

IRON FIST

by
John Turman

Based on the Marvel Comic Book Series

No portion of this script may be performed, reproduced,
or used by any means, or quoted or published in any
medium without the prior written consent of Silent
Development Corp.

SILENT DEVELOPMENT CORP.
2700 Colorado Avenue
2nd Floor
Santa Monica, CA 90404

2nd Rewrite
September 27, 2001
©2001
SILENT DEVELOPMENT CORP.
All Rights Reserved

FADE IN:

AN ANGRY MOUNTAINOUS LANDSCAPE --

Not mountains, alive --

WE ARE ECU - MOVING ALONG A SCAR ON THE NECK OF DANNY RAND

CAMERA PULLS BACK and we are --

INT. TRAIN (MOVING) - NIGHT

Danny Rand sleeps against the rattling window -- dressed simply in well-worn clothes from another time -- on the seat beside him, a weathered knapsack.

From O.S., a small hand enters frame and traces the scar --

OWEN, 9 years old and curious, leans over the seat back, fascinated by the scar, confident he's inspecting a sleeping victim.

Danny opens one eye --

DANNY

I was about your age when I got it.

Owen jumps back.

OWEN

Did it hurt?

DANNY

It still does.

Owen's father, a working JOE, yanks his son down from the seat back, gives Danny a suspicious look.

JOE

Son, leave the man alone. Sorry about that sir. He's curious.

DANNY

That's alright.

Owen turns back to his father with youthful excitement --

OWEN

Where are the seats again, Dad?

JOE

They're right up front.

(MORE)

JOE (CONT'D)

I told you, this is the big game,
son, and I'd take care of
everything...

ON DANNY

Watching and listening.. CAMERA MOVES IN on his eyes --

JOE (CONT'D)

I promised you a...

DISSOLVE TO --

MIST-COVERED MOUNTAINS - TIBET

The awe-inspiring grandeur of the Himalayas -- object of
centuries of western fantasy --

EXT. MOUNTAIN PASS - DAY

An expedition treks through the clouds of a mountain pass.
Four occidentals in modern gear and six sherpas in native
dress.

WENDELL RAND

...real adventure. Huh?

ANGLE ON WENDELL RAND

He turns TOWARD CAMERA and smiles, dashing in the mold of a
classic adventure hero. Beside him is HEATHER, his beautiful
wife, her face framed by a local Khata, a Tibetan prayer
scarf, flapping in the wind.

DANNY RAND stares up at his parents, 9 years old.

DANNY

Wow, it's like we're on top of the
world...

HAL MEACHUM joins them and laughs. He's a chiseled, rough-
hewn maverick. He consults a series of yellowed maps

MEACHUM

That's right, Danny. Where are we
exactly on this thing, partner?

WENDELL

Put that away, Hal, you know what
we're looking for isn't on a map.

Wendell opens a beautiful antique compass. The needle moves strangely, twitches nervously, useless. Wendell taps the glass. CAMERA LINGERS IN SLOW-MO on Wendell's fingers holding it.

WENDELL (CONT'D)

The ancient texts talk about a valley of clouds where north becomes south and east becomes west.

MEACHUM

There's a valley.

Meachum stares ahead into a mist-shrouded mountain valley.

Wendell points behind them. Storm clouds moving in.

WENDELL

And here come more clouds. We better make camp before that storm hits.

Wendell closes the compass and hands it to Danny. It's useless now.

ON WENDELL, HEATHER AND DANNY

Walking, as the expedition continues --

HEATHER

What if this place is nothing but a fairy tale?

WENDELL

No, there are too many stories in too many sources. Kunlun. The fabled temple in the clouds, the most magical and timelessly beautiful place on earth...

Meachum draws alongside Wendell and shadow-boxes, throwing a few light-hearted karate moves at him, which he half-parries.

MEACHUM

Where lie hidden ancient wisdom and eternal secrets lost to man, eh Wendell? So where is it? We must be close.

Meachum surveys the dramatic valley below and the gathering storm clouds above.

WENDELL

Patience, Hal. The legends say the temple only exists for those with faith and pure of heart.

MEACHUM

Yeah yeah. I'm not interested in superstitions, I'm after the cold, hard truth.

Wendell and Meachum regard each other for a beat before Wendell turns away. Meachum stares after him.

WENDELL

We're close, I can feel it. Let's make camp and we'll survey the area after this storm passes through.

A ROCK WALL

Single-file, the Sherpas lead them carefully across a narrow trail cut in the rocky face.

Danny is roped between his father and mother.

Wendell looks for safe footing and when he has it, he directs his son and wife to follow. Some loose rocks slip ominously away down the cliff.

ANGLE ON MEACHUM - as he steps on a flat rock, that moves as he steps across. He surreptitiously uses his walking stick to dislodge it further as he passes over it. Meachum points out the rock to Wendell and nods.

WENDELL steps on the rock and it flips downhill with his weight, the gravel beneath it gives way triggering a small rock slide. Wendell reaches out a gloved hand for Meachum's but --

MEACHUM

Hal...

MEACHUM pulls away, clings to the rock wall.

WENDELL slides down the sheer wall pulling Danny and Heather after him -- Wendell stabs his pickaxe into the rocks and arrests his slide, he dangles below them, over a sheer chasm, roped to his desperate family above --

HEATHER

Wendell!

