



SOLOMON

KLINE

THE YEAR



I won. No, I didn't win my match at Ides of March, nor the second round tournament match leading up to it, against Aurora and Yelena Gorgo, but...neither did she. The last few weeks since Ides have been interesting for me. I came up big BETTING on the tournament and to be honest, I was rooting for you, Aurora. I wanted you to win it all and you should not be ashamed of your performance one bit. Fact is, I respect the hell out of you. You earned my respect the first time we faced, in my XWF debut and even more when we went to WAR in the second round of the King of the XWF tournament. See another thing happened recently, for me. I joined The United Global Wrestling Coalition, UGWC. Not only did I join, but in the time since Ides of March, I won two matches there and a title. I am the new UGWC Conquest champion. My first title. It feels good to say. It feels good to WIN. But, with that said, there's no rest for the wicked and I do realize that there are LEVELS to this.

But before I get too far into that discussion, let's talk about a few other things, shall we? Yes, for those wondering, I did see my father return to the "ring" of sorts at Ides of March and nearly win a jousting "competition" whilst wearing a full suit of armor and calling himself Sir Nick Mélon, which, for the uninformed is just the letters of Crimson Kline, rearranged. I guess everyone deals with personal trauma differently. The man learns his brother is in a bad accident and he decides to speak in ye olde English and compete against a dinosaur and a literal pig. Jurassic Pork, I suppose. Of course, in true Kline fashion, he came up short, even when the competition wasn't exactly stiff. This is what I fight for. People like to say that I'm only here to live up to Crimson Kline's legacy, but I'll be honest, that word is thrown around a little too loosely these days. While it's true that I chose to compete here in the place where he made his name, it's inaccurate to say I want to walk the same path. Make no mistake, I will mince zero words when I say this; I am here to SURPASS his "legacy." For me, there is no escaping the comparisons and that's fine. I've accepted that as out of my control. At this point in my career, there will be whispers of Crimson's kid. I say let them whisper. Because one day, maybe not next week or a year from now, but when all is said and done, people will look at

HIM as say, hey, isn't that Solomon Kline's dad? Yeah, I heard he was a wrestler back in the day. When people shoot crumpled up paper balls into trash cans, they yell Kobe, not Jelly Bean. Rest in power to both legends. But hey, it could be worse. He could have gone on a celebrity reality show or something.

The other elephant in the room I want to address is the Black Rainbow. It's funny how all of these misfits who don't play well with others suddenly become a cohesive unit. Now, I have no connection to nor love for Kieran King, our rightful two-time King of the XWF, like it or not; but for them to do what they did after not one, but two grueling matches that night was straight up cowardly behavior. Is this what your god, your entity, Vorazd, teaches? Do you really think a four one one assault on a man who's just been through hell makes you look good? But it's funny how quickly things shift around here. One minute, Gorgo is celebrating being the X-treme champion and the next? She finds herself pinned backstage by Tommy Wish. I'm still laughing about that one. So now we have Enigma and Marisol on Anarchy, Sarah Wolf and Gorgo on Massacre, following the yellow brick road to some sort of hostile takeover. I can't be the only one ready to stand against that. I imagine King would have something to say about all of it, if he bothered to show up more than once per year. Honestly, I think that's my biggest beef with him. He thinks he's so above the roster here that he only has to show up every couple of months and the worst part is, no one has yet to prove him wrong. At least Aurora has the decency to show up each and every week and put everything into her matches.

Which leads me back to you, Aurora. It seems we are destined to do the dance all over again in this our third meeting and yet, this is the one with the biggest stakes and strangely enough, it's our first one on one match. I know you said it's gauche to talk about fight club, specifically when it's a multi-person match, but it's relevant. Sure, you've gone two and 0 against me so far and you were absolutely the better competitor, but there were outside factors at play. Aside from that, I am learning from my mistakes and getting better with every match that I wrestle. I won my last two matches and everything is coming up Kline. I know full well that the battle before me is all uphill. I know firsthand

what you are capable of, Aurora. I also know that you aren't going to be at 100 percent going into it after you put it all on the line at Ides of March. I refuse to believe that the outcome of this match is a foregone conclusion.

