily being blindsided by Maxwell Jett and eliminated.

Ring Announcer: "Emily Hightower is the NEW UTA Hardcore Champion!"

Emily holding the Hardcore Championship at ringside, still glaring at Maxwell.

Cut to Graham Keel charging Maxwell, only for Maxwell to catch and dump him over.

Ring Announcer: "Graham Keel is the NEW UTA Fighting Champion!"

Cut to Mikey and Bobby invoking the WTFC days.

Bobby charging.

Maxwell sidestepping.

Bobby's clothesline accidentally sending Mikey Unlikely over the top rope.

Ring Announcer: "Mikey Unlikely is the NEW WrestleZone Champion!"

Mikey accepting the title, then telling Bobby:

Mikey Unlikely: "Get him."

Cut to Yoshii trying to help Bobby against Maxwell.

Maxwell using Bobby again.

Yoshii falling to the floor.

Ring Announcer: "Yoshii is the NEW UTA United States Champion!"

Yoshii lifting the title at ringside as Jed Eye loses his mind.

The music drops lower.

Now the montage slows.

Bobby Dean and Maxwell Jett stand as the final two.

Bobby serious.

Focused.

More dangerous than anyone expected.

John Phillips: "And then, in the final stretch, Bobby Dean reminded everyone that underneath the jokes, underneath the scooter, underneath the snacks, there is still a great wrestler."

Bobby suplexing Maxwell.

Bobby hitting the corner avalanche.

Bobby catching Maxwell out of the air with a powerslam.

The crowd chanting his name.

Crowd: "BOB-BY! BOB-BY! BOB-BY!"

Mark Bravo: "For a few minutes, The O2 believed Bobby Dean was going to become UTA Champion."

Cut to Maxwell grabbing the referee.

The thumb to Bobby's eye.

Maxwell baiting Bobby with the battle chair.

Both men on the apron.

Maxwell biting Bobby's hand.

Maxwell kicking the battle chair away.

Bobby falling.

The crowd exploding in boos.

Ring Announcer: "Bobby Dean is the NEW UTA International Champion!"

Bobby sits on the floor, title in hand, looking up at Maxwell.

Cut to Maxwell rolling back into the ring.

Alone.

The last man standing.

Ring Announcer: "The winner of the All or Nothing Rumble... and STILL UTA Champion... Maxwell Jett!"

Maxwell clutches the UTA Championship to his chest.

The boos are deafening.

He smiles anyway.

John Phillips: "Somehow, some way, Maxwell Jett survived."

Mark Bravo: "You can hate how he did it. You can call it cheap, cowardly, manipulative, and disgusting. You would be right. But the result is the result. Maxwell Jett is still UTA Champion."

The montage shifts into a final championship recap.

Silas Grimm and El Fantasma Oscuro 1 holding the UTA Tag Team Championships.

Emily Hightower with the Women's Championship and Hardcore Championship.

Graham Keel holding the Fighting Championship.

Mikey Unlikely with the WrestleZone Championship.

Yoshii lifting the United States Championship.

Bobby Dean placing the International Championship across the battle chair.

Maxwell Jett raising the UTA Championship while the crowd rains down hatred.

John Phillips: "International Affair did not simply crown champions. It reset UTA."

Mark Bravo: "New champions. New grudges. A wounded Empire. A furious Susanita Ybanez. A double champion in Emily Hightower. An awakened Bobby Dean. And Maxwell Jett, still standing at the top of the mountain with everyone below him now aiming upward."

The music fades into one final shot.

Maxwell Jett clutching the UTA Championship.

Bobby Dean staring back from ringside with the International Championship resting on the battle chair.

The screen slowly fades to black.

White text appears.

70 ENTERED.

69 FELL.

1 SURVIVED.

A beat.

AND UTA WILL NEVER BE THE SAME.

The package ends.

The broadcast cuts back live to the arena, where the crowd is already buzzing from the retrospective.

John Phillips: "Welcome back, everyone. If International Affair was the earthquake, then tonight we begin measuring the aftershocks."

Mark Bravo: "And there are a lot of people in this building tonight still feeling those aftershocks, John. Champions, challengers, enemies, former friends, and one UTA Champion who may have survived London, but may not survive what comes next."

Selina Santorino vs. Darren Valiant

Match

The broadcast cuts back live inside the José Miguel Agrelot Coliseum, where the crowd is still buzzing from the International Affair retrospective and the chaos that opened the night.

John Phillips: "Welcome back to San Juan, Puerto Rico, and after everything we have already seen tonight, we are finally ready for our opening contest."

Mark Bravo: "Finally? John, I feel like we've already lived through three main events and a lawsuit."

John Phillips: "Selina Santorino will take on Darren Valiant, and this is a major opportunity for both competitors as the World Tour rolls forward."

Mark Bravo: "Selina made a lot of noise at International Affair. Darren Valiant wants to make sure she doesn't turn him into content tonight."

The lights shift.

Spotlights begin sweeping across the crowd like the opening of a red-carpet premiere. The arena floor flickers with moving beams, catching signs, faces, and flashes of camera phones as the first heavy kick drums hit.

“Gold Teeth Grin” begins to play through the sound system, glam-rock swagger colliding with modern percussion.

The crowd rises with a strong reaction as Darren Valiant steps through the curtain.

He wears a sleeveless entrance jacket, wrists taped, jaw set, chin high. There is confidence in every inch of him. Not quiet confidence. Not humble confidence. The kind that borders right on the edge of obnoxious because he knows exactly how good he is.

Ring Announcer: "The following contest is scheduled for one fall! Introducing first... from Cleveland, Ohio... weighing in at two hundred and eighteen pounds... he is The Spotlight Specialist... DARREN VALIANT!"

Darren stops at the top of the ramp.

He points to himself.

Then he points toward the ring.

Like he is claiming real estate.

John Phillips: "Darren Valiant is a tremendous athlete, a flash technician, and someone who can change the complexion of a match in a split second."

Mark Bravo: "He wrestles like every exchange is a camera test, but the annoying part is he usually passes."

Darren starts down the ramp, eyes locked on the ring. He does not slap every hand. He does not beg for noise. He walks like he already knows the spotlight is going to follow him whether anyone approves or not.

Halfway down the ramp, Darren suddenly stops.

He rolls his shoulders.

Then he fires off a quick shadow-boxing combination — left, right, slip, pivot — before snapping his leg up into a sharp superkick pose.

The pose hits exactly as one of the spotlights crosses him, creating a perfect flashbulb moment.

The crowd reacts, and Darren smirks.

Because he knew they would.

John Phillips: "Valiant calls himself a walking highlight reel, and there is a reason for that. He is fast, he is crisp, and his timing is dangerous."

Mark Bravo: "He can sell you a comeback, a near fall, a heartbreak, and a knockout in about forty-five seconds. That is not normal."

Darren reaches ringside and pauses near the apron, looking around the Coliseo as the crowd noise continues to rise.

He taps the edge of the apron once.

Then he slides in clean under the bottom rope.

The moment he enters the ring, he pops to his feet instantly, throwing his arms wide as if welcoming the entire arena into his frame.

He turns slowly, soaking in the reaction, then points toward the hard camera.

Darren Valiant: "I don't just steal the show..."

He smirks.

Darren Valiant: "...I rewrite it."

Darren backs into his corner, removing his sleeveless jacket and handing it off to ringside. He rolls his neck, shakes out his arms, and bounces lightly on the balls of his feet.

The music begins to fade.

Darren's expression shifts from showman to competitor.

The grin remains, but the eyes sharpen.

John Phillips: "Darren Valiant looks ready, but he is about to deal with one of the most self-obsessed and unpredictable personalities to arrive in UTA."

Mark Bravo: "Selina Santorino is not coming out here to wrestle a match, John. She is coming out here to produce an episode. Darren better make sure he doesn't end up as the unskippable ad."

Darren leans back in the corner, arms draped over the ropes, waiting for Selina Santorino.

Darren Valiant leans back in the corner, arms draped over the ropes, waiting for Selina Santorino.

The lights in the Coliseo shift again.

This time, the arena does not feel like a wrestling venue.

It feels like a production set.

The opening notes of Mariah Carey's "Obsessed" pulse through the speakers, and a wave of boos rises instantly from the San Juan crowd.

John Phillips: "And here comes Selina Santorino."

Mark Bravo: "Get ready, John. We are no longer broadcasting a wrestling match. We are now extras in Selina's personal livestream."

From above the entrance stage, a custom gold drone descends into view.

The Santorino Sentinel.

Its ring light flickers in rapid, paparazzi-style bursts as it hovers into position, searching for the only person in the building it has been programmed to care about.

Then Selina Santorino steps through the curtain.

She pauses beneath the strobing glow, standing tall, composed, and impossibly self-satisfied. Her eyes do not go to the crowd. They go directly to the drone lens.

She adjusts her posture by half an inch, finds the perfect angle, and gives the camera a slow, bored smile.

Ring Announcer: "And his opponent... from Miami, Florida... she is the Queen of Clicks... the Dominican Diamond... **SELINA SANTORINO!**"

Selina begins her walk down the ramp with the practiced ease of a supermodel crossing a runway. The drone glides backward ahead of her, keeping her centered in frame.

Darren watches from the ring, unimpressed but alert, bouncing lightly in the corner as Selina turns the entire entrance into a content shoot.

John Phillips: "Selina Santorino made her UTA debut at International Affair, and whether you like her attitude or not, she brings a unique level of confidence and athletic upside."

Mark Bravo: "Unique is one word. I was going to say exhausting. But she is six feet tall, athletic, and completely convinced the universe runs on her Wi-Fi signal, so Darren Valiant cannot let the presentation distract him from the danger."

As the lyric hits — "Why are you so obsessed with me?" — Selina suddenly stops near the barricade.

A fan in the front row is yelling at her.

Selina slowly turns toward them.

She leans over the barricade, getting uncomfortably close, and sings the line directly into their face with a mocking, theatrical smirk.

The fan shouts back.

Selina raises one flat palm inches from them.

A sharp, dismissive gesture.

Don't talk to me.

Then she pivots back to the drone's lens with a dismissive shrug.

Selina Santorino: "Love me. Hate me. It's all the same..."

She tilts her head, smiling with chilling calm.

Selina Santorino: "...because I'm just simply better."

The crowd boos louder.

John Phillips: "Selina feeding off the reaction here in San Juan."

Mark Bravo: "She does not see boos, John. She sees engagement metrics."

Selina reaches ringside and stops at the apron.

She looks up at Darren Valiant.

Darren smirks back from the corner, motioning with one hand as if inviting her to hurry up.

Selina laughs like the idea of being rushed is personally offensive.

She turns back to the drone and gives a small outfit-check spin before vaulting smoothly onto the apron.

She steps through the ropes with predator grace, entering the ring as if she is claiming studio space rather than stepping into competition.

Darren steps out of the corner for a moment, watching her carefully.

Selina does not acknowledge him.

Instead, she moves to the center of the ring as the Santorino Sentinel hovers above her.

Then she sprints forward.

Frontflip.

Perfect landing into a flat split dead-center on the canvas.

The crowd reacts despite itself.

Selina spins a full three hundred sixty degrees on the mat, long limbs sweeping out like a compass, then transitions into an elegant backward roll.

Using the momentum, she rises slowly, fluidly, dramatically, until she reaches her full height.

The exact millisecond she stands tall, the house lights cut to pitch black.

The only light in the building is the blinding white spotlight from the drone, pinned directly on Selina.

She stands in the eerie silence, legs crossed in a model stance.

Then she brings both hands to her temples.

Slowly, she mimes lowering an invisible crown onto her head.

At the precise moment she presses the crown into place, she looks straight into the drone lens and whispers.

Selina Santorino: "Subscribe... to become influential."

The drone triggers one final massive strobe flash.

For one split second, Selina's image is burned across the dark arena.

Then the house lights hum back to life in a soft magenta beauty-filter glow.

Selina breaks the pose with a casual, bored yawn.

Darren Valiant claps sarcastically from his corner.

Selina finally turns her head toward him.

She looks him up and down.

Then she looks back into the drone.

Selina Santorino: "Low-res."

The crowd boos again as Darren's smirk sharpens.

Mark Bravo: "Oh, that one landed."

John Phillips: "Darren Valiant does not seem amused."

Selina struts to the nearest turnbuckle and climbs up, sitting casually on the top rope like it is a VIP sofa.

The drone drifts inches from her face, its LIVE tally light blinking.

She blows a kiss to her viewers, then gives the lens a quick outfit check, completely ignoring the referee's attempt to get her down and start the match.

Darren steps forward now, rolling his neck and loosening his shoulders.

Selina keeps talking softly to the drone, mockingly gesturing toward him without even looking.

John Phillips: "The referee is trying to get Selina Santorino ready to compete, but she is still treating this like her personal broadcast."

Mark Bravo: "That confidence is either going to make her a star or get her superkicked into airplane mode."

Selina finally hops down from the top rope, smoothing herself out as if the match has been allowed to begin because she decided it could.

The drone rises away from the ring as Selina takes her corner.

Darren Valiant stands across from her, eyes locked, grin gone now.

The referee checks with both competitors.

The bell is next.

The referee checks with Darren Valiant.

Darren nods, eyes locked across the ring.

The referee checks with Selina Santorino.

Selina does not answer immediately.

She holds up one finger, turning slightly toward the Santorino Sentinel as it hovers near the outside of the ring. She adjusts her hair, finds the lens, and mouths something silently to her viewers before finally glancing back at the referee.

Selina Santorino: "You may begin."

The referee looks less than impressed.

Darren smirks from the opposite corner.

The bell rings.

DING DING DING!

John Phillips: "And here we go! Darren Valiant against Selina Santorino, our opening contest here in San Juan!"

Mark Bravo: "Darren needs to be careful early. Selina may be obnoxious, but she is tall, athletic, and she is absolutely not afraid to make a highlight at someone else's expense."

Darren steps out of the corner, circling with his hands up.

Selina remains where she is for a beat, looking him up and down like she is deciding whether the lighting is flattering enough to continue.

Darren gives her a little wave forward.

Darren Valiant: "Anytime."

Selina scoffs.

Selina Santorino: "Don't rush premium content."

The crowd boos.

Darren nods like he expected that, then suddenly darts in.

Selina reacts quickly, stepping back and slipping away before he can grab the wrist.

She wags a finger at him.

Selina Santorino: "Blocked."

Mark Bravo: "She just called defense a block."

John Phillips: "That tracks."

Darren resets, bouncing lightly on the balls of his feet.

They circle again.

This time Selina steps in, reaching for a collar-and-elbow tie-up.

Darren meets her in the center.

Selina immediately uses her height and leverage, forcing Darren backward two steps.

Darren plants his feet, shifts his hips, and twists underneath, transitioning into a side headlock.

The crowd gives a small cheer for the clean counter.

John Phillips: "Valiant with the side headlock, and there is that counter-wrestling Darren brings to the table."

Selina's eyes widen, not from pain, but from offense.

Selina Santorino: "Do not touch the hair."

Darren cranks the hold slightly.

Darren Valiant: "Then stop leading with it."

Selina pushes him toward the ropes.

Darren hits the ropes and rebounds.

Selina drops down flat.

Darren hops over her and keeps running.

Selina pops up and leapfrogs as Darren comes back.

Darren rebounds a third time.

Selina turns, looking for a quick hip toss.

Darren flips through it, landing on his feet.

Selina turns around—

Darren snaps off a picture-perfect dropkick.

Selina hits the mat and immediately rolls toward the ropes, more angry than hurt.

The crowd cheers.

John Phillips: "Beautiful dropkick by Darren Valiant!"

Mark Bravo: "And Selina is already mad. Not because she got hit. Because the camera saw it."

Darren pops up fast, throwing his arms wide for the crowd.

He turns toward the Santorino Sentinel and points at himself.

Darren Valiant: "Clip that."

The crowd reacts with cheers and laughter.

Selina's head snaps toward him from the ropes.

Her expression goes cold.

Selina Santorino: "Cute."

She pulls herself up using the ropes, then steps through them halfway, forcing the referee between her and Darren.

Referee: "Come on, Selina. Back in."

Selina holds out one hand, demanding space.

Selina Santorino: "I'm recalibrating."

Mark Bravo: "Recalibrating means stalling, right?"

John Phillips: "In this case, yes."

Darren backs off, palms raised, but the smirk is back.

Selina slowly steps back inside.

They circle again.

Darren shoots for the wrist.

Selina catches him this time, twisting into a sharp arm wringer.

Darren winces as Selina torques the wrist and steps around him with sudden precision.

John Phillips: "There is the athletic ability from Selina. When she focuses, she can move very cleanly in there."

Selina yanks Darren down to one knee, then leans toward the nearest camera.

Selina Santorino: "This is what high-resolution control looks like."

Darren grimaces, then rolls forward, kips up, reverses the wrist, and twists behind her into a hammerlock.

The crowd cheers again.

Selina freezes.

Not trapped.

Embarrassed.

Darren Valiant: "Buffering?"

The crowd pops.

Selina snaps her head back and catches Darren in the cheek with the back of her skull.

It is not pretty.

It is effective.

Darren staggers backward, holding his jaw.

The crowd boos.

John Phillips: "Selina with the back of the head, and that may have caught Valiant right in the mouth."

Mark Bravo: "That was the wrestling version of closing an app by force."

Selina turns and immediately unloads with a flying forearm.

Darren takes it hard, selling the impact through his whole body as he stumbles toward the corner.

Selina charges again.

Second flying forearm.

Darren absorbs it and drops to a seated position near the turnbuckles.

Selina turns to the drone and points toward Darren.

Selina Santorino: "See? Low-res hardware crashes under pressure."

She runs in, looking for the third strike in the sequence.

Darren suddenly explodes out of the corner.

He ducks under the incoming knee strike and hooks Selina by the head.

Jumping DDT!

Selina spikes into the canvas.

The crowd erupts.

John Phillips: "Valiant caught her! Sudden jumping DDT!"

Mark Bravo: "That is Darren Valiant. He can look half-dead and still hit you with something before your brain processes the opening."

Darren rolls Selina over and hooks the leg.

Referee: "One!"

Referee: "Two!"

Selina kicks out hard.

She rolls to her side, blinking quickly, one hand going to her head.

Darren sits up, breathing through the sting in his jaw, then nods to himself.

John Phillips: "Near fall for Darren Valiant early, and Selina Santorino may have just learned that this is not going to be a one-woman production."

Darren gets to his feet and motions for Selina to stand.

Selina pushes up slowly, anger now cutting through the performance.

The drone hovers closer.

Selina waves it away sharply.

Selina Santorino: "Not that angle."

Darren steps forward.

Selina suddenly grabs the front of his tights and pulls him forward, sending him throat-first across the middle rope.

The crowd boos as Darren snaps backward, clutching his throat.

John Phillips: "Cheap shot by Santorino!"

Mark Bravo: "She found the angle she wanted, John. Unfortunately for Darren, it was throat-first into the rope."

Selina rises behind him, the anger replaced once again by that smug, camera-ready calm.

She puts one boot between Darren's shoulders and presses him down against the rope, choking him while the referee begins the count.

Referee: "One! Two! Three! Four!"

Selina steps away right before five, hands raised innocently.

Selina Santorino: "Terms and conditions."

The crowd boos louder.

Darren rolls away from the ropes, coughing and trying to pull himself back up.

Selina looks down at him, then toward the drone again.

Selina Santorino: "Now we're live."

She reaches down, grabs Darren by the hair, and pulls him back toward the center of the ring as the match begins to tilt in her favor.

Selina reaches down, grabs Darren by the hair, and pulls him back toward the center of the ring as the match begins to tilt in her favor.

Referee: "Watch the hair, Selina!"

Selina Santorino: "It's called direction."

She snaps Darren forward and drives a sharp knee into his midsection.

Darren folds over, still coughing from the rope shot.

Selina hooks him around the head and neck, then drops backward with a quick snap neckbreaker.

Darren hits the canvas hard, rolling to his side as Selina sits up immediately and turns toward the Santorino Sentinel.

Selina Santorino: "Did we get that? Tell me we got that."

John Phillips: "Selina Santorino beginning to string offense together here, but every time she does, she checks the camera before she checks the opponent."

Mark Bravo: "That is the danger and the flaw. She wants to win, but she also wants the win to look expensive."

Selina gets to her feet and circles Darren, who pushes up to one knee.

She looks down at him with open disdain.

Selina Santorino: "This is embarrassing for you."

Darren lifts his head, still breathing hard.

Darren Valiant: "You talk this much on mute too?"

The crowd pops.

Selina's expression tightens.

She fires a stiff forearm across Darren's jaw.

Darren's head snaps to the side, and he drops back to both hands.

Mark Bravo: "He got a reaction, but he also got his mouth rearranged for it."

Selina grabs Darren by the wrist and pulls him up, then whips him toward the ropes.

Darren rebounds.

Selina steps into him and launches him overhead with a sharp exploder suplex.

Darren crashes onto the mat and sells the landing through his shoulders and back, rolling all the way to the corner.

John Phillips: "Exploder suplex by Santorino! And Valiant landed hard!"

Selina crawls into the cover with one hand on Darren's chest and her other hand raised toward the drone in a peace sign.

Referee: "One!"

Referee: "Two!"

Darren kicks out.

Selina immediately sits up, glaring at the referee.

Selina Santorino: "That was three in 4K."

Referee: "It was two."

Selina Santorino: "Upgrade your eyes."

The crowd boos as Selina gets to her feet, annoyed but still in control.

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

Selina places one boot on his back and steps over him like he is a piece of set dressing in her way.

John Phillips: "The disrespect from Selina Santorino."

Mark Bravo: "And Darren Valiant is the wrong guy to disrespect if you don't want a comeback thrown in your face."

Selina turns back and reaches down for Darren again.

But Darren grabs the front of her gear and suddenly yanks her forward, sending her throat-first across the middle rope in payback.

The crowd cheers as Selina springs backward, clutching at her throat, eyes wide with outrage.

John Phillips: "Valiant returns the favor!"

Mark Bravo: "Terms and conditions, baby!"

Darren rolls away, still hurt, buying himself a second.

Selina turns around, furious, and charges.

Darren drops flat.

Selina hops over him and hits the ropes.

Darren pops up as she rebounds.

Selina swings a forearm.

Darren ducks underneath, spins behind her, and catches her with a snap neckbreaker of his own.

Both competitors hit the mat.

John Phillips: "Valiant with the neckbreaker! Both competitors are down!"

The crowd begins clapping, trying to pull Darren back into the match.

Darren rolls to his stomach, pushing himself up slowly.

Selina crawls toward the ropes, frustration replacing the polished performance.

The referee checks both competitors but begins no count, as both are moving.

Mark Bravo: "Darren Valiant needed that counter badly. Selina was starting to turn this into one of those influencer apology videos where nobody apologizes and somehow everybody else is wrong."

Darren gets to one knee.

Selina uses the ropes to pull herself upright.

They turn toward each other at the same time.

Selina rushes in first.

Darren sidesteps and sends her into the corner.

Selina catches herself on the turnbuckles, but Darren follows in fast.

Flying forearm from Darren!

The crowd pops.

Selina stumbles out of the corner.

Darren hits the ropes and comes back with a second flying forearm.

Selina goes down.

Darren kips to his feet, adrenaline taking over, the crowd rising with him.

John Phillips: "Here comes Darren Valiant!"

Selina gets up quickly, throwing a wild shot.

Darren ducks it, catches her around the head, and drops her with a sudden jumping DDT.

Selina bounces off the canvas and rolls to her back.

Darren hooks the leg deep.

Referee: "One!"

Referee: "Two!"

Selina kicks out.

Darren rolls onto his back, staring up at the lights for half a second before sitting up with a grin.

Darren Valiant: "Okay. Okay."

John Phillips: "Another near fall for Darren Valiant, and Selina Santorino is finding out that Valiant can strike from nowhere."

Mark Bravo: "He is not trying to out-brand her. He is trying to out-time her."

Darren rises, feeding off the crowd.

He backs into the corner and begins tuning up the leg, not theatrically, but with sharp little bounces as Selina starts to stir.

John Phillips: "Darren may be looking for the Spotlight Kick!"

Selina gets to one knee.

Darren launches forward.

Selina suddenly drops low and rolls under the superkick.

Darren's leg sails over her head, and the momentum turns him around.

Selina pops up behind him, grabs him by the waist, and tries to pull him into position.

Selina Santorino: "Smile."

The drone swoops closer.

Selina tries to force Darren's face toward the camera for the selfie pre-roll.

John Phillips: "Selina may be setting up Cancel!"

Mark Bravo: "That is the content lock! Darren needs to move!"

Darren elbows backward once.

Selina holds on.

Darren fires a second elbow.

Selina staggers but refuses to release.

She reaches toward the drone, trying to get the shot anyway.

Selina Santorino: "Hold still, budget boy."

Darren suddenly drops his weight, rolls forward, and sends Selina flipping over him with a snap mare-style escape.

Selina lands seated.

Darren hits the ropes behind her.

Spotlight Kick to the back of the head!

The crowd erupts as Selina collapses forward.

John Phillips: "Spotlight Kick! Darren caught her!"

Mark Bravo: "The camera got that one!"

Darren quickly turns Selina over and covers.

Referee: "One!"

Referee: "Two!"

Selina throws a shoulder up just before three.

The crowd groans.

Darren sits back on his knees, eyes wide for a moment.

John Phillips: "So close! Darren Valiant nearly put Selina Santorino away!"

Darren runs both hands through his hair, then slaps the mat once and gets to his feet.

Selina rolls toward the apron, clearly shaken now.

The Santorino Sentinel hovers near her as she reaches for the ropes.

She notices the drone.

Even hurt, even dazed, instinct takes over.

She looks into the lens and weakly lifts a hand.

Selina Santorino: "Still... gorgeous."

Darren sees it and shakes his head.

Darren Valiant: "Unbelievable."

He steps toward her.

Selina suddenly grabs him by the front of the tights and pulls him forward, sending him shoulder-first between the ropes and into the ring post.

The impact echoes.

Darren drops backward, clutching his shoulder.

John Phillips: "Oh! Valiant into the post!"

Mark Bravo: "That is what makes Selina dangerous. She can be vain and still be vicious."

Selina drags herself back through the ropes and crawls toward Darren.

She hooks his arm, pulls him flat, and covers with both legs trapped.

Referee: "One!"

Referee: "Two!"

Darren kicks out.

Selina lets out a frustrated scream and slaps the mat.

Selina Santorino: "Why are you still rendering?!"

The crowd boos and cheers at the same time, fully invested now.

Selina gets to her feet, breathing harder, her hair no longer perfect, her expression no longer curated.

She looks down at Darren.

Then toward the corner.

John Phillips: "Selina Santorino may be thinking high risk here."

Mark Bravo: "That is usually where her need for engagement overrides common sense."

Selina moves to the corner and climbs to the top rope.

The crowd rises as Darren remains down near the center of the ring, one hand on his shoulder.

The Santorino Sentinel lifts higher, angling above the ring.

Selina looks up at it and points down at Darren.

Selina Santorino: "Hit the like button."

She stands tall on the top rope.

Then launches.

Corkscrew moonsault!

Darren rolls away at the last possible second.

Selina crashes hard into the canvas.

The crowd erupts.

John Phillips: "Nobody home! Selina went for the moonsault, and Valiant moved!"

Mark Bravo: "She wanted a viral moment, and she may have just gone splat in high definition!"

Both competitors are down.

Darren clutches his shoulder.

Selina curls on the mat, holding her ribs.

The referee checks them both as the crowd claps and stomps, trying to pull the match toward its next gear.

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Referee: "One!"

Darren rolls to his side, teeth clenched, one arm tucked tight against his body.

Selina presses a forearm to the canvas, trying to push herself up, but immediately drops back down, gasping from the impact.

Referee: "Two!"

John Phillips: "Selina Santorino took a huge risk, and it did not pay off. Darren Valiant had just enough awareness to get out of the way."

Mark Bravo: "That is Darren's gift. He can be hurt, he can be rocked, he can be barely breathing, and somehow he still finds the half-second he needs."

Referee: "Three!"

The crowd grows louder.

Darren crawls toward the ropes.

Selina rolls toward the opposite side, one hand still wrapped around her ribs.

Referee: "Four!"

Darren grabs the middle rope and pulls himself to one knee.

Selina reaches the ropes and does the same, but she is breathing hard now, no longer interested in the drone, the lighting, or her angles.

Referee: "Five!"

Both competitors get to their feet at nearly the same time.

Darren turns first.

Selina turns a split second later.

They stumble toward each other in the center of the ring.

Selina swings first.

A forearm catches Darren across the jaw.

Darren sells it big, staggering backward, nearly dropping to one knee.

Then he springs forward and answers with a forearm of his own.

Selina's head snaps to the side.

The crowd cheers.

John Phillips: "Now we're trading in the center!"

Selina fires again.

Darren fires back.

Selina.

Darren.

Selina goes for a third forearm, but Darren ducks underneath.

He slips behind her, hooks around the head, and looks for the Valiant Shift.

John Phillips: "Valiant Shift!"

Selina grabs the top rope with both hands, stopping the motion before Darren can pull her down.

Darren lands on his back alone, the failed attempt jarring his already damaged shoulder.

Mark Bravo: "Smart by Selina! She knew exactly where she was!"

Selina turns fast and steps toward Darren, looking to capitalize.

Darren rolls through, pops to his feet, and throws the Spotlight Kick.

Selina ducks under it.

Darren spins through the missed kick.

Selina catches him from behind.

She locks the waist.

The drone suddenly dips closer.

Selina sees the blinking LIVE light from the corner of her eye.

Even now, hurt and desperate, the instinct takes over.

Selina Santorino: "Now."

She forces Darren's face toward the drone lens.

Darren struggles, trying to pry her hands apart.

Selina leans beside him, managing a strained but perfect pout.

The drone flashes.

Selina Santorino: "CANCEL!"

Selina spins Darren around, trying to hoist him into the fireman's carry for the full rotation facebuster.

But Darren slips down behind her.

The crowd pops.

John Phillips: "Darren escaped Cancel!"

Selina turns around—

Darren jumps.

Valiant Shift!

No!

Selina shoves him off at the last possible second.

Darren hits the ropes chest-first and rebounds backward.

Selina catches him under both arms.

Underhook DDT!

John Phillips: "Showtime! Selina planted him!"

Mark Bravo: "That may do it!"

Darren's head and shoulders spike into the mat, and Selina immediately rolls him over.

She hooks the leg, but instead of a deep cover, she presses one hand dramatically against Darren's chest and turns toward the Santorino Sentinel.

Referee: "One!"

Referee: "Two!"

Darren kicks out.

The crowd erupts.

Selina bolts upright, eyes wide.

Selina Santorino: "No."

The referee holds up two fingers.

Referee: "Two!"

Selina Santorino: "No, no, no. Delete that. That did not happen."

John Phillips: "Darren Valiant kicked out of Showtime!"

Mark Bravo: "And Selina cannot believe the algorithm betrayed her!"

Selina grabs Darren by the face with both hands, staring down at him in disbelief.

Selina Santorino: "You are not supposed to still be here."

Darren's eyes are glassy, but he manages the smallest grin.

Darren Valiant: "Bad connection."

The crowd pops again.

Selina slams Darren's head back against the mat and gets to her feet, furious now.

She turns to the referee, then to the drone, then to the corner.

Her breathing is sharper.

The polished livestream mask is cracking.

John Phillips: "Selina Santorino is losing control emotionally here."

Mark Bravo: "That is bad news for Darren or bad news for Selina. We are about to find out which."

Selina drags Darren up by the wrist.

He can barely stand.

She hooks the arm again, looking for another underhook DDT.

Darren drops to one knee, blocking it.

Selina clubs him across the back.

Darren stays down, refusing to be lifted.

Selina hits him again.

Selina Santorino: "Stay down!"

She tries to pull him into position one more time.

Darren suddenly surges upward, driving Selina backward into the corner.

The crowd comes alive.

Darren buries a shoulder into her midsection.

Again.

Again.

The referee warns him to back off.

Darren stumbles backward, shaking out the damaged shoulder.

Selina staggers out of the corner.

Darren catches her with a sudden snap neckbreaker.

He does not cover.

He cannot cover immediately.

Both competitors are down again.

John Phillips: "Valiant had the counter, but he may not have enough left to follow up!"

Darren rolls slowly toward the ropes, pulling himself up as the crowd claps in rhythm.

Selina sits up near the center of the ring, dazed, one hand at the back of her neck.

Darren sees her position.

He sees the opening.

The crowd sees it too.

John Phillips: "Darren is lining her up!"

Darren grips the top rope with one hand, using it to steady himself.

His shoulder is screaming.

His jaw is swollen.

But he is on his feet.

Selina rises slowly.

Darren takes a step forward.

Then another.

Selina turns—

Spotlight Kick!

Selina catches the leg.

The crowd gasps.

Selina smiles through the exhaustion.

Selina Santorino: "Predictable."

She spins Darren around.

Darren completes the rotation, but instead of losing balance, he springs off his good foot and launches backward.

He hooks Selina's head on the turn.

Valiant Shift!

This time it lands.

Selina is driven hard into the canvas.

The crowd explodes.

John Phillips: "Valiant Shift! Darren hit it out of nowhere!"

Mark Bravo: "That is the timing! That is the whole game with Darren Valiant!"

Darren rolls over, grabs Selina by the leg, and hooks deep with everything he has left.

Referee: "One!"

Referee: "Two!"

The Santorino Sentinel suddenly dips low near the referee's line of sight, its ring light flashing wildly.

The referee flinches and turns his head for half a second.

Darren looks up, confused and furious.

John Phillips: "What is that drone doing?!"

Mark Bravo: "The Santorino Sentinel just got involved!"

The referee waves the drone away angrily.

That moment is enough.

Selina shifts underneath Darren and hooks her long leg over the bottom rope.

The referee finally turns back and sees the rope.

Referee: "Rope break!"

The crowd boos loudly.

Darren sits up, stunned.

Darren Valiant: "Are you kidding me?"

John Phillips: "Darren Valiant had this match won! He had Selina down off the Valiant Shift!"

Mark Bravo: "And the drone bought her half a second. In wrestling, half a second is rent money."

Darren gets to his knees, arguing with the referee as the official points to Selina's boot on the rope.

Selina rolls to the apron, barely conscious, but still in the match.

The Santorino Sentinel rises back above the ring, its LIVE light blinking like nothing happened.

Darren glares up at it.

Then he turns back toward Selina.

Selina is dragging herself up on the apron.

Darren grabs her through the ropes, trying to pull her back in.

Selina suddenly drops down, snapping Darren throat-first across the top rope.

Darren stumbles backward, coughing and clutching his neck.

Selina slips back into the ring behind him.

Darren turns around—

Selina jumps up and catches him with a slingshot superkick!

Darren drops to one knee.

John Phillips: "Slingshot superkick by Selina!"

Selina backs away, breathing hard, eyes locked on Darren.

The drone moves in.

Selina points to it, then points at Darren.

Selina Santorino: "Now upload this."

Darren tries to push up.

Selina charges.

Divine Blitz!

First flying forearm.

Second flying forearm.

Third flying forearm.

Darren somehow stays standing, wobbling badly.

Selina hits the ropes and comes back with the shattering knee strike.

It catches Darren flush.

Darren collapses backward onto the mat.

John Phillips: "Divine Blitz connects!"

Mark Bravo: "Darren is out!"

Selina drops into the cover, hooking the leg with both arms this time, no posing, no peace sign, no wasted angle.

Referee: "One!"

Referee: "Two!"

Darren kicks out again.

The arena explodes.

Selina sits up, absolutely stunned.

Her hair is a mess.

Her breathing is heavy.

Her face is no longer filtered by arrogance.

It is disbelief.

John Phillips: "Darren Valiant kicked out again! Somehow, some way, The Spotlight Specialist is still in this!"

Mark Bravo: "Selina finally covered him like a wrestler instead of an influencer, and he still got the shoulder up!"

Selina crawls backward, staring at Darren like he has personally ruined her broadcast.

Darren lies on the mat, barely moving, but still breathing, still fighting.

The crowd chants for him now.

Crowd: "DAR-REN! DAR-REN! DAR-REN!"

Selina slowly turns toward the drone.

The LIVE light blinks.

She says nothing.

For once, there is no line for the camera.

Only anger.

Selina slowly turns toward the drone.

The LIVE light blinks.

She says nothing.

For once, there is no line for the camera.

Only anger.

John Phillips: "Selina Santorino is out of jokes. She is out of cute comments. Darren Valiant has forced her into a fight."

Mark Bravo: "And that may be the most dangerous version of her, John. The version that stops performing and starts trying to hurt somebody."

Selina crawls back toward Darren, grabbing him by the jaw and forcing his face toward hers.

Selina Santorino: "You don't get to ruin my debut singles moment."

Darren's eyes are half-open. His chest rises and falls hard. He is barely there, but that same defiant little smirk still pulls at the corner of his mouth.

Darren Valiant: "Too late."

Selina's face twists.

She slams a forearm down across Darren's face.

Then another.

Then another.

The referee steps in, warning her as Darren tries to cover up.

Referee: "Open the hand! Come on, Selina!"

Selina Santorino: "I'm open to ending him."

The crowd boos as Selina gets to her feet and drags Darren up with her.

Darren's legs are unsteady. His shoulder hangs lower than before. He reaches for Selina's wrist, trying to fight the grip, but she knees him hard in the ribs.

Darren drops back to one knee.

Selina looks down at him.

Then she looks toward the drone.

The anger sharpens into something colder.

Selina Santorino: "Fine."

She points at the Santorino Sentinel.

Selina Santorino: "Bring it in."

The drone lowers toward eye level.

John Phillips: "She may be going back to Cancel!"

Mark Bravo: "She tried it once and Darren escaped. This time, I don't know if he has enough left."

Selina pulls Darren upright from behind, locking the waist and trapping one arm across his body.

Darren struggles weakly.

Selina forces his face toward the drone lens.

The ring light bathes them both in harsh white light.

Selina leans beside him, breathing hard, hair messy, eyes furious.

Selina Santorino: "Smile for the last clip."

The drone flashes.

Selina Santorino: "CANCEL!"

She tries to spin Darren around and hoist him up.

But Darren drops his weight again.

Selina screams in frustration and clubs him across the back.

She tries again.

Darren hooks one leg around hers, blocking the lift.

The crowd starts to rise.

John Phillips: "Darren is fighting it!"

Selina hits him again across the back.

Darren stumbles forward, almost falling.

Selina grabs him by the hair and yanks him back, trying to reset the hold.

Darren suddenly reaches up and catches her head.

He drops down fast.

Jawbreaker!

Selina staggers backward, clutching her mouth.

Darren collapses to both knees, then forces himself up through pure instinct.

Mark Bravo: "He bought himself one more breath!"

Selina shakes it off and charges.

Darren throws the Spotlight Kick.

Selina ducks.

Darren spins through, his damaged shoulder slowing him just enough.

Selina catches him with a sudden high knee to the ribs.

Darren folds.

Selina hooks both arms again.

John Phillips: "Showtime again!"

Darren powers backward, driving Selina spine-first into the corner before she can drop him.

The crowd cheers.

Darren backs up, still doubled over.

Selina lunges out of the corner with a forearm.

Darren ducks underneath.

He hooks her head from behind.

John Phillips: "Valiant Shift—"

Selina grabs the top rope again.

Darren lands on his back, but this time he rolls through the landing, popping up to one knee instead of staying down.

Selina turns, expecting him to still be on the mat.

Darren springs forward.

Spotlight Kick!

Selina takes it under the jaw and collapses backward into the ropes.

The crowd explodes.

John Phillips: "Spotlight Kick connects!"

Mark Bravo: "She's out on her feet!"

Selina rebounds off the ropes, stumbling forward.

Darren grabs her from behind.

