The boxing world was on its feet that night, that May 7th evening in Las Vegas.

Boxing fans anywhere and everywhere fell in love with a pair of warriors, enjoying every minute, every second of that brutal tango between Diego Corrales and Jose Luis Castillo. Fight of the year, fight of the decade ... simply a special brawl.

But not everyone could relish in the violent exchanges. In fact, one person had a hard time watching at all.

While everyone was hypnotized by that torrid fist-to-face pace in that brightly lit Vegas ring, was it tough for that one person to even watch?

“Very,” Michelle Corrales said.

Diego Corrales’ wife must have felt as if she were holding her breath for nearly 30 minutes — three agonizing minutes at a time.

“It was an emotional roller coaster,” she said. “But he continued to look at me and give me eye contact and wink at me and let me know he was OK. I felt like he could take Castillo’s best punch. And he kept moving. It was a different game plan than from what I thought he was going to do. But as long as he kept reassuring me he was OK ... I was still on pins and needles. I still had tears in my eyes. I was still emotional. But I was OK.”

Of course, it did not look as if Corrales would be OK when Castillo dropped him twice in the 10th round. But, in a script right out of Tinseltown, Corrales got off the canvas and dropped and stopped Castillo.

Corrales is making the rounds now — handshaking and autograph-signing and picture-taking rounds, not the kind of rounds that give you a headache.

“El Paso’s the first (stop),” Corrales said. “Albuquerque for sure. I’m heading to Mexico City for four or five days. Keep moving. The fans deserve something back.

“I’m completely recovered from the fight,” Corrales said. “I’ve been recovered for quite some time now.”

That fight was not an easy fight for anyone to recover from — not even the fans. It was boxing at its best. Corrales and Castillo got A+ marks from every fan for their war on that spring evening in the desert.

“What can I say about Castillo,” Corrales said, “other than he’s awesome. I’m a fan of his forever. It’s what he’s done and what he showed in that fight. It’s a great honor to be part of a

fight of that magnitude."

It was a fight, in fact, that catapulted Castillo and Corrales, zooming them from good fighters and champions into legendary status.

"It's what everybody dreams about," Corrales said. "Normally, you spend your entire career building it. We did it in one show. The enormity of it and how fast it happened was a shock. My thing is to have as much fun with it as I can. I'm young. I have so much career left. Have fun with it and enjoy the ride right now."

Corrales has come so far in the past few years. He rode a 33-0 record into that first fight with Floyd Mayweather way back in January, 2001. His corner tossed in the towel in the 10th round after he had been dropped a fifth time. He was desperately behind on the scorecards, trailing 90-79, 90-78 and 89-78. He did not fight again for two years, spending just over a year in jail for domestic abuse.

He dropped a fight to Joel Casamayor (stopped due to two cuts in his mouth) on the comeback trail. But he has journeyed on. He has soared to the top. He is 27, he is 40-2 (33) and he is on top of the 135-pound world. He has come all they way back. Is there a magic moment in his career, a time when he is old and working the rocking chair instead of the speed bag, that he can look back on with a special pride? Is there a beautiful memory?

"Right now," Corrales said. "Because of all the things that have gone on in my life, to be able to come back and show our youth that no matter what life throws at you, you can still take control of it and get it all back and take it back. For that reason, right now signifies so much to me."

And then there is that other creature, the future. Will there be a Corrales-Castillo 2?

"Honestly, right now, me and Jose Luis Castillo need to do this again," he said. "If there's nothing else, he has earned so much respect from me I feel the urge and desire to get back in there and do it again.

"Oh, and here's the funny thing," Corrales added. "He (Castillo) would do it in a heartbeat."

Every fighter carries his own special wish list, a ledger that has more than just a single name scribbled in it. Corrales is certainly no different.

"Any fan who watched my career knows that I have on my resume some of the best names," Corrales said. "You've never seen me duck anybody. And when the going got tough, I kept on rolling. I think that's one of the small parts of my career."

And what about another duel with Mayweather?

"Of course. That's never far from my mind. I don't think he saw the best of me. I think the world knows he didn't see the best of me. Until he sees the Diego at 100 percent, he'll never get the credit that he feels he deserves."

And Ricky Hatton?

“First off, with a champion like (Kostya) Tszyu, I can’t see where quitting ever should come up. It should never even cross your mind. I don’t think how he can even think of that. But Ricky Hatton ... what an awesome performance! He showed a lot of heart. Step up in there and charge the guy head on and crowd him. He was right. Crowd Tszyu. He (Tszyu) didn’t know what to do. He can't punch inside. But that was a real gutsy move, willing to go crowd a guy like Tszyu and get inside like that. It was a good plan.”

Anyone else?

“I’d love to see Erik Morales before I leave this division. I had said a few things. He guaranteed there was no way I would beat his good friend Castillo. But if somehow I found a way to beat Castillo, he’d move up and fight me. Of course, that hasn’t materialized yet. So I wonder if he really meant what he said or if he’s a little intimidated stepping in here and playing with the big dog.”

But, no matter who is on that list, there has to be only one name at the top ... the name that will make the fight every boxing fan wants to watch again. And again.

“Castillo is on my list. One thing about a historic fight: there always has to be a rematch to that epic battle. The only way you encore that is by doing it again.”

Every fight fan will ante up to see that rematch. If you love the sport, you have to see that one again. Everyone. Well, almost everyone.

“We’ve had discussions regarding this (his tenure in the sport),” Michelle Corrales said. “Probably the next two, three years. So we’ll see. He has this hit list; list of fights he’d like to see happen. If he can accomplish those fights, he should retire right on target.”

In the meantime, Corrales will continue to relish his well earned moment in the sun.

Handshakes. Autographs. Pictures. Smiles. And more smiles.

He has certainly earned it.

One day soon, though, he and Castillo will leave their locker rooms and make that walk toward another special spotlight. Michelle Corrales will be looking for eye contact, a wink — and holding her breath.

The rest of the fight world will be on their feet, mesmerized. Again.