

KUNG FU KIDS

by

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And

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Final Draft

EXT. BANK OF A RIVER - ANCIENT CHINA - DAY

A landscape as serene as a meditative scroll painting. A gentle river reflects a perfect blue sky. At the river's edge, A BLACK SALAMANDER skitters across a rock. A RED LOTUS BLOSSOM floats by. A LARGE TORTOISE ambles along the riverbank. Suddenly...

A STRONG WIND rises. DARK CLOUDS shadow the land. A LARGE ARMY OF BLACK SALAMANDER FORCES advance on A SMALL FORCE OF RED LOTUS SOLDIERS. The TORTOISE slips into the water.

The TWO ARMIES clash. Against the sound of CLANGING SWORDS and CRIES OF PAIN we hear A WOMAN'S VOICE...

VOICEOVER

Hundreds of years ago, in the land  
of our ancestors, the Red Lotus  
people fought to protect their land  
from cruel invaders, the army of  
the Black Salamander.

Upriver, A BAND OF BATTLE-WEARY RED LOTUS SOLDIERS fill their waterskins and warm themselves by a fire. A RED LOTUS WARRIOR scratches a battle plan into the mud with a stick. He stops, sensing DANGER.

RED LOTUS WARRIOR

We have company.

SHAPES OF BLACK SALAMANDER ENEMY FIGHTERS dart through the trees around the camp. Dozens of them.

SOLDIER

We must flee!

RED LOTUS WARRIOR

No! We stand and we fight! We  
never abandon our home!

SOLDIER

But we're not as strong as you.  
You have a chance. We will be  
killed.

The Red Lotus bends his stick, snapping it in two. Then he grabs ten sticks and bundles them together. When he tries to break the bundle, he can't. He hands each man a stick.

RED LOTUS WARRIOR

We are only as good as each other.  
There can be great strength in  
small numbers.

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The soldiers toss their sticks into the fire. The flames build and the fire grows. Unsheathing their swords, the soldiers prepare to fight...and possibly to die.

ENEMY SOLDIERS charge from the trees with EAR SPLITTING BATTLE CRIES. An armored BLACK SALAMANDER WARRIOR springs panther-like at the Red Lotus Warrior. With DAZZLING RED LOTUS KUNG FU, the Red Lotus Warrior attacks his enemy.

The TWO WARRIORS are hurled into the fire by the force of their fighting. SPARKS FILL THE SCREEN AS WE FADE TO:

While the battle rages, the dying Red Lotus offers his water skin to the mortally wounded Black Salamander.

RED LOTUS WARRIOR (CONT'D)  
 Drink. We are both dying.

The battlefield BLURS and SHIMMERS. In the fevered grip of death, the Red Lotus hallucinates a TALKING TORTOISE.

TORTOISE  
 Great Red Lotus Warrior, I have long observed your virtues -- courage, loyalty, patience, and humility. But now, by showing compassion to your ancient rival, you alone embody all five sacred virtues of the Xinxu Mountain.

The PATTERN OF LINES AND CRACKS on the Tortoise's SHELL begin to melt and swirl into CHINESE IDEOGRAMS.

TORTOISE (CONT'D)  
 Record what you see on my back and receive the secret of invincible kung fu power. The secret will save your life, but you must then promise to use your life in service of the Five Virtues.

The Red Lotus Warrior nods, accepting the terms. He uses his finger to copy the ideograms onto his own TUNIC.

TORTOISE (CONT'D)  
 Guard it well. Should it fall into lesser hands, the power can be used to serve evil.

The Red Lotus, covered with sacred text, STANDS. In a glorious display of INVINCIBLE KUNG FU, he defeats waves of Black Salamanders against the setting fireball of the sun.

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VOICEOVER

The Red Lotus became the ruler of the land. With the tunic as the power behind the throne, the kingdom was filled with happiness and laughter.

By A RED LOTUS TEMPLE, the Warrior holds his SMALL SON in his arms, and surveys his prosperous kingdom. His PEOPLE FLY KITES. But while they laugh, the Warrior worries.

VOICEOVER (CONT'D)

But the new ruler could never rest. As the Tortoise warned, evil hands were always grabbing for the power.

In a furious COLLAGE, the Warrior fights away the HANDS of would-be usurpers, grasping for the tunic on his body.

VOICEOVER (CONT'D)

And then one night...

A DARK FIGURE slips into a palace chamber and snatches the boy from his bed. It's the BLACK SALAMANDER WARRIOR.

VOICEOVER (CONT'D)

...An Evil Warrior found invincible power's only vulnerability...

The Black Salamander dangles the SON over an ocean cliff.

VOICEOVER (CONT'D)

...the heart.

The Red Lotus relinquishes his tunic for his son. But as the Salamander's hand seizes it, the boy bites his hand. The tunic is fumbled; the Red Lotus retrieves it. Rather than suffer defeat, the evil one jumps into the sea below.

The Red Lotus finds his son trying to pull the tunic onto his tiny body. (He wants it too!) The Warrior tugs it away and regards the garment with grave concern.

VOICEOVER (CONT'D)

The Warrior King realized the gift of invincibility could also be a curse.

EXT. RIVERBANK - NIGHT

THE RED LOTUS WARRIOR hurls the tunic into the river. As it flies, a whirling vortex forms and widens. The TUNIC falls into the water mouth and the river swallows it up.

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The whirlpool subsides, rippling into the amazing pattern of the YIN YANG SYMBOL. Two fish leap out. A BLACK FISH WITH A WHITE EYE conjoins mid-air with a WHITE FISH WITH A BLACK EYE. YIN YANG.

Suddenly, the Warrior sees that the TORTOISE is by his side and has witnessed all. He instantly regrets his impulsive action. He's lost his burden, but also his purpose.

RED LOTUS WARRIOR  
Is it gone forever, Tortoise?

TORTOISE  
The last Red Lotus will have one chance to reclaim it. The tunic will summon him with a sign.

RED LOTUS WARRIOR  
What is the sign?

TORTOISE  
A boy without a father.

The Warrior looks up. THE STARS twinkle and arc, CLICKING into a celestial formation. A CONSTELLATION OF A LOTUS FLOWER. The sky is alive with shooting stars. When he looks down, the Tortoise is gone. The Warrior walks away.

VOICEOVER  
The Warrior disappeared, never to be seen again. From that point on, the Red Lotus people faded away.

A DARK FIGURE appears and jumps into the river. Thrusting his hands into the water, he flails and thrashes in vain for the tunic. It's the Black Salamander.

VOICEOVER (CONT'D)  
The Black Salamander, their evil deeds now unchecked, grew and flourished. But without the tunic, their power would never be absolute.

CLOSE ON: A WOMAN'S HAND pulls A BRONZE ROD WITH A RED HOT TIP from a fire and fits it into a small hole notched into a TURTLE SHELL. The rod flames against the shell oracle.

VOICEOVER (CONT'D)  
To find the tunic, you must *first* find the *last* Red Lotus...

INT. MODERN LOFT - SAN FRANCISCO - NIGHT - PRESENT DAY

A stylish 60 year old Chinese woman, the DIVINER, pokes at the shell in a fireplace. Two Philippe Starck graphite chopstick hair utensils rise from her head. She speaks and we recognize the voice of the Narrator.

DIVINER

...You have spent a bundle looking for him but he continues to slip through your fingers. Now time is running out...

She looks up at her Black Salamander client, A SLEEK ASIAN MAN. A GRAPHIC WAFFLE IRON SCAR covers half his face. A sharp CRAAAACK as intense heat fractures the shell.

DIVINER (CONT'D)

Ah! The turtle, the most silent of creatures speaks...

She drags the shell closer and "reads" the cracks.

DIVINER (CONT'D)

He's very close. So close you've seen him!

WAFFLEHEAD

Chinatown! Give me his name!

DIVINER

This isn't a phone book. A person can hide his name but not his nature. I see...he's a fighter... no, a teacher, wait...a fighter!

WAFFLEHEAD

He's a kung fu master! Of course.

Wafflehead shares a surprised look with his pudgy minion, GOON DIP, and then regards the Diviner with an evil smirk.

WAFFLEHEAD (CONT'D)

You're good...so good I bet you know what I'm thinking right now.

The Diviner reads his thoughts. Her smug expression turns terrified as she realizes he's just decided to kill her.

DIVINER

Don't! His name will come to me!

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WAFFLEHEAD

Then you could warn him. And no one must know of our plans!

The Diviner seizes the red hot branding stick from the fire and slices it through the air with deadly efficiency.

WAFFLEHEAD (CONT'D)

You'll have to do better than that.

Grinning savagely, Wafflehead grabs the hot rod with a bare hand, jabs it into the Diviner's chest and "casts" her into the lap of a big fat Buddha statue.

DIVINER

There's...one other...thing...

But she croaks. DING DONG. Goon Dip and Wafflehead look out the window. A DIM SUM DELIVERY BOY waits at the door.

DELIVERY BOY

Delivery! Seventeen sixty!

Wafflehead grabs money from the Diviner's purse and slips it through the mail slot.

WAFFLEHEAD

(imitating Diviner)

I'm sorry, I'm not dressed. Keep the change!

The Delivery boy pedals off. Goon Dip grabs the food and begins to open the cartons. Nothing but fortune cookies.

GOON DIP

Hey, where's the food? This is just cookies! Fortune cookies up the yin yang!

Wafflehead throws the Yellow Pages at him.

WAFFLEHEAD

Go to "D" for dojo.

GOON DIP

Chinatown is crawling with kung fu masters. How will we know him?

WAFFLEHEAD

A giraffe can't hide its neck. A zebra can't hide its stripes. And a Red Lotus can't hide his kung fu.

Wafflehead's SLAMS a cookie open and reads the fortune.

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WAFFLEHEAD (CONT'D)

'As I was saying, Red Lotus rules!'

They crack open every cookie. They all say the same thing. Wafflehead glares at the dead diviner.

WAFFLEHEAD (CONT'D)

I killed her too soon! She knew more than she told us!

Wafflehead grabs a smashed lamp and fits the "live" prongs around the Diviner's BIG TOE. After a tiny jolt she rises like the Bride of Frankenstein. Blue light sizzles between the chopsticks in her hair. Re-animated, she speaks.

DIVINER

I see the writing on the walls of the caves of Xinxu. The last Red Lotus rises like a sleeping tiger. He trains his army of warriors to defeat you. They grow stronger by the hour...

INT. BAMBOO TIGER DOJO - CHINATOWN - DAY

The army of warriors growing stronger by the hour are FOUR LITTLE KIDS practicing an aggressive kung fu kata. Their teacher, OLD MASTER, radiates a strong dramatic presence as he coaches. But the strict disciplinarian outside hides a soft tofu center inside.

OLD MASTER

Harder! Faster! Give of yourself! Don't leave the form! Do it again!

A LITTLE KID rips off his safety pads and throws them down.

LITTLE KID

I QUIT! This is not the kung fu I signed up for! I thought we'd be fighting on walls and ceilings or leaping over trees and rooftops. But all we ever do is practice!

OLD MASTER

In Chinese, "kung fu" means "hard work." Practice now, be Jackie Chan later. Be Jackie Chan now, be in hospital later.

LITTLE KID

But I want to kick some butt!

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OLD MASTER  
Tantrum Fu not allowed. Three  
hundred knuckle push-ups, please.

He points to the floor.

LITTLE KID  
You're freaking me out.

BERNIE FONG, an Asian/Jewish little surfer dude, steps in.

BERNIE  
Dude, where's your warrior spirit?

LITTLE KID  
This dojo is TOO HARD and TOO  
BORING! You said it yourself,  
Prudence.

He jabs a finger at PRUDENCE WEBB, a worldly sugar-coated tomboy. Then he turns on DJ BOSSIDY, a boy scout going for his kung fu badge.

LITTLE KID (CONT'D)  
So did you, DJ, you're just too  
scared to admit it! And we're not  
warriors, Bernie, we're kids!  
(shaking his head)  
Dweebs. I'm a vapor.

He storms out of the dojo. Old Master faces his three remaining students, who wilt under his hard gaze.

OLD MASTER  
I teach old school kung fu! Hard  
work! Practice! Repetition!  
(vulnerable)  
Am I boring, students?

PRUDENCE, DJ & BERNIE  
Noooooo! Totally not! No way!

PRUDENCE  
You're great, Old Master, but *some*  
*people* are superficial and they  
like a little...magic...mixed in  
with their lessons.

OLD MASTER  
Magic is the refuge of the lazy!

BERNIE  
It's not *us*, but other kids want a  
little flash with their hard work.

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OLD MASTER

Las Vegas Fu! Movie fu! That's  
Fake Fu! Not our kind of fu.

DJ

No one wants to join this dojo.  
Word's out that training with you  
is an all-you-can-sweat buffet.

OLD MASTER

Good! This weekend at the Chop  
Sucky Nationals we'll show everyone  
that old school hard work pays off!

DJ realizes there's a big problem in their little lives.

DJ

Now we can't go to the tournament!

PRUDENCE

He's right! A dojo can't compete  
without four on a team! That's the  
rules!

BERNIE

If we don't compete who will behold  
our awesome power?

Old Master makes a calming gesture with his hands.

OLD MASTER

We all need to relax and have  
faith. The warrior we're looking  
for is looking for us.

EXT. OAKLAND STREET - DAY

JULIAN HUBBLE, 10, a contemporary Huck Finn, runs a  
sidewalk three card monte game like a pro. His mark is a  
TOUGH TEENAGER and his bad-ass CHOLLA GIRLFRIEND.

JULIAN

...Like I said, pick the red. The  
black is wack but the red bakes  
your bread. Easy money...

The Teenager points to a card. Julian taps the card in the  
middle.

JULIAN (CONT'D)

I think you want this one, friend.

TOUGH TEENAGER

Don't work me, punk. That one.

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Julian turns the card. It's a black Jack. A loser. He flips the middle card. It's the winner. Red.

JULIAN

Dude, I liked you! So I gave it to you! What's wrong with you?

Julian pockets his twenty. The Cholla Girlfriend busts in.

CHOLLA GIRLFRIEND

He's messin' with yo' psychology!  
Now get our money back!

Suddenly, the crowd is jostled by A COUPLE OF COPS. Julian tries to run but one of them grabs him by the collar.

COP #1

Okay, pack it up. This carney's foldin'!!!

(to Julian)

You. Let's see some ID.

JULIAN

I'm a kid. What kind of ID could I possibly have?

COP #2

What's your name, smart lip?

Facing the cop uniform ties Julian's golden tongue. Cop #1 pats down Julian's pockets and fishes out a wallet. He reads the name on the license.

COP #1

Richard Glatzer?

TOUGH TEENAGER

Yo! I'm Richie. IS THAT MY WALLET?

JULIAN

Does the word "duh" mean anything to you?

TOUGH TEENAGER

I thought you liked me!

The Cholla Girlfriend spots an upside down name off a skateboard propped up against the curb.

CHOLLA GIRLFRIEND

Julian Hubble! That's his name!  
Unless he stole this too!

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COP #1

*Julian Hubble?* As in *detective*  
Julian Hubble?

COP #2

You mean criminal Julian Hubble...

Cop #1 gestures for Cop #2 to can it. But he can't.

COP #2 (CONT'D)

Like father, like son. A chip off  
the old bad block.

JULIAN

You've insulted my father two  
times! You want to go for three?

Julian vaults over the cops with an AMAZING RED LOTUS KUNG FU MOVE. Landing with the precision of a grasshopper, he kick-flips his skateboard, and takes off like a shot. The cops take off after him.

SKATEBOARD/KUNG FU COMBO CHASE SEQUENCE

Julian zips through VENDORS and PEDESTRIANS like a power mower through grass, the cops on his tail.

-- He spins a display ROLLING RACK OF CLOTHES sideways to block the PURSUING COPS.

-- FIVE TOY REMOTE CONTROL CARS zip around on the sidewalk. Julian knocks into the VENDOR, the remote goes flying. The cops are slowed down, tripping over the WHIZZING TOY CARS.

-- Julian clips a SPARKLETT'S GUY, knocking the JUGS OF WATER balanced on his shoulders to the pavement. They roll down the hill. PEDESTRIANS scatter.

-- Julian flies into an intersection. A BIKE MESSENGER swerves wildly to avoid him and SLAMS into a PIZZA DELIVERY GUY. PIZZAS go flying. A symphony of SCREECHING BRAKES.

INSIDE A CAR

Goon Dip is behind the wheel when a BIG FAT PIZZA lands SPLAT on the windshield. Goon Dip turns on the wipers. They smear the pizza over to Wafflehead's side.

ON THE STREET

The Pizza Delivery Guy has a cow.

PIZZA GUY

HEY, ASS WIPE!

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SPARKLETT'S GUY

My water broke!

BIKE MESSENGER

It's his fault!

Julian barrels down a steep hill at MACH SPEED! TWO GUYS CARRYING A COUCH exit a building right in front of him. The skateboard goes under it, Julian flips over it, nails his landing and then SLAMS into a LARGE FED EX WOMAN who crashes into A NEWS STAND. Fed Ex envelopes and newspapers flutter as Julian gets away.

NEWSTAND GUY

That little jerk!

BIKE MESSENGER

There's a line forming to the left!

The News Stand Guy and the Large Fed Ex Woman join the POSSE OF PURSUERS. The cops are way way way back.

Julian goes down another street and into the path of A VOLKSWAGEN BEETLE! His skateboard swoops onto the Bug like it was a half-pipe ramp, catches big air, and lands squarely. Ahead, smooth sailing. Julian relaxes.

INT. KISS THE SKY KITE SHOP - DAY

The SOUND OF FOOTSTEPS barrelling down steps. Behind a worktable, a door flies open. Prudence, Bernie, and DJ plunge into the shop from the dojo upstairs.

DJ

How do we look for someone who's looking for us? Do we stand still?

PRUDENCE

Doing nothing is not an option. We only have two days!

Prudence pushes ahead of them and FLINGS the door open.

BERNIE

Wait up! We can't run out and get just anybody. I don't want some loser on our team!

DJ

Why? We had one before.

All the kids RUSH OUT...

EXT. STREET

...and CRASH INTO JULIAN! Julian's skateboard shoots out from under him and he's kicked back into a pile of crates.

The Posse rounds the street corner.

PIZZA GUY

There he is!

Julian tries to run but the Bike Messenger cuts him off and attacks him with a HIGH-SPINNING KARATE KICK.

JULIAN

Mongolian Grasshopper Chop!

Julian dispatches the Bike Messenger with a RED LOTUS HAND STRIKE. The PIZZA GUY throws several TAE KWON DO PUNCHES.

JULIAN (CONT'D)

Fang of the Secret Pounce!

Julian flips the Pizza Guy into a bank of garbage. The SPARKLETT'S GUY charges Julian with SUPERFAST WU SHU KICKS.

JULIAN (CONT'D)

Roaring Lightning Thrust!

The KIDS GAPE as Julian leaps and swings around a street sign and sidekicks the Sparklett's Guy.

THE COPS arrive and pull Julian down from the pole.

COP #1

Alright, Julian Hubble! That's enough for one day!

The cops lead Julian to A PATROL CAR.

DJ

Prudence, quick, go tell them who you are! Get him off!

BERNIE

They're taking him! Do something!

Prudence plunges into the arrest and starts talking off the top of her head.

PRUDENCE

Officers! Wait! Please wait! I can see why you want to arrest him!  
(looking around)  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

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PRUDENCE (CONT'D)

I think we've got some misdemeanors here, I see Class A and Class B, maybe a malicious mischief, I hope not, for his sake, but let's not forget, he *is* a youthful offender!  
(off their looks)

I learn all this stuff from my father...*Michael Webb*...anyway, what we need is for...um...Julian to come back to the dojo as soon--

COP #1

Whoa, slow down. What's your name?

PRUDENCE

Prudence Webb. You probably know my father. The chief of police?

They do. They become less stern, more accommodating.

COP #2

And you're in the same dojo with Julian here?

DJ

We have a tournament coming up and if he's not on our team, we'll lose! We really need him, Officer!

PRUDENCE

(sincerely)  
I hope you can find it in your hearts to let him off, just once?

COP #1

Look, kids, it's not up to us.  
(gesturing)  
We've got a lot of unhappy people here...

PURSUER POSSE

I need new bike tires! That was five pizzas plus tips! Newspapers! Ten liters plus deposit!

DJ spies Julian slipping a wad of card hustling profits from his jeans to his parka. DJ snatches the money and waves it in the air.

DJ

All covered! No worries!

Julian GULPS as he watches while DJ and Bernie dole out his dough to his victims. Cop #1 bends down to Prudence.

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COP #1  
Where's your dojo?

Prudence points to the floor above the kite shop.

COP #1 (CONT'D)  
(to Cop #2)  
Yeah, I know that old guy. We can  
send the kid back there.  
(to Julian)  
Alright, we're gonna let you go.  
But consider this a real warning.

PRUDENCE  
Thanks, Officers! Should I say hi  
to my father for you?