Heather and Danny struggle for purchase, trying to anchor themselves on the rope --

WENDELL

Hal, help them, pull me up! Do something...

The Sherpas move quickly to help but the trail is too narrow --

DANNY drops his father's compass and struggles with the taut rope -- his father's life on the other end --

But it's too much for him. He's pulled forward, slicing his chin against the sharp rocks. Heather braces herself against a rock, slows Danny's slide.

Off Danny's terrified bloody face --

MEACHUM

It's a shame it has to come to this, "partner."

WENDELL

What are you doing?

MEACHUM

Surviving. I told you, this trip was going to be tough. You shouldn't have brought the kid. Are you ready to die today, Wendell?

HEATHER

No...!

Meachum swings his axe into the hillside above, dislodging a rock slide --

Wendell looks up --

WENDELL

Heather! You and Danny have to get out of here! Find Kunlun... you'll be safe... I love you both...

AS THE ROCKS cascade into Wendell, dislodging him from the rocks -- pulling his family down after him -- Wendell pulls his boot knife and slashes through the rope allowing --

WENDELL FALLS, carried by the rocks and boulders into the abyss. He doesn't scream.

DANNY

Dad, no!

THE ROPE HOLDING HEATHER AND DANNY goes slack, letting them cling to safety on the narrow trail --

Heather grabs Danny, wraps her *khata* around Danny's bleeding chin. She turns to face Meachum.

HEATHER

You bastard.

The Sherpas move to help Heather and Danny.

Meachum draws a gun. Meachum fires at the first Sherpa, at his feet.

MEACHUM

(subtitled Nepalese)

[Leave them.]

The Sherpas back away.

SHERPA

(subtitled Nepalese)

[A curse on your quest. You have brought corruption to everything you touch. You will never find Kunlun. You will die here.]

Meachum fires again. Shoots the lead Sherpa.

MEACHUM

I said leave them.

The other Sherpas scatter like a herd of mountain goats, dropping the packs, the supplies tumbling down the cliffs.

MEACHUM (CONT'D)

Goddamnit! Get back here!

He fires again but the Sherpas are gone. Meachum points his gun at Heather.

MEACHUM (CONT'D)

Heather, I'm sorry. I've always liked you. If I thought I could trust you now...

Danny picks up the compass, clutches it in his small hand. In an instant, the pain of a lifetime etches Danny's young face.

DANNY

You killed him!

Danny throws a rock, crowns Meachum in the head. The gun fires wild.

HEATHER

No, Danny! That won't help.

Heather uses the distraction to push Danny away and dive at Meachum. They struggle. The gun between them. It fires - BLAM! Hard to tell where it's pointing. Meachum falls to the ground, his head bloodied. The gun tumbles to the rocks.

Heather steps back, a jagged, bloodied rock falls from her hand and she trips, tumbling down the hillside toward the cliff --

Danny scrambles across the narrow trail of rocks, diving --

ANGLE ON DANNY'S HAND

As Heather grabs it and manages to stop her fall. Danny helps his Mom to her feet. The wind has picked up. The first few snowflakes of the storm fall.

MEACHUM gets to his feet and goes for his gun --

HEATHER (CONT'D)

Run, Danny!

Heather pulls Danny away and they escape into the wilderness. The clouds have moved in, rapidly becoming a howling storm --

MEACHUM (O.S.)

(receding)

Heather... Danny... you won't make it...

TIME CUT:

EXT. TRAIL - ANGLE ON DANNY AND HEATHER - WHITEOUT

DANNY presses on into what has become a driving blizzard -- supporting his mother's weight -- making slow progress --

DANNY

We've already been here but...

The whiteness lifts enough to see the mountain ahead, stretching off into oblivion -- strange, it was't there a moment before --

DANNY (CONT'D)

Mom, look...

Cut into the hillside are carved structures, growing more ornate and detailed as they stretch away up the mountain --

DANNY (CONT'D)

The temple. We made it... I knew it... Mom, look, we're going to be okay...

Danny turns to his mother but she doesn't answer. There is an ominous trail of blood in the snow behind her. Danny gets no response, no movement at all. Heather just lays there.

Fear growing, Danny opens her parka -- revealing the bullet wound. It's a miracle Danny got her this far. Danny's hands come away covered in blood, already beginning to freeze. DANNY sobs. Faint swell of MUSIC, Eastern drums, the Kunlun theme.

DANNY (CONT'D)

No...

A ROBED FIGURE emerges from the mist, through a carved archway down the mountain side -- hooded in the ritual jade and gold of the monks of Kunlun --

THE MONK lowers his hood, unaffected by the elements. Despite his age, the eyes are bright and clear. This is the OLD MAN. He waits like a statue as Danny cries over his mother. Heather's spreading blood scars the pristine snowscape like a wound. The wind wails a mourning.

