

A DIRECTORIAL APPROACH TO WILLIAM BLACK'S IN THIS CORNER,  
WEIGHING IN AT 236 POUNDS, FROM PETOSKEY, MICHIGAN,  
INVENTOR OF THE NORTH COUNTRY CRUSH,  
MAULER MAN MOZE

THESIS

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MASTER OF ARTS

by

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## INTRODUCTION

Man must decide what his goal in life is, how hard he wants to reach it, and what he will settle for if he can not obtain that goal. In a free society man is given the privilege of self-determination at birth. He must spend a certain part of his life, whether it be a minute or years, deciding what path he will take. He may change his goal or obtain the original goal and set an even higher one. The play, In This Corner, Weighing In At 236 Pounds, From Petoskey, Michigan, The Inventor Of The North Country Crush, Mauler Man Moze, written by William Black, is a study of one man's self-determination. It is a study of values and goals; it is a social comment.

In This Corner, Weighing In At 236 Pounds, From Petoskey, Michigan, The Inventor Of The North Country Crush, Mauler Man Moze is an original play. The first performance before an audience will come out of this study. There is no prior production from which to draw information or to analyze. William Black has written this play as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master of Arts degree.

The purpose of this thesis is to study the playwright and his ideas, to analyze this play in detail, to present a production approach, to direct the play for viewing by an audience, and to evaluate the effectiveness of the production after the final performance. The play will be staged in full arena to permit and encourage audience involvement. A great amount of time in rehearsal will be spent on the special directing challenges this play presents, such as wrestling sequences which must be carefully choreographed.

Included in the appendix of this paper will be the complete production book and two critiques of the production written by members of the faculty at Southwest Texas State University.

CHAPTER I  
THE PLAYWRIGHT

"I write plays that will entertain and bring people to the theatre."<sup>1</sup> Charles William Black, known to his friends as Bill, was born April 29, 1949, in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. His early childhood was spent much like that of most children except that his family moved several times, and by the time he reached the eighth grade in school he had lived in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma; Kansas City, Kansas; and Boulder, Colorado. The Black family moved to New Braunfels, Texas, in 1963. William Black became interested in playwriting during his sophomore year at New Braunfels High School in 1964. He wrote a play entitled All That Glitters Is Not Creamcheese which was entered in the Trinity University Play Festival Contest and received a third place award. It was during this contest that Black met the contest judge, Eugene McKinney, playwright-in-residence at Trinity University. McKinney encouraged him to continue writing and Black

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<sup>1</sup>Interview with William Black, San Marcos, Texas, February 10, 1974.

claims that he owes much to McKinney for the encouragement he received from him during his high school days.<sup>1</sup>

Professor McKinney became playwriting advisor for In This Corner, Weighing In At 236 Pounds, From Petoskey, Michigan, The Inventor Of The North Country Crush, Mauler Man Moze<sup>2</sup> after the untimely death of Ramsey Yelvington, playwright-in-residence at Southwest Texas State University.

Black began his college years at the University of Texas in Austin in 1967. Strangely enough, he did not choose drama as his major field of study. He registered as a marketing major, but it did not take him long to decide to change his major studies to theatre. "Economics ate my lunch," explained Black during an interview, "so I decided to try playwriting again."<sup>3</sup> After one year at the University of Texas he decided that the Drama Department there was not for him. He had not written any plays and had only managed to land one acting role.

In 1969, Black entered Southwest Texas State University and quickly became involved in theatre.

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Hereafter referred to as In This Corner/Mauler Man Moze.

<sup>3</sup>Interview with William Black, San Marcos, Texas, February 15, 1974.

That year he wrote Never Hide Your Tommy Gun In The Oven. It was produced in the spring One-Act Play Festival on campus. Never Hide Your Tommy Gun In The Oven, according to Black, is an absurdist play which is a social comment on violence.<sup>1</sup> It was the first of several social comment plays that Black would write.

In 1970, Black wrote three plays. The first was a social comment play entitled Confederate General From Big Sur. The play is a satire based on two men who decide to go out and live off the land. It has never been performed.

The second was a one-act play entitled Mauler Man Moze. This play, of course, has now been rewritten and expanded into three acts and retitled In This Corner/ Mauler Man Moze.

The third play of 1970 was another social comment drama. Custer Had It Coming deals with the history of Indians in America. The play was incorporated into a multi-media production written and produced by Southwest Texas State University drama students and entitled Quack.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., February 17, 1974.

Black spent 1971 and 1972 studying playwriting, acting, revising, and rewriting his earlier plays. He graduated from Southwest Texas State University and began graduate studies. In 1973, he wrote John Dillenger Died For You, a social comment play on violence, and The Frog Pond, a children's play which dealt with ecology. The Frog Pond was produced as part of the "Summer Season 73" at Southwest Texas State University. A friend of Black's, Robert Zamora, wrote lyrics and music for The Frog Pond. This play won Black the chance to write the first creative thesis play to be done at Southwest Texas State University.

It is not hard to surmise that Black's plays deal with society. He considers the plays that he writes comedies which contain a comment on life.

I try not to get too serious, entertainment is the primary goal of my plays, the message or comment is secondary. I write for enjoyment, hoping to see my finished work acted on stage. I try to write plays that will bring people to the theatre.<sup>1</sup>

When asked what playwrights influenced him, Black replied that he felt the greatest influence had been the French absurdists and the first French playwrights who departed from realism about the turn of the century, especially Alfred Jarry and Guillaume Appolinaire.

I really like and I am influenced by the Dadist and Swedish playwrights who wrote the first "happening" type plays.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid. <sup>2</sup>Ibid.



Although Black does not feel he is influenced by Neil Simon, he is a great fan of his. "I think Simon writes so people will enjoy and laugh while in the theatre. He gives the people what they seem to want and I think that's fine."<sup>1</sup>

Black also likes playwrights who are willing to experiment with new forms of writing. He says he admires the works of men like Eugene O'Neill, who did not just stay with what was successful but tried new forms and new ideas.

When asked what he felt about American playwrights today, Black replied that he felt this was a period of turmoil.<sup>2</sup>

During an interview, Black explained where he got the idea to write In This Corner/Mauler Man Moze. Black's second cousin is Danny Hodge, a professional wrestler, based in Oklahoma City. In 1970, Black wrote a one-act play about his cousin and entitled it Mauler Man Moze. Hodge was a three time N.C.A.A. champion wrestler for the University of Colorado during his college days. He won the Silver Medal in the Olympics, in Melbourne, Australia, in 1956. Today he is a very successful professional wrestler in and around

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., February 18, 1974.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

Oklahoma. Black spent many hours discussing the world of wrestling and the life of a wrestler with his cousin. These talks prompted the first writing of Mauler Man Moze as a one-act play in 1970. In 1973, Black decided he needed to expand and improve the play. Then he got the chance to rewrite the one-act version into a three-act thesis play.

When asked why he wanted to write about wrestling, Black explained that to him wrestling is many things.

Wrestling is theatre, circus, and drama all rolled into one. Most sports end up being show business, but wrestling on a professional level is nothing but show business. This interests me very much. Wrestling becomes the final fight in life, good over evil. No one ever has to decide who the bad guy is in wrestling. He is known from the minute the crowd first sees him.<sup>1</sup>

Black feels that wrestling is a fun sport and should be viewed for enjoyment only. But he knows that wrestling is more than just fun to many spectators. Black believes that people go to the arena on Saturday to cheer their favorite gladiator. If he wins, then it was worth the money; if he loses it still is because the audience can release all their emotions and fears during the match. The "good guy" wrestler is loved by all. The "bad guy" wrestler is a man that the crowd can compare to the bad bosses and general "bad guys"

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

in society. If the "bad guy" wins, that simply means that the spectator can identify with the defeat of the "good guy" and understand his failure.

In the writing of In This Corner/Mauler Man Moze, Black is more interested in the wrestler than in the crowd. The play is mainly about Mauler Man and his self-determination. Successful wrestlers usually begin their careers on the college campuses in amateur college wrestling. It is a very different world from professional wrestling. College wrestling is a completely controlled sport while professional wrestling is almost bedlam. In college wrestling there is no "heavy" or "bad guy." When a highly skilled college wrestler enters the professional wrestling world he does not just begin to get paid, like most college athletes entering a professional sport, he must become a different kind of athlete. He must adapt and change his wrestling techniques. He must become an actor. These things interest Black.

In This Corner/Mauler Man Moze is a play about a young wrestler who wants to be a "good guy," a champion "good guy" wrestler. In the beginning he is allowed to play that role; then his popularity begins to decline and he is finally given the choice of quitting or becoming a "bad guy" type. The play traces Mauler Man's climb

to the top of the professional wrestling circle and then his struggle to stay on top and finally his decision to compromise his goal. Mauler Man's compromise and his self-determination is the essence or main idea of the play. This is what Black wants the audience to be most aware of.

William Black wants the audience to become involved in the lives of Mauler Man, his opponents, and his manager. The play is a compressed look into the wrestling world as seen by Black.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

## CHAPTER II

ANALYSIS OF IN THIS CORNER/MAULER MAN MOZE

In This Corner/Mauler Man Moze is an action play. It seems fitting to analyze the play using Aristotle's Poetics for the basis of analysis because Aristotle put plot as the most important part of a play and defined it as an imitation of an action. According to the Poetics, there are six major parts of a drama: plot, character, thought, diction, song, and spectacle.<sup>1</sup> In This Corner/Mauler Man Moze will be discussed using each of these six major parts of drama.

The plot of this play is divided into two major parts: the first is the motivation of Mauler Man by other characters in the play, the second part is the actual wrestling action which encompasses the crowd-characters' action. The play's plot begins with the crowd-characters entering the wrestling arena and getting settled for an evening of entertainment. They become a part of the audience. Their action, according to the script, is to motivate the audience to become

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<sup>1</sup>Aristotle, Poetics, trans. S. H. Butcher (New York: Hill and Wang, 1961), p. 62.

involved in the play. The playwright does not always give each of these characters definite lines. They ad-lib their lines depending upon the wrestling action. The crowd-characters comment throughout the play on the wrestling action. Several of the crowd-characters enter the wrestling ring and have direct contact with the Announcer and the wrestlers. The crowd-characters are colorful and interesting. There is the Old Lady who becomes at first a good omen to Mauler Man and a supporter of his wrestling--at the end of the first act she enters the ring and places the Championship Belt around his waist. Later in the play she turns against him and urges the other crowd-characters to hate him. Two other crowd-characters, Mrs. Botts and the Old Chicano, also enter the ring action. They win door prizes and must enter the wrestling ring to accept them. The playwright intends that the crowd-characters depict real wrestling fans. They are a direct influence on Mauler Man because they motivate many of his actions. In the beginning of the play they are critical of him, then they begin to support him and as the play progresses they make him a champion with their support and loyalty. At the end of the play, however, they hate him and scream for his defeat. The playwright touches

on a universal theme with the crowd-characters in that they represent the idea of the downfall of a hero who loses favor with his followers. The crowd-characters are fickle and do not possess the qualities of real loyalty. They represent ideals which are only temporary. In essence, they are what wrestling fans are. They are there to be entertained, or to release daily pressures, to see someone they can envision as their boss or mother or wife get his "block knocked off." They go to wrestling knowing full well that the wrestlers are just pretending, but to these crowd-characters it does not matter. Their action in this play is justified by the playwright. Without the action of the crowd-characters the play would not be as believable as it is and much of the color and excitement would be lost. Mauler Man would not be as complete a character, and the other wrestlers would not have the type of motivation that only the crowd-characters could offer.

The main action of the play centers around Mauler Man. After the crowd-characters are seated the actual dialogue of the play begins with the introduction of Mauler Man by the Announcer. The script explains that Mauler Man is about to wrestle in his first professional match. He has been discovered by a very

successful wrestling promoter. During this exposition the reader first comes into contact with the style of the playwright. Black chose to write In This Corner/ Mauler Man Moze for the most part in a satirical, comic manner. Mauler Man is nervous. The wrestling action begins as Mauler Man faces "a real dirty fighter," Don De La Guano. Mauler Man defeats Guano and is pleased with the crowd-characters' encouragement, but he feels that Guano has thrown the fight. After a short scene where a door prize is given, Mauler Man confronts the Announcer and his promoter, Otto, with his feeling that Guano was not fighting. During this confrontation the pace of the play slows as the reader sees that Mauler Man is confused and worried over his new career. It is at this point that the reader first glimpses how naïve Mauler Man is even though the playwright supplies the reader with comic lines during the scene. There are four forces acting on Mauler Man in this scene. The first force is that of his disgust at having the match given to him without having to fight for it. This disgust causes him to wonder if professional wrestling will be a good career for him. The second force is that he enjoyed the crowd and winning and being cheered. The third force is the Announcer. The Announcer laughs at



Mauler Man because he does not think Mauler Man could possibly be serious when he gets angry over the fact that Guano did not fight. This confuses Mauler Man more. The fourth force is Otto. He works to convince Mauler Man that Guano was just old and sick. He appeals to Mauler Man to take it easy on the opponents by telling him that the crowd does not expect him to really fight and that it is all just a game. He tells Mauler Man that he can quit wrestling anytime he wants to, but if he will keep fighting he will probably become a world champion and make a lot of money. All of these forces begin to affect Mauler Man and as the scene ends he is left alone wondering what to do. He makes his first compromise at this point in the play. He decides to try playing at wrestling, reasoning that he should not quit after just one fight.

The play's action then changes to another wrestling sequence. Mauler Man is pitted against Son of Adolph. During this match Mauler Man is described by the Announcer as being a "real clean fighter." His opponent, Adolph, is the culprit. He uses all the dirty tricks he can. The crowd-characters quickly begin to support Mauler Man, and when he defeats Adolph they cheer him and come to ringside to get his autograph.

At this point in the script, Mauler Man becomes a little more confident and begins to play to the crowd-characters. He has an interview with the Announcer and explains that he is a clean fighter (he has obviously picked this up from the Announcer's description of him), but he is still somewhat shy and unsure of himself. He is very quiet and reserved. During the interview, Don De La Guano and Son of Adolph enter the ring and begin to play at beating Mauler Man up. Mauler Man eventually overcomes both of them and the crowd-characters run into the ring and lift him to their shoulders in triumph. The Old Lady presents Mauler Man with a championship belt. He is elated yet somewhat confused at all the commotion being made over him. Otto and the Announcer stand in the ring with the crowd-characters and congratulate themselves for making Mauler Man a hero. This action ends the first act of the play.

In the first act, the playwright, through the use of satirical comedy has set before the reader a man who has become a part of a new world. Mauler Man is introduced to the reader and placed in the world of professional wrestling; at first he is just another wrestler, then the crowd-characters, the Announcer, and Otto mold him into a champion, much to his surprise. He begins

to change from a shy, honest, and unsure man to a champion, whether he wanted to be or not, with a more confident air about him. When he gives in and goes along with the idea of pretending to wrestle, he has made his first compromise. The reader finds a man who is troubled and not strong enough to exert his own will.