He jumps.

Valiant Shift!

Selina crashes hard into the mat.

Darren rolls over, hooks both legs, and stacks his weight down across her shoulders.

Referee: "One!"

Referee: "Two!"

The Santorino Sentinel suddenly dives low again, but this time the referee sees it coming.

He turns sharply, throwing both arms up and stepping toward the drone.

Referee: "Hey! Get that thing out of here!"

The referee swats at the air, trying to force the Santorino Sentinel away from the ring.

For one critical second, his attention is gone.

Darren keeps Selina stacked down, shoulders pressed to the mat, legs hooked tight.

John Phillips: "The referee's distracted! Darren has her down!"

Mark Bravo: "He had the Valiant Shift! He had the cover! But that drone just bought Selina a lifeline!"

Darren looks up, realizing the count has stopped.

Darren Valiant: "Come on! Count!"

The hesitation costs him.

Selina's eyes snap open beneath him.

She reaches up, grabbing Darren by the front of the gear, and yanks him forward.

Her other hand shoots across his face.

Fingernails rake the eyes.

Darren recoils immediately, rolling away and clutching at his face.

The crowd erupts in boos.

John Phillips: "Oh, come on! Selina went to the eyes!"

Mark Bravo: "The referee never saw it. The drone made sure of that."

The referee finally forces the Santorino Sentinel higher and turns back toward the action.

Darren is on his knees, blinking hard, one hand covering his eyes.

Selina rolls toward the ropes, gasping, furious, and desperate.

For the first time all match, she is not smiling for the camera.

She is not performing.

She is surviving.

Darren tries to stand, still half-blind.

Selina crawls behind him, using the ropes to drag herself up.

John Phillips: "Darren Valiant had this match won, and now he can't see where Selina is!"

Darren swings blindly, trying to create space.

Selina ducks under it.

She slips behind him and locks the waist.

The Santorino Sentinel drops back into position, its ring light blinking.

This time, Selina does not look pretty.

Her hair is a mess.

Her face is flushed.

Her ribs are aching.

But the camera is there.

So she forces the moment anyway.

Selina Santorino: "Smile."

She yanks Darren's face toward the drone lens.

Darren tries to fight free, but his balance is gone.

The drone flashes.

Selina Santorino: "CANCEL!"

In one desperate, fluid burst, Selina spins Darren around, hoists him up, and drives him down face-first with the rotation facebuster.

Darren hits hard.

The impact snaps through the ring.

John Phillips: "Cancel! Selina hit Cancel!"

Mark Bravo: "After the eye rake! After the drone! She finally got him!"

Selina rolls Darren over and drops across him.

This time there is no peace sign.

No pose.

No wink to the camera.

She hooks both legs and presses every bit of her weight down across his shoulders.

Referee: "One!"

Referee: "Two!"

Referee: "Three!"

DING DING DING!

The crowd erupts in boos as Selina's music hits.

Ring Announcer: "Here is your winner... SELINA SANTORINO!"

Selina rolls off Darren and lies on the mat for a moment, breathing hard, one arm across her ribs.

Darren remains down, one hand still near his eyes, the other draped across the canvas.

John Phillips: "Selina Santorino steals it! Darren Valiant had the match won after the Valiant Shift, but the Santorino

Sentinel got involved, the referee was pulled out of position, and Selina took advantage."

Mark Bravo: "That was not high-resolution wrestling, John. That was piracy."

The referee raises Selina's hand, but she immediately yanks it away from him.

She pushes herself to her knees, then slowly stands, still hurting but victorious.

The Santorino Sentinel hovers close.

Selina looks into the lens.

For a second, the anger is still there.

Then the mask returns.

The smug smile.

The tilted chin.

The manufactured perfection.

Selina Santorino: "Hate me. Love me."

She steps over Darren Valiant, planting one boot beside his shoulder as she leans toward the drone.

Selina Santorino: "It's all the same."

The crowd boos louder.

Selina raises both hands to her temples and slowly mimes lowering the invisible crown back onto her head.

Selina Santorino: "I'm simply better."

John Phillips: "She may have won, but Darren Valiant has every right to be furious about how this match ended."

Mark Bravo: "Furious, sure. But Selina Santorino is going to wake up tomorrow with a win in the record book and probably three million views of that finish before breakfast."

Selina exits through the ropes, taking her time despite the punishment she absorbed.

At ringside, she pauses beside the Santorino Sentinel, gives it one final look, and blows a kiss directly into the lens.

Behind her, Darren Valiant sits up slowly in the ring, blinking hard and realizing exactly what happened.

His frustration is written across his face.

Selina backs up the ramp, smiling now, arms spread as the boos rain down.

The livestream survived.

And Selina Santorino got exactly what she wanted.

Bigger Picture

Segment

The broadcast cuts backstage.

The camera is already moving, catching up to a chaotic scene in one of the corridors behind the curtain.

Chris Ross is pacing like a caged animal, jaw clenched, eyes burning. Two officials stand in front of him, palms out, trying to keep him from surging forward.

Across from him, Mike Best is being held back by another pair of officials. The UTA Hall of Famer looks furious, one hand rubbing the back of his skull where Ross blasted him moments ago.

Valentina Blaze stands off to the side at first, watching the temperature rise again with every passing second.

Chris Ross: "I am sick and tired of everybody stickin' their nose in my business!"

Ross points past the officials directly at Mike.

Chris Ross: "Every damn time I get close to Maxwell Jett, somebody gets in my way. First Scythe. Now you. Everybody wants to make a moment off my fight!"

Mike Best: "Your fight?"

Mike laughs, but there is no humor in it.

Mike Best: "Chris, nobody cares about your fight. Nobody cares about your little redemption tour. Nobody cares that you used to have the belt. Nobody cares that you think Maxwell owes you something."

Ross takes a hard step forward, and the officials immediately tighten the wall between them.

Official: "Chris! Back up!"

Chris Ross: "Say that again."

Mike Best: "I said nobody cares about Chris Ross as champion."

Ross explodes forward, shoving into the officials hard enough to drive them back a step.

Chris Ross: "You arrogant son of a—"

Mike pushes forward too, trying to get through the bodies separating them.

Mike Best: "You hit me from behind, tough guy! You want to act like everybody's in your way? Maybe stop swinging at people who are trying to fix the problem!"

Chris Ross: "Ahhhhh... The old timer who refuses to accept that Father time is approaching. The man who's level of narcissism is so high that he made his last name Best..."

Mike Best: "I'm a god damn Hall of Famer!"

Ross laughs sharply, pure venom.

Chris Ross: "I'm just going to tell you a quote that a death row inmate said before he was executed.... Some were born a king.... Some were born a street sweeper... But in the end... Everyone dances with.... THE REAPER...."

Mike surges forward again, and the officials struggle to keep both men apart.

Official: "Enough! Both of you, stop!"

Valentina finally steps into the middle of the frame.

She does not yell at first.

She just walks straight between the chaos, forcing both men to look at her instead of each other.

Valentina Blaze: "Stop."

Ross is breathing hard, still glaring over her shoulder at Mike.

Valentina Blaze: "Chris."

Ross's eyes flick to her.

Valentina Blaze: "Stop."

Then she turns slightly toward Mike.

Valentina Blaze: "Mike. You too."

Mike scoffs, still heated.

Mike Best: "He hit me in the back of the head."

Chris Ross: "And I'll do it again if you—"

Valentina Blaze: "No, you won't."

That cuts through.

Ross looks at her, irritated, but he does not immediately fire back.

Valentina Blaze: "Both of you need to calm down and actually think for five seconds."

She points down the hallway, toward the direction First Class escaped earlier.

Valentina Blaze: "This is exactly what Maxwell Jett wants."

Ross shakes his head, but Valentina keeps going.

Valentina Blaze: "He wants everyone fighting each other. He wants Chris Ross fighting Mike Best. He wants Mike Best fighting Chris Ross. He wants every threat to that title too angry, too proud, too distracted, and too busy trying to prove something to everybody except him."

Mike's jaw tightens.

Ross looks away, still fuming.

Valentina Blaze: "That is how he stays safe."

She turns toward Ross now, her voice firm but not soft.

Valentina Blaze: "Chris, you already watched this happen with Samuel Scythe."

Ross's expression hardens.

Valentina Blaze: "He got pulled into it. You got pulled into it. First Class slipped away. Maxwell stayed champion. The more chaos there is around him, the easier it is for him to hide behind it."

Chris Ross: "I don't hide behind anybody."

Valentina Blaze: "I know that."

She steps closer to him.

Valentina Blaze: "But Maxwell does."

Ross says nothing.

Valentina turns toward Mike next.

Valentina Blaze: "And Mike, I respect you. I do."

Mike raises his eyebrows slightly, still annoyed but listening.

Valentina Blaze: "But you need to respect that Chris Ross is a former UTA Champion trying to get his belt back."

Mike Best: "His belt?"

Chris Ross: "Damn right."

Mike Best: "See, that right there is the problem."

Valentina immediately cuts back in before it can explode again.

Valentina Blaze: "No. The problem is Maxwell Jett."

The hallway quiets for half a beat.

Valentina Blaze: "All of this is nonsense. The two of you standing here, screaming over who deserves what, who interrupted who, who hit who, who gets the next word, who gets the next moment? Nonsense."

She looks from Ross to Mike.

Valentina Blaze: "There is a common enemy."

Ross's nostrils flare.

Valentina Blaze: "And whether either of you likes it or not, you should be working together."

Ross immediately shakes his head.

Chris Ross: "No."

Valentina looks at him.

Chris Ross: "No, I've seen what happens when I team with people."

There is a weight to that.

Not just anger.

History.

Chris Ross: "People get in my way. People make it about them. People cost me what I'm tryin' to take back. I'm done trusting anybody to stand next to me when I can just walk through whoever's in front of me."

Mike Best: "Good. Because I'm not here to be your partner."

Mike shrugs the officials off just enough to stand taller.

Mike Best: "I'm not here to help Chris Ross finish his story. I'm not here to be some side quest in your little revenge game."

He points to himself.

Mike Best: "I am a god damn Hall of Famer. I made my name in High Octane. I made my name in DREAM. I made my name everywhere I decided I was going to matter."

Mike steps forward, but this time not violently. Just enough to make the words land.

Mike Best: "And now? This is my time to shine in the UTA."

Ross gives him a cold stare.

Chris Ross: "Then shine somewhere else."

Valentina exhales, frustrated, then steps fully between them again.

Valentina Blaze: "Fine."

Both men look at her.

Valentina Blaze: "You don't have to work together."

She looks at Ross.

Valentina Blaze: "You don't have to trust him."

Then to Mike.

Valentina Blaze: "And you don't have to help him."

She gestures between them.

Valentina Blaze: "But there is no reason to fight each other."

Ross looks past her at Mike.

Chris Ross: "There is if he gets in my way."

Valentina turns sharply toward Ross, but he is already speaking directly to Mike now.

Chris Ross: "Stay out of my way, and there won't be any problems."

Mike's eyes narrow.

Mike Best: "Only problem I see..."

He steps a little closer, officials ready to move if needed.

Mike Best: "...is Chris Ross stopping me from finishing what I started at All or Nothing."

The tension spikes again.

Ross's shoulders square.

Mike does not back down.

Valentina immediately raises both hands between them.

Valentina Blaze: "No."

She looks at Ross first.

Valentina Blaze: "Not here."

Then Mike.

Valentina Blaze: "Not now."

For a long moment, nobody moves.

The officials remain tense, ready to jump in again.

Ross breathes hard through his nose, fists clenched at his sides.

Mike Best keeps one hand on his hip, the other still flexing like he wants to throw it.

Valentina stands between them, refusing to move.

Valentina Blaze: "Maxwell Jett is walking around this building right now smiling because this is exactly what he wanted."

That lands.

Ross looks away first, jaw grinding, rage still there but no longer boiling over.

Mike's expression remains sharp, but he stops trying to step forward.

The violence begins to simmer.

Not disappear.

Just simmer.

Chris Ross: "You get one warning."

Ross points at Mike.

Chris Ross: "One."

Mike Best: "That's cute. I'll try to cherish it."

Valentina closes her eyes for half a second, annoyed but relieved the fists have stopped flying.

Valentina Blaze: "Both of you are impossible."

Ross turns and storms down the hallway, still furious.

Valentina watches him go, then looks back at Mike Best.

Valentina Blaze: "He's not your enemy unless you make him one."

Mike rubs the back of his head again where Ross hit him, then gives her a thin, humorless smile.

Mike Best: "Funny. I was about to say the same thing."

Mike turns and walks the opposite direction, leaving the officials standing in the middle of the hallway, still unsure whether they should relax.

Valentina remains there for a moment, caught between two storms that have not ended, only moved apart.

John Phillips: "Valentina Blaze trying to keep Chris Ross and Mike Best focused on Maxwell Jett, but I don't know if either man is willing to listen."

Mark Bravo: "She's right, John. Maxwell wants chaos around him. The problem is Chris Ross and Mike Best are both very, very good at creating chaos."

The camera holds on Valentina's face as she looks down the hallway after Ross, then back the other way after Mike.

The tension is still there.

The violence has only been postponed.

Earn Your Place

Segment

The arena lights dim.

For a moment, the building sits in low gold, the kind of light that usually means celebration when Sol Azteca is involved.

The crowd rises before the music fully hits, already reacting to the symbol burning across the video wall.

The Aztec sun appears in bright gold.

Then Sol Azteca's instrumental music rolls through the speakers.

No vocals.

Just percussion, rhythm, and fire.

Sol steps through the curtain.

The reaction is loud, but Sol does not come out smiling.

She does not bounce in place.

She does not clap along with the crowd or play to the front row.

She stands at the top of the ramp in a brand-new mask, clean and whole, the colors sharp beneath the lights. There

are no tears in it. No stitches. No exposed wound where Emily Hightower ripped the last one apart.

This mask is new.

But Sol is not.

The way she carries herself tells the story anyway. Her shoulders are tighter. Her walk is colder. The usual warmth is gone, replaced by the look of someone who remembers exactly what it felt like to wake up after a chain had been pulled across her throat.

John Phillips: "There is Sol Azteca, and Mark, this is a very different Sol than the one who first arrived in UTA."

Mark Bravo: "It has to be. Emily Hightower changed something. She tore the mask, she used the chain, she choked Sol unconscious, and then at International Affair, those two found each other again in the middle of absolute chaos. That issue is not gone."

John Phillips: "And the woman Sol is looking for tonight is no longer just Emily Hightower. She is now the UTA Women's Champion and the UTA Hardcore Champion."

Mark Bravo: "That makes this more dangerous, John. Emily has gold now. Emily has power now. And if you know anything about the Hightowers, power does not make them generous."

Sol starts down the ramp.

Fans reach for her, but she does not stop. A few hands brush her shoulder. A few signs are held high. One reads, "SOL NEVER QUIT." Another reads, "FINISH IT."

Sol sees them.

But she keeps walking.

She reaches ringside, climbs the steps, and enters the ring.

Once inside, she walks to the center and takes the microphone from the ring announcer. The music fades behind her, and the chants begin almost immediately.

Crowd: "SOL! SOL! SOL!"

Sol lowers her head for a second, listening.

Then she raises the microphone.

Sol Azteca: "Emily Hightower."

The name gets a mixed wave of boos and heat from the crowd.

Sol lets it breathe.

Sol Azteca: "I am not going to stand here and pretend what happened did not happen."

She pauses.

Sol Azteca: "You won."

The crowd quiets just enough for the words to feel heavy.

Sol Azteca: "The referee stopped the match. Your hand was raised. I lost."

She nods once, accepting the sentence before anyone can accuse her of running from it.

Sol Azteca: "But you did not pin me."

The crowd cheers.

Sol Azteca: "I did not tap."

The cheers get louder.

Sol Azteca: "I did not quit."

Now the building fully comes alive.

Sol steps forward, voice steady, not frantic.

Sol Azteca: "You put a chain across my throat until my body could not answer anymore. That is what happened. I remember the lights. I remember the sound. I remember your family at ringside. I remember every time I got close to putting you down, one of them was close enough to pull the match back toward you."

Boos roll through the arena.

Sol looks toward the entrance.

Sol Azteca: "I am not here asking for pity. I am not here asking these people to erase the result. I am here because you and I both know the truth."

She lifts her chin.

Sol Azteca: "That match did not end because I surrendered."

The crowd cheers again.

Sol Azteca: "That match ended because you needed every piece of the Hightower name to survive me."

The reaction becomes louder, sharper.

John Phillips: "Sol Azteca is not denying the loss. She is challenging the meaning of it."

Mark Bravo: "And that is the dangerous part, because Emily can hold up the record all she wants, but Sol is talking about pride. She is talking about whether Emily actually finished the job."

Sol continues, her eyes fixed on the stage.

Sol Azteca: "Then at International Affair, in the middle of seventy people, you looked at me and said it too."

She pauses.

Sol Azteca: "This is not finished."

The crowd rises with her.

Sol Azteca: "You were right."

Sol steps toward the ropes nearest the stage.

Sol Azteca: "So come out here. Bring the Women's Championship. Bring the Hardcore Championship. Bring David. Bring Buck. Bring Dakota. Bring whoever you need to feel safe."

The crowd roars.

Sol Azteca: "But come look me in the eyes and tell me why Emily Hightower—"

A loud engine rev tears through the arena speakers.

Sol stops.

The lights cut from gold to harsh white and rusted red.

The video wall fills with smoke, scrap metal, headlights, and the Hightower name burned across the screen like a

brand.

Emily Hightower's music hits.

The crowd erupts into boos.

Sol turns toward the stage.

Emily Hightower steps through the curtain.

The UTA Women's Championship rests over one shoulder. The UTA Hardcore Championship hangs from her opposite hand.

She does not walk with the rushed anger of someone coming to fight. She walks with the slow confidence of someone who knows everyone in the building is already looking at her.

David Hightower steps out behind her.

Buck comes next, arms loose at his sides, eyes fixed on the ring.

Dakota follows last, quiet and watchful.

Emily stops at the top of the stage.

She does not come down the ramp.

She does not move toward the ring.

She stands beneath the lights, both championships visible, looking down at Sol from a distance like the ring itself is not worth her time.

The boos grow louder when the crowd realizes she is not coming any closer.

John Phillips: "Emily Hightower has arrived, but she is staying on the stage."

Mark Bravo: "That might be the most disrespectful thing she could do. Sol called her out face to face, and Emily is answering from up there like Sol does not deserve her presence in the ring."

Emily lifts the microphone already in her hand.

The music fades.

She waits through the boos, letting them hit her and fall away.

Then she looks at Sol.

Emily Hightower: "You done?"

The crowd boos hard.

Sol stands in the ring, staring up the ramp.

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

Emily Hightower: "No, really. You done telling everybody how brave you were when you lost?"

The boos rise again.

Emily's expression does not change.

Emily Hightower: "Because that was real inspiring, Sol. You came out here with your new mask, your big speech, your little list of things I did not do. I did not pin you. I did not make you tap. You did not quit."

She nods as if she is considering it.

Then her face hardens.

Emily Hightower: "And you still lost."

The line lands like a slap.

Sol does not move.

Emily takes one slow step forward on the stage, but no more.

Emily Hightower: "That is what you do not seem to understand. Not tapping is not winning. Not getting pinned is not winning. Passing out in front of the whole world while the referee raises my hand is still losing."

The crowd boos.

Emily points down toward the ring.

Emily Hightower: "You lost to me."

Sol lifts her microphone.

Sol Azteca: "With your family."

Emily cuts her off.

Emily Hightower: "With my family watching me win."

David smiles faintly behind her.

Emily continues.

Emily Hightower: "You keep saying that word like it is supposed to shame me. Family. Like I am supposed to stand here and apologize because mine showed up. Like I am supposed to feel bad because when things got ugly, I had blood standing with me."

She looks back at David, Buck, and Dakota for half a second, then back to Sol.

Emily Hightower: "I am a Hightower. That is not an excuse. That is the warning label."

The crowd reacts with another wave of boos.

Emily looks down at Sol again.

Emily Hightower: "And let us talk about you for a second."

She gestures toward the ring with the Hardcore Championship.

Emily Hightower: "You have been here a month."

Sol's eyes stay locked on her.

Emily Hightower: "One month. You walked in here with your mask, your respect, your traditions, your little speeches about who you are when the bell rings. And what have you done?"

She waits, then answers herself.

Emily Hightower: "You have not won a match in this company."

The crowd boos louder.

Emily speaks over them.

Emily Hightower: "You have not won a championship. You have not earned a place at the front of this division. You got choked out, woke up, and somehow convinced yourself that surviving me meant I owe you something."

Sol's jaw tightens beneath the mask.

Emily leans forward slightly, still keeping the distance.

Emily Hightower: "I do not."

The words are cold and final.

Emily Hightower: "I do not owe you closure. I do not owe you another fight. I do not owe you a title shot. I do not owe you a second chance just because these people like chanting your name."

Crowd: "SOL! SOL! SOL!"

Emily looks around as the chant grows.

She smiles.

Emily Hightower: "There it is."

She points out at the crowd.

Emily Hightower: "That is the disease in this place. Everybody thinks noise means value. Everybody thinks sympathy means opportunity. Everybody thinks if they bleed enough, cry enough, survive enough, or get popular enough, they deserve to stand across from a champion."

Emily raises the Women's Championship.

Emily Hightower: "No."

The crowd boos.

Emily raises the Hardcore Championship.

Emily Hightower: "No."

She lowers both titles slowly.

Emily Hightower: "For too long, women in this division have been rewarded for being loud instead of dangerous. For too long, people have stepped over bodies they did not put down and called it earning. For too long, title shots have been handed out because somebody got hurt, somebody got robbed, somebody got a cheer, somebody looked good losing."

Her eyes return to Sol.

Emily Hightower: "You are not special because you looked good losing."

Sol lifts the microphone again.

Sol Azteca: "And you are not strong because you are far away."

The crowd erupts.

Emily's smile fades.

Buck takes one step forward beside her, but David keeps his hand low and still. Buck stops.

Sol walks toward the ropes nearest the stage.

Sol Azteca: "You are standing up there because you know if you come down here, this becomes real again."

The building gets louder.

Sol Azteca: "You can hold two titles. You can stand with your family. You can say I lost until your throat hurts. But you

know I did not break."

Sol points at Emily.

Sol Azteca: "And that bothers you."

Emily stares at her from the stage.

For a moment, the champion does not answer.

Then she lifts the microphone slowly.

Emily Hightower: "No, Sol."

She shakes her head.

Emily Hightower: "What bothers me is entitlement."

The crowd boos.

Emily steps to the edge of the stage, just close enough to make it feel personal, still far enough to deny Sol the confrontation.

Emily Hightower: "I got hit with a kendo stick by Marie Van Claudio. Sorry, I mean Marie Van Dumbass. And you know what I heard? 'Oh, Emily, it was an accident. These things happen.' Yeah, no. The real insult is the fact Marie Van Dumbass got a free title shot gift-wrapped for her for absolutely no reason at all."

The crowd reacts loudly.

Emily Hightower: "She basically got a title shot off of my name, and as far as I'm concerned, everyone can sit here and boo me, but you all know damn well that is what happened."

Emily's voice sharpens.

Emily Hightower: "I tried doing things the right way, and you know what it got me?"

She looks from the crowd back to Sol.

Emily Hightower: "Nothing but humiliation after humiliation. Then it clicked. Why fight against my family when I can utilize them?"

She lifts the Women's Championship again.

Emily Hightower: "So I stopped asking."

Then she lifts the Hardcore Championship.

Emily Hightower: "I took."

The crowd boos, but Emily's voice grows stronger.

Emily Hightower: "I walked through pain. I walked through chaos. I walked through seventy people. I walked out of London with the UTA Women's Championship and the UTA Hardcore Championship because when I finally quit waiting for this company to decide what I deserved, I took everything I wanted."

She points down at Sol.

Emily Hightower: "You lost one fight and came out here asking for the world to make it right."

Sol shakes her head.

Sol Azteca: "I came out here asking you to finish it."

Emily laughs.

Emily Hightower: "I did finish it."

The boos are immediate.

Emily's eyes narrow.

Emily Hightower: "You just did not like the ending."

Sol steps closer to the ropes.

Sol Azteca: "Then come write another."

The crowd roars.

Emily does not move.

That is the heel move.

She simply smiles again, slow and mean.

Emily Hightower: "No."

The simplicity of it draws louder boos than any insult.

Emily Hightower: "You still do not understand. You are not standing in that ring negotiating with me. You are not calling me out. You are not forcing my hand. You are standing in my company, in my division, underneath my championships, asking for something you do not deserve."

She turns slightly toward the hard camera.

Emily Hightower: "And that goes for every woman in the back."

The crowd noise swells.

Emily stands tall between David, Buck, and Dakota, both championships visible.

Emily Hightower: "You do not deserve a shot because you were close. You do not deserve a shot because you got cheated. You do not deserve a shot because you have history. You do not deserve a shot because these people decided your name is fun to scream."

She looks back at Sol.

Emily Hightower: "And you damn sure do not deserve one because you lost to me and lived. You are just a no-talent in a silly mask who could not get the job done."

Sol's grip tightens around the microphone.

Emily continues.

Emily Hightower: "The Women's Championship is mine. The Hardcore Championship is mine. This division is mine. And from now on, nobody gets near either of these unless I decide they have earned the privilege of being hurt by me."

The crowd boos hard.

Sol raises the microphone one more time.

Sol Azteca: "You can deny me."

Emily's eyes stay on her.

Sol Azteca: "You can run from this."

Emily's jaw tightens.

Sol Azteca: "You can let David speak through you and call it strength."

The crowd reacts sharply.

David's expression remains calm, but his eyes change.

Sol continues.

Sol Azteca: "But you and I know what happened when there was a chain between us. You had to choke me unconscious because I would not give you what you wanted."

She steps closer to the ropes.

Sol Azteca: "I did not surrender."

The crowd cheers.

Sol Azteca: "And I will not disappear."

Emily looks down at her, cold and still.

Sol's voice drops.

Sol Azteca: "Kore wa owattenai."

She lets the words hang for a second.

Sol Azteca: "This is not over."

The crowd erupts.

Emily stares at Sol for a long moment.

Then she raises both championships.

Emily Hightower: "You are right."

The crowd buzzes.

Emily's smile returns.

Emily Hightower: "It is not over."

She takes one step back, putting more distance between herself and the ring.

Emily Hightower: "It is just not your turn."

The boos rise again.

Emily Hightower: "You want a shot at my belt? Earn it. And maybe I will give you a shot. Key words, Sol. I give you the shot."

Emily looks toward the hard camera, her voice turning colder.

Emily Hightower: "Not Scott Stevens. I do not care what he says. He does not grant access to me. If he does not like it, he can try to strip me of these titles, and then he can deal with the family."

She points at herself with the Hardcore Championship.

Emily Hightower: "Me. I grant the shots now."

The boos rain down.

Emily lowers the microphone and turns away from Sol.

David follows.

Buck backs away last, still staring at the ring like he would love nothing more than to go down there and handle it himself.

Dakota lingers for half a second, her eyes flicking from Sol to Emily.

Then she turns and follows her family.

Sol remains in the ring.

She does not chase.

She does not yell.

She stands there beneath the lights in her new mask, staring at the stage as Emily Hightower walks away with both championships.

John Phillips: "Emily Hightower refused to even enter the ring. She denied Sol Azteca the confrontation she came for and made a declaration to the entire division."

Mark Bravo: "That is power, John. Ugly power. Champion power. Monster power. Emily is not saying come earn it. She is saying nobody deserves it unless she says so."

John Phillips: "And Sol Azteca is still standing in that ring with unfinished business."

Mark Bravo: "Emily can call it entitlement. Sol can call it truth. Either way, this is not finished."

The camera cuts between the two images.

Emily Hightower on the stage with the UTA Women's Championship and UTA Hardcore Championship.

Sol Azteca in the ring, alone, refusing to look away.

The segment ends with distance between them.

And that distance somehow makes the hatred feel worse.

Controversy

Segment

The broadcast cuts backstage, where the noise of the San Juan crowd still bleeds through the walls of the José Miguel Agrelot Coliseum.

Melissa Cartwright stands in the interview area, microphone in hand, already looking toward the hallway as production crews move around her.

A few seconds later, Selina Santorino enters frame.

She is still breathing from the match, hair slightly out of place, one hand pressed lightly against her ribs from the punishment Darren Valiant gave her.

But the second she sees the camera, Selina adjusts.

The pain gets edited out.

The posture changes.

The chin lifts.

The Dominican Diamond finds her light.

Hovering just over her shoulder is the Santorino Sentinel, its gold frame catching the backstage lighting as the drone's ring light flickers alive.

Melissa Cartwright: "Selina, can I get a few words after what we just saw out there?"

Selina looks at Melissa like the question itself is low-resolution.

Selina Santorino: "Obviously."

She turns slightly toward the drone first, not Melissa.

Selina Santorino: "Influencies, I know. I know. Breathtaking, historic, cinematic. Try not to overload the server."

Melissa waits half a beat, then raises the microphone again.

Melissa Cartwright: "Tonight was your UTA singles debut, and also Darren Valiant's. You picked up the win, but there was plenty of controversy at the end. The drone distraction, the eye rake, the referee losing control for just a moment—"

Selina slowly turns her head toward Melissa.

The smile fades into something sharper.

Selina Santorino: "Melissa."

Melissa stops.

Selina Santorino: "Do you know what controversy is?"

Melissa does not answer immediately.

Selina Santorino: "Controversy is what people call excellence when they are too budget to understand production value."

Selina smooths one hand over her gear, making sure the drone catches the angle.

Selina Santorino: "Darren Valiant walked into my studio tonight thinking this was going to be some gritty little fight scene. All heart. All grit. All very inspiring for people who shop in clearance sections."

She gives a small, dismissive laugh.

Selina Santorino: "And then he learned what everybody learns."

Selina leans slightly toward the camera.

Selina Santorino: "Hate me. Love me. It is all the same."

She points to herself with total confidence.

Selina Santorino: "Because I'm simply better."

The drone shifts closer, capturing her from a slightly higher angle. Selina notices instantly and tilts her face toward it, treating the interview like a live stream that Melissa has been permitted to stand inside.

Melissa Cartwright: "Darren had you in serious trouble more than once. There was a moment after the Valiant Shift where it looked like he may have had the match won if the referee had been in position."

Selina's eyes narrow.

Selina Santorino: "If."

She lets the word sit there like it smells bad.

Selina Santorino: "If the referee was there. If Darren moved faster. If my drone did not have better timing than his entire career. If, if, if."

Selina waves one hand dismissively.

Selina Santorino: "Do you know what winners do not have to do, Melissa? They do not have to live inside hypotheticals."

She gestures back toward the arena.

Selina Santorino: "That result is not hypothetical."

Melissa glances toward the hallway, then back to Selina.

Melissa Cartwright: "Still, some people are going to say Darren proved he can hang with you."

Selina's expression changes immediately.

Not anger.

Insult.

Selina Santorino: "Hang with me?"

She turns fully toward Melissa now.

Selina Santorino: "Melissa, a cheap phone can technically open the same apps as a luxury device. That does not make it premium."

The drone's light flickers as if punctuating the line.

Selina Santorino: "Darren Valiant survived long enough to become content. Congratulations to him. He got clipped. He got posted. He got engagement. He should be grateful."

Selina looks back to the drone and flashes a peace sign, but the smile behind it is cold.

Selina Santorino: "But he did not beat me. He did not outsmart me. He did not cancel me. He became another unskippable ad between me and the next viral climax."

Melissa shifts the microphone back toward herself.

Melissa Cartwright: "So what comes next for Selina Santorino after winning her debut singles match in UTA?"

Selina pauses.

For the first time, she looks directly into Melissa's eyes instead of the camera.

Selina Santorino: "The upgrade continues."

She says it softly, with total certainty.

Selina Santorino: "This roster is full of low-res little projects pretending they belong on premium screens. Tonight was not a debut. It was an installation."

She slowly turns back toward the drone again.

Selina Santorino: "And if anyone in that locker room thinks they are next, they should do what all my followers do."

Selina smiles.

Selina Santorino: "Wait for me to post."

Melissa tries to follow up, but Selina lifts one hand between them, palm out.

Selina Santorino: "No more questions. The lighting here is starting to flatten me, and I refuse to be interviewed in anything less than diamond conditions."

Selina turns toward the drone.

Selina Santorino: "Influencies, clip the finish, mute the commentary, enhance the angle, and remember..."

She adjusts her hair one final time.

Selina Santorino: "The algorithm does not lie."

She looks back at Melissa with a bored little smile.

Selina Santorino: "Ciao."

Selina walks out of frame, the Santorino Sentinel drifting after her like a gold-plated shadow.

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

Melissa Cartwright: "Selina Santorino wins her debut singles match here in UTA, and whether you like how she did it or not, she clearly believes tonight was another successful upload."

The shot lingers for a moment as the drone light disappears down the hall.

Then the broadcast cuts away.

Graham Keel vs. Kaine

Match

The broadcast cuts back live inside the José Miguel Agrelot Coliseum, the San Juan crowd still loud after the chaotic backstage confrontation between Chris Ross, Mike Best, and Valentina Blaze.

John Phillips: "Welcome back to UTA World Tour, live from San Juan, Puerto Rico, and we are about to see the first title defense of the new UTA Fighting Champion."

Mark Bravo: "And not just any title defense, John. This is the Fighting Championship. That means no pinfalls. You cannot steal one with a roll-up. You cannot hook the tights. You cannot sneak out with three seconds of luck."

John Phillips: "Fighting Championship rules are simple and brutal. The match can only end by submission, knockout, or referee stoppage."

Mark Bravo: "Which means Graham Keel's title reign begins with exactly the kind of match he was built for. But across the ring from him tonight is Kaine, and that man does not stay down easily."

John Phillips: "Graham Keel won the Fighting Championship in the All or Nothing Rumble at International Affair. Tonight is defense number one. If Keel can make five successful defenses, he earns the right to turn in that Fighting Championship for a shot at the UTA Championship, or any championship he chooses."

Mark Bravo: "Five defenses. That is the countdown. But the countdown only starts if he survives Kaine tonight."

The arena lights suddenly drop.

Darkness rolls across the Coliseo.

Then the building floods in a deep blood-red glow.

A low rumble creeps through the speakers as smoke begins to spill across the entrance stage, thick and slow, crawling along the floor like fog over a graveyard.

The opening sounds of "Dead Bite" by Hollywood Undead hit the sound system.

The crowd rises with a dark, excited roar.

John Phillips: "And here comes the challenger."

From inside the smoke, a figure appears low to the ground.

Kaine crawls out onto the stage, skeletal face paint glowing under the UV light, eyes fixed forward beneath the red haze.

He pauses there for a moment, one hand planted against the floor, breathing slowly, almost inhumanly, as the crowd buzzes around him.

Ring Announcer: "The following contest is for the UTA Fighting Championship, and will be contested under Fighting Championship rules! No pinfalls. The match can only end by submission, knockout, or referee stoppage!"

The crowd cheers the stipulation.

Ring Announcer: "Introducing first, the challenger... from Salem, Massachusetts... weighing in at two hundred and ten pounds... he is The Revenant... KAINÉ!"

Kaine slowly rises out of the smoke.

He stands six feet tall, but somehow looks larger beneath the blood-red glow, the skeletal paint on his face burning white and black under the light.

He tilts his head, staring toward the ring like he is not walking into a title match, but toward something he has already survived in nightmares.

Mark Bravo: "Kaine is a cult hero for a reason. Hardcore wars, ugly fights, broken bones, chaos. You do not beat this man by making him hurt. Pain seems to make him feel more alive."

John Phillips: "That may be the biggest question for Graham Keel tonight. Keel is a master of pressure, pain, and limb control. But how do you break someone who thrives on punishment?"

Kaine begins stalking down the ramp.

No wasted motion.

No playing to the crowd in the usual sense.

He feeds off them, but not like a hero soaking in adoration.

He feeds off them like a fire finding oxygen.

Fans along the aisle reach out toward him. Some cheer. Some recoil. Some chant his name.

Kaine keeps moving.

Halfway down the ramp, he stops and throws his arms wide.

His head snaps back.

Kaine: "DEAD BUT ALIVE!"

The crowd roars back.

Crowd: "DEAD BUT ALIVE!"

Kaine snaps forward again, eyes wild now, and continues toward the ring.

John Phillips: "Listen to this crowd! Kaine has them with him here in San Juan."

Mark Bravo: "Because they know what kind of fight this is about to be. Fighting Championship rules are not about

looking pretty. They are about surviving long enough to make the other person stop."

Kaine reaches ringside and does not climb the steps.

Instead, he drops down and slides under the bottom rope, moving like something dragged out of the dark and pointed toward violence.

He rises in the center of the ring, the red light still washing over him.

The referee watches carefully, already aware that this will not be a normal championship match.

Kaine turns toward the hard camera.

He taps two fingers against his own chest.

Kaine: "Pain is proof I'm still alive..."

He slowly turns toward the entrance ramp, waiting for the champion.

Kaine: "...and tonight, you're proof I'll never die."

The crowd erupts again as Kaine backs into his corner, crouching low against the turnbuckles.

He does not pace.

He does not stretch.

He waits.

The blood-red light begins to fade as the music lowers.

John Phillips: "Kaine is ready. Graham Keel's first defense is coming next, and the countdown to five begins now."

Mark Bravo: "Or it ends before it ever really starts."

Kaine is ready. Graham Keel's first defense is coming next, and the countdown to five begins now.

The blood-red light fades from the arena.

For a moment, there is nothing.

No music.

No motion on the stage.

Just the low murmur of the San Juan crowd and Kaine crouched in the corner, staring toward the entrance.

Then a single white spotlight cuts through the darkness.

It lands at the top of the ramp.

Five seconds pass in complete silence.

John Phillips: "Listen to this building settle. That is the presence of Graham Keel."

Mark Bravo: "No flash. No theatrics. No wasted breath. The man walks to the ring like he is going to court and your arm is the evidence."

The slow orchestral theme begins.

Measured.

Cold.

Controlled.

Graham Keel steps into the spotlight.

The UTA Fighting Championship rests around his waist.

He does not raise it.

He does not slap the plate.

He does not look into the camera.

His eyes are locked forward on Kaine.

Ring Announcer: "And his opponent... from Manchester, England... weighing in at two hundred and forty-seven pounds... he is The Hold Architect... and the NEW UTA Fighting Champion... GRAHAM KEEL!"

The crowd gives Keel a strong, respectful reaction, mixed with the tension of knowing exactly what kind of match this is about to become.

Keel begins walking down the ramp.

No wasted movement.

No acknowledgement of the fans reaching toward him.

No expression beyond quiet focus.

Every step is the same length as the last.

John Phillips: "Graham Keel became Fighting Champion at International Affair inside the All or Nothing Rumble, and tonight is his first defense. If he can successfully defend this championship five times, he earns the right to turn that title in for an opportunity at the UTA Championship, or any championship of his choosing."

Mark Bravo: "And if there was ever a championship designed for Graham Keel, this is it. Submissions, knockouts, referee stoppages. No pinfalls. You do not beat Graham Keel with a flash three-count. You have to survive him long enough to make him stop."

The camera cuts to Kaine in the ring.

The Revenant remains crouched low, skeletal face paint still glowing faintly under the arena lights, eyes never leaving the champion.

Keel reaches the bottom of the ramp.

He pauses at ringside and looks into the ring.

Kaine slowly rises from the corner.

The two men stare at each other.

John Phillips: "Kaine is resilience and chaos. Graham Keel is pressure and precision. Under Fighting Championship rules, this could get very uncomfortable very quickly."

Mark Bravo: "Kaine wants a war. Keel wants a limb. Different philosophies. Same result if either man gets what he wants."

Keel steps onto the apron.

He wipes his boots once.