LONG SHOT - ABOVE HIM STRETCHES THE MAGNIFICENT TIBETAN TEMPLE carved from the rock itself. Massive gates emblazoned with a dragon pattern. Mists swirl around ornate spires. *"Know all things to be like this: A mirage, a cloud castle, A dream, an apparition, without essence, but with qualities that can be seen"*. The MUSIC of KUNLUN gives way to a driving urban beat --

CUT TO:

INT. TRAIN (MOVING) - SAME

A BOOM BOX cranks as a gang of urban predators have taken over the last four rows. They turn the back of the car into their own private rage party. Call their leader SLICK; he heads up the aisle. The passengers try to pretend they aren't there. No one makes eye contact.

Danny watches as Slick stops at Joe and Owen. Joe avoids looking up as long as he can.

SLICK

Did I hear you say you scored tickets
to the big game, old man?

JOE

(quietly)
Come on, my kid...

SLICK

Good seats?

JOE

(quietly)
Please, not in front of my boy...

Owen looks up at his father. Danny watches Slick.

SLICK

What, you want him to think Daddy's
a hero? That it? Okay, here's your
chance...

Slick puts his hands out, taunting Joe to make his move.

JOE

No, it's his birthday...

Slick holds his hand out. Joe hands the tickets over --

SLICK

What a coincidence. It's my birthday
too. Difference is my dad wasn't no
puss...

But before he can embarrass the man in front of his son,
Slick looks across the aisle and notices Danny watching him.
Staring right through him. Danny's intensity is a wordless
interruption.

Slick stares at Danny, who holds his gaze, the only one on
the train not afraid to make eye contact --

SLICK (CONT'D)

Hey! The hell you looking at, Opie?!

Danny draws Slick's full attention with his stare -- doesn't
take his eyes off Slick as Slick's gang surrounds him.
Finally he answers --

DANNY

Just waiting my turn.

A couple of thugs, BIG BOY and BONES, lean over the seat behind Danny. Danny seems to measure them.

SLICK

Well it's your turn now. You're not from around here are you?

RINGS

Must be from out of town.

SLICK

Must be from another planet. Didn't anyone warn you how dangerous the city is? Why, it's not safe to walk the streets.

DANNY

Why is that?

Danny's got the full attention of the gang now. Slick and his boys stare like Danny's just lit himself on fire --

SLICK

You're about to find out.

Slick flourishes a butterfly knife -- whips it around -- points it at Danny's throat. It's a big knife but it looks small beside Danny's scar.

SLICK (CONT'D)

Looks like someone told you once.

Danny stops smiling -- and he moves -- faster than you can imagine -- he starts by grabbing Slick's knife hand -- the rest we don't see clearly because we're outside the speeding train --

EXT. TRAIN (TRACKING WITH IT) - CONTINUOUS

The train rockets past CAMERA like a juggernaut --

INSIDE, IMPRESSIONISTIC MOVEMENT as Danny hits and kicks -- the action captured in frozen moments by the strobing tunnel lights -- Danny moves against the massive momentum of the onrushing train -- upstream like a Salmon -- and bodies fly in his wake -- he's spinning, leaping, using the rails --

THE STATION RUSHES UP AND --

SLAM TO:

INT. TRAIN STATION - NIGHT

A SQUEAL OF BRAKES as the train pulls in -- waiting commuters roused from numbing routine by what they see when the doors open --

The car is a riot zone in still-life. Slick and his gang lie busted up, chains, knives and weapons littered at their feet. Danny wraps his knapsack over his shoulders and steps over the bodies as he heads for the door --

OWEN

How did you do that, mister? Magic?

DANNY

Practice. Started about your age.

Danny lays a gentle hand on Owen's head. Then lifts it, as if afraid he might contaminate the innocence. Danny steps past the bodies and exits to the platform --

THE CROWD gathers for a look at the crime scene inside the train --

CRANK INTO SLO-MO as DANNY walks TOWARD CAMERA against a sea of backs -- a man on a mission --

CUT TO:

EXT. THE CITY - VARIOUS SHOTS -- MONTAGE

THE DISCORDANT JUMBLE OF THE MODERN CITY. The filth and shit-shine of a man-made cesspool. The modern world in decay and in need of heroes --

DANNY WALKS PAST --

A NEWSSTAND -- headlines announce casualties of the latest flare-up in local gang wars.

AN APPLIANCE STORE WINDOW -- a wall of TV sets tuned to various news channels show police blotter violence stories.

INT. FLOP HOUSE HOTEL OFFICE - NIGHT

DANNY rings the bell and gets no response from the manager CARLA, visible in the office, tough as a rusty nail. She glances out at Danny. He smiles pleasantly. She turns back to a high speed pursuit on TV and spoons another bite of stale Chinese food into her mouth.

Danny watches her ignore him, then gently rings the bell again. She carries the carton as she approaches.

CARLA

Yeah?

Danny points to a sign that says: SINGLE ROOMS: \$15.

DANNY

I need one of those.

CARLA

That's by the hour.

DANNY

(puzzled look)

How much for the night?

CARLA

Twenty-five.

DANNY

(another puzzled look)

Why would someone rent a room for only an hour?

CARLA

Because what you need to do in it doesn't take a whole day. And it's too much paperwork to rent 'em by the minute.

This means nothing to Danny.

CARLA (CONT'D)

(bored routine)

Credit card and driver's license.

DANNY

I'm sorry I don't have those.

CARLA

Huh? Where're you from?

DANNY

I was born here.

(off Carla's skeptical look)

But I grew up in the east.