They look at each other. They're not sure.

COP #1  
Nah, that's okay. Why don't we  
keep this just between us?

EXT. KISS THE SKY KITE SHOP - DAY

A KUNG FU WARRIOR is painted on the glass door. CHINESE  
LETTERING READS: BAMBOO TIGER DOJO UPSTAIRS! Prudence  
flings it open. Bernie, DJ, and Julian follow her inside.

INT. KISS THE SKY KITE SHOP - DAY

The minute the door is closed, Julian slaps DJ on the back  
and doubles over with laughter.

JULIAN  
Whoa hoo! Did you see the looks on  
the faces of those cops? Where's a  
camera when you need it.  
(to Prudence)  
You were awesome. Thanks for lying  
for me.

PRUDENCE  
Who's lying? It's payback time.  
We did you a major solid. Now you  
have to do us one.

Julian's smirk slides off his face. She's serious.

JULIAN  
You mean that kung fu tournament  
stuff was for real?

Bernie is surprised that Julian is surprised.

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BERNIE

Why else would we obstruct justice?

JULIAN

So that's your scam. Here's how I see it. I don't owe you anything 'cuz I didn't ask for anything. And I wouldn't join a team for all the tea in China. But here's what I will do...

He whips out another wad of cash and peels a few bills off.

JULIAN (CONT'D)

Here. Go get some new mats for your kung fu classes or something.

Prudence steps out of the shop and WHISTLES SHARPLY.

PRUDENCE

Officers! You forgot something!

Julian looks out the window. The Cops are on their way back. Julian waves his wad.

JULIAN

You want more cake, just say so, name your price!

The kids remain silent. They've already named it. The cops arrive. Julian has to decide. Team or cops.

JULIAN (CONT'D)

I forgot to say 'sorry' for all the trouble I caused.

Cop #1 pats Julian's shoulder.

COP #1

Just as long as we don't have to come here again.

BERNIE

That's up to him.

Julian tries to look sheepish and contrite but the deal is clear. Julian plays ball or the kids calls the cops.

When the cops leave, Prudence grabs Julian's skateboard and holds it high over her head. Julian lunges for it.

JULIAN

Hey!

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CONTINUED: (2)

PRUDENCE

Insurance. To make sure you show  
up tomorrow for practice.

Prudence points upstairs. Julian is outraged.

DJ

Don't even get into it with her.

INT. BLACK SALAMANDER SECRET HEADQUARTERS - NIGHT

Goon Dip crumples up pages of "d for dojo" yellow pages and  
tosses them. They've struck out. Wafflehead is on the  
phone. The voice on the other end IS SCREAMING.

VOICE

WHERE IS HE?!?

WAFFLEHEAD

Um, we're closing in on him.

INTERCUT WITH:

EXT. PAGODA PALACE - ALLUSIA - DAY

Surrounded by jungle and mountains, THE PAGODA PALACE is an  
incredible po-mo combo of glass and steel modernism and  
traditional swooping roof pagoda style.

INT. PAGODA PALACE PRIVATE TRAINING DOJO - ALLUSIA - DAY

The voice belongs to LO FAT, a caftan-wearing regent/  
glorified nanny and frustrated megalomaniac. His fingers  
gleam with JEWELLED RINGS. Behind him, an Asian boy,  
KAKAO, 11, practices kung fu strikes with a WOODEN DUMMY.

LO FAT

I'm tired of your excuses! Every  
day it's a different story.  
Wafflehead, what is your job?

WAFFLEHEAD

To find the last Red Lotus and  
bring him to you alive.

In the background, Kakao folds his arms impatiently.

KAKAO

Get off the phone! I'm waiting for  
a call!

LO FAT

In a minute, Your Highness.  
(hissing into phone)

(MORE)

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LO FAT(CONT'D)

If I'm not wearing the tunic by the time Prince Kakao becomes King Kakao, instead of eating at Panda Express, you'll be working there! Put Goon Dip on the phone.

Wafflehead tosses the phone to Goon Dip. Goon Dip holds it to his ear. A nervous SQUEAK issues from his mouth.

LO FAT (CONT'D)

If you don't find the Red Lotus in three days, kill Wafflehead. Put Wafflehead on.

Goon Dip lobs the phone back to Wafflehead.

LO FAT (CONT'D)

If you don't find the Red Lotus in three days, kill Goon Dip.

KAKAO

(on an extension)

Lo Fat, are you deaf or stupid? I said GET OFF THE PHONE!

LO FAT

Yes, Your Majesty, right away--

CLICK. Wafflehead stares at the dead line.

GOON DIP

Boss, what'd he say to you?

WAFFLEHEAD

The usual empty threats. You?

GOON DIP

Oh, nothing.

But they eye each other warily.

EXT. NORTH BEACH NEIGHBORHOOD - LATE AFTERNOON

DJ and Bernie walk home down a leafy street. A GANG OF BMX RIDING BULLIES turns a corner. The bikers orbit DJ and Bernie, "harassing" them like The Wild Ones on a spree.

BULLY #1

Going home before it gets dark?

BULLY #2

Did you have a nice playdate?

DJ tucks his head down to avoid a fight. But not Bernie. His eyes light up at all the fun he's going to have.

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BERNIE

What are you losers looking at? I think I'm going to have to teach you a lesson! It's called 'How to Pick a Fight with the Wrong Dudes!'

The Bullies dismount, letting their bikes clatter to the ground. Four abreast, they bear down on the boys.

BERNIE (CONT'D)

DJ! This is going to be zesty! Do what I do.

As the Bullies get closer, Bernie apes a BIG WIMP backing away in utter horror. DJ, however, backs away in bona fide horror. Bernie never catches on that DJ's fear is genuine.

BERNIE (CONT'D)

(wimpering)

Please don't hurt us. Please don't take our lunch money...

DJ

(quaking with fear)

No, no, please, don't. Really. I'm not kidding. I BEG YOU!

DJ collapses to his knees and clasps his hands in prayer. Bernie laughs at DJ's performance.

BERNIE

You slay me, Bossidy!

(to Bullies)

Taste the power of the Midnight Scorpion Death Fist!

Bernie lets out A WILD CRY and unleashes a flurry of kung fu punches at Bully #1 and #2, who fall back under his relentless attack.

Bernie dusts his hands off only to be knocked to the ground by Bully #3 and #4. While they bean him, Bernie sees DJ, frozen in one spot, paralyzed with fear.

Bernie twists away from the Bullies, wincing at the scrapes on his knees and elbow. The Bullies run back to their bikes and take off, laughing at the cakewalk.

BERNIE (CONT'D)

Hey! You didn't back me up!

DJ

I froze.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

BERNIE

You don't freeze in the dojo! You  
don't freeze in tournaments!

DJ

I guess I only freeze when it's  
real!

EXT. PRUDENCE'S HOUSE - NICE NEIGHBORHOOD - NIGHT

Prudence, on Julian's skateboard, rumbles up the driveway.

EXT./INT. PRUDENCE'S HOUSE - DINING ROOM - NIGHT

POLICE CHIEF RICHARD WEBB, his wife, MRS. WEBB, and 12 year  
old daughter MIRANDA, sit around the dining table, their  
heads bowed for the blessing. Food steams from bowls and  
platters. One chair is conspicuously empty.

CHIEF WEBB

...thank you for the food we are  
about to eat--

Prudence, skateboard under her arm, EXPLODES into the room  
with a BANG and heads for the neighboring den.

PRUDENCE

Quick! Turn on ESPN3!

Chief Webb reaches and grabs his daughter by her waistband.

MRS. WEBB

Not until you sit down and eat your  
dinner!

PRUDENCE

It'll be over by then!

CHIEF WEBB

Prudence, settle down, you can't do  
everything!

PRUDENCE

You can if you're fast enough!

Prudence parks the skateboard belly up in a corner and  
takes her seat. Prudence SIGHS and GRUMBLES as the food is  
passed around the table at a snail's pace!

CHIEF WEBB

What are you doing with *Julian  
Hubble's* skateboard?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Prudence deploys a swift kung fu hand movement to snatch a roll from the basket on the other side of the table.

PRUDENCE

Why? Who is he?

CHIEF WEBB

I don't want you fraternizing with a kid like that. Stay away from him.

Prudence snags a baked potato with lightning fast kung fu.

PRUDENCE

I can't stay away. He's joining our team. In fact, we're getting married. We're very much in love.

Prudence takes aim and sharply flicks a spoon at a bowl of corn cobs. The spoon collides with the bowl and both items careen out of control. Prudence leaps, twists in mid-air, grabs the bowl, "catches" the falling corn, lands back in her seat and passes the bowl to her father.

CHIEF WEBB

(forcefully)

His father was one of ours who went over to the bad guys and came to a very bad end.

PRUDENCE

Are you serious?!? What bad guys?

Chief Webb shoots a look at Mrs. Webb. But she and Miranda are mesmerized/horrified by Prudence's kung fu antics.

CHIEF WEBB

Alright, Prudence, go watch your show.

Prudence handsprings over the table and flips into the den, landing comfortably on a bean bag chair.

ON TV, a cable sports news channel showcases an upcoming international kung fu tournament.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ANNOUNCER

The American kung fu team will be decided this weekend but, so far, frontrunners for the Coronation Tournament in Allusia are 10 year old Bosnian dynamo, Mongo Milicevic, India's champ Hadji Godbolly, and Canadian Derek Grimes. But the hands and feet to beat belong to Allusia's own Prince Kakao Hung Duck, the reigning Pan-Asian champion...

Miranda curls next to Prudence in the bean bag.

MIRANDA

What is this, Prudence?

PRUDENCE

The top of the kung fu world!

EXT. CHINATOWN STREET - NIGHT

GOON DIP and WAFFLEHEAD peer through the window of a storefront McDojo. Inside, a CAUCASIAN TAI CHI INSTRUCTOR teaches a group of SENIOR CITIZENS.

With an aggravated HISS, Wafflehead CROSSES another DOJO NAME off of his list. They've struck out again.

INT. BAMBOO TIGER DOJO - DAY

DJ punches his fists into a bucket of sand, an exercise that hardens hands for combat. Prudence stretches and Bernie reads a comic book while he does finger push-ups.

DJ

Fledgling amateurs, feel the power of my Monkey Palm Strike...

He aims his open palm at a tea cup on a low table. The cup doesn't move. Bernie laughs and starts sparring with DJ.

PRUDENCE

No unsupervised sparring.

She points to a sign of Ten No-No's on the wall. The door opens and JULIAN enters. With his bad attitude.

JULIAN

(snidely)  
Where's your troop leader?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BERNIE

Our revered sifu isn't here yet.  
 (to DJ and Prudence)  
 This is great. Now we have a team.

JULIAN

Teams are for people who can't  
 stand up for themselves.

Bernie grabs a bamboo kite dowel from a worktable.

BERNIE

Watch. This is you.

He grips the stick on both ends and snaps it in two. He  
 grabs five more and tries to snap the bundle. He can't.

BERNIE (CONT'D)

And this is you on a team. Here.  
 See for yourself.

Julian grabs the bundle like a baseball bat and SMASHES it  
 against the brick wall. Splinters fly. So much for that.

DJ

(to Bernie)  
 Enter the drag.

Prudence gets up and greets Julian face to face.

PRUDENCE

Hi, Julian. Thanks for showing up.  
 You can go ahead and change. Old  
 Master'll be here any minute.

JULIAN

I'm not wearing any Crouching Tiger  
 Raging Bull tunic, if that's what  
 you're getting at.

PRUDENCE

At least take your shoes off, okay?

JULIAN

Not these shoes. They're not  
 leaving my feet.

The kids look down at Julian's TRAINERS. Translucent from  
 toe to heel with edgy design language and racing lights.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

JULIAN (CONT'D)

I had 'em smuggled in from Tokyo. They won't be hitting these streets for six months. By the time you can get 'em, I'll be sick of 'em.

PRUDENCE

They're cool. But no shoes allowed in the dojo. Rules are rules.

JULIAN

I don't see anyone to enforce them.

BOOMING VOICE

A true warrior always sets a good example. Even to himself!

The kids jump. Their heads spin around. NO ONE is there. Just the table. And the tea cup.

DJ

Old Master? Where are you?

BOOMING VOICE

I'm right in front of you.

The tea cup RATTLES. The kids look at each other, spooked.

BOOMING VOICE (CONT'D)

There's a method to my magic. Guess the lesson!

Julian rolls his eyes. Prudence takes a stab at it.

PRUDENCE

Things are not what they seem?

LAUGHTER booms from above. The kids yank their heads up.

OLD MASTER'S VOICE

If you don't see your opponent...

The voice RINGS OUT behind them. The kids spin. Old Master is standing horizontally against a wall. This stunt grabs Julian's attention. He edges closer to the group.

OLD MASTER'S VOICE (CONT'D)

...don't assume he isn't there.

The kids blink and Old Master's gone. Behind them, Old Master drifts down from the ceiling in a slo-mo corkscrew.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

OLD MASTER

You don't need eyes to see and you  
don't see everything with eyes.

From thin air, he produces a scarf. Snapping it expertly,  
it wraps itself around his head and ties its own knot.

OLD MASTER (CONT'D)

AAAttttaaaaaackkkk!

One at a time, the kids "attack" blindfolded Old Master  
with their individual kung fu animal forms.

Prudence charges Old Master out of the gate with an Eagle  
Claw high kick. Old Master easily deflects the strike and  
counters with a kick that sends her flying across the dojo.

OLD MASTER (CONT'D)

If you don't learn to wait for the  
right moment, Eagle Claw, you'll  
never know what it could have given  
you.

Prudence staggers to her feet, humbly bows, and attempts  
the form again. This time, she's flawless.

Old Master CLAPS his approval. Prudence makes the Eagle  
Claw victory sign.

PRUDENCE

Finger power!

Julian gives *her* the finger. Prudence tosses her head.

Bernie makes wing-like movements with wide arms and "wades"  
over to Old Master like the White Crane. It's a flapping  
flurry of wing parries as master and student spar with  
perfect form.

Bernie bows and swaggers back to his spot. Julian yawns at  
Bernie's technique.

OLD MASTER

Don't be so full of yourself, White  
Crane, that there's no room for the  
rest of the world.

Bernie looks askance, busted. DJ bombards Old Master with  
Monkey style strikes. He rolls, he scratches, he SCREAMS.

OLD MASTER (CONT'D)

Monkey in the grass! Monkey  
playing with ball of string!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

DJ performs back to back kicks with blinding speed.

OLD MASTER (CONT'D)  
Great, Monkey! But you must learn  
to face your opponents the same way  
you face your friends. Fearlessly!

Julian laughs at DJ. Old Master faces him.

OLD MASTER (CONT'D)  
Okay, new warrior! Your turn!

And then, in a sudden blur of speed,, Julian rockets toward Old Master and unleashes a dazzling Flying Crescent Kick, the red racing lights of his trainers flashing. Julian and Old Master collide mid-air and engage in a fierce combat of skillfully matched hand and leg movements.

The kids are WOWED. Old Master rips off his blindfold.

OLD MASTER (CONT'D)  
WHERE DID YOU LEARN THAT KUNG FU?!?

JULIAN  
WHAT'D YOU DO WITH MY TRAINERS?!?

Julian stares at his feet. NO TRAINERS! His big toe wiggles out of a hole in one of his mismatched socks.

OLD MASTER  
Tell me who taught you that form!

JULIAN  
My father.

OLD MASTER  
Who? Look at me!

JULIAN  
My father, man, what are you, deaf!

Prudence, DJ, and Bernie are horrified and almost scared to see how Old Master will react to Julian's insolence.

But Old Master seems to be studying Julian. A flicker of recognition grows into full-blown comprehension. Old Master knows who Julian's father is. Or was.

He points across the dojo where THE TRAINERS are lined up next to the other shoes. His mastery has removed them.

Old Master bows to the other kids, ending the class. Prudence, DJ, and Bernie hustle to collect their shoes and scoot out of the dojo. As they leave...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

PRUDENCE

He didn't even get mad at Julian.

DJ

I know, I thought he'd explode.

A shadow falls over Julian while he zips his trainers.

OLD MASTER

Your father must have told you that  
the eyes of strangers must never  
see your kung fu. It's too  
dangerous.

JULIAN

Then what's the point of learning  
it?

OLD MASTER

For life or death situations only.  
Tomorrow at the tournament. You'll  
use Praying Mantis.

JULIAN

Whatever.

Trainers zipped, he hops up and pushes past Old Master.

INT. BLACK SALAMANDER SECRET HEADQUARTERS - DAY

At a pristine altar, Wafflehead performs a trance-like  
worship to the sinister portraits of his evil ancestors.

WAFFLEHEAD

Wise and mighty ancestors, please  
lead us to the last of the Red Loti  
and grant us the power to defeat  
the five hideous virtues.

CLIP CLIP CLIP. Wafflehead's eyes dart to a corner where  
Goon Dip is clipping his toenails.

WAFFLEHEAD (CONT'D)

...that's disgusting! Do that on a  
newspaper!

GOON DIP

Hey, Boss, remember when that  
cement block fell on my foot?

Goon Dip sweeps the clippings onto a newspaper.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WAFFLEHEAD

Can't you see I'm praying for some help? You think Lo Fat has any big ideas? Something, a suggestion! No! All he does is give orders. He wants the tunic. Who doesn't?

GOON DIP

Hey, Boss! Look at this!

He holds out the newspaper.

WAFFLEHEAD

I don't want to look at toenails!

GOON DIP

No, look! The Chop Socky Nationals are gonna be here tomorrow!

Wafflehead snatches the newspaper out of Goon's hands. The toenails go flying all over the altar.

WAFFLEHEAD

Every kung fu master in the city will be there! Good eye, Goon!  
(to the altar)  
I mean, thanks for the hot tip, evil ancestors!

As Wafflehead CACKLES, WE MOVE IN ON THE ALTAR. The Black Salamander ancestors grin malevolently.

INT. SPORTS ARENA - DAY

The Chop Socky Championship. Six kung fu matches take place in separate rings. The venue is festooned with the logo of the corporate sponsor. "WISE CRACK FORTUNE COOKIES -- THE MANY FACES OF WIZDUMB."

MONTAGE

Of the all day event. Bernie, DJ, Prudence, and Julian fight OPPONENT after OPPONENT in POINT COMPETITION and WIN ALL OF THEIR MATCHES handily. Julian, however, loses all of his fights with lackluster Praying Mantis kung fu.

IN THE STANDS

Most of the PARENTS of all the kids (except Julian) are there. MRS. WEBB cheers Prudence on. MR. and MRS. BOSSIDY root for DJ. RACHEL and YAO FONG scream for Bernie.

THE SIDELINES

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Prudence gives her mother a thumbs up and notices Julian.

PRUDENCE

Is your mother here, Julian?

JULIAN

She had to work.

PRUDENCE

So did my dad.

Old Master gathers the team together.

OLD MASTER

We're ten points behind. If Julian wins his match, the team wins.

The kids deflate.

DJ

He hasn't won a match all day.

BERNIE

He'll throw the fight just to jerk us around.

Julian ignores their comments. But Old Master sends Julian into the ring with a pat on the back.

OLD MASTER

It's never too late to try, Julian.

JULIAN

What am I supposed to try *with* when I can't even use my own kung fu.

ANNOUNCER'S VOICE

In Ring #2, Julian Hubble, of San Francisco's Bamboo Tiger Dojo...

WAY UP IN THE RAFTERS

Wafflehead and Goon Dip sit in the next to the last row in the ozone layer of the arena.

GOON DIP

This is humiliating, Boss. Why did we get the cheap seats?

WAFFLEHEAD

Why should we pay for good seats when we can move down to better ones? Everybody does it. C'mon.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

They stand up and sneak down to some pricier seats. A by-the-book LITTLE KID USHER appears out of nowhere.

LITTLE KID USHER

Let me see your stubs.

They hand 'em over. The Little Kid Usher wags them back to their bad seats with a flashlight.

IN THE RING

Julian and his OPPONENT square off, A REFEREE between them.

REFEREE

Ready...Set...Fight!

He lowers the flag and the fight begins. Julian's OPPONENT attacks with amazing style and speed. Julian blocks his kicks and punches, but with minimum effort and zero enthusiasm. He starts to lose points.

DJ

See? He's losing on purpose!

OLD MASTER

His competition is very tough!

BERNIE

You saw him in the dojo. He was awesome! And that's *me* saying it.

As Julian the championship disappears before their eyes, DJ and Bernie turn their backs on Julian. But not Prudence. She stays with him. She's not giving up on him yet.

The Opponent hits Julian squarely in the chest. The match will be won or lost on Julian's next move.

And then, Julian's eyes meet Prudence's.

PRUDENCE

Julian! You could beat anyone with your kung fu! I know you can! Show everyone what you can do!

Prudence's high expectations give Julian the incentive to want to WIN! He has one split second to debate. Old Master's approval? Or Prudence's?