Then steps through the ropes.

The referee immediately moves between champion and challenger, making sure neither man advances before the

formal introductions are finished.

Keel walks to the center of the ring and removes the Fighting Championship from his waist.

He finally looks down at it.

Not with awe.

Not with pride.

With assessment.

Like the title itself is a tool.

A key.

A contract with pain attached.

Keel hands the championship to the referee.

Graham Keel: "One."

The referee looks at him for a beat, then raises the championship high.

John Phillips: "You heard him. Graham Keel just said one. Defense number one."

Mark Bravo: "The countdown starts tonight. But Kaine would love nothing more than to make sure it never reaches two."

The referee holds the UTA Fighting Championship above his head as the camera tightens on both competitors.

Kaine stands in his corner, shoulders rolling, a wild grin beginning to form beneath the skeletal paint.

Graham Keel stands opposite him, arms loose at his sides, expression unreadable.

The referee passes the title to ringside, then turns back to both men.

Referee: "Fighting Championship rules. No pinfalls. Submission, knockout, or referee stoppage only. Protect yourselves at all times."

Kaine leans forward slightly.

Kaine: "Dead but alive."

Keel does not react.

He simply raises his hands, ready to wrestle.

Graham Keel: "Pressure isn't pain..."

Keel's eyes narrow.

Graham Keel: "...until I decide it is."

The crowd rises as the referee steps back.

The bell is next.

The crowd rises as the referee steps back.

The bell is next.

DING DING DING!

John Phillips: "And here we go! Graham Keel's first defense of the UTA Fighting Championship is underway!"

Mark Bravo: "No pinfalls. Submission, knockout, or referee stoppage only. If you want to leave champion, you have to make the other man quit, pass out, or become unable to continue."

Kaine comes out of the corner first, shoulders loose, hands low, a wild grin pulling at the skeletal paint across his face.

Graham Keel moves with much less emotion.

Hands up.

Chin tucked.

Feet measured.

Kaine circles wide.

Keel cuts the angle off immediately, stepping left before Kaine can complete the circle.

John Phillips: "Watch Keel's footwork. Kaine wants space. He wants chaos. Keel is already denying him the full ring."

Mark Bravo: "That is Graham Keel. He turns a wrestling ring into a shrinking room."

Kaine suddenly lunges forward, looking to crash into a collar-and-elbow tie-up.

Keel does not accept it.

He slips under Kaine's lead arm, catches the wrist, and twists into a standing arm wringer.

Kaine grunts as Keel immediately steps behind him and forces the arm high between the shoulder blades.

John Phillips: "Keel goes right to the arm."

Mark Bravo: "Of course he does. Graham Keel does not explore options. He identifies the target and starts demolition."

Kaine throws his free elbow backward.

Keel leans just far enough away that the shot misses, then snaps Kaine down to one knee with the wrist still trapped.

Kaine reaches for the ropes.

Keel steps between him and the escape, forcing Kaine's hand back down.

The crowd reacts with a mix of appreciation and discomfort.

John Phillips: "That is surgical control from the champion."

Kaine slowly turns his head, glaring up through the paint.

Kaine: "Pain is proof."

Keel's face barely changes.

Graham Keel: "Then let's verify."

Keel drops to a knee and drives Kaine's trapped arm downward across his own shoulder with a kneeling armbreaker.

Kaine barks out in pain, then immediately laughs through it.

The laugh unsettles the referee for half a second.

Mark Bravo: "That is not normal."

John Phillips: "Kaine thrives on punishment, but Graham Keel is not interested in scaring him. He is interested in disabling him."

Keel keeps control of the wrist and tries to pull Kaine flat to the mat.

Kaine fights up instead, forcing himself to one knee, then both feet.

Keel twists the wrist harder.

Kaine steps through, rolls forward, and comes up swinging with a pump kick.

Keel releases the arm and leans backward just in time, the boot passing inches from his face.

Kaine lands off-balance.

Keel immediately catches him with a European uppercut.

Kaine's head snaps back.

Keel follows with a second European uppercut.

Kaine stumbles toward the ropes.

Keel reaches for the arm again.

Kaine suddenly surges forward and blasts Keel with a flying knee strike.

The champion drops to one knee.

John Phillips: "Kaine caught him!"

Mark Bravo: "That is the problem with Kaine. You think you have him measured, and then he throws himself at you like a haunted missile."

Kaine shakes out the damaged arm, then charges the ropes.

He rebounds as Keel rises.

Kaine leaps.

Running senton!

Keel rolls out of the way.

Kaine crashes hard into the canvas but rolls through the impact, somehow coming up to a seated position with that same grin.

Keel steps in and kicks the damaged arm out from under him.

Kaine drops sideways.

John Phillips: "Keel back to the arm. Every opening, every mistake, he goes back to the same point."

Keel grabs the wrist again and drops his weight across Kaine's shoulder, pinning the arm to the mat.

There is no pinfall count.

There cannot be one.

Instead, Keel drives his forearm across Kaine's jaw and starts grinding him down from the dominant position.

Referee: "Kaine, can you continue?"

Kaine snarls up at the referee.

Kaine: "Dead."

Keel shifts his pressure, bending Kaine's wrist backward.

Kaine: "But alive!"

Kaine bucks hard, forcing Keel to post with one hand.

Keel floats with it, staying heavy on the shoulder, but Kaine twists his lower body and catches Keel around the head with his legs.

The crowd rises.

John Phillips: "Kaine trying to transition!"

Kaine rolls, pulling Keel off balance and trapping him briefly in a loose triangle attempt.

Keel immediately stacks forward, driving Kaine's knees toward his own face to relieve the pressure.

He slides his trapped arm free before Kaine can lock the wrist.

Mark Bravo: "That could have become Soul Reaper if Kaine trapped the wrist. Keel knew it instantly."

Keel backs away for the first time, not in fear, but reassessment.

Kaine rolls to one knee, grinning as he clutches his damaged arm against his body.

He nods slowly at Keel.

Kaine: "Now we fight."

Kaine charges.

Keel sidesteps and catches him with an arm drag.

Kaine rolls through, pops up, and charges again.

Keel arm drags him again, this time keeping the wrist.

Kaine rolls to his feet and swings wildly with the free hand.

Keel ducks under, hooks the body, and takes him over with a butterfly suplex.

Kaine hits hard but rolls backward to his knees almost immediately.

Keel steps forward.

Kaine explodes up with a pump kick that catches Keel flush in the chest.

The champion staggers backward into the corner.

John Phillips: "Kaine just keeps coming!"

Mark Bravo: "You cannot count him down. You cannot pin him. You have to make him stop. Good luck with that."

Kaine lets out a guttural scream and charges into the corner.

Diving cannonball!

Kaine crashes into Keel's chest and ribs, folding the champion down in the corner.

The crowd roars.

Kaine drags himself up, shaking out his injured arm before pulling Keel away from the turnbuckles.

Keel drops to one knee, trying to create space.

Kaine hits the ropes.

Running senton connects this time.

Keel absorbs the full weight across his chest.

John Phillips: "Senton lands! The champion is in trouble!"

Kaine gets up, pain still shooting through the arm, but momentum overtaking him.

He grabs Keel and pulls him toward the ropes.

The referee watches carefully, ready to step in if either man becomes unable to defend himself.

Kaine forces Keel onto the middle rope, then steps through to the apron.

Mark Bravo: "Kaine is heading outside. This is where the risk meter starts blinking red."

Kaine backs up along the apron.

Keel is draped across the middle rope, trying to rise.

Kaine charges.

Running apron knee strike!

No.

Keel moves.

Kaine's knee crashes into the ropes, and his damaged arm catches awkwardly against the top strand as he tries to keep his balance.

Keel immediately grabs the arm from inside the ring and snaps it downward over the top rope.

Kaine drops to the apron, shouting in pain.

John Phillips: "Keel trapped the arm! Kaine took too big a risk!"

Mark Bravo: "And under these rules, that may be the beginning of the end. If Keel destroys that arm, Kaine may not be able to defend himself, let alone submit anyone."

Keel steps through the ropes onto the apron.

Kaine tries to swing with his good arm, but Keel blocks it, hooks him, and drives him back-first onto the apron with a Russian leg sweep variation.

The impact echoes through ringside.

The crowd groans.

Referee: "Back in the ring! Come on!"

There are no count-outs being emphasized here.

The referee wants the fight inside, but the championship can only change hands by ending the opponent.

Keel rises first on the apron, then pulls Kaine up by the bad arm.

Kaine swings his head forward, trying to headbutt his way free.

Keel shifts, traps the wrist, and drops backward, snapping the arm down across the hardest part of the ring.

Kaine collapses to the floor below, clutching the arm.

John Phillips: "Oh my god, the arm against the apron!"

Mark Bravo: "That is not just pain. That is structural damage."

The referee drops to the outside to check on Kaine.

Referee: "Kaine! Can you continue?"

Kaine is on one knee, breathing hard, hair hanging forward, face paint smeared from sweat and impact.

He looks up slowly.

His grin returns.

Kaine: "Pain..."

He forces himself to stand.

Kaine: "...is proof."

Keel stands above him on the apron, watching without emotion.

Kaine suddenly lunges, grabbing Keel's leg and yanking it out from under him.

Keel crashes back-first onto the apron.

Kaine stumbles backward, then charges.

Running knee strike to Keel on the apron!

This one connects.

Keel spills off the apron to the floor.

The crowd erupts.

John Phillips: "Kaine got him! Kaine got him with the knee!"

Mark Bravo: "That man is hurt, that arm may be wrecked, and he is still throwing himself into the champion!"

Both men are down at ringside.

The referee kneels between them, checking Keel first, then Kaine.

Neither man is finished.

Not yet.

Kaine crawls toward the barricade, pulling himself upright with one good arm.

Keel pushes up against the apron, blinking away the impact of the knee.

The San Juan crowd pounds on the barricade, chanting now.

Crowd: "UTA! UTA! UTA!"

Kaine turns toward Keel.

His damaged arm hangs low.

His body is already marked by the match.

But his eyes are alive.

Keel looks back at him, one hand pressed to his jaw.

The champion's expression remains calm.

But now there is recognition.

This will not be simple.

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John Phillips: "Both men are down on the outside, and remember, under Fighting Championship rules, this match cannot end by count-out. It cannot end by pinfall. Submission, knockout, or referee stoppage only."

Mark Bravo: "And another critical detail here, John. Each competitor only gets one rope break. One. After that, if you get caught in the ropes again, the referee does not have to save you."

John Phillips: "That changes everything in a match built around submissions and stoppages."

Kaine staggers forward first.

He grabs Keel by the back of the head with his good hand and drives a clubbing forearm down across the champion's shoulders.

Keel drops to one knee near the apron.

Kaine grabs him again and rolls him back under the bottom rope.

The crowd cheers as Kaine slides in after him, shaking out the damaged arm like he is trying to force feeling back into it.

John Phillips: "Kaine gets the champion back inside. He knows he cannot win by count-out. He has to finish Graham Keel in the ring."

Keel gets to one knee.

Kaine charges.

Pump kick!

Keel ducks under it and catches Kaine's bad arm on the way past.

He twists sharply, yanking Kaine down to the mat with another arm wringer takedown.

Kaine lands hard on his shoulder and shouts through clenched teeth.

Mark Bravo: "Right back to the arm. Keel does not waste a mistake."

Keel steps over the trapped limb, drops his weight, and begins threading Kaine's wrist beneath his own leg.

Kaine tries to roll away.

Keel follows.

The champion slides into a crossface position, trapping the injured arm and pulling Kaine's head backward.

John Phillips: "Keel may be looking for the Lancashire Lock!"

Kaine claws forward with his free hand.

Keel adjusts, hooking the wrist tighter and wrenching diagonally across Kaine's neck and shoulder.

Kaine's face twists under the skeletal paint.

Referee: "Kaine! Do you submit?"

Kaine: "No!"

Keel pulls back harder.

Kaine kicks his legs, trying to rotate his hips.

But Keel has him flattened.

Every time Kaine reaches forward, the bad shoulder stretches farther.

John Phillips: "This is what Graham Keel does. He makes every escape hurt worse than the hold itself."

Mark Bravo: "And Kaine is close to the ropes, but remember, if he uses them, that is it. His rope break is gone."

Kaine stretches his free hand toward the bottom rope.

The crowd begins to buzz.

Referee: "Kaine, you get one! You understand me? One rope break!"

Kaine's fingertips brush the rope.

Keel shifts his hips, dragging him back two inches.

Kaine screams, then surges forward with everything left in his body.

His hand clamps around the bottom rope.

Referee: "Rope break! Kaine has used his rope break!"

The crowd reacts with a mix of relief and tension.

Keel does not release immediately.

Referee: "Break it, Graham! One! Two! Three!"

Keel releases at three and rolls backward to one knee, still holding Kaine's wrist for half a second before letting it drop.

John Phillips: "Kaine survives, but that is the challenger's rope break gone."

Mark Bravo: "And Graham Keel knows it. From this point forward, if Keel catches him near the ropes again, Kaine may not have anywhere left to go."

Kaine pulls himself into the corner, breathing hard, bad arm tucked close.

Keel stands and slowly rolls his neck.

He looks at the referee.

Graham Keel: "That is his one."

Referee: "I know."

Keel nods once.

Then he advances.

Kaine suddenly explodes out of the corner with a wild burst, catching Keel with a shoulder from the good side.

Keel stumbles back.

Kaine hits the ropes, ignoring the pain in his arm.

Flying knee strike!

Keel catches him.

The champion absorbs the impact and turns it into a brutal backbreaker across the knee.

Kaine folds backward and drops to the mat.

John Phillips: "Backbreaker by Keel! He caught Kaine out of midair!"

Keel does not cover.

There is no cover to make.

Instead, he stands over Kaine and drives one sharp knee into the ribs.

Then another.

Then he grabs the injured arm and pulls Kaine up by it.

Kaine howls.

Referee: "Kaine, can you defend yourself?"

Kaine spits toward the mat and swings with his free hand.

Keel catches that arm too.

For one dangerous second, both of Kaine's arms are controlled.

Keel steps behind him, traps the challenger in the corner, and pulls him backward over his shoulder.

John Phillips: "Corner pull-to-back suplex!"

Keel drops Kaine neck-first into the canvas.

The impact is ugly.

Kaine rolls to his stomach, one hand reaching instinctively toward the ropes before he realizes what he has already spent.

Mark Bravo: "Look at Kaine. Instinct took him toward the ropes, but the rope break is gone."

Keel sees it too.

The smallest flicker of calculation crosses his face.

He grabs Kaine by the ankle and drags him backward toward the center of the ring.

Kaine kicks with the free leg, catching Keel in the chest once.

Keel absorbs it.

Kaine kicks again.

This one lands closer to the jaw, and Keel takes a step back.

Kaine scrambles up, wild-eyed, wounded, but still dangerous.

Kaine: "DEAD BUT ALIVE!"

The crowd roars with him.

Crowd: "DEAD BUT ALIVE!"

Kaine charges.

Keel braces for impact.

Kaine suddenly changes levels, hooking Keel around the waist and driving him backward into the ropes.

Keel's back hits the strands.

Kaine unloads with short, desperate shoulder strikes to the midsection.

The referee steps in.

Referee: "Kaine, back him off the ropes!"

Kaine does not listen at first.

He drives another shoulder into Keel.

Then another.

Keel suddenly wraps an arm around Kaine's head, trying to twist him into another front facelock.

Kaine drops low, hooks the leg, and yanks Keel off balance.

Both men tumble down near the ropes.

Kaine lands on top, scrambling immediately into position.

His legs shoot around Keel's neck and shoulder.

John Phillips: "Soul Reaper! Kaine is trying for Soul Reaper!"

Kaine traps Keel in the kneeling triangle choke, using his good arm to hook the wrist and wrench the neck at a sick angle.

The crowd explodes.

Mark Bravo: "He's got it! He does not have full strength in that bad arm, but he has enough of the wrist trapped!"

Keel's eyes widen for the first time all match.

He tries to posture up.

Kaine cinches tighter.

The referee drops down beside them.

Referee: "Graham! Do you submit?"

Keel shakes his head immediately.

Kaine pulls back, teeth gritted, neck muscles straining as he tries to finish the champion.

Kaine: "Sleep."

Keel reaches with his free hand.

The bottom rope is close.

Close enough.

He stretches.

Kaine tries to roll them farther away, but his injured arm weakens the angle.

Keel's fingertips find the bottom rope.

Referee: "Rope break! Graham Keel has used his rope break!"

The crowd erupts as the referee signals it clearly to ringside.

John Phillips: "Keel has used his rope break! Both men have now spent their one escape!"

Mark Bravo: "Now the ropes are just decoration. From here on out, if either man gets caught, there is no safety net."

Kaine refuses to release right away, screaming through the strain of the hold.

Referee: "Break it, Kaine! One! Two! Three! Four!"

Kaine releases just before five, rolling away while clutching his bad arm against his body.

Keel pulls himself to the apron side of the ropes, coughing, one hand pressed to his throat.

The referee steps between them, pointing first to Kaine, then to Keel.

Referee: "Both rope breaks are gone! You hear me? Both!"

Kaine laughs from one knee.

Keel looks up slowly.

For the first time, the champion's calm has a crack in it.

Not panic.

Awareness.

The match has changed.

John Phillips: "We are now in deep water. Kaine cannot go to the ropes. Graham Keel cannot go to the ropes. This match will end by submission, knockout, or stoppage, and there is no automatic escape left for either man."

Mark Bravo: "This is where the Fighting Championship becomes cruel."

Kaine rises first, wobbling but alive.

Keel rises a moment later, slower than before.

They stand across from each other.

Both damaged.

Both breathing hard.

Both out of exits.

Kaine grins through the pain.

Kaine: "Nowhere to run."

Keel resets his stance, hands raising with deliberate control.

Graham Keel: "I wasn't running."

The crowd rises again as the two step toward the center of the ring.

The crowd rises again as the two step toward the center of the ring.

Kaine's damaged arm hangs low, fingers flexing as if he is trying to will feeling back into them.

Graham Keel's breathing is heavier now, one hand briefly touching his throat after the Soul Reaper scare.

Neither man looks toward the ropes.

There is no point anymore.

John Phillips: "No rope breaks left. No pinfalls. No easy way out. The only thing standing between Graham Keel and defense number one is Kaine's ability to keep fighting."

Mark Bravo: "And Kaine has built a career on keeping fighting when normal people would be asking for help."

Kaine steps forward first and throws a forearm with his good arm.

Keel absorbs it across the jaw and answers with a European uppercut.

Kaine staggers back half a step.

Then smiles.

He throws another forearm.

Keel fires another uppercut.

Forearm.

Uppercut.

Forearm.

Uppercut.

The pace quickens as the crowd begins to roar with every strike.

John Phillips: "Center of the ring! Kaine and Keel trading shots!"

Kaine suddenly screams and throws a wild headbutt.

It catches Keel across the bridge of the nose.

The champion stumbles backward, blinking hard.

Kaine charges.

Pump kick!

It connects flush, and Keel drops to one knee.

Mark Bravo: "Keel is rocked!"

Kaine backs into the ropes out of instinct, but the referee points immediately.

Referee: "No rope break left, Kaine! No rope break!"

Kaine ignores him, not using the ropes for escape, only for momentum.

He launches forward with a flying knee strike.

Keel catches him out of the air.

For a second, both men freeze in the struggle.

Kaine tries to hammer down with the good arm.

Keel turns his body and dumps Kaine backward with a brutal butterfly suplex.

Kaine lands high on his shoulders and rolls through, but this time he does not pop up immediately.

John Phillips: "Butterfly suplex by Keel! Kaine landed hard!"

The referee steps close to Kaine, checking his eyes.

Referee: "Kaine, talk to me. Can you continue?"

Kaine pushes the referee's hand away with his good arm.

Kaine: "Alive."

Keel is already moving.

He grabs Kaine by the damaged arm and drags him toward the center of the ring.

Kaine tries to kick him away, but Keel steps around the legs and drops his knee across the shoulder joint.

Kaine howls, his body jolting under the pressure.

Mark Bravo: "That arm is hanging by a thread, John. Keel has been on it since the opening minute."

Keel traps the wrist and begins threading Kaine's body into a tighter, more vicious configuration.

Kaine recognizes it and tries to roll to his stomach.

Keel follows, trapping one arm, then reaching across the face.

John Phillips: "Keel is trying to get him turned! He wants the Lancashire Lock again!"

Kaine claws forward with his free hand.

The ropes are only a few feet away.

But they may as well be across the ocean.

The crowd realizes it at the same time he does.

Mark Bravo: "No rope break. He can get there, but it will not save him."

Kaine still crawls.

Not because it will force the break.

Because his body only knows forward.

Keel plants one boot against the canvas, pulls back, and completes the turn.

Lancashire Lock!

The figure-four crossface hybrid is locked in tight, Kaine's arms and ankles caught as Keel wrenches diagonally through the neck, shoulder, and spine.

The building erupts.

John Phillips: "Lancashire Lock! Keel has the Lancashire Lock in the center of the ring!"

Mark Bravo: "Kaine's rope break is gone! There is no escape clause left!"

Kaine screams.

The sound is raw and terrible.

The referee drops down beside him.

Referee: "Kaine! Do you submit?"

Kaine: "NO!"

Keel pulls back harder.

Kaine's damaged arm bends at a sick angle, shoulder trembling under the pressure.

His free hand reaches out, fingers scraping against the mat.

The bottom rope is close.

Kaine's fingertips touch it.

The referee sees it.

But he does not call for the break.

Referee: "You used it! You used your rope break!"

Kaine grips the rope anyway, screaming into the canvas.

Keel does not release.

He cannot be forced to.

John Phillips: "Kaine has the rope, but it does not matter! His rope break is gone!"

The crowd is split between roaring for Kaine to survive and begging for the referee to stop it.

Kaine tries to pull himself closer to the ropes, but the movement only gives Keel a worse angle.

Keel adjusts his grip, driving his forearm across Kaine's face and pulling back until the challenger's body is arched in the wrong direction.

Graham Keel: "Enough."

Kaine shakes his head violently.

Kaine: "Dead..."

His voice cracks.

Kaine: "...but..."

Keel wrenches again.

Kaine's hand slips from the rope.

His body shudders.

The referee checks him, leaning in close.

Referee: "Kaine! Stay with me!"

Kaine does not answer.

His eyes are open, but they are glassy.

Keel keeps the hold locked.

The referee grabs Kaine's free hand and lifts it.

It drops.

The crowd gasps.

Referee: "Kaine!"

The referee lifts the hand again.

It drops a second time.

John Phillips: "Kaine may be out! He may be out in the Lancashire Lock!"

The referee lifts the hand a third time.

For a heartbeat, it hangs there.

The crowd rises, willing it to stay up.

Kaine's fingers twitch.

Then his arm starts to drop.

But before it can fall completely, Kaine clenches his fist.

The Choliseo erupts.

Mark Bravo: "He's still alive!"

Kaine lets out a strangled scream and starts dragging both men sideways, inch by impossible inch.

Keel's expression tightens.

He cannot believe Kaine is still moving.

Kaine reaches the ropes again, not to break, but to pull himself upward.

He uses the bottom rope as leverage, fighting to roll his hips.

The referee watches carefully. No break is called.

Keel tries to flatten him back out.

Kaine suddenly twists, using the rope leverage to roll through the hold.

The hold breaks from the movement, not from the referee.

Kaine collapses free near the ropes, clutching his arm and neck.

The crowd explodes again.

John Phillips: "Kaine escaped it! Not by rope break, by movement! By sheer survival!"

Mark Bravo: "That was not a technical escape. That was a man refusing to become a corpse on live television."

Keel sits up, breathing hard, staring at Kaine.

That crack in his calm gets wider.

He rises and immediately grabs Kaine by the damaged arm again.

Kaine is barely moving.

The referee steps in close.

Referee: "Kaine, you need to show me something."

Keel pulls Kaine up.

Kaine swings wildly with the good arm.

Keel catches it, steps behind, and wraps Kaine in a figure-four neck lock from the side, dragging him down again.

Kaine thrashes, but the bad arm cannot help him push free.

John Phillips: "Figure-four neck lock! Keel has transitioned again!"

Keel squeezes, controlling the head and neck now, taking away Kaine's ability to breathe cleanly.

Kaine kicks at the mat.

The referee drops again, checking him.

Referee: "Do you submit?"

Kaine tries to answer.

Only a rasp comes out.

Keel shifts his hips, increasing the pressure.

Mark Bravo: "This is the champion adapting. The arm did not finish it, so now he is taking the air."

Kaine's legs stop kicking for a moment.

The referee's hand hovers, ready to call for the bell if Kaine cannot intelligently defend himself.

Then Kaine suddenly rolls backward, stacking Keel awkwardly.

No pin count.

There is no pin count.

But the motion forces Keel to release the neck lock to avoid being folded underneath.

Both men scramble up.

Kaine is on instinct now.

Keel steps in.

Kaine leaps.

Springboard cutter!

It connects out of nowhere.

Keel spikes into the canvas.

The crowd comes unglued.

John Phillips: "Springboard cutter! Kaine found it from nowhere!"

Mark Bravo: "How? How is he still doing this?"

Kaine cannot cover.

A cover would not matter anyway.

Instead, he crawls toward the corner, dragging his bad arm behind him.

Keel is down near the center of the ring, stunned.

The crowd realizes what Kaine wants.

John Phillips: "Kaine is going to the top."

Mark Bravo: "That arm is wrecked. His neck has been twisted half the match. This is either going to win him the Fighting Championship or end him."

Kaine reaches the turnbuckles.

He pulls himself up with one good arm, step by step, grimacing through the pain.

Keel starts to stir.

Kaine gets to the top rope.

He stands unsteadily, looking down at the champion.

The crowd rises with him.

Kaine: "DEAD BUT ALIVE!"

Kaine leaps.

Grave Digger!

Top-rope double stomp—

No!

Keel moves at the last possible second.

Kaine crashes feet-first into the canvas, the impact buckling his legs.

He stumbles forward, bent over from the landing.

Keel rises behind him.

He traps Kaine in the corner from behind.

Pulls him backward over the shoulder.

Corner Pull-to-Back Suplex!

Kaine lands neck-first again, folding violently into the mat.

The referee immediately drops beside him.

Referee: "Kaine! Kaine, answer me!"

Kaine rolls to his side, blinking, one arm limp, legs shifting under him like he is trying to rise but cannot find the command.

Keel crawls toward him.

The champion does not wait.

He threads the injured arm again.

Hooks the body.

Turns Kaine over.

Lancashire Lock.

Again.

John Phillips: "No, not again! Keel has the Lancashire Lock again!"

Mark Bravo: "Kaine is trapped! No rope break! No strength left in the arm!"

Kaine barely reacts at first.

Then the pain hits.

His body jolts violently.

The referee drops down right in front of him.

Referee: "Kaine! Submit or defend yourself!"

Kaine opens his mouth.

No words come.

Keel pulls back, face tight, every muscle in his body committed to the hold.

Kaine's good hand searches for something.

Rope.

Mat.

Air.

Anything.

There is nothing.

The hand stops moving.

The referee checks him.

Referee: "Kaine!"

Kaine's eyes flutter.

The referee looks at the trapped arm.

Then at Kaine's face.

Then at Keel.

Keel does not let go.

The referee has seen enough.

DING DING DING!

The bell rings as the crowd reacts with a huge mix of cheers, groans, and stunned applause.

Ring Announcer: "Here is your winner by referee stoppage... and STILL UTA Fighting Champion... GRAHAM KEEL!"

Keel releases immediately when the bell sounds.

He rolls backward to a seated position, breathing hard, sweat dripping from his face.

Kaine remains on the mat, curled slightly to one side, the referee checking on him at once.

John Phillips: "Graham Keel retains by referee stoppage! Kaine did not submit. Kaine did not quit. But the referee had no choice!"

Mark Bravo: "That is what Fighting Championship rules are about. It is not about pride. It is about whether you can continue. Kaine could not defend himself, and Graham Keel has defense number one."

The referee receives the UTA Fighting Championship from ringside and brings it to Keel.

Keel rises slowly, still feeling the effects of the fight, and takes the title into his hands.

He looks down at it.

Then he looks at Kaine.

There is no celebration.

No taunt.

Just a small nod of respect toward the challenger.

Then Keel lifts one finger.

Graham Keel: "One."

The crowd reacts as Keel raises the championship with that single finger still held in the air.

John Phillips: "Defense number one is complete. Four more, and Graham Keel can turn that Fighting Championship in for the title opportunity of his choosing."

Mark Bravo: "And if this is what defense number one looked like, I do not know who is lining up for number two."

Medical staff slide into the ring to check on Kaine as the referee keeps space around him.

Keel steps back, allowing them room.

The final shot holds on the champion standing in the corner, UTA Fighting Championship over his shoulder, one finger still raised.

The countdown has begun.

The final shot holds on the champion standing in the corner, UTA Fighting Championship over his shoulder, one finger still raised.

The countdown has begun.

Medical staff continue checking on Kaine near the center of the ring.

The Revenant is conscious now, but barely sitting up, one arm tucked tight against his body while the referee speaks with him carefully.

Kaine tries to push the medical staff away.

They do not let him.

John Phillips: "Kaine is moving, thankfully, but Graham Keel did exactly what a Fighting Champion is supposed to do. He found the weakness, attacked it, and made continuing impossible."

Mark Bravo: "Kaine never quit. That is important. He never submitted. He never gave Graham Keel the satisfaction. But Fighting Championship rules do not require pride to agree with reality."

Kaine reaches for the ropes, trying to stand.

The official and medical staff help him slowly to one knee.

The crowd begins to clap.

Not wildly.

Respectfully.

Kaine's face paint is smeared. His breathing is heavy. His damaged arm hangs low as he forces himself upright.

Across the ring, Graham Keel watches without expression.

Kaine turns his head toward the champion.

For a moment, the two men stare at each other.

Keel adjusts the Fighting Championship on his shoulder.

Then he gives Kaine one small nod.

Kaine's lips curl beneath the smeared skeletal paint.

Kaine: "Dead..."

The crowd starts to rise with him.

Kaine: "...but alive."

The San Juan crowd applauds louder as Kaine refuses a stretcher and instead allows the referee to help him toward the ropes.

John Phillips: "That may have been Graham Keel's victory, but Kaine just reminded everyone why they call him The Revenant."

Mark Bravo: "He lost, but he walked through hell to do it. There is no shame in that."

Kaine steps through the ropes and drops carefully to the floor, still holding his arm close as the medical staff follow him around ringside.

He pauses near the aisle, looking back once toward the ring.

Keel remains there, title in hand.

Kaine nods once.

Then he continues up the ramp, battered but upright.

The camera returns to Graham Keel.

The Fighting Champion walks back to the center of the ring.

His music has faded, leaving only the hum of the crowd and the aftermath of the fight.

Keel looks down at the championship again.

Then he raises it slightly, not for spectacle, but as confirmation.

Graham Keel: "One."

He lowers the title.

Graham Keel: "Four remain."

The crowd reacts as Keel turns and exits the ring.

John Phillips: "Short, direct, and terrifyingly clear. One defense down. Four remain."

Mark Bravo: "That belt is not just a championship to Graham Keel. It is a countdown clock. Every defense brings him closer to choosing whatever championship opportunity he wants."

John Phillips: "And after what we just saw, every champion in UTA should be watching Graham Keel very carefully."

Keel steps down from the apron and begins walking up the ramp, title over his shoulder, eyes forward the same way they were when he entered.

No wasted motion.

No celebration.

Just one more step toward five.

The camera follows Keel until he disappears through the curtain.

Then the broadcast cuts back to Phillips and Bravo at ringside.

John Phillips: "What a championship defense. But this night is far from over. Still to come, Jacoby Jacobs of First Class goes one-on-one with Savior Hawkins, and you have to believe Jacoby is looking for revenge after what happened in the All or Nothing Rumble."

Mark Bravo: "Savior Hawkins eliminated Jacoby in London, and Jacoby has been in a bad mood ever since. Well, worse than usual. First Class bad moods come with better shoes."

John Phillips: "We also have the International Championship on the line as Valkyrie Knox defends against Bianca Page, and later tonight, Yoshii defends the United States Championship against Trey Mack."

Mark Bravo: "The Empire wants gold back. First Class wants control. Chris Ross and Mike Best want Maxwell Jett. And Graham Keel just told the entire locker room that four more people may be getting stretched before he picks his prize."

John Phillips: "UTA World Tour continues live from San Juan. Do not go anywhere."

The camera pulls back to a wide shot of the Coliseo, the crowd still buzzing from the Fighting Championship war as the broadcast prepares to move on.

Deal With It

Segment

The broadcast cuts backstage to the loading area of the José Miguel Agrelot Coliseum.

The camera catches Maxwell Jett in motion, UTA Championship over his shoulder, designer bag in one hand, sunglasses already on despite being indoors.

Behind him, Jacoby Jacobs and Darran Darrington hurry to keep up.

A black car waits near the exit, engine running.

The driver stands beside the open rear door.

John Phillips: "Wait a minute. Is Maxwell Jett leaving?"

Mark Bravo: "That looks like a man who has decided San Juan has given him enough culture for one evening."

Maxwell reaches the car and turns sharply, nearly causing Jacoby to run into him.

Jacoby Jacobs: "Whoa, whoa. We leaving? Good. Great. Love that. Very smart. Champion-level decision."

Darran Darrington: "Yeah, after what happened with Ross and Mike Best? I support relocation."

Maxwell looks at them like they have misunderstood something very obvious.

Maxwell Jett: "I'm leaving."

Jacoby blinks.

Jacoby Jacobs: "Right. We. We are leaving."

Maxwell lifts one finger.

Maxwell Jett: "No. I am leaving."

He points directly at Jacoby.

Maxwell Jett: "You have a match."

Jacoby's face drops.

Jacoby Jacobs: "I have a match."

Maxwell Jett: "Yes."

Jacoby Jacobs: "Tonight."

Maxwell Jett: "That is generally how tonight works."

Darran glances between them, then toward the hallway behind them, uneasy.

Darran Darrington: "Okay, but what about Mike Best?"

Maxwell adjusts the UTA Championship higher on his shoulder.

Darran Darrington: "Or Chris Ross?"

Jacoby nods quickly.

Jacoby Jacobs: "Yeah. That. Exactly that. Big fan of that question. What about the two violently angry men who were just trying to tear each other apart because of you?"

Maxwell smiles thinly.

Maxwell Jett: "Because of me?"

He scoffs.

Maxwell Jett: "That is such an ugly way to describe leadership."

Jacoby opens his mouth, then closes it.

Maxwell Jett: "Look, gentlemen, I have had a long evening. I was verbally accosted, physically threatened, interrupted by an alumni crisis, and forced to breathe the same air as Chris Ross for far longer than my immune system prefers."

He steps closer to the open car door.

Maxwell Jett: "So I am going somewhere secure, private, and expensive."

Jacoby points back toward the arena.

Jacoby Jacobs: "But what do we do if Ross comes looking for you?"

Darran Darrington: "Or Mike."

Jacoby Jacobs: "Or both."

Darran Darrington: "Or Valentina."

Jacoby Jacobs: "Why would you add Valentina?"

Darran Darrington: "Because she was there."

Jacoby Jacobs: "That does not help my anxiety."

Maxwell exhales through his nose, annoyed.

Maxwell Jett: "Deal with it."

Jacoby stares at him.

Jacoby Jacobs: "Deal with... Chris Ross?"

Maxwell Jett: "If necessary."

Darran Darrington: "And Mike Best?"

Maxwell Jett: "If necessary."

Jacoby Jacobs: "And my match?"

Maxwell Jett: "Preferably first."

Maxwell climbs into the back seat of the car.

Jacoby takes a step forward, almost pleading now.

Jacoby Jacobs: "Max, come on, man. Savior Hawkins eliminated me at All or Nothing. I'm already dealing with that. Now I gotta go out there while Ross and Mike Best are loose in the building looking for the human version of a trust fund with a title belt?"

Maxwell leans toward the open door, sunglasses reflecting the loading dock lights.

Maxwell Jett: "Jacoby."

Jacoby waits.

Maxwell Jett: "Win your match."

For a second, it almost sounds like encouragement.

Then Maxwell adds the rest.

Maxwell Jett: "It will make First Class look better while I'm gone."

Jacoby's shoulders sink.

Maxwell Jett: "And Darran?"

Darran Darrington: "Yeah?"

Maxwell Jett: "Make sure he doesn't embarrass us."

Darran nods, though he does not look especially confident.

Darran Darrington: "Right. Sure. Minimal embarrassment."

Maxwell reaches for the door handle from inside.

Jacoby Jacobs: "Wait, wait, wait, hold on. You're really just leaving us here?"

Maxwell smiles.

Maxwell Jett: "No, Jacoby."

A beat.

Maxwell Jett: "I'm trusting you."

Jacoby almost looks touched.

Almost.

Maxwell Jett: "Try not to make me regret it."

Maxwell slams the car door shut.

Jacoby and Darran stand there for a second, staring through the tinted window.

The driver gets back into the front seat.

The car pulls away.

Jacoby watches it disappear out of the loading area and into the night.

Silence settles between the two remaining members of First Class.

John Phillips: "The UTA Champion has just left the building."

Mark Bravo: "And he left Jacoby Jacobs with a match, a panic attack, and two potential murder problems."

Darran slowly turns toward Jacoby.

Darran Darrington: "Your match is next."

Jacoby looks at him.

He is nervous.

Not because of Savior Hawkins.

Not exactly.

His eyes drift back toward the hallway.

Back toward the building.

Back toward wherever Chris Ross and Mike Best may still be.

Jacoby Jacobs: "Yeah."

He swallows hard.

Jacoby Jacobs: "Great."

Darran pats him on the shoulder.

Darran Darrington: "Look at it this way."

Jacoby Jacobs: "Please don't."

Darran Darrington: "At least Savior Hawkins is probably the safest person you might run into tonight."

Jacoby closes his eyes.

Jacoby Jacobs: "That is the worst comforting sentence anyone has ever said to me."

Darran gives him one more pat on the shoulder and starts guiding him back toward the arena.

Jacoby walks reluctantly, still glancing over his shoulder every few steps.

The camera holds on the empty loading dock for a moment.

The champion is gone.

First Class is exposed.

And Jacoby Jacobs is next.

Next Week

Segment

The broadcast cuts elsewhere backstage shortly after the Fighting Championship match.

The hallway is busier than usual, still reacting to what just happened in the ring. Production assistants move quickly with headsets pressed to their ears. A medic passes through the background. Somewhere farther down the corridor, the distant roar of the San Juan crowd continues to rumble through the walls.

Then Graham Keel walks into frame.

The UTA Fighting Championship rests over one shoulder.

He is breathing heavily, but not dramatically. Sweat darkens his hairline. One forearm is taped tighter than it was before the match. There is redness across his neck and shoulder from Kaine's punishment, and the slow stiffness in his walk says the victory came with a price.

But Graham Keel does not limp for effect.

He does not look around for applause.

He simply walks.

Focused.

Measured.

One defense completed.

Four to go.

John Phillips: "There is Graham Keel, still Fighting Champion after surviving Kaine earlier tonight."

Mark Bravo: "Surviving is the right word, John. Kaine is not the kind of opponent you just beat and forget about. Graham Keel got his first successful defense, but he had to walk through a very ugly fight to get it."

Keel rounds the corner, adjusting the championship on his shoulder.

Then he stops.

Ace Andrews stands ahead of him.

The Corporate Cutthroat is dressed impeccably, dark custom suit fitted like money itself had been tailored into fabric. Tinted glasses sit across his face, his bald head catching the overhead light as he smiles with the smooth ease of a man who believes every hallway becomes more important once he enters it.

Behind him stands Samuel Scythe.

No smile.

No movement.

No wasted breath.