CARLA

This is the east.

As Danny takes out a pouch and separates American dollars from an assortment of foreign currencies.

DANNY

The other east.

CARLA

Right. You in for business or pleasure?

DANNY

Business.

She sizes him up.

CARLA

Yeah, what kind of businessman are you?

DANNY

The kind that stays at your hotel.

This is as close as we see Danny get to sarcasm. She smiles. Touche. He hands her some bills. She hands him a key and looks at the little bit of money he has left.

CARLA

7A. How many nights?

DANNY

One should do it.

Danny takes the key and looks at the money as he replaces it in the pouch.

INT. SHITTY HOTEL ROOM - DAY

A grimy room where former child stars come to overdose. A shithole but Danny doesn't seem to care. He tries the window -- it's bolted shut. He lays his knapsack on the bed, scaring a rat from underneath.

Danny unpacks, taking out memories, pieces of a lost childhood: His father's compass --

FLASH - SLO-MO - HIS FATHER CLOSING THAT COMPASS FOR THE LAST TIME, SMILING AND HANDING IT TO DANNY.

A HAND-MADE VALENTINE'S CARD -- A photo of an angelic blonde-haired 9 year old girl, JOY.

The picture moves -- Joy turns and smiles AT CAMERA -- flips her hair. Youth and innocence and first love. Her nose crinkles. She smiles. A technicolor super 8 memory. Now the picture returns to a frozen moment.

A PHOTO OF WENDELL AND HEATHER WITH BABY --

The picture moves -- Wendell turns and looks at Danny, smiles.

A PHOTO OF WENDELL AND HAL MEACHUM

Both smiling, looking tanned and dashing, shaking hands in front of their new warehouse business, their futures ahead of them. The photo moves -- Meachum puts an arm around Wendell. The sign on the warehouse: MEACHUM & RAND/ MOUNTAIN IMPORTS.

Finally Danny unfolds a Kuniun ritual robe, hooded, jade and gold. But he doesn't put it on, just holds it in his hands and sits on the bed, looking out at the city through grime-streaked windows.

CAMERA CIRCLES HIM TO REVEAL -- sitting in the chair behind him is an ethereal form -- the Old Man from the temple --

DANNY

Sifu, why do you follow me?

THE OLD MAN

Because you are still my student.

DANNY

I rejected the vows. What I'm going to do goes against everything you've taught me.

THE OLD MAN

Perhaps. That depends on what you do.

DANNY

You know what I'm going to do. I'm going to settle things with Meachum. I'm going to avenge my parents. I'm going to kill him.

THE OLD MAN

We must each follow our own way. I have taught you all I can.

DANNY

But when I left you said my training is unfinished.

THE OLD MAN

It is. But my role in it may be at an end. Perhaps the time is coming for you must teach yourself.

SLAM CUT TO:

SMACK!

A 14 YEAR OLD DANNY TAKES A KICK TO THE HEAD --

It drops him to the dirt. We are --

EXT. KUNLUN MONASTERY COURTYARD - FLASHBACK

In a simple ring marked by a circle of coloured sand, young Danny spars with a larger and more talented Tibetan student. Danny is the occidental, the outsider -- he falls -- he is not the more skilled fighter -- but he gets back up -- the other student knock him down again -- Danny gets up again -- takes another vicious shot to the head -- he is angry, raging, barely controlling it. He is taking a beating.

THREE OLDER MONKS WATCH -- the powerful, hooded, LEI KUNG, the Thunderer -- The impassive YU-TI -- and THE OLD MAN --

LEI KUNG

(subtitled Tibetan)

Your stray dog is too small.

THE OLD MAN

(subtitled Tibetan)

So were you once. We are all small when we are first born.

Lei Kung shakes his head in disgust as Danny takes a pounding below.

LEI-KUNG

He's not one of us.

The Old Man allows a slight smile.

THE OLD MAN

No, he is not. Watch.

IN THE SAND RING - Young Danny gets to his feet, dirt mixed with blood under his nose. He dances around, using the moves of Kunlun but making them uniquely his own --

YOUNG DANNY

(english)

Come on! Let's see it! Come on!
Bring it!

Danny takes another shot from the larger and more skilled opponent but uses his movement and the force to spin, SCREAMING an angry kyai, coarse by comparison with his sparring mate's subdued control --

Danny uses the momentum and the pain from the blow to launch him into the air into a spinning kick to the chin of the unprepared student -- sending him flying and down --

Danny is on him before he can recover, raining blows down on the larger student from every angle -- the Tibetan student counters but Danny redoubles his efforts and closes off resistance -- Danny is brutal, a real finisher -- the larger student is frightened --

YOUNG DANNY (CONT'D)

(english)

I'll kill you!

The Old Man calls out, speaks to Danny in perfect english, tinged by a surprising British accent --

THE OLD MAN

(english)

No, Daniel, that is not the way.

Danny stops, shaken from his rage, poised over the larger boy, punch raised ready to deliver a killing blow -- something about Danny's fist draws our attention, as if lit by a hotter key light, brighter than anything around it -- [NOTE: This is not the Iron Fist but a trick of the light, a precursor to it.]

DANNY

Maybe it's my way.

LEI KUNG

Kunlun Monks do not train to take
life.