IN THE RAFTER SEATS

WAFFLEHEAD grazes for kung fu masters through binoculars. GOON DIP crams popcorn in his mouth.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

WAFFLEHEAD'S POV: A TELEPHOTO VIEW THROUGH THE BINOCULARS

Wafflehead focuses on kung fu masters. But IN THE OUT OF FOCUS FOREGROUND, some kid throws jumping kicks, back kicks, and roundhouse kicks like poetry in motion.

RACK FOCUS TO REVEAL...

...Julian! He's a striking, spinning, kicking RED LOTUS KUNG FU MACHINE. He scores point after point. The CROWD CHEERS Julian's dazzling display of awesome martial arts.

The kids are elated by Julian's masterful comeback but OLD MASTER IS AGHAST at the public display of Red Lotus.

PRUDENCE, DJ, AND BERNIE  
GO, JULIAN! AWESOME! WICKED!

IN THE RAFTER SEATS

Wafflehead drops his binoculars and leaps to his feet.

WAFFLEHEAD  
That's Red Lotus kung fu!

Julian scores the winning point! The REFEREE raises a flag. Julian wins! The team wins!

ON THE SIDELINES

Prudence, DJ, and Bernie run out and hoist Julian onto their shoulders. He smiles from ear to ear.

And then his eyes meet Old Master's. Julian sees his teacher's anger melt away as Old Master gets caught up in the excitement of the victory and the kids' high spirits.

IN THE RAFTER SEATS

GOON DIP  
But he's just a kid! The fortune  
teller said it would be an old man!

WAFFLEHEAD  
If the boy knows Red Lotus, then  
someone must have taught it to him.

Wafflehead watches Julian jump down from the shoulders of his teammates and drag Old Master into the limelight.

THE AWARDS PRESENTATION

TOURNAMENT OFFICIALS assemble in the center ring with the Bamboo Tiger Dojo team. The kids are BEAMING.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TOURNAMENT OFFICIAL

To present the trophy to the new  
Chop Socky National champions, the  
President and CEO of Wise Crack  
Fortune Cookies, Jimmy Yip!!!!

HUGE APPLAUSE. A Chinese American, JIMMY YIP, very upbeat,  
bounds into the ring. He's Asian but he looks and sounds  
like he hasn't been any further east than USC.

JIMMY YIP

Congratulations, Bamboo Tigers!  
Wow! YOU GUYS ROCK!!!

His arms summon a HUGE BURST OF APPLAUSE. A TROPHY the  
size of a ground missile is presented to the team.

JIMMY YIP (CONT'D)

Are you ready, Bamboo Tigers, to  
duplicate your winning performance?

The kids look to Julian. Without him, there's no team.

JULIAN

Count me in!

JIMMY YIP

Because we are sending you to the  
annual Kung Fu World Championship  
on a beautiful island off the coast  
of Hong Kong! Next stop, Allusia!

The kids SQUEAL and HIGH FIVE each other but OLD MASTER is  
thrown into a STATE OF SHOCK. A GONG reverbs in his head.

KIDS

Isn't it amazing? We're going to  
Allusia!!! Have you ever been to  
Allusia, Old Master?

OLD MASTER

Yes...once. A long time ago...

JIMMY YIP

Smile, everyone!

A BLIZZARD OF FLASHES as PHOTOGRAPHERS click away.  
ECSTATIC KIDS and a CATATONIC OLD MASTER!

IN THE ARENA

Wafflehead and Goon Dip push through the exiting crowd.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

GOON DIP

We did it, Boss! We got him!

WAFFLEHEAD

Not quite. I have to see the old man perform Red Lotus himself. We can't afford any more mistakes.

INT. SUSIE SONG'S RESTAURANT - NIGHT

The TROPHY rotates on a Lazy Susan in the middle of a large table. The kids and Old Master celebrate their victory. The owner, SUSIE SONG, delivers a plate of egg rolls.

SUSIE SONG

Egg rolls on the house tonight!

KIDS

Thanks, Susie! You rule!

Susie leaves with a smile. The kids raise their sodas and toast their parents at a nearby table.

THE PARENTS TABLE

The Fongs, Mrs. Webb, and the divorced Bossidys toast their little champions with flamboyant restaurant cocktails.

RACHEL FONG

As far back as the womb, I knew Bernie had talent. His kicks were so graceful, even when they were battering my uterine wall--

THE TROPHY TABLE

Old Master surveys the crowd. Mostly kids and locals. Then he spots TWO BLACK SALAMANDERS at a corner table.

Prudence whispers to Bernie. Bernie nods and whispers to DJ, DJ to Old Master. No one whispers to Julian.

JULIAN

What don't I know?

Prudence removes her MANDALA PIN from her shirt and places it on Julian's plate.

PRUDENCE

The vote was unanimous.

OLD MASTER

Wear it to show pride in your dojo.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JULIAN

Thanks but I don't wear jewelry.

BERNIE

Nobody does. You put it in a drawer and only wear it on special occasions.

PRUDENCE

Like the Tournament in Allusia!

Julian takes it and puts it in his pocket. That's good enough for the kids. They CLAP and WHOOP. But Old Master is vigilant behind his smile. And wary.

EXT. SUSIE SONG'S RESTAURANT - NIGHT

A SIGNED TEAM PHOTO OF THE KIDS is displayed in the window next to a recent picture of Jackie Chan and faded signed photos of Jerry Brown, Jerry Garcia, and Nipsey Russell.

A BIG SEDAN pulls up to the curb. FOUR BLACK SALAMANDER BAD BUY BRUTES climb out.

AT THE ENTRANCE

The door opens. THE BLACK SALAMANDER CADRE come in with the chilly air. Susie's smile fades when she sees them.

AT THE VICTORY TABLE

Old Master watches Susie seat the SALAMANDERS. They strut into the room, flaunting their tong muscle. A FEW PATRONS abandon their tables, leaving food steaming on the table.

DJ snares the last dumpling with his chopsticks.

JULIAN

Hey, you already had two dumplings!

DJ

You're crazy!

JULIAN

Three orders of dumplings, four dumplings in one order, six people, that's two dumplings each.

PRUDENCE

So somebody got a little hungry.

Old Master scans the restaurant and picks out MORE and MORE BLACK SALAMANDERS mixed in with the diners.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BERNIE

Next time divide them up at the outset, dude.

JULIAN

I didn't know I needed orange cones around them. I thought they were safe in the middle of the table.

OLD MASTER

This is why I like Wendy's. Everybody gets their own bag.

Old Master's eyes pick up Salamanders everywhere. Prudence notices Old Master's tense body language. And Julian's.

PRUDENCE

Who are these people, Old Master?

OLD MASTER

Finish eating.

Old Master signals the waiter. But Bernie leans in, converting the table into a campfire.

BERNIE

Black Salamanders. Your basic crime syndicate. Evil tentacles stretching all over the world...

Julian tucks deeper into his egg rolls. Prudence notices.

BERNIE (CONT'D)

One of their leaders is called Wafflehead. But not to his face.

DJ

"Wafflehead?"

The Waiter delivers the check and whispers lowly.

WAITER

An unfortunate incident at the IHOP. You don't want the details, trust me.

OLD MASTER

You kids listen to too much gossip. Very colorful gossip about evil maniacs with comic book names!

It's WAFFLEHEAD in the flesh! The kids GULP. Old Master, slow to read their stunned faces, keeps going.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

OLD MASTER (CONT'D)

What next? Pancakeface?

The kids signal Old Master to SHUT UP. They bulge their eyes out, draw their fingers across their throats...

OLD MASTER (CONT'D)

As for these Salamanders, whatever their business is, you can be sure it has nothing to do with you!

Wafflehead makes a signal. BLACK SALAMANDER BRUTES rise from around the room. The kids stand shakily as the Brutes converge on their table. All except Julian.

PRUDENCE

Old Master, didn't you tell us that a true warrior tries to stop a fight *before* it starts?

(beat)

Old Master? Old Master?

The kids turn. A BRUTE stands behind Old Master and, holding a chopstick at both ends, presses it against Old Master's throat, cutting off his air.

The kids watch as Old Master remains passive and refuses to defend himself. Goon Dip leans into Wafflehead.

GOON DIP

Boss, he's not fighting back. He's not showing us his kung fu!

With a signal from Wafflehead, the Brutes start to shove chopstick splinters up into Old Master's fingernails.

Julian rises from his chair.

JULIAN

Don't let them do that to you, Old Master! What's the matter? Fight back! Where is your kung fu?

But Old Master doesn't move a muscle.

Unable to watch Old Master's plight, Julian launches into the most AMAZING RED LOTUS KUNG FU HIGH FLYING SPINNING KICK ever! His kick takes down the FIRST WAVE OF BRUTES. Just as another wave CRASHES in on the table.

Prudence, DJ, and Bernie back Julian up and jump into the action with synchronized kicks and BATTLE CRIES!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

The parents, absorbed in their own conversations, don't realize their kids are kung fu-ing until its too late!

A GIGANTIC KUNG FU FIGHT ENSUES. Shrimp balls, egg rolls, oodles of noodles and won ton go KERFLOOEY.

The kids, outnumbered six to one, are amped and hold their own. Old Master strains against the BRUTES who hold him.

The PARENTS plunge into the melee.

CLOSE ON MRS. WEBB screaming bloody murder. PULL BACK TO REVEAL a large skein of soy sauce has stained her outfit.

MRS. WEBB

Ahhhhhhhhhh! It's Marc Jacobs!!!

Prudence masterfully fights off Brutes, three at a time.

PRUDENCE

Mom! Get out of here! Save yourself!

Yao Fong whips out his cell phone and dials 911.

YAO FONG

Susie Song's! Big gang fight!

RACHEL FONG

My baby, my baby, my baby!

Rachel Fong throws herself in between a charging Black Salamander Brute and Bernie. She's roadkill.

DJ's father rolls up his sleeves and puts his dukes up.

DJ

Dad, that's so 90's!

DJ's kung fu hand strikes neutralize a round robin of BRUTES. Mr. Bossidy HOOTS with pride at DJ's skill.

BEHIND A CARVED WOODEN SCREEN

Wafflehead signals the BRUTES to let Old Master loose.

They shove him into the middle of the brawl. Old Master trips and wobbles through the fight, "inadvertently" aiding the kids against their opponents.

(Note: Old Master uses "Drunken Master" technique, masking powerful strikes with "drunken" unsteady movements, instead of revealing his Red Lotus kung fu.)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

Julian sends GOON DIP onto A LAZY SUSAN and twirls it at superspeed. Goon Dip spins into a blurry pinwheel.

DJ forces the face of his ATTACKER into a BAMBOO STEAMER. Instant HOT STEAM FACIAL. DJ jumps to the side for a quick breather. And a quick nibble of shu mai.

Bernie is about to be attacked by a Brute when Julian crashes the KUNG FU TROPHY onto the attacker's head.

BERNIE

Night, night.

Julian heaves a Brute on top of a Dim Sum Cart. It careens through the plate glass window of the restaurant.

JULIAN

And another one bites the dust.

Bernie is hurled into a HUGE FISH TANK. He emerges, armed with two live lobsters, and uses their claws as weapons.

A BRUTE attacks DJ with a scary war face. Suddenly, DJ FREEZES. Instead of fighting, DJ TURNS TAIL AND RUNS.

IN THE KITCHEN

Smoke pours out of the oven. Flour sifts through the air.

Julian KICKS a pot of boiling stock and uses the lid to block a BRUTE'S weapon and then uses it as a FRISBEE to knock off another Brute. Bernie runs in.

BERNIE

Hey! Where's DJ?

He looks around in vain. WE SEE that DJ is hiding, scared and guilty, under a table.

A BRUTE attacks Prudence, CURSING at her IN CHINESE. She crams a Peking Duck down his gullet.

PRUDENCE

Chew on that!

Making the Eagle Claw finger power sign, she slips on the oil-slicked floor. Julian slides a sloshing tub of TOFU under her to cushion the fall.

Old Master skids and bangs into an industrial kitchen hose. A POWERFUL JET STREAM OF WATER knocks over SIX BRUTES.

A Brute threatens to force Prudence's head into a pool of sizzling oil in a HOT WOK.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

PRUDENCE (CONT'D)

Old Master! Mayday! Mayday!

Old Master runs to the rescue. With a "clumsy" Jackie Chan kung fu move he flips the wok off the fire and onto the Brute's head. The Brute SCREAMS as hot oil sears his face.

BEHIND THE CARVED SCREEN

Wafflehead watches Old Master suspiciously when Goon Dip wobbles over, his eyes spiralling in their sockets.

GOON DIP

He's no Red Lotus, Boss, he's just  
a stupid old drunk!

Wafflehead leaves his hiding place and approaches "drunk" Old Master.

WAFFLEHEAD

You are very good at being very  
bad. You wouldn't be trying to  
hide your true skill, would you?

Wafflehead slowly pulls A SWORD out of a slit-sleeve. He lets Old Master see that his eye is already trained on a target -- Prudence!

WAFFLEHEAD (CONT'D)

A cute little girl is a terrible  
thing to waste.

With a sadistic grin, he lets the sword fly. Old Master lunges into a supernaturally skillful RED LOTUS KUNG FU FORM and snags the SWORD just before it nails Prudence in the back. She has no idea she was even in danger.

Wafflehead's look of astonishment morphs into a creepy smile. His smile fades when POLICE SIRENS WHOOP in the distance. The Brutes scatter in every direction.

On his way out, Wafflehead trips over Julian, who rifles through the pockets of downed Brutes. Wafflehead looks down at him, eyes narrow. Julian looks up at Wafflehead, eyes wide.

EXT. BAMBOO TIGER RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Wafflehead and Goon Dip hop into a waiting car. It pulls out into traffic just as POLICE CARS arrive on the scene.

INT. DARK SEDAN - NIGHT

Wafflehead and Goon Dip, both chain-smoking, are barely visible for all the smoke. Wafflehead is on his cell.

WAFFLEHEAD

We didn't get him. But we found him. And wait till you hear--

He holds the phone away from his ear while LO FAT SCREAMS IN CHINESE.

WAFFLEHEAD (CONT'D)

'What's so hard?' Have you fought any Red Lotus lately?

(listens)

You're not letting me finish. The guy has a dojo for little kids. They compete in tournaments! They won one tonight, actually, and guess what the prize is?

LO FAT

No. Not the Coronation Tournament!

WAFFLEHEAD

So now we can nab him in our own back yard!

LO FAT

This is too good! I love it! By the way, you didn't kill Goon Dip, did you?

WAFFLEHEAD

Ah, no.

LO FAT

Don't bother. And you're still here so you both disobeyed me.

CLICK. Wafflehead glares at Goon Dip.

GOON DIP

How do we nab him on the island, Boss? His kung fu is too slippery!

WAFFLEHEAD

We'll have to fight Red Lotus kung fu *with* Red Lotus kung fu.

EXT. SUSIE SONG'S RESTAURANT - NIGHT - LATER

Susie Songs gives her statement to the COPS. CHIEF WEBB, Prudence's father, is among them, directing procedure. The other parents corral their kids and drag them away.

MRS. WEBB

You've done your last karate kick!

PRUDENCE

It's kung fu! How many times do I have to tell you?

MRS. WEBB

Never again. You're going to a nice little modeling school!

PRUDENCE

I thought you didn't want me to take drugs.

THE CAMERA FINDS RACHEL FONG, reading her husband the riot act. She clasps Bernie to her bosom. He can't breathe.

RACHEL FONG

He has to fight to solve a problem? Why can't he *think* his way out of it?

THE CAMERA MOVES TO MR. BOSSIDY, who slaps DJ's back with congratulations, making him feel guilty and uncomfortable.

MR. BOSSIDY

Don't be so modest, DJ! You were a one man army in there!

DJ smiles weakly and wishes his father would shut up. Mr. Bossidy flags down Old Master.

MR. BOSSIDY (CONT'D)

Old Master! How can I sign up? I want to join DJ's class!

OUTSIDE THE ENTRANCE

The PATROL CARS pull away.

INSIDE

The RESTAURANT CREW cleans up the demolished restaurant. Old Master sweeps up broken dishes, lost in thought.

His eyes drop to the ground. The FIRST PLACE TROPHY lies broken at his feet.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Old Master bends down to pick up the pieces. A PAIR OF TRAINERS with red flashing lights step INTO FRAME.

Old Master straightens up and faces Julian. Julian opens his mouth to speak but Old Master beats him to it.

OLD MASTER

I told you never to use Red Lotus in public. You have no idea what you started. Your actions pointed an arrow at me.

JULIAN

I didn't know anyone was after you! If I did, I wouldn't have done it. My father didn't tell me not to use it.

OLD MASTER

But I told you not to!

JULIAN

I'm sorry for ruining your life!

He turns on his heel to go.

OLD MASTER

Wait!

Julian stops at the door. Old Master joins him.

OLD MASTER (CONT'D)

Red Lotus kung fu is an ancient martial art. The kung fu of my ancestors. I was the last person to know it, so, to keep it alive, I taught it to my best student.

Julian looks at him and connects the dots.

JULIAN

You mean my father?

Old Master takes Julian by the shoulders.

OLD MASTER

Hold your head high, Julian. He was an honorable man...

(turning)

...More honorable than I am.

EXT. OAKLAND STREET - LATER

Julian skateboards down a quiet working class street in his neighborhood.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A DARK SEDAN prowls down the block like a shark. It slows down next to Julian. A rear window electrically descends. It's Wafflehead.

WAFFLEHEAD

Julian, why are you hanging around with your father's enemies? When you could be with his friends?

Julian ignores him and pushes off on his skateboard. The sedan catches up with him.

WAFFLEHEAD (CONT'D)

I come all the way down to offer you a business deal and this is how you treat me?

JULIAN

I saw how you do business. Thanks but no thanks.

WAFFLEHEAD

I just thought you might want to finish the job your father started.

Julian slows down.

JULIAN

I'm listening.

WAFFLEHEAD

To find something we lost. We'll pay you -- enough money to buy a lot of skateboard wax.

JULIAN

I'm still listening. But I don't hear much.

WAFFLEHEAD

When the time is right, you'll hear it all.

The sedan glides away.

EXT. GOLDEN GATE PARK - DAY

Old Master flies a kite, letting out more line, feeding the kite to the sky. It's fashioned out of the RED LOTUS BATTLE FLAG. When it's almost a speck, Old Master lets go of the line. He's cutting ties with his ancestors, sending his duty away like a bad spirit.

Julian storms across the field toward him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JULIAN

You said my dad was honorable.  
Black Salamanders say he was one of  
them! He can't be both.

OLD MASTER

What was the lesson your first day  
at the dojo, Julian?

JULIAN

(rolling his eyes)

You can't see everything with your  
eyes. So tell me what I can't see.

OLD MASTER

Your father told me things he  
couldn't tell anyone, not even your  
mother.

JULIAN

What things? I have a right to  
know. You know what my mother has  
to go through? People pointing her  
out and whispering. If you know  
something, give it up. He's dead  
now so who's it going to hurt?

OLD MASTER

Even death does not release me from  
my oath to him. The bond between a  
master and student is sometimes  
more sacred than blood.

JULIAN

*I'm your student now.*

OLD MASTER

My time of teaching has passed.  
You must learn by yourselves now.

Julian is flabbergasted. He catches sight of Old Master's  
parked car, packed and ready to go. Old Master's leaving.

OLD MASTER (CONT'D)

I can't explain now but I'm doing  
you and the other kids a favor.

JULIAN

By ditching us before our trip?  
You teach us about courage and then  
you run away without even saying  
goodbye!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

OLD MASTER

I was going to say goodbye. Don't worry, I'll find another master to take you to Allusia.

JULIAN

(insulted)

Because that's all we really care about. Hey, thanks for the memories! Have a nice life!

He turns his back on Old Master and stomps off. Old Master watches Julian go, crushed with guilt.

Suddenly, A LARGE SHADOW falls across Old Master's entire body. He looks up. His RED LOTUS KITE is dive-bombing him with a vengeance. Old Master runs. But the kite CHASES him down. Old Master runs a zigzag pattern to avoid it.

OLD MASTER

Get away from me! Leave me alone.  
I quit! I don't want you!

But the kite forces him down to the ground and buries Old Master under the "weight" of his Red Lotus duty.

INT. DOJO - OLD MASTER'S PRIVATE OFFICE - NIGHT

Julian sneaks into the dojo and into Old Master's private office. He rifles through drawers and cabinets, looking for any tangible evidence. He's about to leave when his eye catches a FRAMED PHOTOGRAPH on the wall.

THE PHOTOGRAPH: A POLICEMAN and OLD MASTER smile in front of a SAN FRANCISCO POLICE DEPT. BANNER. The resemblance is unmistakable. This man is Julian's father.

The memory hurts. And then, the SOUND OF FOOTSTEPS alarms Julian. He frantically looks around for an escape route.

IN THE TRAINING HALL

It's dark but WE CAN SEE A FIGURE crossing the dojo, headed straight for the private office.

