

Monday Night Ward: #367

August 31, 2026 | Sydney Entertainment Centre - Sydney, New South Wales

#367 Introduction

[BLACK SCREEN]

The unmistakable sound of distant crowd noise begins to rise.

A heartbeat.

THUMP.

Another.

THUMP.

Then--

A low, distorted guitar riff tears through the darkness.

"ASYLUM" -- DISTURBED

[CUT TO WIDE SHOT]

The screen suddenly explodes into life.

The massive **Sydney Entertainment Centre** is absolutely packed.

Thousands upon thousands of AWS fans fill the building, their voices colliding into one deafening wall of sound. Crimson and black lights sweep across the audience while gigantic video boards flash the unmistakable **ASYLUM WRESTLING SOCIETY** logo.

The camera slowly glides over the crowd.

Australian flags wave throughout the arena.

Fans hold handmade signs high above their heads:

"WELCOME TO THE ASYLUM!"

Monday Night Ward: #367

"SYDNEY WANTS VIOLENCE!"

"WARD #367!"

"AWS! AWS! AWS!"

The camera swings toward the center of the arena.

And there it is.

THE ASYLUM.

The spectacular AWS entrance stage towers over the arena like something ripped straight from a nightmare.

Rust-covered steel framework.

Massive barred windows.

Flickering fluorescent lights.

Industrial pipes.

Chains hanging from the ceiling.

Emergency warning strobes pulsing crimson.

A huge steel **ASYLUM** sign dominates the center of the set while artificial smoke rolls across the entrance ramp.

The camera pushes closer.

A pair of gigantic metal asylum doors sit at the top of the ramp.

They slam shut.

BOOM!

The crowd explodes.

[CUT TO CROWD]

Fans jump to their feet.

Monday Night Ward: #367

Some are screaming.

Some are pounding the barricades.

Others are filming the spectacle with their phones.

The camera sweeps across the lower bowl...

Then the upper deck...

Then back across the floor...

The entire building appears to be moving.

[CAMERA PAN -- RINGSIDE]

The AWS ring sits beneath a brilliant white spotlight.

The ropes glisten.

The AWS logo is centered on the canvas.

The camera circles the ring before sweeping back toward the entrance stage.

Another eruption of pyro blasts from the stage.

BOOM! BOOM! BOOM!

The crowd roars.

[CUT TO BROADCAST BOOTH]

Positioned on the **left side of the insane asylum-themed entrance set** is the AWS Monday Night Ward commentary and broadcast area.

At the desk sit:

GINNIFER "GIDGET" STEPHENSON, the energetic play-by-play voice of Ward.

Beside her is **TODD WINCHESTER**, the cynical and sharp-tongued color commentator.

Nearby, ready to make her presence felt throughout the night, stands **AMY MARINO**, AWS ring announcer.

Monday Night Ward: #367

And moving around the perimeter of the booth with a microphone in hand is **CASPER BROOKS**, prepared to chase down the competitors and personalities of AWS throughout the evening.

The camera slowly pushes toward the desk.

Gidget smiles as the crowd continues roaring.

GIDGET STEPHENSON:

"SYDNEY! AUSTRALIA! ARE YOU READY?!"

The response is thunderous.

CROWD:

"YEEEEEEEEAAAAAAHHHHH!!!"

Todd shakes his head with a grin.

TODD WINCHESTER:

"Listen to this place, Gidget. We haven't even had the opening bell yet and Sydney is already louder than most buildings I've been in."

GIDGET:

"Louder? Todd, this isn't loud. This is absolutely **insane!**"

Gidget turns toward the camera.

GIDGET:

"WELCOME, EVERYONE, TO ASYLUM WRESTLING SOCIETY'S MONDAY NIGHT WARD!"

The crowd erupts again.

GIDGET:

Monday Night Ward: #367

"WELCOME TO WARD #367!"

A huge **367** graphic flashes across the arena screens.

BOOM!

GIDGET:

"AND WELCOME TO SYDNEY, NEW SOUTH WALES, AUSTRALIA!"

Another gigantic roar.

TODD:

"Tonight, Sydney gets a front-row seat to the most unpredictable professional wrestling on the planet."

Todd looks toward the asylum set.

TODD:

"And judging by that entranceway, the patients appear to have already escaped."

Gidget laughs.

GIDGET:

"That's exactly what makes Monday Night Ward so dangerous!"

The camera cuts away from the booth.

[CUT TO AMY MARINO]

Amy stands at ringside, microphone in hand, watching the crowd with a grin.

AMY MARINO:

"Gidget, Todd, I don't think Sydney understands what they've signed up for tonight."

Monday Night Ward: #367

The camera follows Amy's gaze toward the ring.

AMY:

"And frankly... neither do we."

[CUT TO CASPER BROOKS]

Casper leans against the barricade, microphone resting against his shoulder.

CASPER BROOKS:

"That's the beauty of AWS."

He looks directly into the camera.

CASPER:

"You never know who is going to walk through those doors... and you never know what they're going to do once they get inside."

The camera abruptly swings back toward the entrance stage.

The asylum doors flicker beneath the crimson lights.

A loud metallic **CLANG** echoes throughout the building.

The crowd goes wild.

GIDGET:

"Oh, here we go!"

The camera rapidly cuts between the entrance stage, the crowd and the broadcast booth.

TODD:

"Something tells me the insanity is about to begin."

Monday Night Ward: #367

The music rises.

The arena lights drop.

Thousands of fans lift their phones into the air.

The camera pulls back into a gigantic establishing shot of the entire Sydney Entertainment Centre.

GIDGET:

"SYDNEY, GET ON YOUR FEET!"

The crowd stands.

GIDGET:

"BECAUSE MONDAY NIGHT WARD #367... IS OFFICIALLY UNDERWAY!"

BOOM!

Pyro erupts across the asylum entrance set.

The AWS logo fills the screen.

ASYLUM WRESTLING SOCIETY

MONDAY NIGHT WARD #367

LIVE FROM SYDNEY, NEW SOUTH WALES, AUSTRALIA

The camera cuts to the ring.

The opening bell sounds.

DING! DING!

GIDGET:

Monday Night Ward: #367

"LET THE INSANITY BEGIN!"

[SMASH CUT TO OPENING MATCH GRAPHIC]

AWS MONDAY NIGHT WARD #367

THE ASYLUM HAS OPENED.

ONE © Vs Mason Hurst

The Fight Pit inside the Sydney Entertainment Centre becomes a human pressure cooker as **ONE** puts the AWS 5150 Championship on the line against Sydney's own "**The Australian Colossus**" **Mason Hurst**. From the opening bell, there is no feeling-out process. These two immediately collide in the center of the pit, exchanging enormous forearms and punishing body shots while the steel structure rattles around them.

ONE initially uses his size and raw power to dictate the pace. He drives Mason repeatedly into the steel, grinds his forearm across the challenger's face, and smashes him with a brutal running shoulder block. Mason refuses to stay down, answering with sharp knees, elbows and calculated strikes to ONE's ribs. Before long, both men are bleeding heavily, crimson running down their faces as they continue fighting through the damage.

The match swings wildly back and forth. ONE nearly puts Mason away with a devastating powerbomb against the canvas, but Mason somehow kicks out. ONE climbs the structure and attempts to finish things from above, only for Mason to meet him on the platform and batter him with repeated headbutts. Mason then sends ONE crashing back into the pit.

That is when the challenger changes his strategy.

Rather than trying to overpower ONE, **Mason starts attacking the base.**

He repeatedly chops at ONE's knees with low kicks. He smashes a knee against the steel frame. He sweeps ONE's leg out from underneath him and immediately follows with another vicious stomp to the kneecap. ONE tries desperately to stand, but Mason keeps cutting him down.

GINNIFER "GIDGET" STEPHENSON:

"Mason Hurst has figured it out! He can't outmuscle ONE, so he's taking away the foundation that makes ONE so dangerous!"

Monday Night Ward: #367

ONE manages one final burst of power, catching Mason and driving him into the mat. Both men are exhausted, bloodied and barely able to stand.

ONE charges.

Mason sidesteps.

ONE'S KNEE COLLIDES WITH THE STEEL.

ONE collapses.

Mason immediately grabs the leg.

He drags ONE toward the center of the pit, steps over him and hooks both legs.

SHARPSHOOTER!

ONE screams.

Mason sits deep, leaning backward with everything he has.

ONE claws at the canvas.

He tries to crawl toward the ropes--but there are **no ropes to save him.**

ONE reaches for the steel fencing.

He's inches away.

Mason shifts his weight and cranks the hold tighter.

TODD WINCHESTER:

"There's nowhere to go! There's absolutely nowhere to go!"

ONE's face twists in agony.

His arms begin to tremble.

Mason screams through gritted teeth:

MASON HURST:

"THIS IS MY HOUSE!"

ONE reaches again.

His fingers fall short.

The champion's struggling slows.

His arms drop.

His head falls backward.

ONE PASSES OUT.

The referee immediately checks him.

No response.

The referee calls for the bell.

DING! DING! DING!

The Sydney crowd erupts.

Mason releases the hold and collapses onto his back, completely spent. Blood covers both men as Mason slowly rolls toward the corner, using the steel to pull himself upright.

The referee raises his arm.

WINNER -- AND NEW AWS 5150 CHAMPION:

"THE AUSTRALIAN COLOSSUS" MASON HURST

Mason is handed the **AWS 5150 Championship**.

He stares at the title through blood-covered eyes before raising it above his head.

Monday Night Ward: #367

The Sydney crowd absolutely loses its mind.

GIDGET:

"MASON HURST HAS DONE IT! THE AUSTRALIAN COLOSSUS HAS SURVIVED THE FIGHT PIT!"

TODD:

"He didn't beat ONE at his own game. He beat him with intelligence, ring awareness and sheer determination! Mason Hurst saw the weakness--and when the opportunity came, he took the damn leg!"

Mason climbs onto the steel platform and raises the championship high above his head as the camera captures the bloodied former champion being tended to below.

ONE is unconscious.

Mason Hurst is champion.

And in one of the most brutal contests of the night, the **AWS 5150 Championship changes hands in Sydney.**

When did the rules change?

Ivy Kross was halfway through answering an email when Mixie appeared in the doorway.

No dinosaur.

No chocolate milk.

No ridiculous glasses.

That was how Ivy knew something was wrong.

"Hey."

Ivy closed the laptop.

"Hey."

Monday Night Ward: #367

Mixie remained in the doorway.

"I have a question."

"Okay."

"It's not a funny one."

"I gathered."

Mixie walked into the room and sat opposite her.

For once, she sat properly.

Feet barely reaching the floor.

"Ivy?"