The second act begins with a wrestling match. It is a tag-team match between the Armenian Albino, Flung and Dung--the Sinister Siamese Twins, Brave Bobby Blue Feather, and Mauler Man. Brave Bobby and Mauler Man win. The play then switches to a scene between these five wrestlers. Each wrestler, with the exception of Mauler Man, removes his mask and reveals himself to be only an average man. The dialogue tells the reader that each has different goals in life. One wrestler wants only to save enough money to open up a fried chicken place with his wrestling partner. The Armenian Albino explains how he began wrestling. Brave Bobby Blue Feather reveals himself to be a sour, beaten man. He appears jealous of Mauler Man and makes fun of his honesty and naïveté. The reader makes two major discoveries during this scene. All of the wrestlers except Mauler Man are past their prime in wrestling and know it.

Secondly, the wrestlers accept the world of wrestling as it is. They have no qualms about losing, though they would rather be winners, mainly because winners get paid more. They do not believe that Mauler Man is serious when he explains he is not acting when he wrestles, and that he is really a clean fighter. When Mauler Man tells them this they laugh at him, but they congratulate him on using a clean-fighter image, saying that it is a great "gimmick." Mauler Man does not understand why they will not believe him. In this scene it is apparent that Mauler Man has not yet become a part of these men's world. He is still naïve, he still trusts people, and he still believes that he will always be a clean fighter. Yet because of this scene he starts to think about what his fellow wrestlers had to say. He begins to wonder if maybe he should quit wrestling while he is still a champion. He asks the Announcer about this and is told to go ahead and quit if he wants to, but the Announcer points out to him that he would sure be missing an opportunity to make a lot of money. At this point in the script, Mauler Man makes another compromise. He again does not quit, convincing himself that the money is good and he should not give it up.

In the next scene, a television interview is arranged for Mauler Man. He is told to read prepared cards to answer the questions which the Announcer asks him. During the interview a change comes over Mauler Man, and for the first time in the play he begins to enjoy playing the part of a wrestler. He becomes radical in his speech before the camera. Even though the words have been written for him, he begins to get caught up in what has been written. He becomes confident and mean; the crowd-characters "boo" him. For the first time in the script he begins to act like the other wrestlers.

After the interview is over he becomes worried over his behavior; he does not understand why he acted the way he did. Before he has a chance to think out what has happened to him, another match starts. Mauler Man finds himself wrestling a ballet performer. It is a benefit match that Otto has arranged. During the wrestling action the ballet performer, Randy Starr, runs around the ring doing all types of ballet steps. Mauler Man ends up chasing him down and finally pinning him, but not before he is made to look like a fool by Starr. The crowd does not cheer Mauler Man, they are applauding the ballet performer. Mauler Man becomes enraged

at being made a fool. He confronts Otto and tells him he will not wrestle again if he is to be ridiculed. Otto very quietly and coolly tells Mauler Man if he does not approve of the matches he arranges for him he can either get another promoter or quit. At this point, Mauler Man compromises his pride. He hates being made a fool, but he is not strong enough to stand up to Otto and quit. He again gives in and promises to wrestle a little longer. Now he claims it is only for the money, nothing else matters. The reader knows, of course, he is just putting up a front for Otto. He is not capable of understanding what his true feelings are. Mauler Man is torn between quitting and staying, he does not know what he will do if he stops wrestling, it has become his life. He does not like to make decisions, it is easier for him to let Otto make the decisions. At the end of this scene, Otto hands Mauler Man a package and tells him it is a new wrestling costume, a new "gimmick" for him. Mauler Man, not wanting another argument with Otto, agrees to wear the costume. Otto then tells Mauler Man that he has arranged a match for him with a new wrestling star, Rocky Steele. He praises Steele, telling Mauler Man that he reminds him of Mauler Man when he first started

wrestling. During this speech Mauler Man remains quiet. After Otto leaves, Mauler Man begins to get dressed in his new costume. The Announcer joins him and tells him not to forget to "moon" during the match with Steele. Mauler Man at first does not understand that he is being told to throw the fight, but he accepts the order and continues to dress. His new costume is that of a Polish sausage grinder. It has a mask with a string of sausage attached to it on the back. The transition has been made; Mauler Man is now the Polish Sausage Grinder. He does not complain--it is as though he will accept whatever comes. He becomes a pitiful character as he stands waiting for the next match. The Announcer enters the ring and introduces Mauler Man first. The crowd-characters have a mixed reaction to Mauler Man, some cheer him, others "boo" him. It does not seem to make any difference to him. As the match begins, there is a definite change in Mauler Man. He begins to fight dirty and act like Guano or Adolph. The crowd-characters throw things at him and "boo" him. This makes him fight dirtier and the crowd-characters hate him more. He loses the fight. The crowd-characters once again enter the ring, but this time they lift Rocky Steele to their shoulders and parade him around. The Old Lady walks

to Mauler Man and dangles the championship belt in his face. The crowd-characters exit and the ring is empty except for Mauler Man who is left tangled in the ropes. A wrestler who is costumed in street clothes enters the arena and hands Mauler Man a towel. Mauler Man then untangles himself and slowly leaves the ring. The play's action is complete. The reader has followed Mauler Man from the beginning of his wrestling career to his downfall as a champion and a man.

The second most important part of a play according to Aristotle is character. The following will be a discussion of each major character found in In This Corner/Mauler Man Moze.

The main character of William Black's play is Mauler Man Moze. The reader is introduced to Mauler Man at the beginning of the play and follows his life in the professional wrestling world. At the start of the play, the reader finds Mauler Man a young man who has one goal in life, to win wrestling matches. He is honest, sincere, and very innocent. Mauler Man is not intelligent. He claims college was too hard for him in one of his speeches. He knows very little about human nature, and throughout the play he never realizes that he is being used by Otto. He sincerely believes



that Otto is interested in him as a person. He trusts Otto and believes that Otto is much smarter than he could ever be. Mauler Man has very little confidence in his reasoning power. He avoids any decisions and because of this trait the reader must believe that he is weak. His unwillingness to make decisions sometimes causes the reader to become unsympathetic to him. He continues to compromise and throughout the play waits to decide whether to quit wrestling. Finally the decision is taken out of his hands and he no longer has a choice. By this time, he is a beaten man and it no longer matters whether he makes a decision or not. In the first act of the play the reader grows to like Mauler Man because of his innocence. It seems as if everything around him is corrupt and his contrast to this draws the reader to him. The reader also cares about Mauler Man because he is honest. It can easily be seen that Mauler Man is headed for doom, mainly because the odds against him are overwhelming. Mauler Man is a tragic figure in that he makes a victim of himself. If he had quit wrestling after the first match there would have been no conflict. When he decides to keep wrestling, he takes the first step on the road to his destruction. The tragic figure must become

enlightened.<sup>1</sup> The playwright does not provide the reader of this play with any information to prove that Mauler Man becomes enlightened. A tragic hero must also be willing to give up everything to reach his goal.<sup>2</sup> Mauler Man reaches his goal early in the play and to obtain it he compromises his honesty when he pretends to be wrestling. He does not stand up to the forces against him, nor does he instigate action. He is acted upon by the other characters. Mauler Man is not an extremist. He gives the reader no indication that he would do-or-die to obtain his goal. Because of Mauler Man's actions, it can be assumed that he could have been talked out of ever becoming a champion if that had been Otto's wish. Therefore, In This Corner/ Mauler Man Moze is not a true tragedy, although it has tragic elements. It must be termed a mixture of melodrama, satirical comedy, and tragedy. The melodrama is evident when Mauler Man wins the championship belt at the end of the first act, and it is mixed with the

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<sup>1</sup>John Gassner, "Catharsis and the Modern Theatre," in European Theories of the Drama, ed. Barrett H. Clark (New York: Crown Publishers, Inc., 1965), p. 515.

<sup>2</sup>Ferdinand Brunetière, "The Law of the Drama," in European Theories of the Drama, ed. Barrett H. Clark (New York: Crown Publishers, Inc., 1965), pp. 383-384.

satire and comedy of the wrestling sequences. The comic elements are found in the wrestling characters and the Announcer's dialogue. The satire is evident throughout the play for it is the means by which the playwright makes his comment about society. It must be remembered above all that much of this play is pure entertainment, and through the character of Mauler Man the reader is invited to enter this "make-believe" world of professional wrestling.

Otto, Mauler Man's promoter, is a one-dimensional character. He represents the "uninterested" interested party. Mauler Man is only important to Otto because he can make money for him. When Mauler Man begins to lose popularity with the crowd-characters, Otto discards him. Throughout the play Otto tells Mauler Man he can quit wrestling, he really does not care one way or the other. The reader becomes convinced of this. Otto also gives the reader the idea that there are five men waiting to take Mauler Man's place. He convinces Mauler Man that this is true. Otto knows exactly how to manipulate Mauler Man. He continually tells Mauler Man he will become rich if he will keep fighting. He convinces Mauler Man that he must play the game of professional wrestling. Otto is a veteran promoter, and we see in

him the image of all wrestling promoters. He is tough, smart, and completely without a conscience. Otto's complete indifference to Mauler Man's threat of quitting causes Mauler Man to become scared of him. In his final scene with Mauler Man, Otto becomes angry at him and tells him to either play his type of game or get another promoter. At this point in the play, Mauler Man has become so dependent on him for decisions that he must do what Otto tells him to do. Even at this point, Otto could care less what Mauler Man does. He does not exploit the fact that he has this control; on the contrary, he is completely indifferent to it. All through the play there is the feeling that Otto has so many wrestlers working for him, one more does not make much difference. As Otto points out in the play, there will always be another wrestler to manage.

The third major character in the play is the Announcer. He influences Mauler Man in much the same way as Otto. His philosophy is to give the crowd-characters what they want at any cost. The Announcer is not interested in Mauler Man as an individual. He supports Mauler Man only as long as the crowd-characters support him. The position of the Announcer as narrator lends an epic quality to the play. As he tells what is

happening in the ring while it is happening, he leads the reader from one wrestling sequence to another and holds the play together during the transitional scenes. He also provides the needed exposition in the play. The Announcer was probably a wrestler in his youth. He knows all the "ropes" and almost every wrestler who has ever wrestled. He, like Otto, has no conscience and could care less about the wrestlers as human beings. He has a dynamic personality while playing the actual wrestling sequences, but during the transitional scenes he lets his guard drop and the reader finds him a somewhat bored, tired man. Cruelty can also be seen in his character. In one scene he gives Mauler Man some cards and asks him if he can read. In another scene he tells Mauler Man that one of the wrestlers died of stab wounds received while walking in the aisle of the arena. He does this for no other reason than to see Mauler Man's uncomfortable reaction to the story.

There is one scene early in the second act of the play which reveals to the reader a brief glimpse of Mauler Man's wrestling opponents. In this scene they remove their wrestling facade and the reader is allowed to look into their lives. Brave Bobby Blue Feather, who is referred to in this scene as Vito, is

a jealous, sour man. He appears to have fought in one match too many. He scorns Mauler Man, and laughs at his innocence. When asked what was the most money he ever made, he replies it was wrestling alligators in Florida. He appears to be tough and full of hate. The reader is given the impression that he hates everything, wrestling included. The other wrestlers are not friendly to him and he seems to be somewhat of an outcast, probably because of his "wise guy" attitude.

The second and third wrestling characters are Flung and Dung. They wrestle as twins tied together in one costume. When they separate themselves they appear to be good friends who constantly pick at each other. Both are very likable characters. Flung's dream is to open a fried chicken stand. He claims he is wrestling only to get enough money saved up to start the place, but the reader gets the impression that he has been wrestling a long time. His partner, Dung, is tired of traveling. He claims he will quit and probably continue as Flung's partner in the chicken business. He too appears old before his time, and seems to be bored with wrestling.

The fourth and most colorful of the wrestlers is the Armenian Albino. He reveals his start in wrestling

and the reader sees a man who is content to keep wrestling and saving his money for something, he has not decided what. The Albino reveals to the reader a man who understands and accepts the wrestling world. He knew from the beginning of his career that he would never be a great wrestler, and even if he got lucky and became one it would not last. He is a complete contrast to Mauler Man in that he entered the wrestling world knowing what he was getting in to and he accepted it. The scene is probably the strongest scene in the play in terms of character. The wrestlers provide insight into their souls. They are not what we expect them to be when they remove their masks, and because of this the human element of the play is elevated. When they remove their masks they stop playing games and the reader can identify with them, laugh with them, and feel sympathy for them.

Son of Adolph, Don De La Guano, the Referee, Rocky Steele, and Randy Starr are wrestling characters who only appear during the matches and the reader is told nothing more about them by the playwright.

The balance of the characters in the play are the crowd-characters who have already been discussed at some length at the beginning of this chapter. To

summarize their contribution to the play, it should be stated here that although they act independently, they comment on the wrestling action. This element makes them unified and they actually become a chorus. They, of course, represent the type of people who attend wrestling matches. When the crowd-characters are working independently they almost become caricatures, and bring out the satirical comedy provided by the playwright. Their purpose is to exaggerate the action of a wrestling fan, but they appear to be real people. The crowd-characters are extremely important to Mauler Man for their likes and dislikes actually dictate his success. The crowd-characters are responsible for Mauler Man's popularity and they eventually become responsible for his defeat. Mauler Man answers to these crowd-characters in each wrestling sequence.

Thought deals with any idea expressed in a play. There are three major ideas expressed in In This Corner/ Mauler Man Moze. The first thought of the play is Mauler Man's self-determination. When the play opens he has already made a decision to try to be a professional wrestler. His goal is to win wrestling matches. After his first wrestling match the reader learns that Mauler Man does not realize what he must sacrifice to be a



winner. When his promoter tells him he must pretend to wrestle, he becomes confused. He knows that he must either quit wrestling or do what he is told. He chooses to continue wrestling, never really thinking that someday he will be told to lose a match. His goal to be a winner has not yet been achieved, so he compromises his style of wrestling. Mauler Man is allowed to reach the top, but only because he consents to "play the game." Everything he achieves is based on Otto's standards, not his. When he finally reaches his goal there is no victory. He only achieves the goal because Otto allows him to. The action of the play forces Mauler Man to decide what he will settle for in life, and what he is willing to sacrifice to keep it. He finally sacrifices his pride and honor. Time after time the reader sees Mauler Man compromise. He is not strong enough to stand up to the outside forces pulling at him. By the end of the play he has nothing left of his self-image and it seems as if he never had a goal at all.

Another idea expressed in In This Corner/Mauler Man Moze is man's inhumanity to man. The reader sees the cruelty of Otto, the Announcer, and the crowd-characters. Otto's and the Announcer's cruelty is mainly indifference. When Mauler Man is finally defeated at

the end of the play, not one character comes to aid him. As mentioned before in this chapter, most of the crowd-characters come to wrestling because they have a need to release their frustrations and anger. The brunt of this release is taken by the wrestlers, even though the author presents this release in a comic way. A meek man can turn into a cruel monster if placed in the right environment, and a wrestling arena affords this type of environment.

