

Chyna: The 9th Wonder of the World

IN REMEMBRANCE**RAYAAN IBTESHAM CHOWDHURY**

Joanie Laurer aka "Chyna" made her debut at a time when pro wrestling was going through its most iconic change. To compete with WCW, Vince McMahon's WWE (erstwhile WWF) introduced edgier content, creating storylines with more violent and adult plots. Chyna fit into it from day one, creating a niche for herself in a male dominated world. She was not the meek ring-side valet, nor was she a damsel in distress – Chyna was a star in her own right, rubbing shoulders with all the big boys. The term "breaking barriers" is used a lot in tributes but what Chyna did was truly the embodiment of that.

She was born on December 27, 1969. She rose to prominence in independent body building circuits and as a glamour model but finally found her place in the WWF where she was termed the "9th Wonder of the World".

Chyna made her breakthrough in 1997, initially being cast as Triple H's bodyguard. Triple H and Shawn Michaels had found her in the indie scene and, impressed by her physique, urged Vince McMahon to bring her in. McMahon himself was initially sceptical, thinking that such a "masculine" woman would never win over the crowd. But Michaels and Triple H remained incessant and finally got their way.

Chyna was an instant hit. Her presence, miles apart from anything the fans had seen with female wrestlers up to that point, sent

shockwaves through the pro wrestling world. As D-Generation X (or DX) gained steam and Attitude Era took off, the sight of Chyna taking on male wrestlers and interfering in Triple H's matches became a novelty. Her signature "hit to the groin" became a staple of the Attitude Era.

After Shawn Michael's back injury, the new DX spearheaded by Triple H put her into a more prominent role and she stepped out of her bodyguard persona to become more of a central character. During that time, she became the first female to appear in the Royal Rumble match in 1999 and even held the Intercontinental Title. At a time when female wrestlers were constantly objectified and used as eye candy, Chyna created a different image of what a female wrestler can be.

After DX, she enjoyed a small stint in an on-screen romance with Eddie Guerrero that also became popular. But her time in the industry would end soon after.

Her career afterwards was marred by controversy. People within the

WWE objected to her choice of careers after leaving and she went through several well documented episodes of drug problems. She also had a very public row with Stephanie McMahon, daughter of Vince McMahon, and more importantly, wife of her former boyfriend Triple H. All of this seemed to get in the way of Chyna's (extremely well deserved) Hall of Fame induction.

Yet all of those things are ultimately inconsequential given the impact that she had in the world of pro wrestling. It was nearly 16 years after her retirement that a new generation of female wrestlers would revive the "Divas Division" as something other than eye candy. That's how important Chyna was. She was integral to the "attitude" of the Attitude Era.

The 9th Wonder of the World will truly never be replaced.

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How to Network Loudly

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Networking is important. It can help you build the right connections with the right people. That's why someone who aspires to attain a job, without using conventional means, dedicatedly runs after important people to network with them. However, sometimes your efforts might end up in vain as the person you want to network with might not notice you at all.

Listed below are a few pointers you might find helpful to avoid feeling like all your stalking didn't amount to anything.

Jhorer beg e like

The first thing you need to do is be active on social media 24/7. Send everyone from your school/university friend requests. And if a senior sends you one, assume that the senior is stalking because you are the most important person in the universe. Once your friend requests are accepted, post on their walls to show people that you know them very well. Show your classmates that you're the potential face of your class. The posts can start with 'TBH' (To be honest) and you can go on writing about how Bobby Deol and this person look alike (thanks to your

stalking skills). Be the first one to hit the like button on whatever your seniors post. When you meet them, ask them where they got the T-shirt they wore on Wednesday from. It shows that you give their posts the attention they deserve. And it's totally, definitely not creepy.

Be the selfie lord

One way to let people know they are important is by taking selfies with them. Always be ready with your phone. You can also request your friends to take pictures with their DSLRs. But your work doesn't end here. Post the selfie instantly on Instagram and Facebook with a caption that highlights how highly you hold the person you took the picture with. It can be something like #bestsenioreva, even if you've known them for just over 5 minutes. If someone refuses to take a selfie with you, don't get disheartened. You can always post your own selfies reminding people of your existence. Do it at 9 p.m. to get the highest amount of likes. Don't worry about people who unfollow you; they don't deserve to behold your glorious duckface anyway.

Feel free to embarrass yourself

To gain something, you need to lose

something. Always speak your heart out. A self deprecating sense of humour always helps lighten the mood. Try telling your seniors about how you used to wet the bed every night till you were 10. Making them laugh or laughing at their horrible jokes is also a sign of your patience. While you do so, don't hesitate to tell them about your dream to conquer their hearts.

Become the gossip king/queen

All you need to do is not have a life and update yourself with others' personal lives. Eavesdrop when people walk by, stalk the exes of your seniors, find out what they were like in the early years,

and go through the comments under all the posts you see. Be sure to leak some info once in a while about your classmates because your popularity is all that matters. Try telling them about which guys of your class have a crush on that one *senior apu*. You will score a lot of brownie points. BIG TIME.

You, my friend, are all set to go.

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