Notes: From the non-competitor cast, I only own the characters of Jiwon and Ligma B. Matterhorn. Winfrey and Sarkan belong to Sierpinski, and Nybble belongs to FourMoonsWatching.

In the center of the screen is a masterfully animated sequence of Nutmeg TV's logo taking shape that, sadly, very few members of the audience are likely to remember - after all, most haven't tuned in to watch a logo dance. After the animation is completed, the view cuts suddenly to black.

A few seconds of darkness pass by, punctuated by the sound of scuffling.

Finally, the camera turns on to reveal a short, wrinkled, and very old-looking man standing in a brightly lit room. He clasps his hands together and nods at the camera.

"Welcome, friends, to the sixth occasional PPC Hunger Games!" he says in a voice much more rich and booming than his frame would suggest. "We know it's been about five years since the last time, but hey! Better late than never!"

The man spreads his arms out, and the camera pans out to reveal the inside of the commentator's booth; it looks like it hasn't been used in ages. An ancient motorcycle coated with rust leans up against the back wall, and the many consoles lined against the sides of the room are covered in chipped buttons, weakly glowing with colored light. Black screens are arranged above them, covered in fingerprints and hairline cracks.

In the background, a fox-tailed boy can be seen trying to move a robotic cat out of the way so he can sweep the dust-coated floor. He half-heartedly nudges it with a broom. The cat, however, doesn't budge an inch, instead batting at the broom handle with a metal paw.

The old man adjusts himself in front of the camera to conveniently hide the scene from view. He clears his throat and continues.

"I, Ligma B. Matterhorn, shall be your host today, and we here at Nutmeg TV hope you enjoy the show!" The man pulls down a felt screen from the ceiling, releasing a massive cloud of dust that blocks the camera's vision for a moment. His silhouette continues speaking.

"Before we get into the actual meat of things, we'll show a round of interviews from our contestants. After all, it's traditional, and Sarkan did a *wonderful* job with the questions.

Hohoho!” The dust clears, showing Matterhorn carrying a massive projector. He sticks it down on the table, aims it at the screen, and watches as the machine hums to life. He turns back to the camera and gives it a wide, toothy grin.

“With all that said, let’s meet our Tributes!”

Registration Interviews

- **David Null, vampire:** I was forced here by my trainee because - *he looks to the side* - he’s a coward!

  Matt, off-camera: Am not!

  David: Then submit yourself!

  Matt: But I’ll die!

- **O’Ryan Keys, human:** No comment.

- **Matthew, human:** *quiet grumbling.*

  Paye, off-camera: Hey! It’ll be fun!

  Matt: Being murdered is fun?!

  Paye: Well, you have to dish out what you take, anyways!

- **Charlie, tabaxi:** I forgot what dying was like, so this’ll be an experience! Plus, it’s been a while since I’ve done actual bard things. Might as well practice! *They idly pluck at their mandola’s strings.*

- **Ocotillo, dragon:** Ocotillo of the Sandwings, DIA, reporting for duty! Here’s hoping for a good time.

  She flares out her wings and sits up proudly. Her head bumps against the ceiling, and she winces.

- **Katalina, shapeshifter cat:** Well, here I am. Hex told me about this event and I got interested. He made it sound so exciting… Oh, yeah, you know me a bit, right? I’m Katalina. No nicknames if you value your life. …Sorry, I don’t like ‘em.

Anyway, I always knew that that Holodeck place was perfect for practice, but I never knew they conducted events there. I always like taking the chance to go sneak up on my targets, and after hearing about these… Hunger Games? Uh, well, I couldn't just pass this up. I don't know if there's a grand prize for first place, but I'm still going in—mostly for fun. It'd be better with a partner… Oh, crap, the IO—

- **Cornelius, pegasus:** We could say that I was invited by Hex despite my objections. I am not as enthusiastic as many others that will enter this massacre. I only sought a sparring partner, not a… Battle Royale? That is what you call this sport, no? Nonetheless, if this will help me relax after being witness to uncouth behavior in this building, I will do what I must.