The third idea of William Black's play is to present a capsule view of the wrestling world. He does this, of course, through the action, characters, and setting of the play. The reader immediately becomes aware of the fact that he is a part of Mauler Man's world. The ring is the only acting area described in the script. All of the action takes place there, and the reader is drawn into the ring with Mauler Man and his opponents. Through the character of Mauler Man the playwright reveals all wrestlers who are enticed into wrestling and are finally thrown away. Otto reveals to us the stereotype wrestling promoter. The reader is given the feeling that Otto is no different than any other wrestling manager. The characters appear real to us and they tell us through their actions what

it is like to be a part of their world. It seems as if the playwright has simply taken the wrestling world and placed it in front of our eyes for an hour. All of the ingredients are there to be taken in by the reader.

Concerning diction, Aristotle wrote that words which are familiar, current, or proper are needed to clarify the drama. He also added that unusual words, which may take the form of jargon, add variety and interest to a play.<sup>1</sup> There are both kinds of diction used in In This Corner/Mauler Man Moze. Most of the diction is common language. It is the language of the layman, but mixed with it is the jargon of the wrestling world. The playwright uses terms such as "moon," "take a dive," and many other wrestling terms. Because of this mixing of diction the play becomes colorful and interesting. It would be ridiculous to have Mauler Man speaking as if he were a Rhodes Scholar. The earthy, everyday speech which the playwright has given to his characters makes them become real and believable. Mr. Black adds more to his play by using German dialect for the character, Son of Adolph. Adolph is both interesting and comic. His diction affords the reader an

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<sup>1</sup>Aristotle, Poetics, trans. S. H. Butcher (New York: Hill and Wang, 1961), pp. 101-102.

extra treat. The diction used throughout the play holds the reader's attention and sends clear and interesting pictures to the mind's eye.

The fifth part of drama, according to Aristotle's system of analysis, is song or rhythm. This facet deals with the actual tempo of the play. The playwright through language and action, provides the reader with a rhythm scheme. At the beginning of the play the pace is slow as the crowd-characters enter. After the introduction of Mauler Man to the crowd-characters, the dialogue seems to speed up as the wrestling sequence begins. Throughout the play, the rhythm is determined by the transitional scenes (scenes that lead from one wrestling sequence to another) and the wrestling scenes. The transitional scenes are much slower and more deliberate. During these scenes the characters reveal their thoughts to the reader and the mood of the play is temporarily set. The action then switches to actual wrestling and because of the physical demands of the script the rhythm is speeded up. This pattern of rhythm is used throughout the play.

The last part of drama, and the least important in Aristotle's estimation, is spectacle. Aristotle defined spectacle as anything seen on stage containing

an emotional attraction of its own.<sup>1</sup> There is great use of spectacle in this play. The playwright sets the play in a wrestling ring, which from the outset lends itself to spectacle. The wrestlers themselves produce spectacle because of their appearance--Don De La Guano appears as a black bat; Son of Adolph is dressed as a German soldier complete with German Luger; the Armenian Albino is costumed in white tights and boots; Flung and Dung are fitted into one costume and are described to the reader as Siamese twins; Brave Bobby Blue Feather is described as being in full Indian regalia, headdress included; and Randy Starr, the ballet performer, appears in pink tights with lace. All the costumes described by the playwright add spectacle to the play. The actual physical wrestling sequences also lend themselves to spectacle. The German martial music, the "Star Spangled Banner," and the ballet music all make for emotional attraction. The crowd-characters also contribute a great amount of spectacle to the play. They enter the ring and parade Mauler Man around. They contribute in a way that the other characters of the play can not, because, according to the playwright's stage directions, they should be allowed to talk with

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 64.

the audience members. All of this adds to the emotional involvement of the audience.

Each element of drama found in In This Corner/ Mauler Man Moze, is conceived, developed, and compiled in such a way by the playwright as to entertain and inform the reader. The play is interesting, complete, and most worthy of production.

### CHAPTER III

#### THE DIRECTOR'S APPROACH

A play must be believable to the viewer, even though the viewer knows or should know that it is not nor ever could be real life. In This Corner/Mauler Man Moze is an imitation of life, just like any other play. With that fact in mind, the director set out to present the best imitation of life possible for the audience. In the case of William Black's play, a considerable effort was made to present a "bigger than life" picture to the audience.

The playwright had three main concerns in writing this play: to show man's self-determination, to paint a picture of the wrestling world, and to illustrate man's inhumanity to man. The style used to present these three concerns, for the most part, was satirical comedy.

The first concern deals strictly with Mauler Man. The actor playing this role had to appear a shy, honest, simple, naïve, man. During tryouts for the play the director looked for this quality in the reading of the lines of the script. The actor who appeared best suited to these qualifications was chosen. Mauler

Man had to make only one decision throughout the play. This decision, of course, was whether to stay with wrestling, even though he knew he was a fake, or to quit. The actor playing Mauler Man had to be able to show the audience that he was unable to make this decision on his own. He had to appear unsure of himself and confused. In short, he had to let the Announcer and Otto overpower him mentally and yet still keep the audience caring about him. For the audience must care about Mauler Man even though he compromises himself and allows Otto and the Announcer to manipulate him. To achieve this, the actor playing Mauler Man had to appear honest and the audience had to believe in his honesty. He also had to be uncomplicated, and to achieve this, the actor was instructed to speak his lines simply and sincerely.

The second concern, to present a colorful picture of wrestling, was achieved in many ways. It was decided by the director that the wrestler-actors should try to go with realistic wrestling scenes instead of stylized, non-realistic wrestling action. If the wrestler-actors could not have achieved a respectable imitation level, then the stylized movement would have been incorporated into the play. It was the director's



decision that the actors did indeed achieve a believable and acceptable level. This was obtained only through many hours of strenuous physical wrestling rehearsal by the actors. Each move was timed and choreographed according to the playwright's script directions. The wrestling sequences were staged to last about five minutes each, as it was the purpose of the entire production to present only the essence of professional wrestling matches. It would have been impossible to stage the wrestling scenes for as long a period as they take place in professional wrestling. The actors were not capable of wrestling in two to six bouts in the time span of one hour and thirty minutes. It was no small problem finding enough men to try out for the various roles of the play, considering that they not only had to be able to act, but they also had to be able to wrestle.

The actors were instructed to appear as realistic as possible (except of course, in the parts of the play where they were supposed to be wrestling "characters"). For example, when the Armenian Albino was seen as a wrestler in a wrestling sequence, he appeared to be a fake--but when he removed his wrestling costume and played a scene with Mauler Man in which they

did not wrestle, then he appeared to be a realistic imitation of a man. Mauler Man too, appeared as two separate people, one was the wrestler, the other was the man. This distinction was made throughout the play in the case of the wrestlers.

The crowd-actors were placed in the viewing audience and were instructed to play for the members of the audience in an attempt to cause them to become more involved in the play. These characters were also given exact movement and "business" to do during the play. The director was well aware of the fact that the crowd-actors would be singled out and easily identified by the audience. It was hoped that they would work as a catalyst between the stage actors and the audience. The crowd-actors were costumed to look like average (if there is such a thing) wrestling fans. They were instructed to converse with the audience members and to comment on all the wrestling action.

In talking to Black about his play, the director agreed that the entire play should be placed in a wrestling ring even though some of the scenes do not necessarily warrant a ring. This idea was instigated in the staging and it added to the idea of timelessness. The play-script does not indicate how much time is being covered

in the play. It did not matter, but it did matter that the audience understood that they were watching what could have been a ten year period of Mauler Man's life. To achieve this understanding, the set never changed and the lighting changed only during the scenes where there was no wrestling action. Everything took place in the ring. It was left to the audience members to determine how much time had passed if they chose to do so.

The costumes were built to be as realistic as possible. Mauler Man appeared first in non-descript wrestling attire: white robe and blue trunks, but as the play progressed and he became a champion, his robes became more colorful--blue and gold moiré, then red satin and gold moiré. Don De La Guano was costumed to look like a bat: black cape, black tights, black leotards, and black mask. The Son of Adolph was costumed in khaki shirt, red tights, red cape with swastika, black tie, and combat boots. The Siamese Twins were costumed in black leotards and were bound together with elastic bandages back to back. Brave Bobby Blue Feather appeared in Indian regalia. Randy Starr, the ballet dancer, wore pink tights, with pink chiffon trim. Rocky Steele was costumed as the all-American wrestler, in

red, white, and blue. All of the costumes were made especially for this production and for the individual actor-wrestlers. To make the costumes as realistic as possible, the costumer followed pictures from today's wrestling magazines.

The Southwest Texas State University Studio Theatre was arranged so that the audience would be seated on all four sides of the ring, just as a real wrestling arena is arranged. Smoking was permitted, and drinks and popcorn were sold to the audience during the wrestling matches. The upholstered seats were removed from the theatre and replaced with folding chairs. An American flag was hung in the arena area. The ring was raised almost three feet from the floor, and the actors were instructed to make their entrances and exits through the audience.

The recorded music of the play was played in the same manner as at a real wrestling match. The "Star Spangled Banner" was played at the beginning of the play. When Son of Adolph fought Mauler Man there was German march music played for his entrance into the arena. During the Randy Starr match, recorded cello music was played over the speaker system to give the effect of foolishness which added to the degradation

of Mauler Man. The march music, "Grandioso," was played during the introduction of Rocky Steele.

The third concern or idea of the playwright, man's inhumanity to man, was achieved by character relation. Otto and the Announcer were both extremely indifferent to Mauler Man, not so much at the beginning of the play, but gradually. All through the play it was emphasized that physical pain was only felt by the stupid. In other words, if a wrestler got hurt it was usually his own fault or, sometimes, just bad luck, but all of the actors were to make light of the idea of pain. For example, in the wrestling scenes it appeared as if the wrestlers were really getting hurt, for they screamed, pounded the mat in agony, and had to be helped from the ring, but not five seconds later they were laughing and talking and showing no signs of ever having been in pain. In the last scene everyone leaves Mauler Man alone, not concerned at all whether he has really been hurt, even though he has been beaten and tangled in the ropes.

In This Corner/Mauler Man Moze is a play which stresses physical action and from this physical action the actors obtained their emotional or psychological action. In rehearsal, the actors were instructed to

learn the physical action first and then add the psychological. Once in the ring, it was discovered that the psychological came much easier after the physical action was mastered. At this point it seems proper to discuss a problem which confronted the crowd-actors. They were given the task of leading what the director termed "controlled confusion." During the wrestling action they had to scream, pound their feet, and throw Coke cups into the ring, but they had to do all these things without covering the voice of the Announcer who was commentating the wrestling action. To achieve this, the crowd-actors were instructed to "key" at all times on the Announcer. In other words, they would time their actions during the breaks in the Announcer's lines, overlapping just enough to appear that they were completely absorbed in the ring action.

Another interesting occurrence during rehearsal was the effect that the masks had on the wrestler-actors. The actors felt that they became much more aggressive when they were wearing their masks. It was an extremely interesting psychological happening, and the actors had to be careful not to get caught up in the effect and begin to really fight. Of course, after they got used to wearing the masks the aggressive feelings began to

subside. The actors also felt that the masks were a great help in that they almost forced them to take on a new identity.

In This Corner/Mauler Man Moze is a play about a man and the world in which he lives. It is hoped that the audience, because of the directing approach discussed in this chapter, understood, enjoyed, and became a part of Mauler Man's world during the performances of the play.

## CHAPTER IV

### PRODUCTION EVALUATION

In This Corner/Mauler Man Moze was performed five times in the Studio Theatre, Southwest Texas State University, June 3rd through June 7th, 1974. The director believes that the overall performances were successful. Still, there was much to be learned from this directing experience.

The intention of the director, through a complete analysis of the playscript, was to present to the audience three ideas: man's self-determination, man's inhumanity to man, and a capsule view of the world of professional wrestling. The script demanded the use of satirical comedy and certain aspects of melodrama (Mauler Man conquering wrestling opponents in the ring) and tragedy (the overwhelming odds against Mauler Man in the real world) to accomplish these three ideas.

When dealing with the idea of man's self-determination, the director had to contend with the character of Mauler Man, played by Robert Rehm. Mauler Man's self-determination was brought out in this production



of the play and was competently carried out by the actor in his role. It is believed that this idea could have been better brought out with the use of more effective physical movement by the actor during the confrontation scenes with Otto and the Announcer. Of course, this shortcoming falls squarely on the shoulders of the director. If the director had placed the actors (Mauler Man, Otto, Announcer) in stronger physical positions, then the character of Mauler Man and his inability to deal with his self-determination would have been better related to the audience. To accomplish this the director should have had Otto and the Announcer "stalking" Mauler Man more. In other words, they should have physically cornered him more, and Mauler Man should have given the effect of continuously trying to get away from them so their power of persuasion would not be as strong. Mauler Man was their prey, and this idea could have been much more effectively related to the audience if this struggle had been shown through this type of physical movement.

The second idea of the play, man's inhumanity to man, was best related to the audience during the last scene of the play when Mauler Man was left alone tangled in the ring ropes. But there were other places

in the play where the director could have brought out this idea better. Otto, the manager, played by John Bloodsworth, never achieved the degree of competency needed to further this idea. The director should have spent more time with Bloodsworth in rehearsal, giving him more direction and guidance. Otto must be a main force which leads the audience to care more for Mauler Man, and unfortunately, he was not. Another scene in the play which could have brought out the idea of man's inhumanity to man was the Announcer's television interview with Mauler Man. But because of oversight on the part of the director, the scene never reached its full potential. The idea of the scene, the degradation of Mauler Man became lost in the comedy. This second idea of the play was also lost, when it should not have been, during the wrestling scene with Mauler Man and Randy Starr, the ballet dancer. The idea of the scene should have been the complete humiliation of Mauler Man. It instead became a type of burlesque routine for the ballet dancer. Although it was extremely funny and the audience responded to it on that level, it did not present to the audience the idea it was supposed to present. For the most part, the audience never even saw Mauler Man in the scene because of Randy Starr's performance. This

failure again was the fault of the director. It was suggested after the close of the play that the character of Randy Starr should have been played with more masculinity and control. This was an excellent suggestion and it would have greatly improved the scene.

The third idea of the play, to present a capsule view of the wrestling world, was carried out more successfully than the other two ideas of the play. The audience responded best to the atmosphere of the wrestling world, and to the wrestling sequences. The crowd-actors were accepted by the audience and accomplished the job of leading the audience into the play. The wrestler-actors presented a very acceptable picture of the wrestling world, aided by the music and costumes of the production.

In This Corner/Mauler Man Moze was presented on two levels. The first was the five wrestling sequences, and the second was the psychological progression of Mauler Man. The first level, the wrestling sequences, was presented to show Mauler Man's climb and finally his defeat against adversaries who were only pretending to be against him. They were not real enemies at all. The wrestling sequences were also staged as they were to provide a realistic view (color, excitement,

falsehood) of professional wrestling matches. It is evident to the director that the first level was the most successful. What was set out to be accomplished on this level was accomplished. The second level did not achieve as much as it could have. The adversaries that Mauler Man faced on this level were real, therefore very important to the first two ideas of the play. Mauler Man had to psychologically contend with Otto and the Announcer. The scenes between Mauler Man and Otto, as stated before, never reached the degree of achievement hoped for, even though a genuine effort was made by the playwright, actors, and director.