IN THE OFFICE

The FIGURE opens the door and flips the light on. It's Old Master. The room is pristine, undisturbed. He opens another door and disappears behind it.

INT. OLD MASTER'S PRIVATE QUARTERS - NIGHT

Old Master opens a cabinet, revealing an ancestor altar. On it, an ANCESTOR TABLET, a peacock feather, and joss sticks. Old Master lights some joss sticks and kneels.

Bowing his head, he prays in a hushed, urgent tone.

OLD MASTER

Illustrious ancestors, I will return to Allusia and retrieve the invincible kung fu power tunic. I will defeat the Black Salamander and restore honor to the Red Lotus name. The boy without the father has come. And I will follow.

Old Master bows in reverence, then leaves the room -- unaware that JULIAN IS HIDING IN THE ALTAR and has heard everything. Julian's eyes are huge. An invincible kung fu power tunic! And somehow he's connected.

EXT. SAN FRANCISCO AIRPORT - EVENING

A RIDICULOUSLY LONG STRETCH LIMO pulls up to the Air Siam Departures curb. DJ, Bernie, and Prudence pile out. Followed by Old Master. The LIMO DRIVER is closing the door when A TRAINER (with red flashing lights) kicks it open and Julian climbs out. Everyone is dripping in Wise Crack Fortune Cookie Co. T-shirts, baseball caps, etc.

Jimmy Yip marshals the team together for a group photo.

JIMMY YIP

What a handsome group of kung fu heroes! Okay, everybody, smile for the camera! No! You're a fighting team! Scowl! Growl! Snarl!

The kids make ferocious faces as the DRIVER takes a shot.

EXT. SAN FRANCISCO AIRPORT - MORNING

AN AIR SIAM JUMBO JET thunders off the runway winging into the ozone of mystery, heading for Lotus Land.

INT. SAN FRANCISCO AIRPORT TERMINAL - DAY

Wafflehead watches the plane become a speck in the sky, a cell phone to his ear. A VOICE answers the RINGING LINE.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WAFFLEHEAD

It's me. They're on their way.  
The Red Lotus Master and his four  
little Jet Li wannabes.

INTERCUT WITH:

EXT. PALACE GROUNDS - ALLUSIA - EVENING

Even more beautiful and mysterious at night. PSYCHEDELIC  
PEACOCKS SHRIEK.

INT. PALACE DOJO - ALLUSIA - DAY

While Lo Fat is on the phone, Kakao practices kung fu.

LO FAT

Excellent. Get back here at once.

KAKAO (O.S.)

Get off! I'm expecting a call!

WAFFLEHEAD

We take off in an hour. What about  
Kakao? Does he suspect anything?

LO FAT

No, he still thinks we're getting  
the tunic so he can win a kung fu  
tournament.

Lo Fat hangs up. Kakao finishes up an impressive wu shu  
routine. Lo Fat CLAPS.

LO FAT (CONT'D)

THE RED LOTUS IS ON HIS WAY! The  
gold medal will soon be yours, your  
Highness.

KAKAO

I'll believe it when I'm wearing  
it, your Lo-ness.

Lo Fat chuckles like a sycophantic good sport.

KAKAO (CONT'D)

Lo Fat, you're hiding it well, but  
it's only natural that you would be  
nervous about your position. In  
three days, I'll be twelve, I'll be  
king. Everyone who no'd me before  
will be yessing me then. Including  
you. Especially you.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LO FAT

I only live to serve you and  
enhance your image wherever I can.

Kakao marches over to a map of Asia and jabs his finger at  
an empty spot in the China Seas.

KAKAO

Then why aren't we on the map?!?

LO FAT

Rand McNally is giving me the  
runaround. We might have to pay  
them off.

KAKAO

Pay them off! Does Australia have  
to pay to be on a map?!?

Lo Fat starts to protest but Kakao holds his hand up.

KAKAO (CONT'D)

Bored now. I'll give you my  
decision very soon.

Kakao flips his little robe and leaves. Lo Fat's rising  
rage makes his veins pop. At the door, Kakao stops.

KAKAO (CONT'D)

Whatever happens, you can keep your  
clothing allowance. I know how  
much that means to you.

MAP INSERT: A RED LINE representing the plane moves from  
west to east, across the Pacific, stopping at Hong Kong.

INT. CHEP LAP KOK AIRPORT BAGGAGE CLAIM - HONG KONG - DAY

The kids follow Old Master, gawking at the sights and  
sounds of an international mega-city airport.

The Air Siam flight Passengers clot around the conveyor  
belt as the bags spill out. DJ sidles up to Julian.

DJ

Want to play Spot the Crazy People?

Julian points at DJ.

JULIAN

Your turn.

Julian keeps his eye on Old Master. He's the only one who  
knows that Old Master has another agenda.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

As the kids and Old Master grab their bags from the conveyor, Prudence makes an officious announcement.

PRUDENCE

For those who didn't follow my suggestion to buy Hong Kong dollars back in San Francisco, don't change your dollars here, do it in the city. Airports are known gougers.

EXT. CHINA SEATS / HYDROFOIL - DAY

The hydrofoil SKIPS across the China Sea through hundreds of islands.

BERNIE

Wow. I'm standing on Asia.

PRUDENCE

Is your Asian DNA vibrating or anything?

Julian ambles over to Old Master and strikes up a conversation.

JULIAN

Old Master, where exactly are you from?

Old Master points at the island in front of them. Allusia.

PRUDENCE, DJ & BERNIE

What? Are you serious?!? Why didn't you tell us?

OLD MASTER

I haven't been there in a long time. I don't even remember it.

The KIDS crowd on the bow and SEE ALLUSIA for the first time. The interior is lush, green and mountainous but the coastline is commercially developed. WE GO ALONG THE AMAZED FACES OF THE KIDS...and end on Old Master who tries to hide his concern. But Julian sees it.

EXT. ALLUSIA - LATE AFTERNOON

The kids and Old Master set foot on the island. They can see the PALACE, near the top of a mountain, as they climb into the courtesy limo.

EXT./INT. COURTESY LIMO - LATE AFTERNOON

Taking the steep curving road up to the palace, the limo passes ELECTRONIC JUMBO-TRONS of local icon KAKAO, performing live action kung fu. POSTERS of Kakao stare from store windows. Novelty Kakao ANTENNA BALLS on every other car.

PRUDENCE

Is he a king or a religion?

JULIAN

Ten years old and he bosses a whole country around.

BERNIE

When he's not winning tournaments.

DJ

You mean we'll have to fight *him*?

BERNIE

Hopefully. How many times in life do you get to kick a king's butt?

EXT. PALACE GROUNDS - MAIN GATE - EVENING

The limo rolls up to the high security compound. PALACE GUARDS man the massive gate -- circular, like a full moon.

EXT. PALACE - EVENING

The kids hop out of the limo, in awe of the surroundings. Exotic flowers and birds are everywhere. Old Master taps DJ and points. MONKEYS gallivant in trees above them.

PRUDENCE

Wow! This must be, like, a ten star hotel!

Bernie refers to an Allusian Guidebook.

BERNIE

No, it's the palace. It's been the private residence of the ruling Hung Duck dynasty for centuries.

PRUDENCE

Oh, so it's like their White House.

BERNIE

Yep. It's where Kakao lives, 'the ruler of Allusia since the tragic death of his parents. Kakao is most revered by his people.'

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JULIAN

Do they have a choice?

DJ

Hey, there he is!

Bernie points way up to a PALACE TERRACE where the young ruler, KAKAO, appears IN SILHOUETTE against the dusk sky. The kids wave. Kakao regards them indifferently.

INT. PALACE TERRACE - EVENING

Kakao watches as the kids and Old Master follow a guide to their quarters. Lo Fat appears behind him.

KAKAO

That's the last living link to invincible kung fu power? He looks old enough to croak at any minute.

LO FAT

Don't underestimate him. His kung fu is as lethal as it is legendary. But, thanks to you he'll be taking it with him to his grave. After he leads us to the tunic, of course.

Lo Fat chuckles confidently. Kakao is not amused.

KAKAO

What about the international sports press, and the Americans?

Lo Fat's hands lay out a hypothetical newspaper headline.

LO FAT

'Old Man About To Die Anyway Suffers Heart Attack!'

KAKAO

I don't know why I let you talk me into this. Forget the tunic! I'm good enough to win the gold medal on my own.

LO FAT

Today you are. But what about tomorrow? In a world that doesn't care about kings anymore. You have to be the best at something to stay popular. Your people love you because they share in the glory of your kung fu victories.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LO FAT(CONT'D)

If you start losing, who will be  
bowing to you then?

Lo Fat bows unctuously. The sound of a HELICOPTER. Lo Fat  
and Kakao look up to see A CHOPPER dip behind the palace.  
Lo Fat's face lights up. He runs inside.

INT. PALACE ENTRANCE - EVENING

COOKIE DUCKWORTH, sexy English Canto-pop singer, blows into  
the palace surrounded by her ENTOURAGE. Lo Fat swoons.

COOKIE

Hello, darling! This is my team.  
Hair, make up, stylist, podiatrist,  
Oriental etiquette advisor...

THE ADVISOR whispers in Cookie's ear.

COOKIE (CONT'D)

Oh, *Asian* etiquette advisor. See?  
He's worth his money already.

Kakao arrives.

COOKIE (CONT'D)

What a darling little king!

LO FAT

Your Highness, allow me to present  
world famous Canto-pop sensation,  
Cookie Duckworth, who needs no--

KAKAO

--I don't remember inviting *her* to  
the island.

LO FAT

That's because *I* invited her.

KAKAO

I don't mind you having your  
friends over, Lo Fat. But you have  
to ask me first. Guards! Escort  
this Bollywood Squares regular off  
the island.

PALACE GUARDS instantly appear. Cookie is appalled.

LO FAT

Your Majesty, please! Without  
Cookie there will be *no* pop star  
singing at the celebration!

Kakao eyes Lo Fat's hands, glittering with jewelled rings.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KAKAO

There is one way she could stay.

LO FAT

You want me to use up one of *my*  
Prerogative Rings for *your*  
tournament?

Kakao shrugs and turns on his heel. The Palace Guards grab Cookie by the elbows.

LO FAT (CONT'D)

Okay! Okay...here...

Lo Fat twists a ring off a finger. Kakao holds his palm underneath to catch the falling ring.

The Guards follow Kakao as he swans out of the room.

KAKAO

Put the pop tart and her groupies  
in the Ching Ling Wing!

Cookie changes SUNGLASSES, pulling a new pair out of practically nowhere, and gives Lo Fat a look.

COOKIE

Well. That little brat isn't as  
malleable as you led me to believe.

LO FAT

I was just playing along with his  
Justin Timberlake complex. I do  
things my way around here. He only  
*thinks* he has control.

INT. ATHLETE'S DORMITORY - EVENING

The dormitory is laid out like a supersized BARRACKS. Rows of bunkbeds extend from the walls. National flags hang from the foot of the bunks, designating team stations.

Prudence, DJ, Bernie and Julian march in, their arms piled high with towels, an extra sheet, pillows, and Gift Bags.

The kids dump the lot on their beds and sort through the loot in their gift bags: t-shirts, Cookie Duckworth's CD, "COOKIE DOE" (Cookie as Bambi a la Pierre et Gilles), crazy Asian bubble gum, Kakao playing cards, balloons and novelty items: plastic ice cubes with dead bugs, chattering teeth, etc. Prudence reads the tag on a rubber chicken.

PRUDENCE

Made in Allusia?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Everyone laughs...except Julian. He's staring at something in his goody bag. A NOTE FROM WAFFLEHEAD! It reads: *Meet me at the koi pond*. The signature consists of four straight lines going down and across. Waffles.

DJ

Dude, you look like you just ate some bad sushi.

JULIAN

No, dude...it was something else I ate.

He holds up a resin flap studded with regurgitated carrots and peas at DJ. Fake vomit. The kids crack up.

As kung fu kids from Japan, Bosnia, Indonesia, Iceland, India, Germany, France, New Zealand, and Chechnya troop in and fill the place up, Prudence, Bernie and DJ get their first look at their international competition.

Prudence smiles at every kid she sees.

PRUDENCE

Everyone looks really really nice.

The French team sashays by and sneers at her outfit. Prudence drops the smile.

PRUDENCE (CONT'D)

Like they're not wearing the Gap.

DJ turns around and to encounter the turbaned face of HADJI GODBOLLY, kung fu kid from India. Hadji stares at him, eyes like lasers.

DJ

Hi, how's it going? You here for the tournament thing?

But Hadji just stares.

Bernie fires off a whirligig novelty item. It ZIPS to the other end of the barracks. Bernie gets down on his knees and crawls under a row of bunk beds to find it.

When he emerges, a little Icelandic beauty, BJORK, 10, holds the zippy toy out for him. Bernie's glasses mist over. She's stunning. Black with straight blonde hair.

BERNIE

Hi. My name's Bernie. I'm from San Francisco, USA.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

BJORK

I'm Bjork. Reykjavik. Iceland.

She helps him up from the floor. He's smitten.

The Japanese team, wearing ultra one minute ago state-of-the-art TRAINERS, smirk at Julian's trainers.

JAPANESE KID

Those are so two months ago.

JULIAN

Don't you know 'retro' when you see it? You guys are trying too hard.

Bernie rubs shoulders with the entire Icelandic team and tries to impress Bjork.

ICELANDIC KUNG FU KID

So you are with the American team?

BERNIE

Yeah, I'm the one responsible for getting us this far. You could say I'm the team captain.

At the mention of "team captain", a nearby thunderous-jawed Bosnian, MONGO, 11, extends his meaty hand to Bernie.

MONGO

I am Bosnian team captain. My name is Mongo. I am the best martial artist from my soils.

BERNIE

Hi, Mongo. My name's Bernie...  
YEEEEOOOOOWWWWW!

Bernie practically keels over from Mongo's grip. The Icelanders LAUGH. Including Bjork.

DJ turns and there's Hadji. Face to face with him.

DJ

Look, ah, Hadji. In the States, we don't stare this much.

HADJI

Thank you. This is an interesting opportunity to exchange cultural information.

In retaliation for his hand, Bernie shoots his zippy toy at Mongo.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

Mongo ducks and the toy hits A CHECHNYAN KUNG FU KID in the nose. Not good. He ROARS from his bunk and swings and whirls a rubber chicken at Bernie. Bernie goes for the Chechnyan with a kung fu roundhouse kick and CLIPS an ENGLISH KID who stands up at the wrong time.

THE PILLOW FIGHT TO END ALL PILLOW FIGHTS ERUPTS

The kids flip and fly all over the place.

Leaping kids kung fu kick pillows mid-air. The bursting pillows spew vapor trails of feathers all over the barracks.

Kung Fu Kids working in concert toss each other into the air with taut blankets.

The JAPANESE KUNG FU KIDS convert their wooden block pillows into baseball bats, taking swings at pillows and plastic ice cubes.

A COUPLE OF INDONESIAN KIDS twist and tie sheets together into giant ropes and heave them over the ceiling beams, creating swinging "vines."

Prudence still tries to maintain composure and a sense of decorum in observance of the rules.

PRUDENCE

Everybody stop! This is totally against the rules!

She looks at Julian when she says that.

JULIAN

Why don't you just lighten up?

PRUDENCE

Why don't you just tighten up!?!

Julian spins off into the fun. And then with a "what the hell" shrug, she gives up and hurls herself into the thick of it, tangoing with the big boys.

In the bathroom, NAUGHTY ENGLISH KUNG FU KIDS fill up balloons (from their gift bags) with water. One fashions a water balloon "launcher" out of the surgical tubing cords used in resistance training devices.

WATER BALLOONS LOB through the air. Kids ZING Kakao playing cards and Cookie CD's at the balloons like they were skeet shooting.

ENGLISH KUNG FU KID

Card Fu! Cookie Fu!

INT. KAKAO'S SECURITY MONITOR ROOM - EVENING

A BANK OF SECURITY MONITORS cast a blue light around the dimly lit room. There's one viewer. Kakao. He watches the pillow fight with more than a trace of envy.

ON ONE MONITOR Prudence KUNG FU LEAPS INTO FRAME, and kisses the camera lens with a BIG BUBBLE GUM BUBBLE.

Lo Fat appears behind the prince. Kakao jumps in his seat.

LO FAT

We're about to grab our man, Your Highness.

KAKAO

You've cut this way too close, Lo Fat. I don't even have time to practice with the thing. What if it's hard to handle?

LO FAT

It's not a surfboard. Or a bucking bronco. All you have to do is put it on. It doesn't *require* anything of you. That's the beauty of it.

KAKAO

You make it sound like anyone could wear the tunic and be invincible.

LO FAT

It will never grace the shoulders of anyone but you, Your Greatness.

Kakao flips his little robe and marches out of the room.

BACK IN THE DORM

Julian swings through the air from rope to rope like Tarzan. At the end of the barracks, his momentum carries him clear out the window. He swoops around and looks down.

HIS POV: A MAN WAITING IN THE SHADOWS BY THE KOI POND.

Julian swings back to the window but brakes with his feet at the sill. Instead of re-entering the barracks, he scurries down the dormitory wall.

INT. DORMITORY - EVENING

A BEEFY GERMAN KUNG FU KID charges into the mayhem.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GERMAN KUNG FU KID

Der authorities are coming! Der  
authorities are coming!

In an instant, the interaction between the kids SWITCHES FROM FIGHTING TO TOTAL GLOBAL COOPERATION. The INDONESIAN KUNG FU KID and A TURKISH KUNG FU KID team up to make beds. A SWISS KUNG FU KID and an ESTONIAN KUNG FU KID collect all the pillows and speed-deal them to beds like playing cards.

DJ kung fu leaps in the air to snag floating feathers. Bernie grabs fake vomit, dirty diapers, and spilt coke bottles off the watery floor so that Prudence can swab it down with towels. Suddenly, she whips her head around.

PRUDENCE

Where's Julian?

EXT. KOI POND - NIGHT

Julian wanders out to the koi pond. In the shadows, a cigarette glows with no face behind it. The man steps out. Wafflehead.

WAFFLEHEAD

I told you I'd be in touch.

JULIAN

You said you were looking for something. So what is it?

WAFFLEHEAD

Something that has great meaning to our people. Meaning *and* magic.

JULIAN

I didn't come out here to listen to your bad poetry.

WAFFLEHEAD

There's an ancient relic hidden on this island, a work of art and an important cultural artifact.

JULIAN

Really? I thought it was an invincible kung fu power tunic.

Wafflehead is taken aback by Julian's disclosure.

WAFFLEHEAD

That too.  
(beat)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WAFFLEHEAD (CONT'D)

The Red Lotus stole it from us a long time ago. We think your master knows where it is and has returned to the island to take it away for himself. That's what your father believed anyway.

Julian knows Old Master's plan. But he plays dumb.

WAFFLEHEAD (CONT'D)

You have special abilities, Julian. Maybe you could be our eyes and ears, for a nice fee, of course.

He waves Wafflehead away.

JULIAN

I'm my own eyes and ears. Hire some other eyeballs.

INT. DORMITORY - EVENING

The DOORS fling OPEN. LO FAT enters with COOKIE DUCKWORTH. Miraculously, the room has been restored to total order. The kids are lined up at their stations. Bernie nudges DJ.

BERNIE

Who's the arm candy?

Lo Fat and Cookie stroll arm and arm down the length of the barracks as they inspect the "troops."

LO FAT

I know you've all had a long day, or a short one, depending on which direction you came from. My name is Lo Fat--

SNICKERS ripple through the barracks. DJ elbows Bernie.

DJ

His brother must be High Cholesterol.

Bernie SNORTS. Prudence GIGGLES.

LO FAT

And, of course, the superstar on my right is the one and only Cookie Duckworth. You have her cutting edge new CD in your gift bags...

The assembled athletes look blank. No one claps. No one cheers. But Cookie is as gratified as if they had.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

COOKIE

Thank you so much, darlings...Thank you, I'm very excited to be here.

Lo Fat stops in front of the Team USA station.

LO FAT

So. The Americans.  
(something's wrong)  
Where's your fourth?

Prudence seethes at the discovery Julian's infraction.

DJ

He ate something from his gift bag that made him very sick...

DJ steps aside to reveal a pond of fake vomit on the floor.

DJ (CONT'D)

Exhibit A.

Lo Fat and Cookie glance down. And GAG uncontrollably as they both hurry away from Team USA.

LO FAT

Sleep well and good luck to all -- although that's impossible.

COOKIE

Remember, we can't all be stars! But I'll have hankies and more CDs for the losers!

Lo Fat guides Cookie out of the dorm.

COOKIE (CONT'D)

I pressed the flesh with a visiting delegation. Just like Jackie! I almost feel like I'm wearing a pillbox hat!

EXT. PALACE GROUNDS - NIGHT

Julian walks back to the dormitory, deep in thought. Not far away, something WHISKS into the forest.

JULIAN'S POV: OLD MASTER STEALS INTO THE OFF LIMITS FOREST WITH LOTUS KUNG FU CLOAKING TECHNIQUE.