Danny backs away, lets the other boy up. He turns to the Older Monks --

DANNY

Then I wasn't meant to be a monk.
Because I'm going to kill the man
who killed my parents.

Danny bows to the unnerved student with a covered fist salute and takes his place in line.

THE OLDER MONKS converse in subtitled Tibetan --

LEI-KUNG

His anger will consume him.

THE OLD MAN

It was his salvation.

LEI-KUNG

It will become his downfall. Perhaps ours too if we continue to teach him.

THE OLD MAN

He is the best we have ever trained. You saw it, he has the Iron Fist within him.

LEI-KUNG

That only makes this game more dangerous. The problem with a stray dog is you don't know where he's been so how can you know who he will bite? He has so far refused to take his vows. You know the risks Kunlun faces from the corruption of the outside world and you have brought an outsider here...

The Old Man watches Danny in meditation practice with the other students, trying his best to master the poses and the stillness --

THE OLD MAN

He still has much to learn.

LEI-KUNG

And if he still refuses his vows?

ON DANNY as he practices a graceful move with the other students. There is a fire in his eyes, a purpose, lacking from the others. On the movement --

DISSOLVE TO:

DANNY finishes the same move in the hotel room, older, stronger, more polished --

CAMERA CIRCLES DANNY AS HE TRAINS, SPIRALLING TIGHTER --

[NOTE: THIS IS OUR SIGNATURE CAMERA MOVE FOR DANNY'S METAPHYSICAL MOMENTS: AN EVER-TIGHTENING CIRCLE.]

Danny's movements intensify -- there is a lot of emotion here -- he is angry --

AS CAMERA COMES AROUND DANNY it reveals a massive SCAR on his chest -- A RAISED AND ANGRY DARKENED BRAND IN THE OUTLINE OF A DRAGON --

He finishes with an intense flourish and a loud exhale. He is focussed. Ready. He looks at the Kunlun robe that lies over the chair where the Old Man was a second ago and reaches for his street clothes. For what he's going to do, he won't dishonor his temple.

SLAM TO:

EXT. THE CITY - VARIOUS SHOTS

URBAN JUNGLE. Danny, knapsack wrapped around his chest. He walks with focus, seeming to move in slow motion, while all around him is frantic purposeless movement.

PAST THE NEWSSTAND -- another day, another headline, another crime.

PAST THE APPLIANCE STORE WINDOW -- the wall of TV sets display new videos of new hit and runs, robberies and shootouts.

As Danny passes CAMERA HOLDS ON one TV -- which covers the hopeful optimism of eyewitnesses being interviewed about the "Subway Avenger" as the event is being called.

EYEWITNESS

One man. He made a statement... we don't have to be afraid... We can fight back...

CUT TO:

EXT. THE CITY SKYLINE (PLATE) - DAY

Afternoon. The bright lights of "Meachum Resorts' Shangri-La Casino" dominate the landscape.

EXT. SHANGRI-LA RESORT AND CASINO - ESTABLISHING - DAY

Big ticket entertainment complex with an exotic Asian theme, the hidden city of Shangri-La theme. Hotel and office towers above a casino entrance --

Danny passes through massive faux doors emblazoned with gaudy gilt dragons. A market-driven commercialization of Tibetan culture.

INT. MEACHUM CASINO LOBBY - SAME

Danny enters like a challenger into a rival school. The decor is bizarre - promising peace, tranquility and enlightenment in the service of the almighty dollar. Staff dressed in gaudy monk-like uniforms [NOTE: Blue and red, not the colors of Kuntun] and cocktail waitresses in primitive thongs.

Danny crosses the casino floor, taking it all in: The moneychanging -- cash for chips. The gaming -- spinning balls, slot tumblers, cards and dice.

A ROW OF SLOT MACHINES --

Danny watches as an attractive woman puts a coin in a slot machine and pulls the handle. The tumblers match up and the machine pays out, spitting out coins.

Danny rummages in his pocket, takes out a U.S. quarter from his stash of currencies. He puts it into a machine and pulls the handle. Nothing. He looks at the woman as she collects her winnings.

WOMAN

Better luck next time.

Danny turns away from the machines --

ANGLE - CRAPS TABLE

MISTY KNIGHT, a real beauty under a veneer of flash and trash, blows on a pair of dice and rolls them. She craps out again but it's the money of the guy next to her she's losing. PINKY, a drunk high roller with a pinkie ring.

PINKY

Damn. You were supposed to bring me luck, baby.

MISTY

I thought you said a man makes his own luck. Tell me more about yours. You said you're in business with Harold Meachum.

PINKY

Did I? I think you brought it up.

(MORE)

PINKY (CONT'D)

How come you're so curious about my business with Meachum. You a cop?

He grabs Misty around the wrist and stares hard at her.

MISTY

Do I look like a cop? Maybe I just like gamblers. And I'm wondering if your chips are big enough.

Pinky twists her arm, caught in his hammy grip.

PINKY

Well maybe I don't like talking business with cops or whores, baby.

Misty stares daggers at him. He's a big man. He uses his other hand to grab her chest, it looks like he's feeling her up but he's feeling for a wire. Surprisingly, she leans in and kisses him, swinging her other arm around his neck and before he can react, she is squeezing, cutting off his carotid with her arm as she covers his face with a kiss.