In spite of several shortcomings in the production, it appeared that the audiences saw a play which they understood, and thoroughly enjoyed. As a learning experience for the director, the production was a complete success for it presented several new problems which the director had never faced before. Among those problems were: directing without furniture or obstacles on the stage proper, directing a cast which consisted of almost all males, directing a play in which choreographed movement was widely used, and directing a play which called for direct audience involvement. All of the problems were interesting and enlightening to the director, but the

most exciting part of this directing thesis was having the chance to direct a play which had never been directed before and to feel the enthusiasm and encouragement of everyone involved in the production.

**APPENDIX A**  
**PRODUCTION BOOK**

PRODUCTION BOOK OF IN THIS CORNER/MAULER MAN MOZE

ACT ONE

1 - 1A: The introduction of Mauler Man

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Announcer  
Mauler Man

(The set is a wrestling ring. There is a sign hung on the wall near the ring which reads, "Wrestling, The Sport That Gives You You're Money's Worth." There is also an American flag hung near the ring. The Announcer enters fifteen minutes before curtain time and announces that the Cokes were donated by San Marcos Bottling Company. Curtain. Mauler Man enters the arena and jumps into the ring. The Announcer enters. Miss Wrestling enters. The Announcer jumps into the ring and asks everyone to please rise for the National Anthem. After the playing of the National Anthem the crowd-actors sit down. Announcer goes to ring microphone. Mauler Man begins his warm-ups, looking around the ring in anticipation.)

ANNOUNCER

In this corner, weighing in at 236 pounds, from Petoskey, Michigan, inventor of the North Country Crush, Mauler Man Moze.

(Mauler Man steps to the center of the ring.)

Mauler Man looks and acts like a man that has never been sick a day in his life. He is 6' 2" and weighs a flat hard 236 pounds. He can wrestle at top speed for sixty minutes without appearing tired or exerted. Yet, if he was to advertise the fact, Wladek "Mauler Man" Moze is the living example of what a former 97 pound weakling can become if he sets his mind to it. As a small boy in Michigan, young Wladek Moze was frail, sickly, and forever catching colds. At school even the small kids picked on him. Running from the playground to the shelter of the cloak-room was all the exercise that he got. Offspring of sturdy Polish immigrant stock,

Wladek Moze was physical paradox. Then one day on a trip to the library to do research for a boy scout project, he came across a book on health. Always aware of his shortcomings, young Wladek decided to borrow the book and see if maybe he could find something in it to help him. He did.

(Mauler Man is somewhat nervous.)

Mauler Man

The book said coffee was bad for anyone taken in great amount, and not good at all for children.

ANNOUNCER

(Trying hard to get laughs.)

From that moment on he quit coffee and hasn't had any since.

MAULER MAN

It was cold where I grew up, very cold. So we drank a lot of liquids to keep warm. A great deal of this was coffee. I drank it three or four times a day. Everyone did. It was cold. But I decided if the book said coffee was bad for children then I would give it up.

(He begins to dance around again.)

ANNOUNCER

Wladek didn't know it then, but he had taken the first step in developing a personal philosophy that might lead him to the professional wrestling championship of North America.

MAULER MAN

(Stepping up to the Announcer.)

I also grew more aggressive on the playground. I began to fight back!



## ANNOUNCER

Two years after this decisive step young Wladek went back to the very same library and checked out another book on health.

## MAULER MAN

(Still very nervous.)

That second book on health had an outline for a diet that, combined with a regular set of progressive exercises, was guaranteed to add weight and muscle to a withered frame and develop the stamina of a gladiator. One of the big requirements was patience. Patience I got.

(The Old Lady and other crowd-actors show their approval by applauding.)

## ANNOUNCER

(Moving around the ring.)

Now young Wladek had the plan and a blue print for a magnificent body. He also had two overdue books. Everyday the diet was followed and so were the exercises. By the time he was sixteen, young Wladek's frame no longer looked like a boney clothesline for wrinkled flesh. Instead, it had meat on it. Plenty of meat and plenty of muscle and plenty of natural-born competitive meanness that began to manifest itself into all sorts of contact sports. He made the starting squad on the football team.

## MAULER MAN

(Becoming a little more confident.)

I was tough. But I never got enough because the referee always blew the whistle and I wanted to keep going. I got lots of penalties for that.

## ANNOUNCER

Mauler Man searched for other sports which would suit his need for contact. That was how he stumbled into

wrestling. He joined the high school wrestling team and became the best amateur wrestler in the state. Out of high school he received plenty of offers to play football but decided instead to follow his new-found passion.

(Announcer begins to get caught up in his speech and becomes extremely pseudo-dramatic.)

The pressures of athletics and his studies became too great for Wladek. He quit college in his junior year right before the N.C.A.A. national championships. Alone and confused he returned home frustrated by the fact that the fame he had possessed a few short weeks before had gone.

MAULER MAN

(Confused.)

I didn't know what to do.

ANNOUNCER

(Sounding like a preacher.)

Then one day on a trip to the grocery store to buy a loaf of bread for his mother, he passed Otto's gym.

MAULER MAN

(Being very serious.)

I couldn't help but hear the grunts and groans from the open windows. These were the same noises I became used to during my days as a collegiate wrestler. It was like music to my ears. I went up and found what I had been looking for. Two guys were going at it on the mat. I don't remember their names, but one was rated number seven on the national wrestling alliance polls. I used to go down to the gym a lot and watch. Then one day I asked Otto if I could go a few rounds with one of the wrestlers. He said, "Sure kid, it's your funeral."

ANNOUNCER

Little did he know that the man he was wrestling was

Wolf Man Gursky, the dirtiest wrestler around. Though naive and inexperienced, Wladek Moze's natural ability and clean wrestling enabled him to destroy the Wolf Man.

(At the mention of Wolf Man the crowd-actors "boo" and "hiss.")

#### MAULER MAN

(Stepping up to the Announcer. Still being very serious.)

He was a real dirty wrestler. He did things they never would have allowed in college, but I knew I would win if I wrestled clean. I did. Otto asked me if I would like to turn pro and do this for money. I agreed and he signed me on the spot. He had to, I ruined his best wrestler.

(Returns to his warm-ups, this time he does four push-ups.)

#### ANNOUNCER

(Moves around the ring.)

From then on Mauler Man, as he was to become known, worked and trained constantly at Otto's gym putting in twelve hours a day on the mats trying to learn the holds and develop a technique. He lived like a monk as Otto shaped him into the magnificent example of a clean wrestler that you see before you. Tough but clean was Otto's motto concerning Mauler Man. Otto has described him as a superman, Hercules, and maybe a little Charles Atlas thrown in. But he can't be compared to anyone else because he is his own man. And now with the gut determination that he innately possessed, he has now decided to conquer another field of endeavor, that of professional wrestling. He is proof positive of what a person can do when he sets his mind to it.

(The crowd-actors cheer.)

1 - 1B: Mauler Man defeats Don De La Guano

Mauler Man  
Announcer

Don De La Guano  
Referee  
Old Lady

(From the alleyway another wrestler, Don De La Guano, appears. The crowd-actors "boo" him and begin to throw Coke cups at him as he enters the ring. The referee enters. Mauler Man goes to his corner.)

#### ANNOUNCER

And in this corner, from Monterrey, Mexico, a man with a heart as black as a bat, the Northern Mexico light heavyweight professional champion, Don De La Guano.

(More "booing" from the crowd-actors.)

This is a preliminary one-fall, no-time-limit match.

(The Announcer exits the ring. He crosses to ringside table and sits. He commentates all the wrestling matches from this table. The referee bounds up on the ring. He checks the two wrestlers' trunks and boots and warns them about infractions. All of this is pantomime. Don De La Guano crosses to Mauler Man and swings the bat cape over his head. The crowd-actors try to get the referee's attention by yelling at him. He runs to the corner where Guano and Mauler Man are and breaks up the fight between them.)

Good evening wrestling fans. Looks like we have some extraordinary matches on the card tonight. It should be a real extraordinary evening. Our pre-lim pits that ever-unpopular Don De La Guano against a new wrestler hailing out of Michigan, Mauler Man Moze. Some of you might remember him as Wladek Moze, that promising young collegiate wrestler. Well tonight he'll find that this is no Joe college he's going to wrestle. Don De La Guano can be described in just one word, real dirty. Besides that...

(The bell sounds.)

well there's the bell and we've just begun in case you've joined us late. It's Mauler Man Moze against Don De La Guano.

(Guano gets Mauler Man in a head lock.)

There goes Guano with a head lock. By now I bet Moze wishes he was back in school.

(Mauler Man breaks free.)

Moze broke out of it!

(Guano gets Mauler Man in another head lock.)

Whoops, he's back in it again. Guano is gouging Moze's eye. Moze protests to the ref but to no avail as Guano digs in deeper.

(Mauler Man breaks clean and shoves Guano away.)

Moze breaks clean and lets Guano have it with the palm of his hand to the chest. He goes for the bat's feet and has him in a figure four leg lock.

(Mauler Man does exactly what the Announcer describes for the rest of the match. Guano also uses the holds that the Announcer describes.)

Guano pulls a hand full of that bushy Michigan hair and is free on his feet. The referee warns the bat but he disregards the warning and goes for those eyes again. Moze is quick to counter with a right to the mid-section.

(The crowd-actors begin to respond to Mauler Man after this move with much more enthusiasm.)

The crowd seems to take to this young wrestler as is evidenced by the cups flying in the direction of the bat. Moze is off the ropes and onto Guano and he brings the malevolent monster from Mexico to his knees. Looks like the tide has turned and Moze seems to be in control. The crowd wants him to finish Guano's career right now. Moze showing quite a flair as he plays to the crowd. They love him. Guano is up but ends up on the mat again with a hard body slam.

(The crowd-actors scream for Moze to finish Guano.)

Looks like the bat had just about had it as Moze seems

to be mounting the ropes in preparation for his favorite hold, The North Country Crush. Outstanding! Guano has been pinned. Moze is the winner. Looks like this young wrestler is headed for quite a career.

(Mauler Man goes to his corner. Guano shakily exits the ring amid much booing. The Old Lady jumps from her seat and starts to attack Guano with her purse. The policeman takes her back to her seat.)

#### OLD LADY

(To policeman.)

You big oafs get your slimey hands off me before I knock you cockeyed. That Don de la Guano is no good. He never was any good. His mother should have thrown him away and kept the stork. Mauler Man is the greatest!

(She sits down. The lights on the crowd dim. The Announcer puts down the mike and enters the ring.)

#### 1 - 1C: Mauler Man's first compromise

Mauler Man  
Announcer  
Otto

#### ANNOUNCER

(To Mauler Man who is standing in his corner trying to catch his breath.)

You looked pretty good there boy. Stick with it and you'll do all right. You probably didn't notice but you had a real good thing tonight. A good omen.

#### MAULER MAN

Yeh, what's that?

#### ANNOUNCER

You see that ol' lady there at the end? She's been coming here every week for the last eight years, never misses a match. They say that she was the one that discovered Joe Bob Jones. Told everybody in the stands that he was gonna be a world champ.

MAULER MAN

Yeh?

ANNOUNCER

Just like with you. She knew it right off.

MAULER MAN

(Angry.)

Did she know that he wasn't wrestling. He just rolled around on the mats. You better check him out; I think he wanted to throw the fight. I tried not even fighting hard and I still beat him. When I gave him a forearm to the stomach you'd have thought I hit him with a steam shovel. He just flew into the ropes.

(The Announcer begins to laugh.)

What are you laughing about?

ANNOUNCER

You're just too strong and you don't know how much.

MAULER MAN

(Serious and angry, trying to explain.)

When we first started I was kind of just fooling around to see what he was going to do and if he was tough. He starts to act like he's gonna stick his finger in my eye but I guess he missed and he ended up putting it in my nose. I sure hope nobody saw that.

ANNOUNCER

(Still laughing.)

I hope he didn't tear any nose hair out.

MAULER MAN

(Confused and angry, beginning to talk faster.)

Then I get him down to the mat with a headlock and he

taps me and whispers, "What are you trying to do, hurt me?" Then he says he'll go down with a body slam and the match will be over. I get real pissed off and figure if I really slam him down hard that he'll get mad and wrestle, but he just lay there groaning and telling the ref to count like hell.

ANNOUNCER

(Almost hysterical.)

You don't really think that he wanted you to win do you? I mean, what would the fans think?

(Calming down.)

Don't you remember what Otto told you on your first match?

MAULER MAN

(Very confused.)

He just told me to keep my ears open and to do what I was told.

ANNOUNCER

Yeh, and Guano was the one to tell you what to do.

MAULER MAN

What?

ANNOUNCER

(Trying to explain.)

Look, ever since you hurt Wolf Man Gursky fooling around the gym that day we've been counting on you to fill in while he recouperates. We didn't have time to tell you everything.

(Otto enters toward the end of this speech and stands at the edge of the ring listening.)

OTTO

(To the Announcer.)



Say could you leave us alone for just a second; there are a few things I'd like to talk over with Wladek?

ANNOUNCER

Sure.

(He exits.)

OTTO

(Entering the ring.)

You did real well tonight Mauler Man, but you almost killed poor Guano. He wasn't ready for you to come out shooting.

MAULER MAN

Huh?

OTTO

You've got a lot to learn, but with the help of some good press you'll go a long way. Make lots of money. Just don't get too enthusiastic. Ol' Guano just got out of the hospital. Hemorrhoids.

MAULER MAN

(Emphatically.)

I was just trying to win.

OTTO

Sit down Wladek. You're a good wrestler and we all don't doubt that one bit. Believe it or not Ol' Guano used to be a pretty fair grappler also. Fact is, he won the amateur title in '49. But he's getting old now; he has to rely on tricks and experience. Now with you it's different. You still have your strength and speed. When I first heard about you people kept saying to me, "You think Joe Bob Jones was great, he couldn't shine Moze's shoes." Ever since Wolf Man got hurt I've had to rely on you. I've found out that you know the right holds, were in great shape, in short, you knew

the technique of the sport. I've always needed someone who could fill Joe Bob's shoes. And after seeing you perform tonight I think you'll do just fine. Wolf Man has been wanting to retire so I'll be able to devote full time to you. You got the same class Ol' Joe Bob had and that's what makes it in this business. Being a good wrestler has got nothing to do with being able to really beat Guano. The fans only look at your class and style. You are what I've been waiting for. I could get any ol' pro ball player to wrestle, but I need someone like you to fill Joe Bob's shoes. The fans tonight just strengthened my belief that you have what it takes.

MAULER MAN

(Still angry.)

But that wasn't a match tonight. He was just dancing around.

OTTO

(Trying to persuade.)

What you don't realize is that Guano was fighting to stay in the ring tonight. I told him I wanted you to win this one tonight and he naturally thought that you knew that you were gonna win. I didn't have time to let you in on all the tricks of the sport. I needed somebody to wrestle and you were there. Let me just say again that I'm proud of what you did.

MAULER MAN

(Not believing.)

You mean that all the matches are rigged, that we're really not wrestling?

OTTO

(Beginning to stalk Mauler Man.)