"Yes?"

"When adults change rules..."

She stopped.

Ivy waited.

"Do they change them because the rules weren't fair?"

"Sometimes."

"Okay."

Mixie looked at her hands.

"And sometimes they change them because something happened that showed the rule didn't work properly?"

"Yes."

"Okay."

Another silence.

Monday Night Ward: #367

Ivy didn't interrupt it.

Mixie finally looked up.

"What if the rule was okay yesterday?"

Ivy's expression changed slightly.

"What do you mean?"

"Everybody knew the rule."

"Yes."

"Everybody played with it."

"Yes."

"And nobody said it was bad."

Mixie's fingers curled around the edge of the chair.

"Then I play."

Ivy said nothing.

"And after I play, somebody says the rule needs to change."

There it was.

Mixie swallowed.

"How do I know if they found something wrong with the rule..."

Her eyes dropped again.

"...or if I did something wrong?"

Ivy leaned back.

"You ask."

"I did."

Monday Night Ward: #367

"And?"

"I don't understand the answer."

That one hurt.

Ivy took a moment before responding.

"Then they haven't explained it well enough."

Mixie looked up.

"That's different from me being bad?"

"Very."

"But what if they say I need to adapt?"

"You can."

Mixie's face tightened.

Ivy continued.

"Adapting doesn't mean accepting every change without understanding it."

Mixie was quiet.

"If somebody changes a rule because it was unfair, they should be able to explain what was unfair."

A small nod.

"If something happened that exposed a problem nobody had noticed before, they should be able to explain the problem."

Another nod.

"And if the rule changed because of something you did?"

Mixie looked directly at her.

"Then what?"

Monday Night Ward: #367

"Then they should be able to tell you what you did."

Silence.

"That seems easy."

"It should be."

Mixie frowned.

"But adults make it complicated."

"Adults make most things complicated."

"Why?"

"Usually because we have considerably more confidence than information."

Mixie almost smiled.

Almost.

Then:

"I don't mind losing."

"I know."

"I don't mind somebody being better."

"I know."

"I don't even mind changing how I play if something isn't working."

"I know that too."

Mixie's feet swung once beneath the chair.

"I just don't like when I learn the rules and then somebody moves them and acts like I should've known where they were going."

Ivy stared at her.

Monday Night Ward: #367

Mixie looked uncomfortable now.

Not angry.

That was worse.

"Because then I don't know how to be good."

Ivy's expression softened.

"You don't need to predict where somebody might move the rules."

"But what if that's how you win?"

"Then that's not a rule."

Mixie looked at her.

Ivy held the gaze.

"That's guessing what somebody wants."

A long silence followed.

Mixie slowly nodded.

"That's different."

"Yes."

"I can learn rules."

"I know."

"I can learn from losing."

"Yes."

"I can adapt."

"Yes."

Mixie looked toward the floor.

Monday Night Ward: #367

"But I can't learn something nobody tells me until afterward."

"No."

Another silence.

Then Mixie asked the question she'd apparently been carrying into the room.

"Did they change the rules because they wanted things to be fair?"

Ivy waited.

"Or because of something I did?"

This time Ivy didn't pretend to have an answer she didn't possess.

"I don't know."

Mixie looked at her.

Ivy leaned forward.

"But you're allowed to ask."

Mixie nodded.

"And if they don't know?"

"Then they can say they don't know."

"And if they're still figuring it out?"

"They can say that too."

Mixie considered this for several seconds.

"That would actually help."

"I know."

Finally, Mixie climbed down from the chair.

She made it halfway to the door.

Monday Night Ward: #367

"Mixie?"

She stopped.

"You didn't do anything wrong by asking where the rules are."

Mixie looked back.

A tiny smile.

"Good."

Then she disappeared into the hallway.

Three seconds passed.

Her head reappeared around the doorframe.

"Ivy?"

"Yes?"

"Steve still knows what he did."

Ivy closed her eyes.

"There is no Steve."

Mixie disappeared again.

"THAT'S WHAT HE WANTS YOU TO THINK!"

Ivy sighed.

At least that sounded more like her.

Fiona O'Connell © (CWF) Vs The Harrower © (AWS)

4 Winds Wrestling Tempest Championship -- Ladder Match

Monday Night Ward: #367

Fiona O'Connell (Champion) vs. The Harrower (Challenger & AWS C4 Division Champion)

The bell rings and **Fiona O'Connell** immediately gets out of the ring, refusing to allow **The Harrower** to turn the championship match into a straight-up brawl. The challenger, already carrying the AWS C4 Division Championship, gives chase--but Fiona slides back inside and catches him with a running dropkick before sending him sprawling through the ropes.

The match quickly becomes a chaotic battle of positioning and timing. Fiona uses the ladders with precision, setting one up in the center of the ring and forcing Harrower to constantly climb after her. Harrower relies on his power, repeatedly catching Fiona during her attempts and launching her into the ladder. At one point, he hoists Fiona onto his shoulders and drives her into an open ladder with a devastating **powerbomb**, leaving both competitors down.

Harrower begins climbing.

He reaches the upper rungs and stretches toward the Tempest Championship.

Fiona desperately climbs the opposite side.

GINNIFER "GIDGET" STEPHENSON:

"The Harrower is one step away from becoming a double champion!"

Harrower gets his fingertips around the belt--

--but Fiona swings a leg over the ladder and drills him with a series of vicious forearms.

Harrower falls backward, crashing onto another ladder below.

Fiona nearly loses her balance but manages to stay on the ladder. She climbs higher, only for Harrower to stagger back to his feet and shove the ladder over.

Fiona crashes onto the ropes and rolls out of the ring.

Harrower retrieves a second ladder and sets it up against the turnbuckles. He charges toward Fiona, intending to crush her against it--but Fiona moves at the last second.

Harrower crashes into the ladder!

Fiona immediately grabs the ladder and lays it across the ring ropes.

She climbs to the top turnbuckle.

TODD WINCHESTER:

"Oh, no. Fiona O'Connell is thinking something insane!"

Fiona launches herself.

DIVING LEG DROP!

Harrower is driven through the ladder.

The crowd erupts.

Both competitors lie motionless.

Fiona eventually crawls back toward the center of the ring. She notices the ladder still standing and begins dragging herself upward. Harrower, battered and exhausted, follows her.

Both reach the top.

They exchange punches while standing precariously on the ladder.

Harrower gains the advantage.

He grabs Fiona by the throat.

He looks ready to throw her from the ladder--

Fiona counters.

She jams her elbow into Harrower's ribs, hooks his arm and violently slams his face against the top of the ladder.

Harrower falls.

Fiona climbs the final few rungs.

She reaches up.

Her fingers close around the championship.

Harrower makes one last desperate attempt to stop her, but Fiona kicks him away.

GIDGET:

"SHE'S GOT IT!"

Fiona unhooks the **4 Winds Wrestling Tempest Championship**.

DING! DING! DING!

The arena erupts as Fiona drops to the canvas clutching her championship.

WINNER AND STILL 4 WINDS WRESTLING TEMPEST CHAMPION:

FIONA O'CONNELL

Fiona sits against the ropes, breathing heavily, bruised and exhausted. She looks across the ring at The Harrower, who is slowly pulling himself from the wreckage of the ladders.

Fiona raises the Tempest Championship overhead.

Harrower remains the **AWS C4 Division Champion**, but his attempt to add another championship to his collection has failed.

TODD WINCHESTER:

"The Harrower came within inches of becoming a double champion tonight, but Fiona O'Connell refused to surrender her throne!"

GIDGET:

"Fiona survives the ladder war! The Tempest Championship remains with its champion!"

Fiona climbs onto the turnbuckles and raises the title above her head as the crowd celebrates.

The Tempest Championship stays with Fiona O'Connell.

Monday Night Ward: #367

Rylie Stone Vs Kamille Kaos

The opening bell barely sounds before **Rylie Stone** and **Kamille Kaos** launch themselves into a violent fight that immediately spills beyond the ring. With advancement in the **2026 AWS Shortcut to the Top Tournament** on the line, neither newcomer is willing to give an inch.

Kamille brings an aggressive, unpredictable offense, smashing Rylie with hard strikes and using whatever the Sydney arena provides as a weapon. Rylie answers with speed and calculated brutality, repeatedly targeting Kamille's legs and head while forcing the fight farther away from the ring. The bout quickly becomes a chaotic tour of the arena floor, barricades, entrance ramp and ringside area.

Both women suffer punishment, but Kamille begins bleeding heavily after Rylie drives her into a piece of exposed ringside equipment. Kamille refuses medical attention and insists on continuing.

GINNIFER "GIDGET" STEPHENSON:

"Kamille Kaos is bleeding profusely, but she is absolutely refusing to stop! This is the kind of determination--and desperation--that the Shortcut to the Top Tournament brings out!"

Rylie realizes Kamille is becoming increasingly compromised.

Instead of backing away, she goes after her opponent relentlessly.

A running knee sends Kamille crashing against the barricade. Rylie follows with a vicious series of strikes before attempting a pin directly on the arena floor.

ONE!

TWO!

KAMILLE KICKS OUT!

The crowd erupts.

Kamille somehow finds another burst of energy. She catches Rylie with a brutal counter and sends her crashing onto the entrance ramp. Kamille then climbs onto the staging platform and launches herself onto Rylie below.

CRASH!

Both women lie motionless.

Monday Night Ward: #367

Kamille slowly gets back to her feet, but the blood loss is clearly taking its toll. Her movements become unsteady. She tries to continue, only for Rylie to catch her with another devastating sequence that leaves Kamille sprawled on the arena floor.

Rylie attempts another cover.

ONE!

TWO!

Kamille barely moves.

The referee stops the count.

Medical personnel rush over to assess Kamille.

Kamille tries desperately to push them away.

KAMILLE KAOS:

"I'M NOT DONE!"

But her body tells a different story.

The referee consults with the medical staff. Kamille has simply lost too much blood to safely continue.

The official makes the call.

DING! DING! DING!

The crowd falls silent for a moment before the announcement is made.

WINNER -- RYLIE STONE

ADVANCING IN THE 2026 AWS SHORTCUT TO THE TOP TOURNAMENT

Rylie stands several feet away, breathing heavily as officials tend to Kamille. There is no celebration at first--just the realization that she has survived one of the most brutal fights of her young AWS career.

Monday Night Ward: #367

TODD WINCHESTER:

"There is no shame in what Kamille Kaos did tonight. She fought until her body physically wouldn't let her fight anymore."

Gidget watches as Rylie looks down at her fallen opponent.