I know that despite being beat up, you are coming at me with everything and I wouldn't want it any other way. I know how dangerous you are and how skilled you are. I know what it feels like to lose to Aurora. Someone in the back must believe that I deserve this match, a shot at your newly won Television championship. Congrats on that, by the way. Because I hear the rumblings. I feel a bit like Peter from Office Space, failing my way into opportunities. I didn't ask to be here, facing you for the TV title and in a Revolution title match on Anarchy, but here we are. I'll take advantage of what's been given to me. Honestly, it should have been your former tag team champion partner Lucy Wyldé facing you for the title. She beat me after all. Wouldn't that be a sight? Partner against partner, friend battling friend. That would have been interesting. What no one wants to see is poor old Crimmy junior getting his ass kicked once again by Aurora like a damn broken record. No, the only interesting outcome here is me winning and getting my first title in the XWF. I know it's possible. The last few weeks showed me that. Round one, Gorgo vs. Aurora showed me that you couldn't get the job done. Honestly, you should be thanking me for round two. You got a second chance despite not winning your match in the first round. But you pulled it out in rounds two and three. You looked undeniable. I was pulling for you. For me, that triple threat was the real finals, though I'm sure you see it differently. While Gorgo showed that you were flawed, it was Kieran King who proved that you are beatable. Before that, it was Dyson and Waters, but still, the burden is on me to prove that you are beatable by me. That is not my plan. That is not my goal. That is my PROMISE. To myself. To the fans and to you, Aurora. Mark your calendar for April 14th, because that is that day I finally beat Aurora and I win the TV championship and that is my promise.



Solomon Kline sits in a chair in a hospital room in Los Angeles, next to his father Caedmon. Lying in the bed next to them is David Dremmen, his uncle and his dad's half-brother, conscious, but not awake. His face is scarred and bruised and his neck and shoulders bear numerous cuts. Solomon fights back tears as he glances at his uncle and then back at his father. "It's so hard seeing him like this. He's such a goof ball, so full of life normally and now he's just stagnant. Existing only."

Caedmon laughs and nods. "I agree, kid. They say he's in a coma and they aren't sure how long it will be. Life is unpredictable." He looks over at his brother and then his son. "How are you doing? Holding up, okay?"

Solomon wipes a tear from his eye. "I'm okay, all things considered. At least I didn't dress like a knight and talk like I was in a bad Shakespeare play. Honestly, I kind of envy him." He gestures toward his uncle David. "Being a person and dealing with all the daily bull shit, especially with Trump and Elon's

bogus journey going on is exhausting. It would be nice to just check out for a bit.”

“I doubt he’s really enjoying himself in this state, but I get what you mean, smart ass. This too shall pass, they say. It is a hard pill to swallow, sometimes. As for the other thing, the Shakespeare thing...I’m afraid mine own intellect doth not recall that which thou speakest.” They share a laugh. “Things will get better. Chin up, kid. Have you heard from your brother? He’s...not answering my calls.”

Solomon looks at Caedmon, confused. “Is this a recent development? Maybe he’s just busy? I think I talked to Lukas like a week ago. Are you worried about him?”

Caedmon takes a deep breath before answering. “They day I stop worrying about you and Lukas is the day my heart stops beating. But no, not particularly. I just...can you try calling him?”

“Dad, I’m not going to be your errand boy. If Lukas really doesn’t want to talk to you, he must have a reason.” Solomon throws up his hands as he gets up from his chair. “I wouldn’t worry about it. I..uh...gotta get some air. This place is too sterile.”

Caedmon smiles. “Your mother didn’t like hospitals either. You get your stubbornness from me, but that is something you share. Well, I won’t keep you. I’ll be here when you get back. Just...think about calling your brother, would ya? I’d give anything to talk to my brother right now.”

Solomon looks over at the hospital bed. “He’s right over there, dad. He’s not dead. He may not respond, but that doesn’t mean you can’t talk to him.” Caedmon smirks as Solomon makes his way toward the door. “Touché.”

Solomon makes his way out of the hospital room, down the hall. He enters the elevator and puts his head down as he presses the first floor button

and rides it down two floors. He then walks outside and to the curb where he produces a box of cigarettes from his pocket. He lights one up and takes a drag. **"You know those things will kill ya, don't you? Sounds like a good time. Can I have one?"** Solomon shakes it off, thinking he must not have gotten enough sleep last night. That voice...it's his. Uncle David. Solomon hears a voice that isn't there. He would have cracked a joke like that. He would have had something funny or dumb to say, just to lighten the mood, but he's not saying anything right now. He takes another big drag from his cigarette and watches as the smoke billows out, a gray cloud. He thinks about what else he would say. He finds himself remembering that night, before that second round match. Remembering that conversation with uncle Dave, that they never got to finish. He was trying to tell me something, Solomon thought. What if he never wakes up? What if I never get the chance to find out what he meant? He finds himself lost in thought when the phone starts buzzing in his pocket. He puts out his cigarette after one last drag and answers.

"Hello?" He says, as he waits for the voice on the other end. **"Hey bro. Can you tell dad that he doesn't need to call me like twenty fucking times in the span of a few days?"** A pause. Deep breaths from both men.

"Way ahead of you, Luke. What's the deal with that anyway? He's just trying to tell you that our uncle is not doing so hot. I'm at the hospital with him right now. He's in a coma." Silence.

"Your uncle, Sol. Look, I'm sorry about his condition, but we aren't exactly close. Besides, he's only dad's half-brother and I'm adopted, remember?" Solomon rests his forehead on his hand.