Let's just say that we cooperate. It takes everybody in the ring including the referee to make you win in the eyes of the fans. Don't worry, it took Joe Bob time before he got into the swing of things.

MAULER MAN

(Sincerely.)

I don't want to be a fake. I just want to be a great wrestler.

OTTO

Look boy, you're no fake. You know that, I know that, and most important, the fans know that. But you can't bust your ass five nights a week year after year. You have to play at being a wrestler. Look, nobody's being fooled. They are just seeing what they want to.

(Trying to kid him.)

Weren't you ever in a school play?

MAULER MAN

(Pouting.)

It just doesn't seem right to me.

OTTO

(Beginning to get disgusted.)

I'm not asking you to love it right off. Nothing is that easy. A lot of guys can't take it and get out and do something else. Its hard when you don't know anything else.

(Trying very hard to reason with Mauler Man.)

That's my trouble. But you're different, you're smart. Now look, give it a chance. You show the fans a little class and I guarantee that in no time you'll be a champ. What have you got to lose. I think that you'll enjoy the fame. Their praise and enthusiasm is genuine. I know. I'll get you a ranking on the polls, put your face in the mags. Its not Sports Illustrated, but what the hell. That's all it takes to be a champion. Good press.

MAULER MAN

(Very confused and unsure of himself.)

Look Otto, you've been good to me getting me into pro wrestling. I guess you know what's right. You've been through it all. I guess I'm just not used to this kind of wrestling and it all seems so different. I guess I should give it a try like you say.

(Trying to convince himself.)

I can always get out if I want to, right?

OTTO

(Patting Mauler Man on the back.)

Nobody is gonna keep you here if you don't want to stay.

MAULER MAN

(Still trying to convince himself.)

Seems like a chance to make some money.

OTTO

(Knows he has won.)

I guarantee if you keep up an image you'll make a lot of money.

MAULER MAN

Yeh, I guess it'll be kind of fun out there playing like we really are hurting each other.

(Mauler Man compromises. But he is not sure of himself.)

As long as I win I don't care.

OTTO

That's right, but winning ain't all there is to it. It's what you give the fans. Remember that.

## MAULER MAN

(Not understanding.)

What I give the fans?

## OTTO

Right, what you give to the fans. That's what is important. Most of the time the fans will want you to win. It'll be a piece of cake. I'm not saying you might not occasionally get a finger in the eye or a knee in the jewels but it'd only be an accident. You're safe up in this ring. It's when you get out that you'll have to be on your toes. Crowds are the roughest part of this game.

(The Announcer enters at the end of this last speech. He is carrying a new robe for Mauler Man.)

## ANNOUNCER

Say Otto, Ol' Mauler Man got a good sign tonight.

## OTTO

What's that?

## ANNOUNCER

(Looking at Mauler Man.)

I think Ol' Wanda is on his side.

## OTTO

You hear that Wladek? What more could you want? She never used to be much of a wrestling fan herself but her husband was. He lived for it. Worked all week for Friday night so's he could go to wrestling. Her husband died but she still keeps coming, a bigger fan than ever.

## ANNOUNCER

(To Mauler Man.)

It's like she's here with her husband in a way.

OTTO

(Enjoying the story.)

I remember the night Joe Bob Jones threw a flower into the crowd and she caught it. Came up to the ring and gave him a big kiss. He couldn't have picked a nicer person. She comes by the office now and then and'll give us fifteen bucks. I'll send her tickets till the money runs out. Then I'll write her and tell her that she's almost out of money. She'll find a way to come down and give us more.

ANNOUNCER

That's the kind of fans that you want in your corner.

OTTO

(Laughing.)

She'll probably die in that seat during a main event. Well I better get out of here. You've got another match coming up. I hope I didn't wear your ear out with all this bullshit, but think about it anyway. It's all what you give the fans. It should be a good card tonight, lots of action.

(Climbing out of the ring.)

You just keep that class coming across. That's what they want.

MAULER MAN

(Falsely.)

No problem.

OTTO

(To Announcer.)

Take care of him, O.K.?

(To Mauler Man.)

Listen Mauler Man, take it a little easier with this next guy.

(Winks.)

You won't have any trouble winning this match.

MAULER MAN

Who am I gonna wrestle?

OTTO

He's using the name "The Son of Adolph" this time. Remember, he's a professional wrestler and he's not used to violence. He'll go in eight after you're North Country...whatever it is.

(He exits.)

MAULER MAN

(Calling out to Otto.)

Crush...North Country Crush.

ANNOUNCER

Here, put this robe on.

(He helps Mauler Man with the robe.)

MAULER MAN

(Looking at the robe.)

Sure. Yeh. Don't want to get a cold or nothing like that.

ANNOUNCER

This Son of Adolph is a real dirty fellow. He'll make Don de la Guano look like an anemic nun.

MAULER MAN

(Very fast.)

But I'm supposed to win.

70

ANNOUNCER

(Teasing Mauler Man, but trying to be serious.)

That doesn't make any difference. He's still mean. He carries things in the ring with him. Things like pencils, bottle openers, brass knuckles. Anything that will hurt. He hides them in his trunks. Why, I remember one night that he had something and started scratching the other guy's eye out. The ref started to search him but he just stuck it in his mouth. About that time the other guy hit him a good one up the side of the head. He swallowed whatever he had. So now instead of trying to hide things in his trunks, he just belches them up whenever he wants to get dirty.

MAULER MAN

(Not knowing how to act.)

Yeh?

1 - 1D: The first door prize

Announcer  
Miss Wrestling  
Mrs. Botts or Fat Lady

(The lights go to full again. The crowd-actors begin to comment on the ring action. The Announcer crosses to ring mike. Mauler Man remains in his corner.)

ANNOUNCER

Good evening ladies and gentlemen and welcome to wrestling. We've got an exciting match coming up, but before we begin I would like everyone to check their programs for the night's card. In the top right hand corner you will notice a number. This number makes you eligible for one of the door prizes that we will be giving away between matches tonight. So if you will all look at your program I'll draw a number from the fish bowl that Miss Wrestling, Velma Joe Vernal is bringing up to the ring.



(Miss Wrestling enters the ring.)

Let's see.

(He draws a number.)

The lucky number is 1128. Who has 1128. 1128.

(The Fat Lady jumps up.)

FAT LADY

I got it. I got it. It's my number. Here it is right here.

ANNOUNCER

Bring it right up here Miss. . .

FAT LADY

(Entering the ring.)

Botts. Mrs. Lavern Botts.

ANNOUNCER

Well, Mrs. Potts. . .

FAT LADY

Botts.

(She grabs mike.)

I'm very happy to be here and I love wrestling.

ANNOUNCER

We're certainly glad you're having a good time and because you had the lucky number tonight you've won six free tickets to wrestling.

(The crowd-actors cheer.)

What do you think about that?

FAT LADY

I think that is just great. I love wrestling.

ANNOUNCER

You come here often do you?

FAT LADY

(Takes the mike and begins to circle the ring.)

I've been coming regular now for about three years. I like it. I lose a lot of tension when I come here. My doctor told me I was cheating him cause I had a nervous disorder at one time and was taking these hormone shots every week to cure it. I had gone to see him steady for about two months and then I started to the matches. I just quit going to see him. About six months later, I saw him and he asked me where I'd been. I said I'd been going to the matches to relieve tension and he up and told me that I'd been cheating him. Have you ever heard anything like that in your life? It sure beats having to pay him and get all those shots.

ANNOUNCER

(Trying to get the mike back.)

You sure sound like a happier person. Who's your favorite wrestler?

FAT LADY

My favorite? Well, I like 'em all. Everyone of 'em.

ANNOUNCER

(Ready for her to leave.)

Well, thank you Mrs. Potts and we hope you have a good time the rest of the evening.

FAT LADY

(As she is leaving the ring.)

Botts. The name is Botts, Lavern Botts. And I certainly will.

ANNOUNCER

(Leans to her.)

Will what?

FAT LADY

Have a good time.

(She waves to the crowd.)

ANNOUNCER

Well, I can see that we are just about ready to begin the next match so I better trot over to the announcing booth to give a hold by hold account of the match between The Fabulous Son of Adolph and the popular newcomer, Mauler Man Moze.

1 - 1E: Mauler Man defeats Son of Adolph

Mauler Man  
Announcer  
Son of Adolph

(The Announcer crosses to ringside booth. German march music begins. The Referee enter the ring. Adolph enters. He proceeds to "heil Hitler" to all four corners of the ring. The crowd-actors boo him. Mauler Man begins to warm up in his corner. The Referee checks both wrestlers. Son of Adolph has a German Luger tucked in his trunks. A brief argument ensues between the referee and Son of Adolph. An agreement is reached and the Announcer is given the gun.

ANNOUNCER

Ladies and gentlemen, boys and girls, our next match of the evening will be a one-fall, no-time-limit match. In this corner, formally of Berlin, Germany, now residing in the jungles of Paraguay, weighing 310 pounds, The Son of Adolph.

(The crowd-actors "boo" Adolph and cheer Mauler Man.)

And in this corner, that dynamite new wrestler, a real clean fighter, from Petoskey, Michigan, the inventor of the North Country Crush, Mauler Man Moze.

(More cheers from the crowd-actors. Mauler Man is surprised but happy at their response.)

And the referee for tonight's match, that former great, Dandy Davy Duncan.

(The bell sounds and the match begins. Mauler Man and Adolph begin to stalk each other. Both wrestlers perform the holds described by the Announcer.)

It's nice to see Dandy Davy out of retirement. He was one of the truly great wrestlers and many people credit him with the Flying Sledge, the hold that made him so devastating. His style is or was similar to that boy up in the ring now, Mauler Man Moze. Here's the Mauler Man with a head lock on Adolph. Yes, Moze has certainly captured the hearts of the crowd. Adolph breaks free and counters with a kick to the stomach. Moze hails out of Petoskey, Michigan. Adolph gouges to the eyes but Mauler Man counters with a knee breaker.

(The crowd-actors throw Coke cups at Adolph.)

By the crowd's reaction you can tell that Adolph has little sympathy among them. Moze's style certainly has changed from those early matches we watched him in. He seems more professional in all his holds. Moze has the Kraut in a modified Boston Crab. Adolph brings Moze to his knee with a grab at the trunks of Moze.

(The crowd-actors scream at the Referee to stop Adolph.)

This is brought to the attention of the ref who obviously didn't see it. Adolph now has Mauler Man in his sadistic hold, the Arian Claw. Mauler Man obviously in much pain, but he breaks it with a forearm to the stomach. He is still dazed. Adolph is right on him with another one of his brutal torture holds, the Gas Oven. I bet I can guess who taught him those. Mauler Man is to the mat. The Referee counts. . . one. . . two. . . but he manages to raise a shoulder. Adolph now jumps on his face.

Mauler Man is flat on the mat again. Adolph is now mounting the ropes for his coup de gras, the Blitzkrieg. Adolph misses. Mauler Man is up on the ropes with his North Country Crush. Adolph is down. . . one. . . two. . . three. The match is over and Mauler Man is the winner.

(The Referee raises Mauler Man's hand in victory.)

Well folks, or volks whatever the case my be, I'm gonna see if I can get a few words with the badly battered butcher from Berlin.

1 - 1F: Mauler Man reaches his goal

Mauler Man  
Announcer  
Son of Adolph  
Don de la Guano  
Old Lady  
Otto  
Crowd-actors

(The Announcer enter the ring. Adolph is on the mat. Mauler Man has gone to his corner and several of the crowd-actors go to ringside to get his autograph. The Announcer crosses to Adolph.)

ANNOUNCER

(Bending down to Adolph.)

Adolph. . . Adolph, excuse me, but can we get a few words with you about the terrible beating you just received?

ADOLPH

(Jumping to his feet.)

I vas chited! Und you can call me mein Furher!

ANNOUNCER

Sorry about that mein Furher. Can you tell us what happened?

ADOLPH

(He grabs the mike and begins preaching to the audience.)

I vas chited by dat Zionish Pollack from Michigan! Und I tell you die Furher will not tolerate dis disgrace!

ANNOUNCER

(Taking the mike back.)

That's a pretty bold accusation that you made about Mauler Man. He's known all over as a very clean wrestler.

ADOLPH

Vas 1st los?

ANNOUNCER

I mean all of these fans saw it and they'll tell you it vas, I mean was clean.

ADOLPH

(Grabbing the mike again. He begins to shout.)

Do you doubt your zupreme master of a zupreme race? I vas chited on! Und if you Commies vud haf let me kip mein veapon, I vud haf vun!

ANNOUNCER

(Has jumped out of the ring during last speech.)

But that would have been illegal.

ADOLPH

(Still screaming and stomping around the ring. The crowd-actors are booing him during all his lines.)

Not in za mutter country! Zare ve vrestle like men! Zare ve haf no little kinder rules. Ve haf rules for men! But how is und inferior race to know zees rules? I am vasting mein time in dis country. I vill go back

to Zouth Amerika und vrestle mein fellow Germans. Zare I vill vin! Zare I vill conquer mankind, za world, und everyzing else! Heil Hitler! Heil Hitler! Heil Hitler!

(He exits the ring. One of the crowd-actors begins a small fight with him. The policeman breaks it up.)

ANNOUNCER

(Getting back in the ring.)

Well fans, there you have it. Can you believe it? The Son of Adolph. Well, let me see if I can get over to talk to Mauler Man. He seems to be autographing a few pictures and talking with his fans. He displayed a devastating grappling match right here in this very ring a few moments ago. Excuse me, Mauler Man.

(He crosses to Mauler Man.)

We'd like to let our audience share some of your feelings about the last match.

MAULER MAN

(Mauler and Announcer cross to corner of ring.)

Well, you know it was a tough one but I pride myself on being a clean wrestler, one that you don't mind letting your kids watch.

(Mauler Man has become more confident.)

ANNOUNCER

Well spoken. You certainly gave a performance tonight that any mother would be proud of. What about all those things Adolph said about you cheating?

MAULER MAN

Well, as you know there are a lot of people out to undermine the very foundations of this great country. Hippies, Yippies to name just a few. People can see that they use the same tactics as that Adolph character. I go at it hard, but I keep it clean. I don't pull hair. I don't gouge eyes. I don't take things in the ring with me other than myself. I beat the guy at

wrestling. I use my North Country Crush. Some guys fight dirty and that sets them aside. That's their image that they live up to. I'm gonna live up to mine.

(The crowd-actors cheer. At this point Son of Adolph and Don de la Guano jump into the ring and begin to beat Mauler Man up. The Announcer stays in the ring and describes the fight. Adolph fires the gun several times.

#### ANNOUNCER

I can't believe it fans. The Fabulous Son of Adolph and Don de la Guano have both attacked the Mauler Man.

(The crowd-actors begin to get to their feet. They are screaming for Mauler Man to get up.)

Can this be possible? Is it legal? Is it just and right? It looks as though Mauler Man is done for. He will no doubt become another link on the Son of Adolph's chain of human bondage.

(Mauler Man begins to fight back. Adolph and Guano are falling all over the mats.)

But wait! The Mauler Man seems to be turning the tables. He is exploding with forearms to the mid-section, Flying Mares, Drop Kicks. He's throwing the whole wrestling dictionary at them!