- **Jarrod, dragon:** Ugh, what a small confinement. …Now then, where to begin? I only came here to hunt some prey. 'Hunger Games' sounds quite outrageous, if I may be sincere, and yet it intrigued me. I assumed that the participants would starve until only one was left standing, but after having heard a few explanations from word of mouth around this place, it all became clear to me. A contest that will test an entire community of fighters… Survival of the fittest. Yes, this hunt will be bountiful!

- **Vanille la Vix, cartoon fox:** Hunger Games, eh? Do you eat there? I bet it's got lotsa food! Oh, arena? Like a gladiator arena? You bet I'm gonna be all for it, friendo! They're all gonna see the marvelous Vanille do some special tricks! It's gonna be a special show you wouldn't wanna miss! Just don't go mad too much once I start, okay?

- **Caprice, human:**

- **Shimon, Razielim (*Legacy of Kain*):**

- **Thalia Quinn, human:** I heard nothin's off limits! So I can finally blow stuff up without hurting people! *She grins manically and twirls her bat.*

- **Doom, halfling (of the half-demon variety):** Quinn is a madwoman and someone's got to keep an eye on her.

- **Kokoro, human (*My Hero Academia*):**

- **Hiromi, android:**

- **Kaitlyn Jackson, human:** It's back! So I was in the last, um, three of these? I did really well my first time out, but the other two have been kind of, ehhhh, so I'd really like to have a good game this time!

- **Agent Noman, Nevadan (*Madness Combat)*:** Well, it's always good to get stuck in again. You'd be surprised how few good fights you get out on missions.

  I'm Agent Noman. First name Agent, last name Noman, of SOM167168. I'm here from the AAHW, and Madness Combat, and, while I can use pretty much anything as a weapon, my favorite thing to use is an ax. Or a submachine gun. Or a nuke, but I don't think we have any of those sitting around.

  Sarkan, interviewer: You'd be surprised!

- **Kkukttak, kif (vaguely rat-like humanoid):** What, you think I'd pass up an excuse to engage in conniving backstabbing and occasionally stab someone? That's pretty much my thing, historically. And FicPsych can't object to this ... right?

- **Farah Tahar, hani (lion-like humanoid):** So, for one thing, maybe I'll make some new friends! I also need to practice actually fighting, since it comes up in crossovers just often enough that I keep getting caught out by it. But mostly, someone needs to keep an eye on Kkukttak.

- **Aulhar Tauran, hani:** Turns out letting it slip that you've fought before and not being ex-Action gets a solid chunk the gods-rotted division at your door talking you into "providing representation for Finance". I don't think I'll do too well at this whole free-for-all murder spree, but I did set up the betting pool, so, even if I lose, I win.

- **Taq, orc:** Fightin's fun! *He grins, putting a hand on the hilt of his sword.*

  The interviewer backs away slowly, moving the camera with him.

  An' no one actually gets hurt 'ere! Heck, I think I've got a shot 'ere.

- **Rebecca Buch, human:** I have *no* idea how I got here, and now this seems to be a nightmare coming true.

- **Boadicea, Terrarian:** It's like Terraria! Lots of fighting. It's like home.

- **Holo-Acacia:** Yeah, he said I should get out a bit more, so I thought I'd jump back into the Arena... he who? None of your business.

“Thank you for the wonderful interviews, Sarkan!” Matterhorn says as the last of the videos finished playing. “Now, let’s move on to the ‘districts,’ shall we?” He taps his knuckles against the side of the projector.