"Look, if you want to not give a fuck about him or dad, that's your choice, but you know I don't look at you as anything less because of how you came into the family. You are my brother. I love you. I don't need to know why you won't talk to dad, but the way he tells it, he doesn't know why. Up to you what you do with that information. Anyway, how are things? Wife and kids doing well?"

“Yeah, I’m not going to get into all that right now, but yes, everyone is good here. The kids say hi. Look, I’ll call dad, but that doesn’t mean everything is all sunshine and roses. Oh, I heard you won a belt! Congrats.”

Solomon loves how his brother can switch from scorched earth to happiness like that. **“Yeah, the UGWC Conquest championship. I defend that five times and I get a shot at their World Heavyweight title. Pretty wild honestly. Then I have a shot at two different titles in XWF next week. Gonna be a tough challenge, for sure, but I love that shit. But hey, I gotta get back inside and check on Dad. I know he always puts up a brave front, but this thing with his brother, I can tell it’s really had an impact on him. He can’t hide that from me.”**

“Okay. Bet. Well, I’m proud of you, Sol. I hope you know that. Give dad a hug from me. Love you back.” Solomon smiles. **“All right, Lukas. I’ll keep you posted on uncle Dave. Talk to you later.”** He disconnects the call and puts his phone away. He makes his way back to the hospital room, where he finds his father sitting next to his brother, just talking. Solomon approaches gently and puts his arm around his dad’s shoulders. The two hug.

“I guess we both got to talk to our brothers. Lukas says hi and he promised he’d call you. Just...give him some time, please. He’ll call you when he’s ready. Somberly, Caedmon nods.

“Thanks, kid.” He says, placing a hand on his son’s shoulder. **“You know, there’s something I need to talk to you about. It’s David’s business, he needs someone to step in and help run things while he’s out. I think he’d want you to do it.”**

Solomon can’t believe what he’s hearing. **“Me? Why me? I don’t know the first thing about his work. He wasn’t exactly forthcoming about it. Plus, I don’t need a day job. I already work for two wrestling companies. Can’t they just hire someone else?”**

Caedmon shakes his head. "I wouldn't ask if there was a better option. I know all your reasons to object and I understand them. It's not an ultimatum. You can say no, but hear me out first. Your uncle, he doesn't trust a lot of people. He keeps his circle small intentionally. Like it or not, if something were to happen to him, God forbid, you are the first person he would want to do the job. I'm still gathering details from the board of directors, but can you just sleep on it and let me know later? We can discuss what it entails in further detail, but I can't wait too long. Just promise me you'll think on it?"

Solomon nods. "Sure, dad. I'll think about it. But can you promise me something?"

"What's that, kid?" Caedmon replies.

"Next time you think about an XWF return...run it by me first?" The two share a much needed laugh.

"Again, I have no idea what you're talking about. I hear Sir Nick rode off into the sunset, never to be seen again. That is, until next year, around March..." The two mountains of men laugh again.

Final thoughts and reflection. I am proud of how far I've come, all of my progress so far in the XWF. I'm still trying to find my place in this crazy company, to prove I belong here on my own merits and I have a long way to go. That's just my own personal standard. I want it all, to be among the greats. I realize that not everyone is going to like me, but they will learn to respect me. Some people don't focus on their win/loss ratio. For some, it's just one bad night. It doesn't have to lead to a downward spiral. I want to give props to Lucy Wylde. Well

done. You were the better wrestler that night. I left it all in the ring and you won, fair and square. I'm proud of my performance and I know I can and will do better.

Black Rainbow, I want you to know that I am here to oppose you and everything you claim to stand for. If I have to find allies to fight you, then so be it. That said, I'm calling out Sarah Wolf. I want to face the Doll. Because regardless of your little group and any ideologies they may follow, I have been wanting to get in the ring and test myself against you. If I beat Aurora, I'll even put the title on the line. There's a famous line in wrestling, 'To be the man, you have to beat the man.' I have already faced some of the best XWF has to offer and Sarah, you are on that list. So if you really are as game as you say you are, face me. What have you got to lose?

And Gorgo, after I take out your little Dog, I'm coming for you, because I owe you a receipt or two. If I have to take on the entire Black Rainbow myself, I'll do it, just to prove a point. Whatever happens, the XWF is an exciting place to be and the landscape changed that night at Ides, for better or worse. I can't wait to make magic in that squared circle with all the misfit toys on the island.

So, Aurora. Just know that whatever happens on Monday, I respect you and I hope the feeling is mutual. Who knows? Maybe one day we'll fight on the same side of the ring, but for now, it's time to squabble up. I can't wait to do this one more time. I know you and I both will give it everything we have and I wouldn't want it any other way. See you soon, my Arizona bae.

Deuces.