Julian peers into the off-limits area for Old Master. Fireflies waft. Wild animals ROAR. Using the RED LOTUS CLOAKING TECHNIQUE, Julian dives in.

EXT. BAMBOO FOREST - EVENING

Julian stealthily follows Old Master from a distance. The bamboos make creaking rustling noises in the wind.

INT. DORMITORY - NIGHT

The kids, now truly beat, settle into their bunk beds for the night. But Prudence is miffed by Julian's absence.

BERNIE

Prudence, relax, Julian likes to do things by himself.

PRUDENCE

I don't care. He could be getting us disqualified! What if they catch him trespassing somewhere?

She hops down from her bunk and puts her jeans on.

BERNIE

Okay. So me and DJ will stay here and worry about Julian getting us disqualified while you go out and double our chances.

Prudence ignores Bernie's logic and carefully treads out of the barracks.

INT. THE TEAM MASTERS DORMITORY - NIGHT

DARK FIGURES stealthily enter the SLEEPING QUARTERS full of SNORING MASTERS, moving through the darkness invisibly. Suddenly, THE LIGHTS GO ON exposing GOON DIP and FOUR NINJAS! They hover over an empty bed, A BOUQUET OF FLOWERS smashed into the pillow. TWENTY MASTERS surround the intruders, frozen in various kung fu attack poses.

MASTERS

Who are you! What are you doing here!

GOON DIP

Um...I have a flower delivery?

He reflexively smells the flowers and instantly passes out. THE NINJAS put him in A BODY BAG and drag him away.

EXT. BAMBOO FOREST - NIGHT

Old Master streaks through the forest and arrives at the convergence of two paths. He thinks he hears something behind him. Whirling around, he sees nothing.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

But instead of going right as he intended, he takes the left path as a precaution, to mislead whoever is tailing him.

EXT. PALACE GROUNDS -- NIGHT

In the distance, THE NINJAS can be seen carrying the body bag to the Palace. Prudence STEPS INTO FRAME, looking around in the dark for any sign of Julian. Up ahead at the edge of a cliff, A BOY WITH HIS BACK TO HER IS SILHOUETTED against the moonlit sky. Prudence hurries over to him.

PRUDENCE

Julian! Why are you out here?

The boy turns. It's KAKAO. Prudence is taken aback.

PRUDENCE (CONT'D)

I mean, what am I doing out here?  
Hi, I'm Prudence. What country are you from?

KAKAO

The one you're standing in.

Prudence realizes who he is. She finds her manners.

PRUDENCE

You have a beautiful country. I'm so happy to be here. Thanks for inviting us, um, should I call you 'Prince?'

KAKAO

No. Just Kakao. The 'prince' part's only good for two more days anyway.

He stares out across the ocean thoughtfully so Prudence decides to respect his privacy and retreat.

KAKAO (CONT'D)

Do you know that Allusia is not even on the map?

Prudence pivots in her tracks and rejoins him.

PRUDENCE

Yes, I did know! But I didn't want to say anything. That's so unfair! I mean, you're here!  
(stomping the ground)  
You should be charted!

Kakao totally impressed by Prudence's outrage.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KAKAO

*I know!* We get no respect! When I become king I'm going to change all that. Allusia has everything great countries have. History, culture, sports teams. Our mythology is every bit as good as the Greeks and nobody even talks about us! They have the Parthenon, we have the caves of Xinxu. They have the Golden Fleece, we have the invincible kung fu power tunic--

VOICE

(harshly)

Your Majesty!

Kakao whips around. It's Lo Fat. He's not happy.

LO FAT

Your 'delivery' has arrived!

With a goodbye glance to Prudence, Kakao flips his little robe and accompanies Lo Fat back to the palace.

LO FAT (CONT'D)

Your Highness, we do have state secrets! And you're telling them to the enemy!

KAKAO

I decide what's a secret!

EXT. ANCIENT RED LOTUS TEMPLE - NIGHT

From behind a palm thicket, Julian watches Old Master enter the dilapidated temple and approach an ancient altar. But instead of kneeling before it, Old Master shoves it off to the side, revealing a sandstone wall pocked with holes.

Next to the wall, stand an old bench and a chair. Julian watches Old Master lift the chair's seat up, take out a game of CHINESE CHECKERS, and place it on a bench.

He grabs MARBLES from the game and begins to fit them into holes on the wall. A DESIGN begins to emerge.

Julian is bewildered. Old Master completes THE DESIGN and THE POKED WALL GRATES open.

Julian leans far to his side to see into the room but he slips slightly. Correcting himself, he accidentally activates the RED FLASHING LIGHTS on his trainers.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Old Master enters the secret room, but does he see a soft red glow pulsing in the jungle brush? Abruptly, he steps away from the door. It closes with A GRATE. He takes the marbles from the wall, returns them to the game, the game to the chair, the altar to the wall. With a swirl of Red Lotus cloaking technique, he is gone.

INT. PAGODA PALACE - NORTH PAVILION - NIGHT

THE NINJAS dump the body bag onto an exquisite carpet. Kakao, Lo Fat, Cookie Duckworth, and Wafflehead are surprised to see, not Old Master, but GOON DIP tumble out of the bag! He's making infantile gurgles.

Another BUNGLE for Lo Fat. He desperately twists A PREROGATIVE RING off a finger and surrenders it to Kakao. Kakao checks his watch and smiles at Lo Fat.

KAKAO

Lo Fat, in exactly 27 hours and 33 minutes you'll be filling out a job application at Panda Express...

COOKIE

(sarcastically)

I love a man in uniform.

Kakao flips his little robe and walks out, Cookie nipping at his heels. Wafflehead skidoos away from Lo Fat and even Goon Dip, in his woozy delirium, tries to wobble/crawl out of the room -- away from Lo Fat's sinking ship.

EXT. THE ALLUSIAN SPORTS FORUM - DAY

ALLUSIAN MARTIAL ARTS FANS arrive for the tournament.

INT. ALLUSIAN SPORTS FORUM - DAY

Marching behind the flowing colors of their flags, KUNG FU KIDS from over twenty countries fill the arena.

Allusia comes alphabetically early in the spectacular PARADE OF NATIONS -- the high point of the OPENING CEREMONIES. KAKAO bears his country's flag. The AUDIENCE goes CRAZY. ALLUSIANS LOVE THEIR PRINCE!!!

ON TEAM USA

Bernie bears the American flag as Team USA parades with the other teams. He keeps tripping, as he strains to keep his eyes on the Icelandic team. DJ wears dark glasses to avoid direct eye contact with Hadji Godbolly and Prudence's eyes search for Kakao at the front of the parade.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Julian, meanwhile, watches Old Master like a hawk.

INT. SPORTS FORUM SKY BOX - DAY

Wafflehead and Goon Dip view the event in the V.I.P. room with Lo Fat. THE ALLUSIANS are GOING WILD for Kakao!

LO FAT

I hate it when they do that!

Down below, the AMERICAN TEAM passes underneath the sky box for review. Old Master and the kids salute the VIP's.

LO FAT (CONT'D)

He thinks he can come to my island  
and continue to elude me!

Lo Fat stands and returns the salute.

LO FAT (CONT'D)

Already an endangered flower,  
tonight the Red Lotus will be  
extinct.

Someone SNICKERS. It's Cookie. She's getting a manicure.

LO FAT (CONT'D)

If you want to be First Lady you  
better pitch in and help me be  
First Man!

CLOSE ON: THE GIANT SCORE BOARD IN THE SPORTS FORUM

The teams are divided into countries and sub-divided into animal-style categories. The combined scores of the individual events represent the team's overall placement.

INT. ALLUSIAN SPORTS FORUM - DAY

The competition site holds six sparring rings. The VARIOUS TEAMS are assembled at team stations around the arena, cheering their teammates on in their matches.

IN ONE RING

Prudence squares off with her OPPONENT, one of the Frogs who sneered at her outfit.

IN THE NEXT RING

Bernie is having a cake walk with his OPPONENT, one of the water balloon-lobbing Teabags.

ON THE SIDELINES

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Julian watches Old Master carefully. Old Master can feel Julian's gaze as he gives DJ last minute pointers and CHEERS him into his ring.

JULIAN

So, how does it feel to be back in your old hood, Old Master?

OLD MASTER

It's changed. But it still brings back memories. You should explore the island while we're here. There are many sites of interest.

Old Master moves further down the sidelines. Julian's uneasy. Did Old Master see him last night?

A BURST OF APPLAUSE. A REFEREE declares PRUDENCE the winner of her match.

Prudence bounds over to Julian, sweaty and flushed, but exhilarated from her victory.

PRUDENCE

I did it! I won! I won!

Julian high fives her. Prudence remembers something.

PRUDENCE (CONT'D)

Hey, where'd you go last night? You didn't get back until after four. *Allusian* time.

JULIAN

I wasn't tired so I walked around.

PRUDENCE

Well, I went out looking for you.

JULIAN

Thanks, Mom.

PRUDENCE

And I met that prince guy, Kakao. He's amazing. He really opened up to me. He told me the history of Allusia and about the caves and the invincible kung fu power tunic...

Julian's eye rolling grinds to a halt. He pulls Prudence aside for a private word.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

JULIAN

Have you told anybody else about  
this tunic?

PRUDENCE

No. Not yet.

JULIAN

Don't! You can't tell anybody!

PRUDENCE

Why? It's just a harmless **legend**.  
What's the big deal?

Prudence is about to probe further when Julian points over  
her head.

JULIAN

Look. There's your boyfriend.

Kakao and A FEW KID ATTENDANTS arrive at his ROYAL BOX.

Prudence waves brightly to KAKAO. He ignores her.  
Prudence is confused and hurt. But tries to hide it.

JULIAN (CONT'D)

He's too far away.

PRUDENCE

Yeah.

TOURNAMENT USHERS distribute PARTY INVITATIONS to all the  
kung fu kids and their masters.

DJ and Bernie, fresh from their victories, join Prudence  
and Julian, along with Old Master. Everybody high fives  
everybody.

OLD MASTER

You all made it to the semi-final  
rounds. A big day tomorrow.

Bernie opens his invitation and reads it.

BERNIE

And a big night tonight!

EXT. THE CELEBRATION

COLORFUL LANTERNS criss-crossing the entrance to a large  
tent. The party is in full swing. Prudence, DJ, Bernie,  
Julian and Old Master enter the bizarre bazaar.

INT. PALACE GROUNDS - THE OPENING CELEBRATION - NIGHT

Small stages ring the party area -- each one featuring a demonstration of a martial art form: Judo, Tae Kwon Do, Kuk Sul Won, Hapkido, Muay Thai, Jujitsu, Karate, etc.

Old Master refers to his party invitation.

OLD MASTER

Okay, everybody, we're looking for the Monkey table!

DJ

Let's find the food first! The invite says it's all you can eat!

BEHIND THE DUMPLING TENT

The evil forces convene. Lo Fat hands out WALKIE TALKIES to Wafflehead and Goon Dip.

LO FAT

Here's the plan. There's a trap door under the master's chair.

He hands a remote control device to Goon Dip.

LO FAT (CONT'D)

When the lights go down for Ms. Duckworth's show, push the big red button, the trap door will open, dumping him into an underground tunnel. The ju jitsu boys will take it from there. We'll have exactly one minute of darkness to get that old man in the can.

Wafflehead peeks through a gap in the tent flaps. Old Master and the kids arrive at the Monkey table.

WAFFLEHEAD

The Lotus has landed.

GOON DIP

Maybe we should have code names.

LO FAT

Good idea. I'll be Dragon One.

(to Goon Dip)

You're, let's see, the Big Dipper!

(to Wafflehead)

And you're Wafflehead.

Wafflehead is not amused.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LO FAT (CONT'D)

Okay, you can be Dragon Two.

INT. COOKIE DUCKWORTH'S DRESSING ROOM TENT - NIGHT

Lo Fat enters to find Cookie in full blown diva mode.

COOKIE

Everything's wrong. The dress, the lighting, the M&M's are the wrong color...

LO FAT

Cookie, this is D Day! Now wear these when you make your entrance.

He hands Cookie a pair of SUNGLASSES.

COOKIE

But these are *last year's* night-scope sunglasses! Everyone knows Cookie Duckworth is cutting edge!

LO FAT

Give me the signal when our man, shall we say, drops out of sight.

COOKIE

You're so self-absorbed with your crime, you don't care about me!

THE MONKEY TABLE

A KARATE GUY karate-chops an ice sculpture, sending chips of ice through the air and landing in the kids' drinks.

Julian keeps his eye trained on Old Master who strolls through the party, mingling with the guests. Bernie and DJ arrive with plates HEAPED with food. And Prudence gazes across the party.

PRUDENCE'S POV: THE VIP SECTION

Stanchioned off with velvet ropes, Kakao sits alone at a throne-like elevated table.

PRUDENCE

You can tell he's not having fun.

Julian looks over at Kakao. A SERVANT is cutting his meat.

JULIAN

What a nerd. Nobody's making him sit there by himself.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DJ  
 ("sensitively")  
 He's probably painfully shy.

BERNIE  
 Or painfully full of himself.

PRUDENCE  
 A subject you know something about.

From across the party, Kakao's eyes catch Prudence's.  
 Definite sparks. Julian sees this and doesn't like it.

JULIAN  
 Why don't you go talk to him? You  
 know you're dying to.

Prudence gets up from the table and, glancing at Julian  
 reproachfully, she leaves.

THE PARTY

Old Master walks among the stages, surveying the Martial  
 Arts Performance Exhibits. Goon Dip skirts along the edge  
 of the party, keeping Old Master in his eyeline.

WE SEE that someone else is tailing Old Master. Julian.

GOON DIP  
 (into walkie talkie)  
 Dragon Two, Dragon Two...

WAFFLEHEAD (O.S.)  
 Copy that. Go Big Dipper.

GOON DIP  
 He's by the karate tent. Over.

WAFFLEHEAD (O.S.)  
 Copy that. Over.

Goon Dip CLICKS OFF. And immediately bumps into someone.  
 Wafflehead.

THE THUMP THUMP THUMP OF LOUD RAP MUSIC.

THE VIP SECTION

Kakao taps his feet and, under the table, gestures like a  
 homeboy.

Prudence grooves her way over to the velvet ropes and  
 dances right under Kakao's nose. He's really impressed.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

KAKAO

Where'd you learn to dance like that?

She busts another killer dance move.

PRUDENCE

Why don't you come down here and I'll give you a free lesson?

Kakao looks to see if the coast is clear. It is. He steps off the platform, but catches his foot on the velvet rope, and falls flat on his face. HUGE LAUGHTER from the crowd. Kakao looks up, mortified. Prudence giggles good-naturedly and offers him her hand.

PRUDENCE (CONT'D)

Dude, that was classic.

Kakao slaps her hand away and scrambles to her feet.

KAKAO

I don't dance with commoners. Especially foreign ones!

He signals to his SENTRIES. They arrive and grab Prudence.

PRUDENCE

Hey, stop it! What are you doing?

Prudence KICKS and SCREAMS as the Sentries cart her to the tent entrance. Holding her ankles and wrists, they swing her like a hammock...

PRUDENCE (CONT'D)

I hope this country has king insurance because they're going to need a replacement after I get through with that little putz!

...and let her fly. A DOPPLER EFFECT WAIL as she sails out of the celebration.

And lands KERPLUNK in the koi pond!

THE DUMPLING TENT

DJ and Bernie pop dumplings in their mouths. Suddenly, Bernie sees Bjork. His glasses mist over. DJ chokes on his dumpling, making horrific RETCHING MOOSE CALL NOISES.

Bernie administers the Heimlich maneuver, ejecting the dumpling from DJ's gullet. It sails over the party.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

(INSERT: The dumpling lands KERPLUNK in Cookie Duckworth's mai-tai in the make-up tent.)

DJ comes up for air. There's Hadji, staring at him with his trademark penetrating hypnotic gaze. DJ is transfixed.

A KUNG FU KID FROM NEW ZEALAND grabs DJ by the head and yanks his face away from Hadji with a hard twist.

KIWI KID

Don't let him hypnotize you!!! He uses an ancient Hindu whammy to suck power out of his opponents.

DJ

Huh?

KIWI KID

He's your next match, you, you... Clyde! And he just won.

NEARBY

Bernie taps Bjork on the shoulder. She spins and deploys a backhand kung fu strike, bopping Bernie in the face.

BJORK

Sorry, Bernie. That was a reflex action!

BERNIE

You have amazing reflexes.

Bjork smiles. And waves to ANOTHER KID.

BERNIE (CONT'D)

(quickly)

We have a lot in common, Bjork. I'm Jewish and Asian American. And you're Icelandic and African American.

BJORK

African *American*?

BERNIE

You know, black.

BJORK

I'm African *Icelandic*.

BERNIE

Oh, cool...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

THE BACK OF THE CELEBRATION

Prudence stealthily approaches a twenty foot high security fence. With an elegant kung fu leap, she lands on razor wire and then flips into the backstage area. She crawls through the tents, looking for a way back into the party.

INT. COOKIE DUCKWORTH'S DRESSING ROOM

Cookie is balling out HER STYLIST, already in tears, about the sequined chiffon shreds hanging from her dress.

COOKIE

How do you expect me to perform in this dangling chiffon moment? One spark and I'm a Frito!

Cookie flings open the flaps to her wardrobe area.

COOKIE'S POV: Prudence, wet and shivering, has swaddled herself in some of Cookie's clothes.

COOKIE (CONT'D)

WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?!?

(catching herself)

I mean, you poor little cold and shivering thing. Here, let me get you out of that wet Dolce and Gabbana and into some dry Old Navy.

Cookie excuses herself to the dressing room. And is best friends with her stylist again, like a schizo.

COOKIE (CONT'D)

Watch what I do. I'm going to pump her for info. This will show Lo Fat that I can be First Lady.

(to Prudence)

How about a little makeover?

Prudence is propped up on a stool. Hair and make-up are already at work. Cookie hovers, supervising.

COOKIE (CONT'D)

Let's bring those pretty eyes out so they just pop off your face.

Cookie snatches the mascara wand from her make-up man and applies it to Prudence herself.

COOKIE (CONT'D)

Has your Old Master given you a tour of the island yet? I understand he's a native.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PRUDENCE

No, we're just focused on the tournament right now.

COOKIE

Surely he's told some exciting stories about the Red Lotus and the Black Salamanders? Open wider.

Prudence's eyes are already popping out of her head. She sees a chance to investigate the tunic and she grabs it.

PRUDENCE

Tons of them. But my favorite stories are the ones about the invincible kung fu power tunic!

COOKIE

Mine too!

Cookie turns for some lipstick and whispers to her stylist.

COOKIE (CONT'D)

She's eating out of my hand!

PRUDENCE

I'll tell you mine if you tell me yours...

COOKIE

Well, darling! All I know about the tunic is...

EXT. CELEBRATION TENT -- NIGHT

Old Master weaves through the crowd. Julian jogs through the PARTYGOERS, trying to keep up with him but Old Master disappears. Julian can't see him anywhere.

But Julian finds by an exit. Glancing over his shoulder, he steps outside and bumps right into WAFFLEHEAD!

WAFFLEHEAD

Going somewhere?

JULIAN

What's it to you?

WAFFLEHEAD

Depends where you're going. I think it's time we pooled our resources, don't you? Or neither one of us will get very far.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JULIAN

I don't need any partners.

Julian pushes past him.

WAFFLEHEAD

Be careful. When your Old Master found out that your father knew where the tunic was, well, the next thing we knew, he was dead.

JULIAN

Old Master taught my father! They had a bond!

WAFFLEHEAD

And this you know because your master told you. What's his proof? A picture on a wall? Here. I've got one too.

Wafflehead fishes a photo out of his jacket and hands it to Julian. It's a picture of JULIAN'S FATHER, WAFFLEHEAD and GOON DIP throwing back a few cold ones at a Chinatown bar.

A BURST OF STATIC from Wafflehead's walkie talkie.

GOON DIP (O.S.)

Dragon Two. Dragon One says the Lotus is on the move. Over.

Wafflehead drops his cigarette and steps on it.

WAFFLEHEAD

As you can see, he was a very good friend of ours, Julian. We don't want his death to go unpunished.

A GONG REVERB from the celebration tent quiets the house for the show. Wafflehead smiles, cold and catlike.

WAFFLEHEAD (CONT'D)

I like you, Julian. Don't miss the show.

Wafflehead disappears. Julian re-enters the tent.

ON A LARGE CENTRAL STAGE

Lo Fat opens his arms to the assembled athletes. As he makes his speech, he keeps his eye on Old Master.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

LO FAT

Welcome! Willkommen! Bienvenidos!  
Ohio Gasayamachi! Zdratsvyotche!  
To the 12th Annual Allusian Kung Fu  
Invitational! Every year we hold a  
kung fu tournament to honor the  
twelfth birthday of our beloved  
ruler, Kakao Hung Duck!

The spotlight swings to Kakao in the V.I.P. Section.