District 1	David Null	Matthew
District 2	Kokoro	Hiromi
District 3	Thalia Quinn	Doom
District 4	Caprice	Shimon
District 5	Ocotillo	Jarrod
District 6	Farah Tahar	Aulhar Tauran
District 7	Agent Noman	Taq
District 8	Vanille la Vix	Rebecca Buch
District 9	Charlie	Katalina
District 10	Kkukktak	Boadicea
District 11	O’Ryan Keys	Kaitlyn Jackson
District 12	Cornelius	Holo-Acacia

As the district names flicker onto the screen, Matterhorn scratches the side of his head. “Say, why do we bother with districts anyway? Nobody ever pays attention to them once the games actually start up. Kid?” He looks back at the fox-boy from earlier, who has finished sweeping and is idly tapping away at a phone. “Do you have any thoughts on this?”

“Huh? What?” The boy looks up. “Um… I think it’s just for solidarity, to be honest. I’m not sure?”

As the two are talking, the robotic cat from earlier trots in front of the camera and sits down, obscuring the view. The conversation quickly dies down as the two notice this.

After a few seconds, the fox-boy breaks the silence. “Is Nybble blocking the camera?”

“I think that’s the case. Heh.” The older man laughs dryly.

“Should I, um. Should I move her?”

“Well, how else is the audience going to see what’s happening?”

There’s a sigh. “Fine, alright. I-”

He yelps as what sounds like an egg timer goes off. Matterhorn starts chuckling again. Nybble shifts slightly, but doesn’t stop blocking the camera.

“Ah, there it is!” The older man takes a moment to compose himself. There’s the sound of footsteps, then the timer stops ringing. “Haha, don’t mind that. It’s just the alarm.”

“...Alarm? Alarm for wha-”

If seeing the food in the Arena makes your mouth water, then you’re welcome to come on down to its providers in spirit - the Cafeteria! The inspiration for the rations scattered throughout the Holo-Arena, the Cafeteria boasts a multitude of wonderful delicacies for our employees. With meals ranging from sludge to mystery meat to Generic slop, you’ll never leave the tables hungry!

We’ll make sure of it.

(Possible side effects of Cafeteria food include intense indigestion, gas cramps, nausea, and a free ticket to Medical. Be careful when you eat.

-The Sturgeon General)

The view opens on Matterhorn tapping away at some of the buttons in front of him. He notices the camera and waves, displaying a bulky copper glove lined with wires and lights he hadn't been wearing before. Notably, the fox-boy and the robot cat are absent.

"Ah, welcome back!" says Matterhorn with a casual grin. You're all just in time for me to show you the wonderful arena we've prepared!" With that, he holds out his glove hand and gives it a shake. A beam of light shines from its palm, forming a monochrome, three-dimensional hologram of a… thing.

The projection looks like a massive tangle of noodles, looping around each other and into each other, sometimes leading off into large, boxy rooms surrounded by yet more tubes. The mass as a whole looks like an enormous knot, and it almost seems to vibrate the longer it's shown.

"Our arena for this year is a holographic replication of the PPC HQ! Well. A part of it, that is. I have no idea if HQ actually looks like this, but that's a question for our programmers, isn't it?"

Matterhorn snaps the glove's fingers, and the hologram zooms in, focusing on one of the rooms in the center of the mass. As the room grows larger, more details can be made out: an array of tables have been pushed into its center, with piles of food, weapons, and other supplies laid on top of it. In the middle of the tables stands a tiny plastic cornucopia, a single apple pushed into its mouth. Chairs line the outskirts of the room, twenty-four of them arranged in a circle.

"Here lies the spawn room, the starting area, the realm that shall host the infamous Bloodbath today: The Cafeteria! Filled with supplies, dubious foods, and the magnificent cornucopia trophy that is worth absolutely nothing, our contestants will have to be fast and furious if they want to grab what they need!"

Matterhorn claps his hands, and the hologram fades. He steps back and gestures at the projector screen behind him, where the full-size and fully-colored Cafeteria appears. He grins.

"Of course, we've kept you waiting for far too long. So without further ado…"

On the screen, blue light shines around the Cafeteria's circle of chairs. When it clears, the contestants can be seen, one in each seat. Some of the larger competitors notably crush their respective chairs upon arrival.

