I have long lost count of how many tears I have shed. Too many times I have seen streams of tears rolling down my cheeks and redness surrounding my eyes. Too many times have I felt like I have been falling and unable to stop. This past Thursday was another one of those times. When Luz was announced the winner, I lost it. I closed my eyes and felt my body pulsating. In my head I wanted to take her down and place my knee hard hard into the small of her back and make her really feel my frustration. Everyone NEEDS to feel it. Everyone NEEDS to know what it feels like to be me.

But when I opened my eyes and saw Amelia come to Luz's defense, standing between us, I realized that Luz was not an enemy of mine. She was not one that was trying to hold me back. She wanted momentum heading into Taking Hold of the Flame, same as me. We both needed it so desperately and she just happened to be a half second ahead of me. More importantly I was a half second behind her. That has pretty much always been the theme. A theme that only I can break.

As new as he is to SCW, Kemal is right. Next time I have to go over the edge. I have to go past the point of no return. It is not enough for me to walk through burning coals. I need to stop and just stand in them, letting the smoke and eventually the flames consume me. I need to embrace the unknown, even if it hurts those who I love the most. Besides, if both Peter and Colleen truly love me, they will always feel the same way about me, no matter what happens. If they don't, then I guess I am truly cursed and I would have nothing else to live for except winning the one prize that everyone is trying their hardest to keep me away from. Obviously the SCW World Championship. The same championship that is being defended inside the infamous Thunderdome, a cage.

That is a word that makes my eyes close and my body shiver all over again, sending chills up my spine. I know what feeling confined feels like and that is an environment that just does not mesh with me. But I know that deep down as a wrestler I will eventually come face to face with being locked inside a solid steel beast. And so I will have my eyes on that one. Besides, there is one trait that all four of the combatants share. In their own ways, they are all bullies. Whoever comes out of that Thunderdome as the SCW World Champion, to me, they are not a winner. To me they will just be the one who was able to pick up the scraps. Everyone seems to love doing that against me. They love to have that disgusting drool form on their lips. They love taking that first delicious bite out of me, like I am an amazing, moist hunk of Porterhouse steak. What each and everyone of you enjoy doing the most? You enjoy wolfing down every single last morsel of my heart, my hopes, my dreams.

But now. Now that one too many people have chosen to do this? The plate is empty. I am empty. Not even a crumb exists. At Taking Hold of the Flame there is nothing left for anyone to take from me. Slowly yet surely you have devoured every fiber of my being. Now it is MY turn to take everything from you.

FRIDAY, MAY 23, 2025
The Night That Everything Changed

"No. No. NO!!!"

She had been tossing and turning in her sleep, but now she has shot up like a rocket, Polly's hands immediately going to rub out her eyes, obviously wanting to be fully awake. As she does this, Peter stirs in the bed beside her. She turns to look at his sleeping body that is underneath the sheets before she turns away and gets out of the bed, wearing her black spaghetti-string nightie that goes down to her knees. Polly does not even get to take two steps away from the bed when she hears his voice from behind her.

"Hey. Another nightmare?"

Polly is not normally stuck up around him but in the spur of the moment she is, probably not even realizing it.

"You think? I can't take it anymore."

Peter looks to be choosing his words carefully, knowing his wife so well.

"Polly, I know these defeats have been very discouraging. I know it feels like you have to keep reloading and going back out there, only to be turned away again and again. But-"

"But what! Way to be supportive by the way. Though then again, support isn't what I need."

"Do you perhaps just want to talk?"

Peter sees her shoulders tense up. When they go back to their former position, the spaghetti strap on Polly's left shoulder comes off the shoulder a little bit. She notices it immediately and replaces it back to where it belongs before she slowly turns around to face him.

"Talk? That won't do anything. What do you think would happen anyway? Do you believe you have all the answers to my problems? I will tell you right now that you don't. My problems began before we even knew each other."

"Hey. I'm willing to listen to you. If there is anything you want or need to say, I'm here for you."

Polly throws up her hands into the air in discontent, telling him "HA! You're here for me. Well, physically I guess you are. But there is more that you don't know about me. Just like I'm sure there is more that I don't know about you."