AT THE MONKEY TABLE

Julian takes his place at the table. He's surprised to see Old Master is there, calmly sipping tea. Julian urgently fires off questions over the APPLAUSE for Kakao!

JULIAN

I know you came here for the tunic.  
Why do you want it? What does it  
have to do with me?

Old Master is caught off guard.

OLD MASTER

For your own protection, I can't  
tell you...

LO FAT

Fresh from entertaining UN Peace-  
keeping forces in St. Tropez...

The lights GO DOWN.

ENTRANCE TO BACK STAGE

A mini-Cookie Duckworth bursts into the party from the backstage area. It's Prudence! She plunges into the crowd, clearly on an urgent mission.

PRUDENCE

Old Master! Old Master!

She's sucked into A WAVE OF KUNG FU KIDS storming the stage for the show. Prudence fights against it but it's useless.

LO FAT

Here she is! Hong Kong's national  
treasure...COOKIE DUCKWORTH!

THE AUDIENCE JUMPS TO ITS FEET AND ERUPTS INTO HUGE  
APPLAUSE. THE LIGHTS GO OUT. IT'S COMPLETELY DARK.

AT THE MONKEY TABLE

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

JULIAN

TELL ME!

COOKIE (O.S.)

Hello, Allusia!

GOON DIP

trains THE REMOTE on Old Master's chair and pushes the big red Dr. Seuss button.

GOON DIP

Dragon One, Dragon Two...it's the Big Dipper! We bagged him!

ON THE STAGE

Colored lights flash on the stage which is actually a skateboard half-pipe. A troupe of EXOTIC DANCERS zip out on Razor scooters and do crazy loop de loops.

Cookie comes out in an outfit that would make Cher blush.

COOKIE

Everybody ready to kung fu fight!

As the opening chords of "Kung Fu Fighting" BLAST OUT, Cookie tosses plastic sunglasses into the mosh pit of KIDS. The KIDS KUNG FU LEAP INTO THE AIR to snag the glasses.

Cookie spots Old Master's EMPTY CHAIR through the night scopes and gives Lo Fat the high sign.

THE SECRET CHAMBER UNDER THE PARTY

Lo Fat races to A BODY on the floor. He's triumphant as he lifts the BOUQUET OF KNOCK OUT FLOWERS and sees...the WOZZY FACE OF DJ! Lo Fat screams at the JU JITSU BOYS.

LO FAT

Does this look like an elderly Red Lotus master? Is this the face of the only man in the world with the key to invincible kung fu power! He's not even Chinese!

DJ's head wobbles from side to side.

DJ

Goo goo. Gaa gaa.

BACK ON STAGE

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

Lo Fat frantically gestures to Cookie that Old Master is still on the loose.

THROUGH THE NIGHTSCOPE SUNGLASSES

Cookie catches fleet glimpses of Old Master as he escapes from the celebration. She uses strange and twisted dance gyrations to steer Lo Fat to Old Master's location.

OUTSIDE

Lo Fat scours the grounds for Old Master. But there's no trace of him. Wafflehead joins Lo Fat.

LO FAT

We've lost him! Now we'll never  
get the tunic!

VOICE

I know where it is.

They turn. Julian pushes past them to lead the way.

FIREWORKS EXPLODE IN THE SKY

A GLITTERING DRAGON dances before the lights rearrange themselves into a SHIMMERING RED LOTUS FLOWER.

THE PARTY

The kids SHRIEK with delight and APPLAUD the fireworks display. Bernie takes Bjork's hand. She lets him.

Prudence searches all over for Old Master. She finds Jimmy Yip and tugs on him. Jimmy Yip looks down and SCREAMS. Prudence looks like a little fright.

PRUDENCE

Mr. Yip, Mr. Yip! Old Master's in  
trouble. Cookie Duckworth told me!

JIMMY YIP

(unconcerned)

Of course she did, she's in show  
business! Always looking for a big  
drama! Just laugh it off.

Prudence forces a LAUGH but Jimmy Yip looks mad.

EXT./INT - THE RED LOTUS TEMPLE

Julian leads Wafflehead and the PALACE GUARDS to the pocked wall, the marbles, and shows them the design "key."

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The wall opens. Wafflehead, Goon Dip, and Julian enter. AN OLD MURAL of Allusia is painted on the wall. The narrative of the tunic is missing several portions -- including the last panel -- the ending.

GOON DIP

It's the story of the tunic!

WAFFLEHEAD

But where is the tunic?!?

Something CRUNCHES under Wafflehead's foot. A FORTUNE COOKIE. Wafflehead bends down to pick up the fortune.

WAFFLEHEAD (CONT'D)

"Put all your money and jewelry in the egg roll and no one gets hurt!"

GOON DIP

In bed.

Old Master whirls and confronts Julian.

WAFFLEHEAD

WHAT IS THIS? SOME KIND OF JOKE?!?

JULIAN

This is where he came last night!

Goon Dip WHISPERS in Wafflehead's ear. Wafflehead smiles.

WAFFLEHEAD

We can take it from here, Julian. Guards! Escort Julian back to the party!

JULIAN

I don't want to go back to the party. I want to find the tunic. And follow in my father's footsteps.

WAFFLEHEAD

(raising an eyebrow)

Oh, you will.

A FEW GUARDS grab Julian by the elbows and lead him away from the temple. Julian is starting to feel at risk.

Suddenly, a super-powered KUNG FU CHI TWISTER blows into the temple and knocks over the guards "escorting" Julian. It's Old Master!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

OLD MASTER

Run, Julian! GO!

Old Master takes on the BLACK SALAMANDERS all at once with Red Lotus kung fu, allowing Julian to escape.

Julian runs and runs and when he's far enough away, he looks over his shoulder.

JULIAN'S POV: Old Master is holding his own but more and more Salamanders arrive. He will soon be overwhelmed.

EXT. CELEBRATION - NIGHT

Prudence returns to the Monkey Table as DJ staggers back.

PRUDENCE

What happened to you?

DJ

I'm not sure exactly. I think I was zapped with rival Hindu mojo that counteracts kung fu chi.

MERRY WHISTLING wafts out of the darkness. Bernie floats over, his head in the clouds, not a care in the world.

BERNIE

'Iceland is such a nice land.'

PRUDENCE

This is no time for romance! These are diversionary tactics by the opposition. Has anyone seen Old Master?

INT. CAVE TORTURE CHAMBER - NIGHT

Old Master's chained to a standing rack torture contraption that's like a Swiss army knife -- it's got drills, spikes, car battery with alligator clamps, blow torch, water torture dropper, videos of Full House. Lo Fat, Wafflehead and Goon Dip watch as Old Master opens his eyes.

LO FAT

Welcome back, my friend.

Old Master takes in Lo Fat's lair.

OLD MASTER

It's nice to be here.

(wryly)

All the comforts of home.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Lo Fat makes huge expansive gestures around the lair.

LO FAT

We've been looking forward to your arrival for a long time. You're probably wondering why you're here.  
(confidentially)

I know you know exactly why you're here. But this is my big moment. I want to enjoy it. Humor me?

Old Master looks at him, giving away nothing. Wafflehead CHUCKLES cruelly.

LO FAT (CONT'D)

How rude of me. I believe you know my men from the San Francisco office...

Wafflehead and Goon Dip wave. Lo Fat moves closer to Old Master. His manner becomes sentimental.

LO FAT (CONT'D)

We haven't seen each other in a long, long time. And I've really grown as a person...so I'm going to give you a choice. We can take the short cut to the truth. Or the scenic route. The scenic route begins like this...

He nods to Goon Dip who presses a button on a big Dr. Seuss remote. Old Master's contraption shakes to life. Hammers, spikes, and water drops hit Old Master all over his body.

LO FAT (CONT'D)

And then we go a little further and we get to...

Goon Dip pushes another button. The shaking and torture becomes more intense.

LO FAT (CONT'D)

And up ahead is a lovely...

An incredible ZAP of torture. Old Master sweats a little.

LO FAT (CONT'D)

I'll give you a breather...because I like you. But imagine a few more hours of a little of this, a little of that. Sooner or later, you will tell me where the *tunic* is.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

OLD MASTER

Even if I knew where it was, I  
don't know if I could retrieve it.

LO FAT

You're lying! I know who you are.  
You know who I am and what I want.  
So since we already know the  
ending, why not make it easy on  
yourself? Tell me now!

Old Master remains silent. Lo Fat grabs Old Master by the  
cheeks and gets right in his face.

LO FAT (CONT'D)

You break my heart!

Lo Fat gives the high sign to Wafflehead and the  
contraption sputters back to life.

EXT. ALLUSIA SPORTS ARENA - DAY

Allusian Fans arrive for the tournament. Flags of many  
nations ring the plaza area.

INT. SPORTS FORUM - DAY

AT THE TEAM USA STATION

DJ, Bernie, and Prudence aren't warming up. They're  
scanning faces on the floor and in the crowd for any sign  
of Old Master. Julian keeps off to the side.

DJ

Maybe this is a test like the tea  
cup. 'You can't see everything with  
your eyes.' Remember?

DJ looks way up into the rafters.

DJ (CONT'D)

Yo! You can come down now!

Bernie snaps his fingers in front of DJ's face.

BERNIE

Do you really think Old Master is  
gonna come all the way to Allusia  
and then miss the whole reason for  
being here?

The kids look doubtful. Of course he wouldn't.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PRUDENCE

Julian, you haven't said anything.  
What do you think?

Julian can't look at Prudence. He's riddled with guilt.

JULIAN

I don't know what to think.

BERNIE

Uh oh. Jimmy Yip approaching from  
the northwest.

Jimmy Yip arrives, dripping with false concern.

JIMMY YIP

Kids, I need you to be really brave  
right now. Your Old Master  
collapsed at the party last night--

Prudence's mind races. DJ and Bernie look startled.  
Julian joins the group.

JIMMY YIP (CONT'D)

...I spoke to Lo Fat and he said  
your master was airlifted to a  
facility where he is stabilized and  
resting comfortably.

PRUDENCE

Can we go see him?

JIMMY YIP

Not now. You have your matches.

Jimmy Yip pulls out a note from his pocket and unfolds it.

JIMMY YIP (CONT'D)

This is from your master.  
("reads")  
Dear students, Today will be your  
hardest test yet. Do your best and  
don't worry. Keep your kicks high,  
Old Master.

Julian rolls his eyes. DJ holds his hand out for the note.  
Jimmy Yip hands it over. It's written IN CHINESE.

PRUDENCE

Then when can we see him?

JIMMY YIP

Soon, soon, it's just a touch of  
Allusian Monkey Fever.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

JIMMY YIP (CONT'D)

I'll contact you the minute he's better. Good health is no laughing matter at the Wise Crack Fortune Company! Good luck, kids.

He leaves. Julian takes off after him.

PRUDENCE

Wait, Julian, where are you going?

She's about to run after him when...

ANNOUNCER'S VOICE

...Prudence Webb to Ring Number Five! DJ Bossidy to Ring Number Four! Hadji Godbolly to Ring Number Four!

DJ

Ring Number Four? Did you know that the word for four is the same as the word for death in Chinese? Four is China's thirteen!

BERNIE

Go! Get up there! Remember what Old Master said! Face your opponents the way you face your friends! Pretend Hadji is me, DJ!

DJ GULPS. He enters his ring and finds his opponent, Hadji Godbolly, meditating in the lotus position. He opens his eyes and fixes them on DJ's like lasers.

ANNOUNCER'S VOICE

Bernie Fong to Ring Number Two. Bjork Sigurson to Ring Number Two!

It's Bernie's turn to GULP.

Bernie enters the ring where Bjork is waiting. He bows. She looks at him, pleading with her big blue eyes to go easy on her. The REFEREE lowers the flag.

Bernie feints and moves but doesn't attack. He's going to let her off. Bjork waits for him to downshift into neutral and then CLOBBERS him with her best kung fu.

INT. TORTURE CHAMBER - DAY

Wafflehead shows Lo Fat broken drill bits, an ax with the handle broken, and the other damaged torture tools of the trade broken by Old Master's chi power.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WAFFLEHEAD

We've tried it all. His internal chi resists everything. Nothing phases him!

Lo Fat circles Old Master in his torture cage, fuming. Suddenly he lunges for the contraption like a maniac. A few nuts and bolts jiggle loose. Just as suddenly, Lo Fat steps away and smooths his hair back, regaining composure.

LO FAT

I didn't want this to get messy. I thought we could keep it between the two of us. But since you're not cooperating...

WAFFLEHEAD

(rhetorically)

If we can't hurt *him*... then who can we hurt that would produce the desired result?

LO FAT

Let's see, who do you care about...

WAFFLEHEAD

(like a child)

...'Old Master?'

OLD MASTER

No, Lo Fat! You and me, man to man. Red Lotus to Black Salamander. Have you no honor?

LO FAT

Boy, are you a relic. Who cares about honor? I want power!!!

Lo Fat, fire burning in his eyes, commands Wafflehead.

LO FAT (CONT'D)

No more chances! Go round up those American brats! Maybe their cries of pain will loosen his tongue!

Old Master closes his eyes, afraid it would come to this.

EXT. ARENA

Julian catches up to Jimmy Yip as he climbs into his Wise Crack Fortune Cookie Co. chauffeur-driven golf cart.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JULIAN

Hold it, Mr. Yip. Where's Old Master? And don't tell me about facilities and airlifts.

JIMMY YIP

(innocently)  
I'm only passing along information.  
(levelling with him)  
Just doing my part, and you should do the same.

JULIAN

I don't have a part!

JIMMY YIP

You can't have it both ways, Julian. You're with us or against us. Last night you were with us. Having a change of heart?

JULIAN

I'll take it up with Wafflehead. Where is he?

JIMMY YIP

Let's see. There's a bar he likes around here. I can't remember the name but it's got a theme...hmmm... it's not bikers, it's not transvestites, or the Allusionian fashion crowd...I can tell you the sign is blue neon.

Jimmy Yip LAUGHS, hard and mean. The chauffeur drives the golf cart away.

INT. ARENA - DAY

WE HEAR Prudence's CRY OF PAIN right before she lands hard on the mat, her face completely squashed.

In the next ring, A TOURNAMENT MEDICAL TEAM carries DJ out of the ring. His feet drag against the mat.

Bernie has the wind knocked out of him by a well-placed jab from a Bjork. For the first time in a long time he has been defeated. He hangs his head in shame.

Julian re-enters the forum. THE KIWI KID runs up to him.

KIWI KID

It's a bloodbath, mate. Your mates are being slaughtered.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANNOUNCER'S VOICE

This is the third and final call  
for Julian Hubble of the Bamboo  
Tiger Dojo!

IN THE CENTER RING

The crowd is chanting, "MONGO! MONGO!" Julian, much  
smaller, looks like he doesn't stand a chance.

ANNOUNCER'S VOICE (CONT'D)

In the Center Ring, Julian Hubble  
of Bamboo Tiger dojo, San  
Francisco! Mongo Milicevic of  
Bosnia's Black Dragon Kwoon!

The REFEREE raises the flag. Before Mongo can complete his  
combat stance, Julian is nailing him with a dazzling  
combination of Red Lotus kicks and strikes.

IN THE ROYAL BOX

Kakao watches Julian's brilliant display of kung fu with  
rising jealousy. His ATTENDANTS caught up in the  
excitement of Julian's performance.

KID IN WAITING #1

That American's kung fu is wack!  
You got to give it to him.

KAKAO

No, you don't!

KID IN WAITING

When you're good, you're good. And  
he's really good.

KAKAO

If you want to admire my  
competition, do it down in general  
admission!

KID IN WAITING

Okay, okay, I was just...

KAKAO

I'm not listening to you.  
(to GUARDS)  
Go get Lo Fat!

Kakao flips his little robe and leaves his box.

IN THE RING

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Julian scores point after point. The match ends almost as soon as it begins. Mongo keels over onto the mat. Julian wins! The ALLUSIANS, who shift allegiances on a dime, now chant, "JULIAN! JULIAN!"

THE TEAM USA STATION

Julian joins his zoned-out teammates after his victory.

DJ AND BERNIE

Your kung fu was the tightest, dude. Congratulations, you made it to the gold medal match!

Julian pants as the adrenaline wears off.

PRUDENCE

What did Jimmy Yip say?

JULIAN

Listen, guys, I don't know where he is but I can tell you Old Master is not in the hospital. It's much worse. He's been kidnapped.

DJ FREAKS. Bernie is stunned. Prudence GASPS.

JULIAN (CONT'D)

I saw it happen with my own eyes. Last night. At an old temple. Wafflehead was there. Goon Dip and Lo Fat are in on it too. So is Jimmy Yip.

PRUDENCE

Why didn't you call the police!?

JULIAN

Because everybody on this island is a Black Salamander! The police, the guards, everybody!

He waves at the entire sports forum. Prudence glances up at the ROYAL BOX. Kakao is there.

JULIAN (CONT'D)

Him too.

BERNIE

Why would these guys kidnap Old Master? He's just a nice old guy with a kite shop.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

JULIAN

He's that, and much more than that.

DJ

Is he from a rich family?

PRUDENCE

It's not money they want, it's an invincible kung fu power tunic. Whoever has it is going to rule the island.

DJ AND BERNIE

A what? What's Old Master got to do with this?

JULIAN

He knows where it is.

Prudence sadly lowers her head into her hands. And sees something under her seat.

Julian looks up. A FORCE OF PALACE GUARDS enter the forum.

JULIAN (CONT'D)

This is bad.

(huddling)

The guards are here! We gotta go!

DJ and Bernie jump up. But Prudence is flabbergasted. She's holding the note Julian received from Wafflehead.

PRUDENCE

(reading)

'Meet me at the koi pond at midnight!' Signed Wafflehead!

Julian is busted. But he pleads with Prudence urgently.

JULIAN

I know it looks bad but we're on the same side, Prudence. I'll prove it later but you've got to trust me now!

PRUDENCE

So you can give us to Wafflehead the same way you did Old Master?

The GUARDS begin to stream into the arena from all sides.

JULIAN

We've got to stick together so we can save Old Master!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

The Palace Guards arrive on the Competition Floor.

PRUDENCE

That's exactly what we shouldn't do. We've got to split up so if they catch one of us they don't catch all of us.

JULIAN

No! There's more strength in numbers!

Prudence, DJ and Bernie back away from Julian.

BERNIE

Go tell Wafflehead you couldn't get us too, you traitor!

The PALACE GUARDS are closing in on the USA team station.

THE OTHER KUNG FU KIDS, Mongo, Bjork, and Hadji Godbolly see the danger the Americans are in and pre-emptively pick off a few GUARDS to create a diversion.

Mongo stomps over to a GUARD and lands a vicious kick on the back of his head, then drives him into the ground.

DJ sees Hadji bore his eye lasers into A GUARD. The Guard freezes in his tracks, hypnotized.

Bjork rolls toward A GUARD, turns a somersault that ends in a power handstand, and kicks the Guard into the air.

BJORK

Go, Bernie! I'm sorry I massacred you!

BERNIE

Anytime!

The kids disperse into the crowd and make their getaways.

EXT. SPORTS FORUM

Julian heads off in one direction by himself. Prudence, DJ and Bernie run off in the opposite direction.

INT. PALACE DOJO - DAY

Kakao paces in front of his GUARDS, fuming. Lo Fat enters and bows. Kakao EXPLODES.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KAKAO

You're supposed to be looking out for me!

LO FAT

I am looking out for you.

KAKAO

Then where's the tunic?!?

LO FAT

(ironically)

Did something happen to make you want it so desperately?

KAKAO

Don't talk down to me just because I'm little. The tunic is mine! It's my island! And everything on the island is mine! DO YOU HAVE A PROBLEM WITH THAT?

LO FAT

I'm the one who told you about the tunic in the first place!

KAKAO

THEN WHY HAVEN'T YOU PRODUCED IT?

While Kakao dresses him down, Lo Fat carefully reaches into one of his sleeves and slowly pulls something out...

KAKAO (CONT'D)

I have come to a decision. As of now, I won't be needing you. My ideas have always been as good as yours. I've been running this place since I was eight. Even though it's a few hours before I am ruler of Allusia, I'm putting you under house arrest. Seize him!

The Guards move in on Lo Fat, who holds up his hands in surrender, A TUNIC dangling from one of them.

LO FAT

Tunic, anyone?

Kakao eyes widen with wonder. He grabs it and puts it on. It's an obvious FAKE but Kakao imagines that he's infused with invincible kung fu power.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

KAKAO  
 (devilishly)  
 How do I know it will work?

With no warning, Kakao deals a flying dropkick to Lo Fat! Lo Fat, upon impact, dramatically hurls himself backwards across the dojo and into a wall.

LO FAT  
 Aaaaaahhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhh!

Kakao marvels at his new "ability." Lo Fat "collapses" in a heap like he's been crushed by Godzilla.

LO FAT (CONT'D)  
 (panting)  
 This is too much, your highness.  
 You're so strong. It's like  
 fighting a force field.