“...Let the games begin!” Matterhorn whips out a kazoo, holds it up to a megaphone, and *buzzes*. The air itself seems to shake with the bone-rattling sound produced.

In the arena, the tributes all start moving. The camera moves about the Cafeteria, zooming in and switching perspectives when needed to keep up with the action.

“It seems we’ve got a cautious crowd today! Look at them scatter!” The majority of the Tributes head away from the Cafeteria, out into the halls of HQ.

“Oh, will you look at that?” The camera doesn’t move at all. Matterhorn blinks, then pulls a red plastic walkie-talkie off his belt and puts it to his mouth. “Hey, Jiwon? Buddy? Zoom in on the horse-man.”

The camera swoops over and comes into focus on one of the participants dragging a table out of the Cafeteria. “There we go. Anyway, It looks like…” Matterhorn packs away his walkie-talkie and pulls out a piece of paper, checking it over. After a few seconds, he continues. “...Cornelius has decided to steal a table! Who knows what goes on in the minds of our competitors. Hoho!”

The view pans out again, showcasing the whole of the Cafeteria. “In other strange gatherings, you can see O’Ryan over there taking the very chair he started in! And Farah, too! And over here with Vanille - apparently she’s a cartoon fellow? Well, she’s acquired a giant cartoon bomb now. Rather fitting.” On-screen, the Agent in question runs off with a stylized explosive twice her height.

“Over there, Doom and David are scuffling over a bag - oh, and it looks like David’s given up, leaving Doom to his spoils! And on the other end of the room, it looks like Hiromi’s tangled up Ocotillo with…” He pauses. On the screen, one can see the android moving away from the dragon, who is struggling with an incredibly long white ribbon wrapped around her body. “What is that, actually? Zoom in a bit.”

The camera complies, letting some text on the ribbon come into focus. It turns out it’s not a ribbon, but a paper list - rows upon rows of swear words in hundreds, if not thousands of languages ranging from Sindarin to Parseltongue, Klingon to binary, Cthuvian to French.

“Well, that’s certainly dedication,” Matterhorn says after a short pause. “But ignoring the fact that there wasn’t any death from that interaction, who wrote that list? How’d it even get in here? I don’t remember the Holodeck ever simulating *that.*”

Right at that moment, Nybble the robotic cat returns. She slips through the doorway, moves next to the ancient motorcycle propped against the wall, and curls up in a ball, purring contentedly. Matterhorn doesn't seem to notice, and his tone quickly changes as he moves to another scene.

"Oh, will you take a look over there! Here's Kaitlyn with a bow, aiming at Rebecca…" The arrow is fired, but just barely misses its target— and strikes Boudicea instead. "She misses but lands a kill nonetheless! Good game, Boudicea, but what a great start to the bloodshed!"

The view zooms outward, fading to reveal the blueprint of the holographic arena once again. "Even with the Bloodbath over and our tributes scattered across HQ, the action didn't slow a bit!" More scenes flash onto the screen behind him.

"A few of our competitors somehow managed to scavenge a shard of peace." Several images are shown briefly: Rebecca walking through a field of grass and flowers, Hiromi sitting by a startlingly gloomy cliff, Ocotillo and Aulhar snuggled close together - notably, the dragon still has scraps of the swear list wrapped tight around her body.

"But on the other hand," Matterhorn says as the on-screen scenes take a different turn, "We've gotten some wilder events as well! We have some non-lethal tussles, for starters." A clip of Shimon chasing Kaitlyn down the halls flashes by, followed by Doom knocking Charlie to the ground.

"Doom continues his winning streak, but once again, no deaths come out of this fight! I wonder what our halfling friend's plan is… sparing too many people won't be great in the long run."

The next thing shown on-screen is a large, fast-moving blur traveling down a hallway. "Moving on, Thalia and Kkukttak have commandeered a fully-functional car! Don't know how long that's going to last, tight as the halls get, but they're driving nonetheless!"