GIDGET:

"Rylie Stone advances, but what an absolutely brutal price Kamille Kaos paid. She refused to quit, she refused to surrender, and ultimately the referee had no choice but to stop this contest because Kamille had lost too much blood to continue."

Rylie finally raises her fist toward the crowd.

She advances.

Kamille Kaos is helped from the arena by medical personnel.

And the **2026 AWS Shortcut to the Top Tournament** moves one step closer to its final showdown.

Ranky Mc Rank Face

MIXIE'S OFFICIAL VERY SCIENTIFIC AWS RANKINGS

Ivy Kross knew something was wrong when she saw the whiteboard.

Not because whiteboards were inherently dangerous.

Not because Mixie wasn't allowed to own markers.

Although, in hindsight, perhaps that policy needed revisiting.

It was because Mixie had written:

OFFICIAL AWS RANKINGS

across the top.

Underneath it:

ELITE
MIDCARD
OPENING ACT
STEVE

Ivy stared.

Mixie stood proudly beside the board wearing a pair of glasses with no lenses in them.

"No."

"You haven't even seen the rankings."

"I've seen enough."

"They're scientific."

"They contain Steve."

Mixie pointed at the bottom category.

"Steve is important."

"Who is Steve?"

"Nobody knows."

"Then how is he important?"

"Exactly."

Ivy closed her eyes.

"Mixie, why are you ranking people?"

"Because apparently that's what adults do."

That got Ivy's attention.

Mixie turned toward the board.

Monday Night Ward: #367

"They decide somebody is elite."

She tapped the word.

"Then somebody is midcard."

Tap.

"Then somebody is opening act."

Tap.

"And then Steve."

Tap.

"Why is Steve below opening act?"

"He knows what he did."

"Steve doesn't exist."

"That's what Steve wants you to think."

Ivy rubbed her temples.

"Fine. Who is elite?"

Mixie immediately erased the entire board.

Ivy blinked.

"Mixie."

"I fixed it."

The new rankings began.

WOULD SHARE CHOCOLATE MILK WITH

"That's not a wrestling category."

Monday Night Ward: #367

"It is now."

Mixie started writing names.

"People who are nice. People who don't steal. People who don't hurt kittens. People who bring snacks."

"You haven't named anybody."

"I'm establishing criteria."

"That is disturbingly responsible."

Mixie drew a dinosaur beside the heading.

"Also dinosaurs."

"Dinosaurs aren't on the AWS roster."

"Cowards."

Next category.

FUN TO CLIMB

Ivy immediately pointed at her.

"No."

"Damien."

"No."

"Seven-foot-six."

"He is a human being."

"That's three-foot-four taller than me."

"Still a person."

"Jamal."

Monday Night Ward: #367

"No."

"Six-foot-four."

"No people climbing."

Mixie reluctantly added:

(ASK FIRST)

Ivy considered it.

"Better."

Next:

PROBABLY KNOWS WHAT THEY'RE DOING

Mixie stared at the empty space.

Then at Ivy.

Then back at the board.

"That seems judgmental."

"You created rankings."

"Yeah, but I'm starting to understand the responsibility."

Ivy's expression changed.

For one glorious moment, she thought a lesson had been learned.

Mixie erased the category.

Ivy smiled.

Then Mixie wrote:

LOOKS LIKE THEY KNOW WHAT THEY'RE DOING BUT MIXIE REQUIRES MORE DATA

Ivy's smile disappeared.

"Scientific."

"Of course."

Next:

PEOPLE WHO NEED A NAP

Mixie immediately wrote several names.

Ivy stepped in front of the board.

"We are not showing that."

"They know who they are."

"Apparently so do you."

"They're grumpy."

"Some people are under considerable stress."

"Nap."

"Some people have responsibilities."

"Nap."

"Some people run companies."

Mixie stopped.

Slowly, she turned toward Ivy.

"Oh."

"No."

Mixie began writing.

Monday Night Ward: #367

"Mixie."

The marker squeaked.

MANAGEMENT

Ivy lunged.

Mixie dodged.

"Absolutely not."

"I haven't ranked them yet!"

"That is precisely what I'm preventing."

Mixie ducked around the other side of the whiteboard.

"Management gets their own category."

"They don't need one."

"Everybody gets evaluated fairly."

Ivy froze.

Mixie froze.

For approximately three seconds, neither said anything.

Then Mixie smiled.

Ivy pointed at her.

"Careful."

Mixie turned back to the board.

Under **MANAGEMENT**, she wrote:

TRYING VERY HARD

Monday Night Ward: #367

Ivy stared at it.

Mixie considered her work.

Then added:

Needs clearer instructions sometimes.

"Mixie."

"What?"

"That's management."

"I know."

"They employ people."

"I know."

"They make decisions about your career."

Mixie nodded seriously.

Then added a gold star.

"There."

Ivy stared.

"You gave management a gold star."

"They're trying."

"That may be the most condescending thing you've ever done."

"I was being supportive!"

"You ranked the people running the company as 'trying very hard.'"

"Would two stars help?"

"No."

Monday Night Ward: #367

Mixie added another.

"Mixie."

"Adapt."

Ivy's eyes narrowed.

Mixie very carefully put the marker down.

"Sorry."

Silence.

Then Mixie looked at the board again.

"You know what the problem is?"

"I can think of several."

"I don't know enough."

Ivy blinked.

Mixie pointed toward the original erased rankings.

"I can call somebody elite."

She shrugged.

"But what if they're rubbish tomorrow?"

Ivy said nothing.

"I can call somebody midcard."

Another shrug.

"But what if they're awesome tomorrow?"

A pause.

"And what if Steve gets better?"

Monday Night Ward: #367

"There is no Steve."

"We don't know that."

"Mixie."

"Fine."

She picked the marker back up.

Ivy watched cautiously.

Mixie erased everything.

Every category.

Every ranking.

Even management's two gold stars.

Then she wrote one final heading.

CURRENT AWS OFFICIAL MIXIE RANKINGS

Underneath:

PEOPLE WHO DID SOMETHING COOL RECENTLY

PEOPLE WHO HAVE NOT DONE SOMETHING COOL YET

PEOPLE MIXIE NEEDS MORE INFORMATION ABOUT

DAMIEN KOSTICH, WHO IS STILL TOO FUCKING TALL

Ivy stared.

"That last one isn't a ranking."

Monday Night Ward: #367

"It is measurable."

"Unfortunately, yes."

Mixie nodded.

"Science."

She capped the marker.

Ivy looked over the board.

"So you've abandoned elite and midcard?"

Mixie shrugged.

"Too complicated."

"Why?"

"Because then I have to decide what somebody is before they do anything."

Ivy looked at her.

Mixie hugged her stuffed dinosaur.

"That seems dumb."

A long silence.

Ivy finally nodded.

"Sometimes the simplest answer is the correct one."

Mixie's face lit up.

"STEVE!"

"No."

"STEVE WAS THE SIMPLEST!"

"There is no Steve!"

Monday Night Ward: #367

Mixie ran from the room.

"FREE STEVE!"

"FROM WHAT?!"

The door slammed.

Ivy stood alone beside the whiteboard.

She looked at **DAMIEN KOSTICH, WHO IS STILL TOO FUCKING TALL.**

She sighed.

Then quietly added a checkmark beside it.

"Objectively."

From the hallway:

"I HEARD THAT!"

Cut to black.

Orphius Marius vs. Vinzenz Krüger

2026 AWS Shortcut to the Top Tournament

Ultimate Submission Match

Orphius Marius vs. Vinzenz Krüger

The **2026 AWS Shortcut to the Top Tournament** delivers another brutally technical encounter as **Orphius Marius** and **Vinzenz Krüger** step into an **Ultimate Submission Match**--a contest where there are no pinfalls and no disqualifications. The only way to score is to make your opponent submit.

From the opening bell, the two men engage in a cerebral war of counters, holds and submission chains. Krüger establishes an early advantage by attacking Orphius' left arm, forcing the first submission with an agonizing armbar.

Monday Night Ward: #367

Vinzenz Krüger -- 1

Orphius Marius -- 0

Orphius responds almost immediately, catching Krüger in a brutal **Texas Cloverleaf** and tying the match.

1-1

What follows is a back-and-forth marathon. Every submission is answered by another, with both competitors constantly changing tactics. Krüger scores with a rear naked choke, while Orphius answers with a crossface. Krüger traps the leg for an Achilles lock, only for Orphius to retaliate with a Dragon Sleeper.

The scoreboard repeatedly flips:

Krüger 2-1.

Orphius 2-2.

Krüger 3-2.

Orphius 3-3.

Krüger 4-3.

Orphius 4-4.

By this point, both men are exhausted. Their bodies are drenched in sweat, their breathing is labored, and neither competitor is willing to surrender an inch.

Krüger scores another fall with a vicious kneebar.

Vinzenz Krüger -- 5

Orphius Marius -- 4

Krüger begins to smell victory.

He repeatedly attacks Orphius' knee, trying to finish the tournament contender with another submission.

But Orphius survives.

He reverses a leg lock, catches Krüger in a modified **octopus stretch**, and forces him to submit.

5-5

The Sydney crowd is on its feet.

One final submission will decide everything.

Monday Night Ward: #367

Both men crawl toward the center of the ring.

Krüger throws everything he has into one last assault, attempting to lock Orphius in a rear-naked choke. Orphius fights the hands, twists his body and manages to reverse the position.

He traps Krüger's arm.

Then the other.

Orphius transitions seamlessly into a devastating **double-arm submission**, wrenching Krüger's shoulders backward while crushing his upper body.

Krüger screams.

He tries to roll through.

Orphius follows him.

Krüger reaches desperately for the ropes, but there are no rope breaks in the Ultimate Submission Match.

The pressure becomes unbearable.

Krüger's hand slaps the canvas.

ONCE!

TWICE!

THREE TIMES!

DING! DING! DING!

The referee signals the submission.

WINNER -- ORPHIUS MARIUS

FINAL SCORE: ORPHIUS MARIUS 6 -- VINZENZ KRÜGER 5

Orphius releases the hold and collapses onto the mat, completely spent.

Monday Night Ward: #367

Krüger remains on his knees, frustrated but clearly exhausted after an incredible display of submission wrestling.

GINNIFER "GIDGET" STEPHENSON:

"SIX TO FIVE! SIX TO FIVE! Orphius Marius survives an absolute submission war and advances in the 2026 Shortcut to the Top Tournament!"

TODD WINCHESTER:

"What a match! Eleven submissions between two men who refused to stay beaten! Krüger came within one fall of taking this tournament spot, but that final transition by Orphius was masterful!"

Orphius slowly rises and raises his fist as the official confirms the final score.

5-5 became 6-5.