Neighboring players move away, uncomfortable with the public display of affection.

Pinky struggles briefly but Misty is locked around his neck and it only takes a few seconds before he slumps to the ground like a meat puppet with cut strings.

MISTY

(under her breath)
Don't call me baby.

Misty looks to the pit boss.

MISTY (CONT'D)

I think it's his heart.

As the pit boss and a guard come to help, Misty grabs a glass and spits the distasteful kiss into it, returning it to a waitresses' tray.

Two paramedics carry Pinkie off for treatment and pass --

DANNY taking the open space at the table beside Misty.

DANNY

May I take this spot?

MISTY

All yours baby. Could use a little
fresh blood around here.

DANNY watches the action -- bets are placed -- dice tumble --
chips are raked and paid -- the Shangri-La dragon logo
embossed on each chip.

MISTY (CONT'D)

So what line of work are you in?

DANNY

I was a student.

MISTY

Graduated?

DANNY

More like dropped out.

A waitress approaches Danny --

WAITRESS

Can I get you a drink?

Danny takes out his money pouch and thumbs the last, single
crumpled bill --

MISTY

The drinks are free.

DANNY

Oh. Then tea, please. Thank you.

Misty's curiosity is piqued. The dice come to Danny. He
holds the ten-spot.

MISTY

So you're going to risk the whole
nest egg on this?

DANNY

Why not?

Danny tosses the ten-spot on craps -- betting the next roll
to come up snake eyes 1:1.

DANNY'S HAND lifts the dice -- SLO-MO as he flips them around
in his hand -- seeing the 1:1 -- he closes his fist and
throws.

THE DICE flip over and over like a pair of balanced throwing knives -- bouncing in perfect synch -- finally landing side by side -- 1:1.

THE TABLE is awed. Bets are paid and taken.

Misty just looks at Danny.

MISTY

How'd you do that?

\$220 IN CHIPS returned to Danny's bet -- 22 to 1 -- the dice back to him -- Danny nods, leaves the chips there to ride. The Pit Boss whispers to the Dealer -- he'd like to see that shit again --

Danny rolls again --

1:1. He gets his number again. The Dealer and the Pit Boss: Oh fuck. The table quiets -- they love a gambler who risks big and gets lucky but this is creepy -- the kid's playing it like a game of skill -- but the winner must be paid. \$106,480.

MISTY (CONT'D)

You a pro?

DANNY

No, first time.

Pit Boss nods seriously to the Dealer. They don't like to do this but -- Dealer takes out another pair of dice -- special dice -- he pushes them across to Danny --

DEALER

New dice.

Danny picks them up -- doesn't even look at them -- just feels them in his hand, their weight, their corners.

Misty stops him.

MISTY

Wait. You seem like a nice guy.
Quit while you're ahead.

DANNY

I do? You don't even know me.

Misty extends her hand.

MISTY

Hi, Misty Knight. You are...

DANNY

Danny.

MISTY

Now I know you. I also know the guy who owns this place.

DANNY

Harold Meachum.

MISTY

Uh huh. Look, you got lucky. In about a minute, one way or the other, you're going to get unlucky. Quit. Get out. This is not the kind of place you want to call attention to yourself.

DANNY

That's exactly what I want to do. Get Meachum's attention. I know he lives here.

Danny picks up the new dice -- holds them and frowns -- he can feel the weight difference --

DANNY (CONT'D)

Can I change my bet?

MISTY

Before you roll, yes, but...

He changes his bet to the eleven -- the Dealer and Pit Boss look stricken -- Pit Boss catches the eye of the Security Chief. And Danny rolls -- 6:5.

MISTY (CONT'D)

How did you do that?

DANNY

These dice are weighted.

MISTY

No shit, Sherlock. How did you know that?

DANNY

If the goal of the game is to try to roll certain numbers, why do they make it so easy?

MISTY

They're making it easier on them.
Most people can't feel the weight of
the dice. It's considered a game of
luck.

DANNY

Skill is more reliable.

MISTY

Not for most people.

Misty leans close to Danny --

MISTY (CONT'D)

Listen, do you know who you're messing
with? Do you know anything about
Meachum?

DANNY

Enough. He and my father were
partners.

Misty is suddenly very interested.

MISTY

Who's your father?

DANNY

Wendell Rand. He's dead. Meachum
killed him.

Misty is floored --

MISTY

How do you know this?

DANNY

I was there.

MISTY

Look, you're going to need
protection...

DANNY

I don't need protection.

MISTY

But...

They're interrupted by the SECURITY CHIEF and two UNIFORMED
GUARDS, flanking Danny --

SECURITY CHIEF

Will you please come with me, sir?

DANNY

I'm here to see Meachum.

SECURITY CHIEF

I don't think so sir.

DANNY

I'll wait. It's still my turn.

Danny turns back to the table, picks up the dice. Chief puts a firm hand on Danny's shoulder and leans close and firmly --

SECURITY CHIEF

I don't think so, sir.

DANNY'S FIST closes on the dice -- a brief faint glow from within --

Danny throws a handful of dust -- he's crushed the dice -- into the Chief's face, distracting him --

Guard #1 and #2 try to surprise Danny from the side -- Danny scoops up a stack of his chips and sprays them out like high speed mini-frisbees --

MISTY

You're crazy.