The screen then cuts to Taq, who is drinking from a bottle. Matterhorn shrugs. "Anyway, here's a good reason why you shouldn't leave your edibles unsupervised!" The image cuts to Taq again, now drinking nothing, his lifeless body on the ground. "It turns out Kokoro pulled a little prank on him and spiked his drink! And so we get death two."

"Speaking of, here's death three!" The screen moves to Vanille confronting Holo-Acacia, a CAD smoking and sparking in her hand. "It looks like our local toon intends to kick off

her run with a *bang*, because she just blew up Holo-Acacia with a CAD! DoSAT should really get those things checked out."

With that, the sequence of images ends, replaced by the spinning logo of Nutmeg TV. Matterhorn clasps his hands together and smiles at the camera. "And that wraps up our first day! We're out of time for now, but don't worry - we'll get to interviewing our contestants again after the ad break, and we hope to see you—"

His walkie-talkie buzzes. The old man looks down for a moment, then takes it and puts it to his ear. "What is it?" A muffled voice comes through, and Matterhorn glances at the camera. "Oh, one second." He turns his back and moves the walkie-talkie to his mouth.

"What do you mean, Boudicea's still in the simulation? …What's this about respawning? Just disconnect her Holodeck gear, it's not that difficult. Don't be slow about it, okay? We're almost out of runtime."

A few more seconds pass, then Matterhorn nods and puts the talkie back on his belt. He turns to the camera, fixes a smile back on his face, and opens his mouth.

"A—"

Have you by any chance died a tragic Holo-death in the Arena and now want to see how you did? Even if you haven't, but still want to see what goes on in the Arena, don't you fret! We have uncut footage from all our camera drones up on the Nutmeg TV website so you can see the hidden details that didn't quite make the highlights!

We'll be putting drone footage up after each day, so don't you worry about running out of content! Well, until you do, that is, but that should take a while. We hope you enjoy the show!

Transcript (Bloodbath)

Hiromi trips up Ocotillo with a comically long list of interdimensional swear words.

O'Ryan steals the chair they started in.

Doom and **David** fight for a bag. **David** gives up and retreats.

Vanille steals a giant cartoon bomb.

Farah steals the chair they started in.

Katalina stays in the Cafeteria for food.

Aulhar finds a canteen full of water.

Cornelius manages to take a table and escape.

Kaitlyn shoots an arrow at **Rebecca**, but misses and kills **Boadicea** instead.

Everyone else runs away from the Cafeteria.

Day 1

Kkukttak and **Thalia** find a car and drive off together.

Doom defeats **Charlie** in a fight, but spares their life.

Farah hunts for other tributes.

Noman, **Caprice**, and **Jarrod** hunt for other tributes.

Hiromi sits at Brooder's Bluff for a while.

Kokoro poisons **Taq'**s drink. He drinks it and dies.

Matt takes an emergency care kit from Medical.

David nearly passes out from exhaustion.

Cornelius stalks **Katalina** all day.

Vanille throws an unstable CAD at **Holo-Acacia**. It explodes, killing her.

O'Ryan eats some food from the Cafeteria and gets a stomachache.

Ocotillo persuades **Aulhar** to snuggle with her 'for warmth.'

Shimon chases **Kaitlyn**.

Rebecca discovers the Courtyard.

District 1	David Null	Matthew
District 2	Kokoro 1 Kill	Hiromi
District 3	Thalia Quinn	Doom
District 4	Caprice	Shimon
District 5	Ocotillo	Jarrod
District 6	Farah Tahar	Aulhar Tauran
District 7	Agent Noman	~~Taq~~
District 8	Vanille la Vix 1 Kill	Rebecca Buch
District 9	Charlie	Katalina
District 10	Kkukktak	~~Boadicea~~
District 11	O'Ryan Keys	Kaitlyn Jackson 1 Kill
District 12	Cornelius	~~Holo-Acacia~~