KAKAO  
 It works, it works! I don't know  
 how it works, but it really works!

Kakao runs around the dojo 'using' invincible kung fu power. Lo Fat fakes being slammed into walls a few times before he surrenders on his knees, begging Kakao for mercy.

LO FAT  
 Are you still casting me aside?

KAKAO  
 No. Everything I said before, I  
 take back. All that matters is  
 that I've got the tunic. I was  
 mad. Now I'm happy.

EXT. PALACE GROUNDS - DAY

Prudence, DJ, and Bernie are hunkered down and moving quickly behind rubber trees and hedges.

DJ  
 What do we do now? We don't know  
 the language, the layout, not to  
 mention emergency phone #s.

PRUDENCE  
 My father always says when you want  
 something done go right to the top.  
 Why waste time on the sales clerk  
 who hates you and wants to leave  
 early when you can go to the  
 prince?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BERNIE

So you'll go to the palace and see what you can find out from Kakao.

PRUDENCE

No, you go! I can't stand Kakao.

BERNIE

Denial is the first sign of a crush.

Prudence shoots him a look. And sees A FORCE OF GUARDS spotting them. The kids take off helter skelter...

...and arrive in a ZEN ROCK GARDEN. The Guards are right behind them. They take cover behind a FEW MEDITATORS, who are lost in their transportations.

The GUARDS enter the garden and stalk through it, looking for the kids.

The kids whisper behind the Meditators.

BERNIE (CONT'D)

There's only ten, we can take them!

DJ

If you and Prudence can handle nine, I'll take the other one.

BERNIE

No sweat. Numbers don't scare me.

PRUDENCE

If we think too much we won't do it! We'll be like these guys.

Like a shot out of a cannon, Prudence vaults over her Meditator, grabs a nearby rock rake, and converts it into a kung fu weapon.

Bernie vaults off the top of his meditator with one finger and lands next to Prudence. He grabs his own rake. It's two against ten. DJ still cowers behind a Meditator.

A KUNG FU FIGHT in the Zen Garden. Prudence and Bernie keep the Guards at bay with Rake Fu over boulders and lily pads but a LARGER FORCE OF GUARDS arrive. Bernie and Prudence are outnumbered and surrounded.

DJ escapes, unnoticed.

Prudence and Bernie are enclosed by Guards. Prudence pretends to notice something on the ground.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

She crouches down to pick it up, conveniently placing herself in a position from which to launch an attack.

PRUDENCE (CONT'D)

Vicious Rooster Fury!

Prudence power-presses into a handstand, nailing A GUARD under the jaw with both heels and sending him into the air.

Bernie executes a handstand kick that nails ANOTHER GUARD squarely in the jaw. The Guards collide mid-air and fall to the ground SCREAMING IN PAIN.

Prudence and Bernie use aeronautics to leap over more guards and streak away. By the time they realize they've made it, they realize they've inadvertently separated.

EXT. PALACE GROUNDS - DAY

Goon Dip carries a few bags of Panda Express take-out down a path. In the trees above, Julian follows him. He jumps from tree to tree and. When he runs out of trees he catapults into the air and lands in front of Goon Dip.

With lightning speed Julian takes the chopsticks out of the takeout bag and holds Goon Dip by the nose with them.

JULIAN

You're coming with me.

GOON DIP

Where are we going?

EXT. XINXU CAVE OPENING - DAY

DJ tentatively approaches a dark cave opening. He takes a step toward it. A CLOUD OF BATS swarm out of it.

DJ runs backward SCREAMING and falls into a hole in the ground. A PATROL OF SIX GUARDS emerge from the cave mouth, looking for the source of the scream.

INT. CAVE NETWORK - DAY

DJ navigates a dimly lit cave labyrinth formed with tunnels and passages. New turns with each turn. He stops, hearing something. FOOTSTEPS.

DJ pops a kung fu stance and makes a 360 degree turn in trembling attack mode. The FOOTSTEPS draw nearer. DJ backs away from them and BUMPS INTO SOMEONE behind him. He SCREAMS and sinks to his knees, begging for mercy.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DJ

Please, don't hurt me. I'll steal whatever my parents have that you want. I'll send you Christmas cards for the rest of your life!

VOICE

That's okay but I'll take your PS2 games.

DJ looks up. It's Bernie. He lugs DJ to his feet. They start walking.

DJ

Thanks a lot. How'd you get here?

BERNIE

It wasn't easy. But I read in the guidebook about these caves. I figured if I was a kidnapper this would be where I'd take a hostage.

They arrives at a three way intersection. Bernie is stymied. But he heads down the center tunnel. DJ follows.

DJ

Why this one?

BERNIE

I'm following the reek of evil.

EXT. PAGODA PALACE - DAY

Prudence, using her Eagle Claw hand form, scales up seven swooping rooves to the terrace where she first saw Kakao.

INT. KAKAO'S PRIVATE QUARTERS - DAY

Eminem's, "Without Me," plays on the stereo. Kakao, wearing the tunic, is trying to dance like Prudence when she appears in one of his windows and falls into the room. Kakao is embarrassed and outraged.

KAKAO

How did you get past security!?!  
Guards! Guards!

PRUDENCE

We got off on a bad footing so I didn't think you'd let me in if you knew who I was.

SAVAGE GROWLS come from behind a door. Kakao opens it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KAKAO

ATTACK!

Prudence's terrified face relaxes into one of joy when the palace watchdogs, six adorable SHIH-TZUS, bound all over her giving her licks and love. Kakao yells at the dogs.

KAKAO (CONT'D)

My first ever intruder and this is your idea of ferocious!

Prudence thinks fast.

PRUDENCE

I was wondering, when we were almost dancing, I had this barrette on and then it was gone. I thought maybe it fell near you...and you didn't know my number and I didn't have your number so...

The GUARDS burst in. He juts his finger at Prudence.

KAKAO

If I had been asleep she could have killed me by now! Get out! And take these useless dogs with you.

GUARD #1

What about her?

KAKAO

Leave her to me.

The Guards and the shih-tzus leave. Kakao saunters among his trophies, oozing superiority.

KAKAO (CONT'D)

You didn't come here to ask about your barrette, did you?

PRUDENCE

Yes! I lost my barrette! But also...I want your help. It's about our master. He's missing--

KAKAO

He's not missing at all. He's in the hospital. He's had a mild heart attack.

PRUDENCE

I thought it was Allusian Monkey Fever!

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

PRUDENCE (CONT'D)

(sadly realizes)

So you are in on it too? I knew it. You guys should get your story straight.

KAKAO

Would you rather we announced that we sent him to jail for attempted stealing of a national treasure!

Kakao models his new fake tunic proudly.

PRUDENCE

Nice kimono.

(then it hits her)

*That's the tunic?!?*

KAKAO

Obviously, your master knows more about Allusian antiquities than he's told you!

PRUDENCE

Look, Kakao, we're both kids. Nobody tells us everything. Do you think your Lo Fat guardian person is keeping you totally in the loop?

Kakao is stung. She's hit a nerve.

KAKAO

GUARDS!

PRUDENCE

This is no way for a host nation to behave!

FOOTSTEPS pound down the corridor. Prudence's eyes dart to the open window. Now would be the time to escape. She chooses to make one final appeal to Kakao.

PRUDENCE (CONT'D)

I know you're a really good guy, Kakao. I know from the first night we met. What difference does it make if Allusia's on the map if it's a horrible place? You want to make it a great place, I know you do, but you've got to do the right thing. I'm afraid for you. I think you might be in danger too!

Prudence's concern penetrates Kakao's brittle facade and goes right to the core. Not since his parents died, has he been addressed with such true feelings.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

PRUDENCE (CONT'D)

We can help each other if we work together.

She holds out her hand to him. The GUARDS burst in! Kakao gestures for them to take her away. Prudence's face falls. Another weak man. The Guards grab her...

PRUDENCE (CONT'D)

I was already leaving.

...and haul her out of Kakao's quarters. Kakao watches her leave with a mix of emotions. Mostly regret.

INT. THE THROWING STAR SALOON - DAY

Julian enters with Goon Dip and adjusts his eyes to the dark. A Chinese crooner covers a Foo Fighters song on the juke box. Alone at the bar, Wafflehead, nurses a Tsing Tao beer. He's non-plussed by Julian's appearance. Seems not to notice that Julian has chopsticks up Goon Dip's nose.

WAFFLEHEAD

Ah, Julian! I've been expecting you. Well. You did a wonderful job for us. You betrayed your Old Master beautifully.

JULIAN

That's what I'm here to talk to you about! You lied to me, you used me!

WAFFLEHEAD

(rubbing it in)  
Betrayal always starts as a good idea. Then it becomes a habit.

JULIAN

Now take me to Old Master or Goon Dip gets it with my homemade lobotomy kit.

He jams the chopsticks further into Goon Dip's nose.

WAFFLEHEAD

I don't think a lobotomy would make much difference in Goon Dip's case.

GOON DIP

Funny, Boss! Very funny!

Julian tosses Goon Dip aside and begins blurring around the bar with Red Lotus kung fu, landing in his fighting stance.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WAFFLEHEAD

Good. Someone to hurt.

Grinning as only a psychopath can, Wafflehead cracks his knuckles. NINJAS step out of every shadow and draw swords!

JULIAN

NINJAS!?!

WAFFLEHEAD

Are you surprised?

JULIAN

No, I'm offended!

The Ninjas raise their swords to strike Julian. Julian tries to fight them off but is soon overpowered.

INT. CAVE NETWORK - DAY

Bernie and DJ stumble into a crazy chamber. Mirrors of all shapes and sizes cover every surface. It's an "Enter the Dragon" mirror collage of illusion and confusion. Reflections of Bernie and DJ multiply every way they turn.

DJ

It's like a freaky dressing room.

BERNIE

This is good. This proves that people have been here before...

DJ trips on a human skeleton and starts to quake.

DJ

...And died here! He couldn't figure out how to get out either!

Suddenly, Bernie disappears entirely from the mirrors. DJ hears footsteps crunching closer.

DJ (CONT'D)

Bernie? Bernie!!!

It's not Bernie. A GUARD stealthily enters the maze. And quickly multiplies in the mirrors. DJ completely freaks. From the jumble of images comes a WHISPER.

BERNIE'S VOICE

Psssst. Over here.

DJ looks around. He can only see hundreds of himself and the Guard, disappearing into vanishing points of infinity.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DJ  
Where are you, Bernie?

BERNIE  
I'm right in front of you!

DJ looks. Hundreds of Bernies in the mirrors but the flesh and blood version is nowhere to be seen.

More PALACE GUARDS appear and MULTIPLY into an ARMY.

DJ tries to run away but he's ambushed by mirrored reflections of THOUSANDS OF GUARDS. He FREEZES.

The GUARDS smash mirrors to reduce the reflections so they can detect the actual DJ and Bernie.

Suddenly BERNIE'S HANDS snatch DJ by the ankles, yank him down to the ground and drag him out of the maze...

BERNIE (CONT'D)  
C'mon. I think I heard sounds from behind that wall down there...

He points to what seems to be a mirrored passageway.

DJ  
Anything's better than this place.

Bernie is momentarily disoriented but regains his sense of direction. He strides forward confidently, DJ right behind him, stepping onto a trick floor hatch that dumps them both into darkness.

Bernie and DJ tumble through obscure space...

INT. TORTURE CHAMBER

...and spew out of an upper level CHUTE of the torture chamber/novelty item factory. Luckily, there are several boxes of whoopee cushions to break their fall. An explosion of FARTING as DJ and Bernie hit the boxes.

Lo Fat is surprised, but pleasantly so, when he realizes who has just dropped in.

LO FAT  
Finally something's going my way!  
It's taken long enough.

DJ  
(disoriented)  
Where are we?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BERNIE

Old Master!

DJ and Bernie see Old Master rigged inside his rattling death trap. They reflexively run toward him but are held back by GUARDS.

Another door opens and Prudence is chucked in.

PRUDENCE

I wasn't going to hurt him! I just wanted my barrette!

And Julian is pushed in by Wafflehead, who returns his sword to his slit-sleeve. GUARDS seize the kids. Julian struggles out of their grasp.

JULIAN

Let go of me!

LO FAT

Well, well, the gang's all here!

He takes Wafflehead aside for a quick word.

LO FAT (CONT'D)

Excellent! Four down, one to go. Now what do we do with that royal pain in the palace?

Wafflehead moves closer to Julian. An idea sparks.

WAFFLEHEAD

(seductively)

Here's your chance, Julian. Time to decide. Are you in...or out?

BERNIE

What's he talking about?

Everyone looks at Julian. Julian briefly locks eyes with Old Master and, in that moment, Old Master sees something no one else sees as Julian speaks...

JULIAN

My father was a Black Salamander and so am I. I'll prove my loyalty to you.

The kids are shocked.

PRUDENCE

Did I just hear what I just heard?  
I knew it!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

WAFFLEHEAD

Yes, little friends, this boy has been a really big help to us. And he's going to perform yet another valuable service. He's about to kick our little king's little ass.

LO FAT

He is?

WAFFLEHEAD

And then Kakao will be a laughing stock making the transition to your rule that much smoother. His adoring public won't adore him so much once he's disgraced in defeat.

LO FAT

I like it!

(to Julian)

You'll be handsomely rewarded for your contribution to our triumphs!

Lo Fat's blackberry goes off. He checks it. It's a message from Cookie. The pager display reads: "What am I supposed to be doing right now?"

LO FAT (CONT'D)

Can't anyone follow directions around here?

He heads for the door.

LO FAT (CONT'D)

Don't go anywhere, hostages! I'll be back!

Prudence, DJ, and Bernie can't believe their eyes and ears. But Old Master is not as quick to judge.

PRUDENCE

How could you do this, Julian?!?

JULIAN

Like we were really friends.

Wafflehead steers Julian out of the chamber.

WAFFLEHEAD

Come with me, my new apprentice. You are ready to learn true power.

They leave. Prudence, DJ, and Bernie face Old Master.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

PRUDENCE

I can't believe he did that to us.

OLD MASTER

Remember, students, things are not always what they seem.

INT. ALLUSIAN SPORTS FORUM - DAY

The stands are packed to the rafters with SCREAMING ALLUSIANS. Survivor's "Eye of the Tiger" ROARS through the Arena P.A. system. All eyes are on the center ring where Julian and Kakao's match is about to begin.

Kakao, surrounded by ATTENDANTS and wearing the TUNIC, enters the arena like a superhero. ALLUSIANS go berserk.

Wafflehead and Goon Dip sit ringside, in Julian's corner.

WAFFLEHEAD

Don't worry about the invincible kung fu tunic he's wearing. It's not real.

JULIAN

I wasn't worried. I just thought it was an ugly robe.

GOON DIP

Ugly robe...heh, heh, that's a good one.

Julian starts to step into the ring. Wafflehead stops him for one last remark.

WAFFLEHEAD

I never thought I'd be using Red Lotus kung fu in the service of the Black Salamanders. How our ancestors would relish the irony.

Julian enters the ring where Kakao is waiting for him.

INT. TORTURE CHAMBER

Jimmy Yip strides in buoyantly like a Master of Ceremonies. Lo Fat inspects a new torture appliance as it makes it's debut -- a makeshift pulley system lowers Prudence, DJ, and Bernie down from the ceiling.

Old Master is wheeled over next to them so he can see his students up close and terrified. At the sight of the kids in danger, Old Master's resolve begins to crumble.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The kids squirm as the pulley dangles them over a pit of STEAMING HOT VANILLA. Jimmy Yip fills his lungs with vanilla-scented air.

JIMMY YIP

I love the smell of hot vanilla in the morning!

Lo Fat directs Jimmy Yip's attention to the dangling kids.

LO FAT

This is definitely a Kodak moment, don't you think? Great rig, Jimmy.

JIMMY YIP

This is the kind of ingenuity I'm going to bring to the novelty market.

DJ

Why are you doing this, Mr. Yip?

JIMMY YIP

You think I want to bake cookies all my life? You kids are my ticket to exclusive world wide distribution of Allusia's novelty items. One final fortune, kids? For the road?

Jimmy Yip cracks a cookie and extracts the paper strip. Lo Fat reads it out loud.

LO FAT

'Your life will be short-lived. Like an hour, tops.'

JIMMY YIP

And they say these fortunes are bogus.

Lo Fat and Jimmy Yip LAUGH. The pulley system lurches and plunges the kids closer to the surface of the steaming vanilla. The kids SCREAM. Lo Fat turns to Old Master.

LO FAT

Any last words?

OLD MASTER

I'll take you to the tunic.

LO FAT

I was hoping you'd say that.

INT. SPORTS FORUM - LATE AFTERNOON

THE CENTER RING

The Referee stands between the TWO COMPETITORS.

REFEREE

Let this be an honorable contest  
between well-matched contestants.

Julian bows. Kakao bows with exaggerated respect and twirls into his fighting stance, billowing THE FAKE TUNIC. He holds his pose, lingering for dramatic effect.

KAKAO

You're facing the might of Kakao  
Hung Duck, master of Tiger Kung Fu!

JULIAN

Whatever.

The REFEREE lowers the flag. Kakao is on top of Julian within seconds, punching and clawing away. Julian quickly matches him punch for punch, kick for kick.

JULIAN (CONT'D)

I didn't come here to fight, Kakao.  
I came here to warn you. You're in  
danger!

Julian backs off, putting some distance between himself and Kakao, who now starts to gloat.

KAKAO

You're just afraid of me and my  
power!

JULIAN

I'm supposed to embarrass you in  
front of your whole country. I  
hate to say this, but you're going  
to get hosed on this one.

Julian executes a handstand kick that nails Kakao squarely in the chest.

JULIAN (CONT'D)

If you have invincible power, could  
I have done that? Could I do *this*?

Julian unleashes a massive barrage of strikes. And then knocks Kakao back with a set of kicks so fast they're almost invisible. Kakao falls back, reeling. The AUDIENCE GASPS. Kakao staggers back to his feet.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KAKAO

I am invincible! I just haven't  
practiced with it enough!

EXT. MOUNTAIN AREA - LATE AFTERNOON

Old Master, hands tied and braced by GUARDS, leads Lo Fat, Cookie, Jimmy Yip, Prudence, DJ, and Bernie along the path of a steep gorge. Beneath them, the RIVER runs.

JIMMY YIP

...The Red Lotus king was always  
trying to keep it. The Black  
Salamanders were always trying to  
get it. So the king got rid of it.

DJ

(engrossed)

How did he do that, Mr. Yip?

Prudence scolds DJ with her eyes for engaging with the enemy.

JIMMY YIP

The only one who knows is your Old  
Master here, the last living Red  
Lotus. See, only a Red Lotus can  
find the tunic. According to the  
caves of Xinxu.

COOKIE

Should we really believe something  
that people have written in caves?  
I mean, if you think about it,  
it's only graffiti.

INT. SPORTS FORUM - DUSK

The fight is reaching fever pitch. ALLUSIAN FANS are on their feet CHANTING "JULIAN! JULIAN!"

IN THE RING

A good kick combination by Kakao is deflected by Julian and turned against Kakao. Julian sidesteps and dodges all of Kakao's punches.

ON THE SIDELINES

Wafflehead grins sadistically. Goon Dip is jumping up and down in his seat.

WAFFLEHEAD

The little punk is out of moves.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

IN THE RING

Slowly at first, but with increasing speed, Julian spirals around Kakao.

JULIAN

Your get-up is a fake! Lo Fat is with Old Master right now trying to get the real tunic for himself.

KAKAO

You're lying! He only lives to serve me and advise me on my image.

JULIAN

Your birthday's at midnight, right? While you're turning twelve, Lo Fat will overthrowing you with the tunic on his back. You'll be king for a day, dude. Literally.

Kakao starts to waver but he gives the tunic one last chance. He darts forward and slices through the air but Julian dodges his attack, leaps, and floors Kakao with a flying elbow drop. The crowd SCREAMS. "JULIAN! JULIAN!"

JULIAN (CONT'D)

He's torturing Prudence and DJ and Bernie right now!

KAKAO

Prudence!?!

Kakao gets up and comes at Julian but instead of attacking him, he takes him by the arm.

KAKAO (CONT'D)

Okay, you win! Let's go!

Kakao and Julian link arms and leap out of the ring, over the heads of Wafflehead and Goon Dip. The audience is bewildered as Kakao and Julian run out of the arena.

Wafflehead jumps to his feet, shaking with rage.

GOON DIP

Why didn't they finish the match, Boss?

WAFFLEHEAD

They're going to another match!

EXT. SPORTS FORUM - DUSK

Kakao and Julian hightail it away from the forum.

KAKAO

How do you know where to go?

JULIAN

Follow me!

EXT. RIVERBANK - DUSK

Old Master leads Lo Fat, Jimmy Yip, Cookie and the kids to a clearing by the river.

It's the location of the battle in the prologue. Old Master takes in the setting -- it's changed in the intervening centuries. A dock has come and gone. A few poles remain in the water. Rocks jut out of the river.