And with Vinzenz Krüger submitting for the **final time**, **Orphius Marius punches his ticket to the next stage of the 2026 AWS Shortcut to the Top Tournament.**

I want one

Later.

Somewhere backstage, Astra Mortis has discovered something considerably more comfortable than an equipment case.

A couch.

Rosalie is beside her.

For several moments, neither speaks.

Then Astra does.

"I met someone."

Rosalie turns her head.

"That sounded ominous."

"It wasn't."

"You said it ominously."

"That's just my voice."

Rosalie studies her.

"Who?"

"The Harrower."

Pause.

"That did not make it less ominous."

Astra smiles faintly.

"Silas."

"Silas."

"Silas Sloane Veyne."

"Ah."

Rosalie considers this new information.

"And how did you come to meet Silas Sloane Veyne?"

"Octavia was there."

Rosalie closes her eyes.

"Of course she was."

"It wasn't that bad."

"Astra."

"What?"

"You, the Harrower and Octavia Vale were in the same room."

"Corridor."

"That distinction does absolutely nothing for me."

Astra laughs.

"We talked."

"About?"

Astra's smile fades.

"Boundaries."

Rosalie's expression changes.

She knows.

Astra doesn't need to explain all of it.

"Necra?"

"Partly."

Astra looks down at her hands.

"Silas understood."

"The stalking?"

"Not specifically."

Astra thinks about how to explain it.

"The idea."

"That wanting something from somebody doesn't give you permission to decide what else you're entitled to take from them."

Rosalie nods.

"I like that."

"Octavia called it jurisdiction."

"Of course she did."

"Apparently observation creates knowledge but not jurisdiction."

"That sounds like Octavia."

"Silas liked it."

"That also sounds concerningly plausible."

Astra smiles.

"He's strange."

"You are describing the Harrower."

"No."

Astra looks at her.

"Stranger than that."

Rosalie raises an eyebrow.

"Should I be worried?"

"No."

Immediate.

Then Astra remembers.

Her expression changes.

"He has a kitten."

Rosalie blinks.

"...What?"

"Silas."

"I understood that part."

"He has a kitten."

"The Harrower."

"Yes."

"The man who looks like he knows where everyone's body is buried."

"Probably."

"Has a kitten."

Astra's smile begins to grow.

"His name is Mister Hush."

Rosalie stares at her.

Astra is losing the battle against looking delighted.

"Mister Hush."

"Yes."

"And where exactly was Mister Hush?"

"In his coat."

Rosalie's lips twitch.

"Naturally."

"He was purring."

"Silas?"

"Mister Hush."

"I needed clarification."

"I asked if he was warm."

Rosalie turns fully toward her.

"You did what?"

"I heard something in Silas's coat."

"And your first question was whether it was warm?"

"It was a reasonable question."

"Was it?"

"Yes."

Astra is becoming defensive now.

"He was a tiny warmblood."

Rosalie breaks.

She laughs.

"Don't."

"I'm sorry."

"You're not."

"I'm really not."

Astra folds her arms.

"He had a tiny head."

That makes it worse.

"Rosalie."

"I'm trying."

"I wanted to touch his tiny head."

Rosalie puts a hand over her mouth.

"Stop fucking laughing at me."

"I'm not laughing at you."

"You're absolutely laughing at me."

"I'm laughing because you're adorable."

Astra's glare has absolutely no effect.

"Did you?"

Astra pauses.

"Did I what?"

"Touch his tiny head."

The irritation disappears immediately.

Astra smiles.

"Yes."

Rosalie sees everything she needs to see.

"Oh no."

"What?"

"You really liked this kitten."

"He climbed onto me."

There is pride in that sentence.

"Did he?"

"I didn't grab him."

"I know you wouldn't."

"Silas told me to ask him."

Rosalie pauses.

"Ask the kitten?"

"Yes."

"And you did?"

"I offered my hand."

Astra demonstrates.

"He sniffed me."

"Then he climbed onto me."

Her smile returns.

"He chose me."

Rosalie looks at her wife.

Really looks.

"You want a kitten."

Astra's eyes widen.

"I didn't say that."

"You didn't have to."

"I do not want a kitten."

A voice comes from behind the couch.

"You should get a kitten."

Astra jumps.

Rosalie doesn't.

Dr. Octavia Vale appears around the end of the couch.

Monday Night Ward: #367

Astra stares at her.

"How long have you been there?"

"Long enough."

"That isn't an answer."

"It is an answer. You object to its precision."

"Were you fucking listening?"

"You were speaking at conversational volume in a communal area."

Astra looks at Rosalie.

"See what I deal with?"

Rosalie smiles.

"I like her."

"Don't encourage her."

Octavia sits.

"I agree with Rosalie."

"About?"

"You want a kitten."

"I do not."

"Your affect when discussing Mister Hush suggests otherwise."

"Don't analyze my kitten affect."

"Mister Hush isn't your kitten."

Astra looks genuinely offended.

"I know that."

Pause.

"...Obviously."

Octavia's mouth twitches.

Astra notices.

"What?"

Octavia tries.

She genuinely tries.

Then she starts laughing.

Astra stares.

Rosalie stares.

Octavia Vale -- Chrono-Witch of Salem, haunted scientist, woman who can make mathematics sound like a death sentence -- is laughing.

"What the fuck is wrong with you?"

Octavia raises one hand.

"I apologize."

She absolutely does not.

"I merely had a thought."

Astra immediately becomes suspicious.

"No."

"I haven't told you what it is."

"I know you."

Octavia manages to compose herself.

Almost.

"If you get a kitten--"

"I'm not getting a kitten."

"--you could name it Necra."

Silence.

Rosalie makes a noise.

Astra slowly turns toward Octavia.

"...Excuse me?"

Octavia breaks again.

"Necra."

"You want me to name my hypothetical kitten after the woman who stalked me?"

"Think about it."

"I am."

"Then you're doing it incorrectly."

Rosalie has begun laughing too.

Astra looks betrayed.

"Not you."

"I'm sorry."

"Nobody in this room is fucking sorry."

Octavia wipes beneath one eye.

"Imagine the practical applications."

"There are no practical applications."

"Necra scratched me."

Astra stares.

"Necra won't stop climbing the curtains."

Rosalie loses it.

"Necra shit on the carpet."

"OCTAVIA."

"Necra has worms."

Astra launches a cushion.

Octavia ducks.

"Violence does not invalidate the hypothesis!"

"I'M GOING TO INVALIDATE YOU!"

Rosalie catches Astra around the waist before scientific peer review becomes a contact sport.

"Okay!"

"Let me go."

"No."

"She deserves it."

"Probably."

Octavia retrieves the cushion.

"I remain convinced it is an excellent name."

Astra points at her.

"If I ever get a kitten--"

Rosalie's eyebrows rise.

Astra catches herself.

"...which I won't."

Octavia nods solemnly.

"Naturally."

"I am not naming her Necra."

"Her?"

Astra freezes.

Rosalie slowly smiles.

Octavia slowly smiles.

Astra realizes what she has done.

"Fuck both of you."

Octavia looks toward Rosalie.

"Female kitten."

"I heard."

"Interesting."

"Very."

Astra gets up.

"I'm leaving."

She takes three steps.

Stops.

Turns around.

"And for the record, if I theoretically had a kitten, she'd have a nice name."

Octavia nods.

"Necra is quite short."

"Not Necra."

"Avery?"

"GOODBYE."

Astra disappears down the corridor.

Rosalie and Octavia watch her go.

Silence.

Rosalie looks at Octavia.

"She's getting a kitten."

Octavia picks up her broken stopwatch.

Click.

"Probability is increasing rapidly."

Rosalie smiles.

"She'll name it something ridiculous."

Click.

"Almost certainly."

Somewhere down the corridor:

"I CAN STILL HEAR YOU!"

Rosalie laughs.

Octavia smiles.

Click.

Black.

Damien Kostich vs. Jamal Payne vs. Mixie

The stakes couldn't be higher inside the **Cage of Death**.

This isn't simply a championship match. The winner walks out as the **AWS Parental Advisory Champion**. The runner-up earns a guaranteed **#1 Contender opportunity for the AWS 5150 Championship**. The third-place finisher gets **absolutely nothing**.

And all three competitors know it.

From the opening bell, **Damien Kostich** uses his enormous size to turn the cage into his personal weapon. The giant throws both **Jamal Payne** and **Mixie** into the unforgiving steel, following with crushing corner attacks and brutal body shots. Mixie relies on speed and agility, constantly moving around Damien and picking her openings, while Jamal attempts to chop the big man down one piece at a time.

GINNIFER "GIDGET" STEPHENSON:

"You have to remember the Triple Jeopardy here! Jamal and Mixie aren't just fighting to become champion--they're fighting to avoid being the person who walks away with absolutely nothing!"

Mixie scores the first major breakthrough, sending Damien face-first into the cage before climbing the structure and delivering a spectacular diving attack. Jamal follows with a series of heavy strikes, and for several minutes the giant is on the defensive.

But Damien eventually explodes back into the fight.

He catches Mixie in mid-air and plants her with a devastating slam. Jamal rushes in, only to be scooped up and driven into the cage. Damien stands over both opponents like a wrecking machine.

TODD WINCHESTER:

"This is exactly why Damien Kostich is so dangerous! You can outmaneuver him, but eventually you have to deal with that size--and dealing with that size hurts!"

The match becomes increasingly chaotic.

Mixie and Jamal briefly work together to neutralize Damien, repeatedly attacking his legs and keeping him grounded. The alliance doesn't last. The moment Damien is vulnerable, Jamal turns on Mixie, and the two

Monday Night Ward: #367

resume fighting for themselves.

Mixie nearly steals the championship after a spectacular maneuver off the cage, but Jamal breaks up the deciding fall at the last possible second.

All three competitors are exhausted.

Blood trickles down their faces.

The cage is littered with weapons and debris.

Damien pulls himself upright and catches Jamal.

POWERSLAM!

Jamal is down.

Damien turns his attention toward Mixie.

He charges.

Mixie sidesteps.

DAMIEN CRASHES SHOULDER-FIRST INTO THE CAGE!

The giant staggers backward.

Jamal sees his opportunity.

He attacks from behind, hammering Damien with everything he has before hooking both arms around the massive body.

GIDGET:

"JAMAL'S GOT HIM!"

Jamal digs his heels into the canvas.

He strains.

Damien tries to fight his way free.

Monday Night Ward: #367

Jamal roars and powers the giant upward.

DERAILMENT!

GUTWRENCH POWERBOMB!

BOOM!

Damien Kostich is driven violently into the canvas.

The entire cage shakes.

The crowd erupts as Jamal immediately covers the giant.

REFEREE:

"ONE!"