"Polly, let's just-"

She shakes her head and points her left pointer finger at him.

"You know what? No. I don't want to know about the past demons in your closet."

"I don't really have any."

"Besides your father being a basic sick psychopath? I find that hard to believe."

Polly turns away from him and raises her chin up. Peter studies his wife's current stance and sighs before he sits up and sits on the side of the bed that Polly had been sleeping in. He then pats the bed, inviting Polly to come and sit next to him.

"Please. Sit. We aren't going to get back to sleep anyways now that we are both wide awake."

"Yeah. I get it. That's my fault too. Just like how it's my fault that I always seem to be so weak, in every sense of the word."

She hasn't turned back to face him as she again looks like she is fighting back tears, this time being successful in that endeavor. Peter looks frustrated now with her and he lets her know it, actually having the balls to tell her the truth.

"Stop it. Just stop it Polly. Look. It's no secret that you have been through a lot and it's no secret that everyone sees you as an easy target. The only way to change all of that is to be the girl that I first met, the one that wasn't scared of anyone or anything, the one that wasn't afraid to stand, the one that made people cry, instead of crying herself. Do you really want to know why I fell in love with you? That is one thing that I have been holding back on telling you, but right now, I see that you need to know. While I tell you, I want you to sit right next to me. I want you to look right in my eyes and I want to be looking right into yours. After I tell you, as long as you are willing, I want to hear what you have been holding back from me. I'm sorry if you feel pressured, but we are life partners and partners talk to one another."

Polly runs her left hand slowly through her dark dyed hair before she very slowly turns around to look at him sitting there. Her green eyes look at him but only for a second before she sits next to him on the bed, saying "Fine".

Polly does not go to touch her husband at all though. Peter does go to wrap his arm around Polly, but she shoves his arm away.

"If you want to talk, then talk. I'm not even in the mood for that. But who knows, maybe I'll learn something. Probably not, but maybe."

She says this to him and then slides further up the side of the bed so she is a few feet away from him now. He makes no move to slide in that direction, being he at least has her attention. He also at this very moment is looking in only one place, right into the fabled green eyes.

"You need to stop feeling so sorry for yourself. That is up to you. As for what I feel I need to tell you Polly, I fell in love with you because I always saw you as a down to Earth girl. Even though

your desires used to be making your father proud while making the show's opponents lose to you, I saw you and I always thought to myself that I wanted a chance with you. Do you want to know what I loved about you so much back then?"

"What."

"Your confidence. You walked with such bounce and with a glowing aura all around you Polly. Your smile was amazing and intoxicating. To me, every time I saw you, you lit up the room. As time has passed by, I'm just left to wonder what happened."

Polly sighs.

"Life happened. Peter, no one can be young forever. Trust me, I wish I had never grown up. Things were far more simple as a kid. I'm sure you can agree with me on that. But… we're grown up now, and I see that if I want to be successful I need to do more than just stand out and do more than just trying to take out the glass ceiling that wants to be permanently stuck just above my head. I need to take my enemies out and I need to have my head fully focused on that task. But with you here and with what my mom wanted me to find, I can't do that."

"What are you saying?"

"I have to be honest with you. Right now, while I do love you too, you're a distraction to me. A distraction that I cannot afford to have. It's not your fault. It's mine. It's like I told you, everything is my fault."

Polly shies away once again, but this time Peter doesn't give her any time to wallow in her self-pity. He slides right up to her, places his left hand under her chin, and makes her stare eye to eye with him.

"If you need space, of course I will give that to you. But not without knowing everything that's wrong. I don't want to force it out of you Polly. I'm just going to hope you tell me so I can maybe understand."

"Hmph. Hope. Now there's a word that just doesn't exist. How many times have I hoped that the bad times would just go away? Yet here I am Peter, still stuck in the same rut. As much as I would love for either you or Colleen to help pull me out of it, that is something that neither of you are capable of doing. It's on me. It's ALL on me!"

"It doesn't have to be that way."

Polly turns her face away. Peter sighs and slaps his hands against his upper legs.

"So I guess you aren't going to be brave enough, huh?"