The table clears, people scatter. Danny smiles and jumps into action as a half dozen more UNIFORMED SECURITY GUARDS converge on the table --

DANNY

Now we're gambling.

Danny drops and pulls the first two toward him, sending them flipping and flying in opposite directions, tumbling over tables, scattering drinks --

As they get to their feet they realize that Danny has stripped them of their batons --

Danny turns to face the rest of the guards, spinning the batons with expert flourishes --

Danny uses the sticks to in an impressive display of (Filipino) stick-fighting -- he reduces a professional security force to Cirque Du Soleil tryouts.

SECURITY CAM P.O.V. - DANNY - SAME

An America's Most Amazing video -- Danny mops up the casino with half of Meachum's security force -- PULL BACK to reveal --

A WALL OF MONITORS

Danny's performance is one brick in the wall of information: International news, stock quotes, security cams. In the B.G., a rhythmic ELECTRONIC NOISE from O.S. --

A HAND with a Patek watch comes into view, fumbles for a remote control, lifts it and the SECURITY CAM image of Danny fills the center screen.

MEACHUM (O.S.)

Are you watching this? What's going on down there? Who the hell is he?

WATCHING THE MONITORS - A couple of hard guys in Italian suits, BOS and STEFAN.

STEFAN

Just a guy making the last mistake of his life.

MEACHUM (O.S.)

Well, take care of it. It's bad for business.

BOS

It's done.

Bos on his cell phone to security --

VERY TIGHT ON HAL MEACHUM'S FACE -- watching the monitor closely as Danny goes through his paces. Now in his 40's, he's still a handsome man in his prime. He studies Danny on the monitor --

BEHIND MEACHUM'S FACE -- a bank of medical testing equipment displaying readouts -- EKGs and EEGs --

CUT TO:

INT. CASINO FLOOR - SAME

Danny finishes off the last of the uniformed guards and turns --

A GRAND STAIRCASE sweeps upward to another, private level. A bunch of guys in matching dark suits with earpieces and sunglasses sweep down the stairway toward Danny --

EXECUTIVE SECURITY FORCE, they move like athletes.

DANNY

Well, that's me. I've got to go.
Nice meeting you.

Misty just stares at him, stunned.

MISTY

You too. Take care...

Danny doesn't wait for the Security Force to get there. He launches himself into the first waves. They are trained martial artists but Danny parries their conventional moves easily, spinning and vaulting, he sends them flying as he ascends, using the staircase like a gymnast --

Danny's moves are fluid and more sophisticated than the punches and kicks that are launched at him. The security men try tasers and telescoping batons but they can't touch Danny.

TOP OF THE STAIRCASE - PRIVATE AREA

Danny gets to the top and a couple of the security force reach into their jackets for guns. Danny intercepts their moves and easily disarms them. He comes out with their Guns, flips them around, and uses the butts like saps to smack them into unconsciousness.

DANNY'S POV - EXECUTIVE SECURITY TEAM LEADER

A wiry guy with sunglasses at the elevator bank, talking into a lapel mike, motioning his men at Danny.

Danny works his way through security toward the team leader. The team leader backs up but Danny intercepts him. Danny gestures to the elevators, which require a key call.

The team leader shakes his head. Danny smacks him around and drags him to the elevator call panel. The team leader shakes his head. In a fluid move, Danny tears off the guy's jacket and rifles the pockets for the call keys.

Danny uses the key to call the elevator. The doors open.

INT. ELEVATOR - CONTINUOUS

Danny jumps in and presses the top button: PH. Nothing. He matches a colored key to a slot on the panel, turns and tries again. Bingo, it lights.

Danny tosses the team leader into three of his own onrushing men as the doors close behind him and he is enveloped in silence and gentle MUSAK --

Danny leans against the rail and waits.

INT. CASINO FLOOR - PRIVATE AREA - SAME

Security Team Leader fumbles for to key his radio --

INT. PENTHOUSE HALLWAY - SAME

A plush hallway, fine italian chairs. Continuing the Asian art theme - though the exotic art on the walls here is not tacky - this is the real thing, all martial-themed. At the end of the long hall, a set of double doors with a gold title: MEACHUM INDUSTRIES.

Bos and Stefan wait with two other guys. Same MUSAK plays, counterpoint to the tension. Stefan answers his cell phone, now on the headset.

STEFAN

So what, let him come.

BOS

Better this way. No witnesses up here.

Bos, Stefan and the two guys take out fancy guns, check them and chamber them. They casually take strategic positions in the long, narrow hallway. Like waiting for the train to pull in to the station. These guys know what they're doing.

DING. The elevator call lights. The doors slowly open.

Stefan motions the other two guys forward into the empty elevator.

Danny drops from a braced position above the door and strips the guns from the two guys hands. He steps out to face Bos and Stefan at the other end of the hall.

STEFAN

You're pretty hard on the help.

The two guys are on their feet behind Danny, but he whirls and takes them out with a couple of kicks that send them back into the elevator in a heap.

Bos and Stefan train their guns on him.

BOS

If you want to live a few seconds longer, you can tell us who you are and why you're here.