"TWO!"

"THREE!"

DING! DING! DING!

Jamal rolls away from Damien, completely exhausted.

WINNER AND NEW AWS PARENTAL ADVISORY CHAMPION:

JAMAL PAYNE

RUNNER-UP -- MIXIE

#1 CONTENDER TO THE AWS 5150 CHAMPIONSHIP

THIRD PLACE -- DAMIEN KOSTICH

WALKS AWAY WITH NOTHING

Jamal is handed the **AWS Parental Advisory Championship**. He drops to one knee, staring at the title before raising it above his head.

Across the cage, Mixie slowly gets to her feet and realizes what finishing second means: despite failing to win the championship, she has earned a guaranteed shot at the **AWS 5150 Championship**.

Damien remains down after the devastating **Derailment**.

TODD WINCHESTER:

"Jamal Payne just powerbombed a human skyscraper! DERAILMENT on Damien Kostich wins him the championship!"

GIDGET:

"And look at Mixie! She may have lost the match, but she walks out of this Cage of Death as the NUMBER ONE CONTENDER to the AWS 5150 Championship!"

The camera closes in on Jamal holding the Parental Advisory Championship on one side of the cage and Mixie staring toward the title on the other.

Three entered the Cage of Death.

One became champion.

One became a #1 contender.

And one leaves with nothing.

JAMAL PAYNE HAS SURVIVED THE TRIPLE JEOPARDY.

Boundaries are important

Monday Night Ward: #367

Backstage at Ward 367.

There are quieter places in an arena.

This isn't one of them.

Production staff move through the corridor carrying cables, clipboards, bottles of water and expressions suggesting that somewhere, something has gone catastrophically wrong.

Perhaps several things.

An equipment case sits against one wall.

Astra Mortis sits on top of it.

Dr. Octavia Vale stands beside her.

Octavia is holding her broken Victorian stopwatch.

Click.

Astra looks at it.

Click.

"Put it away."

Click.

"No."

"It's broken."

"We've discussed this."

"And yet it remains broken."

Octavia looks at Astra.

"You continue to confuse failure to perform its original function with failure to possess a function."

Astra stares at her.

"It's a broken fucking stopwatch."

"Reductionism is intellectually lazy."

"It's also broken."

Click.

Astra closes her eyes.

"One day, Octavia..."

Footsteps.

Not hurried.

Not heavy.

Just approaching.

Octavia looks first.

Astra follows.

Silas Sloane Veyne rounds the corner.

The Harrower.

He stops.

Three people stare at one another.

Silas looks at Astra.

Then Octavia.

Then the stopwatch.

Click.

His eyes remain on it.

"That doesn't work."

Octavia looks down.

Then back at Silas.

"Define work."

Astra's eyes close again.

"Oh, fuck me."

Silas looks at Astra.

"I only mentioned the watch."

"Stopwatch."

Silas looks at Octavia.

"My apologies."

"Accepted."

Astra slides down from the equipment case.

"You two have known each other for twelve seconds and I already hate this."

Silas's attention shifts toward her.

Not aggressively.

He simply looks.

Astra notices.

The examination lasts perhaps two seconds.

"Don't."

Silas stops.

Immediately.

"Understood."

Monday Night Ward: #367

Silence.

Octavia looks from Astra to Silas.

Then back.

Click.

Astra glances toward her.

"Don't you fucking dare say interesting."

"I wasn't going to."

"Bullshit."

"I was going to say informative."

Astra points at her.

"Worse."

Silas looks toward Octavia.

"She objects to being observed."

Astra's head turns.

"No."

Silas waits.

"I object to someone deciding that because they can observe me, they're entitled to whatever comes next."

Something changes.

The humor leaves Silas's face.

Octavia's thumb stops against the stopwatch.

Astra notices.

"There is a difference."

Silas nods once.

"Yes."

Silence.

The corridor continues around them.

People pass.

Somehow none of them seem particularly interested in passing between these three.

Octavia speaks first.

"Observation and entitlement."

Astra looks at her.

"Don't turn this into a lecture."

"I wasn't."

"You're using the voice."

"I have one voice."

"You absolutely fucking don't."

Silas almost smiles.

Almost.

"She's correct."

Octavia looks at him.

"We've known one another for less than two minutes."

"Sufficient sample size."

Astra points between them.

"No."

Silence.

Then Silas looks toward Astra.

"Someone crossed yours."

Not a question.

Astra's expression hardens.

"Careful."

"I don't require details."

That stops her.

Silas continues.

"You said you object to someone believing observation entitles them to whatever comes next."

"That's enough."

Astra studies him.

"Necra."

Octavia says nothing.

Astra does.

"She wanted my championship."

"Fine."

"She challenged me."

"Fine."

"She beat me."

Astra doesn't hesitate.

"Clean."

"She earned that."

Silas remains still.

"And?"

Astra's jaw tightens.

"And apparently wanting something I had become permission to stalk me."

Silence.

"Her word."

"Not mine."

Silas's expression becomes unreadable.

"No."

Astra waits.

"No what?"

"Wanting something doesn't create permission."

Octavia finally speaks.

"Nor jurisdiction."

Both look at her.

Octavia holds the broken stopwatch loosely at her side.

"Desire establishes desire."

"Nothing more."

"Observation establishes knowledge."

"Nothing more."

Monday Night Ward: #367

"Neither automatically grants jurisdiction over the person being observed."

Astra considers that.

"You really couldn't just say don't stalk people?"

"I could."

"And?"

"Mine was more precise."

Astra exhales.

"Of course it was."

Silas looks away.

For the first time, Astra notices something in him.

Recognition.

"Someone crossed yours too."

Silas looks back.

Astra raises an eyebrow.

"What?"

"You get to notice things but nobody else does?"

Silas considers the accusation.

"Fair."

Octavia watches him.

"Fiona."

Silas's eyes flick toward her.

"You've researched the card."

"Yes."

"Accurately?"

"More accurately than Fiona researched you."

Silence.

Astra looks between them.

"Oh."

Silas's voice becomes colder.

"She was entitled to research me."

"Everything publicly available."

"My history."

"My statistics."

"My wrestling style."

"My championship."

"What I choose to tell AWS about myself is available to anyone willing to read it."

Pause.

"She was entitled to misunderstand it."

Astra frowns slightly.

"That's generous."

"People are allowed to be wrong."

Octavia nods.

"Necessarily."

"Otherwise inquiry becomes impossible."

Silas continues.

"What she wasn't entitled to do was reach the edge of what she knew..."

His voice lowers.

"...and decide everything beyond it belonged to her imagination."

Silence.

"She didn't know how I became champion."

"So she supplied possibilities."

"Blackmail."

"Bribery."

"Weak competition."

"Not questions."

"Not evidence."

"Answers."

Astra's expression changes.

She understands.

"She made the missing parts yours to defend."

Silas looks at her.

"Yes."

Octavia's eyes move between them.

"Different trespass."

Astra looks toward her.

"Same principle?"

Monday Night Ward: #367

Octavia considers.

"Adjacent."

Of course.

"Necra allegedly crossed a physical and personal boundary because she decided her objective justified access."

"Fiona crossed an informational boundary because she decided uncertainty justified invention."

Silas looks at Octavia.

"Informational boundary."

"Epistemic, technically."

"I preferred informational."

"It is less accurate."

"It is less obnoxious."

Astra snorts.

"He's got you there."

Octavia looks mildly wounded.

"I disagree."

"Naturally."

Silence.

Astra looks at both of them.

Then something occurs to her.

"Hang on."

Neither speaks.

Monday Night Ward: #367

Astra points at Octavia.

"You spend half your life watching patterns."

Then Silas.

"And your entire creepy fucking existence seems to be built around studying people."

Silas's head tilts.

"Creepy fucking existence."

"Don't get distracted."

"I'm not."

"You enjoyed it."

"Slightly."

Astra folds her arms.

"So where's your boundary?"

Silence.

This time neither Silas nor Octavia answers immediately.

Astra smiles without warmth.

"Yeah."

"That's what I thought."

Octavia looks down at her stopwatch.

Click.

"Knowing is not permission."

Astra's smile disappears.

Octavia looks at her.

"I may notice someone's hand shaking."

"That does not grant me ownership of why."

"I may recognize changes in breathing, speech, routine, posture, decision-making."

"I may even reach a hypothesis that explains them."

"That does not entitle me to enter the life that produced them."

She closes her hand around the stopwatch.

"Observation creates knowledge."

"It does not create jurisdiction."

Silas studies her.

"Good."

Octavia turns toward him.

"Your turn."

Silas doesn't hesitate.

"What you give me."

Astra waits.

"Explain."

"Words."

"Actions."

"Choices."

"Patterns repeated in public."

"In the ring, responses to pain."

"Fear."

"Fatigue."

"Pressure."

"Those are things an opponent gives me by participating."

Silas looks at Astra.

"I observe."

"I form conclusions."

"I test them."

"Sometimes I'm wrong."

Astra watches him carefully.

"And if someone tells you to stop?"

"I stop."

Immediate.

No flourish.

No hesitation.

Astra's expression changes by a fraction.

"Just like that?"

"Outside the bell?"

"Yes."

"Inside?"

"You agreed to a fight."

Astra nods slowly.

"Fair."

Monday Night Ward: #367

Octavia speaks.

"Consent establishes the permissible field."

Astra looks at her.

"You somehow made consent sound like quantum mechanics."

"It isn't."

"I know."

"Then why--"

"Because sometimes, Octavia, somebody says no and you fucking listen."

Silence.

Silas nods.

"Considerably more efficient."

"Less comprehensive."

Astra stares at Octavia.

Octavia pauses.

"...but substantially more efficient."

"Thank you."

Silence.

Then--

PRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRR.

Astra freezes.

Octavia freezes.

Silas closes his eyes.

Monday Night Ward: #367

PRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRR.

Astra slowly turns toward him.

"...What the fuck was that?"

"Nothing."

PRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRR.

Astra looks at Silas's coat.

Then at Silas.

Then the coat.

"You have something in there."

"That is an extraordinarily invasive observation considering the conversation we've just had."

Astra ignores him.

"Is it warm?"

Silas blinks.

"What?"

"Whatever is in your coat."

Octavia tilts her head.

"Presumably approximately thirty-eight degrees Celsius."

Silas looks at her.

"Please stop helping."

Something moves.

A tiny black head emerges from Silas's coat.

Two ears.

Monday Night Ward: #367

Two enormous eyes.

Astra's entire expression collapses.

"...Oh."

Silas sees it happen.

"No."

Astra looks at him.

"I haven't done anything."

"You are about to."

"You have a tiny warmblood."