Just a six-foot-three shadow with anger behind the eyes and enough stillness to make the air feel colder around him.

Keel looks at Ace first.

Then at Scythe.

Then back to Ace.

His expression does not change.

Graham Keel: "Can I help you?"

Ace smiles wider, as if delighted by the politeness.

Ace Andrews: "Mr. Keel."

Ace takes one slow step forward, hands relaxed, voice smooth.

Ace Andrews: "Allow me to offer my congratulations."

Keel says nothing.

Ace gestures toward the Fighting Championship.

Ace Andrews: "One successful defense. One step forward. One less doubter able to claim that what happened in London was a fortunate accident."

Graham's eyes narrow slightly.

Graham Keel: "I don't concern myself with doubters."

Ace Andrews: "No, of course not."

Ace gives a small nod, as if that answer confirms something he already knew.

Ace Andrews: "That is what I find interesting about you. So many men win a championship and immediately begin performing the role of champion. They get louder. Sloppier. Emotional. Drunk on the shine of the thing."

Ace's eyes dip to the championship again.

Ace Andrews: "But you? You treat that title like a tool."

Keel adjusts the strap on his shoulder.

Graham Keel: "It is a responsibility."

Ace Andrews: "Precisely."

Ace points one finger lightly, pleased.

Ace Andrews: "A responsibility with terms. Five successful defenses, and suddenly the Fighting Championship becomes more than a title. It becomes a key."

Graham's stare stays flat.

Graham Keel: "Four remain."

Behind Ace, Samuel Scythe's head tilts just slightly.

Not curiosity.

Recognition of prey making a sound.

Ace hears it too and smiles.

Ace Andrews: "Yes. Four remain."

Ace takes another measured step, still keeping enough distance to make it clear he is not foolish.

Ace Andrews: "And tonight, Graham, you defeated a monster."

Keel does not answer.

The words hang in the corridor with Kaine's name never needing to be spoken.

Ace Andrews: "That matters. It truly does. Kaine is violence wearing skin. He is chaos with a pulse. Many men would have broken under him. Many men would have made excuses after him."

Ace gestures toward Graham's taped arm, then the championship.

Ace Andrews: "You did neither."

Graham looks past Ace again, directly at Scythe.

Scythe stares back.

No blink.

No shift.

Just that dead, murderous focus.

Graham Keel: "You didn't stop me to compliment me."

Ace laughs softly.

Ace Andrews: "No."

The smile remains, but the temperature drops.

Ace Andrews: "I did not."

Ace turns slightly, opening the shot so Samuel Scythe fills more of the frame.

Ace Andrews: "Tonight, you defeated a monster."

He pauses.

Ace Andrews: "But what about next week you try to defeat..."

Ace looks back at Scythe.

Samuel does not move.

Ace Andrews: "...a Reaper."

The hallway seems to still around the challenge.

John Phillips: "Wait a second."

Mark Bravo: "Ace Andrews is challenging Graham Keel to defend the Fighting Championship against Samuel Scythe next week."

Graham's gaze stays on Scythe now.

He studies him the way he studies every opponent.

Height.

Weight.

Posture.

Shoulders.

Hands.

The lack of wasted motion.

Scythe's stare does not change under inspection.

If anything, it becomes heavier.

Ace Andrews: "Samuel Scythe has no interest in ceremonies. He does not care about your count. He does not care about the prestige of your championship. He does not care what defeating you might mean to the record books."

Ace's smile turns thinner.

Ace Andrews: "He cares about impact. Damage. The harvest."

Samuel Scythe finally steps forward.

One step.

That is all.

The movement is enough to make the production assistant in the background immediately decide to be somewhere else.

Samuel Scythe: "You reap what you sow."

The line is low.

Flat.

Almost calm.

That makes it worse.

Graham looks from Scythe to Ace.

Graham Keel: "Next week?"

Ace Andrews: "If you still consider yourself a fighting champion."

Graham gives the smallest exhale through his nose.

Not a laugh.

Not amusement.

Something colder than that.

Graham Keel: "I don't consider myself anything."

He adjusts the championship again, more firmly this time.

Graham Keel: "I defend."

Ace's smile widens.

Ace Andrews: "Then we are agreed."

Graham steps closer now, closing some of the space between himself and Scythe.

Not enough to start a fight.

Enough to make it clear he is not being moved by intimidation.

Graham Keel: "Tell your Reaper something for me."

Ace tilts his head.

Ace Andrews: "By all means."

Graham looks directly at Samuel Scythe.

Graham Keel: "Power creates openings."

Scythe's jaw tightens slightly.

Graham Keel: "Anger creates mistakes."

Graham taps the Fighting Championship once.

Graham Keel: "Pressure becomes pain when I decide it does."

The silence afterward is sharp.

Ace's smile remains, but his eyes sharpen behind the tinted glasses.

Samuel Scythe takes another half-step forward.

This time, Ace raises a hand without looking back.

Scythe stops.

Not because he fears Graham.

Because Ace told him to.

Ace Andrews: "Careful, Graham."

Ace speaks gently, almost warmly.

Ace Andrews: "You survived a monster tonight."

He glances at the championship again.

Ace Andrews: "Do not mistake survival for immunity."

Graham starts to walk past them.

For one moment, he and Scythe are shoulder to shoulder.

Neither man turns fully.

Neither man backs away.

The camera catches the size, the tension, and the contrast.

The Hold Architect.

The Reaper.

One champion counting defenses.

One weapon waiting to interrupt the count permanently.

Graham Keel: "Next week, then."

Graham continues down the hall.

Ace watches him go, still smiling.

Scythe does not smile.

He simply turns his head and follows Graham with his eyes until the champion disappears around the corner.

Samuel Scythe: "He falls."

Ace adjusts his cuffs with satisfaction.

Ace Andrews: "Perhaps."

He looks into the camera.

Ace Andrews: "Or perhaps he learns that not every harvest leaves something standing."

Ace turns and walks away, Samuel Scythe following behind him like a storm that has finally been given a destination.

John Phillips: "It sounds like next week, Graham Keel will defend the Fighting Championship against Samuel Scythe."

Mark Bravo: "Graham beat Kaine tonight. Defense number one. But if Ace Andrews gets his way, defense number two may be against The Reaper himself."

John Phillips: "Graham Keel said four remain. Samuel Scythe may be looking to make sure that number never becomes three."

Jacoby Jacobs vs. Savior Hawkins

Match

The camera returns to the arena floor inside the José Miguel Agrelot Coliseum, where the San Juan crowd is still alive after the Fighting Championship war that just unfolded.

John Phillips: "Welcome back to UTA World Tour, live from San Juan, Puerto Rico, and we are ready for singles action."

Mark Bravo: "Jacoby Jacobs has been abandoned by Maxwell Jett, told to deal with Chris Ross and Mike Best if necessary, and now he has to face the man who eliminated him from the All or Nothing Rumble."

John Phillips: "Savior Hawkins made an immediate impact at International Affair, and tonight, he gets Jacoby one-on-one."

Mark Bravo: "That is a bad night stacking on top of a bad night for Jacoby. And somewhere in a moving car, Maxwell Jett is probably very proud of himself for not being here."

The lights suddenly cut.

The arena plunges into darkness.

For a moment, there is only the sound of the crowd.

Then floating white orbs begin to dance through the shadows, scattered across the arena like stars breaking through a storm.

Gold streaks shimmer from the rafters, cutting through deep navy pulses of light that beat in time with the opening guitar of Safest Ledge's "Healing Pool."

The reaction begins immediately.

Not just cheers.

Recognition.

This is San Juan.

This is home.

John Phillips: "Listen to this reaction."

Mark Bravo: "Savior Hawkins was born right here in San Juan. This is not just another entrance tonight, John. This is personal."

The drum kicks begin to sync with the frantic lasers.

The pressure builds.

The crowd rises.

Then, at the first explosive climax of the song, white and gold pyrotechnics detonate across the stage.

Savior Hawkins bursts through the curtain like a bolt of lightning.

The Coliseum erupts.

Ring Announcer: "The following contest is scheduled for one fall! Introducing first... from Orlando, Florida, by way of San Juan, Puerto Rico... weighing in at two hundred pounds... he is The Archangel... SAVIOR HAWKINS!"

Savior sprints to the edge of the ramp, all kinetic energy and fire. His arms wave upward, pulling the crowd higher and

higher, feeding off the noise like he needs it to breathe.

He plants his feet at the edge of the stage.

Then he draws a massive invisible bow.

The entire crowd seems to know what is coming.

Savior Hawkins: "SHOWTIME!"

The crowd screams it with him.

Crowd: "SHOWTIME!"

A final blast of white and gold sparks frames his silhouette as the roar inside the building becomes overwhelming.

John Phillips: "What a moment for Savior Hawkins here in Puerto Rico!"

Mark Bravo: "You can see it on his face, John. He is trying to control it, but this building means something to him."

Savior does not go straight to the ring.

Instead, he takes off around ringside, moving fast, tagging hands, leaning into the barricade, making sure the front row feels every bit of the energy pouring out of him.

He hops onto the barricade near one side of the aisle, balancing for a second as fans reach up toward him.

For a flash, he smiles.

Genuine.

Bright.

Then it fades into focus.

John Phillips: "Savior Hawkins has that rare ability to connect with people instantly, but beneath all this energy, there is a very serious competitor."

Mark Bravo: "That's what makes him dangerous. The showmanship gets you looking one way, then the bell rings and suddenly he is all pressure, footwork, and technique."

Savior completes the lap, then pivots sharply back toward the ring.

As the song reaches its next major crescendo, he sprints toward the apron, slides under the bottom rope, and pops instantly to his feet.

White and gold lights flash across the navy-tinted fog as Savior runs to the nearest turnbuckle and climbs.

He stands tall, arms out, letting the noise hit him.

Then he draws the invisible bow again.

Slow this time.

Deliberate.

Cinematic.

The crowd follows every motion.

Crowd: "SHOW-TIME! SHOW-TIME! SHOW-TIME!"

Savior releases the imaginary arrow into the rafters, then hops down to the canvas.

The music begins to fade.

The showmanship evaporates with it.

His chest still heaves from the entrance, but his eyes lock onto the aisle.

His expression changes completely.

The smile is gone.

The hometown celebration is gone.

Now there is only focus.

John Phillips: "That switch right there. That is what Jacoby Jacobs has to deal with. Savior Hawkins can ride the emotion of this crowd, but once the bell rings, he becomes precise."

Mark Bravo: "And Jacoby knows Savior threw him out of the All or Nothing Rumble. That bruise is still fresh, and First Class does not handle embarrassment well."

Savior retreats to his corner and begins bouncing lightly on the balls of his feet, shifting into rhythmic boxing-style footwork.

His eyes stay fixed on the entrance curtain.

The Archangel is in his sanctuary.

And now Jacoby Jacobs has to walk into it.

Savior Hawkins retreats to his corner and begins bouncing lightly on the balls of his feet, shifting into rhythmic boxing-style footwork.

His eyes stay fixed on the entrance curtain.

The Archangel is in his sanctuary.

And now Jacoby Jacobs has to walk into it.

The arena lights shift from white and gold into a sleeker, colder presentation.

A polished graphic flashes across the screen.

FIRST CLASS

The crowd boos immediately.

John Phillips: "And here comes Jacoby Jacobs, one half of the Rich Young GRAPPLRZ, representing First Class tonight."

Mark Bravo: "Representing First Class, yes. Supported by First Class? That is a little more questionable now that Maxwell Jett has left the building."

Jacoby Jacobs steps through the curtain first, dressed in expensive streetwear layered over his gear, sunglasses on, chin lifted, trying to project the same moneyed arrogance that has become First Class's calling card.

Darian Darrington comes out beside him, clapping his hands together, talking him up immediately.

Darian Darrington: "Top floor, baby. Top floor. You got this."

Jacoby nods like he believes it.

Then he glances over his shoulder.

Quick.

Almost subtle.

Almost.

John Phillips: "Jacoby trying to look confident, but he has been looking over his shoulder since the moment Maxwell Jett drove away."

Mark Bravo: "Can you blame him? Chris Ross is angry. Mike Best is angry. Maxwell Jett is gone. And Jacoby is dressed like the closest available substitute."

The ring announcer raises the microphone.

Ring Announcer: "And his opponent... accompanied to the ring by Darian Darrington... representing First Class... JACOBY JACOBS!"

The boos grow louder.

Jacoby spreads his arms like the reaction is beneath him, then turns slightly to Darian.

Jacoby Jacobs: "They mad because they not us."

Darian Darrington: "Exactly. They ain't us. They could never be us."

Jacoby nods again, forcing a grin.

Then he looks toward the side of the stage.

Then behind him again.

Darian catches it this time and steps closer.

Darian Darrington: "Hey. Focus on Savior."

Jacoby Jacobs: "I am focused on Savior."

A beat.

Jacoby Jacobs: "I'm also focused on not getting murdered from a blind spot."

Darian Darrington: "That's fair."

The two start down the ramp.

Jacoby keeps his shoulders loose, trying to bounce with confidence, pointing at fans and jawing with them as he walks.

Jacoby Jacobs: "You wish you had this fit! You wish!"

A fan near the barricade shouts something back.

Jacoby starts to respond, but another loud noise from somewhere in the arena makes him snap his head around.

Nothing is there.

Just the crowd.

Darian puts both hands out, calming him down.

Darian Darrington: "You good. You good."

Jacoby Jacobs: "I know I'm good."

He adjusts his sunglasses.

Jacoby Jacobs: "I am extremely good."

Then, quieter:

Jacoby Jacobs: "You see anybody?"

Darian Darrington: "No."

Jacoby Jacobs: "You checked?"

Darian Darrington: "I'm looking right now."

Jacoby Jacobs: "Look harder."

John Phillips: "Jacoby Jacobs has to be thinking about more than just Savior Hawkins tonight. Chris Ross and Mike Best both made it very clear earlier that Maxwell Jett is their target, and with Maxwell gone, First Class may be left to absorb the consequences."

Mark Bravo: "That is the danger of being the entourage. Sometimes the star leaves in the car, and you are still standing there holding the tab."

Savior watches from the ring, expression focused and still.

He does not smile.

He does not mock Jacoby's nerves.

He simply watches him approach, bouncing lightly in place.

Jacoby reaches ringside and stops before climbing in.

He looks under the ring apron.

Darian stares at him.

Darian Darrington: "What are you doing?"

Jacoby Jacobs: "Checking."

Darian Darrington: "For what?"

Jacoby Jacobs: "Problems."

Darian looks around, then nods as if he cannot fully argue with that.

Jacoby stands up straight and realizes the camera is on him.

The cool immediately comes back on.

Jacoby Jacobs: "Just making sure the facilities meet First Class standards."

Mark Bravo: "That is the fastest excuse I've ever heard."

John Phillips: "He looked under the ring for Chris Ross."

Mark Bravo: "I would too."

Jacoby climbs onto the apron, but before stepping through the ropes, he looks back up the ramp one more time.

Still nothing.

No Chris Ross.

No Mike Best.

No Maxwell Jett.

Just Darian at ringside and Savior Hawkins waiting across the ring.

Jacoby finally steps through the ropes.

He removes his sunglasses, folds them carefully, and hands them down to Darian.

Jacoby Jacobs: "Protect these with your life."

Darian Darrington: "Got you."

Jacoby Jacobs: "I'm serious."

Darian Darrington: "Me too."

Jacoby turns toward Savior and forces the grin again.

Jacoby Jacobs: "You got lucky in London."

Savior steps out of his corner, calm and focused.

Savior Hawkins: "Then come prove it."

The crowd cheers.

Jacoby's grin twitches.

For a second, he looks ready to fire back.

Then a fan noise behind him makes him glance over his shoulder again.

Savior sees it.

Darian sees it.

The referee sees it.

John Phillips: "Jacoby Jacobs is trying to stay composed, but Savior Hawkins has already seen the distraction."

Mark Bravo: "The match has not even started, and Jacoby is fighting ghosts."

The referee steps between the two competitors, giving final instructions.

Savior Hawkins rolls his shoulders and settles into stance.

Jacoby backs toward his corner, eyes flicking once more to the ramp.

Darian Darrington stands outside, sunglasses in hand, scanning the arena like unofficial security.

The bell is next.

The referee steps between the two competitors, giving final instructions.

Savior Hawkins rolls his shoulders and settles into stance.

Jacoby backs toward his corner, eyes flicking once more to the ramp.

Darian Darrington stands outside, sunglasses in hand, scanning the arena like unofficial security.

The bell is next.

DING DING DING!

John Phillips: "And here we go! Savior Hawkins against Jacoby Jacobs, one-on-one here in San Juan!"

Mark Bravo: "One-on-one in theory. Jacoby's got Darian outside, Chris Ross and Mike Best somewhere in his imagination, and Maxwell Jett somewhere very far away from responsibility."

Savior steps out of his corner, light on his feet, hands up, posture tight and focused.

Jacoby steps out more slowly.

He points at Savior, talking as he moves.

Jacoby Jacobs: "London was a fluke. You know that, right? Everybody knows that."

Savior does not answer.

He simply circles.

Jacoby circles with him, still trying to wear the grin, but his eyes keep darting past Savior toward the entrance ramp.

Darian Darrington: "Lock in, Jacoby! Lock in!"

Jacoby Jacobs: "I am locked in!"

Savior suddenly steps forward.

Jacoby flinches back, raising both hands defensively.

The crowd laughs.

Jacoby immediately turns on them.

Jacoby Jacobs: "Ain't nobody scared! I was resetting!"

Mark Bravo: "That was a strategic panic."

John Phillips: "Savior Hawkins has not thrown a strike yet, and Jacoby Jacobs already looks rattled."

Savior keeps moving, composed.

Jacoby finally lunges in for a lock-up.

Savior slips to the side and grabs the wrist.

He twists into a quick arm wringer, then snaps Jacoby down to one knee.

Jacoby immediately reaches up, grabbing at Savior's hand, face tightening.

Jacoby Jacobs: "Alright, alright, alright! Relax!"

Savior keeps the pressure on the wrist and steps over, forcing Jacoby's shoulder to turn.

Jacoby rolls forward to relieve the pressure, pops to his feet, and tries to reverse.

Savior flows with him, spins behind, and takes Jacoby over with a clean waistlock takedown.

Jacoby hits the mat, chest-first.

Savior floats across the back, keeping control.

John Phillips: "That is the precision we talked about during the entrance. Savior Hawkins is not wasting movement."

Mark Bravo: "And this is bad for Jacoby, because he wants to run his mouth and manage the room. Savior is forcing him to wrestle."

Jacoby gets to his hands and knees.

Savior rides the waist and reaches for the arm again.

Jacoby suddenly grabs the bottom rope and yells before Savior even has the hold fully applied.

Jacoby Jacobs: "Break! Break! I got the ropes!"

The referee steps in.

Referee: "Clean break, Savior."

Savior releases immediately and backs away.

Jacoby rolls under the bottom rope to the floor, landing beside Darian.

The crowd boos.

John Phillips: "Jacoby taking an early breather."

Mark Bravo: "That was not a breather. That was a safety inspection."

Darian hands Jacoby his sunglasses for a second like they might restore his confidence.

Darian Darrington: "You good. He ain't better than you."

Jacoby Jacobs: "I know he ain't better than me."

Jacoby looks toward the ramp.

Jacoby Jacobs: "You see anybody?"

Darian Darrington: "No."

Jacoby Jacobs: "What about behind us?"

Darian looks behind them.

Darian Darrington: "No."

Jacoby Jacobs: "What about, like, emotionally? You feel anything weird?"

Darian Darrington: "Bro, get in the ring."

The referee starts counting.

Referee: "One!"

Referee: "Two!"

Savior stands in the ring, patient, eyes fixed on Jacoby.

He does not chase.

He does not get baited.

He just waits.

John Phillips: "That may be the most important thing Savior can do right now. Do not let Jacoby's chaos become your chaos."

Jacoby climbs onto the apron at four, still jawing.

Jacoby Jacobs: "You real brave when people ain't watching your back."

Savior steps toward him.

Savior Hawkins: "They're watching yours."

Jacoby freezes.

He turns sharply to look behind him.

There is no one there.

Savior uses the opening.

He darts forward and catches Jacoby with a flying forearm that knocks him off the apron and down to the floor.

The crowd erupts.

John Phillips: "Savior caught him! Jacoby looked away, and Savior made him pay!"

Mark Bravo: "That was mean. That was smart. I liked it."

Darian immediately rushes to Jacoby's side, helping him sit up.

Darian Darrington: "You good?"

Jacoby Jacobs: "Why would you ask me that like I look bad?"

Darian Darrington: "You got hit in the face."

Jacoby Jacobs: "I know what happened!"

Savior looks out at them from inside the ring.

The crowd begins chanting.

Crowd: "SHOW-TIME! SHOW-TIME! SHOW-TIME!"

Savior takes two steps back.

John Phillips: "Savior Hawkins is building speed!"

Savior hits the ropes.

He charges across the ring.

Jacoby sees it coming and yanks Darian in front of him.

Savior stops short at the ropes before diving, catching himself just in time.

Darian throws his hands up, still holding the sunglasses.

Darian Darrington: "Hey, hey! I'm not in the match!"

Mark Bravo: "Jacoby just used Darian as emotional and physical cover."

John Phillips: "And Savior had to stop himself. He will not risk taking out a man not in this match."

Jacoby, from behind Darian, suddenly reaches up and grabs Savior's ankle through the ropes.

He yanks hard.

Savior falls backward, hitting the mat.

The crowd boos as Jacoby slides in fast.

He drops a sharp elbow across Savior's chest.

Then another.

Then he pops to his knees, confidence returning all at once.

Jacoby Jacobs: "That's First Class strategy!"

John Phillips: "And just like that, Jacoby takes control because Savior hesitated."

Mark Bravo: "Savior did the right thing. Jacoby did the effective thing. Wrestling is cruel like that."

Jacoby pulls Savior up and drives a knee into his midsection.

He sends Savior into the corner, then follows with a running back elbow.

Savior absorbs it and staggers forward.

Jacoby hooks him and snaps him down with a quick neckbreaker.

He covers.

Referee: "One!"

Savior kicks out quickly.

Jacoby immediately sits up, annoyed.

Jacoby Jacobs: "That was at least two."

Referee: "It was one."

Jacoby Jacobs: "Count richer."

Mark Bravo: "Count richer?"

John Phillips: "I don't think that's how officiating works."

Jacoby grabs Savior in a side headlock on the mat, grinding down with unnecessary theatrical effort.

Savior reaches for the wrist, trying to create space.

Jacoby tightens the hold and looks toward Darian.

Jacoby Jacobs: "See? I'm good. I'm locked in."

A loud shout from the crowd makes Jacoby glance toward the ramp again.

That tiny distraction is enough.

Savior turns his hips, slips a knee underneath him, and starts pushing up.

Jacoby realizes too late and tries to wrench the headlock tighter.

Savior drives short elbows into Jacoby's ribs.

One.

Two.

Three.

Jacoby releases.

Savior runs to the ropes.

Darian steps closer on the outside, and Savior has to adjust his path for a split second.

Jacoby catches him on the rebound with a sharp dropkick to the knee.

Savior flips forward and lands hard.

John Phillips: "Jacoby takes out the knee!"

Mark Bravo: "That was actually very smart. Savior's entrance, his offense, his footwork, all of it is movement-based. Slow him down and you take away a lot of the Archangel's wings."

Jacoby grabs the leg immediately and drags Savior toward the bottom rope.

He places Savior's ankle across the rope and steps down on the knee.

Referee: "Jacoby! Back it off!"

Jacoby Jacobs: "I have until five!"

Referee: "One! Two! Three! Four!"

Jacoby steps away at four, hands raised innocently.

Jacoby Jacobs: "Clean. Legal. Educational."

The crowd boos louder.

Savior rolls away, clutching the knee.

Jacoby turns to the crowd and opens his arms again, the confidence coming back in layers.

Jacoby Jacobs: "You see? Y'all worried for nothing. First Class always lands!"

Behind him, Savior starts to rise.

Darian sees it and shouts.

Darian Darrington: "Behind you!"

Jacoby flinches hard and spins around with both fists up.

Only Savior is there.

The crowd laughs again.

Jacoby realizes how jumpy he looked and immediately gets angry.

Jacoby Jacobs: "That's not funny!"

Savior limps forward and throws a forearm.

Jacoby answers with a kick to the bad knee.

Savior drops to one knee.

Jacoby grabs him by the chin.

Jacoby Jacobs: "You embarrassed me in London."

He slaps Savior across the face.

The crowd boos.

Savior slowly turns his head back.

The look in his eyes changes.

The polite face cracks.

Just for a second.

John Phillips: "That may not have been wise."

Jacoby sees the shift and backs up half a step.

Jacoby Jacobs: "What? You mad now?"

Savior rises despite the knee.

Jacoby swings.

Savior blocks and fires back with a flying forearm.

Jacoby staggers.

Savior hits a second flying forearm.

Jacoby stumbles into the ropes.

Savior loads up for a third.

His knee buckles mid-step.

Jacoby ducks outside through the ropes, narrowly escaping.

Savior catches himself in the center of the ring, breathing hard, frustration flashing across his face.

For a moment, the pressure shows.

The crowd chants his name.

Crowd: "SA-VIOR! SA-VIOR! SA-VIOR!"

Savior closes his eyes, takes a sharp breath, and forces the emotion down.

Forward.

Always forward.

Mark Bravo: "There it is. That little flash. Savior Hawkins wants to be composed, but there is something boiling underneath the surface."

John Phillips: "And Jacoby Jacobs may have just found a dangerous button to push."

Jacoby stands on the floor beside Darian, holding his jaw.

He looks shaken again, but this time not because of Ross or Mike Best.

Because Savior Hawkins just looked at him like he wanted to take something apart.

Darian Darrington: "You good?"

Jacoby swallows, then forces the grin back.

Jacoby Jacobs: "Yeah."

He looks into the ring at Savior.

Jacoby Jacobs: "I got him."

But the way he says it sounds less like confidence.

And more like he is trying to convince himself.

Jacoby stands on the floor beside Darian, holding his jaw.

He looks shaken again, but this time not because of Ross or Mike Best.

Because Savior Hawkins just looked at him like he wanted to take something apart.

Darian Darrington: "You good?"

Jacoby swallows, then forces the grin back.

Jacoby Jacobs: "Yeah."

He looks into the ring at Savior.

Jacoby Jacobs: "I got him."

But the way he says it sounds less like confidence.

And more like he is trying to convince himself.

The referee leans through the ropes, warning Jacoby to get back inside.

Referee: "Come on, Jacoby! Back in the ring!"

Jacoby points at Savior, still standing safely beside Darian.

Jacoby Jacobs: "Keep him back. Look at him. He's unstable."

Savior Hawkins: "Get in."

The words are quiet, but they carry.

Jacoby hears them.

So does the crowd.

John Phillips: "Savior Hawkins is trying to pull himself back under control, but Jacoby Jacobs may have awakened something he does not want to deal with."

Mark Bravo: "Jacoby needs to keep this about the knee. He starts making it personal, and Savior may start swinging from a place that has nothing to do with winning."

Jacoby slowly climbs onto the apron.

Savior steps forward.

Jacoby immediately drops back to the floor.

The crowd boos.

Jacoby Jacobs: "Back up! Space! Boundaries!"

Savior exhales sharply and takes a step back.

Jacoby climbs onto the apron again, one hand on the top rope, one eye on Savior, one eye somehow still checking the aisle.

He starts to step through.

Savior lunges.

Jacoby snaps his upper body back through the ropes, but Savior catches him with a sharp forearm across the chest.

Jacoby stumbles on the apron.

Savior grabs him by the head and pulls him through the ropes.

Jacoby twists in mid-motion and catches Savior with a shoulder to the bad knee.

Savior buckles.

Jacoby slides fully into the ring and chop blocks the back of the leg.

Savior drops to the mat hard.

John Phillips: "Jacoby back to the knee! That injured leg stopped Savior's momentum cold!"

Mark Bravo: "That is where Jacoby has been effective. When he stops worrying about the building collapsing around him and actually wrestles, he's dangerous."

Jacoby grabs Savior's leg and drags him toward the center of the ring.

He lifts the leg, then drives an elbow down into the inside of the knee.

Savior grimaces, grabbing at the canvas.

Jacoby does it again.

Then again.

Each shot is sharper than the last.

Jacoby Jacobs: "Still feel like showtime?"

Jacoby twists Savior's leg into a rough half crab, sitting back with a smug look as the crowd boos.

Referee: "Savior, do you give up?"

Savior Hawkins: "No."

His answer is immediate.

Too immediate.

Like he is answering something deeper than the referee.

Savior reaches forward, dragging himself by his forearms toward the ropes.

Jacoby sits back harder, putting more torque through the knee.

Jacoby Jacobs: "Where you going? Huh? Where you going, hometown hero?"

Savior's face tightens.

The crowd begins clapping in rhythm, willing him forward.

Crowd: "SA-VIOR! SA-VIOR! SA-VIOR!"

Savior claws another few inches.

Jacoby looks toward Darian, annoyed.

Jacoby Jacobs: "Why they so loud?"

Darian Darrington: "Because he from here!"

Jacoby Jacobs: "He said Orlando!"

Darian Darrington: "By way of here!"

Jacoby Jacobs: "That's too many locations!"

The argument costs him leverage.

Savior lunges forward and grabs the bottom rope.

Referee: "Break! He's got the ropes!"

Jacoby holds on.

Referee: "One! Two! Three! Four!"

Jacoby releases at four and immediately backs away, hands up.

Jacoby Jacobs: "I broke! I broke! Stop yelling at excellence!"

Savior uses the ropes to pull himself up, favoring the knee heavily.

Jacoby sees the weakness and comes charging.

Savior sidesteps, but the knee slows him.

Jacoby catches himself in the ropes, bounces back, and blasts Savior with a jumping knee to the ribs.

Savior doubles over.

Jacoby hooks him around the waist from behind.

For a moment, Savior's eyes widen.

The setup is too familiar.

Jacoby is mocking him.

John Phillips: "Wait a minute, Jacoby has him from behind!"

Mark Bravo: "Is he trying to steal Savior's own setup?"

Jacoby looks past Savior toward the crowd and throws his free hand upward.

Jacoby Jacobs: "SHOWTIME!"

The crowd erupts in boos.

Savior's expression snaps.

He drives the back of his head into Jacoby's face.

Jacoby releases and staggers backward, clutching his nose.

Jacoby Jacobs: "My face!"

Savior turns.

His limp is obvious.

So is his anger.

Jacoby swings first.

Savior ducks and fires a forearm.

Jacoby staggers.

Savior fires another forearm.

Jacoby drops to one knee.

Savior grabs him by the wrist and pulls him up into a short-arm flying forearm, forcing the impact through the whole body.

Jacoby drops flat.

John Phillips: "Savior is fighting through the knee!"

Mark Bravo: "He is fighting through it, but watch him. Every step costs him."

Savior reaches down and pulls Jacoby up.

Jacoby suddenly rakes the eyes.

The referee is slightly out of position, checking Savior's leg angle, and misses the fingers across the face.

Savior recoils, blinded.

Jacoby grabs him immediately and snaps him down with a DDT.

Savior spikes into the mat.

Jacoby rolls him over and hooks the leg.

Referee: "One!"

Referee: "Two!"

Savior kicks out.

The crowd cheers.

Jacoby sits up, hands on his head.

Jacoby Jacobs: "Come on!"

Darian pounds the mat from the outside.

Darian Darrington: "Stay on him! Stay on him!"

Jacoby rises and starts stomping Savior's bad knee.

Once.

Twice.

Three times.

The referee backs him off.

Referee: "Jacoby, watch the knee!"

Jacoby Jacobs: "That is literally what I'm watching!"

Savior rolls toward the corner, trying to create distance.

Jacoby follows, but another sudden roar from the crowd makes him snap around.

Nothing.

No Ross.

No Best.

No one.

Darian throws both hands up.

Darian Darrington: "It's the crowd, man!"

Jacoby Jacobs: "They keep doing it suspiciously!"

That tiny pause gives Savior enough time to pull himself to the second rope.

Jacoby turns back.

Savior launches.

Second-rope flying forearm!

Both men go down.

John Phillips: "Savior caught him! Desperation forearm from the second rope!"

Mark Bravo: "Bad knee and all, Savior Hawkins found a way to change the match."

The referee starts a count as both men lie on the canvas.

Referee: "One!"

Savior rolls to his side, clutching his knee.

Jacoby blinks at the lights, one hand still near his nose.

Referee: "Two!"

Darian slaps the mat, urging Jacoby up.

Darian Darrington: "Get up, Jacoby!"

Referee: "Three!"

The San Juan crowd claps louder, pulling Savior back into the match.

Crowd: "SA-VIOR! SA-VIOR! SA-VIOR!"

Referee: "Four!"

Savior plants one hand on the mat.

His face shows pain.

Then frustration.

Then discipline.

He pushes up.

Referee: "Five!"

Jacoby crawls toward the ropes, using them to drag himself up.

Savior gets to one knee.

Then to both feet.

The injured knee wobbles.

But he is standing.

John Phillips: "Both men are up!"

Jacoby turns and charges.

Savior catches him with a forearm.

Jacoby staggers back and charges again.

Savior catches him with another forearm.

A third charge.

A third forearm.

This one drops Jacoby flat.

The crowd erupts.

John Phillips: "Flying forearms from Savior Hawkins!"

Savior limps backward into the corner, gritting his teeth.

He gestures for Jacoby to get up.

Jacoby rises slowly, dazed.

Savior rushes forward for another strike.

The bad knee buckles slightly.

Jacoby catches the opening and kicks the knee out again.

Savior drops down.

Jacoby grabs him by the head and pulls him into position.

He looks toward Darian, suddenly energized.

Jacoby Jacobs: "Watch this. First Class finish."

Jacoby hooks Savior, looking for a lifting facebuster variation.

Savior blocks by dropping his weight.

Jacoby tries again.

Savior blocks again.

Then Savior explodes upward, lifting Jacoby into a suplex exploder.

Jacoby crashes across the mat and rolls toward the corner.

Mark Bravo: "Exploder by Hawkins! That was pure adrenaline!"

Savior drops to one knee immediately after landing it, pain shooting through the leg.

He slaps the mat once.

Hard.

Angry at the pain.

Angry at the delay.

Angry at himself for not being able to move faster.

The crowd senses the emotion rising again.

John Phillips: "Savior has Jacoby hurt, but that knee is becoming a serious problem."

Mark Bravo: "And you can see what it does to Savior mentally. Every second he cannot capitalize, it eats at him."

Darian climbs onto the apron, shouting toward the referee.

Darian Darrington: "Check his knee! He can't compete like that!"

The referee turns toward Darian, warning him to get down.

Referee: "Get off the apron!"

Savior sees Darian.

The anger flashes again.

He limps toward him.

Savior Hawkins: "Get down."

Darian raises both hands, still on the apron.

Darian Darrington: "I'm just concerned for your health, bro."

Savior grabs Darian by the shirt.

The crowd roars.

But from behind, Jacoby crawls forward and clips Savior's knee again.

Savior collapses, releasing Darian.

Darian drops back to the floor with a grin.

John Phillips: "Darian Darrington bought Jacoby another opening!"

Mark Bravo: "That is why he is out here. Sunglasses, security, distraction. Multi-tool Darian."

Jacoby rolls Savior to the center of the ring and covers, hooking the bad leg tight.

Referee: "One!"

Referee: "Two!"

Savior kicks out again.

The crowd erupts.

Jacoby's confidence cracks.

He looks at the referee, then at Darian, then toward the ramp, then back at Savior.

Jacoby Jacobs: "Why is everyone so difficult tonight?"

Savior rolls onto his stomach, trying to push up.

Jacoby stands over him, breathing hard now.

The grin fades.

There is frustration there.

Embarrassment.

And underneath it, fear that this match is slipping.

He grabs Savior by the hair and pulls him up.

Jacoby Jacobs: "You should've stayed lucky."

Savior suddenly grabs Jacoby's wrist.

Jacoby freezes.

Savior looks up at him from one knee.

Savior Hawkins: "I don't need luck."

He yanks Jacoby forward into a sharp forearm from the kneeling position.

Jacoby stumbles backward.

Savior rises, limping, but driven.

The crowd comes up with him.

Jacoby swings.

Savior ducks.

He slips behind Jacoby and locks his hands around the waist.

The crowd explodes.

John Phillips: "Savior has him! Savior has Jacoby set!"

Savior looks past Jacoby toward the crowd and rafters.

For one moment, the pain disappears behind purpose.

Savior Hawkins: "SHOWTIME!"

The crowd screams it back.

Crowd: "SHOWTIME!"

Savior starts to lift for Invictus.

But his injured knee gives out.

Jacoby drops behind him and rolls toward the ropes in panic.

Savior falls to one knee, furious.

He slams his fist into the mat again.

Jacoby crawls to the apron, eyes wide.

Mark Bravo: "The knee gave out! Savior had the moment, but his own body betrayed him!"

John Phillips: "And look at Savior. He is furious at himself."

Savior's breathing gets heavier.

He grabs at his own knee like he wants to punish it for failing him.

The crowd chants louder, trying to pull him back.

Crowd: "SA-VIOR! SA-VIOR! SA-VIOR!"

Jacoby sits on the apron, clutching the middle rope, staring back in disbelief.

Darian runs over beside him.

Darian Darrington: "You alive?"

Jacoby Jacobs: "Barely!"

Inside the ring, Savior forces himself up again.

His focus returns, but now it is strained.

Too intense.

Too desperate.

He turns toward Jacoby.

Jacoby sees the look and immediately tries to retreat farther along the apron.

Jacoby Jacobs: "Time out!"

Savior limps toward him.

Savior Hawkins: "No."

Inside the ring, Savior forces himself up again.

His focus returns, but now it is strained.

Too intense.

Too desperate.

He turns toward Jacoby.

Jacoby sees the look and immediately tries to retreat farther along the apron.

Jacoby Jacobs: "Time out!"

Savior limps toward him.

Savior Hawkins: "No."

Jacoby scrambles along the apron, gripping the ropes as Savior reaches through to grab him.

Darian Darrington moves closer on the outside, trying to put himself between Savior and Jacoby again.

Darian Darrington: "Ref! Back him up! He's got a bad knee and an attitude problem!"

Referee: "Darian, stay out of it!"

Savior reaches over the top rope and grabs Jacoby by the front of his gear.

Jacoby's eyes go wide.

Jacoby Jacobs: "Get him off me!"

Darian starts toward Savior's leg, looking for another cheap distraction.

Then the crowd suddenly changes.

It is not a cheer at first.

It is a wave of recognition rolling from one side of the arena to the other.

John Phillips: "Wait a minute..."

Mark Bravo: "What is happening over there?"

The camera cuts hard to the barricade on the far side of ringside.

A man in a black hoodie steps over the guardrail.

Then the hood drops.

The San Juan crowd erupts.

John Phillips: "That's Mike Best!"

Mark Bravo: "The Son of GOD just came out of the crowd!"

Mike Best hops down from the barricade and moves fast around ringside.

Darian turns at the sound of the crowd.

He sees Mike too late.

Mike blasts him with a running knee to the side of the head.

Darian drops instantly, sunglasses flying from his hand and skidding across the floor.

John Phillips: "Mike Best just wiped out Darian Darrington!"

Mark Bravo: "I don't think Mike came here to watch the match, John!"

The referee turns toward the commotion, eyes wide, but Mike backs away from the ring with both hands lifted.

He is not touching Jacoby.

He is not touching Savior.

He simply stands over Darian, jaw clenched, Hall of Fame ring catching the ringside light.

Referee: "Hey! Hey! Get away from him!"

Mike points down at Darian.

Mike Best: "That one was for the back of my head."

Jacoby, still on the apron, slowly turns his head.

His face drains.