(Guano and Adolph fall into a heap on the mats. Mauler Man mounts the ropes and gets ready for his North Country Crush. The crowd-actors go wild.)

I don't believe it! The Mauler Man is going to attempt a Double North Country Crush! It has never been done before! Can he subdue two wrestlers at the same time?

(Mauler Man delivers the Crush.)

Don de la Guano and Son of Adolph have had it! The Mauler Man has done it again.

(The crowd-actors rush into the ring. Otto enters the arena and hands a championship belt to the Old Lady. She enters the ring and places it around Mauler Man's waist. The crowd-actors parade him around and then



exit. The Announcer looks around the ring. Guano and Adolph are still in a heap on the mats. The Announcer tells the audience that the matches will resume in about fifteen minutes. He exits. Guano and Adolph slowly get up. Guano looks at Adolph and suggests that they go get a beer. They exit.)

CURTAIN

## ACT TWO

2 - 1A: Mauler Man defeats The Sinister Siamese Twins  
and The Armenian Albino.

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Mauler Man  
Albino  
Flung  
Dung  
Referee  
Announcer  
Brave Bobby Blue Feather

(This act begins much the same as the first act. The crowd-actors enter with the audience. The Announcer enters. Miss Wrestling enters and sits at ringside table. The Albino and the Twins enter and get up in ring. Mauler Man and Brave Bobby Blue Feather enter when the crowd-actors begin to chant, "We want Mauler Man." The referee enters.

## ANNOUNCER

(At the ring mike.)

Ladies and gentlemen, here it is, a match I know that we've all been waiting for, a best two-out-of-three tag-team-match. No time limit. In this corner, the World Federation and Alliance of Wrestling's top tag team, from Yutz, Armenia, The Armenian Albino.

(The crowd-actors boo.)

And his partners from Chingow, Siam, Flung and Dung, the Sinister Siamese Twins.

(Again more boos from the crowd-actors.)

And in this corner, straight from the Cherokee nation, Brave Bobby Blue Feather.

(The crowd-actors cheer.)

And his partner, the National Brotherhood of Wrestling's

number one ranked wrestler, from Petoskey, Michigan, the inventor of the North Country Crush, Mauler Man Moze.

(The crowd-actors really show their approval. The Announcer crosses to the ring mike. The bell sounds.)

Here we go fans, a truly exciting match.

(All of the action described by the Announcer takes place as he describes it.)

The first two wrestlers out for each team are Brave Bobby Blue Feather and Flung and Dung. Brave Bobby starts off with a head lock on Flung or maybe it's Dung. Anyway, it's broken quickly as Brave Bobby is brought to his knees with a Yuliption Femur Fracture. Dung, or is it Flung, begins applying his thumbs to the temples of the Brave while Flung or Dung administers a leg lock. The Brave is in real pain. Flung and Dung begin applying more pressure. The Brave is begging for mercy but he can't get to his partner for a tag. Looks like he may have to give up. That or I'll bet he never does a rain dance again.

(The crowd-actors are booing the twins. The Referee crosses to the Announcer and tells him to stop the match.)

It's all over! Brave Bobby has succumbed and that ends the first fall. Remember there are two more falls in this best two-out-of-three tag-team match. Very quick match but they don't call them the Sinister Siamese Twins for nothing. Mauler Man helps Brave Bobby back to the corner to recuperate.

(Mauler Man keeps his back to the Albino. The bell sounds.)

The bell sounds! Here comes the Armenian Albino and pounces upon the unsuspecting Moze! Mauler Man is down but he springs up to deliver a forearm to the face of the Albino. The Albino counters and the two wrestlers are in the center of the ring exchanging punches. It looks like the Albino is fading. Yes folks, he's trying to match the Mauler Man blow but is sinking to his knees. He's down . . . one . . . two . . . three!

The second fall is over just as quickly as it began. Both teams traded falls. How's that for excitement! Yes, you see it all here on professional wrestling. This match isn't over yet. We still have one fall to decide and by the looks of things it could go either way. Both teams are very effective at doling out their respective forms of punishment. Flung and Dung help the Albino to his corner and try to get him ready for the next fall. He seems to be shaken up as Moze really delivered those punches, all clean of course, to the face of the arch-enemy from Armenia. It looks as though the third fall is about to get underway.

(Mauler Man and Brave Bobby are in their corner. The bell sounds.)

He'll start out against the twins. Now fans, we're underway. But what's this? Has Moze gone crazy? He seems to be running in a circle. He is trying a clever play to confuse both Flung and Dung. They are falling for it and seem to be losing their balance. They are getting dizzy. Mauler Man suddenly leaps for a Quad-ankle Take Down! You don't see that very often. This boy has really learned the ropes. Moze quickly tags his partner to deal out some desired revenge. The twins try to get to their feet. Brave Bobby taps Flung on the shoulder. Dung turns around and the Brave lets him have it. The Brave now brings Flung to the turnbuckle and is pounding him senseless. Now the Albino has decided to join in as he has the Brave by the scalp and is administering his own brand of punishment. Now Flung and Dung start in on the Brave. All three wrestlers are really giving him hell right in his own corner with Mauler Man looking on! Why isn't he helping his partner? Is he that clean? Yes, he's that clean! Brave Bobby finally makes a legal tag and the Mauler Man is a house afire! He has the Twins in a double head lock, and at the same time drop kicks the Armenian adversary! Brave Bobby attempts to come in, but Mauler Man warns him that it would be an infraction of the rules to come in without a legal tag. Mauler Man still has Flung and Dung in a head lock and the Albino is on the mat. I think that Mauler Man kicked him a little low. Moze now stands upon the Albino's chest and won't let him up. He's begging for mercy. Will the ref stop the match? Yes, he does! It's all over! Mauler Man and Brave Bobby have won the match!

(The Referee raises Mauler Man and Brave Bobby's hands in the air. The Albino and Flung and Dung remain on the mats. The Referee and the Announcer exit the ring. The crowd-actors freeze in their places.)

2 - 2B: The wrestlers become real men

Mauler Man  
Albino  
Brave Bobby  
Flung  
Dung

(The lights dim. Slowly, the wrestlers begin to stir. Mauler Man sits on the mat. Brave leans against the ropes.)

#### ARMENIAN ALBINO

Will you get the hell up now, it's over. Oh, my feet are killing me!

#### FLUNG

(Rising from the pile with his twin. They begin to get undressed and unbind themselves.)

What are you bitching about? Have you ever tried to wrestle in a pair of tights with somebody else?

#### DUNG

(Looking at Flung.)

It's no picnic for me either, you sweat like a wild ox.

(Flung and Dung become separated.)

#### ALBINO

I took my kid to the zoo today and we walked all over hell and back. This is no time to break in a new pair of boots.

#### FLUNG

(Looks around the arena.)

Looked like a good house tonight. We must have made a couple of hundred bucks each. How much did you get tonight. . .

(To Dung.)

What's his name?

DUNG

Mauler Man.

FLUNG

What did you get tonight, Mauler Man? Five?

BRAVE BOBBY

(Sourly.)

Five! Hell, man he's a world champ. He must have got a thousand.

MAULER MAN

I got eight hundred.

BRAVE BOBBY

(Grumbling.)

Ain't as much of a champ as I thought.

ALBINO

Why don't you leave him alone Vito. You never got any eight hundred bucks.

BRAVE BOBBY

(Being very defensive.)

Lots of times.

ALL BUT MAULER MAN

When?

**BRAVE BOBBY**

Wrestling alligators down in Florida. I got eight fifty a week during the summer.

**ALBINO**

What's a Wop doing wrestling gators in Florida?

**BRAVE BOBBY**

(Angry.)

I don't know. Maybe they like Italian food.

**ALBINO**

(Not paying any attention to Brave Bobby.)

Yeh, but you never got that kind of money wrestling just one match. Anyway, if it wasn't for Mauler Man we wouldn't be getting as much as we are tonight. You really draw them in don't you kid?

**MAULER MAN**

(Trying to be nice.)

I guess people like to see me wrestle.

**FLUNG**

(Warming up to Mauler Man.)

You're the biggest draw since Joe Bob Jones.

**DUNG**

Easy.

**BRAVE BOBBY**

(Trying to pick an argument.)

I wrestled with Joe Bob and he was a hell of a lot more flashy. He'd have the crowd begging for him to cream somebody.

DUNG

(Trying to shut Brave Bobby up.)

I always wondered what happened to you.

ALBINO

(Friendly.)

There's no use in comparing. Joe Bob never did reach his peak. He never drew as many as he could have. But. . .

(To Mauler Man.)

What did you say your name was?

MAULER MAN

Wladek.

ALBINO

But Walldick here will probably be just as good. How long is up to the fans, but he'll be super. I seen 'em come and I seen 'em go. . . .

FLUNG

(Teasing the Albino.)

Yeh, from mostly on your back.

(All the wrestlers laugh.)

ALBINO

(Almost proud.)

I don't mind a bit. It keeps me working steady. I can wrestle all over this country. I got quite a bit of the long green put away too.

DUNG

You've got more to show for it than I do. I'm getting



out to find some other work. This traveling is killing us.

FLUNG

(Excited.)

We're gonna go back home and do something exciting like open up a fried chicken place.

BRAVE BOBBY

That's about your style.

(Brave Bobby is sour and jealous.)

I will admit that you've got a pretty good gimmick. I mean the Siamese twin bit. I wouldn't mind getting into that. I'm tired of this Indian crap.

DUNG

(Setting Brave Bobby up.)

Look we'll let you have our costume when we're finished on one condition.

BRAVE BOBBY

(Sourly.)

What's that?

DUNG

(Smiling.)

That whoever becomes your partner agrees that you two will be joined at the mouth permanently!

(Everyone laughs except Brave Bobby.)

BRAVE BOBBY

I'm gonna stay with this game and someday you guys might have the chance to wrestle me. You too Mauler Man. You're not gonna last forever, unless you've got more brains than I give you credit for.

ALBINO

(Tired of Brave Bobby.)

Why are you riding him?

BRAVE BOBBY

I just don't like people who stumble into things without knowing what the hell it's all about. He's got no right to be a wrestler. It ain't fair.

MAULER MAN

(Defending himself.)

I work at it as hard as anybody else. It's not my fault that I just happened to be at the right place at the right time.

BRAVE BOBBY

(Showing false confidence.)

Ah, what the hell am I worrying about. You don't have what it takes to last. You'll see. I'm gonna stay in this game and someday all of you will get the chance to wrestle with me on a main event.

DUNG

(Quietly.)

I'd rather sell chicken.

(All the wrestlers laugh except Brave Bobby.)

ALBINO

(Trying to change the subject.)

What'd you do before coming here Valbeck?

MAULER MAN

I went to college. Couldn't make my grades cause I wrestled so much, so I dropped out. You know what

happened after that, I mean stumbling into wrestling.

ALBINO

(Becoming very interested.)

Wow, a college man! You play ball?

MAULER MAN

No, just wrestled.

ALBINO

(Remembering.)

I played ball in college. . .

BRAVE BOBBY

(Hatefully.)

Here we go again.

ALBINO

. . . almost played in the pros, but I hurt my knee pretty bad and had to give up football. I'm lucky I fell into this or I'd still be picking cotton for \$1.75 an hour. I've been going at it for twenty years. See, you play your cards right and you can stay in this business for a long time. Me, I had to stay in it. I can't do nothing else. I'd thought about becoming a bartender, but my wife thought it might be too dangerous.

BRAVE BOBBY

(Shaking his head.)

See there Mauler Man, look what you have to look forward to.

ALBINO

(Not paying any attention to Brave Bobby.)

You remind me of when I started out. I remember I went to the matches as a spectator when they came to my home town.

MAULER MAN

Where's that?

ALBINO

(Proudly.)

Bald Knob, Arkansas.

BRAVE BOBBY

Oh, Jesus!

ALBINO

(Remembering with enjoyment.)

Used to go all the time. I was pretty big kid right out of high school. One night they offered to give a hundred dollars to anyone who could stay in the ring with this wrestler. His name was Clancy Brannigan. I got up to the ring to get a closer look when I noticed all these people were staring at me.

(He laughs.)

I guess they thought I was gonna wrestle. Well, the announcer thought that's what I was gonna do and before I knowed it I was up there. I started to take my shoes and shirt off. The crowd started to give some bull shit cause they wanted to know what this big dumb hillbilly was doing trying to wrestle this professional. Being young, this kind of pissed me off, so I decided I was gonna win if I had to get killed. I thought that was a good possibility. Now he had to pin me in ten minutes or I got to keep the money. I had it all planned. I was gonna stay close to the ropes. After about five minutes of this, this guy Brannigan dragged me out into the middle of the ring and really started to put the squeeze on me. He was about to pin me when I grabbed his hand and bit down real hard on his finger and took the damn thing off. Spit it out right in the middle of the ring. The crowd loved it. There I was in my jeans dancing around in the ring with this big tough wrestler laying in the middle crying like a baby. You should have seen it.

FLUNG

(Laughs.)

Last time it was his thumb.

ALBINO

(Having too much fun to stop his story.)

I tell you the crowd loved it. That's when I started to wrestle for regular money. Back on the country circuits. I called myself The Bald Knob Brahma. Hell, I still use that name every once in awhile and sometimes I meet somebody that saw that match. That guy Branigan is still wrestling too.

(Becoming quiet.)

Probably was the first time he'd ever been hurt.

FLUNG

(After a long pause.)

Say, we'd better get out of here. We got another match coming up soon.

(The wrestlers begin to get up and pick up their wrestling gear.)

ALBINO

Yeh, we'd better get a move on. Say Balbick. . .

MAULER MAN

Wladek.

ALBINO

Yeh, well anyway, what other names do you wrestle under, in case we happen to run into you again.

MAULER MAN

Just Mauler Man. That's all.

ALBINO

That so huh? Well look, maybe we can wrestle again sometime.

BRAVE BOBBY

(Stepping out of the ring.)

Only next time I want to be against you and see how tough you really are.

FLUNG

(Sarcastically.)

Maybe you could rub him on the stomach and he'd fall asleep.

ALBINO

(Shaking hands with Mauler Man.)

I'd wrestle with Mauler Man anytime.

BRAVE BOBBY

You'd wrestle with anybody anytime.

ALBINO

(Paying no attention to Brave Bobby.)

You'll be around a long time Valbink.

DUNG

(Stepping up to Mauler Man and shaking his hand.)

Where do you go from here?

MAULER MAN

I think Otto wants me to stay around here for awhile.

DUNG

Well, we sure enjoyed wrestling with you.

## FLUNG

(Shaking Mauler Man's hand.)

See you around. If you ever get the craving for some chicken sometime, come look us up.

## MAULER MAN

Sure thing, We'll see you again. Thanks.

## ALBINO

Maybe we can be the good guys next time. It won't be too hard for Vito to convince anybody.

(He exits.)

## BRAVE BOBBY

I doubt if he'll be around that long, but I'll take you up on it.

(He exits. The Announcer enters and is carrying another robe. This one is fancier than the first. He jumps onto ring.)

2 - 2C: The beginning of Mauler Man's decline.