"His name is Mister Hush."

Astra looks personally wounded by how fucking adorable that is.

"Mister Hush."

"Yes."

"I would like to see Mister Hush."

"You are seeing him."

Astra gives Silas a look.

"You know what I mean."

Silas looks down at the kitten.

Then back at Astra.

"Ask him."

Astra stops.

Octavia looks at Silas.

Monday Night Ward: #367

Silas doesn't acknowledge it.

Astra slowly crouches.

She does not reach for Mister Hush.

She offers one hand.

Palm relaxed.

"Hello, Mister Hush."

Mister Hush stares.

Astra waits.

"I am Astra."

Nothing.

"I would very much like to touch your tiny head."

Silas looks down.

"Remarkably diplomatic."

"Shut up."

Mister Hush leans forward.

Sniffs Astra's fingers.

Once.

Twice.

Astra doesn't move.

Then Mister Hush climbs out of Silas's coat.

Onto Astra's arm.

Up.

Monday Night Ward: #367

And directly against her chest.

PRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRR.

Astra's eyes widen.

"...He chose me."

Silas looks betrayed.

"Temporarily."

Octavia watches Mister Hush settle himself.

"Consent established."

"I can see that."

Astra carefully scratches beneath Mister Hush's chin.

The purring becomes absurd.

Her smile is immediate.

Genuine.

Silas stares at his cat.

"I feed you."

Mister Hush purrs.

"I provide shelter."

Purring.

"Fresh tuna."

More purring.

Astra looks delighted.

"He likes me."

Monday Night Ward: #367

"He has demonstrated a temporary lapse in judgment."

Octavia steps closer.

Mister Hush looks at her.

Octavia begins to extend one hand.

Stops.

Looks at Mister Hush.

Waits.

Silas notices.

Astra notices.

Mister Hush stretches one paw toward Octavia.

Touches one finger.

Octavia's eyebrows rise.

"Interesting."

Astra groans.

"There it fucking is."

Silas looks at Octavia.

"Don't make this statistical."

"Too late."

"He has met you once."

"Every dataset begins somewhere."

"One is not a dataset."

"Technically--"

"No."

Astra laughs.

Mister Hush purrs between them.

Three people who entered this corridor separately remain there for another moment.

No alliance.

No agreement.

No promise that any of them particularly like the others.

Only an observation.

Knowing is not permission.

Wanting is not permission.

Not knowing is not permission to invent.

And sometimes the simplest boundary in the world requires no doctorate, no diagnosis, no prophecy and no philosophy.

You offer.

You wait.

The tiny warmblood decides.

Black.

Astra Mortis © & Octavia Vale vs. Tequila Rose ©

The Opening Bell

The crowd erupts as **Astra Mortis**, the reigning AWS Women's Pinnacle Champion, enters the ring alongside **Octavia Vale**. Across from them stand the AWS Women's Tag Team Champions, **Necra Octavian Kane and Avery McCullen**, collectively known as **Tequila Rose**.

Monday Night Ward: #367

There is no championship on the line, but nobody treats this like an exhibition.

Mortis and Kane begin the match.

The two women immediately meet in the center of the ring, with Kane attempting to overpower the champion. Mortis refuses to give ground, slipping underneath a clothesline and answering with a sharp kick to the knee. Kane catches Mortis attempting another strike and launches her across the ring.

Mortis pops back up.

Kane charges.

Mortis counters with a drop-toe hold!

Kane crashes face-first into the canvas.

Mortis immediately transitions into a grounded headlock before Kane powers herself upright and drives Mortis backward into the corner.

Avery reaches out for the tag.

Mortis gets there first.

TAG TO OCTAVIA VALE!

Vale enters at full speed, springing off the ropes and catching Kane with a flying forearm. Kane stumbles backward, allowing Vale to hit a second running strike.

Vale attempts a third.

Kane catches her.

BELLY-TO-BELLY SUPLEX!

Vale lands hard.

Kane covers.

1...

2...

KICKOUT!

Monday Night Ward: #367

Tequila Rose Take Control

Kane drags Vale toward the Tequila Rose corner and tags Avery.

McCullen enters and immediately begins dismantling Vale's arm with a series of wrist control transitions.

Vale attempts to escape.

Avery reverses.

ARM DRAG!

Vale rolls through.

Avery follows.

SECOND ARM DRAG!

Vale scrambles to her feet and catches Avery with a sudden spinning kick.

Both women are down.

The crowd begins chanting for the tag.

Vale crawls toward Mortis.

Avery reaches for Kane.

TAG!

DOUBLE TAG!

Mortis storms into the ring while Kane comes charging across from the opposite corner.

Mortis ducks Kane's first attack and delivers a running knee to Avery.

Kane grabs Mortis from behind.

Mortis elbows free.

She turns--

SUPERMAN PUNCH!

Kane staggers.

Mortis immediately grabs Avery and launches her toward the ropes.

Avery rebounds.

MORTIS CATCHES HER WITH A SPINNING URANAGI!

Cover!

1... 2...

KANE BREAKS IT UP!

Octavia Vale rushes into the ring and attacks Kane.

The four women erupt into a wild brawl.

The referee is forced to intervene.

Chaos Erupts

Kane sends Vale through the ropes.

Mortis attempts to attack Kane from behind.

Kane turns.

BIG BOOT!

Mortis drops.

Kane screams at the champion and attempts to pull her up.

Mortis counters with a thumb to the eye.

The referee warns Mortis.

Kane stumbles backward.

Monday Night Ward: #367

Mortis runs--

RUNNING KNEE!

Kane collapses against the ropes.

Mortis pulls her away.

DDT!

Mortis covers.

1...

2...

KICKOUT!

The champion can't believe it.

Mortis pulls Kane up by the hair.

She attempts another DDT.

Kane blocks it.

CHOKESLAM!

Mortis somehow lands on her feet!

She immediately connects with a roundhouse kick.

Kane falls through the ropes.

Mortis turns--

Avery is waiting.

RUNNING KNEE!

Mortis gets knocked backward.

Vale enters the ring and tackles Avery.

Monday Night Ward: #367

The crowd explodes.

Octavia Vale Takes the Fight to Avery

Vale and Avery trade rapid-fire strikes.

Vale lands a forearm.

Avery answers.

Vale lands another.

Avery ducks--

NECKBREAKER!

Avery hooks the leg.

1...

2...

MORTIS BREAKS THE COUNT!

Avery immediately transitions into an armbar.

Vale twists.

She rolls.

PINNING COMBINATION!

1... 2...

Avery kicks out.

Vale catches her with a kick to the ribs.

Avery staggers.

Vale climbs the ropes.

Monday Night Ward: #367

DIVING CROSSBODY!

Both women crash down.

Vale slowly rises and sees Kane attempting to re-enter the ring.

Vale charges.

BASEBALL SLIDE!

Kane crashes backward.

Vale turns around--

AVERY WITH A SUPERKICK!

Vale drops.

Avery makes the cover.

1...

2...

MORTIS PULLS VALE'S LEG ONTO THE ROPES!

The referee stops the count.

Avery looks furious.

The Final Stretch

Avery tags Kane.

Tequila Rose begin setting up their tandem offense.

Kane grabs Vale.

Avery climbs the ropes.

Mortis sees it coming.

Monday Night Ward: #367

The champion charges.

She knocks Avery off the ropes!

Avery crashes onto the apron.

Kane turns toward Mortis.

MORTIS WITH A SPEAR!

Kane goes down.

Mortis covers.

1...

2...

KICKOUT!

The arena erupts.

Mortis looks stunned.

She grabs Kane and attempts to lift her.

Kane suddenly explodes upward.

HEADBUTT!

Mortis staggers.

Kane tags Avery.

Avery enters.

DOUBLE TEAM!

Kane whips Mortis toward the ropes while Avery catches her on the rebound.

Mortis escapes and rolls underneath Avery's strike.

Avery turns--

VALE WITH A MISSILE DROPKICK!

Avery falls backward.

Vale covers.

1... 2...

KANE BREAKS IT UP!

Vale immediately goes after Kane.

The two women spill toward the ropes.

Mortis attempts to help her partner.

Avery catches Mortis from behind.

REVERSE DDT!

Mortis rolls away.

Avery turns back toward Vale.

Vale is trapped in the corner.

Kane grabs her.

Avery climbs the ropes.

TEQUILA ROSE ARE SETTING UP THE KILL!

Mortis realizes what's happening.

She scrambles to her feet.

MORTIS CHARGES!

She knocks Avery off the ropes!

Avery lands on the apron.

Kane still has Vale.

Monday Night Ward: #367

Vale attempts to escape.

Kane blocks her.

CHOKESLAM!

Vale counters!

She lands behind Kane.

ROLL-UP!

1...

2...

KANE KICKS OUT!

Vale springs up.

Avery is back on the apron.

Vale turns--

SUPERKICK FROM AVERY!

Vale is rocked.

Kane grabs her from behind.

Avery climbs the ropes.

The crowd realizes what's coming.

TEQUILA ROSE'S FINISHING COMBINATION!

Kane launches Vale upward.

Avery comes flying off the ropes.

CORKSCREW CUTTER!

Monday Night Ward: #367

Vale is driven face-first into the canvas.

She bounces off the mat and rolls onto her back.

Kane immediately hooks both legs.

1...

2...

3!

? WINNERS: TEQUILA ROSE

Necra Octavian Kane & Avery McCullen

The AWS Women's Tag Team Champions stand victorious as the crowd reacts to the hard-fought battle.

Astra Mortis slowly pulls herself up using the ropes, visibly frustrated. She looks across the ring at Tequila Rose.

Kane raises the AWS Women's Tag Team Championship.

Avery joins her.

The champions have just pinned the Women's Pinnacle Champion's partner -- without ever needing the title to be on the line.

Mortis stares at the two champions with a mixture of anger and respect.

Tequila Rose have made their statement.

They aren't simply the women holding the AWS Women's Tag Team Championships.

They're two of the most dangerous competitors in the entire AWS Women's Division.

Good Luck

"Warhammer Heart" by Cryptic Writings begins playing as "God's Gift" Jeremiah Vastrix walks out from the

Monday Night Ward: #367

back to the cheering of the crowd. He waves to the fans as he makes his way down to the ring and reveals a microphone in his hand.

Jeremiah Vastrix - I just thought I would come down here to the ring to say hi.

The crowd answer back "Hi!"

Jeremiah laughs as the crowd cheers him on before going back to the microphone.

Jeremiah Vastrix - It has come to my attention that my good friend, Adam Stryker, will be coming down to the ring here soon to defend his Interstate championship against Drake Nygma. The Interstate title. You know, the "I lost the main title so this is my consolation prize championship".