Jacoby Jacobs: "Oh, no."

Mike looks up at him.

And smiles.

Mike Best: "Hi, Jacoby."

Jacoby immediately tries to climb down from the apron on the opposite side, but Savior still has hold of his gear through the ropes.

Jacoby Jacobs: "Let go! Let go! Bigger problem!"

Savior pulls him back toward the ring.

Jacoby clings to the top rope with both hands.

Savior Hawkins: "Your problem is in here."

Jacoby Jacobs: "My problem is everywhere!"

The crowd is roaring now as Mike circles slowly around the outside, keeping distance from the referee but making sure Jacoby sees him.

John Phillips: "Mike Best said earlier that Maxwell Jett was his problem, but Maxwell left the building. First Class did not."

Mark Bravo: "And Jacoby Jacobs now has to wrestle Savior Hawkins while Mike Best is walking around ringside like a shark with a Hall of Fame ring."

Savior yanks Jacoby over the top rope and back into the ring.

Jacoby lands on his feet but immediately turns toward the ropes, eyes locked on Mike.

Jacoby Jacobs: "You can't be here!"

Mike spreads his arms innocently.

Mike Best: "I bought a ticket."

The crowd cheers.

Mark Bravo: "I would like to see that receipt."

Jacoby points frantically toward Mike.

Jacoby Jacobs: "Ref! Ref, do something!"

Referee: "He's not in the match! Focus!"

Jacoby Jacobs: "That is exactly the problem!"

Savior limps forward behind him.

Jacoby keeps yelling at the referee, motioning wildly toward Mike.

Jacoby Jacobs: "He assaulted my emotional support Darian!"

Savior grabs Jacoby from behind and spins him around.

Jacoby reacts out of panic, throwing a wild elbow that clips Savior across the jaw.

Savior staggers, and Jacoby immediately kicks the bad knee again.

Savior drops to one knee.

Jacoby looks surprised that it worked.

Then he looks outside again.

Mike is helping Darian sit up just enough to shove him back down with one hand on the forehead.

The crowd laughs and boos in equal measure.

Darian Darrington: "Man, what the hell?!"

Mike Best: "Stay there."

Jacoby's panic spikes all over again.

Jacoby Jacobs: "Don't touch him! That's my guy!"

Mike Best: "Come get him."

Jacoby takes half a step toward the ropes.

Then remembers Savior is behind him.

Then remembers Mike is outside.

Then remembers Maxwell is gone.

Every calculation on his face ends badly.

John Phillips: "Jacoby Jacobs is trapped between Savior Hawkins in the ring and Mike Best on the floor."

Mark Bravo: "That is not a place you want to be unless your life insurance is First Class too."

Jacoby turns back to Savior and charges, desperate now.

Savior catches him with a forearm.

Jacoby staggers but fires back with a knee to the midsection.

He grabs Savior by the head and tries to snap him down with another DDT.

Savior blocks.

Jacoby clubs him across the back.

Savior blocks again.

Jacoby glances outside.

Mike is still there.

That one glance costs him.

Savior powers up and lifts Jacoby over with another suplex exploder.

Jacoby crashes hard and rolls toward the corner.

John Phillips: "Exploder! Savior Hawkins just launched Jacoby!"

Savior drops to one knee after the move, grabbing at his bad leg, but his eyes are locked forward.

No smile.

No celebration.

Just forward.

Jacoby pulls himself up in the corner, dazed and panicked.

Outside, Darian crawls toward the apron, trying to get back into the picture.

Mike sees it and casually steps on the hem of Darian's jacket, pinning him in place.

Darian Darrington: "Get off my jacket!"

Mike Best: "No."

Jacoby watches this unfold, horrified.

Jacoby Jacobs: "That jacket costs more than your whole career!"

Mike slowly turns his head toward Jacoby.

The smile disappears.

Mike Best: "Say that again."

Jacoby immediately regrets everything.

Jacoby Jacobs: "I said... uh... historic career."

The crowd laughs again.

Savior uses the ropes to pull himself up.

He limps toward Jacoby, who is now looking anywhere except at his opponent.

John Phillips: "Savior has to stay focused here. Mike Best's involvement has changed the entire atmosphere of this match, but Jacoby is still dangerous when cornered."

Mark Bravo: "Dangerous and terrified are not mutually exclusive."

Savior reaches Jacoby and pulls him out of the corner.

Jacoby suddenly grabs the front of Savior's tights and yanks him face-first into the middle turnbuckle.

Savior stumbles backward, stunned.

Jacoby rolls him up from behind.

Referee: "One!"

Referee: "Two!"

Savior kicks out.

Jacoby immediately scrambles away, eyes wide.

Jacoby Jacobs: "That was three! That was three! I need this to be over!"

The referee holds up two fingers.

Referee: "Two!"

Jacoby turns toward Mike outside.

Jacoby Jacobs: "You're distracting the referee!"

Mike Best: "I'm not even talking to him."

Jacoby Jacobs: "Your aura is interfering!"

Mark Bravo: "That may be my favorite official complaint."

Darian tries once more to get up.

Mike bends down and grabs him by the collar.

For a second, it looks like he may throw Darian into the steps.

The referee turns again, warning Mike from inside the ring.

Referee: "Mike! Back away or I'm calling security!"

Mike raises both hands and steps back.

Darian uses the opening to crawl away toward the far side of ringside.

Jacoby sees Darian creating distance and looks relieved.

Then Savior grabs him by the wrist.

The relief vanishes.

Savior pulls Jacoby in and fires a short forearm.

Jacoby fires back with a desperate slap.

Savior's head turns from the impact.

Slowly, he looks back.

That dangerous flash returns in his eyes.

Jacoby sees it and immediately tries to backpedal.

Jacoby Jacobs: "Okay, hey, competitive spirit, my bad."

Savior lunges with another forearm.

Jacoby ducks under and chop blocks the bad knee again.

Savior collapses to the mat.

Jacoby drops on him with a cover, both feet reaching toward the middle rope.

He plants them there for leverage.

Referee: "One!"

Referee: "Two!"

Mike Best jumps onto the apron just long enough to point at Jacoby's feet.

Mike Best: "Feet on the ropes!"

The referee sees it and stops the count.

Referee: "Break! Feet off the ropes!"

Jacoby shoots upright, furious and terrified at the same time.

Jacoby Jacobs: "Why are you helping him?!"

Mike Best: "I'm not."

Mike drops back to the floor.

Mike Best: "I'm hurting you."

The crowd roars.

John Phillips: "Mike Best just cost Jacoby a chance to steal it!"

Mark Bravo: "And he said the quiet part loud. He is not here to help Savior Hawkins. He is here to make First Class miserable."

Jacoby gets to his feet and storms toward the ropes, pointing down at Mike.

Jacoby Jacobs: "You are not supposed to be out here!"

Mike steps closer.

Mike Best: "Neither is Maxwell."

Jacoby freezes.

Mike's smile sharpens.

Mike Best: "But he left you anyway."

That one lands.

Jacoby's jaw tightens, embarrassment mixing with panic.

Behind him, Savior Hawkins forces himself up one more time.

The San Juan crowd rises with him.

John Phillips: "Jacoby needs to turn around!"

Darian, still dazed on the far side of ringside, sees Savior rising.

Darian Darrington: "Jacoby! Behind you!"

Jacoby turns.

Savior explodes forward as best as the bad knee allows.

Flying forearm!

Jacoby staggers backward into the ropes, rebounds, and walks right into another flying forearm.

Savior roars, pain and emotion boiling over now.

He pulls Jacoby up from the mat and locks his hands around the waist.

The crowd explodes.

John Phillips: "Savior has him again!"

Savior looks past Jacoby, toward the rafters, toward the crowd, toward everything he is trying to outrun.

His knee shakes beneath him.

For one awful second, it looks like it might fail again.

Savior clenches his jaw.

He forces it to hold.

Savior Hawkins: "SHOWTIME!"

The crowd answers thunderously.

Crowd: "SHOWTIME!"

Savior lifts.

Jacoby panics in midair, flailing for anything.

He rakes at Savior's face.

Savior nearly loses him.

His knee buckles.

But he spins through anyway.

Invictus!

The fireman's carry 360-rotation facebuster plants Jacoby in the center of the ring.

John Phillips: "Invictus! Savior hit Invictus!"

Mark Bravo: "Bad knee and all! He got him!"

Savior rolls Jacoby over and hooks the leg.

Mike Best watches from the floor, arms folded.

Darian crawls desperately toward the ring, but he is too far away.

Referee: "One!"

Referee: "Two!"

Referee: "Three!"

DING DING DING!

The San Juan crowd erupts as Savior's music hits.

Ring Announcer: "Here is your winner... SAVIOR HAWKINS!"

Savior rolls off the cover and sits on the mat, clutching his knee, breathing hard.

The win is his.

But so is the pain.

John Phillips: "Savior Hawkins defeats Jacoby Jacobs! He beat him at International Affair by eliminating him from the All or Nothing Rumble, and he has beaten him again tonight in singles competition!"

Mark Bravo: "But let's not ignore the obvious. Mike Best took out Darian Darrington, and that absolutely got into Jacoby's head."

Mike Best backs away from ringside, satisfied, never entering the ring.

He looks down at Jacoby, then toward Darian, then gives a small wave.

Mike Best: "Tell Max I said hi."

The crowd cheers as Mike turns and disappears back into the sea of fans near the barricade.

Darian crawls into the ring to check on Jacoby, still holding his head from the knee strike.

Jacoby is down, stunned, embarrassed, and furious.

Savior uses the ropes to pull himself to his feet.

The referee raises his hand.

The hometown crowd roars again.

Savior looks out across San Juan.

For a moment, the pressure fades.

For a moment, forward is enough.

John Phillips: "A massive win for Savior Hawkins in front of the Puerto Rican crowd, and a disastrous night for First Class without Maxwell Jett."

Mark Bravo: "Maxwell left them behind. Mike Best made them pay. Savior Hawkins finished the job."

Savior steps through the ropes carefully, still favoring the knee, but victorious.

Inside the ring, Jacoby finally starts to come around as Darian tells him what happened.

The look on Jacoby's face says everything.

He lost the match.

Mike Best made an example out of First Class.

And Maxwell Jett was nowhere to be found.

The Silence Says Enough

Segment

The broadcast cuts backstage immediately after the replay of Savior Hawkins' victory over Jacoby Jacobs.

No music.

No interview setup.

No one talking over the moment.

Just a dim corner of the backstage area where a production monitor sits on a rolling cart, the screen glowing in the low light.

On the monitor, the replay runs again.

Jacoby Jacobs distracted.

Darian Darrington wiped out at ringside.

Mike Best standing near the barricade, the crowd exploding around him.

Then Savior Hawkins taking the opening, striking fast, and putting Jacoby away.

The clip loops back.

Mike Best again.

The hood coming down.

The look on his face.

The way he moved like he had every right to be there.

The camera slowly pulls back from the monitor.

Chris Ross is standing in front of it.

Alone.

Still.

His arms hang at his sides, hands loosely curled, shoulders square. The hallway behind him is alive with distant movement, but none of it touches him. Crew members pass farther down the corridor and instinctively keep their distance.

Ross does not blink much.

He does not swear.

He does not pace.

He just watches.

John Phillips: "That is Chris Ross backstage, and he is watching exactly what we just saw moments ago."

Mark Bravo: "Mike Best just got involved in First Class business. He took out Darian Darrington, he distracted Jacoby Jacobs, and Savior Hawkins capitalized. But look at Ross, John. He is not reacting like everybody else."

The replay hits the moment again.

Mike Best's face fills the monitor.

Ross's eyes stay fixed on the screen.

His jaw tightens.

Only slightly.

But enough.

The cold anger that usually sits under the surface does not explode this time.

It settles.

It sharpens.

For a man like Chris Ross, that is somehow worse.

John Phillips: "Earlier tonight, Ross and Mike Best nearly tore each other apart when both men got near Maxwell Jett. Now Mike has inserted himself into the night again."

Mark Bravo: "Ross came here with one target, and that target was Maxwell. But Mike Best keeps appearing in the frame. He keeps putting himself in the same orbit."

The monitor shows Mike backing away through the crowd, leaving Jacoby and Darian in ruins behind him.

Ross lowers his head for half a second.

Not in frustration.

Not in confusion.

Calculation.

When he raises his eyes again, the expression is different.

More serious.

More focused.

Like something has been added to the list.

The replay ends.

The monitor cuts back to the live feed, but Ross remains staring at it for a moment longer.

Then his eyes shift.

Not toward the camera.

Not toward anyone nearby.

Just down the hallway.

Somewhere off-screen.

Somewhere Mike Best might be.

John Phillips: "Chris Ross has not said a word."

Mark Bravo: "He does not have to. That look says enough."

Ross slowly turns away from the monitor.

His boots start down the corridor with heavy, deliberate steps.

The camera holds on the monitor for one more second as the replay thumbnail freezes on Mike Best's face.

Then the shot follows Ross from behind as he disappears into the backstage shadows.

No words.

No threat.

Just the feeling that something has shifted.

Why Marie Why?

Segment

The arena lights shift as the broadcast returns to ringside.

There is no immediate music.

Just the low buzz of the San Juan crowd, still restless after everything that has unfolded throughout the night.

Then the heavy drums begin.

Red lights spread across the stage.

The violin cuts through the air as fire flickers up from the entranceway, growing larger with each rising note.

Then the growl hits.

A loud explosion erupts from the stage.

Susanita Ybanez steps through the firelight.

The crowd rises for her.

She stands at the top of the ramp for a moment, looking out across the arena. There is no smile on her face tonight. No celebration. No wide-eyed gratitude.

Only hurt.

Only confusion.

Only the look of someone who thought she had saved a friend and instead watched that friend break something inside her.

John Phillips: "There is Susanita Ybanez, and Mark, this has to be one of the most painful moments of her UTA career."

Mark Bravo: "She went into International Affair believing she was fighting to free Marie Van Claudio from Amy Harrison and The Empire. She won the match. She survived the pressure. She thought she had done it."

John Phillips: "And then Marie turned on her."

Mark Bravo: "That is the kind of betrayal that does not just hurt physically. It changes the way you look at people."

Susanita starts down the ramp.

Fans reach for her as she passes. Some cheer. Some hold signs. Some simply watch her with the quiet sympathy that comes when a crowd knows words will not fix what happened.

She climbs onto the apron, looking straight ahead.

Then she leans back, raises both hands, and brings them down as pyro fires from the turnbuckles.

Susanita steps into the ring and walks to the center.

The music fades.

The crowd chants her name.

Crowd: "SU-SAN-I-TA! SU-SAN-I-TA!"

Susanita accepts a microphone from the ring announcer.

She waits.

The chant keeps going.

Finally, she raises the microphone.

Susanita Ybanez: "At International Affair, I thought I did what I came to do."

The crowd quiets slightly.

Susanita Ybanez: "I thought I freed my friend."

Her voice tightens on the final word.

Susanita Ybanez: "I thought Marie Van Claudio was trapped. I thought Amy Harrison and The Empire had their hands around her career, around her heart, around everything she used to be."

Susanita looks toward the entrance.

Susanita Ybanez: "I fought Amy because I believed Marie was worth fighting for."

A strong cheer rises.

Susanita Ybanez: "And when I won, I thought it was over."

She pauses.

The pain on her face deepens.

Susanita Ybanez: "But then Marie stood behind me."

The crowd begins to boo, already remembering.

Susanita Ybanez: "And she attacked me."

The boos grow louder.

Susanita Ybanez: "She turned on me. She turned on every person who believed in her. She turned on every woman who looked at her and saw someone who could lead this division with pride."

Susanita grips the microphone tighter.

Susanita Ybanez: "Marie..."

She swallows hard.

Susanita Ybanez: "Why?"

The building quiets around the question.

Susanita takes one step forward, eyes locked on the stage.

Susanita Ybanez: "Why, Marie?"

For a moment, nothing happens.

Then the opening to Marie Van Claudio's music begins.

The crowd reacts immediately, but the sound is not what Marie used to receive.

It is not respect.

It is not warmth.

It is anger.

The violin rises, and Marie Van Claudio steps onto the stage.

She is not alone.

Amy Harrison emerges beside her, wearing a vicious smirk and the kind of confidence that makes every boo sound like

applause to her.

Marie stands beneath the lights, staring down at Susanita.

The First Lady of the UTA used to walk out to cheers from fans who respected everything she had built. Tonight, she stands there and lets the boos fall over her without flinching.

Amy leans slightly toward Marie, saying something that the camera cannot pick up.

Marie's expression barely changes.

John Phillips: "Marie Van Claudio is here, and Amy Harrison is right beside her."

Mark Bravo: "That says plenty before anyone speaks. Whatever Marie wants to say tonight, she is saying it with Amy standing at her shoulder."

Marie begins walking down the ramp with Amy beside her.

The crowd boos harder with every step.

Susanita does not back up.

She stands in the ring, watching Marie come closer, heartbreak hardening into anger.

Marie climbs the steps slowly. Amy follows, asking the referee to open the ropes with a mocking little tilt of her head. Once inside, Amy walks to the side, licking her lips and mouthing something toward the crowd before settling behind Marie.

Marie takes a microphone.

Susanita does not wait.

Susanita Ybanez: "Why?"

Marie looks at her.

For a brief second, something almost familiar crosses her face.

Then it disappears.

Marie Van Claudio: "You want to know why?"

The crowd boos.

Marie lets it happen.

Marie Van Claudio: "Fine."

She turns slightly, looking out at the audience.

Marie Van Claudio: "You all want to know why too, don't you?"

The boos grow louder.

Marie Van Claudio: "Of course you do. Because every single one of you sat there clapping for me, cheering for me, buying the shirts, buying the merch, acting like you understood me."

Marie's voice sharpens.

Marie Van Claudio: "You never understood anything."

Amy smiles behind her.

Marie Van Claudio: "Amy and I were both given the short end of the stick in our last run in this company."

Susanita's eyes narrow.

Marie Van Claudio: "UTA buried the women. UTA took our opportunities. UTA made us an embarrassment. They told us to wait. They told us to be grateful. They told us the division mattered while treating it like something they could pause, cancel, restart, and rewrite whenever it was convenient."

The crowd boos the bitterness in her voice.

Marie Van Claudio: "And all of you let it happen."

Marie points toward the audience.

Marie Van Claudio: "You cheered when it was easy. You clapped when they told you to clap. You called me a pioneer. You called me the First Lady. You acted like your respect meant something after everything had already been taken from us."

She looks back at Susanita.

Marie Van Claudio: "Amy understood."

Amy steps closer now, standing shoulder to shoulder with Marie.

Marie Van Claudio: "Amy knew exactly what this place had done. She knew exactly how it felt to be used, ignored, pushed aside, and then expected to smile for the next poster."

Amy raises her microphone with a slow, cruel smile.

Amy Harrison: "Because unlike all these pathetic losers, Marie finally stopped pretending gratitude was the same thing as power."

The boos intensify.

Susanita keeps her eyes on Marie.

Marie Van Claudio: "We knew that if we were going to be taken seriously, then we would have to do something that could not be ignored."

Marie pauses.

Her eyes harden.

Marie Van Claudio: "And that..."

She gestures between herself and Amy.

Marie Van Claudio: "...we did."

The crowd erupts in boos.

Marie Van Claudio: "Every one of these pathetic losers in the audience cheered and clapped for Marie Van Claudio."

She says her own name like it belongs to someone else now.

Marie Van Claudio: "They booed Amy Harrison. They bought the shirts. They bought the merch. They picked their sides."

Marie steps closer to Susanita.

Marie Van Claudio: "And not a damn person could ignore us."

Susanita shakes her head, disgusted.

Susanita Ybanez: "So that was it?"

Marie does not answer immediately.

Susanita Ybanez: "All the people who believed in you? All the women who respected what you built? All of that was just something to use?"

Marie's face tightens, but Amy laughs.

Amy Harrison: "Don't make this noble, sweetheart."

Susanita turns toward Amy now.

Amy Harrison: "This company does not reward noble. It does not reward loyalty. It does not reward waiting your turn and waving at the people like some inspirational little mascot."

Amy takes a step forward.

Amy Harrison: "It rewards the ones smart enough to take what they want."

Marie nods slowly.

Marie Van Claudio: "So what if there were a few casualties along the way?"

The crowd turns even louder.

Marie Van Claudio: "Hardcore Sandy?"

Marie scoffs.

Marie Van Claudio: "A legend?"

She laughs coldly.

Marie Van Claudio: "Ha."

Susanita's jaw tightens.

Marie Van Claudio: "Susanita Ybanez?"

Marie turns fully toward her.

Marie Van Claudio: "The future?"

Another cold laugh.

Marie Van Claudio: "Ha."

Susanita steps closer, nose almost level with Marie's chest, refusing to be intimidated by the height difference or by Amy's presence nearby.

Susanita Ybanez: "I fought for you."

Marie looks down at her.

Susanita Ybanez: "I believed in you."

Marie leans slightly closer.

Marie Van Claudio: "That was your mistake."

The line hits hard.

The crowd boos violently.

Marie Van Claudio: "You want to know why, Susanita? You want to know why?"

Marie's voice rises now, anger and arrogance fully mixing.

Marie Van Claudio: "Because we are better than you."

Amy smiles beside her.

Marie Van Claudio: "We are smarter than you."

Marie points at Susanita.

Marie Van Claudio: "And we knew if we were going to be given what we deserved, we had to take it."

She steps in closer.

Marie Van Claudio: "By any means necessary."

Susanita's hand tightens around the microphone.

Her eyes flick to Amy, then back to Marie.

Susanita Ybanez: "Then you are not the woman I thought you were."

Marie's expression goes cold.

Marie Van Claudio: "Good."

Amy suddenly moves.

She blindsides Susanita with a forearm to the back of the head.

The crowd erupts in boos.

John Phillips: "Amy Harrison from behind!"

Mark Bravo: "And here we go! The Empire strikes again!"

Susanita drops to one knee, stunned.

Amy immediately grabs her by the hair and drives a knee into her face.

Marie stands there for half a second, watching.

Then she joins in.

Marie stomps down on Susanita's shoulder as Amy clubs her across the back.

The boos grow louder.

Susanita tries to fight up, firing a shot into Amy's ribs, then one toward Marie, but the numbers swallow her quickly.

Amy grabs Susanita by the jaw and forces her face toward the hard camera.

Amy Harrison: "Long live the Empire!"

She drives Susanita face-first into the mat.

Marie pulls Susanita back up and throws her down with a German suplex.

Susanita lands hard, rolling to her side as the crowd screams in protest.

John Phillips: "This is a two-on-one assault! Susanita came out here looking for answers, and The Empire is giving her violence instead!"

Mark Bravo: "That is the answer, John. That is the whole point. Marie just said it. By any means necessary."

Amy drops beside Susanita and starts hammering away with mounted shots.

Marie stands over them, looking out at the audience as the boos rain down.

For the first time, she does not look wounded by the crowd turning against her.

She looks satisfied.

Amy pulls Susanita up again, holding her arms back.

Marie steps in front of her.

Susanita's hair hangs across her face. She is hurt, but still staring up at Marie with defiance.

Marie Van Claudio: "You wanted the truth."

Marie slaps Susanita across the face.

Marie Van Claudio: "There it is."

The crowd erupts again.

Then the arena goes dark.

A sharp pulse hits the sound system.

? "5 out of 6" by Dessa ?

The crowd explodes.

John Phillips: "Wait a second!"

Mark Bravo: "That's Lexi Gold!"

The ramp begins to glow.

Gold-shaped lights appear beneath each step as Lexi Gold bursts through the curtain, moving fast, not waiting for the full pageantry of her entrance.

On the big screens, snakes slither in flashes of gold, their glowing eyes tracking the ring as if guarding her path.

Lexi does not pose.

She does not pause.

The Golden Goddess is sprinting.

Marie and Amy immediately turn toward the stage.

Amy releases Susanita, and Marie backs toward the ropes.

Lexi slides under the bottom rope and pops up ready to fight.

Marie and Amy do not wait for her to get close.

They bail.

Amy drops to the floor first, pulling Marie's arm and dragging her out after her.

The crowd boos as The Empire retreats around ringside.

John Phillips: "Lexi Gold is here, and The Empire wants nothing to do with her right now!"

Mark Bravo: "Amy and Marie knew exactly what they were doing when it was two-on-one. The second Lexi evened the numbers, they wanted out."

Lexi stands near the ropes, daring them to come back in.

Marie backs up the ramp, eyes locked on Lexi.

Amy stands beside her, still smirking, but there is anger behind it now.

Lexi does not chase.

Instead, she turns and drops to one knee beside Susanita.

Susanita pushes herself up slowly, breathing hard, one hand near her jaw.

Lexi checks on her, speaking low enough that the camera cannot fully catch it.

Susanita nods once.

She is hurt.

But she is not broken.

Lexi looks back toward the ramp.

Marie and Amy are still there, backing away, proud of the damage they caused and furious they were interrupted before they could do more.

The camera tightens on Lexi's face.

The look says everything.

This is not just a save.

This is a warning.

This is far from over.

John Phillips: "Lexi Gold came to Susanita's aid, but look at that stare."

Mark Bravo: "That is not sympathy, John. That is recognition. Lexi knows exactly what Amy Harrison and Marie Van Claudio are capable of now, and I don't think she is going to let this go."

Susanita reaches the ropes and pulls herself to her feet.

Lexi stays beside her.

On the ramp, Marie lifts her microphone one more time.

Marie Van Claudio: "Remember this, Susanita."

She points down at the ring.

Marie Van Claudio: "Belief does not save you."

Amy leans into her own microphone with a cruel smile.

Amy Harrison: "The Empire does not forgive."

The boos thunder through the arena.

Marie and Amy turn away and disappear through the curtain.

In the ring, Susanita stands beside Lexi Gold, still holding her jaw, still staring toward the entrance.

The betrayal remains.

The fight is only beginning.

Gracias

Segment

The broadcast cuts backstage shortly after Savior Hawkins' victory over Jacoby Jacobs.

The hallway behind the curtain is still alive with motion. Crew members move quickly around production cases, officials pass through with headsets on, and the roar of the San Juan crowd continues to bleed through the walls.

Melissa Cartwright stands near the UTA interview backdrop, microphone in hand.

Melissa Cartwright: "Ladies and gentlemen, please welcome my guest at this time, fresh off his singles debut victory here in UTA... Savior Hawkins."

The camera widens as Savior Hawkins steps into frame.

He is still breathing from the match, sweat on his brow, his blue, gold, and white gear showing the physical toll of the fight. There is a slight favoring of one leg from the punishment Jacoby targeted, but Savior does not let himself lean on it for long.

He straightens.

He smiles.

The public face returns quickly.

Melissa Cartwright: "Savior, congratulations. Your first singles match here in UTA, in front of this San Juan crowd, and you walk away with the win. How are you feeling right now?"

Savior takes a breath.

For a second, he looks toward the arena entrance, listening to the crowd on the other side of the wall.

Savior Hawkins: "I'm feeling grateful, Melissa."

He nods, choosing the word carefully.

Savior Hawkins: "I know people see the lights, the music, the pyro, all of that, and they think this is just another debut. But for me? This was San Juan. This was home. This was the place where everything started before I even knew how to say out loud that I wanted to be a professional wrestler."

Melissa nods, giving him room to continue.

Savior Hawkins: "So yeah, winning tonight matters. Beating Jacoby Jacobs matters. But doing it here? In front of these people? That is something I'm going to carry with me."

Melissa Cartwright: "It was not an easy win. Jacoby had Darian Darrington at ringside, and then Mike Best getting involved outside the ring changed the entire complexion of the match. How difficult was it to stay focused through all of that?"

Savior's expression tightens slightly.

The smile does not vanish.

But it becomes more controlled.

Savior Hawkins: "That is UTA, right?"

He lets out a short breath, almost a laugh, but not quite.

Savior Hawkins: "You can prepare for the person across from you. You can study tape. You can learn tendencies. You can know where the openings are supposed to be."

He glances briefly downward, then back up.

Savior Hawkins: "But then the match becomes bigger than the match. Darian is there. Jacoby is trying to use every second he can. Mike Best appears in the crowd. The building explodes. Everybody reacts."

Savior's jaw sets.

Savior Hawkins: "And in that moment, you either lose yourself in the chaos or you find the line through it."

He looks directly toward the camera.

Savior Hawkins: "Tonight, I found the line."

Melissa Cartwright: "There was a moment late in the match where it looked like your knee may have been bothering you. Jacoby did target it, and even with everything happening outside the ring, he gave you trouble. Are you concerned about that going forward?"

Savior's eyes flick back to Melissa quickly.

The shift is small, but visible.

A flash of defensiveness.

Then he smooths it over.

Savior Hawkins: "I'm fine."

He says it a little too fast.

Then he nods once, as if correcting the tone himself.

Savior Hawkins: "I'm fine. Jacoby is talented. People can say whatever they want about First Class, but when the bell rings, he can go. He found something and he attacked it. That is what competitors do."

He rolls his shoulder, trying to reset the energy.

Savior Hawkins: "But I won."

The words hang for a second.

Savior Hawkins: "That is the part I need to focus on. I won. I moved forward. That is what matters."

Melissa notices the emphasis but does not press too hard.

Melissa Cartwright: "Earlier at International Affair, you told the UTA audience that you were not what's new, you were what's next. After tonight, do you feel like you proved that?"

Savior's smile returns more naturally this time.

Savior Hawkins: "I proved step one."

He holds up one finger.

Savior Hawkins: "That is all tonight was. Step one. I am not going to stand here and pretend one win means I have arrived. That is not how this works. There are champions here. There are killers here. There are people with names, legacies, factions, power, history, and all kinds of reasons to think someone like me should wait."

Savior leans slightly toward the microphone.

Savior Hawkins: "But I have spent enough of my life waiting."

For the first time, the line comes out heavier than expected.

Savior realizes it almost as soon as he says it.

He adjusts, bringing the energy back up.

Savior Hawkins: "So I'm going to keep moving. One match at a time. One night at a time. One chapter at a time."

He looks into the camera again.

Savior Hawkins: "I respect everybody in that locker room. I really do. But respect does not mean I am stepping aside for anybody."

Melissa Cartwright: "So what is next for Savior Hawkins?"

Savior pauses.

The crowd can be heard faintly chanting from inside the arena.

He hears it.

His expression softens for half a second.

Then the focus returns.

Savior Hawkins: "Whatever comes next."

He nods once.

Savior Hawkins: "Whoever comes next."

His voice gets firmer.

Savior Hawkins: "Because I meant what I said. I am not what's new."

Savior looks straight into the lens.

Savior Hawkins: "I'm what's next."

Melissa smiles slightly and turns back toward the camera.

Melissa Cartwright: "Savior Hawkins, victorious in his UTA singles debut tonight here in San Juan."

Savior starts to step away, then stops.

He turns back toward the camera one more time.

Savior Hawkins: "And San Juan..."

The crowd noise swells faintly, as if the arena can sense the moment.

Savior smiles.

Savior Hawkins: "Gracias."

He taps his chest once.

Savior Hawkins: "This one was for you."

Savior walks out of frame.

Melissa watches him go, but the camera lingers a second longer than usual.

Just long enough to catch Savior in the background, around the corner, alone for half a beat.

The smile fades.

His hand drops briefly to the knee Jacoby worked over.

He takes one sharp breath.

Then he straightens again and keeps walking forward.

The broadcast cuts away.

Valkyrie Knox vs. Bianca Page

Match

The broadcast returns from the aftermath of Savior Hawkins' victory, the San Juan crowd still buzzing as the camera sweeps across the José Miguel Agrelot Coliseum.

John Phillips: "What a night it has already been here on UTA World Tour. But now, the focus shifts to a collision in the women's division with major implications."

Mark Bravo: "And this one has all kinds of combustible elements. Valkyrie Knox steps into the ring against Bianca Page, who will have Ace Andrews with her at ringside."

John Phillips: "Bianca Page has made it clear from the moment she arrived that she wants gold in UTA. Tonight, she gets a chance to make a statement against one of the most physically dominant women in this company."

Mark Bravo: "Wanting gold is one thing. Surviving Valkyrie Knox is another."

The arena lights begin to dim.

A low roll of thunder rumbles through the building.

The crowd reacts immediately, a wave of boos and uneasy anticipation rising as the lighting shifts into a deep, violent purple.

A war horn bellows through the Coliseum.

Smoke pours across the entrance stage.

For a few seconds, there is no movement.

Only thunder.

Only purple darkness.

Only the sense that something brutal is about to step through it.

John Phillips: "Here comes The Iron Valkyrie."

Valkyrie Knox emerges from the smoke.

Her expression is carved from stone, cold and unreadable, as if the noise of the crowd is not opposition but weather.

She steps into the light and raises a steel-spiked gauntlet toward the rafters.

The war horn sounds again.

Ring Announcer: "The following contest is scheduled for one fall! Introducing first... from Reykjavik, Iceland... weighing in at one hundred and eighty-two pounds... she is The Iron Valkyrie... VALKYRIE KNOXX!"

The crowd rains boos down over the announcement.

Valkyrie does not react.

She lowers the gauntlet slowly and begins her walk down the ramp.

No wasted motion.

No playing to the crowd.

No unnecessary flash.

She moves like a siege engine pointed at the ring.

Mark Bravo: "Valkyrie Knox is not someone who does a lot of talking once that bell rings. She overpowers you. She slams you. She makes every second feel like something bad is about to happen."

John Phillips: "A former strong-woman competitor, a Muay Thai grappler, and one of the most physically imposing athletes in the women's division. Valkyrie Knox has built her reputation on force."

Mark Bravo: "And she has no patience for anyone trying to use her as a stepping stone. Bianca Page may be classy, but Valkyrie Knox is a war."

Valkyrie reaches ringside and stops at the base of the steps.

She looks toward the ring.

Then toward the entrance ramp, where Bianca Page will soon arrive.

Her jaw tightens slightly.

Not fear.

Not concern.

Anticipation.

She climbs the steps, one heavy step at a time.

At the top, she pauses on the apron and looks out over the San Juan crowd.

The boos grow louder.

Valkyrie's mouth barely moves.

Valkyrie Knox: "Kneel..."

She steps through the ropes.

Valkyrie Knox: "...or be broken."

Valkyrie enters the ring and walks directly to the center.

She raises the steel-spiked gauntlet once more as the deep purple light catches the smoke around her.

The war horn sounds again.

John Phillips: "There is no fear in Valkyrie Knox. No hesitation. Bianca Page may be confident. She may be cerebral. She may have Ace Andrews in her corner. But Valkyrie Knox is walking into this like she already knows how it ends."

Mark Bravo: "That is the scary thing about Valkyrie. She never looks worried. She never retreats. She looks at every opponent like they are just another weight to lift and drop."

Valkyrie backs into her corner, rolling her shoulders once.

Her eyes remain locked on the entranceway.

The Iron Valkyrie is here.

Now Bianca Page must arrive.

Valkyrie backs into her corner, rolling her shoulders once.

Her eyes remain locked on the entranceway.

The Iron Valkyrie is here.

Now Bianca Page must arrive.

The deep purple lighting fades.

The thunder dies away.

For a moment, Valkyrie Knoxx is left standing in near darkness, alone in the ring, her eyes fixed forward like she is waiting for something to break.

Then the mood changes completely.

The screen brightens with polished gold and soft white light.

"Wildest Dreams" by Taylor Swift begins to play over the sound system.

The crowd boos immediately as a sleek graphic appears across the screen.

CLASSY

Bianca Page emerges from the backstage area with a big smile, chin lifted, every step measured like the entrance ramp has been rolled out specifically for her.

She stops at the top of the entranceway and looks out over the San Juan crowd.

The smile widens.

Then she blows a kiss to the audience.

The boos get louder.

John Phillips: "And here comes Bianca Page. Confident, decorated, and absolutely convinced that UTA gold belongs around her waist sooner rather than later."

Mark Bravo: "Bianca does not lack confidence. She walked into this company telling every champion to pay attention, and tonight she gets Valkyrie Knoxx one-on-one."

Ace Andrews steps through the curtain behind her.

The Corporate Cutthroat is dressed in an expensive suit, calm and smug, looking every bit like a man who believes his presence makes the room more important.

He does not rush to Bianca's side.

He strolls.

Controlled.

Measured.

Wealthy enough to make arrogance look scheduled.

Ring Announcer: "And her opponent... accompanied to the ring by Ace Andrews... from Naples, Florida by way of New York City... weighing in at one hundred and thirty pounds... she is "Classy"... BIANCA PAGE!"

Bianca begins walking down the aisle, smiling as if the boos are applause delivered incorrectly.

Ace walks half a step behind her, hands relaxed, eyes moving between Valkyrie in the ring and the referee waiting inside.

John Phillips: "Ace Andrews has been a major factor around Bianca Page since her arrival in UTA. A fourteen-time world champion in his own right, now acting as advisor, manager, and strategist."

Mark Bravo: "That is a very polite way to say Ace Andrews knows every shortcut in the book and probably wrote the foreword."

Bianca passes the fans along the aisle, giving one side a slow, pageant-like wave.

A fan yells toward her from behind the barricade.

Bianca turns her head, still smiling.

Bianca Page: "You're welcome."

She continues forward, completely unbothered.

Ace lingers just long enough to look at the same fan with a cold, condescending smirk before following Bianca down the aisle.

John Phillips: "Bianca Page calls herself classy, but there is a vicious streak underneath the polish. She is cerebral, opportunistic, and if an opening presents itself, she will absolutely take it."

Mark Bravo: "And with Ace Andrews at ringside, openings have a funny way of presenting themselves."

Bianca reaches ringside and stops before the steps.

She looks up at Valkyrie Knoxx.

Valkyrie does not move.

She does not blink.

She simply stares down at the challenger like Bianca has walked to the edge of a cliff and mistaken it for a balcony.

Bianca's smile stays in place.

But it sharpens.

Bianca Page: "All that drama just to stand there?"

Valkyrie's expression does not change.

Valkyrie Knoxx: "Climb in."

Ace steps beside Bianca and quietly speaks near her ear.

The camera cannot catch all of it, but Bianca nods once, still keeping her eyes on Valkyrie.

Then Bianca turns toward the ring steps.

At ringside, she does a slight twirl, arms out, letting the boos wash over her.

She motions for the referee to open the ropes.

The referee hesitates for half a second.

Bianca's eyebrows rise.

Bianca Page: "Any time now."

The referee steps over and opens the ropes.

Bianca enters carefully, one leg through, then the other, making the simple act of entering the ring feel like a demand for service.

Ace applauds politely from the floor.

Ace Andrews: "Excellent, Classy One. Make them wait. Make them watch."

Bianca walks into the middle of the ring and raises both arms out to the side.

The boos intensify.

She smiles through all of it.

Then her eyes drift toward Valkyrie.

That smile remains.

But the distance between them is suddenly very real.

John Phillips: "Bianca Page may have all the poise in the world, but standing across from Valkyrie Knox is different once you are inside that ring."

Mark Bravo: "That is why Ace is important. Bianca has to stay smart. She cannot get dragged into a strength fight with Valkyrie. That is a terrible career choice."

Valkyrie steps out of her corner.

Bianca lowers her arms.

Ace immediately raises one hand from ringside, telling Bianca to stay calm, stay measured, stay away from the first collision.

The referee moves between the two women.

Referee: "Back up. Both of you."

Valkyrie does not back up at first.

Bianca does, but only one step, keeping her chin high.

Bianca Page: "You're not as intimidating as you think you are."

Valkyrie's eyes narrow.

Valkyrie Knox: "You will be."

Bianca's smile flickers for the smallest moment.

Ace sees it from ringside.

Ace Andrews: "Focus, Bianca."

Bianca inhales slowly and rolls her shoulders, the smile returning.

Valkyrie stands opposite her, stone-faced and waiting.