"Brave enough to do what? Tell you all about what my issues are?"

Polly sticks her nose back up into the air, even though her back is turned to him.

"Yes. If I were you and felt the way you do Polly, I would be willing to try anything to feel even a little bit better and more like myself. I say this now as not your husband, but as a friend. Please, tell me everything."

She stands up and slowly marches over to her big bag of luggage. From the big bag she pulls out the doll. Peter sees it and then sees Polly undoing the back of the doll's dress. She opens the hidden door of the doll where the dark diamond lies within. Not even looking at him she shows off the diamond. Even though the room is dark, Peter can see it glistening a little, despite it being black. Polly willingly tosses it to him. Peter catches it.

"My dad put it in there when I was a little girl. I had no idea it was there until very recently, when I went home all by myself."

"This is why you have been the way you have been? It's a diamond. Since he left it for you, you're rich. You're-"

"That thing is a curse. You want it, it's yours Peter. I don't want it."

Peter looks up at Polly. He can right now see the look in her eyes, being she is actually looking down at him as he still sits on the side of the bed.

"I know you have had bad dreams before, but are you saying this is the cause of the recent ones? The one that you just had right now?"

Polly just nods before telling him "This one has been far different from the others. I have experienced this nightmare before. However, it was many years ago when my dad was still alive and well."

"Are you alright with telling me all about it?"

The former blonde heavily sighs before she goes and sits down on the chair that is placed at the round table in the room. She doesn't look directly at Peter, but instead just past him before she closes her eyes. Peter waits to see if she will tell him everything.

"They first started when I was 10. Obviously that was a time in my life where I could just feel my body beginning to change. Not quite the time of my first period, but I knew that slowly yet surely my childhood would be ending. I… I did my best to keep a smiling face because I loved both of my parents so much. Every single time my dad came into the room at night when I called out for him, I appreciated him so very much. Especially on warm and not nights such as this one. It was the very first one where I felt the most rattled when I woke up sweating from head to toe,

wearing just a pair of pale pink panties and a matching pale pink training bra, the first bra I ever wore."

"Anyways, I will never forget that night where he stayed in my room with me until the sun came up."

"I'm sorry to interrupt Polly. I really am. But do you remember what you saw prior to waking up?"

She finally does look directly at him, her green eyes clear to him, even though they have not yet turned on a light.

"Very much so. Someone, an unknown figure, was chasing me. In my hands I held my doll, the very same doll I hold right now. But on that night and many other nights, I could never make out who the figure was, nor could I make out their voice as all I could hear was just incoherent sounds coming from the one who was chasing me."

"In your nightmare, did they ever catch you?"

"No. I would always run as fast as my legs could carry me. Each and every time I would wake up so sweaty, even worse than I am right now. Peter, I'm sure they're near and my mom told me the other day that they wanted the diamond."

"I'm here to protect you, as are Colleen and Marissa. You won't be kidnapped again if that's what you are so worried about."

"That isn't it. They aren't after me. Not this time. Which is why I want to get rid of that thing. It… it…"

Polly's monotone worried voice fades out.

"It what?"

Polly looks like she doesn't want to say, but finally she is brave enough to separate her lips and tell him.

"It holds all of my dad's secrets. Peter, I loved him so much. But mom told me what she read in one of the books she has from my dad. Now it's like I have no idea who my dad even was. I thought I knew him. I feel… betrayed."

Peter stands up and goes and stands behind the chair that Polly is sitting in. He gently talks to her.

"I'm sure there's an explanation."

“An explanation that I will never know. Mom doesn’t even know. It died with my dad. Peter, just please, get that thing out of my sight.”

Peter looks down into his left hand and at the dark diamond before he just tells Polly “Something is telling me that isn’t in your mother’s wishes. I’ll keep it for you for now. Will she be coming to get it at some point?”

“She said she would, but with how busy she is, who knows when that will be. I’d prefer to just destroy it. Nothing good has ever come to me when secrets are involved.”

“I won’t argue with you there. For you though, since you are feeling negative vibes from the diamond, for you Polly, I will keep it for now. Don’t go looking for it in my luggage.”