Jeremiah laughs at that, and a few of the crowd laugh with him, with a smattering of boos.

Jeremiah Vastrix - Yes, I know it's a very serious title and that Drake will be gunning for him with all that he has to try to take that title from Adam. So, I'm just down here to wish the man, good luck in the coming match. You know you're not going to beat me at Clash at the Beach so, you may as well get a win someplace. This is it. Beat Drake Nygma and retain that consolation prize. It is the only belt that you're going to be able to hold onto.

Jeremiah drops the microphone onto the mat and steps out of the ring before heading to the back with the crowd cheering him all the way.

Adam Stryker © vs. Drake Nygma

The Sydney Entertainment Centre is buzzing for the **AWS Interstate Championship No Holds Barred Match** between reigning champion **Adam Stryker** and challenger **Drake Nygma**.

But before the champion can even make his entrance, the atmosphere abruptly changes.

[BACKSTAGE -- LIVE]

A production camera catches Adam Stryker walking through the backstage area, the **AWS Interstate Championship** secured around his waist.

Suddenly--

CRASH!

A member of **The Cohort** blindsides him from behind.

Monday Night Ward: #367

Another appears.

Then another.

Then another.

Within seconds, **The Cohort** swarm Stryker.

They slam him into a concrete wall.

They drive him into equipment cases.

They beat him down with ruthless efficiency.

GINNIFER "GIDGET" STEPHENSON:

"WHAT THE HELL IS THIS?! THE COHORT ARE ATTACKING ADAM STRYKER!"

Security rushes in, but The Cohort have already done their damage.

Stryker lies battered on the floor.

One member kneels beside him.

They deliberately remove the **AWS Interstate Championship** from Stryker's possession.

The Cohort stand together, holding the title between them.

Then they walk away.

TODD WINCHESTER:

"They just stole the championship!"

GIDGET:

"This isn't stealing the spotlight, Todd! They just took the Interstate Championship itself!"

[MINUTES LATER -- ARENA]

Monday Night Ward: #367

The arena suddenly erupts in a chorus of boos.

The Cohort's music hits.

The group emerges onto the entrance stage.

One member carries the **AWS Interstate Championship** over their shoulder.

No explanation.

No announcement.

No Adam Stryker.

The Cohort slowly march toward the ring.

Waiting inside is **Drake Nygma**.

Drake looks toward the entrance with a mixture of confusion and fury.

The Cohort reach ringside.

They don't enter immediately.

Instead, they spread out.

One on the north side.

One on the south.

One on the east.

One on the west.

They surround Drake on all four sides.

Drake turns, trying to keep his eyes on all of them.

TODD:

"Drake Nygma is completely surrounded!"

Monday Night Ward: #367

The member holding the Interstate Championship finally steps through the ropes.

They stare directly at Drake.

Then look down at the championship belt.

And, with deliberate disrespect--

THUD.

They drop the **AWS Interstate Championship** flat onto the canvas.

The crowd rains down boos.

The Cohort member steps over the belt.

The others climb onto the ring apron.

Drake squares up.

Then--

BLACKOUT.

The entire arena goes completely dark.

The crowd erupts in confusion.

A few seconds pass.

Then the lights suddenly return.

THE COHORT ARE GONE.

Completely gone.

No explanation.

No warning.

Monday Night Ward: #367

Only the Interstate Championship lying in the middle of the ring.

Drake stands alone beside it.

The camera cuts between Drake, the title and the entranceway.

Adam Stryker is nowhere to be seen.

The crowd begins chanting:

"WHAT IS THIS?!"

GIDGET:

"The Cohort are gone! They've vanished!"

TODD:

"And what exactly are we supposed to do now?! Adam Stryker has been destroyed backstage, his championship has been taken, and The Cohort just dropped it in the ring like it means absolutely nothing!"

Gidget looks toward the ring.

GIDGET:

"The scheduled match was Adam Stryker versus Drake Nygma for the AWS Interstate Championship... but Adam Stryker isn't here!"

Todd's expression turns serious.

TODD:

"So what happens to the championship? Is it still Adam Stryker's? Has The Cohort stolen it? Is Drake Nygma still the challenger? Does the title become vacant?!"

The official standing at ringside looks just as confused as everyone else.

Drake slowly picks up the championship.

Monday Night Ward: #367

He stares at it.

Then looks toward the backstage area.

GIDGET:

"We have more questions than answers right now!"

The camera pulls back to a wide shot of the ring.

Drake Nygma stands alone, holding the AWS Interstate Championship.

Adam Stryker is absent.

The Cohort have disappeared.

And the scheduled **No Holds Barred Match** never begins.

TO BE CONTINUED...

WHAT IS THE STATUS OF THE AWS INTERSTATE CHAMPIONSHIP?

A question of history

Backstage at Ward 367 is usually concrete.

Black curtains.

Production cases.

People wearing headsets moving quickly enough to imply everything is simultaneously under control and five seconds from catastrophe.

This part of the building is different.

Color.

An uncomfortable amount of it.

Monday Night Ward: #367

AWS banners hang from the ceiling. Replica championships sit beneath display lights. A merchandise stand is doing brisk business selling shirts that will inevitably become sleepwear within six months.

Music plays somewhere.

Fans laugh.

Someone is wearing a foam championship belt.

Someone else has painted their entire face.

And standing in the middle of all of it is Týr Dagrsson.

Still.

Silent.

Enormous.

Several fans have noticed him.

None appear entirely certain whether they're supposed to approach.

Týr notices this.

His eyes move from face to face.

A young AWS production assistant hurries toward him carrying a microphone.

"Týr! There you are. We've been looking for you. We need to get your interview before--"

Týr looks at the microphone.

Then at the production assistant.

Then beyond them.

At the fans.

Something almost resembling mischief enters his expression.

"No."

Monday Night Ward: #367

The production assistant stops.

"No?"

"I have changed my mind."

"About the interview?"

"About you conducting it."

That produces several interested noises from nearby fans.

The production assistant blinks.

"Okay. Who did you have in mind?"

Týr looks around.

Points.

"Him."

Every head turns.

A fan wearing an AWS shirt immediately looks behind himself.

Týr points again.

"Yes. You."

The fan points at his own chest.

"Me?"

"Unless there is another man standing precisely where you are standing."

"Uh..."

Týr looks toward the production assistant.

"Give him the microphone."

"Týr, we don't usually--"

Monday Night Ward: #367

Týr shrugs.

"What the hell."

He looks back toward the fan.

"I will let a fan interview me."

There is a cheer.

The fan looks simultaneously delighted and deeply concerned about how his evening has developed.

The production assistant reluctantly hands him the microphone.

"Just... don't swear."

The fan looks at Týr.

Týr looks at the production assistant.

"That instruction appears to have arrived too late."

Laughter.

The production assistant sighs and retreats.

The fan looks down at the microphone.

Then considerably upward at Týr.

"Okay."

Týr waits.

"Shit."

More laughter.

"Sorry."

"You have already disappointed the woman."

"Yeah."

"Continue."

The fan thinks.

"Okay. You're fighting Vin Halsted tonight."

Týr nods.

"Street Fight."

"Yes."

"And Vin's been wrestling for, what, twenty-three years?"

Týr's expression changes.

Not dramatically.

But the amusement recedes.

"He has mentioned it."

The fan laughs.

Týr doesn't.

The fan catches that.

"Right. So... does that bother you?"

"His experience?"

"Yeah. Like, he's been doing this forever. Does that make you think you're at a disadvantage?"

Týr considers him.

Actually considers him.

"That is a good question."

The fan seems surprised.

"Thanks."

"Twenty-three years should matter."

The surrounding noise continues.

Bright lights.

Music.

Fans moving behind them.

Yet somehow the space around Týr feels quieter.

"Experience should matter."

"A man who has spent twenty-three years practicing anything should possess knowledge that someone beginning today does not."

"He should have made mistakes."

"Learned from them."

"Watched others make the same mistakes."

"Learned from those too."

Týr folds his arms.

"Twenty-three years is impressive."

"I will not insult Vin Halsted by pretending otherwise."

The fan raises the microphone slightly.

"But?"

Týr looks down at him.

A faint smile.

"You are learning."

The fan grins.

"But?"

The smile disappears.

"I have begun wondering what Vin believes those twenty-three years entitle him to."

Silence immediately around them.

"There is a difference between experience and authority."

"There is a difference between saying, 'I have survived this before, perhaps I can teach you something,' and saying, 'I have survived this longer than you, therefore you know nothing.'"

Týr looks toward the nearby replica championships.

"Vin uses the word veteran frequently."

"He uses the years."

"The history."

"The things he has seen."

"The things he has done."

"And I find myself wondering..."

His eyes return to the fan.

"...when did being a veteran become something to weaponize?"

The fan doesn't immediately have another question.

Týr doesn't rescue him.

Eventually:

"What do you mean?"

Týr nods.

"Good."

Monday Night Ward: #367

He uncrosses his arms.

"Twenty-three years ago, Vin Halsted was not a twenty-three-year veteran."

Pause.

"He was new."

"There was a first locker room."

"A first match."

"A first mistake."

"A first time he stood across from someone who knew more than he did."

Týr steps slightly closer to the microphone.

"Someone gave him that match."

"Someone took him seriously before he had twenty-three years available to demand that they do so."

"Someone lost to him for the first time."

"Someone helped make Vin Halsted possible."

The fan slowly nods.

"So you think he should be helping younger wrestlers?"

Týr thinks.

"Not necessarily."

That answer catches the fan.

"No?"

"He owes nobody mentorship merely because he survived."

"He owes nobody friendship."

"He owes nobody opportunity."

Monday Night Ward: #367

"But if he intends to use twenty-three years as evidence that his opinion carries greater weight..."

Týr's voice lowers.

"...then I am entitled to examine what those twenty-three years produced."

There it is.

"Did they produce wisdom?"

"Patience?"

"Perspective?"

"Did they teach him how to recognize potential before everybody else recognizes it?"

"Did they teach him that the person standing opposite him may know something he doesn't?"

Pause.

"Or did twenty-three years simply give Vin Halsted a larger number to stand behind?"

The fan whistles softly.

"Damn."

Somewhere behind the camera:

"Language!"

The fan winces.

Týr looks toward the unseen production assistant.

"That one wasn't me."

Laughter breaks the tension.

For a moment.

The fan looks back at Týr.

"So do you respect Vin?"

Monday Night Ward: #367

Týr answers immediately.

"Yes."

That seems to surprise several people.

"I respect what twenty-three years requires."

"I respect survival."

"I respect persistence."

"I respect getting up enough times that eventually decades accumulate behind you."