The referee looks to both competitors, then signals toward the timekeeper.

The bell is next.

Bianca inhales slowly and rolls her shoulders, the smile returning.

Valkyrie stands opposite her, stone-faced and waiting.

The referee looks to both competitors, then signals toward the timekeeper.

DING DING DING!

John Phillips: "And we are underway! Valkyrie Knox against Bianca Page!"

Mark Bravo: "Bianca needs to stay away from the power. Do not let Valkyrie get her hands locked. Do not get trapped in a corner. Do not let this turn into a strongwoman demonstration."

Valkyrie steps forward immediately.

Bianca steps back.

Valkyrie steps forward again.

Bianca circles away, smile still on her face, one hand raised as if asking Valkyrie to slow down.

Bianca Page: "Patience. You've heard of it?"

Valkyrie does not answer.

She cuts the ring in half instead.

Bianca notices and quickly ducks toward the ropes, putting a hand through them before Valkyrie can close the distance.

Referee: "Back up, Valkyrie."

Valkyrie stops just short of grabbing her.

Bianca looks out to Ace and gives a small laugh, pretending the escape was strategy rather than survival.

Ace Andrews: "Good. Make her chase the match you want."

John Phillips: "Ace Andrews already coaching from the outside, and Bianca Page immediately going to the ropes to keep Valkyrie away from her."

Mark Bravo: "That is smart. Annoying, but smart. Valkyrie wants contact. Bianca wants control."

Bianca slowly steps away from the ropes and raises both hands, inviting a lock-up.

Valkyrie takes one step in.

Bianca immediately slips under and fires a quick kick to the back of Valkyrie's thigh.

Valkyrie turns.

Bianca lands another kick to the same leg.

Then a third, snapping low and fast before backing away again.

John Phillips: "Bianca targeting the leg early."

Mark Bravo: "That is one way to chop down power. If Valkyrie cannot plant, she cannot throw you through the mat."

Valkyrie advances again, slightly more irritated now.

Bianca darts in for another low kick.

This time Valkyrie catches her by the wrist.

The crowd reacts.

Bianca's smile vanishes.

Bianca Page: "Let go."

Valkyrie yanks her forward and nearly takes her head off with a short-arm lariat.

Bianca flips to the mat and rolls instinctively toward the corner.

John Phillips: "Short-arm lariat! Valkyrie almost turned Bianca inside out!"

Mark Bravo: "That is exactly what Bianca had to avoid. One grip, one pull, one bad landing."

Bianca pulls herself up in the corner, eyes wide for the first time.

Valkyrie charges.

Corner body avalanche!

Bianca barely slips out to the apron, and Valkyrie crashes chest-first into the turnbuckles.

Bianca reaches over the ropes and snaps Valkyrie throat-first across the top strand.

The referee warns her immediately.

Referee: "Bianca! Watch it!"

Bianca Page: "She ran into me."

Bianca steps back through the ropes and hits a sharp snap DDT as Valkyrie turns out of the corner.

Valkyrie hits the mat but starts pushing up almost immediately.

Bianca covers fast.

Referee: "One!"

Valkyrie powers out before two, throwing Bianca halfway off her.

Bianca lands on her knees, stunned by the strength.

John Phillips: "Valkyrie powers out at one!"

Mark Bravo: "Bianca just learned that a DDT is not a finish. It is a suggestion."

Ace steps closer to the ring, clapping once to get Bianca's attention.

Ace Andrews: "Don't admire the strength. Exploit the movement. Make her turn."

Bianca nods quickly, regaining herself.

Valkyrie gets to one knee.

Bianca hits the ropes and comes back with a high knee.

Binx connects against Valkyrie's jaw.

Valkyrie rocks backward but does not go down.

Bianca hits the ropes again.

Another high knee.

This one drops Valkyrie to both knees.

John Phillips: "Bianca is building momentum!"

Bianca steps back, measures her, and goes for Swanky, the superkick.

Valkyrie catches the boot.

The crowd erupts.

Bianca hops once, trapped.

She immediately tries to talk her way out of it.

Bianca Page: "Okay. Okay. We can be professional."

Valkyrie rises to her feet while still holding the leg.

Valkyrie Knoxx: "Kneel."

She swings Bianca by the captured leg and throws her backward with raw force.

Bianca crashes to the canvas and rolls toward the ropes, clutching her lower back.

Mark Bravo: "That was not a wrestling counter. That was Valkyrie throwing laundry."

Valkyrie stalks forward.

Bianca grabs the bottom rope and slides halfway under it.

The referee steps in, holding Valkyrie back.

Referee: "She's in the ropes. Back up."

Valkyrie snarls, rare but visible.

Ace moves around ringside to Bianca's side, kneeling near her without touching her.

Ace Andrews: "Breathe. She is strong, not smart. Take the leg. Take the angle. Take the match."

Bianca nods, jaw tight now, the pleasant smile replaced by calculation.

She pulls herself back into the ring just as Valkyrie reaches for her.

Bianca kicks upward from the mat, catching Valkyrie in the knee.

Valkyrie stumbles one step.

Bianca rolls behind her and clips the same leg from the back.

Valkyrie drops to one knee.

John Phillips: "Bianca back to the leg! Ace Andrews told her to take the leg, and that is exactly what she is doing!"

Bianca springs forward and hits a slingshot senton atomico, crashing across Valkyrie's back.

Valkyrie drops flat to the canvas.

Bianca hooks the leg.

Referee: "One!"

Referee: "Two!"

Valkyrie kicks out with authority.

Bianca rolls away quickly this time, avoiding immediate retaliation.

Mark Bravo: "That was better. Hit and move. Do not stay in the danger zone."

Valkyrie pushes up, slower now, one hand touching the knee Bianca has targeted.

Bianca sees it.

Her smile returns.

Bianca Page: "There it is."

She steps in and throws another low kick.

Then another.

Then she grabs Valkyrie by the head, looking for Graceful, the Ace Cutter.

Valkyrie shoves her off before Bianca can drop.

Bianca rebounds off the ropes.

Valkyrie explodes forward with a running big boot.

Bianca ducks at the last possible second.

Valkyrie's leg catches over the top rope for half a second.

Bianca immediately dives low and chop blocks the planted leg.

Valkyrie drops awkwardly near the ropes.

John Phillips: "Bianca avoided disaster and went right back to the knee!"

Bianca grabs Valkyrie's leg and drags it toward the bottom rope.

She wraps the knee around the rope and pulls backward.

Referee: "Break it! One! Two! Three! Four!"

Bianca releases at four, stepping away with both hands raised.

Bianca Page: "Classy clean break."

Ace applauds from the outside.

Ace Andrews: "Exactly. Make her carry herself. She cannot carry you."

Valkyrie pulls herself up near the ropes, anger beginning to cut through the stoicism.

Bianca steps toward her again.

Valkyrie suddenly grabs Bianca by the throat with both hands and drives her backward into the corner.

The crowd erupts.

Referee: "Valkyrie! Open hands! Break!"

Valkyrie releases, but immediately drives her shoulder into Bianca's midsection.

One.

Two.

Three.

Bianca gasps, folding over Valkyrie's back.

Valkyrie backs up as much as the bad knee allows, then charges in.

Corner body avalanche connects this time.

Bianca is crushed against the turnbuckles.

John Phillips: "Valkyrie caught her! Bianca could not escape that time!"

Bianca staggers forward out of the corner.

Valkyrie hooks her around the waist.

Deadlift German suplex!

Bianca is thrown across the ring, landing hard on the back of her shoulders.

She rolls all the way to the apron, eyes wide, suddenly desperate.

Mark Bravo: "And that is the danger. Bianca can have ten minutes of strategy undone by ten seconds of Valkyrie Knox getting both hands on her."

Ace rushes around ringside, shouting instructions.

Ace Andrews: "Out! Bianca, out! Reset!"

Bianca does not need to be told twice.

She rolls off the apron to the floor, landing near Ace.

Valkyrie stands in the ring, favoring the targeted knee but still upright.

She looks down at Bianca.

Then steps toward the ropes.

Ace raises one hand, standing between Valkyrie and Bianca without touching either competitor.

Ace Andrews: "Easy now. Referee, she needs space."

Valkyrie Knox: "Move."

Ace smiles up at her, smooth and poisonous.

Ace Andrews: "I'm not in your way. I'm merely existing near a better athlete."

Valkyrie steps through the ropes onto the apron.

Ace backs away immediately, both hands up, still smiling.

The distraction is just enough.

Bianca slides back into the ring behind Valkyrie.

Valkyrie realizes a second too late and turns.

Bianca sprints from the opposite side.

Swanky!

The superkick connects flush as Valkyrie is stepping back through the ropes.

Valkyrie drops to one knee inside the ring.

John Phillips: "Superkick by Bianca! Ace Andrews created the opening!"

Mark Bravo: "That man does not need to touch anybody to be dangerous. He just has to be inconvenient at the right time."

Bianca looks down at Valkyrie, breathing hard, smile fully gone now.

She grabs Valkyrie by the head.

Hooks her.

And drops.

Graceful!

The Ace Cutter snaps Valkyrie down to the mat.

Bianca rolls her over and covers, hooking the leg tight.

Referee: "One!"

Referee: "Two!"

Valkyrie kicks out.

Bianca sits up in disbelief.

Ace's smile fades slightly on the outside.

John Phillips: "Valkyrie kicks out after Swanky and Graceful back-to-back!"

Mark Bravo: "Bianca had the right plan. She just may not have enough yet."

Bianca turns toward Ace, frustration beginning to show.

Bianca Page: "What does it take?"

Ace points calmly toward Valkyrie's knee.

Ace Andrews: "More."

Bianca looks back at Valkyrie.

Then her expression hardens.

Classy is starting to get vicious.

Bianca looks back at Valkyrie.

Then her expression hardens.

Classy is starting to get vicious.

Bianca crawls toward Valkyrie's leg and grabs the damaged knee with both hands.

Valkyrie tries to kick her away, but Bianca twists the leg sharply and drops an elbow across the inside of the knee.

Valkyrie's jaw tightens.

Bianca drops another elbow.

Then another.

John Phillips: "Bianca Page is staying on that knee. Ace Andrews told her more, and she is delivering exactly that."

Mark Bravo: "This is not glamorous now. This is not pretty. This is Bianca trying to take one of Valkyrie's foundations away."

Bianca stands and drags Valkyrie's leg toward the center of the ring.

She steps through and starts to twist the legs.

John Phillips: "Bianca may be looking for Class Act!"

Valkyrie immediately recognizes the danger and uses her free leg to shove Bianca backward.

Bianca stumbles into the ropes but rebounds quickly.

Valkyrie tries to rise.

Bianca clips her low again.

Valkyrie drops to one knee.

Bianca hits the ropes and comes back with another high knee.

Binx connects again.

Valkyrie rocks backward, but this time she reaches out and catches Bianca by the wrist before she can get away.

The crowd reacts as Bianca's eyes widen.

Bianca Page: "No, no, no—"

Valkyrie yanks her in and blasts her with a short-arm lariat.

Bianca folds inside out and hits the canvas hard.

John Phillips: "Short-arm lariat! Valkyrie caught her again!"

Mark Bravo: "Bianca kept going back to the well, and Valkyrie finally slammed the lid shut."

Valkyrie drops to one knee after the move, her damaged leg forcing her to pause.

She snarls, annoyed at her own body for slowing her down.

Ace sees it immediately.

Ace Andrews: "Move, Bianca! She can't follow!"

Bianca rolls toward the ropes, clutching her chest and throat from the lariat.

Valkyrie pushes herself up.

She limps toward Bianca, grabs her by the hair, and drags her upright.

Bianca fires a quick shot to the knee.

Valkyrie absorbs it.

Bianca throws another.

Valkyrie absorbs that one too.

Then Valkyrie headbutts her.

Bianca staggers backward into the corner, stunned.

Mark Bravo: "That was a bad sound."

Valkyrie charges in as best she can.

Corner body avalanche!

Bianca gets crushed again, her body folding against the turnbuckles.

She stumbles forward.

Valkyrie hooks her around the waist.

Deadlift German suplex!

Bianca is launched across the ring and lands hard near the opposite corner.

The crowd gives a grudging roar at the sheer impact.

John Phillips: "Valkyrie is throwing Bianca Page around now!"

Mark Bravo: "That is the power difference. Bianca can cut her down, but if Valkyrie gets both hands on her, she becomes luggage."

Ace pounds the apron once, his calm starting to thin.

Ace Andrews: "Bianca! To the outside!"

Bianca tries to crawl toward the ropes, but Valkyrie gets there first.

She grabs Bianca around the waist from behind and deadlifts her up again.

Bianca elbows backward once.

Twice.

A third elbow catches Valkyrie near the temple.

Valkyrie loosens her grip just enough for Bianca to slip behind.

Bianca shoves Valkyrie forward into the ropes.

Valkyrie rebounds.

Bianca spins.

Right Stuff!

The discus clothesline connects, but Valkyrie does not go down.

She staggers.

Bianca's frustration flashes.

She spins again.

Another discus clothesline.

This one drops Valkyrie to one knee.

Bianca screams, hits the ropes, and comes back with a spear.

Valkyrie drops flat to the mat.

Bianca covers.

Referee: "One!"

Referee: "Two!"

Valkyrie powers out again.

Bianca rolls to her knees, breathing hard, hair starting to fall out of place.

Bianca Page: "Stay down!"

Valkyrie turns her head slowly toward Bianca.

The look alone makes Bianca back up half a step.

Valkyrie Knoxx: "Make me."

The crowd reacts loudly.

John Phillips: "Valkyrie Knoxx is hurt, but she is still terrifying."

Mark Bravo: "And Bianca knows it. The longer this goes, the less classy this is getting."

Bianca stands and looks toward Ace.

Ace points upward.

Ace Andrews: "Lavish Lifestyle. Now."

Bianca nods.

She grabs Valkyrie and pulls her toward the corner, positioning her near the turnbuckles.

Bianca climbs to the second rope, looking down at Valkyrie with a cold smile.

Bianca Page: "This is what class looks like."

She jumps, twisting for the blockbuster setup.

Lavish Lifestyle—

No.

Valkyrie catches her.

The entire arena gasps.

Bianca is trapped across Valkyrie's shoulders.

Ace's eyes go wide on the outside.

John Phillips: "Valkyrie caught her!"

Valkyrie shifts Bianca into a gorilla press position despite the damaged knee screaming underneath her.

She holds Bianca high for one brutal second.

Then drops her into a gorilla-press powerslam.

Bianca crashes hard to the mat.

Valkyrie collapses beside her, clutching the knee immediately after impact.

Mark Bravo: "That may have hurt Valkyrie almost as much as Bianca. That knee is becoming a problem every time she tries to lift."

Both women are down.

The referee starts the count.

Referee: "One!"

Bianca rolls onto her side, grimacing.

Valkyrie plants one hand on the mat.

Referee: "Two!"

Ace circles ringside, jaw tight, recalculating.

Referee: "Three!"

Valkyrie starts to push up.

Bianca crawls toward the ropes.

Referee: "Four!"

Valkyrie reaches her feet first, limping badly now but still upright.

Bianca uses the ropes to stand.

Valkyrie charges.

Bianca ducks and pulls the top rope down.

Valkyrie spills over the top rope and crashes hard to the floor.

John Phillips: "Valkyrie to the outside!"

Bianca drops to one knee in the ring, trying to recover.

Ace moves toward Valkyrie on the floor, careful not to touch her while the referee watches.

Ace Andrews: "You hear me, Valkyrie? This is what happens when force meets intelligence."

Valkyrie rises to one knee on the outside, turning her head toward Ace.

Her expression darkens.

Valkyrie Knox: "Speak again."

Ace smiles, but backs up.

Ace Andrews: "Gladly. From a safe distance."

The referee begins counting from inside the ring.

Referee: "One!"

Bianca sees Valkyrie distracted by Ace.

She hits the ropes.

John Phillips: "Bianca is moving!"

Bianca charges across the ring and launches through the ropes.

Suicide dive!

Valkyrie turns at the last second and catches Bianca in midair.

The crowd explodes.

Mark Bravo: "Oh no!"

Valkyrie holds Bianca against her chest, staggering back from the impact but refusing to fall.

Bianca shakes her head, panic breaking through.

Bianca Page: "No, no, no!"

Valkyrie charges forward and drives Bianca spine-first into the barricade.

The ringside fans jump back as the impact rattles the wall.

John Phillips: "Valkyrie just drove Bianca into the barricade!"

Bianca crumples to the floor.

Valkyrie turns slowly toward Ace Andrews.

Ace freezes.

The crowd rises.

Mark Bravo: "Ace may have talked himself into a very bad neighborhood."

Valkyrie limps toward him.

Ace backs away, both hands raised.

Ace Andrews: "Now, now. Professional boundaries."

Valkyrie keeps coming.

The referee leans through the ropes, shouting.

Referee: "Valkyrie! Back in the ring! Stay off the manager!"

Ace continues retreating around the ring post.

Valkyrie follows.

For a moment, her attention is entirely on Ace.

And Bianca Page sees it.

Bianca, still hurting near the barricade, reaches under the ring skirt.

Her hand disappears underneath.

John Phillips: "What is Bianca doing?"

The referee is still focused on Valkyrie and Ace.

Bianca pulls something out just enough to hide it against her body.

Small.

Flat.

Metallic.

Mark Bravo: "I do not like the look of that."

Ace points past Valkyrie suddenly.

Ace Andrews: "Referee, I am being threatened!"

The referee steps out to the floor to keep Valkyrie back.

Bianca slips the object into the side of her gear and pushes herself up, eyes fixed on Valkyrie.

Valkyrie finally turns back toward Bianca.

She does not know what Bianca has found.

Not yet.

Valkyrie finally turns back toward Bianca.

She does not know what Bianca has found.

Not yet.

Bianca leans against the barricade, one arm wrapped across her ribs, the other held tight against her side.

She looks hurt.

She looks desperate.

And with Ace Andrews still standing several feet away with both hands up, Bianca looks alone.

That is the picture she wants Valkyrie to see.

John Phillips: "Bianca Page is in trouble on the outside, but I'm still concerned about what she may have pulled from under the ring."

Mark Bravo: "The referee didn't see it. Valkyrie didn't see it. Ace might be the only one out here who knows exactly what just happened."

Ace adjusts his jacket and slowly backs farther away, keeping the referee's attention for one more second.

Ace Andrews: "I am merely trying to preserve order, official. Surely you can appreciate a civilized man in uncivilized circumstances."

Referee: "Stay back, Ace!"

Valkyrie limps toward Bianca.

Each step is heavy.

The knee is damaged, but the threat is not.

Bianca looks up and forces a smile.

Bianca Page: "Still walking? Impressive."

Valkyrie reaches down and grabs Bianca by the hair.

Valkyrie Knox: "Still talking?"

She yanks Bianca upright and drives her backward into the apron.

Bianca gasps as her spine hits the edge.

The small metallic object stays hidden between her forearm and body.

The referee slides back into the ring and restarts control, yelling for both women to bring it inside.

Referee: "Back in! Come on, get it back in the ring!"

Valkyrie grabs Bianca by the back of the neck and rolls her under the bottom rope.

Bianca slides in, still clutching the hidden object against her side.

Valkyrie follows more slowly, the bad knee making the climb difficult.

Ace watches from the outside, calm returning to his face.

Ace Andrews: "Now, Bianca."

It is quiet.

Almost too quiet to hear.

But Bianca hears it.

Valkyrie steps through the ropes.

Bianca suddenly rolls away from her and pushes up to one knee, holding her ribs, playing wounded.

Valkyrie advances.

The referee steps to the side, checking Bianca's condition.

Referee: "Bianca, can you continue?"

Bianca Page: "Of course I can continue."

Valkyrie reaches for her.

Bianca suddenly swings upward.

The object flashes.

A small metal compact, hidden in her palm, cracks against Valkyrie's knee.

The referee is blocked by Valkyrie's body and Bianca's angle.

He sees the motion.

He does not see the weapon.

Valkyrie drops instantly to one knee, face twisting in pain.

John Phillips: "What was that? Bianca hit the knee!"

Mark Bravo: "She hit more than the knee, John. I'm telling you, she had something in her hand!"

Bianca quickly slides the compact underneath her body and kicks it toward the apron with the back of her heel.

Ace bends down casually at ringside, pretending to adjust the apron skirt.

The compact disappears.

Valkyrie clutches at the knee, breathing hard, her stoic control finally cracking.

Referee: "Valkyrie, you okay?"

Valkyrie shoves his hand away.

Valkyrie Knoxx: "Move."

Bianca rises behind her.

The smile is back.

Not bright.

Not polished.

Vicious.

She grabs Valkyrie by the head from behind.

Graceful!

The Ace Cutter drops Valkyrie hard to the mat.

Bianca rolls her over and hooks both legs.

Referee: "One!"

Referee: "Two!"

Valkyrie kicks out.

Bianca's eyes widen.

The crowd roars.

John Phillips: "Valkyrie still kicks out! Even after whatever Bianca did to that knee, even after Graceful, Valkyrie survives!"

Mark Bravo: "Bianca's face says it all. That was supposed to be it."

Bianca sits there for a second, staring at the referee with disbelief turning quickly into anger.

Bianca Page: "No. No, that was three."

Referee: "Two."

Bianca Page: "Count better."

Ace steps closer to the apron, both palms out, trying to settle her without appearing rattled himself.

Ace Andrews: "Do not argue. Finish her."

Bianca exhales through clenched teeth and looks back at Valkyrie.

Valkyrie is on her side, one hand pressed to the knee, the other reaching for the ropes.

Bianca crawls toward the leg again.

She grabs the ankle.

Steps through.

And this time, Valkyrie cannot kick her away fast enough.

John Phillips: "Bianca is going for Class Act again!"

Bianca twists Valkyrie's legs into the Indian deathlock.

Valkyrie reaches for Bianca, but Bianca leans back, using the damaged knee as the center of the hold.

Class Act is locked in.

Valkyrie's head snaps back in pain.

Mark Bravo: "She's got it! She has the Class Act locked in on the bad knee!"

The referee drops beside Valkyrie.

Referee: "Valkyrie! Do you submit?"

Valkyrie Knoxx: "No."

Bianca wrenches backward.

Valkyrie's face tightens, but she refuses to scream.

She refuses to give Bianca that satisfaction.

Bianca Page: "You can be stubborn, or you can be smart."

She pulls harder.

Bianca Page: "But you cannot be both."

Valkyrie digs her hands into the canvas and starts dragging both of them toward the ropes.

The movement is slow.

Painful.

Every inch makes the hold worse.

Bianca shakes her head, pulling backward as hard as she can.

John Phillips: "Valkyrie Knox is trying to get to the ropes, but that damaged knee is trapped right in the center of Bianca's submission!"

Mark Bravo: "This is where Bianca's plan pays off. She spent the match tearing that base apart, and now she has Valkyrie stuck."

Valkyrie reaches forward.

Her fingers are still far from the bottom rope.

Ace crouches at ringside, right near the ropes, watching the distance.

Ace Andrews: "Pull her back. Make her earn every inch."

Bianca tries.

Valkyrie keeps crawling.

The crowd begins to rumble, drawn into the struggle despite Valkyrie's hostility.

Valkyrie reaches again.

Closer now.

Bianca's eyes widen as she realizes Valkyrie might actually get there.

Valkyrie stretches.

Her fingertips brush the bottom rope.

Ace suddenly reaches up, just out of the referee's sight, and nudges the rope backward with his hand, pulling it away by inches.

Valkyrie's hand closes on air.

John Phillips: "Ace Andrews moved the rope! Come on!"

Mark Bravo: "The referee didn't see it! He was checking the shoulders and the hold!"

Valkyrie turns her head toward Ace.

Her eyes go cold in a way that makes even Ace step back.

But the damage is done.

Bianca drags Valkyrie back another foot.

Valkyrie's hand slams the mat.

Not tapping.

Anger.

The referee checks immediately.

Referee: "Was that a tap?"

Valkyrie Knox: "No!"

Bianca screams in frustration and wrenches the hold tighter.

Bianca Page: "Tap!"

Valkyrie plants both hands, then suddenly starts powering upward.

Bianca's expression shifts from frustration to alarm.

John Phillips: "What is Valkyrie doing?"

With the hold still tangled around her legs, Valkyrie starts turning her body, forcing Bianca's balance to shift.

Bianca tries to keep the submission locked, but Valkyrie's raw strength begins to twist the pressure back.

Bianca shakes her head, panicking.

Bianca Page: "No, no, no!"

Valkyrie roars and rolls through, reversing the pressure enough to break Bianca's grip.

Both women separate, Bianca scrambling backward, Valkyrie clutching the knee and dragging herself toward the ropes.

Mark Bravo: "She muscled her way out! That is ridiculous!"

Bianca gets up first and charges.

Swanky!

Valkyrie ducks under the superkick from one knee.

Bianca spins through.

Valkyrie grabs her around the waist.

Deadlift German!

No.

The knee gives out.

Valkyrie cannot complete the lift.

Bianca lands behind her and immediately grabs the head.

Graceful—

No.

Valkyrie shoves Bianca off.

Bianca rebounds off the ropes.

Valkyrie explodes forward with a running big boot on pure instinct.

It connects.

Bianca drops flat.

Valkyrie collapses too, the bad knee folding underneath her.

John Phillips: "Big boot! Valkyrie got all of it, but she can't capitalize!"

Both women are down.

Ace Andrews is pacing now, calm gone, concern written across his face.

The referee begins the count.

Referee: "One!"

Bianca stirs.

Valkyrie rolls onto her side, gripping the damaged knee.

Referee: "Two!"

The San Juan crowd builds with the count.

Referee: "Three!"

Ace slaps the apron.

Ace Andrews: "Bianca! Get up!"

Referee: "Four!"

Bianca crawls toward the corner.

Valkyrie pushes to one knee.

Referee: "Five!"

Valkyrie rises first, limping badly, hair falling around her face.

Bianca pulls herself up in the corner.

Valkyrie sees her.

She starts forward.

Slow.

Dangerous.

Bianca's eyes dart to Ace.

Ace reaches into his jacket.

The referee sees the motion this time.

Referee: "Ace! Hands where I can see them!"

Ace freezes, then smiles innocently and raises both hands.

Ace Andrews: "Of course."

The distraction lasts only a second.

But Bianca uses it.

She reaches up and thumbs Valkyrie in the eye as the larger woman closes in.

Valkyrie recoils, blinded.

The crowd boos loudly.

John Phillips: "Bianca to the eyes!"

Bianca ducks behind Valkyrie and rolls her up, grabbing a handful of gear.

Referee: "One!"

Referee: "Two!"

Valkyrie powers out, sending Bianca flying forward into the ropes.

Bianca rebounds back.

Valkyrie catches her.

For one second, Bianca is lifted high.

John Phillips: "Valkyrie has her!"

Ragnarok Bomb!

The elevated sit-out powerbomb detonates in the center of the ring.

Valkyrie folds over Bianca, hooking both legs with what strength she has left.

Referee: "One!"

Referee: "Two!"

Ace Andrews puts Bianca's foot on the bottom rope.

Referee: "Rope break!"

The crowd explodes in boos.

John Phillips: "Ace put her foot on the rope! The referee didn't see it!"

Mark Bravo: "He saw the foot, not the hand that placed it there!"

Valkyrie slowly lifts her head.

She looks at Bianca's boot on the rope.

Then she looks at Ace.

Ace backs away immediately.

The crowd rises as Valkyrie's expression becomes murderous.

She releases the cover and starts to stand.

Bad knee or not, her attention is now on Ace Andrews.

Mark Bravo: "Ace better start moving."

Valkyrie slowly lifts her head.

She looks at Bianca's boot on the rope.

Then she looks at Ace.

Ace backs away immediately.

The crowd rises as Valkyrie's expression becomes murderous.

She releases the cover and starts to stand.

Bad knee or not, her attention is now on Ace Andrews.

Mark Bravo: "Ace better start moving."

Valkyrie drags herself upright using the ropes, eyes never leaving Ace.

Ace takes another step back, both hands up, that polished smile beginning to crack at the edges.

Ace Andrews: "Now, Valkyrie, let's not make a foolish emotional decision."

Valkyrie steps through the ropes onto the apron.

The referee immediately moves in, trying to stop her from leaving the ring.

Referee: "Valkyrie, stay in the ring! Stay in the ring!"

Valkyrie does not look at him.

She steps down to the floor.

Ace turns and walks faster now, moving around the ringside area with the urgency of a man whose mouth has finally overdrafted his body.

John Phillips: "Valkyrie Knox has had enough of Ace Andrews!"

Mark Bravo: "Ace has been poking the bear all match, and now the bear has a bad knee and a worse attitude."

Ace circles around the ring post.

Valkyrie follows, limping but gaining ground.

The referee leans through the ropes, shouting at both of them.

Referee: "Ace, get away from the ring! Valkyrie, back inside!"

Ace points toward the referee, still retreating.

Ace Andrews: "I am being pursued by an unstable competitor! This is clearly unsafe working conditions!"

Valkyrie reaches him near the commentary side and grabs him by the lapel of his suit jacket.

The crowd erupts.

Ace's eyes widen.

Ace Andrews: "Careful. This is custom."

Valkyrie pulls him closer.

Valkyrie Knox: "Kneel."

Ace swallows, glancing toward the ring.

Inside, Bianca Page is still down from the Ragnarok Bomb, but she is moving.

Slowly.

Quietly.

She rolls toward the far ropes while Valkyrie's full attention stays on Ace.

John Phillips: "Valkyrie has Ace, but Bianca is stirring in the ring!"

Mark Bravo: "This is the trap. It has been the trap all along. Ace is willing to be bait if it buys Bianca one more chance."

Valkyrie pulls Ace toward her like she might throw him over the announce desk.

Ace quickly grabs the top of the desk with both hands, trying to anchor himself.

Ace Andrews: "Referee! I am not licensed for this match!"

The referee exits the ring and gets between them, trying to force separation.

Referee: "Let him go! Let him go now!"

Valkyrie slowly releases Ace's lapel.

Ace immediately backs away behind the referee, smoothing his jacket with shaking hands.

Ace Andrews: "That was assault. Expensive assault."

Valkyrie takes one step toward him again.

The referee blocks her path.

Referee: "Enough! Back in the ring!"

Valkyrie's nostrils flare.

She looks past the referee at Ace.

Ace smiles again.

Just barely.

And that is when Valkyrie realizes.

Her head turns sharply back toward the ring.

Bianca Page is already on the top rope.

John Phillips: "Bianca is up top!"

Valkyrie shoves past the referee and starts toward the ring.

But the damaged knee slows her.

Bianca stands on the top turnbuckle, one hand pressed against her ribs, eyes locked on Valkyrie.

The classy smile is gone.

There is only survival now.

Valkyrie reaches the apron and starts to climb.

Bianca leaps.

Majestic!

The top-rope elbow drop crashes down across Valkyrie's upper back and shoulders as she is halfway through the ropes.

Valkyrie collapses into the ring, tangled awkwardly near the ropes.

John Phillips: "Majestic from Bianca Page! Valkyrie never saw it coming!"

Mark Bravo: "Ace Andrews bought her the time, and Bianca made the jump!"

Bianca clutches her ribs immediately after impact, rolling away in pain.

The referee slides back into the ring behind them.

Bianca crawls toward Valkyrie, grabbing her by the bad leg.

She pulls Valkyrie away from the ropes with everything she has left.

Valkyrie tries to grab the bottom strand, but Bianca kicks her hand away.

Bianca steps through the legs again.

John Phillips: "No, not again!"

Class Act!

The Indian deathlock is locked in once more, right in the center of the ring.

Valkyrie immediately plants both hands, trying to power out before Bianca can fully lean back.

Bianca screams as she wrenches the hold tight.

Bianca Page: "Stay down!"

Valkyrie refuses.

She pushes up on her hands, trying to turn the pressure again.

Bianca reaches back and grabs the ropes behind her for leverage.

The referee is on the opposite side, checking Valkyrie's shoulders and asking if she submits.

Referee: "Valkyrie! Do you give up?"

Valkyrie Knox: "No!"

Bianca pulls harder on the rope.

The angle worsens.

Valkyrie's face twists in pain.

John Phillips: "Bianca has the rope! Bianca Page is using the rope for leverage!"

Mark Bravo: "And the referee cannot see it from that side!"

Ace Andrews steps onto the apron, not to interfere directly, but to yell toward the referee.

Ace Andrews: "She's tapping! Look at her hand!"

The referee turns slightly toward Ace.

For one second, his body blocks the view of Bianca's grip on the rope even more.

Bianca wrenches back violently.

Valkyrie slams her hand down.

Once.

The referee drops low.

Valkyrie slams the mat again.

Twice.

Not a tap.

A fight.

A warning.

A refusal.

Bianca pulls on the rope one more time.

Valkyrie's hand rises.

Her fingers spread.

For a moment, the entire arena holds its breath.

Then Valkyrie plants the hand flat and starts pushing up again.

Bianca's eyes go wide.

Bianca Page: "No!"

Valkyrie begins to turn the hold.

Slowly.

Inch by inch.

The crowd rises with her.

Bianca releases the rope and tries to keep the legs trapped, but Valkyrie is moving now.

Ace jumps down from the apron and circles toward the side where the referee cannot see him clearly.

Valkyrie almost has the hold reversed.

Bianca panics and breaks it herself, rolling away before Valkyrie can turn it into something worse.

Both women separate.

Valkyrie reaches the ropes, pulling herself up with visible pain.

Bianca staggers to her feet in the opposite corner.

John Phillips: "Valkyrie survived the Class Act again, but how much damage has been done to that knee?"

Mark Bravo: "Enough that every second from here on is dangerous for her. She is running on strength and spite."

Bianca charges from the corner.

Valkyrie turns and explodes forward with a short-arm lariat attempt.

Bianca ducks underneath.

She rebounds off the ropes.

Valkyrie catches her on the return.

Valknut Driver!

Valkyrie spins Bianca into a high-angle sit-out Michinoku Driver II.

The impact shakes the ring.

Valkyrie stays seated after the landing, unable to immediately cover because the bad knee buckles beneath her.

John Phillips: "Valknut Driver! Valkyrie got her!"

Mark Bravo: "Cover her! Valkyrie has to cover!"

Valkyrie reaches for Bianca.

Bianca is limp, flat on the mat.

Valkyrie crawls across her and hooks the leg.

Referee: "One!"

Referee: "Two!"

Ace Andrews yanks the referee out of the ring by the ankle.

The crowd explodes in boos.

John Phillips: "Ace pulled the referee out! That should be a disqualification!"

Mark Bravo: "That was desperation! Bianca was done!"

The referee stumbles on the floor and immediately turns on Ace, furious.

Referee: "What are you doing?!"

Ace backs away, hands up, trying to argue innocence despite everyone in the building seeing it.

Ace Andrews: "He fell! I was helping!"

The referee points toward the back.

Referee: "You're out of here! Get out!"

The crowd cheers loudly.

John Phillips: "Ace Andrews has been ejected!"

Mark Bravo: "About three scandals too late, but better late than never!"

Ace's face drops.

He points at himself, offended beyond measure.

Ace Andrews: "Me? You're ejecting me?"

Referee: "Go!"

The referee points again, more forcefully this time.

Ace slowly backs up the ramp, furious, shouting all the way.

Ace Andrews: "This is a miscarriage of officiating! Bianca, finish the brute!"

Inside the ring, Valkyrie has pulled herself up using the ropes.

She watches Ace retreat with cold satisfaction.

But behind her, Bianca Page is crawling.

Bianca reaches toward the side of the ring where Ace had been standing.

Her fingers close around something he left behind on the apron.

A second compact.

Or maybe the same one, returned to play one last time.

John Phillips: "Wait, Bianca has something again!"

Valkyrie turns.

Bianca swings for the knee.

This time Valkyrie catches her wrist.

The crowd erupts.

Bianca's face falls.

Bianca Page: "No."

Valkyrie squeezes Bianca's wrist until the compact drops to the mat.

The referee sees it.

His eyes widen.

But before he can call anything, Valkyrie pulls Bianca in.

Valkyrie Knox: "Broken."

Fallen Fury!

The crucifix powerbomb drops Bianca directly into the knee-lift.

Bianca collapses to the mat.

Valkyrie hooks both legs, pressing down with everything she has left.

Referee: "One!"

Referee: "Two!"

Referee: "Three!"

DING DING DING!

The war horn sounds as Valkyrie's music hits.

Ring Announcer: "Here is your winner... VALKYRIE KNOXX!"

Valkyrie releases the cover and rolls to one knee, clutching the damaged leg.

Bianca lies flat on the mat, the compact nearby, the referee now fully aware of what had been happening.

John Phillips: "Valkyrie Knox survives Bianca Page and Ace Andrews! What a battle, and what a disgraceful amount of interference from Ace!"

Mark Bravo: "Bianca had the plan, Ace had the shortcuts, but Valkyrie had the strength to endure it and the grip to stop the final cheat before it landed."

The referee raises Valkyrie's arm.

She immediately pulls it away, not wanting help, not wanting sympathy.

She stands on her own, limping, but standing.

At the top of the ramp, Ace Andrews has stopped retreating.

He looks back toward the ring, furious.

Valkyrie turns toward him.

She raises the steel-spiked gauntlet once more.

Then points directly at Ace.

Valkyrie Knox: "You next."

Ace's expression tightens.

He says nothing.

For once, the Corporate Cutthroat has no clever line ready.

John Phillips: "Valkyrie Knox has sent a message to Ace Andrews as much as Bianca Page tonight."

Mark Bravo: "And if I'm Ace, I suddenly remember I'm retired from wrestling and very busy elsewhere."

Valkyrie limps toward the ropes and steps through them, refusing assistance as she makes her way down the steps.

Inside the ring, Bianca Page begins to stir, still dazed, still beaten, still furious.

Ace backs up through the curtain.

Valkyrie Knox leaves under her own power.

Damaged.

Angry.

Victorious.

A Message

Segment

The broadcast cuts backstage.

The camera is already moving, catching up with Jacoby Jacobs and Darian Darrington as they limp through the corridor toward the First Class locker room.

Neither man looks like he wants to be on camera right now.

Jacoby has one hand pressed against his ribs, his designer jacket hanging half-open, the confidence from earlier in the night replaced by a sour, embarrassed frustration.

Darian is worse. He walks with a visible hitch, one shoulder rolled forward after the chaos at ringside during Jacoby's match with Savior Hawkins. His jaw is tight. His eyes keep cutting around the hallway like he expects Mike Best to pop out from behind every equipment case.

Jacoby Jacobs: "Man..."

He stops for half a second, wincing as he adjusts his jacket.

Jacoby Jacobs: "Screw that Mike Best, man."

Darian shakes his head, still angry, still sore.

Darian Darrington: "For real. Dude hoppin' rails like some broke fan with a grudge. That was supposed to be handled."

Jacoby Jacobs: "Exactly. Max leaves. Mike shows up. Savior gets lucky. And now we gotta hear about it from everybody."

Darian exhales sharply.

Darian Darrington: "Nah. We get our stuff, we get outta here, and we let Max deal with all that when he feels like coming back."

Jacoby gives him a look.

Jacoby Jacobs: "If he feels like coming back."

That hangs there longer than either of them likes.

They reach the First Class locker room door.

The nameplate is clean. Polished. Too nice for the hallway around it.

Jacoby reaches for the handle.

Darian looks back down the corridor one more time.

Darian Darrington: "Man, I swear if Mike Best is still in this building..."

Jacoby opens the door.

Both men freeze.

The camera is behind them, catching only their faces as the light from inside the locker room spills across them.

The frustration disappears.

Shock replaces it.

Then fear.

Jacoby Jacobs: "Wait..."

Darian's eyes go wide.

Darian Darrington: "Oh man..."

Jacoby takes one step back.