“Don’t worry. I don’t want it. Trouble has found me at every turn and I’m sick of it.”

Peter has nothing else to say. He gets off the bed and heads over to his bag. Polly turns away, clearly not wanting to see where he puts it. Peter zips his bag back up and then goes and gets completely back on the bed and lays down on the side of the bed that he originally chose.

“I’m going to try and get some more sleep. You should too, Polly.”

“I can’t.”

Peter sighs before he takes his eyes off of her and turns over to his right, doing his best to get back to sleep. It isn’t long before he is successful. Meanwhile Polly just stays in the chair, looking at him in the bed, unable to find the desire to even want to try to close her eyes. To her she probably doesn’t want to face what her mind might throw at her. Maybe she doesn’t want to do something that she has found herself doing oh so many times, crying out for a man whom she thought she knew.

MONDAY, MAY 26, 2025
Another Day She Does Not Want To Remember

Memorial Day. We should all always remember those who have been lost. While the day is meant to mourn those who we have lost while serving in the United States military, it is not wrong to reflect on those loved ones whom we have lost due to other causes. Yet Polly Pingotti does not look like she wants to remember anyone or anything. Right now she walks alone. No Peter, no Colleen, no Marissa, no one.

Right now she walks in the grassy area of what appears to be a bayou, having left Atlanta before the others. She had left a letter for Peter and one for Colleen. The responses to those letters were text messages that she has left unanswered.

“I can’t even let them know where I am. Besides, Peter knows everything else.”

Polly sighs and continues to walk along very slowly, wearing a brand new and very lovely looking knee-high cypress-colored halter dress, looking out at the bayou’s serene waters. After walking a bit further, she sees a huge log that she chooses to walk up to and sit down on, crossing her right leg over her left. Perhaps feeling comfortable she just looks out and closes her green eyes and just lets time slip by. A large amount of time goes by, so much that some bullfrogs begin to start making their presence felt. She hears them and opens her eyes, seeing it is beginning to get into the evening hours. She can hear a few crickets chirping too. Even though darkness will soon be falling, she just doesn’t seem to care in the slightest.

“This right here is easy. Simple. You guys don’t know how easy you have it.”

She looks right at one of the bullfrogs and it gives off a ribbit right at her, but makes no move to go towards her, nor does Polly stand up.

“Your biggest problem is finding dinner. Now I have to find out why my dad hid that diamond in my doll for so many years. It’s a distraction that I just don’t need. Maybe I should have kept it and not given it to Peter. I could have just chucked it right here in the swamp and no one would have ever found it.”

The frog ribbits at her again before it turns and dives back into the water.

“Sure. Even when I’m talking to a frog it needs to take something away from me.”

Polly sighs and finally places her right foot back on the ground and gets up off the log. She begins to walk back down the path that she came. When she arrives back at the beginning, she sees a second car in the small parking lot. As she comes out of the area lined with trees, a guy that looks to be about her age steps out of the other car and looks at her but doesn’t make any move towards her. Polly does her best to ignore him and goes to the car that she has taken from New Orleans down to here, but she doesn’t get in, sensing that he is still looking at her. She musters up the courage to speak to this total stranger, even though she keeps her mostly bare back turned to him.

“Still looking at me? Why don’t you take a picture? It’ll last longer.”

Polly shakes her hair for a few moments, having the majority of her dark-haired locks land on her right side, tossed over her shoulder so she can look down to see her hair. The guy still has not said a word and instead seems to be trying to find what he wants to tell her. But Polly no longer takes kindly to his silence and whirls around to face him.

“So? Why are you still just looking at me? If you have nothing to say, leave. I’m not in the mood. Besides, I’m taken. I’m married.”

Finally he speaks, but reveals nothing about himself. He just says two extremely vague words.

"I figured."

"That's it? That's all you're going to say? There is no way that you are out here for some sort of a Sunday drive. You're looking for me, aren't you?"

Polly wasn't lying when she said she was not in a good mood. She takes it upon herself to walk right up to him. He looks taken aback as he can see now that Polly meant what she said.

"I'm sorry. I can't lie to you. When I pulled up in my car here, I saw you walking up the trail. I figured I would stop and see if you needed help. You had a far-off look in your eyes from what I could see."