Then quieter:

"That is why I expect more from him."

The fan's expression changes.

That's the line.

Týr knows it too.

"I do not question whether Vin Halsted is a veteran."

"That would be foolish."

"I question what kind of veteran he has chosen to become."

The fan lowers the microphone slightly.

Týr gestures toward it.

"You have one more."

"Oh."

The fan thinks.

Then smiles.

"Who's winning tonight?"

Monday Night Ward: #367

Týr stares at him.

The fan's smile slowly becomes nervous.

Týr leans toward the microphone.

"Now you're asking stupid questions."

The surrounding fans burst into laughter.

Týr finally grins.

He takes the microphone gently from the fan.

"You did well."

"Seriously?"

"Your second question was considerably better than your last."

"I'll take it."

Týr hands the microphone back to the returning production assistant.

Then stops.

Looks once more at the fan.

"Twenty-three years from now..."

The fan waits.

"...remember what you were like tonight."

"Why?"

Týr begins walking away.

"So you don't become the sort of man who mocks someone for only having twenty-two."

The fan watches him disappear through the curtain.

The production assistant looks at the fan.

Monday Night Ward: #367

The fan looks at the production assistant.

"Did I just get life advice from Týr Dagrsson?"

Beat.

"Apparently."

Black.

Vin Halsted vs. Týr Dagrsson

The main event begins with **"The Gold Standard" Vin Halsted** and **Týr Dagrsson** meeting in the center of the ring. There is no feeling-out process. The two immediately begin throwing heavy punches and forearms, with Halsted gaining the early advantage through speed and precision.

Týr absorbs the punishment and answers with raw power, launching Halsted across the ring with a massive suplex. Halsted rolls outside, but Týr follows him, turning the ringside area into a weapons-filled battlefield.

Halsted introduces a steel chair.

Týr introduces the ring steps.

Neither man is interested in fighting conventionally.

A chair shot across Týr's back sends him staggering, but Týr responds by driving Halsted spine-first into the barricade. He then grabs Halsted and attempts to send him through the commentary table.

Halsted escapes at the last second.

SUPERKICK!

Týr drops to one knee.

Halsted follows with a running knee strike that sends Týr over the barricade.

The crowd is already on its feet.

But neither competitor is finished.

? THE ENTRANCE STAGE

Monday Night Ward: #367

The fight eventually spills toward the entrance stage.

Halsted attempts to gain control, smashing Týr against the side of the entrance set before retrieving a steel chair.

Týr blocks the swing.

HEADBUTT!

Halsted stumbles backward.

Týr sees the opportunity.

At the base of the entrance stage sits a table wrapped in **barbed wire and engulfed in flames**.

The crowd realizes what is about to happen.

Týr climbs.

Halsted slowly gets back to his feet.

Týr reaches the top of the entrance stage.

Halsted looks up.

TÝR LEAPS!

Týr launches himself from the top of the entrance stage, crashing down onto Halsted--

STRAIGHT THROUGH THE FLAMING BARBED-WIRE TABLE!!!

BOOOOOOOOM!!!

The table explodes beneath them.

Barbed wire tears through the remnants of the table as both men disappear into the wreckage.

The arena erupts.

Officials immediately begin rushing toward the scene, but Týr refuses assistance.

Monday Night Ward: #367

Despite the punishment, **Týr is still moving.**

He grabs hold of Vin.

Týr begins dragging him.

Then, with an almost insane burst of adrenaline, he gets Halsted upright and **sends him running toward the ring.**

Halsted stumbles down the aisle.

His legs give out.

HE COLLAPSES!

Týr follows behind him, barely able to remain upright himself.

Both men are clearly feeling the effects of the devastating table spot.

Týr eventually gets Halsted back to his feet and sends him underneath the bottom rope.

The match continues.

? THE BLOOD BATH

Inside the ring, the fight becomes even more vicious.

Both men are visibly battered.

Halsted catches Týr with a series of vicious strikes before driving him into the corner.

Halsted looks at the turnbuckle.

Then at Týr.

He reaches down.

Halsted begins ripping the turnbuckle pad away.

The protective padding comes loose.

Monday Night Ward: #367

The exposed steel is now visible.

Týr staggers toward him.

Halsted grabs him.

WHIP!

TÝR CRASHES INTO THE EXPOSED TURNBUCKLE!

The impact sends him collapsing to the mat.

Halsted doesn't let up.

He drags Týr back to the center and begins hammering him with forearms.

Týr's face is already marked from the battle.

Halsted attempts the **Halsted Hangover**.

Týr blocks it!

POWERBOMB!

Halsted crashes down.

Týr covers.

1...

2...

HALSTED KICKS OUT!

The crowd erupts.

Týr can barely believe it.

? DESPERATION

Týr grabs Halsted and attempts another power move.

Monday Night Ward: #367

Halsted counters.

DDT!

Both men are down.

Halsted crawls toward the ropes.

Týr does the same.

They slowly pull themselves upright.

FOREARM!

FOREARM!

FOREARM!

Neither man falls.

Halsted gets the advantage.

SUPERKICK!

Týr staggers.

Halsted charges--

HALSTED HANGOVER!

Týr ducks!

Halsted crashes into the ropes.

Týr catches him from behind.

GERMAN SUPLEX!

Halsted rolls through.

SECOND GERMAN!

Týr refuses to release him.

THIRD GERMAN!

Týr screams and covers.

1...

2...

KICKOUT!

The arena is absolutely rocking.

Týr pounds the mat in frustration.

? THE LIGHTS GO OUT

Týr pulls himself toward the ropes.

Halsted is slowly getting back to his feet.

Suddenly--

THE LIGHTS GO OUT.

The entire building falls into darkness.

The crowd erupts in confusion.

Neither man can see.

A few seconds pass.

Then--

THE LIGHTS RETURN.

Monday Night Ward: #367

The arena explodes.

THE COHORT HAS ARRIVED.

ONE stands at the top of the entrance ramp with the rest of **The Cohort** behind him.

They slowly make their way toward the ring.

Halsted turns toward the entrance.

He can't believe what he's seeing.

Týr looks toward the opposite side.

The referee is distracted by The Cohort's arrival.

ONE points toward the ring.

The Cohort begins surrounding it.

Halsted screams at them from inside the ring.

He turns back toward Týr--

ROLL-UP!!!

Týr catches him completely off guard.

1...

2...

3!!!

? WINNER: TÝR DAGRSSON

Týr Dagrsson advances in the 2026 AWS Shortcut to the Top Tournament

Monday Night Ward: #367

Time: 26:41

Finish: Roll-Up

Pinned: Vin Halsted

The bell rings.

The crowd erupts in a mixture of shock and outrage.

Týr immediately rolls away and uses the ropes to pull himself upright.

He is barely standing.

But he has won.

Halsted sits in the ring, stunned.

He looks toward The Cohort.

He knows exactly what happened.

The Cohort has effectively handed Týr Dagrsson the victory.

ONE simply stares into the ring.

No celebration.

No explanation.

Just a cold, calculated message.

Týr raises his fist as the referee declares him the winner, while Halsted remains furious on the opposite side of the ring.

The final replay shows the brutality of the match--the **top-of-the-stage dive through the flaming barbed-wire table**, the exposed turnbuckle, the blood, the exhaustion--and then the cruel ending.

After surviving everything Týr Dagrsson could throw at him, **Vin Halsted was undone by a distraction.**

Týr Dagrsson moves on.

The Cohort has changed the Shortcut to the Top Tournament forever.

Monday Night Ward: #367

Post Match Horror

The arena has barely had time to recover from the brutal **Shortcut to the Top Street Fight** when the lights suddenly begin to flicker. The atmosphere shifts from celebration to uncertainty as **ONE leads The Cohort** onto the entrance stage. There is no music, no announcement, and no warning.

The Cohort is here.

ONE slowly leads the group toward the ring, and then the assault begins.

They attack **anything that moves.**

A referee attempting to restore order is immediately blindsided. Members of The Cohort swarm the ringside area, dropping referees with brutal strikes before turning their attention toward the AWS medical team. EMTs attempting to check on the injured competitors are knocked to the floor and sent scrambling for safety. **AWS security rushes down the aisle**, only to be overwhelmed almost instantly.

The crowd is in complete disbelief.

This isn't a fight.

It's an occupation.

? TÝR DAGRSSON BECOMES THE NEXT TARGET

While security attempts to establish a perimeter, **Týr Dagrsson** is still recovering from his Street Fight with Vin Halsted. He can barely stand after being driven through the table earlier in the night.

ONE notices him.

He slowly walks toward Týr.

Týr tries to fight back.

ONE catches him by the throat.

Týr struggles.

ONE grabs him with **both hands.**

The arena erupts as ONE lifts Týr completely off the ground.

Monday Night Ward: #367

For one horrifying moment, Týr hangs helplessly in the air.

Then--

? DOUBLE-HANDED CHOKE BOMB!!!

BOOOOOOOOOM!!!

ONE drives Týr straight down with an absolutely sickening double-handed choke bomb.

But this isn't onto a normal wrestling mat.

ONE drives Týr through the canvas.

The ring literally gives way beneath him as Týr disappears through the broken section of the ring.

The crowd falls into stunned silence.

ONE stands over the destruction, staring down into the hole where Týr has disappeared.

The Cohort gathers behind him.

? THE MESSAGE IS CLEAR

More referees attempt to enter the ring.

The Cohort attacks them.

Medical personnel rush toward the ring.

The Cohort attacks them.

Security tries one final time to intervene.

The Cohort destroys them.

There is no one left capable of stopping them.

ONE slowly raises his arms as The Cohort stands around him.

The camera focuses on the shattered canvas.

Monday Night Ward: #367

Then on Týr Dagrsson lying motionless beneath the ring.

Then back to ONE.

The message couldn't be clearer:

The Cohort doesn't care about the rules.

They don't care about officials.

They don't care about security.

And they certainly don't care who gets hurt.

As AWS officials finally order the broadcast crew to evacuate, ONE looks directly into the hard camera.

A final image fills the screen:

ONE.

THE COHORT.

TOTAL CHAOS.

The show abruptly cuts to black.

Show Credits

Segment: "#367 Introduction" - Written by Feigel.

Segment: "When did the rules change?" - Written by Drake Nygma.

Segment: "Ranky Mc Rank Face" - Written by Drake Nygma.

Segment: "I want one" - Written by Drake Nygma.

Segment: "Boundaries are important" - Written by Drake Nygma.

Segment: "Good Luck" - Written by Vastrix.

Segment: "A question of history" - Written by Drake Nygma.

Segment: "Post Match Horror" - Written by Feigel.

Results Compiled by the eFed Management Suite