OLD MASTER

This is the spot. Yes, this is it.

LO FAT

Where do we start digging?

He summons his shovel-bearing GUARDS

OLD MASTER

You won't need shovels. The tunic is not in the earth.

He looks up at the stars.

LO FAT

Is it going to fall down from the sky? Or what?

OLD MASTER

We're waiting for the stars.

The first stars of the RED LOTUS CONSTELLATION appear and arc into position.

Cookie, Jimmy Yip, and Lo Fat scour the heavens.

EXT. RED LOTUS TEMPLE - DUSK

Julian leads Kakao up the steps of the moonlit temple.

KAKAO

I didn't know this was here!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JULIAN

Come on!

Kakao helps Julian push the altar to the side, exposing the pocked wall. Kakao watches, bewildered, as Julian takes the Chinese Checkers set from the chair and grabs the marbles. Kakao is more incredulous when Julian positions the marbles into the wall, creating a design.

The wall opens. The boys step inside.

INT. RED LOTUS TEMPLE - SECRET ROOM - DUSK

They look around. It's the mural Julian has seen before.

JULIAN

Does any of this make any sense to you?

KAKAO

Not what's on the wall. But I can tell you this is a map room.

(pivoting)

A decoy map room. The Lotus must have built it to keep the Salamanders off course. Clever.

The wall slides back into place. Julian and Kakao exchange defeated looks. Now they don't know where to go. Just as they're walking away...

KAKAO (CONT'D)

Wait! Look at this!

Looked at from the side, the marbles tell a different story. Some of the marbles are raised higher than others. The map is topographical!

KAKAO (CONT'D)

Here, yes, this is it!

(showing Julian)

This three are the peaks of the Xinxu mountains. And see this over here, it's the river. And this marble here, the blue one, must be the location of the tunic! I know where to go!

Their eyes light up. And then they take off, Kakao leading the way.

PRUDENCE, DJ, AND BERNIE

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

sequestered off to the side by an escort of Guards. Prudence scratches a battle plan in the mud with a stick and speaks quietly under her breath.

PRUDENCE

When I say, "bok choy, big boy!" Bernie, you and I will strike from one side. Meanwhile, DJ can come in from this way.

DJ

I don't know if we can pull this off. Now that we're here, it's all getting really really real.

PRUDENCE

The whole idea to make a plan was *your* idea!

DJ

As an *idea*, it *is* great. As *reality*...we might be in over our heads.

PRUDENCE

DJ, if you're going to live in the future, do me a favor and don't live in the one where we fail.

AT THE RIVERBANK

Everybody is watching the sky. The stars CLICK into formation and flare brightly. It's midnight! Old Master watches the river, expecting to see the whirlpool, the fish and the tunic. But nothing happens. Old Master is perplexed. Cookie joins Lo Fat.

COOKIE

Do something! Make him give it to us. Should I try a seduction?

Old Master refers to the stars and then back to the river.

OLD MASTER

It's time! Everything is where it should be. The river is supposed to open up. I don't understand, it should be happening but it's not.

Lo Fat angrily juts his finger at the water.

LO FAT

Nothing's coming out of that river! Don't toy with me, Lotus!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

OLD MASTER

Give it a chance. Be patient!

LO FAT

Patient! I've waited five hundred years for this!

A SHRILL WHISTLE accompanies an invisible skyrocket. FIREWORKS explode in the sky.

ACROSS THE RIVER

A midnight blast-off birthday coronation celebration for Kakao kicks off with CHEERS and APPLAUSE. KUNG FU KIDS from the tournament celebrate with native ALLUSIANS.

BY THE RIVERBANK

The celebration for Kakao fuels Lo Fat's rage.

LO FAT (CONT'D)

GUARDS! Bring those kids to the cliff and throw them over!

The Guards jerk the kids to their feet.

OLD MASTER

NO! Leave them out of this! Maybe we have to adjust the calendar. It happened before, it will happen again. It has to!

As the Guards push the kids to the edge of the cliff, Cookie steps up to Lo Fat and intercedes.

COOKIE

Wait one minute, Lo. I know I'm not exactly the motherly type, but this is completely over the top!

LO FAT

Guards!

Guards appear behind Cookie and push her up the hill.

ON THE CLIFF

Cookie is now tied in with the kids.

COOKIE

Oh, God. Let's think about Jackie? What would she do?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

DJ

Jackie!

COOKIE

She'd smile, I know that.

DJ

So would he.

As the Guards advance to push everyone over, DJ really does think of Jackie Chan -- he starts to CRY and WHIMPER.

DJ (CONT'D)

Oh, please, please don't hurt me,  
Guards! I'm too young to die!

But this time, DJ is the one aping the fear of a WIMP. Next to him, Bernie begs for his life, totally seriously.

BERNIE

No, no! You can't! I beg of you!  
NOOOOOOOOO!

COOKIE

Darlings, even though this could be  
it, we should try to go out in  
style! I want to die like an icon.

The Guards push the kids and Cookie to the absolute edge. Now Prudence starts to cry.

DJ

Don't be afraid, Prudence.

BERNIE

(crying)  
When did you get so brave?

DJ

BOK CHOY!

And then, to everyone's surprise, DJ takes a leap of faith and jumpkicks A GUARD, knocking him down.

Prudence and Bernie look at each other. DJ's leading the way?

Prudence and Bernie rally behind DJ as he attacks the first wave of Guards.

Cookie chips in and attacks the Guards with her INVISIBLE BAT BELT OF SUNGLASSES. Each pair can be flicked into darts, blow gun, killer whirligigs, deadly boomerangs, etc.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

Julian and Kakao race in from the tall grass with a surprise attack, and send TWO GUARDS into the river.

BERNIE

Get out of here, Julian. Fight with your own side.

JULIAN

This *is* my side! I was undercover so I could figure out a way to save everyone!

KAKAO

He's telling the truth! We're all fighting the Black Salamander now!

Prudence, DJ, and Bernie absorb Julian and Kakao into their beleaguered force. Now FIVE KIDS are working together. Prudence and Kakao are next to each other, fighting guards.

PRUDENCE

So we meet again...

KAKAO

...This time as allies.

Bernie sees figures approaching from down the river.

BERNIE

Bogey at nine o'clock!

It's Wafflehead and Goon Dip! Now the real battle begins. The kids charge and square off for individual fights with their enemies!

### **Prudence vs. Jimmy Yip**

Prudence circles around Jimmy Yip, delivering a salvo of kung fu kicks and spins. Jimmy Yip stands still as a statue, taking it. He doesn't fight back.

PRUDENCE

Why aren't you fighting?!? I thought you had a cause!

JIMMY YIP

You know what? I'm just going to go ahead and flee. Kung fu's not exactly my bailiwick.

Jimmy Yip takes off like a shot. Prudence is right behind him.

### **Bernie, DJ, vs. Guards and Goon Dip.**

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

Goon Dip reveals a secret grab bag of weapons stashed all over his body. He lets fly a round of SILVER THROWING STARS at superspeed. Bernie deflects them masterfully.

Goon Dip reaches into his bag again and pulls out NUNCHUKS. But DJ disarms him effortlessly.

DJ

Hey, no double dipping, dude!

### **Julian vs. Wafflehead**

Wafflehead makes the snakehead hand form and strikes Julian. Wafflehead's Snake style is extraordinary.

WAFFLEHEAD

You think you're pretty smart, don't you? Going undercover, pretending to be one of us. Just like your father!

JULIAN

So he wasn't a Black Salamander!

Julian hits Wafflehead with a stunning Red Lotus power strike. Wafflehead charges back with his samurai sword. They match each other blow for blow.

WAFFLEHEAD

He thought he'd infiltrate, get inside our ranks, but I got onto him! Just like I'm onto you!

JULIAN

You're the one who killed him!

WAFFLEHEAD

And you're about to follow in his footsteps!!!!

Before Wafflehead can fathom what's happening, Julian lunges at him with alarming speed, sending Wafflehead airborne with a powerful whirlwind attack.

Observing all this, Lo Fat grabs Old Master.

LO FAT

You trained them well but they're not going to last. You show me the tunic or I show them no mercy! Playtime has ended!

COOKIE

Look!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (6)

Cookie, eyes wide, points at a spot in the river.

From the waters of the river, a SPLASH. A BLACK FISH WITH A WHITE EYE APPEARS. FOLLOWED BY A WHITE FISH WITH A BLACK EYE. They meet to form the YIN YANG SYMBOL.

Lo Fat goes closer to the river...mesmerized.

The river churns and whirls. A vortex forms. The TUNIC APPEARS, rising out of the water mouth. It's exactly the tunic from the prologue. Tattered and covered in sacred text. It hovers over the water.

LO FAT

It's coming! It's here!

Lo Fat unrolls his deadly sleeves and casts them across the river like fishing lines. The sleeves snatch the tunic and retract back to Lo Fat. In an instant, he's wearing it.

LO FAT (CONT'D)

Five hundred years of waiting and  
hoping ends today!

Lo Fat gloats in Old Master's face.

LO FAT (CONT'D)

Your ancestor couldn't handle the  
power so, like a coward, he  
secreted the tunic away from those  
who could!

OLD MASTER

What makes you think it was my  
ancestor who hid it?

Lo Fat suddenly realizes who he's dealing with.

LO FAT

It was you!

OLD MASTER

Yes! And I hid it to keep it away  
from the unworthy hands of your  
corrupt evil ancestor!

Lo Fat glares at Old Master, centuries of hatred and  
resentment boil to the surface.

LO FAT

You've overstayed your welcome  
here. But now...with me!...the Red  
Lotus dynasty has finally reached a  
dead end.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (7)

Lo Fat winds up for his lethal assault but Kakao steps directly in front of Old Master, foiling his attack.

KAKAO

If you want him, you'll have to go through me.

LO FAT

The student wants to teach the master a lesson? You're no match for me.

Kakao whips off the fake tunic in a flash of movement and sends it flying through the air like a knife at Lo Fat.

Prudence races to Kakao's side. DJ, Bernie, and Julian are right behind her. They unite with Kakao in front of Old Master, forming a human barricade.

DJ

Alone, maybe not. But together, we have a fighting chance.

All the bad guys unite around Lo Fat.

LO FAT

You have guts, young warriors. But I have invincible kung fu power!

Lo Fat and his evil forces surge toward the kids. The kids repel each attack with a vengeance. Julian hangs back to untie Old Master's hand bindings.

JULIAN

Old Master, I'm sorry I trusted to Wafflehead. I had questions and wanted answers. He lied to me.

OLD MASTER

You had to find out for yourself who your friends are. I can't teach you everything. Some things you have to learn all on your own.

THE FIGHT CONTINUES.

As Old Master watches, the kids fight with a level of skill and fluidity they've never demonstrated before. Old Master's eyes suddenly shimmer with comprehension. It's not the tunic that has invincible power! It's the five kids! Together, they are INVINCIBLE!

Suddenly, Old Master leaps into the fight.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (8)

OLD MASTER (CONT'D)

This is between you and me!

Lo Fat spins to face Old Master.

LO FAT

My name is Lo Fat. You killed my ancestor. Prepare to die.

Lo Fat, with blinding speed, charges Old Master full tilt with a deadly kung fu attack.

### **Old Master vs. Lo Fat**

In an eerie replay of the fight in the prologue, Lo Fat and Old Master battle. They are going mano a mano, equally matched.

Old Master is a physics phenomenon with his fierce Red Lotus fighting ability. The highest kicks, the fastest spins.

The KIDS are amazed to see Old Master's kung fu unleashed like they've never seen it before.

Lo Fat takes the fight to the river. He masterfully leaps and lands securely onto the poles of the dilapidated dock.

Old Master flies onto the poles after him with expert skill and precision.

### **THE POLE FIGHT**

Old Master and Lo Fat have their final showdown on a grouping of uneven poles, jutting out from the river the length of a dock.

The masters display kung fu so dazzling it seems other-worldly as they make their moves on the small jagged pole surfaces, like two pieces on a chessboard.

But it is Old Master who achieves checkmate. He fights Lo Fat to the pole furthest out from the shore, where Lo Fat teeters wildly. Old Master merely folds his arms and blows a puff of air at Lo Fat. Lo Fat plunges into the river.

LO FAT (CONT'D)

I'm drowning! I'm really drowning!  
I can't die! I'm all powerful!

Kakao sees Lo Fat going down, and considers letting him drown. But only for a nano-second. Next thing we know, Kakao jumps into the river and swims to Lo Fat's sinking body.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (9)

Kakao loops his arm around Lo Fat's neck and, with great strength, swims him to shore, drags him from the water and pumps his chest.

KAKAO

Lo Fat, wake up! Are you alright?

Kakao sticks his fingers into Lo Fat's mouth, searching for possible obstructions. Lo Fat cries, heaves, chokes and sputters. He's alive!

LO FAT

Why did you save me?

KAKAO

Just because you're a bad person doesn't mean I'm going to be a bad person back to you. I may have been a brat, Lo Fat, but you're an adult and should have known better. GUARDS!

The Guards arrive and handcuff Lo Fat. Cookie shows up and looms over her quasi-fiancee.

LO FAT

Cookie, it's crumbling. If I'm not a king, who will I be, where will I go? What will I do?

COOKIE

Why don't you become a clown? And bring delight to children everywhere?

ACROSS THE RIVER

A CHANT rises up from the FESTIVE PARTY CELEBRANTS.

CELEBRANTS

KAKAO! KAKAO! KAKAO!

ON THE RIVERBANK

Kakao, for the first time, realizes his birthday party is taking place across the river. More FIREWORKS erupt.

KAKAO

Hey! It's my birthday!

JULIAN

Let's celebrate!

They smile at each other. Everyone follows as Kakao leads the way to the other side.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (10)

AT THE PARTY

A LOCAL VILLAGE has been festooned with lanterns and Chinese decorations.

As Kakao leads Old Master, Prudence, Bernie, DJ, Julian, and Cookie into the festivities, ALLUSIANS and KUNG FU KIDS cheer and whoop! Bjork, Mongo, Hadji Godbolly, and the Kiwi Kid are among the celebrants. Prudence, DJ, Bernie, Julian and Kakao disappear into the sea of festivity.

THE YEAR OF THE MONKEY PARADE begins. Floats, costumed characters, and DANCING LIONS weave through the cheering throng.

LATER AT THE PARTY

Old Master gathers his students around him.

OLD MASTER

It wasn't the stars. Stars are always on time. The tunic wasn't late. It was summoned by the virtues. Not mine. Yours.

DJ

What virtues?

OLD MASTER

The Five Virtues of the Xinxu Mountains. Today I learned that it wasn't the tunic that held the invincible power, it was...

His hand touches his chest, his heart, his mind.

OLD MASTER (CONT'D)

I didn't know until this day that, by having virtue, I had the power all along. These virtues together are the only invincible power I've ever seen.

He looks at Prudence and DJ.

OLD MASTER (CONT'D)

Prudence, your virtue is patience. Without your patience you would have moved too early. And DJ, you overcame fear. If it wasn't for your courage, it would have been I who almost drowned.

Old Master turns to Bernie.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (11)

OLD MASTER (CONT'D)  
Bernie, by showing humility, you enabled DJ to rise up and seize the moment! And Kakao--

KAKAO  
Me?

OLD MASTER  
You demonstrated the virtue of compassion.

KAKAO  
(drawing a blank)  
When?

OLD MASTER  
You showed compassion to your enemy, Lo Fat, and saved him, even though he wronged you.

DJ  
That's only four virtues.

Old Master regards Julian. He's backing away.

OLD MASTER  
You don't think you have virtue, Julian?

Julian is unsure. Prudence steps up.

PRUDENCE  
I know what it is.

OLD MASTER  
Tell him, Prudence.

PRUDENCE  
It's loyalty. Because he stayed faithful to his friends, even when his friends didn't show faith in him.

She puts her arms around Julian. They hug.

OLD MASTER  
Being virtuous is a constant challenge. A virtue is not something you have, it's something you *do*. Every day.

Bjork appears and runs up to Bernie.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (12)

BJORK

You're leaving, aren't you? We didn't have much time together.

BERNIE

Bjork, I want to stay right here with you...

(points to the ground  
under their feet)

But back there...

(points to North  
America)

...I have responsibilities and homework. We fly back tomorrow.

BJORK

I know. You need to get on that plane.

BERNIE

We'll always have Allusia.

Bernie grabs Bjork and plants a big smacker-oo on her cheek. FIREWORKS burst among the stars above.

JULIAN

is off by himself. Old Master appears behind him.

JULIAN

Wafflehead killed my father.

OLD MASTER

The Black Salamanders found out he was an undercover policeman. They threatened him with death unless he exposed my identity...

Old Master looks away, pained by the memory. DJ shows up.

OLD MASTER (CONT'D)

...Your father was too honorable to give me up. I'm so sorry, Julian, for both of us. Your father was like a son to me.

Julian pats Old Master on the back. DJ pipes in.

DJ

Then maybe Julian could be like a grandson or something.

JULIAN

I could do that.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (13)

OLD MASTER  
That would make my life! And  
that's saying something!

Bernie and Prudence join the group.

DJ  
So how old are you exactly, Old  
Master?

OLD MASTER  
I'm five hundred. But I look two  
hundred.

BERNIE  
Wow! How do you do it?

OLD MASTER  
I eat right, plenty of vegetable,  
get eight hours sleep, and avoid  
magic as much as possible.

A Guard comes up to Prudence.

GUARD  
His Majesty would like a word with  
you.

She turns only to find that she's practically on top of  
Kakao. He is mere inches behind her.

KAKAO  
I'm sorry I was rude to you,  
Prudence. I really do want to  
learn how to dance. So I decided,  
why don't you stay and be my queen?

PRUDENCE  
Queen! I can't even go to first  
base! But come visit us in San  
Francisco. You'll love my friends  
and my school.

KAKAO  
You mean it?

PRUDENCE  
Totally. I wouldn't say it if I  
didn't mean it.

At that very moment, Wafflehead, Goon Dip, Jimmy Yip, and  
Lo Fat, all in handcuffs, are being led through the  
celebration as prisoners by the Palace Guard.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (14)

Lo Fat breaks away from the group and crawls on his knees to Kakao. His bound hands are clasped together in a begging gesture.

LO FAT

Please have mercy on me, Your Highness. I'll go into therapy, anything you say. But don't make me live my life in a prison!

KAKAO

There is a way you could stay out of the slammer!

Lo Fat's eyes light up. Until he sees where Kakao's eyes are directed. His four remaining Prerogative Rings. Kakao nods to a Guard who twists them off Lo Fat's fingers.

Kakao gives them to the Prudence, DJ, Bernie and Julian.

KAKAO (CONT'D)

(smiles)

If you ever need me, just give me a ring. And I'll be there.

Kakao flips his little robe and walks off. Suddenly, he stops and makes an important announcement.

KAKAO (CONT'D)

Hey, I just realized something! I'm twelve! I'm king!

Four bakers carry a giant over-the-top BIRTHDAY CAKE lit with TWELVE FLAMING CANDLES. "Happy Birthday King Kakao" in every language is written all over the cake.

Everybody CHEERS as Kakao blows out the candles. Cookie trots over and links elbows with Kakao.

COOKIE

(doing Marilyn)

Happy Birthday to you, Happy Birthday to you...Happy Birthday, King Kakao...

The rest of the kids and Old Master join in...

As they all walk along the riverbank decorated with streamers WE SEE THE TORTOISE from the prologue. He's wrinkled and old, as old as Old Master.

Old Master breaks away from the group and goes to the riverbank. He kneels down next to the TORTOISE and lowers his head.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (15)

OLD MASTER  
Have I failed you, Tortoise?

TORTOISE  
No, Red Lotus. If you weren't my  
student, I wouldn't want to teach.

The Tortoise ambles back to the river. He smiles and then swims into the water.

EXT. SAN FRANCISCO SKYLINE - DAY

The world famous.

INT. SAN FRANCISCO CITY HALL - DAY

At an official ceremony, Prudence's father, CHIEF WEBB, presents Julian with a Distinguished Medal of Honor, being awarded to his father posthumously. Julian shakes Chief Webb's hand.

All the kids are there, along with Old Master and Mrs. Hubble. Even Susie Song. And the entire San Francisco police force, including Cop #1 and Cop #2, who let Julian off after his skateboard adventure. Everyone CHEERS.

Prudence, on stage next to her father, breaks ranks, and hugs Julian.

JULIAN  
If you hadn't crashed into me, none  
of this would have happened.  
Thanks, Prudence.

PRUDENCE  
Hey, no problem.  
(joking)  
Why don't you just lighten up!

Prudence pops a kung fu stance. Julian pops one back.

EXT. GOLDEN GATE PARK - SAN FRANCISCO - DAY

Old Master, Julian, Kakao, Prudence, Bernie and DJ in Golden Gate Park operating kite lines of the team kite.

EXT. SKY

The hundred segment centipede thrashes and dances in a sky glittering with other happy kites.

THE END