Mauler Man  
Announcer

## ANNOUNCER

You'd better limber up. There is another match coming up. Put this on so the crowd will know who you are.

(He helps Mauler Man put the robe on.)

## MAULER MAN

(Thinking about something else.)

Yeh, I'd better put it on. I don't want to get cold. Say, you think I ought to quit, I mean while I'm on top? You don't think Otto would get mad do you?

## ANNOUNCER

(Looking him over carefully.)

No, he'd just find somebody else. It'd take awhile but he'd find somebody else, but you'd be crazy to quit now. You've got it made. Otto had made a lot of good wrestlers, but you and Joe Bob were something different.

(Turning from Moze.)

Quit if you want to, but you'd be crazy.

## MAULER MAN

(Afraid to ask.)

This Joe Bob Jones, what happened to him?

## ANNOUNCER

(Crossing to Mauler Man.)

One night he was coming back to his dressing room after beating this kid from Oklahoma. There was a lot of blood. And it looked like it was a pretty brutal affair. Otto did real good getting blood splattered everywhere. But this kid had a father that thought all of it was real and he attacked Joe Bob with a pin knife. He died before we could get an ambulance. We didn't know that he was really hurt. Thought he was just fooling because there was so much blood around anyway.

(He stops for a moment.)

It's funny how some people start taking things too serious.

(Without any feeling.)

Joe Bob could have been the greatest ever.

(Changing to more business like manner.)

Look, straighten yourself up a little cause you're gonna be on T.V. Come on let's get in position. Otto has prepared some answers to the questions I'm gonna



ask you. Think you can handle that?

MAULER MAN

(Still thinking about Joe Bob.)

I think so.

ANNOUNCER

(They move to the center of the ring. The Announcer takes the ring mike and positions Mauler Man.)

Good, just read the cards after I ask the questions. Put a little feeling into it, O.K.?

(The light comes up on the crowd. The crowd-actors begin to respond.)

Good evening ladies and gentlemen. Welcome to all-star wrestling. Before tonight's match we have here to talk to you in person, a wrestler who needs no introduction in these parts. He's wrestled here with quite a bit of success and has become somewhat of an idol. I'm talking, of course, about Mauler Man Moze.

(The crowd-actors cheer.)

The reason we have him here tonight is to answer the allegations that he has made toward a large segment of his devoted fans. I'm talking about the youth. Moze is a handsome giant. He's got it all, the world's championship, money in the bank, a college education. On the surface you would think he is the kind of athlete that any young fan could identify with. He strikes you as a man a teenager would love to communicate with.

MAULER MAN

(Reading.)

Thank you.

ANNOUNCER

The all-American boy. The kids call him the all-American put-down.

(Mauler Man looks confused and surprised.)

Why is that Mauler Man?

MAULER MAN

(Hesitating.)

After a match with Doctor Z, the announcer asked if I had anything to say to the nation's youth and I said, "Tell the kids to take a bath and get a haircut."

(Under his breath.)

I never wrestled any Doctor Z. . .

ANNOUNCER

(Not stopping for Mauler Man.)

As I understand it, the levis and bead set were shocked and started to desert you. They considered you another money-grabbing phoney.

MAULER MAN

(Still reading the cards.)

I believe in the clean way of wrestling and living, like listening to your parents, attending church and school.

(A boo is heard from the crowd-actors.)

I don't appreciate and I won't tolerate, young adults who smoke or drink pot. If most of these people who are deserting me fit into that category, then good riddance to them.

(The Old Lady cheers. More booing from the other crowd-actors.)

ANNOUNCER

Moze is a four-letter word to a big part of young generation wrestling fans.

Any decent youngsters wouldn't stop liking me. The nice kids know what I stand for. Maybe it's square to believe in mother and the flag and apple pie. I believe in it and I don't care who knows it. If the Hippies and Yippies are bad mouthing me, then I want them to know I don't care.

(Mauler Man begins to play the role written for him.)

ANNOUNCER

Who said anything about Hippies or Yippies?

MAULER MAN

Well, those are the only ones who could possibly knock me. I hope to help the rest of America's youth get back on the ball.

ANNOUNCER

(Egging him on.)

Seems like a strange statement from a man who seems to have alienated himself from a big part of America's youth.

MAULER MAN

(Takes the mike.)

As I said before, the youth I'm interested in are those who believe in what I stand for. Things like honor, love, and country.

(The Old Lady cheers.)

ANNOUNCER

(Shoving Mauler Man out of the way.)

There you have it wrestling fans, you can take him or leave him. He may not be what you like, but he'll always be the Mauler Man.

2 - 2D: The second door prize

Announcer  
Old Chicano  
Miss Wrestling

ANNOUNCER

Now before we begin the next match, we'll draw again for our big prize of the evening. So if our Miss Wrestling would come out with the fish bowl, I'll draw another number. Here she is. . . let's see.

(He draws a number.)

The lucky number is 2134. . . 2134. . . Who's got 2134?

OLD CHICANO

(Jumping up and crossing to ringside.)

Me. I got it! I got 2134! It's me.

(He enters the ring.)

ANNOUNCER

Congratulations, Mr. . . .?

OLD CHICANO

(Looking at Miss Wrestling.)

Thank you very much.

ANNOUNCER

(Wanting to get this over with.)

Yes, well our grand prize of the evening is being brought by our own Miss Wrestling. Here she is. It's a deluxe toaster! What do you think about that.

OLD CHICANO

(Surprised and unhappy.)

It's nice, I guess. Don't you have any more free tickets?

ANNOUNCER

(Walking away from the man.)

Well, there goes a happy man folks.

(The Old Chicano leaves the ring cursing. He gives the toaster to one of the crowd-actors and returns to his seat.)

2 - 2E: The Randy Starr match, Mauler Man is made to look like a fool.

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Announcer  
Mauler Man  
Referee  
Randy Starr  
Karl Bockwinkle

ANNOUNCER

Now it looks as though we are close to the start of the match.

(Randy Starr and Karl Bockwinkle enter and come into ring. The crowd-actors cheer.)

Ladies and gentlemen, tonight's match is a special benefit match for the civic symphony orchestra. In this corner, weighing 236 pounds from Petoskey, Michigan, Mauler Man Moze.

(No one pays any attention to Mauler Man, they are watching Randy Starr.)

And in this corner, his opponent from the city ballet, weighing 145 pounds, you've seen him in Swan Lake and now you'll see him wrestle the world's champion, the ever-graceful Fabulous Randy Starr.

(The crowd-actors cheer.)

And for your added enjoyment, these two performers will be accompanied by Maestro Karl Bockwinkle, first chair

cellist with the civic symphony.

(Karl stands and bows. He then sits down and gets ready to play for the match. He is center ring.)

He will accompany the wrestlers with Tchaikovsky's "Swan Lake." And now, I'll let the music take over the commentary.

(He crosses to the ringside table, the Referee jumps into the ring with a conductor's baton. He is dressed in a tuxedo. He taps the baton on the top ring rope. The music begins and Randy begins to dance around the ring. Mauler Man does not know what to do. He begins to stalk Randy but Randy just dances away from him. Mauler Man stops and watches Randy. Randy dances to him and grabs his hands and tries to lead around the ring. After a few steps Mauler Man pulls away. He is really frustrated. He gets mad and grabs Randy. He picks him up and Randy goes into a mid-air dance position. Mauler Man drops him. Randy begins to wilt to the mat. The cellist is playing wildly. Mauler Man mounts the ropes for the North Country Crush but Randy just stays on the mat. The music ends and the Referee goes over to Randy and counts, "One. . . two. . . three, finis." Randy bounces up and begins to bow. The crowd-actors cheer Randy. Mauler Man slowly get down from the ropes and returns to his corner. The Referee hands Randy a bouquet of roses. He crosses to Mauler Man bows and gives him a rose. Mauler Man lets it drop to the mat. The crowd-actors cheer Randy as he leaves the ring with Karl and the Referee.)

## 2 - 2F: Mauler Man confronts Otto, the final compromise

Otto  
Mauler Man

(The lights dim. The crowd-actors freeze.

OTTO

(Entering the ring, excited.)

You did good Mauler Man. The crowd really ate that match up. We'll have to try that again sometime.

## MAULER MAN

(Angry.)

I looked like a fool.

## OTTO

(Not paying any attention.)

Did you see the reaction of the crowd. They loved it. I had no idea that you had a knack for these novelty matches.

## MAULER MAN

(Very Angry.)

Some world champion.

## OTTO

(Beginning to lose his temper.)

Look don't take it so hard. A lot of guys are world champs and most of them would give anything to have a crowd react to them the way they do to you. The fans are concerned about what you do and say. These kinds of matches are good for press and besides, the audience gets bored when they know what you'll do and say all the time. Got to give them variety.

## MAULER MAN

(Extremely upset.)

I just don't like to be a fool.

## OTTO

(Controlling himself.)

Is that what's bothering you? Look, you're no fool. We both know that and besides what do you care about what the crowd thinks? You only need them when you wrestle. They pay the bills. They don't mean a thing when you're not Mauler Man.

MAULER MAN

(Trying to explain.)

Yes but. . .

OTTO

(Cutting him off.)

Look if you'd rather not wrestle I'll find somebody that don't mind. You've made enough money. You'll find something to do. All I have to do is to tell the press that you've become a missionary or something.

MAULER MAN

(Pleading.)

All I want to do is wrestle with some dignity.

OTTO

(Tired of fooling with Mauler Man.)

Man, that won't get you across the street. Look at every wrestler. They have to put up with the same garbage that you have to. It's nothing new. But they do it because that is what you are supposed to do. If I'd told Joe Bob to go out and wrestle in his underwear he'd have done it. Because he understood the way things are. That is what you have to do to make the money, that's what's important.

MAULER MAN

But how come it can't be different with me?

OTTO

(Yelling.)

Because you're no different. You're the same as anybody else.

MAULER MAN

(Very slowly and quietly.)



But I thought I was the greatest. . .

OTTO

(Out of patience.)

You are what the fans think you are. That's my business.

MAULER MAN

(Afraid of Otto. Pleading.)

Look, I don't want to quit, Otto. I still want to wrestle. I can't do anything else.

OTTO

(Mean.)

I just don't want you to do something you don't think you can do.

MAULER MAN

(Giving in.)

I'll still wrestle.

OTTO

(A little threatening.)

Remember, if you don't like it, I'll change it. I won't guarantee that you'll draw at the gate.

MAULER MAN

(Glad the argument is over.)

O.K.

OTTO

(Still angry.)

I better go. You have another match coming up real soon.

MAULER MAN

(Sincerely.)

I only asked, Otto, cause I didn't know what it's all about. You understand that don't you. It's not you, its just my pride. . .

OTTO

You don't have room for that.

MAULER MAN

(Resigned.)

Just tell me what you want me to do Otto.

OTTO

(Ready to leave.)

Just remember, it's all a game. Just a part.

MAULER MAN

(Trying to convince himself.)

Yeh, that's all.

OTTO

(Being very nice.)

You'll be pleased with this match. It's with a really good wrestler. He was a N.C.A.A. champ, all-American cornerback in college. He just graduated and wanted to make a little money without too much pain. His name is Rocky Steele. Real dynamite. The crowd will love him.

MAULER MAN

Rocky Steele?

OTTO

Yeh, he wrestled in the Olympics. Won a silver medal. There is a hell of a crowd tonight.

MAULER MAN

(Falsely.)

Sounds great.

OTTO

(Pretending as if it just occurred to him.)

By the way, I have an idea for you. A new style. It will give you a little more versatility.

MAULER MAN

What's wrong with the old style?

OTTO

(Thinking of his new idea.)

Nothing. Except that it's just a little dated. People are tired of heroes. They want anti-heroes.

(Warming up to Mauler Man to get what he wants.)

Don't ask my why. Here get into this. The crowd will go wild over it.

(He hands Mauler Man a package.)

MAULER MAN

(Wanting to make Otto happy.)

Maybe the change will do me good.

OTTO

(Begins to walk in the direction of Rocky Steele's dressing room.)

You better hurry. The match is about to begin.

(Stopping.)

Look, just don't worry.

(Otto exits. Mauler Man opens the package. It contains his new wrestling costume. A "T" shirt with "Mauler Man Moze" written on one side and "America Love It Or Leave It" written on the other, and a pair of cut-off bluejeans with a red bandana in the pocket. There is also a mask with two pieces of sausage attached on the top. The sausage dangles down the back of the mask. Mauler Man slowly looks at each piece of the clothing. He begins to get dressed.)

2 - 2G: Mauler Man accepts his fate

Mauler Man  
Announcer

(Announcer enters the ring and begins to check the ropes.)

ANNOUNCER

This should be a good match tonight. This Rocky Steele is really a showman. He has what the fans like to see, you know the wholesome, clean-cut athletic type. You know.

MAULER MAN

(Still dressing.)

Yeh, I know.

ANNOUNCER

(Looking at Mauler Man.)

What do you think of your new costume? Should do all right.

MAULER MAN

(Unsure of himself.)

I don't know, I've just got it. I'm not used to wrestling with a costume on.

ANNOUNCER

Otto really came up with a great idea. This new gimmick

will do a lot for you. The crowd will love it. I've always said that with a good promoter a wrestler with a lot on the ball could become almost immortal, could wrestle forever.

MAULER MAN

(Interested.)

Forever?

ANNOUNCER

(As if he knows everything.)

Wladek you've just started. When this Sausage Grinder thing gets worn out Otto's gonna have you wrestle a live bear. There's nobody doing that nowadays. It has some great possibilities.

MAULER MAN

(Nervously.)

I've never wrestled a live bear before.

(He puts on his new mask.)

ANNOUNCER

(Not paying any attention to Mauler Man.)

Shouldn't be any trick to it. He'll be muzzled so he won't be dangerous. It'll really bring the crowds in.

MAULER MAN

(Saying what he thinks the Announcer would want him to.)

There's probably a lot of money in wrestling bears.

ANNOUNCER

Bound to be.

## MAULER MAN

(Feeling the mask.)

You know, now that I have this mask on I don't feel near as funny about going out and wrestling the Rocky Steele.

## ANNOUNCER

(Still engrossed in the monetary possibilities of bear wrestling.)

What?

## MAULER MAN

I'm not used to wrestling in a mask. I mean I've never worn one before but it doesn't seem to bother me.

(The mask is beginning to take effect.)

It almost feels good. I bet that sounds crazy.

## ANNOUNCER

(Still thinking about bear wrestling.)

Mask looks fine. It may not look like much, but Otto took a lot time considering the possibilities. You know I remember a guy back in '52 that used a bear. His name was. . . Volga something.

## MAULER MAN

(Goes to the corner and does a quick knee bend and then turns out with a fierce growl. He is pleased with himself.)

The Polish Sausage Grinder!

## ANNOUNCER

(Still trying to think of the name.)

No that's the name you're using. I know, it was The Volga Boatman and his Russian Bear. What the hell happened to him?

MAULER MAN

(Still warming-up in the guise of his new character.)

I could probably wear a mask when I wrestled a bear  
couldn't I?

ANNOUNCER

I'd have to talk to Otto about it, but I'm sure he'd  
want you to. It'd probably have to be something to  
do with bears.