Jacoby Jacobs: "Not you too—"

A steel chair comes down hard from inside the room.

CRACK!

It catches Darian across the upper body and shoulder, folding him instantly into the doorframe before he spills sideways into the hallway.

John Phillips: "What the hell?!"

Jacoby turns to run.

He gets two steps.

That is all.

The chair swings again from just inside the doorway.

CRACK!

Jacoby drops face-first onto the hallway floor, one hand reaching out toward nothing as the impact echoes off the concrete walls.

Mark Bravo: "Somebody was waiting for them!"

The camera jolts slightly as the operator steps back.

For a moment, all we see is Darian down against the wall and Jacoby laid out on the floor.

Then a boot steps through the locker room doorway.

The chair lowers into frame.

Chris Ross steps out of the First Class locker room.

The building reaction can be heard from inside the arena as the image hits the screen.

Ross does not look wild.

He does not look frantic.

He looks cold.

The steel chair hangs at his side, gripped loosely in one hand like the damage has already been done and the weapon no longer interests him.

He looks down at Darian.

Then at Jacoby.

There is no satisfaction on his face.

No smile.

No laugh.

Just purpose.

John Phillips: "That's Chris Ross! Chris Ross was waiting inside the First Class locker room!"

Mark Bravo: "Mike Best may have cost Jacoby the match, but Ross just made sure First Class doesn't get to leave clean either!"

Darian groans, trying to push himself up against the wall.

Ross takes one slow step toward him.

Darian immediately stops moving.

Jacoby rolls to his side, clutching his back, eyes barely focused.

Ross crouches slightly, bringing himself just low enough for both men to hear him.

Chris Ross: "Let Maxwell know..."

His voice is low.

Flat.

Worse than shouting.

Chris Ross: "The Reaper is coming."

Ross looks toward the open locker room door, then back down at the two broken members of First Class.

Chris Ross: "And he has his place in hell secured."

Ross stands back up.

He lets the chair drag lightly against the floor for one step, metal scraping against concrete.

Then he walks away down the corridor.

No rush.

No panic.

No need to look back.

The camera stays on Jacoby and Darian, both laid out outside the First Class locker room, the open door behind them now looking less like a safe place and more like a trap someone forgot to check.

John Phillips: "Chris Ross just sent a message to Maxwell Jett through Jacoby Jacobs and Darian Darrington."

Mark Bravo: "And if I'm Maxwell, I'm not worried about the message. I'm worried about how calmly Ross delivered it."

The final shot catches the chair still in Ross's hand as he disappears around the corner.

First Class has been left grounded.

And Maxwell Jett has been warned.

Paperwork

Segment

The broadcast returns from break with a wide shot of the arena.

The crowd is already buzzing, still carrying the noise from the last segment, when the lights suddenly shift.

A familiar beat hits.

? "Blunt Blowin" by Lil Wayne ?

The crowd erupts.

The opening notes roll through the building, and the video wall fills with bright lights, paparazzi flashes, red-carpet imagery, and fast cuts from a career that has always existed somewhere between wrestling ring, movie set, and expensive afterparty.

The screen flashes one word.

UNLIKELY

Then another.

WRESTLEZONE CHAMPION

Mikey Unlikely steps through the curtain.

The reaction gets louder.

He stops at the top of the stage with the WrestleZone Championship resting over his shoulder, dressed like a man who had a tailor, a stylist, and probably a lighting consultant involved before he walked through the curtain.

He takes one slow look around the arena.

Not overwhelmed.

Not nervous.

Just smiling like the building has finally remembered what it was missing.

John Phillips: "Listen to this reaction for Mikey Unlikely."

Mark Bravo: "Mikey Unlikely is back in a UTA ring with championship gold, John. For a lot of people in this building, that is nostalgia, ego, history, and Hollywood all walking down the ramp at the same time."

Mikey starts down the ramp, slower than he used to, but somehow even more deliberate.

He does not rush.

He lets the crowd see him.

He lets the cameras find the title.

He lets the moment breathe.

A few fans reach out from behind the barricade. Mikey points at one sign, laughs at another, and gives a quick nod to a fan wearing old WrestleUTA merchandise.

There is history in the reaction.

The kind that does not need to be explained to everyone because the people who know, know.

John Phillips: "Mikey Unlikely's road through UTA has been anything but simple. Music success, Hollywood fame, championship runs, betrayals, reinventions, and now, after all this time, he walks back in as WrestleZone Champion."

Mark Bravo: "And the most Mikey Unlikely part of that whole sentence is that he probably thinks this was inevitable."

Mikey reaches ringside and pauses near the steps.

He looks down at the WrestleZone Championship over his shoulder.

Then he looks into the ring.

For the first time, the smile softens.

Only for a second.

Then he climbs the steps, ducks through the ropes, and steps into the ring.

The crowd rises again as Mikey walks to the center, unhooks the title from his shoulder, and raises it above his head.

The roar gets bigger.

He lowers the title back to his shoulder and takes a microphone from ringside.

Mikey Unlikely stands in the center of the ring with a microphone in one hand and the WrestleZone Championship resting over his shoulder.

He smiles.

Waits.

The reaction continues.

Mikey nods knowingly, letting it breathe just long enough before finally raising the microphone.

Mikey Unlikely: "You know... I thought about what I was going to say when I came back here. I really did. Weeks. Months. Maybe years."

Mikey looks around the arena.

Mikey Unlikely: "What do you say when you walk back into a place that meant this much to your career? What do you say when you come back to a company that helped make you who you are? What do you say to people you haven't seen in over ten years?"

He pauses.

A grin slowly spreads across his face.

Mikey Unlikely: "I told you so."

Huge reaction.

Mikey nods.

Mikey Unlikely: "No, seriously. I told people. I told friends. I told Bobby Dean. I told anybody that would listen. If Mikey Unlikely ever walked back into WrestleUTA..."

He motions around the arena.

Mikey Unlikely: "This is exactly what would happen."

The crowd cheers.

Mikey Unlikely: "And look at you. You made me right. Again. That is becoming a habit."

The crowd laughs.

Mikey Unlikely: "Now, don't get emotional on me. I know. It has been a long time. Some of you got older. Some of you got married. Some of you had kids. Some of you still owe me money."

He lets the accusation hang just long enough for the front row to start laughing.

Mikey Unlikely: "I'm serious, by the way. Find me after the show."

The crowd laughs again.

Mikey Unlikely: "And me? Well..."

Mikey straightens his jacket.

Mikey Unlikely: "I got better looking. Aged like a fine wine. Bought nicer suits. Bought nicer watches. Made more money. Got more famous. Made more money again. At one point..."

He shrugs.

Mikey Unlikely: "I even bought a wrestling company."

The crowd cheers.

Mikey immediately holds up one hand.

Mikey Unlikely: "Do not clap for that. It was a terrible investment."

Big laugh.

Mikey Unlikely: "The point is, life happened. A lot of it. I left. I won championships. I traveled the world. I got called a legend, which feels aggressive because legend sounds old, and I prefer incredibly successful and handsome."

The crowd reacts.

Mikey Unlikely: "But then International Affair happened."

Mikey looks down at the WrestleZone Championship.

Mikey Unlikely: "Number thirty."

The crowd cheers again.

Mikey Unlikely: "And the second that music hit, the second those lights came on, the second I stepped through that curtain, I remembered something."

He looks into the hard camera.

Mikey Unlikely: "You don't stop being Mikey Unlikely."

Pop.

Mikey Unlikely: "You can leave. You can disappear. You can get older. You can own companies. You can sell companies. You can do whatever it is rich people do during the day. But when you come back here?"

He lifts the WrestleZone Championship slightly.

Mikey Unlikely: "You come back where you belong."

The crowd cheers.

Mikey Unlikely: "And somehow, some way, after all this time, I ended up holding something valuable again."

He pats the title.

Mikey Unlikely: "The WrestleZone Championship."

Another cheer.

Mikey Unlikely: "Now, let's address the elephant in the room."

Mikey's smile tightens as if he is trying not to enjoy the sentence before he says it.

Mikey Unlikely: "Bobby Dean eliminated me."

The crowd laughs.

Mikey nods.

Mikey Unlikely: "No, no. Let's be honest. That is what happened. I had Maxwell Jett exactly where I wanted him. I had a plan. A good plan. A brilliant plan. One of the greatest plans in wrestling history."

Mikey points toward the entrance.

Mikey Unlikely: "And Bobby Dean clotheslined me into another tax bracket."

The crowd laughs.

Mikey Unlikely: "Now, a lesser man would be upset. A lesser man would be angry. A lesser man would demand revenge. But Bobby Dean also accidentally won me a championship."

He raises a finger.

Mikey Unlikely: "Which means, for the first time in recorded history, a Bobby Dean mistake actually worked out for Mikey Unlikely."

Huge laugh.

Mikey cannot help but smile.

Mikey Unlikely: "The truth is, I did not come back because I needed this."

He taps the title again.

Mikey Unlikely: "I did not come back because I needed attention. Have you met me? Attention finds me."

Pop.

Mikey Unlikely: "I came back because this place matters. This company matters. WrestleUTA was part of my story before a lot of people knew what my story was."

He looks around the arena.

Mikey Unlikely: "And whether anybody likes it or not, I am part of WrestleUTA's story too."

Big reaction.

Mikey raises the WrestleZone Championship.

Mikey Unlikely: "So if you think I came all the way back here just to make one appearance..."

He smiles.

Mikey Unlikely: "Then you have not been paying attention for the last fifteen years."

Mikey lowers the title back onto his shoulder.

Mikey Unlikely: "Baby..."

He looks into the camera.

Mikey Unlikely: "I'm just getting started."

The crowd roars.

Mikey starts to lift the title again, but before he can fully raise it—

? "The Best Around" ?

The crowd reacts immediately.

Mikey slowly turns toward the entrance, already smiling like he knows exactly who this is before the camera even cuts to the stage.

Then the camera does cut.

And there he is.

Bobby Dean rides out onto the stage on his beat-up, refurbished mobility scooter.

The thing looks like it has been repaired at least three times by people who had access to duct tape, optimism, and no formal training. One side panel is slightly different from the other. The front basket rattles with every tiny bump. Something near the back wheel squeaks like it is filing an official complaint.

The UTA International Championship rests across Bobby's lap, shining brightly against the worn scooter seat.

Bobby stops at the top of the ramp.

He looks at the crowd.

Then at Mikey.

Then down at the title.

HONK.

The scooter horn cuts through the arena.

Bobby immediately looks embarrassed by it.

John Phillips: "And here comes the UTA International Champion, Bobby Dean."

Mark Bravo: "A Hall of Famer, a champion, a man who somehow made a mobility scooter part of championship presentation. Bobby Dean is one of one."

Mikey turns toward the entrance, smiling.

Mikey Unlikely: "Well, well, well."

Bobby sits frozen at the top of the ramp.

Mikey Unlikely: "Look who it is. The man who clotheslined me into another tax bracket."

The crowd laughs.

Bobby winces.

Bobby Dean: "Mikey, I—"

Mikey Unlikely: "No, no, no. Come on down here, Bobby. You can't apologize from all the way up there. That is cowardly, terrible for television, and apparently comes with sound effects."

The crowd laughs again.

Bobby gives the scooter controls a nervous look, then starts down the ramp.

The reaction is warmer than Bobby seems ready for. He glances around, confused by it, almost suspicious of it, the International Championship balanced carefully across his lap as the scooter hums toward ringside.

For all the comedy of the visual, there is something else there too.

Bobby Dean is not walking out with an old joke title this time.

He is not wandering backstage with a Hall of Fame plaque and a belt nobody recognizes.

He is the UTA International Champion.

And somehow, that seems harder for Bobby to process than anyone else.

John Phillips: "At International Affair, Bobby Dean survived the All or Nothing Rumble and left London with the International Championship. However it happened, however unlikely it seemed, Bobby Dean is standing here tonight as champion."

Mark Bravo: "And the wild part is I don't think Bobby believes it yet."

Halfway down the ramp, Bobby lightly bumps the horn again by accident.

HONK.

Bobby closes his eyes.

Mikey Unlikely: "Powerful point. Very moving."

Bobby reaches ringside, carefully parks the scooter near the steps, and pats the handlebar once like he is apologizing to it for the attention.

He takes the International Championship from his lap, climbs off the scooter with some effort, and makes his way up the steps.

For a moment, Bobby pauses on the apron.

Mikey watches him.

The crowd starts clapping.

Bobby steps through the ropes and into the ring.

For a moment, Bobby Dean and Mikey Unlikely stand across from one another.

Two champions.

One certain he belongs there.

One looking like he is afraid someone is going to ask for a receipt.

Bobby Dean: "I'm sorry."

Mikey lets the words sit.

Bobby Dean: "I didn't mean to. I know that probably don't help much, but I didn't. Maxwell moved, and I hit you, and then you were gone, and I just..."

Bobby looks down at the International Championship.

Bobby Dean: "I don't even know if I'm supposed to have this."

The crowd quiets slightly.

Mikey's smile fades, not completely, but enough.

Mikey Unlikely: "Bobby."

Bobby looks up.

Mikey Unlikely: "I told you in London."

The words land heavier than the joke that came before them.

Mikey Unlikely: "Get him."

The crowd reacts.

Bobby's face drops a little.

Bobby Dean: "I didn't."

Mikey Unlikely: "No. You didn't."

Mikey lets Bobby sit with that for a moment, but not long enough to bury him in it.

Mikey Unlikely: "We'll work on that."

The crowd laughs, and Bobby almost smiles despite himself.

Mikey Unlikely: "But you did not screw me. Maxwell Jett used you. There is a difference."

Bobby listens.

Mikey Unlikely: "And while we are being honest, Bobby Dean, you did not trip, fall, sneeze, and accidentally survive sixty-eight other people."

The crowd cheers.

Bobby blinks like he was not expecting that.

Mikey steps closer and taps the faceplate of Bobby's championship.

Mikey Unlikely: "You made it to the final two. You walked out of London with the International Championship. So maybe the problem is not that you are not supposed to have that title."

Mikey looks Bobby in the eyes.

Mikey Unlikely: "Maybe the problem is that you forgot what kind of man you used to be when people stopped laughing long enough to pay attention."

The crowd gives Bobby a strong reaction.

Bobby swallows hard. His grip tightens around the International Championship.

Before he can answer, the mood shifts.

No music hits.

Just boos.

Because the crowd sees him before the production team even catches up.

Eric Dane Jr. steps onto the stage with a microphone in his hand.

The boos become immediate and loud.

Dane Jr. stands there in expensive gear, polished, smug, and visibly annoyed by everything happening in the ring.

His entrance look is pure excess: silver details, sunglasses, the kind of self-conscious flash that says every piece was chosen because he thought it looked important. He carries himself like a man born three steps from the finish line who still wants credit for the race.

He glances down at the mobility scooter near ringside, then back up at Bobby with open contempt.

Eric Dane Jr.: "That was touching."

The boos grow louder.

Eric Dane Jr.: "Really. Heartwarming. Mikey Unlikely comes back, Bobby Dean stumbles into relevance, and suddenly everybody wants to pretend London changed the hierarchy around here."

Mikey turns toward the stage.

Bobby's shoulders tense.

Eric Dane Jr.: "It didn't."

Junior looks directly at Mikey.

Eric Dane Jr.: "You're standing there with the WrestleZone Championship like it is some grand comeback prize. Like it is a souvenir from your little nostalgia parade."

He points toward the title.

Eric Dane Jr.: "That championship has already been on my shoulder."

The crowd boos.

Eric Dane Jr.: "I know exactly what it is. I know exactly what it means. And I know exactly how much better it looked when I was the one carrying it."

Mikey raises his microphone.

Mikey Unlikely: "Former WrestleZone Champion, right? I heard."

Junior smirks.

Eric Dane Jr.: "You should have."

Mikey Unlikely: "I also heard you used to be Hardcore Champion."

The crowd reacts.

Junior's expression sharpens.

Mikey Unlikely: "That one still true, or did London get weird for everybody?"

Bobby looks down, trying not to react.

Junior glares into the ring.

Eric Dane Jr.: "Laugh it up. All of you. Laugh at London. Laugh at the Rumble. Laugh at my father sticking his nose where it did not belong."

The mention of Eric Dane Sr. gets a reaction.

Junior's jaw tightens.

Eric Dane Jr.: "But while you are all laughing, maybe you should remember something."

He reaches into his jacket and pulls out a folded document.

The crowd boos harder.

Junior lifts it just enough for the camera to see.

Eric Dane Jr.: "I still have the contract."

Mikey looks amused.

Bobby does not.

His face changes the second he sees the paper.

Junior notices.

Eric Dane Jr.: "There it is. Bobby remembers."

Junior smiles.

Eric Dane Jr.: "Scott Stevens remembers too. Trust me. He has read this thing enough times to develop a permanent twitch."

The crowd boos.

Eric Dane Jr.: "A guaranteed title shot. My title shot. My choice. My timing. Not yours. Not his."

He points at Bobby.

Eric Dane Jr.: "And definitely not Stevens'."

Mikey lifts the microphone again.

Mikey Unlikely: "Of course you brought paperwork to a wrestling ring."

The crowd laughs.

Mikey Unlikely: "You look like the kind of kid who asks for a manager at his own birthday party."

Big reaction.

Junior's smirk flickers.

Eric Dane Jr.: "Paperwork made me Hardcore Champion."

He points to Bobby.

Eric Dane Jr.: "Paperwork made Bobby Dean useful."

Bobby looks up.

Eric Dane Jr.: "Paperwork keeps me exactly where I belong, which is one signature away from taking whatever championship I decide is worth my time."

Junior's eyes shift from Mikey's WrestleZone Championship to Bobby's International Championship.

Eric Dane Jr.: "And now look at this. Two champions standing in the ring. One washed-up movie star pretending this is 2015, and one lifelong stooge pretending he did not win a title by accident."

The crowd boos.

Bobby lowers his eyes again.

Mikey sees it immediately.

Mikey Unlikely: "Hey."

Bobby looks toward him.

Mikey Unlikely: "Don't do that."

Bobby says nothing.

Mikey turns back to Junior.

Mikey Unlikely: "You want to talk about accidents? Fine. Bobby Dean made a mistake in London and still walked out International Champion."

Mikey steps closer to the ropes.

Mikey Unlikely: "You walked into London with a championship, a famous last name, and every advantage your little contract collection could buy you."

Mikey lets the sentence find Junior before he finishes the thought.

Mikey Unlikely: "And you still walked out with less gold than Bobby Dean."

The crowd erupts.

Junior's face hardens.

Eric Dane Jr.: "Careful."

Mikey Unlikely: "No, kid. You be careful."

The crowd rises.

Mikey Unlikely: "Because you are standing up there waving paper around at two champions. So if you want this—"

He raises the WrestleZone Championship.

Mikey Unlikely: "Or if you want that—"

He points to Bobby's International Championship.

Mikey Unlikely: "Then stop talking like a lawyer and start walking like a wrestler."

The arena pops.

Bobby slowly raises his head.

Junior looks from Mikey to Bobby.

Then back to the contract.

He smiles again.

Eric Dane Jr.: "That is the problem with old stars. You still think the fight starts when you say so."

Junior taps the contract with two fingers.

Eric Dane Jr.: "It starts when I say so."

The crowd boos.

Junior backs toward the curtain, never taking his eyes off the ring.

Eric Dane Jr.: "Enjoy the moment, Mikey. Enjoy the applause. Enjoy playing mentor to that."

He points at Bobby one more time.

Eric Dane Jr.: "Because one day soon, one of you is going to hear my music, see this contract, and realize the joke

was over before you even knew I had started telling it."

Junior lowers the microphone and disappears through the curtain.

The boos follow him out.

In the ring, Mikey watches the stage for a moment.

Then he turns back to Bobby.

Bobby is still holding the International Championship, but his eyes are fixed on the entranceway.

Mikey steps beside him.

Mikey Unlikely: "Bobby."

Bobby slowly looks over.

Mikey Unlikely: "Hold it up."

Bobby hesitates.

Mikey raises the WrestleZone Championship.

The crowd starts cheering again.

Bobby looks down at the International Championship.

Then, slowly, he raises it.

The reaction builds.

From ringside, the scooter horn suddenly sounds.

HONK.

Bobby looks down in horror, realizing he must have bumped the remote on the apron or the thing has simply chosen this moment on its own.

Mikey looks at the scooter.

Then at Bobby.

Mikey Unlikely: "Even the scooter believes in you."

The crowd laughs and cheers.

Bobby does not smile exactly.

But he does stand a little taller.

Mikey's music hits again as the two champions stand in the ring, WrestleZone Championship and International Championship raised side by side.

At the top of the ramp, the curtain moves slightly.

For half a second, Eric Dane Jr. can be seen watching from the back.

Then he disappears.

The camera returns to Mikey and Bobby in the ring as the crowd continues cheering, the beat-up mobility scooter parked at ringside like the strangest getaway vehicle in championship history.

Proving Grounds: Season Two

Segment

The screen cuts to black.

For a moment, there is only silence.

Then a single overhead light flickers on.

An empty wrestling ring sits in the center of a dark training facility.

No fans.

No pyro.

No entrance music.

Just canvas.

Ropes.

And the kind of silence that makes every breath sound louder than it should.

A voice begins over the image.

Voiceover: "Everybody wants the contract."

Quick cuts flash across the screen.

Boots hitting concrete.

Hands taping wrists.

A duffel bag thrown onto a bunk.

A locker door slamming shut.

Eight silhouettes standing in a row, faces hidden by shadow.

Voiceover: "Everybody says they are hungry."

A bell rings.

The footage snaps into motion.

Two competitors lock up in the ring, driving each other backward with the kind of desperation that does not belong in an exhibition.

Another clip shows someone sprinting ropes until their legs give out.

Another shows a competitor sitting alone on the edge of a bed, head in their hands, the noise of the house moving around them.

Voiceover: "But hunger is easy to talk about when no one is watching what it costs."

The Proving Grounds logo appears briefly, then glitches away.

More footage.

A shared kitchen.

Arguments at midnight.

Someone laughing too loudly at the dinner table.

Someone else staring across the room like they have already picked their first target.

Training drills under bright lights.

Cold stares in confessionals.

A coach's whistle.

A body hitting the mat.

Voiceover: "Eight competitors."

The screen flashes: 8 COMPETITORS.

Voiceover: "One house."

The screen flashes: ONE HOUSE.

Voiceover: "No shortcuts."

The screen flashes: NO SHORTCUTS.

A competitor shouts across the house, but the words are cut off by another violent ring impact.

A hand reaches for the bottom rope.

A trainer yells from off-screen.

Someone storms out of a room and slams a door hard enough to shake the frame.

Voiceover: "They will live together."

A shot of the house hallway at night.

Voiceover: "Train together."

A shot of sweat dripping onto the canvas.

Voiceover: "Break down together."

A shot of one competitor sitting alone in the locker room, breathing hard, eyes red, refusing to let the camera see too much.

Voiceover: "And when the bell rings..."

The music builds.

The cuts become faster.

A forearm connects.

A body crashes into the turnbuckles.

A competitor screams in frustration.

Another raises their arms after a win.

Another sits on the mat after a loss, staring at nothing.

Voiceover: "They will fight each other for the one thing that can change everything."

The screen goes black again.

Then one word appears.

CONTRACT.

The word burns gold against the darkness.

Voiceover: "A chance to earn a UTA contract."

The empty ring returns.

This time, the eight silhouettes stand around it.

No one speaks.

No one moves.

The camera slowly pushes in.

Voiceover: "Some came for opportunity."

One silhouette steps forward.

Voiceover: "Some came for redemption."

Another steps forward.

Voiceover: "Some came because this is the only thing they have left."

The music drops out.

A final bell rings.

The Proving Grounds logo slams onto the screen.

PROVING GROUNDS

SEASON TWO

A final line appears beneath it.

COMING SOON

Voiceover: "Eight will enter the house."

The logo flickers.

Voiceover: "Only one will leave with a future."

The screen cuts to black.

Yoshii vs Trey Mack

Match

The camera returns to ringside as the crew finishes clearing the area from the previous match. The San Juan crowd is loud, restless, and aware that the final match of the evening is next.

John Phillips: "Ladies and gentlemen, it is now time for our main event of the evening."

Mark Bravo: "And this one is big, John. The United States Championship is on the line. Yoshii defends against Trey Mack."

John Phillips: "Yoshii survived the chaos of All or Nothing and walked out as the United States Champion. But tonight, he faces a challenger with frightening speed, frightening power, and Clovis Black watching his back."

Mark Bravo: "That part matters. Clovis Black is not just moral support. Clovis Black is a bad decision waiting outside the ring."

The arena lights dip into deep purple and gold.

A bassline thumps through the Coliseo like a heartbeat.

The video wall flashes with quick cuts of collisions, rolling sentons, cannonballs, and bodies crashing into canvas.

Then the words appear across the screen.

THE MACK ATTACK

"Get Up" hits over the speakers, a heavy funk-rap beat rumbling through the building.

The crowd reacts with a mix of boos, noise, and anticipation.

Trey Mack steps through the curtain with a grin that says he knows exactly what everyone is thinking and dares them to say it anyway.

He rolls his shoulders once.

Slaps his own chest.

Then starts a loose bounce at the top of the ramp, moving with the rhythm of the music like the beat belongs to him.

Ring Announcer: "The following contest is scheduled for one fall and is for the UTA United States Championship! Introducing first, the challenger... accompanied to the ring by Clovis Black... from Long Beach, California... weighing in at two hundred and ninety pounds... he is The Mack Attack... TREY MACK!"

Trey spreads his arms wide as the boos grow louder.

He nods with a bright, arrogant confidence, soaking it all in like every sound in the building is fuel.

Trey Mack: "Ayyyyy, San Juan! Main event time, baby!"

Behind him, Clovis Black steps through the curtain.

The contrast is immediate.

Trey is rhythm.

Clovis is impact.

Clovis wears the same dead stare that has followed him through every building on this tour. No smile. No nod. No pandering to the crowd. Just a slow, deliberate presence, hood up, eyes forward, shoulders squared like a man walking toward a debt he intends to collect.

John Phillips: "There is Clovis Black, and I cannot overstate how dangerous his presence is at ringside."

Mark Bravo: "Clovis is a runaway locomotive in human form. Trey Mack can fly around the ring and hit you from every angle, and Clovis just stands there reminding you that if things go sideways, they can get worse."

Trey starts down the ramp, bouncing with loose confidence, pointing toward the ring and then back to himself.

Trey Mack: "When I hit the gas, everybody feels it!"

He grins, then looks over his shoulder at Clovis.

Trey Mack: "Tell 'em."

Clovis says nothing.

He keeps walking.

Trey laughs like silence was exactly the answer he expected.

Mark Bravo: "That is the whole Mack and Black dynamic right there. Trey has enough charisma for both of them. Clovis has enough violence for everybody else."

John Phillips: "And tonight they may be looking to add championship gold to that equation."

Halfway down the ramp, Trey suddenly breaks into a short burst of speed, charging forward like a sprinter trapped in a heavyweight's body.

He stops just short of ringside, laughing as the front row recoils, then throws both arms out again.

Trey Mack: "MACK ATTACK!"

The crowd answers despite itself, some booing, some shouting the words back, all of them reacting.

Clovis arrives beside him without theatrics, stopping near the base of the ramp.

He looks toward the ring.

Then toward the aisle.

Then back toward the ring.

It is not nervous scanning.

It is perimeter control.

John Phillips: "Clovis Black already taking stock of the area around the ring."

Mark Bravo: "That man is not here for vibes, John. He is here to make sure Trey Mack gets every possible advantage."

Trey climbs onto the apron and pauses, turning back toward Clovis.

Clovis steps closer to the apron, looking up at him.

The two men share a look.

Trey grins wider.

Clovis does not.

Trey nods once, then slides into the ring under the bottom rope.

He pops up fast, throwing his arms out wide in the center of the ring.

Trey Mack: "MACK ATTACK!"

The music thumps louder for a moment as Trey bounces in place, shoulders loose, eyes alive, every bit of him moving like a man who believes momentum is a weapon.

Then the grin fades.

His eyes narrow toward the entranceway.

The swagger remains.

But now there is focus behind it.

John Phillips: "Trey Mack is playful when he is in control, but do not let the rhythm and the charisma fool you. This is a two hundred and ninety pound powerhouse who moves like a much smaller man."

Mark Bravo: "Corner splashes, cannonballs, rolling sentons, big suplexes, and that Mack Truck powerbomb. Trey does not need a lot of space to wreck somebody, but if you give him space, he will build speed and run right through you."

Outside the ring, Clovis Black takes his place near Trey's corner.

He removes his hood slowly, eyes still locked forward.

No smile.

No movement beyond the slow rise and fall of his chest.

Just a warning shaped like a man.

Trey leans against the ropes, still staring up the ramp.

Trey Mack: "Bring me that title."

Clovis stays silent at ringside.

Trey rolls his neck and backs into his corner, bouncing lightly now, warming up for impact.

The challenger is here.

The Mack Attack is waiting.

And the United States Champion is next.

Trey Mack rolls his neck and backs into his corner, bouncing lightly now, warming up for impact.

The challenger is here.

The Mack Attack is waiting.

And the United States Champion is next.

The lights inside the Coliseo shift.

The purple and gold that followed Trey Mack fades into a sharp, ceremonial red and white glow across the entrance stage.

A deep drumbeat begins to echo through the arena.

Slow.

Heavy.

Like footsteps from something enormous approaching from a distance.

The crowd rises before the champion even appears.

John Phillips: "And here comes the United States Champion."

Mark Bravo: "I hope the ring crew double-checked the bolts on this thing, because this match is about to put every inch of that canvas to the test."

The video wall flashes with images from International Affair.

The All or Nothing Rumble.

Bodies flying over the top rope.

Chaos everywhere.

Then the image freezes on one man.

Yoshii.

The words appear across the screen.

UNITED STATES CHAMPION

The crowd roars.

Jed Dye steps through the curtain first.

He wears a mischievous, egotistical grin, strutting onto the stage like he personally negotiated the building into existence.

He gestures broadly with both arms, demanding the audience show proper respect before the champion arrives.

Jed Dye: "Ladies and gentlemen, get on your feet! Hide the buffet! Reinforce the ring! Because San Juan is about to witness a living, breathing, championship-carrying natural disaster!"

The crowd reacts loudly, some cheering, some laughing, all making noise as Jed turns back toward the curtain with theatrical pride.

Jed Dye: "The United States Champion... YOSHIII!"

Yoshii steps through the curtain.

The reaction swells.

Six feet, four inches.

Five hundred and eighty-three pounds.

The massive former world champion sumo stands at the top of the ramp with the UTA United States Championship strapped around his waist.

He looks across the arena with calm, heavy confidence.

No wasted emotion.

No panic.

No doubt.

Ring Announcer: "And his opponent... accompanied to the ring by Jed Dye... from Tokyo, Japan... weighing in at five hundred and eighty-three pounds... he is the reigning UTA United States Champion... YOSHIII!"

Yoshii raises both arms as the crowd roars again.

Yoshii: "YOSHIII!"

Jed claps loudly beside him, nodding like he just translated something far more complicated than Yoshii's own name.

Jed Dye: "You heard the man!"

Inside the ring, Trey Mack leans back against the ropes, grin still on his face, but his eyes narrow just slightly.

Outside the ring, Clovis Black remains motionless.

For once, even Clovis has something massive to stare at.

John Phillips: "Yoshii won the United States Championship in the All or Nothing Rumble, and now he makes his first major defense against Trey Mack."

Mark Bravo: "Trey Mack is a powerhouse at two hundred and ninety pounds, but Yoshii is nearly six hundred. Trey likes to build speed and collide. Well, good luck colliding with a mountain."

Yoshii begins the walk down the ramp.

Each step is slow, deliberate, and heavy enough to make the camera subtly shake as it tracks him.

Jed struts at his side, pointing toward the ring, toward Trey, toward the championship around Yoshii's waist, making sure no one misses the importance of any of it.

Jed Dye: "Look at him, Trey! Look real good! That right there is not a man you run through. That is a man you run into

and wake up next Tuesday!"

Trey laughs from the ring, bouncing in place.

Trey Mack: "Big man can fall too, Jed!"

Jed points back at him immediately.

Jed Dye: "Not on your schedule!"

Mark Bravo: "Jed Dye is already working overtime."

John Phillips: "Jed has been Yoshii's tour guide and translator going all the way back to Yoshii's original time in UTA, and there is no question he sees opportunity with the United States Championship now in Yoshii's possession."

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

He looks at Trey Mack in the ring.

Then he looks down at Clovis Black outside the ring.

Clovis does not move.

Yoshii does not move either.

For a moment, the two men simply stare at each other.

The crowd buzzes at the visual.

John Phillips: "That is a lot of human destruction in one shot."

Mark Bravo: "Yoshii and Clovis Black staring each other down at ringside, and somehow Trey Mack is the smaller problem standing in the ring. That is insane."

Jed steps slightly between Yoshii and Clovis, smiling like a man who immediately realizes he has placed himself in the wrong zip code.

Jed Dye: "Easy now. Everybody remain respectful. Nobody needs to prove anything before the bell."

Clovis slowly turns his head toward Jed.

Jed's smile tightens.

Jed Dye: "Especially you. You look busy. Keep doing that."

Yoshii finally looks away from Clovis and heads for the steel steps.

The steps groan under him as he climbs.

Trey Mack backs away from the ropes, rolling his shoulders, grin still there but focus sharpening.

Yoshii steps onto the apron and pauses.

He places one hand on the top rope.

Then steps over the middle rope and into the ring.

The ring visibly shifts under his weight.

Mark Bravo: "There it is. The ring just remembered Yoshii is the champion."

Yoshii walks to the center of the ring and unstraps the United States Championship from around his waist.

He holds it in both hands, looks down at the gold for a moment, then raises it high above his head.

The crowd roars.

Yoshii: "YOSHII!"

Jed applauds from the outside, then points toward the hard camera.

Jed Dye: "That is your United States Champion! Former world champion! Former sumo destroyer! Current problem for every man in UTA!"

Trey steps out of his corner just enough to look up at the title.

His smile returns.

Trey Mack: "That gold gon' look real good with the Mack Attack."

Yoshii lowers the championship and turns slowly toward him.

He says nothing at first.

Then he takes one heavy step forward.

Yoshii: "No."

The crowd pops.

John Phillips: "Simple answer from the champion."

Mark Bravo: "Hard to argue with a no that weighs five hundred eighty-three pounds."

The referee steps between them and takes the United States Championship from Yoshii.

He raises the title high above his head.

Trey Mack bounces lightly in his corner.

Yoshii stands still in the opposite corner, massive and calm.

Clovis Black watches from the floor, expression unreadable.

Jed Dye paces near Yoshii's side of the ring, already talking, already scheming, already grinning.

John Phillips: "United States Championship on the line. Yoshii defends against Trey Mack. Jed Dye with the champion. Clovis Black with the challenger."

Mark Bravo: "This is not just a main event. This is a collision report waiting to happen."

The referee hands the championship to the timekeeper, then checks both corners one final time.

Trey Mack leans forward, grin fading into fight.

Yoshii lowers his stance, feet planted, impossible to ignore.

The bell is next.

The referee hands the championship to the timekeeper, then checks both corners one final time.

Trey Mack leans forward, grin fading into fight.

Yoshii lowers his stance, feet planted, impossible to ignore.

The bell is next.

DING DING DING!

John Phillips: "The United States Championship is on the line, and our main event is officially underway!"

Mark Bravo: "Trey Mack wants to bring that title back to The New Empire. Yoshii wants to prove the All or Nothing Rumble did not create a fluke champion. This is going to be heavy."

Trey Mack steps out of his corner first, shoulders loose, bouncing lightly in place.

Yoshii does not bounce.

Yoshii does not circle.

Yoshii simply steps forward.

The ring shifts with him.

Trey grins and nods, circling to his left, trying to get Yoshii to turn.

Trey Mack: "Big man. Big title. Big target."

Yoshii turns with him, slow but steady.

Yoshii: "No."

Trey laughs once, then darts in with a quick body shot.

The punch lands against Yoshii's midsection.

Yoshii barely moves.

Trey throws another body shot.

Then a clubbing forearm across the chest.

Yoshii absorbs it.

Trey backs away before Yoshii can grab him.

John Phillips: "Trey Mack testing the champion early, but Yoshii did not give much ground."

Mark Bravo: "That is the problem. Trey is a powerhouse. Trey is two hundred and ninety pounds. Against almost anyone else, he is the one bullying people. But Yoshii is not anyone else."

Trey circles again, still smiling, but there is calculation now.

Clovis Black watches from ringside, arms at his sides, silent and still.

Jed Dye paces outside near Yoshii's corner, already pointing toward Trey.

Jed Dye: "That's it, Yoshii! Let him waste fuel! Let him burn gas driving into a mountain!"

Trey glances at Jed.

Trey Mack: "Jed, you got a whole lot to say for somebody standing behind six hundred pounds of insurance."

Jed immediately points to Yoshii.

Jed Dye: "Correct!"

Trey smirks, but that moment costs him.

Yoshii steps in and shoves Trey backward with both hands.

Trey flies into the ropes, rebounds, and runs straight back into Yoshii's shoulder.

Trey bounces off and hits the mat.

The crowd roars.

John Phillips: "Trey Mack just ran into Yoshii and got knocked down!"

Mark Bravo: "That was like shoulder-blocking a refrigerator full of cement."

Trey sits up, blinking, more surprised than hurt.

Yoshii looks down at him.

Clovis does not move.

But his eyes narrow.

Trey gets to one knee, then points at Yoshii, nodding like he has accepted the challenge.

Trey Mack: "Okay. Okay. That's how we doin' it."

Trey gets up and hits the ropes again.

He comes back faster.

Shoulder block.

Yoshii rocks half a step.

The crowd buzzes.

Trey hits the opposite ropes.

Another shoulder block.

Yoshii rocks again.

Not down.

But moved.

John Phillips: "Trey Mack is building speed!"

Mark Bravo: "This is what he does. Momentum is his weapon. The more room he gets, the worse it gets for whoever is standing there."

Trey slaps his chest and hits the ropes a third time.

He comes back with a full head of steam.

Running crossbody!

Trey crashes into Yoshii.

Yoshii stumbles backward.

One step.

Two steps.

But he does not fall.

Yoshii wraps both arms around Trey and holds him against his chest.

Trey's eyes widen.

John Phillips: "Yoshii caught him!"

Yoshii turns and drops Trey with a massive side slam.

The ring shakes on impact.

Trey arches his back and rolls toward the corner, stunned.

Mark Bravo: "That was almost three hundred pounds of Trey Mack being treated like carry-on luggage."

Yoshii rises slowly.

Jed throws both arms up at ringside.

Jed Dye: "Yoshii! United States Champion! King of mass! King of crash! King of don't try that again!"

Yoshii turns toward Jed for the smallest nod.

Trey uses the corner to pull himself up.

Yoshii charges in.

Trey slips out of the corner at the last second.

Yoshii hits the turnbuckles chest-first.

The ring shakes again.

Trey immediately throws a spinning back elbow to the side of Yoshii's head.

Then another.

Yoshii turns out of the corner.

Trey drives heavy body shots into him.

One to the ribs.

One to the stomach.

A clubbing forearm to the jaw.

Yoshii stumbles into the ropes.

John Phillips: "Trey Mack finding openings now! He is not trying to lift Yoshii. He is trying to break him down through repeated impact."

Mark Bravo: "Smart. You don't start with the impossible. You start with the ribs, the air, the balance."

Trey backs into the opposite corner.

He grins again.

That grin is dangerous now.

Trey Mack: "When I hit the gas..."

He charges.

Trey Mack: "...everybody feels it!"

Corner splash!

Trey collides with Yoshii in the corner, driving the air from the champion's body.

Yoshii staggers forward.