"You should keep your eyes on the road."

"If you're a secret police officer, I guess I'm guilty. Give me a ticket."

Polly scoffs and actually laughs a little.

"Oh really? I guess it's your lucky day. I'm not an undercover cop. I just wanted to come here to be alone, to think, to reminisce, to just want better days. How about you? What brings you out here?"

"Um…"

Polly actually looks very confident as she looks right at him. He looks like the nervous one for a change.

"Come on. Tell me the truth."

He looks at her now with his eyes, these being the same eyes that were hiding from her back in Atlanta.

"Okay, okay! You got me. I know who you are, Polly. The dark hair didn't fool me. I have kept tabs on Supreme Championship Wrestling for quite some time now. I knew I had to find you. I caught up with you in Atlanta at Centennial Park. I couldn't reveal myself to you at that time. I just couldn't. And I figured you would want to go out of the way and be alone when you got to New Orleans. I just got lucky on that one to find you."

"Who ARE you?"

Her green eyes squint as she looks to be trying to figure it out. He helps her out.

“My father was a friend and business partner of your father’s. Don’t worry. I’m not after you, but my father sent me to recover the black diamond that he gave to your father to hide for him. He couldn’t hold onto it because um…”

The man’s voice trails out.

“Because of why?”

“Can you keep a secret?”

Polly takes one more step up to him so she is almost right in his face, definitely close enough for him to easily touch her if he wanted. Yet for some reason, she seems to trust him not to.

“Honestly I can’t deal with all these secrets anymore. I just wish everything was out in the open. Just tell me. I don’t have that cursed thing on me right now but I know who does have it and he’s keeping it safe. Trust me. I wanted to ditch it and be done with it. I want to move on with my life. As much as I loved my dad, it’s like he’s casting a shadow over my life.”

“I will tell you. My father got it down in Rio de Janeiro. Brazil.”

He puts his head down, stopping.

“Yeah? I know where Brazil is. I wasn’t born yesterday. Out with it. And while you’re at it, tell me your name.”

“How disrespectful of me Polly. It’s Michael, Michael Jorgenson. The last name should ring a bell to you.”

“Yes, it does. I haven’t seen you in like what, about 15 years? I definitely didn’t recognize you. As for the diamond?”

“I’m ashamed to say it. He sort of stole it from the previous owner when the previous owner wasn’t looking.”

“Great! So for a quarter century I have been in the possession of a damn stolen diamond without even knowing it?!”

Michael nods, saying “I’m afraid so, Polly. There’s more though. That previous owner’s daughter is seeking the diamond. She has been able to get a valid citizenship here in the U.S. She will stop at nothing to get it. I don’t want you or your mother in the middle of this and-”

“My mom found some notes in one of my dad’s old books that she still has. She’s in Europe on a job assignment. Has been for a few years now. She’ll be fine.”

“Oh. That simplifies things a little. Can you perhaps go get the diamond from who has it and then just bring it to me? It does hold a lot of monetary value and in this girls’ hands, who knows what can happen and-”

“But it is too much of a burden for me to carry. I don’t know what my dad was thinking when he gave it to me and then chose not to tell me about it. Sure I was a toddler back then, but even when I grew up and was a teenager, he said nothing. I had no clue when I first found it.”

Michael looks directly into Polly’s green eyes now and reads them before nodding and saying “I believe you.”

“That doesn’t matter. Anyways, look, you can have it. I don’t care about money. I’m a professional wrestler. I don’t need it. I don’t want it!”

She snaps at him before turning quickly and walking back towards the car she has. Michael doesn’t follow her but does call out to her.

“Hey, Polly, I’m really sorry that your family got dragged into this.”

Polly stops dead in her tracks. Without turning around, she tells him “Sorry does NOT turn back the hands of time, Michael. I prefer to stop having to remember things and remember someone who I loved so much and thought I knew everything about. Meet me tomorrow at noon outside the Superdome. I’ll be around back. If I spot you, I’ll call out your name. I’ll have the diamond with me. It’s all yours.”