MAULER MAN

(Trying to make a joke.)

How about a forest ranger?

ANNOUNCER

(Not laughing.)

Could be. Something like that. If you were a broad  
we could dress you up as Goldy Locks. Now that would  
bring people in.

MAULER MAN

(Thinking about the next match.)

What's this Steele guy wrestle like? I mean does he  
have a . . . you know. . . gimmick?

ANNOUNCER

Nope. He's just a wholesome son of bitch. Looks like  
he just stepped out of a jock strap commercial.

MAULER MAN

(Hesitating.)

Do I beat him?

ANNOUNCER

(Long pause.)

No. You see he's new and Otto wants his career to get started off good. That doesn't mean it won't be a good match . . .

(He turns away from Mauler Man.)

MAULER MAN

(Very quietly.)

You mean I'm gonna throw this one?

ANNOUNCER

(Not wanting to hurt Mauler Man anymore.)

Look, you've been in wrestling long enough to know that it's not like real sports. I mean with winners and losers.

(Trying to cheer him up.)

Everybody's a winner. That's the way . . .

MAULER MAN

(Trying to sound sure of himself.)

I understand.

ANNOUNCER

(Slowly.)

Do you?

(Beginning to con him again.)

I mean it's not too late to get out. You're the boss. But this is the way things are. You got to accept them. A lot of guys helped you get to the top. We are all working together.

MAULER MAN

(Falling for it.)

I know. It's just hard when you've been on top for so



long. It's nice being a winner. I never did much losing. I don't know if I can.

ANNOUNCER

(Trying to humor him.)

Yeh, but Mauler Man isn't wrestling anymore. You got something different now, a new wrestler.

MAULER MAN

(Quietly.)

But I know who I am even if I'm wearing this get-up.

ANNOUNCER

(Still trying to humor Mauler Man.)

Look, that Ol' Mauler Man will always be a winner to the fans. He ended his career on the top. You're starting with something new. It's different now.

MAULER MAN

Yeh, I guess it is different.

ANNOUNCER

You'll see. Once you get into that ring dressed like you are it'll all be different. Haven't you ever wanted to see what it was like to be one of those guys you always beat. It'll be sort of a catharsis. Yeh, that's what it is a catharsis.

MAULER MAN

(Worried.)

If you say so. It's gonna be hard to be the bad guy. I don't know if I can.

ANNOUNCER

Everybody can. You'll do all right. Are you just about ready?

MAULER MAN

(Very slowly.)

.This is it?

ANNOUNCER

(Understanding Mauler Man's meaning but not willing to get involved any further.)

This is it. Rocky Steele has a hold that he calls the Star Spangled Slammer. It's a lot like your North Country thing, so be sure not to use it.

MAULER MAN

(Trying to hold on to at least one thing.)

Crush. It's called the North Country Crush.

ANNOUNCER

(Turning away.)

Anyway don't use it. You'll moon right after the Star Spangled Slammer.

MAULER MAN

Moon?

ANNOUNCER

(Walking back to him.)

Yeh, look at the moon.

(Indicating the sky.)

When you're flat on your back you look at the moon.

MAULER MAN

Oh, yeh.

## ANNOUNCER

Well, it's time to start.

(Looking him over.)

You sure look different. That should make it easier.

## MAULER MAN

I sure feel different.

(The Announcer goes to the corner to check the ropes, then he goes to ring mike. Mauler Man looks at himself and begins to take on a different character. He lunges at the ropes practicing his growl. This is all done very slowly.)

2 - 2H: Steele defeats Mauler Man, the cycle is complete

Mauler Man  
Announcer  
Rocky Steele  
Referee  
Crowd-actors  
Otto  
Wrestler

(The lights on the audience come up. The crowd-actors begin to comment. The Announcer blows into the ring mike. Music begins. Mauler Man warms-up in his corner. Rocky Steele enters and bounds onto the ring. The Referee enters.

## ANNOUNCER

Good evening ladies and gentlemen. Tonight's match is a one-fall, five-minute time limit, lights out match. The final match of tonight's card. In this corner, weighing in at 236 pounds, from Petoskey, Michigan, inventor of the North Country Crush, Mauler Man Moze, the Polish Sausage Grinder.

(The crowd-actors boo.)

And in this corner, direct from his medal-winning

appearance at the Summer Olympics, where he brought back a silver medal for the red, white, and blue, weighing 195 pounds from Sterling, Colorado, Rocky Steele.

(The crowd-actors cheer. The bell sounds. The Announcer crosses to the ringside table and sits.)

Looks like a good match, fans.

(The wrestlers use the holds described by the Announcer.)

Mauler Man seems to be going at it quite hard. He lets Rocky have it to the face and back of the neck with his closed fist.

(The crowd-actors scream at Mauler Man.)

The ref warns him to keep that palm open. Moze has Steele in a head lock and is applying the finger to the ol' eyeball. Steele breaks out and brings Moze to his knees with a Flying Mare. Boy can this kid wrestle! He has Mauler Man in a Quarter Nelson, now a Half Nelson, a Three Quarter Nelson, and now a Full Nelson! Can you believe that! But Moze grabs Steele's trunks and brings him to the mat. The Polish Sausage Grinder is now trying to strangle Rocky. Will you look at the crowd!

(The crowd-actors begin to throw Coke cups at Mauler Man.)

They are on their feet screaming at Moze to let him go. This just adds fuel to the diabolical Moze's fire. He's the man they love to hate. But miraculously, Rocky breaks free and delivers another Flying Mare to Moze. It has him stunned. He's reeling. He's against the ropes. Rocky wraps Moze in the ropes and he is too dazed to resist. Rocky is now bouncing off the ropes preparing to deliver his Star Spangled Slammer!

(The crowd-actors begin to yell at Rocky to use the Slammer.)

The crowd is yelling for Moze's blood. Rocky Steele devastates him with the Star Spangled Slammer! He wins. The crowd is wild. Steele wins!

(The crowd-actors enter the ring. The Old Lady goes to

Mauler Man's corner and gets the championship belt. She dangles it in front of Mauler Man. He kicks at her. She takes the belt and puts it around Rocky's waist. The crowd-actors cheer. Rocky exits the ring. Otto is waiting for him. The crowd-actors follow. Mauler Man is left in the ropes. A wrestler dressed in street clothes enters the arena as the Announcer and Miss Wrestling exit. He walks over to Mauler Man and puts a towel over his shoulder. He exits. Mauler Man slowly untangles himself. The lights dim a bit. Mauler Man goes to the center of the ring. He slowly looks in the direction that Rocky went out. He makes a slow complete turn around and takes his mask off. He wipes his face with the towel. He jumps from the ring and slowly walks out of the arena. The lights slowly go out.)

CURTAIN

**APPENDIX B**  
**FACULTY CRITIQUES**

CRITIQUE OF IN THIS CORNER/MAULER MAN MOZE

I attended the performance of Mauler Man Moze that was presented on Tuesday, June 4, and all of my comments are based on that performance. My general impression was of competent conception and handling of the play within the limitations of the script and playing facility.

Despite the fact that I personally tend to dislike the technique of placing actors in an audience, I felt that it worked quite well in this case. It was a good directorial solution to the space problem of the Studio Theatre, and it was in keeping with the overall directorial approach to the play. It succeeded better than many such efforts, because the crowd-actors for the most part, did not overdo their participation. One exception to this was Gretchen Shoopman, who tended to overplay just a bit at times and became distracting rather than supportive.

The wrestling sequences were handled quite well with the exception of the "Randy Starr" sequence. This sequence was important as the transition in the fortunes of the protagonist and his own realization of how far

he had gone in abdicating his personal dignity. The scene became more of a burlesque routine for David Payne-Carter, with Robert Rehm as the straight man, than an integrated part of the play. Mauler Man did not appear absurd, as he should have, because Randy Starr was so absurd.

The sequence needed to be played in such a manner that Mauler Man would appear awkward and inept in the face of the agility of the dancer. Instead of the effeminate and frenzied movement that David Payne-Carter used, we should have seen a very controlled and masculine dancer whose superior coordination allows him to easily elude a frustrated wrestler, who becomes more frenzied as the match progresses.

On the whole, the wrestling sequences came off much better than the dialogue scenes that they alternated with. The weakest scenes were those between Mauler Man and Otto. Was Otto supposed to have an accent? He appeared to have one, but it did not come through as a good representation of anything recognizable. I would suggest that a director should not allow an actor to use an accent for a character if he can not come up with an acceptable one in the early stages of the rehearsal.



John Bloodsworth played with an absence of a total muscular responsiveness that made his movements appear stiff and this even reflected in his voice. I suggest that if the director could not find the means to relax and loosen him up more, she should have had him play the scenes without the arm-hand gestures that called added attention to his lack of total muscular involvement.

The character of Otto needed greater variety in attitude and a progression of change from scene to scene. From a man who was encouraging and supportive of the protagonist in the first scene, he needed to develop into an attitude that is unfeeling and threatening in the last. There was enough in the script to allow for this.

Were all the matches taking place in small arenas the size of the Studio Theatre? The characters failed to take on a sense of space beyond the walls of the theatre. Was this on purpose, or was this a directorial oversight? It seemed logical to me that at least some of the matches would have been taking place within rather large halls.

The humor of the play did successfully move across the line to pathos without a jolt. This is

no mean accomplishment. I particularly liked the ending. However, the ending needed some kind of a final action for Mauler Man that punctuates his final abdication of dignity. Since the script did not furnish it, the director should have turned to the playwright for an idea, or come up with one herself.

The director of a new script has a special function of communicating to the playwright her needs that the script may not supply. This should only be done when the director is sure of the intent and overall design of the playwright. How much interaction between the director and playwright went on? Was there a freedom to change and add for the sake of the production?

It was apparent, to this observer that the director had put a lot of time and effort into the production, and that she has instilled enthusiasm into the cast. I enjoyed the production with the exception of a couple of moments when the public address system got a bit loud.

Lester Schilling

Director of Reader's Theatre

**CRITIQUE OF IN THIS CORNER/MAULER MAN MOZE**

The first aspect of Mauler Man Moze which the director must be roundly applauded for, and which hit the audience immediately upon arrival to the theatre, is of course the establishment of an atmosphere. Her meticulousness extended to the last detail: from an extremely well-constructed ring with especially suitable lighting to the folding hard metal chairs which replaced the standard comfortable upholstered chairs of the studio theatre; from the inspired use of popcorn and Coca-Cola vendors in the audience to the program itself, with paper texture and print style carefully coordinated with the play. I appreciated the signs on the wall and, more subtly, the use of the red-white-and-blue motif (along with the rousing national anthem) as an enlargement of the theme to reflect the fact that for a no doubt surprising percentage of the population, wrestling is a firmly ensconced spectator sport, a sturdy piece of Americana.

The play/exhibition expressed itself on two levels: one presentational (the five simulated wrestling matches in which Mauler Man's rise and fall in the ring

is depicted) and the other representational (revealing the psychological progression of Mauler Man through this simulated career as reflected through his relationships with his manager, the announcer, and his peer/rivals.)

Of these two levels I feel that probably the first facet of the play was ultimately the more successful. The initial two matches, preceded by the authentic banalities of the ringside announcer, the obligatory patriotism, and the introduction of Mauler Man, our hero (helpfully identified for us as such by the audience "plants" who functionally became the equivalent of the Greek chorus, guiding our responses as a representation of the "community") rode the crest of this initial excitement. In my opinion the tag match pushed the admitted bizarre quality of televised wrestling about as far as it could go. I do not know how much of the Randy Starr match was described in the playscript, but for me, this unit was clearly out of the wrestling milieu, and no matter how much laughter was elicited from the audience (for dubious reasons) I believe the otherwise careful set-up of the wrestling crowd's world was marred by this blatancy, squeezed even more totally out of the bounds of possibility by

the presence in the ring of a cello player! Due to the pivotal nature of Mauler Man's encounter with Rocky Steele, I found this last match curiously disappointing. The tension seemed absent as we experienced with Mauler Man his first defeat (whether actual or simulated.) Rocky cut such an impressive figure upon entering that his actual performance seemed dull by contrast.

Looking at the second level of the play, the scenes which bracketed the matches, the confrontation of Mauler Man with the important people in his life, I felt an inner dearth in the production/play. (At this point, not examining this new heretofore untried script, I would be uncertain as to where to lay the blame.) The wrestling matches showed us exciting-though-fake physical combat; to balance this I feel the alternating scenes needed equally interesting, non-fake psychological movement. The bulk of this task lay with Otto, the Announcer, and Mauler Man. The Announcer, to me, seemed more aware of who he was; his natural ease in handling dialogue was an asset to the play, especially his adroitness at the so-called "throw-away" line; Otto did not fare so well in carrying his words. But I felt in both characters, despite the

disparity in level of character development, a lack of realized objective. If there did occasionally seem to be a verb, as in one of the Otto scenes, I recall that the verb seemed to stay the same: "to persuade" from beginning to end, without Otto's finding the different facets of persuasion which might have been employed throughout in order to give the scene variety and interest.

Mauler Man, our key figure, drew empathy from me, but the ultimate demise of his career (or at least as he wanted it to be) left no real impact on me. He is, like Willie Loman, a "little man" and ultimately ineffectual in the face of his obstacles. With Willie, however, there was a struggle to win, even up to his final exit, while the role/performance of Mauler Man was characterized largely by a passivity that denied him the focus he deserved. I commend the actor on his decorum, his sincerity, and his concentration. Finally, though, these attributes were not enough. By electing to play each of the aforementioned scenes in the ring itself, I feel that the director imposed severe handicaps upon herself in terms of focus and intensity. There was no place to sit except on the ropes or on the floor, so that the compositions retained a sameness of level that eventually grew dull. With no real obstacles

to play through/over/around the director ultimately resorted to climactic, face-to-face actor positions repeatedly, thus nullifying the badly needed tension created when two persons reach out for each other. The visual excitement of the matches filled the ring with swirling color and frenzy; by contrast, the "talk scenes" were dull because the psychological movement could not hope to fill such a large expanse of space.

A comment on the play itself: I think the idea is a viable one which, re-thought, might well be intensified and rewritten to greater effect. Perhaps the matches could stay fairly intact (with the possible exception of the last two) but the crux of the play lies ultimately in the crisis within Mauler Man. Perhaps the play strives to do too much in too short a time. I felt a serious flaw in that there was no obvious technique to simulate time passage, and it is this progression of time that builds and kills the man's career. In some of the discussion over Mauler Man's transition to the "hippie" image-after an earlier television interview in which he identified himself as an absolute rightist, I received the impression that a wrestler's success or failure is to some extent dependent upon the temperature of the times, the public's

need for heroes or, by contrast, anti-heroes. If this impression is indeed correct, perhaps in the transitions from wrestling to talk, a multi-media approach might be taken via a newsreel (a la Neil Simon's Prisoner Of Second Avenue) in which the progression or regression of socio-economic and political attitudes, the loosening and tightening of religious and moral fibers, and, in particular, the status of the "hero" in American society is depicted epic-style as a general background for the very specific world of this play.

Rodney H. Eatman

Director and Acting Coach



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