Trey hits the ropes again.

Rolling senton!

No.

Yoshii moves just enough, and Trey crashes hard into the mat.

The crowd reacts with a loud groan.

John Phillips: "Nobody home on the rolling senton!"

Trey sits up, clutching his lower back.

Yoshii steps in front of him.

Trey looks up.

Yoshii runs forward with a massive body block.

Trey is flattened.

Mark Bravo: "Oh my God."

John Phillips: "Yoshii just crushed Trey Mack!"

Yoshii covers, pressing his forearm across Trey's chest.

Referee: "One!"

Referee: "Two!"

Trey kicks out with a shoulder, drawing a reaction from the crowd.

Yoshii looks down, then nods once, acknowledging the fight.

At ringside, Clovis Black remains expressionless.

Jed Dye, however, is already yelling.

Jed Dye: "That was two and three quarters! Maybe three and a restaurant reservation!"

Referee: "It was two!"

Jed Dye: "Your math fears greatness!"

Yoshii pulls Trey up with both hands.

Trey suddenly drives a forearm into Yoshii's ribs.

Another.

Another.

Yoshii grabs him by the head and pushes him backward.

Trey rebounds off the ropes and ducks under a wide swing from Yoshii.

He hits the opposite ropes.

Clovis Black pounds the apron once.

Just once.

Hard enough to make the sound crack through the arena.

Trey accelerates.

Running crossbody again!

This time, Yoshii goes down.

The crowd explodes.

John Phillips: "Trey Mack takes Yoshii down!"

Mark Bravo: "He needed multiple runs, multiple collisions, and maybe a prayer, but Trey Mack knocked the champion off his feet!"

Trey crawls over into a cover.

Referee: "One!"

Yoshii kicks out hard at one, sending Trey rolling away.

Trey lands near the ropes, laughing in disbelief.

Trey Mack: "One?!"

Clovis looks at Trey from the outside.

Trey looks back at him, still breathing hard.

Trey Mack: "I know. I know."

Trey pushes up and starts stomping at Yoshii's legs, trying to keep the champion grounded.

Kick to the thigh.

Kick to the knee.

Another clubbing forearm to the chest as Yoshii starts to rise.

Yoshii reaches for him.

Trey sidesteps and hits a short burst off the ropes.

Low dropkick to the side of the knee.

Yoshii drops to one knee.

John Phillips: "Trey attacking the base now, trying to get Yoshii down to his level."

Mark Bravo: "That is the only way some of the big offense becomes possible. You cannot powerbomb a standing mountain. You have to create a hill first."

Trey measures Yoshii from the corner.

He looks to the crowd, grin returning.

Trey Mack: "Big man flies!"

Trey charges.

Cannonball in the corner!

The impact catches Yoshii while he is seated against the bottom turnbuckle.

The ring jolts.

Trey rolls backward from the collision, sitting up with a wide grin as the crowd erupts despite themselves.

John Phillips: "Cannonball by Trey Mack! Nearly three hundred pounds crashing into Yoshii!"

Mark Bravo: "That is the scary part. Trey is big enough to hurt you and quick enough to make it sudden."

Trey drags Yoshii away from the corner as much as he can, straining with the effort.

He only gets him a few feet.

Enough to cover.

Referee: "One!"

Referee: "Two!"

Yoshii powers out.

Trey rolls backward and slaps the mat once, frustration finally showing.

Trey Mack: "Come on, man!"

Jed Dye claps from the outside, leaning toward Yoshii's corner.

Jed Dye: "That's it! That's the champion! That is the largest kickout in United States Championship history!"

Clovis Black slowly turns his head toward Jed.

Jed notices.

His clapping slows.

Jed Dye: "And I mean that respectfully to all parties."

Trey gets back to his feet and looks at Clovis.

Clovis says nothing.

But he makes a small motion with one hand.

Cut him down.

Trey nods.

He turns back toward Yoshii, who is already trying to rise.

Trey hits the ropes, gaining speed again.

Yoshii rises at the same time.

Trey comes back with another running crossbody.

Yoshii catches him.

The crowd gasps.

Trey struggles, but Yoshii adjusts his grip.

Yoshii roars and drops Trey with a massive belly-to-belly throw.

Trey lands hard and rolls all the way across the ring.

John Phillips: "Yoshii just threw Trey Mack across the ring!"

Mark Bravo: "That was two hundred and ninety pounds leaving the ground like a suitcase at baggage claim."

Trey rolls near the ropes, clutching his back.

Yoshii rises, breathing harder now, but still in control.

Clovis Black steps one pace closer on the outside.

The referee notices and points at him.

Referee: "Stay back, Clovis!"

Clovis stops.

He does not argue.

He does not even blink.

But his presence alone changes the air.

John Phillips: "Clovis Black has not interfered, but every time he moves, the referee has to account for him."

Mark Bravo: "That is how a dangerous second works. He does not have to cheat every second. He just has to make everyone remember he could."

Yoshii pulls Trey toward the center of the ring.

He steps over him, looking toward the corner.

The crowd rises.

John Phillips: "Yoshii may already be thinking Bonzai Drop!"

Jed Dye throws both arms into the air at ringside.

Jed Dye: "Yes! Yes! Drop the bomb! Drop the bomb!"

Yoshii begins moving toward the corner.

Slow.

Heavy.

Trey rolls onto his stomach, trying to crawl away.

Clovis Black steps forward again.

This time, Jed Dye sees him.

Jed moves around the ring, inserting himself between Clovis and the corner.

Jed Dye: "Nope! No, sir. No train traffic on this side of the tracks. The champion is conducting business."

Clovis looks down at Jed.

Jed's confidence drops by several inches.

Jed Dye: "Business that includes... uh... healthy boundaries."

Inside the ring, the referee watches Jed and Clovis for a moment, making sure they do not get involved.

Yoshii reaches the corner and begins to climb to the second rope.

The crowd builds.

Trey, still down, turns his head.

He sees Yoshii climbing.

His eyes widen.

Mark Bravo: "Trey Mack needs to move. If Yoshii lands that Bonzai Drop, this is over."

Trey crawls toward the ropes.

Yoshii steadies himself on the second rope.

Jed points upward, hyping the crowd and himself.

Jed Dye: "History is descending!"

Clovis suddenly grabs Jed by the back of the jacket and yanks him away from the corner.

The crowd erupts in boos.

Jed stumbles backward, nearly falling.

Referee: "Clovis! Back off!"

The referee turns toward the ropes, yelling at Clovis.

Yoshii looks down at the commotion.

That second of distraction matters.

Trey explodes up from the mat, far faster than a man his size should.

He runs to the corner and slams both forearms into Yoshii's lower back.

Yoshii wobbles on the ropes.

John Phillips: "Trey got there! Clovis created just enough distraction!"

Mark Bravo: "And now Yoshii is in a very dangerous place!"

Trey climbs to the second rope beside Yoshii, throwing heavy body shots into the champion's ribs.

One.

Two.

Three.

Yoshii tries to shove him away.

Trey hangs on.

The crowd rises as Trey hooks Yoshii around the head and shoulder.

John Phillips: "There is no way."

Mark Bravo: "Trey, do not do this. There is ambition and then there is structural damage."

Trey tries to pull Yoshii off the ropes.

Yoshii blocks.

Trey throws another body shot.

Yoshii blocks again.

Trey screams, muscles straining, trying to force the champion down.

For a moment, Yoshii shifts.

The ring crew in another universe gets nervous.

Then Yoshii headbutts Trey.

Trey drops from the ropes and lands on his feet, staggering backward.

Yoshii steadies himself again.

Trey rushes back.

Yoshii kicks him away with one massive leg.

Trey falls backward into the center of the ring.

The crowd erupts.

John Phillips: "Trey is down!"

Yoshii looks down.

Then jumps.

Bonzai Drop—

No!

Trey rolls away at the last possible second.

Yoshii crashes seated into the canvas.

The entire ring shakes violently.

Trey rolls to the apron, wide-eyed, breathing hard.

Mark Bravo: "That impact may have registered on airport radar."

John Phillips: "Yoshii missed the Bonzai Drop, and Trey Mack has life!"

Yoshii sits on the mat, pain finally showing as the missed impact shoots through his lower body.

Trey pulls himself up on the apron.

Clovis Black steps closer, eyes locked on Yoshii.

Jed Dye, still recovering from being yanked away, points furiously toward Clovis.

Jed Dye: "Referee! He put his locomotive hands on me!"

The referee warns Clovis again from inside the ring.

Referee: "This is your last warning!"

Clovis slowly raises both hands.

Not apologetic.

Just compliant enough to remain dangerous.

Trey steps through the ropes, eyes locked on Yoshii.

His grin returns, but now it is tired.

Earned.

Meaner.

Trey Mack: "Now we got a fight."

Trey steps through the ropes, eyes locked on Yoshii.

His grin returns, but now it is tired.

Earned.

Meaner.

Trey Mack: "Now we got a fight."

Yoshii is still seated on the canvas, one hand pressed to the mat, the other near his lower back after the missed Bonzai Drop.

Trey Mack takes one deep breath.

Then another.

Then he hits the ropes.

John Phillips: "Trey Mack is moving again!"

Trey rebounds and crashes into Yoshii with a low running body block, driving his shoulder into the champion's chest.

Yoshii rocks backward but stays upright.

Trey rolls through, gets back to his feet, and hits the ropes again.

Another running body block.

This one knocks Yoshii onto his back.

The crowd erupts.

Mark Bravo: "He got him down! Trey Mack got the champion flat!"

Trey does not cover immediately.

Instead, he looks toward the corner.

Then toward Clovis.

Clovis gives the smallest nod.

Trey's grin widens.

Trey Mack: "Big man flies."

Trey backs into the corner, then charges forward.

Rolling senton!

This time it connects.

Nearly three hundred pounds crashes across Yoshii's chest.

Trey bounces off the impact, clutching his own ribs, but he forces himself back over into the cover.

Referee: "One!"

Referee: "Two!"

Yoshii powers out.

Trey rolls away, sitting up with disbelief written across his face.

Trey Mack: "Man, what are they feeding you?"

Jed Dye immediately throws his arms up at ringside.

Jed Dye: "Championship discipline and premium catering!"

Clovis turns his head toward Jed.

Jed points at him, but keeps a safe distance.

Jed Dye: "Don't look at me like that! I am in a managerial capacity!"

John Phillips: "Jed Dye and Clovis Black are almost having their own match outside the ring."

Mark Bravo: "That is one of the weirdest size mismatches I have ever seen, and Jed is losing it without being touched."

Trey gets to his feet and starts stomping Yoshii's midsection.

He stomps again.

And again.

Then he drops a heavy forearm across Yoshii's chest.

Yoshii absorbs it, but he is slower to move now.

Trey sees it.

The challenger grabs Yoshii by the head and tries to pull him up.

It is not easy.

It is like trying to drag a truck uphill by the bumper.

Mark Bravo: "This is where Trey has to be careful. Trying to lift Yoshii can burn out your own arms before you even get him off the mat."

Trey gets Yoshii to one knee.

He throws a clubbing forearm.

Another.

Another.

Yoshii starts to rise.

Trey steps back and hits a spinning back elbow.

The shot lands flush.

Yoshii rocks backward.

Trey hits a second spinning back elbow.

Yoshii stumbles toward the ropes.

Trey hits the ropes on the far side.

He charges.

Running crossbody!

Yoshii catches him again.

The building gasps.

But this time Trey immediately starts throwing elbows to the side of Yoshii's head.

One.

Two.

Three.

Yoshii staggers back into the ropes with Trey still in his arms.

Trey slips down behind him.

He shoves Yoshii forward, chest-first into the ropes.

Yoshii rebounds.

Trey ducks under.

Then he explodes upward with a pop-up powerslam attempt.

For a moment, the arena rises with him.

For a moment, it almost happens.

Then Yoshii's weight crashes down over Trey's shoulder, crushing the attempt before it can become real.

Trey collapses underneath him.

Yoshii falls across Trey's chest.

Referee: "One!"

Referee: "Two!"

Trey kicks out.

John Phillips: "Trey tried to lift Yoshii, and Yoshii simply collapsed the attempt!"

Mark Bravo: "That could have crushed Trey's ribs. That is the gamble. You want to make history lifting Yoshii, you may become history under him."

Trey rolls to the side, coughing, clutching his midsection.

Clovis steps closer to the apron again.

This time, the referee points before Clovis even reaches the ropes.

Referee: "Back! I'm not telling you again!"

Clovis stops.

He stares at the referee.

No words.

No movement.

Just pressure.

Jed Dye quickly hustles around the outside, waving both arms.

Jed Dye: "Yes, yes, excellent officiating! Enforce rules! Protect democracy! Protect Yoshii!"

Clovis turns toward Jed.

Jed immediately backs up two full steps.

Jed Dye: "Protect Jed also, if possible."

Inside the ring, Yoshii gets to his feet slowly.

Trey is up to one knee.

Yoshii reaches down and grabs him by both shoulders.

Trey suddenly fires a headbutt into Yoshii's stomach.

Then another.

Then he rises with a heavy uppercut to the body.

Yoshii doubles slightly.

Trey hits the ropes.

Clovis pounds the apron again.

The sound cracks like a gunshot.

Trey comes back with full momentum.

Corner splash—

No.

Yoshii catches him and shifts his weight.

Massive uranage-style slam!

Trey hits the mat hard and rolls onto his side.

John Phillips: "Yoshii plants Trey Mack!"

Yoshii does not cover.

Instead, he looks toward the corner again.

The crowd rises.

Mark Bravo: "He is thinking Bonzai Drop again."

Jed Dye jumps in place on the outside, pointing toward the corner.

Jed Dye: "Second time's the charm! Drop the bomb! Drop the bomb!"

Yoshii begins moving toward the corner.

Trey is down near the center of the ring, breathing hard, one arm wrapped across his ribs.

Clovis steps around ringside.

Jed sees him moving and hurries to intercept again, but this time Clovis does not even look at him.

Clovis keeps walking.

Jed Dye: "Hey! Hey! Locomotive man! This is a closed track!"

Clovis stops near the corner where Yoshii is climbing.

The referee sees him and leans through the ropes.

Referee: "Clovis! Move away from the corner!"

Clovis raises both hands slowly.

Again, technically doing nothing.

Again, being impossible to ignore.

Yoshii steps onto the second rope.

Jed points frantically at Clovis.

Jed Dye: "He is menacing with intent! That is illegal in at least four states!"

The referee remains turned toward Clovis for one second too long.

Trey reaches up from the mat and grabs the referee's pant leg.

The referee looks down, confused.

Trey pulls himself closer to the corner using the referee's leg as leverage, not enough to knock him down, just enough to gain distance while the official is busy with Clovis.

John Phillips: "Trey used the referee to pull himself closer!"

Mark Bravo: "That was clever. Questionable, but clever."

Yoshii looks down and sees Trey closer than expected.

Trey suddenly surges upward, using the bottom rope to launch himself.

He clubs Yoshii in the side of the knee.

Yoshii wobbles on the second rope.

Trey climbs onto the second rope beside him again.

This time, Trey does not try to lift him immediately.

He throws body shots.

Ribs.

Stomach.

Ribs again.

Then a clubbing forearm to the side of the head.

Yoshii sways.

John Phillips: "Trey Mack is trying to chop Yoshii down on the ropes!"

Mark Bravo: "He learned from the first attempt. Do damage first. Then try the impossible."

Trey hooks Yoshii.

The crowd rises.

Clovis Black watches from outside, dead still.

Jed Dye has both hands on his head.

Jed Dye: "No! No! Gravity is not licensed for this!"

Trey screams and pulls.

Yoshii resists.

Trey throws another body shot.

Then another.

He plants his feet on the second rope and pulls again.

Yoshii shifts.

The crowd gasps.

Yoshii's massive frame starts to move.

Trey roars.

For one impossible moment, he has Yoshii leaning.

Then Yoshii clubs him across the back.

Trey almost drops.

But he hangs on.

Another clubbing blow from Yoshii.

Trey still hangs on.

Then Trey changes strategy.

He slides down from the second rope, landing on the mat beneath Yoshii.

He hooks both of Yoshii's legs from underneath.

John Phillips: "What is Trey doing now?"

Trey yanks forward with everything he has.

Yoshii loses balance.

The United States Champion falls from the second rope and crashes backward onto the mat.

The entire ring quakes.

Trey collapses backward too, exhausted, but Yoshii is down.

Mark Bravo: "He couldn't lift the mountain, so he pulled the mountain off the cliff!"

The crowd is roaring now as both men are down.

The referee starts the count.

Referee: "One!"

Trey rolls onto his stomach, crawling toward Yoshii.

Yoshii lies on his back, chest rising and falling heavily.

Referee: "Two!"

Clovis Black pounds the apron once more.

Jed Dye pounds the apron from the opposite side, trying to rally Yoshii.

Jed Dye: "Get up, Yoshii! Remember who you are! Remember the title! Remember lunch!"

Referee: "Three!"

Trey crawls across Yoshii and hooks the leg.

Referee: "One!"

Referee: "Two!"

Yoshii kicks out.

Trey rolls off, lying on his back, laughing breathlessly at the absurdity of it.

Trey Mack: "This big dude is a problem."

Clovis looks into the ring.

For the first time, he speaks.

Clovis Black: "Finish it."

Trey hears it.

His expression changes.

The grin fades.

The swagger drains into purpose.

Trey pushes up slowly, eyes locked on Yoshii.

John Phillips: "Clovis Black telling Trey Mack to finish it, and Trey may be thinking Mack Truck."

Mark Bravo: "That is a sit-out powerbomb, John. And I do not know how you powerbomb Yoshii unless the laws of physics owe you a favor."

Trey grabs Yoshii by the head and starts pulling him toward the center of the ring.

He gets Yoshii to one knee.

Then both feet.

Trey throws a body shot.

Another.

Another.

Yoshii doubles just enough.

Trey steps back.

Then charges.

Cannonball in the corner setup is impossible here, so Trey improvises.

He blasts Yoshii with a short-range running splash to the chest.

Yoshii staggers.

Trey hits the ropes.

Another splash.

Yoshii staggers again.

Trey hits the ropes a third time, screaming as he comes in.

Yoshii suddenly catches him with both hands around the throat and upper chest.

The crowd erupts.

Yoshii roars and shoves Trey backward into the corner.

Trey hits hard.

Yoshii backs up.

Then charges.

Massive corner splash!

Trey is crushed between Yoshii and the turnbuckles.

He staggers out on jelly legs.

Yoshii grabs him.

Belly-to-belly suplex!

Trey crashes into the center of the ring.

Yoshii covers.

Referee: "One!"

Referee: "Two!"

Trey kicks out.

Clovis's jaw tightens at ringside.

Jed Dye almost jumps out of his shoes.

Jed Dye: "Come on! That man just got flattened like airport luggage!"

John Phillips: "Trey Mack stays alive! The challenger is still in this!"

Yoshii sits up slowly.

He looks toward the corner.

Then to Trey.

Then he points down at the challenger.

Yoshii: "Done."

The crowd rises again.

Yoshii begins dragging Trey toward the corner.

Jed Dye is screaming now.

Jed Dye: "Yes! Yes! No more delays! No more trains! No more Mack! Drop the bomb!"

Clovis Black moves.

This time he does not step toward the apron.

He steps toward Jed.

Jed sees him coming and immediately starts backing away.

Jed Dye: "Nope! No! I am not the legal man! I am not even an illegal man!"

Clovis keeps walking.

The referee sees Clovis stalking Jed and leans through the ropes again.

Referee: "Clovis! Back up! Now!"

Yoshii looks out toward the floor, distracted by his manager backing away from Clovis.

Trey, barely moving, opens one eye.

He sees Yoshii turn.

He sees the opening.

He reaches up.

Low blow.

The referee does not see it.

Yoshii freezes.

The crowd explodes in boos.

John Phillips: "Oh come on! Trey Mack just went low!"

Mark Bravo: "The referee was dealing with Clovis, and Trey Mack took the shortcut!"

Yoshii drops to both knees, pain finally breaking through his massive frame.

Jed Dye sees it and screams toward the referee.

Jed Dye: "He cheated! He cheated! He hit the ancient forbidden button!"

The referee turns back, but the damage is done.

Trey crawls to the ropes, dragging himself upright.

Clovis stops stalking Jed immediately.

He steps back, expression unchanged.

The plan worked.

Trey pulls himself to his feet, breathing hard, eyes locked on Yoshii.

Yoshii is on both knees in the center of the ring.

For the first time all match, Trey Mack is looking down at him.

Trey Mack: "Now."

Trey hits the ropes.

He comes back with a full-speed running crossbody to the kneeling champion.

Yoshii drops flat.

Trey rolls through, pops up, hits the ropes again, and comes back with another rolling senton.

This one lands hard.

Trey hooks the leg, pressing his weight across Yoshii's chest.

Referee: "One!"

Referee: "Two!"

Yoshii kicks out.

The crowd erupts.

Trey sits up, staring at the referee like he cannot understand what just happened.

Trey Mack: "No way."

Clovis Black takes one step closer.

Jed Dye collapses to one knee outside the ring, clutching his own hair.

Jed Dye: "That's my Godzilla!"

Inside the ring, Yoshii rolls slowly to his side.

Trey looks at him.

Then toward Clovis.

Clovis stares back.

Clovis Black: "Again."

Trey nods.

He gets to his feet, slower now, every breath heavy.

He backs into the corner.

The crowd rises.

Yoshii is down near the opposite side, trying to push up.

Trey starts a loose bounce.

Not playful this time.

Predatory.

Trey Mack: "Mack Attack."

He charges.

He gets to his feet, slower now, every breath heavy.

He backs into the corner.

The crowd rises.

Yoshii is down near the opposite side, trying to push up.

Trey starts a loose bounce.

Not playful this time.

Predatory.

Trey Mack: "Mack Attack."

He charges.

Trey barrels across the ring like a man trying to run through a wall and prove the wall was wrong for standing there.

Yoshii pushes up to one knee.

Trey launches forward.

Running crossbody—

No.

Yoshii surges upward with both arms and catches Trey across the chest.

The entire arena erupts.

John Phillips: "Yoshii caught him! Yoshii caught Trey Mack again!"

Mark Bravo: "How does he still have that in him?!"

Trey's eyes go wide as Yoshii staggers backward under the weight.

The champion's knees bend.

His back strains.

For one second, it looks like Trey's momentum may still drive him down.

But Yoshii roars.

Yoshii: "YOSHII!"

He turns and crushes Trey into the mat with another massive side slam.

The ring shakes violently on impact.

Trey rolls onto his side, clutching his ribs, gasping.

Yoshii collapses to one knee beside him, breathing hard, still feeling the earlier low blow and all the repeated attacks to his body.

John Phillips: "The champion just answered! Trey Mack thought he had the opening, and Yoshii shut it down with raw power!"

Mark Bravo: "That was not pretty. That was not technical. That was five hundred eighty-three pounds refusing to die in the main event."

Jed Dye is practically jumping up and down outside the ring.

Jed Dye: "That's it! That's it! That's the United States Champion! That is premium imported destruction!"

Clovis Black steps forward again.

Jed immediately sees him and points with both hands.

Jed Dye: "No! Nope! Referee, look at that man! That man is shaped like interference!"

The referee turns toward Clovis.

Referee: "Clovis! I said stay back!"

Clovis does not back up this time.

He steps onto the apron.

The crowd erupts in boos.

John Phillips: "Clovis Black is on the apron now!"

Mark Bravo: "He has been walking the line all match, and now he may have crossed it."

The referee rushes toward him, shouting.

Referee: "Get down! Get down right now!"

Clovis stands there, one hand on the top rope, staring past the referee and directly at Yoshii.

Yoshii slowly rises to both feet.

The champion turns toward Clovis.

The crowd buzzes at the sight of the two monsters locking eyes again.

Jed Dye slides around the ring, panic all over his face.

Jed Dye: "No, no, no. Referee, this is why we need traffic laws!"

Clovis finally looks down at the referee.

Then, with the smallest motion, he points at Yoshii.

Clovis Black: "Move him."

The referee points back toward the floor.

Referee: "You move! Down! Now!"

Behind the referee, Trey Mack crawls toward the corner, trying to drag himself upright.

Yoshii takes one step toward Clovis.

The referee wedges himself between the ropes and Clovis, still demanding the enforcer get down.

Jed has finally had enough.

He rushes over, reaches up, and grabs Clovis by the boot from the floor.

Jed Dye: "Off the property!"

Clovis slowly looks down.

Jed realizes what he has done.

Jed Dye: "I regret my legal strategy."

Clovis steps down from the apron, but not because of the referee.

Because of Jed.

Jed backs away immediately, hands up.

Clovis stalks him.

John Phillips: "Jed Dye may have just saved Yoshii from one distraction and created a worse problem for himself!"

Mark Bravo: "Jed poked the locomotive, John. You never poke the locomotive."

Outside the ring, Jed turns and runs around the corner post.

Clovis follows with slow, heavy steps at first.

Then he suddenly accelerates.

Jed's eyes widen as Clovis closes the distance.

Jed Dye: "Oh no!"

Jed dives around the steel steps, barely avoiding Clovis as Black crashes shoulder-first into the steps with a thunderous clang.

The top half of the steps shifts from the impact.

The crowd gasps.

John Phillips: "Clovis hit the steps!"

Mark Bravo: "Jed Dye survived by cowardice and geometry!"

Clovis drops to one knee beside the steps, shaking out his shoulder, anger finally breaking through the stone expression.

Inside the ring, Yoshii sees Clovis down.

Jed pops up behind the steps, points at Clovis, and immediately becomes brave again.

Jed Dye: "That is what you get! That is what you get for violating the traffic pattern!"

Clovis slowly turns his head toward Jed.

Jed ducks back behind the steps.

The referee looks out at Clovis, then at Jed, trying to restore order.

But in the ring, Trey Mack is back on his feet.

Yoshii turns from the ringside chaos.

Trey charges.

Spinning back elbow!

The shot catches Yoshii on the jaw.

The champion staggers.

Trey hits the ropes.

Another spinning back elbow!

Yoshii drops to one knee.

John Phillips: "Trey Mack caught Yoshii while the champion was watching the chaos outside!"

Trey backs into the corner, breathing hard, eyes wide and wild.

He slaps his chest once.

Trey Mack: "When I hit the gas..."

He charges across the ring.

Cannonball in the corner!

But Yoshii is not in the corner.

Trey improvises mid-run, throwing his body into a cannonball-style attack against the kneeling champion.

The impact sends both men crashing backward.

Yoshii falls flat.

Trey rolls through, clutching his back, but forces himself up.

The crowd is roaring now as Trey looks at Yoshii, then toward Clovis.

Clovis is still down near the steps, pushing himself up.

There is no help coming.

Trey realizes it.

His face hardens.

Trey Mack: "Fine."

He grabs Yoshii by the head and starts pulling.

The entire building rises as Trey tries to get the champion upright.

John Phillips: "Trey Mack may be thinking Mack Truck again!"

Mark Bravo: "He tried to lift Yoshii before and nearly got crushed. But if he can somehow hit it, we may have a new United States Champion."

Trey gets Yoshii to one knee.

He throws a body shot.

Another.

Another.

Yoshii doubles slightly.

Trey hooks him.

The crowd noise turns into a nervous roar.

Trey screams as he tries to haul Yoshii up.

For a moment, Yoshii's feet almost leave the mat.

Almost.

Trey's legs shake.

His back strains.

His grip slips.

Yoshii drops back down and lands with both feet planted.

Trey's eyes widen.

Yoshii grabs him by the shoulders.

Massive headbutt.

Trey drops to one knee.

Yoshii grabs him again.

Another headbutt.

Trey sways, barely staying upright.

Yoshii pulls him in and crushes him with a belly-to-belly suplex.

Trey lands hard and rolls toward the center of the ring.

John Phillips: "Yoshii answers! The champion answers with another massive throw!"

Yoshii crawls toward the cover.

He hooks the leg.

Referee: "One!"

Referee: "Two!"

Trey kicks out again.

The crowd erupts.

Yoshii sits up slowly, breathing hard now, sweat pouring down his face.

Jed Dye crawls back into view on the outside, still hiding from Clovis but watching the match.

Jed Dye: "Finish him, Yoshii! For the title! For Japan! For every buffet that believed in you!"

Yoshii turns toward the corner.

Then back toward Trey.

He drags Trey into position.

The crowd rises again.

John Phillips: "Yoshii has Trey positioned! The champion is going back to the corner!"

Mark Bravo: "Third attempt. If he lands this, Trey Mack is finished."

Yoshii steps toward the corner slowly.

Clovis Black is back on his feet outside the ring.

He is holding his shoulder.

But he is standing.

Jed Dye sees him and points frantically.

Jed Dye: "No! No more! Your client is being flattened fair and square!"

Clovis starts toward the apron again.

This time, the referee has seen enough.

He turns and points directly toward the back.

Referee: "That's it! You're out of here! Clovis, you're gone!"

The crowd explodes.

John Phillips: "Clovis Black has been ejected!"

Mark Bravo: "The referee finally had enough! Clovis is out!"

Clovis stands at ringside, staring at the referee.

He does not move.

The referee points again, more forcefully.

Referee: "Go! Now!"

Clovis turns his head toward Trey, who is still down in the ring.

Trey reaches one hand out, half pleading, half furious.

Trey Mack: "Nah, nah, nah..."

Clovis looks back at Yoshii climbing the corner.

Then at Jed Dye.

Jed is smiling now.

A terrible idea forms in Jed's face.

Jed Dye: "Bye-bye, train man."

Clovis takes one step toward Jed.

The referee yells again.

Referee: "Leave!"

Security appears near the ramp, approaching cautiously.

Clovis stares at them.

Then finally backs away.

Slowly.

Furious.

The crowd boos and cheers in a chaotic mix as Clovis starts up the ramp.

Inside the ring, Yoshii reaches the second rope.

Trey is still down.

Jed Dye throws both arms into the air.

Jed Dye: "No train! No problem! Drop the bomb!"

Yoshii steadies himself.

The crowd rises.

Trey suddenly rolls toward the ropes.

He is not close enough to escape.

But he is close enough to grab the referee by the shirt as the official turns back from ejecting Clovis.

The referee stumbles forward.

Yoshii hesitates on the second rope, not wanting to come down with the referee off balance near the landing zone.

John Phillips: "Trey grabbed the referee! Trey just bought himself another second!"

Mark Bravo: "The challenger is surviving by inches and interruptions!"

Yoshii climbs down from the second rope, frustrated, and reaches for Trey.

Trey suddenly pulls the referee slightly into Yoshii's path.

Yoshii stops himself short to avoid crushing the official.

The referee yanks free and warns Trey.

Referee: "Don't touch me again!"

That moment gives Trey enough time to roll underneath Yoshii.

He pops up behind the champion.

Low chop block to the back of Yoshii's leg.

Yoshii drops to one knee.

Trey hits the ropes.

Full speed.

Rolling senton across Yoshii's back.

Yoshii drops flat again.

Trey crawls to the cover.

Referee: "One!"

Referee: "Two!"

Yoshii kicks out.

Trey screams in frustration and slams both hands into the mat.

Trey Mack: "Stay down!"

Yoshii starts to rise again.

The crowd noise builds with him.

Trey backs into the corner, exhausted, angry, and running on instinct now.

Yoshii gets to both knees.

Trey sees the target.

He charges.

Cannonball!

Yoshii catches him.

Not clean.

Not standing.

But enough.

Yoshii traps Trey's body against his own massive frame and rolls backward, crushing Trey underneath him in a sudden counter.

The referee drops to count.

Referee: "One!"

Referee: "Two!"

Trey kicks out at the last second.

John Phillips: "Near fall! Yoshii almost retained right there!"

Both men separate, barely moving.

Clovis Black has stopped halfway up the ramp despite security trying to move him.

Jed Dye is screaming himself hoarse at ringside.

The United States Championship sits at the timekeeper's table, waiting for someone to survive long enough to claim it.

Mark Bravo: "This main event has become chaos, John. Clovis ejected, Jed losing his mind, Trey refusing to die, Yoshii refusing to fall."

Yoshii rises first.

Trey reaches for the ropes.

Yoshii grabs him.

Trey suddenly rakes the eyes.

The referee sees enough of it this time and warns him hard.

Referee: "Trey! Last warning!"

Trey Mack: "I'm trying to win a title!"

Yoshii staggers backward, blinded.

Trey hits the ropes.

Spinning back elbow.

Yoshii staggers.

Trey hits the ropes again.

Another spinning back elbow.

Yoshii drops to one knee.

Trey backs up, measuring him.

He charges again.

Yoshii reaches out blindly and grabs him around the waist.

Belly-to-belly—

No.

Trey blocks with both hands against Yoshii's head.

He drives a knee into Yoshii's face.

Then another.

Yoshii releases.

Trey steps back, grabs Yoshii by the head, and pulls him into position.

The crowd realizes what he is trying to do.

John Phillips: "Trey is going for it again!"

Mark Bravo: "No way. No way he gets him up."

Trey screams.

He bends.

He lifts.

Yoshii's feet leave the mat.

Only slightly.

But enough for the building to explode.

Trey cannot get him all the way up.

His legs buckle.

Yoshii drops back down.

Yoshii's weight crushes Trey backward again.

But Trey rolls through the collapse, grabbing Yoshii's legs as they fall.

He stacks the champion awkwardly.

Referee: "One!"

Referee: "Two!"

Yoshii powers out.

Trey rolls backward into the corner, stunned but still alive.

Yoshii gets to one knee.

Then both feet.

Trey looks at him.

For the first time, Trey Mack's expression says what everyone else has been thinking.

How?

Yoshii points at him.

Yoshii: "Done."

Yoshii charges.

Massive corner splash!

Trey moves.

Yoshii hits the turnbuckles hard.

Trey rolls behind him.

He grabs Yoshii from the side and uses every bit of leverage he can find.

He cannot lift him.

So he pulls him backward into a modified schoolboy.

Trey hooks one leg.

Then the other.

He stacks all his weight forward.

His feet hit the ropes for leverage.

The referee drops down.

Referee: "One!"

Referee: "Two!"

Jed Dye sees the feet.

Jed Dye: "Ropes! Ropes! Ropes!"

The referee looks up and sees Trey's feet on the ropes.

Referee: "Break! Feet off the ropes!"

Trey releases the pin, furious, rolling away before Yoshii can grab him.

Trey Mack: "Come on!"

Clovis Black, still on the ramp, shoves past one security guard and starts back toward the ring.

The referee sees him coming.

Referee: "Security! Get him out!"

Two more security members move toward Clovis.

Clovis drops one with a forearm.

The crowd erupts.

John Phillips: "Clovis Black just dropped security!"

Another security guard grabs Clovis from behind.

Clovis throws him off into the barricade.

The referee turns fully toward the chaos.

Jed Dye sees the referee distracted and looks into the ring.

Trey is reaching into his tights.

Jed's eyes widen.

Jed Dye: "No! No! Object! Object! Foreign thing! Foreign thing!"

Trey pulls out a small chain wrapped around his fist.

The crowd boos loudly.

Yoshii rises, still dazed from the corner collision.

Trey swings.

Jed Dye reaches into the ring and grabs Trey's ankle.

Trey stumbles.

The chain shot misses Yoshii by inches.

Yoshii turns.

Trey looks down at Jed, furious.

Trey Mack: "Man, let go!"

Jed hangs on for dear life.

Jed Dye: "I am protecting national interests!"

Trey tries to kick him away.

Yoshii steps in.

He grabs Trey by the wrist.

The chain drops to the mat.

The referee turns back just in time to see the chain hit the canvas.

He looks at Trey.

Then at the chain.

Trey's face says everything.

Referee: "What the hell is that?!"

Before the referee can make a call, Yoshii pulls Trey forward.

Massive palm strike to the chest.

Trey staggers backward into the corner, the air blasted from his body.

Yoshii charges.

Corner splash!

Trey is crushed.

He staggers forward, barely standing.

Yoshii grabs him and throws him down in the center of the ring.

The crowd explodes.

John Phillips: "Yoshii has Trey down! The chain backfired!"

Outside the ring, Clovis Black is fighting with security on the ramp.

Jed Dye is screaming at the referee to watch the ring.

Yoshii points to the corner.

Yoshii: "YOSHII!"

The crowd roars with him.

The champion climbs.

Slow.

Heavy.

Final.

Mark Bravo: "If he lands this, it is over. There is no Clovis now. No chain. No shortcut."

Yoshii reaches the second rope.

Trey is flat on the mat.

The referee kicks the chain out of the ring and turns back.

Clovis tries to break through security.

Jed Dye runs halfway up the ramp and jumps onto Clovis's back.

John Phillips: "Jed Dye just jumped on Clovis Black!"

Mark Bravo: "That may be the bravest and dumbest thing Jed has ever done!"

Clovis staggers for half a step, reaching back for Jed.

Security swarms him at the same time, pulling him away from the ring.

In the ring, Yoshii looks down at Trey.

Then jumps.

Bonzai Drop!

The impact is enormous.

Trey's body jolts under the full weight of the champion.

The crowd explodes.

Yoshii stays seated across Trey's chest as the referee drops to count.

Referee: "One!"

Referee: "Two!"

Referee: "Three!"

DING DING DING!

The arena erupts as Yoshii's music hits.

Ring Announcer: "Here is your winner... and STILL UTA United States Champion... YOSHII!"

Yoshii slowly rolls off Trey and sits on the mat, breathing heavily, exhausted but victorious.

The referee retrieves the United States Championship and brings it to him.

On the ramp, security finally forces Clovis Black backward while Jed Dye slides off his back and scrambles away before Clovis can get a hand on him.

John Phillips: "Yoshii retains! Yoshii survives Trey Mack, Clovis Black, a chain, a low blow, and everything The New Empire threw at him!"

Mark Bravo: "That was not a title defense. That was a natural disaster response exercise."

Yoshii gets to his feet slowly as the referee raises his arm.

The United States Championship is handed back to him, and Yoshii clutches it against his chest before raising it high.

Yoshii: "YOSHII!"

The crowd roars back.

Jed Dye, now safely away from Clovis, rushes down the ramp and slides into the ring.

He immediately points at Yoshii like he personally manufactured the champion's victory.

Jed Dye: "That is my guy! That is the United States Champion! That is the largest successful export in professional wrestling history!"

Yoshii looks at Jed.

Jed looks up at him, still breathless from jumping on Clovis.

Yoshii places one massive hand on Jed's shoulder.

Jed beams with pride.

Yoshii: "Good."

Jed points to himself, deeply moved.

Jed Dye: "He said good! He said good! Write that down!"

Outside the ring, Trey Mack rolls toward the apron, clutching his ribs, barely moving after the Bonzai Drop.

Clovis Black has stopped fighting security near the ramp.

He stares into the ring.

Not at Yoshii.

At Jed.

Jed notices.

His celebration immediately becomes smaller.

Jed Dye: "Still worth it."

Mark Bravo: "Jed Dye may have helped save the United States Championship for Yoshii, but he also may have put himself on Clovis Black's to-do list."

John Phillips: "Yoshii retains in our main event, but I do not think The New Empire will forget how this ended."

Yoshii stands in the center of the ring, United States Championship raised high.

Jed Dye stands beside him, trying to look brave while keeping one eye on Clovis.

At ringside, Trey Mack is helped toward the floor, furious and damaged.

On the ramp, Clovis Black backs away slowly, eyes still locked on the ring.

The final image is Yoshii holding the title above his head while the San Juan crowd roars around him.

The champion survived.

The United States Championship stays with Yoshii.

Conclusion

Also scheduled to appear: Suanita Ybanez, Chris Ross, The Empire, WrestleZone Champion Mikey Unlikely, International Champion Bobby Dean, Hardcore and Women's Champion Emily Hightower, and UTA Champion Maxwell Jett.

CARD SUBJECT TO CHANGE

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