Polly says no more as she resumes walking. She unlocks the car and steps in and it is not long at all before she drives off. Michael just stands there in the parking lot for a few more minutes with his cell phone in his hands. He appears to be searching for something. When he finds what he is looking for on his phone, he too gets into his car and drives off in the same direction that Polly just did.

MONDAY NIGHT, MAY 26, 2025
Too Many Times Like These, Too Many Secrets

It is not normal for me to just take the time to try and relax, being everything I have dealt with. But when I have tried, each and every single time I seem to fail to enjoy even just a little bit of bliss. Nothing new there. Even at this very moment it’s the exact same. It’s why I felt like I needed to sit down and write every feeling that I currently feel.

I just… I feel like I can never live my own life. It seems like I am always getting pulled this way and that way and every other way that everyone else wants me to go. I know what I have to do. I HAVE to put my foot down! That is what I plan to do tomorrow when I meet him and hand over the diamond. However to me that is only one step in the process. First I have to get the diamond back from Peter, which shouldn’t be a problem. After all, it technically was entrusted to

me. I can do whatever I want with it. Just like how I should be able to put everything else aside and get what I want when it comes to Supreme Championship Wrestling.

To put it bluntly, in my personal life, I'm tired of all the secrets, and in my professional life, I'm tired of all the roadblocks and disappointments. Jennifer Cassidy ignoring my pin on Kemal Yilmaz was the last straw. As much as I respect Luz, when she said what she said in that ring, it meant nothing to me. It brought no solace. Just like how I am getting this bad inkling that someone secret and hiding in the shadows will just come into Taking Hold of the Flame and rip that victory out from underneath me too.

Not like it would surprise me. Everyone just loves taking advantage of me. Everyone just loves holding me down, including you Selena. But I will come back to you as it is no secret who you believe you are and what you believe you will do. You don't need to hide and lurk in the shadows, unlike Ryan LeCavalier. Nor do I.

Another thing I don't have to do anymore is to lead a family, a clan, a club. I know I brought Colleen and Aisling here to SCW, because I felt like they deserved a second chance and I felt like they deserved an opportunity to show that they could do something positive and constructive, rather than following the orders of a sick man and be destructive. Yeah, I know what Colleen has done in the underground, but she has done what has had to do to be successful. Same with Aisling when she was healthy. Same with Marissa now too. My question too many times has been when will it be my turn.

I am no longer asking. You may all believe that I am crying wolf on this one but I am TELLING you all, no matter who is the last person standing at Taking Hold of the Flame, I will NOT let anyone blindside me again. I will not let anyone take something that does not belong to them. I will not let anyone take something that I have worked so hard to earn. NOT AGAIN!!!

So, for those of you that want to make your glorious return and want to look to do it at MY expense? Don't be surprised when I capture you and drop you face first into that damn mat! Once I do that, maybe I will just stand idly by and let someone else pick the bones and finish you off. For once, I need to be the smart one and pick my spots. I mean technically I could be sort of like my old foe Glory Braddock and just let it all come to me. That thought has crossed my mind. However it has also crossed my mind that Glory is just overly full of herself, and she is not the only one. It's almost scary to think how many secret entrants will believe that they can just come in here and in a very, VERY short time take everything that someone like myself has worked SO HARD for! It makes me want to puke.

I can't let it happen. I just can't. You know what? I don't care WHOSE music hits. My eyes will lock right with yours when you come out and you will know to do one specific thing. If you don't want to cry and you don't want your surprise opportunity to be gone in the blink of an eye? Stay far, FAR away from me!

I am not kidding. If you DO decide to tempt fate, I will do something to you that far too many have done to me. I, this dark diamond personified, will be your Dreamkiller.

It will be impossible for any of you to take rulership over the Flame that leads to the Rise to Greatness main event when your dream has been shattered.

As for me, do any of you think I'm scared of taking on anyone in that ring?

Not a chance! Besides, I have had so many of my dreams dashed. So many. I, Polly Pingotti, am beyond tired of facing that fate. I'm going to change it. I'm going to cross the lines that obviously need to be crossed. No more holding back. Not like it matters if someone approaches me to tell me that they hate me for it. I have nothing left to lose anyway.