Danny talks like he's the one holding the guns; a gentle warning --

DANNY

My business is with Meachum.

BOS

Not at the moment.

DANNY

Have it your way then.

Danny starts walking toward them. Bos and Stefan spread to opposite walls and OPEN FIRE --

STEFAN

Don't mind if I do.

Danny ducks and kicks one of those fine Italian chairs -- it rockets down the hall like a cannon, taking bullets --

Bos and Stefan dive to avoid the chair and FIRING WILDLY --

Danny races up the wall to avoid the bullets -- He ricochets to the other wall -- all the while closing the distance -- as Bos and Stefan correct their aim --

Danny lands in the open -- he's cut the distance in half but Bos and Stefan have recovered and FIRE --

ON STORM OF BULLETS barrelling toward Danny --

SLO-MO on Danny -- his face knits in concentration and he --

CAMERA TRAVELS into the blackness of his eyes and RESOLVES into a universe of rushing LIGHTS, infinite and infinitesimal at the same time -- the universe of a man's soul -- RUSHING BACK OUT TOWARDS CAMERA WHICH PULLS AWAY --

CAMERA RUSHES Danny's arm to his hands -- they ball as he summons the Iron Fist and starts his movement --

THE CAMERA ROCKETS DOWN THE HALL TOWARD DANNY as the bullets bear down, Danny's arms arc gracefully toward the bullets, his hands gesturing in ancient and secret *Mudras*, hand symbols used to focus hidden power and ----

HIS HAND GLOWS, as if lit from within by white-hot embers -- without SLO-MO, we wouldn't even see it -- his body flows gracefully, his arms windmill on a collision course with the speeding bullets -- The Iron Fist manifests --

As the bullets and Danny's movements converge in a flurry of movement --

WE ARE BACK IN REAL TIME --

Danny stands there, mere feet away from Bos and Stefan.
DANNY'S FISTS SMOKE --

BOS

The hell you just do?!

Danny opens his hand and flicks the bullets at their feet like smoking cigarette butts.

Bos and Stefan's faces show doubt, eyes open to a new and terrifying world --

Danny disarms them. Bos and Stefan try to fight back but Danny is on them. A short and brutal close-quarters fight --

Danny is smaller but faster, he matches them move for move, wraps himself around Stefan and chokes him out, while riding him, using him like a pommel horse to pivot and kick Bos unconscious.

INTERCUT - SECURITY CAM P.O.V. - SAME

Stefan collapses and Danny rolls to his feet and continues past the downed men TOWARD CAMERA, exiting under the security lens --

BACK TO SCENE

Danny leaps toward the massive penthouse doors -- his right hand glowing brightly -- When he punches it's like an EXPLOSION -- ceiling lights blow -- the doors, and locks splinter out of the frame --

DOUBLE CUT INTO:

INT. MEACHUM'S SUITE - CONTINUOUS

The doors shatter out of their hinges and Danny lands bursts into the impressive suite, an angel of vengeance, his fists trailing wisps of smoke --

The entire floor, sleek and modern, customized around the very unique business and personal needs of one man --

MEACHUM (O.S.)

So, you wanted to see me?

HAL MEACHUM sits in the cockpit of his information center, surrounded by screens and mointors. He is enthroned and imprisoned in a huge, hi-tech, contraption that monitors his every cerebral, chemical and electrical respons, displaying them on an array of meters, gauges and displays. The reason for all this --

HAL MEACHUM IS A TRIPLE AMPUTEE -- He's missing both legs and his left arm.

Danny stares at the bizarre and unexpected sight --

Meachum's torso and stumps are surprisingly well-toned, hooked up right now to sensors and stimulators -- the background NOISES are EEGs, EKGs from medical monitoring equipment Meachum is still hooked up to. He wipes away the monitoring devices with his good hand as DOCTORS and PERSONNEL stumble to help from their positions ont he floor where they dove for cover --

MEACHUM (CONT'D)

I have many enemies, which are you?

Meachum is unflappable --

MEACHUM (CONT'D)

What's wrong, boy? Not what you expected? I thought everyone in this city knew the Hal Meachum story by now. But not you. Who are you and what do you want with me?

A MONITOR plays a report on the subway incident with the SUPER: SUBWAY VIGLANTE --

MEACHUM (CONT'D)

You came in on the train last night, didn't you? The Subway Avenger.

Danny moves closer --

DANNY

You don't recognize me.

Meachum wheels forward --

MEACHUM

Should I? You look familiar...

DANNY

Wendell Rand was my father.

With this, Meachum seems to deflate.

MEACHUM

My god. Yes... Daniel. You were just a boy...

DANNY

Then you know why I'm here.

MEACHUM

Of course.

(beat)

To kill me...

Danny says nothing -- Bos, Stefan and the other security goons stagger and stumble back into the room, broken and battered -- they've recovered guns --

Doctors and technical personnel again scramble for cover -- Danny tenses -- prepared to fight again --

MEACHUM (CONT'D)

(to his men)

Stop posing. You had your chance. You boys could no more stop him if he decided to kill me than I could dance a tango. You saw what he did out there. This boy's a Kunlun monk.

DANNY

No. I'm no monk.

Not the answer Meachum expected but doesn't slow him down.

MEACHUM

But you've been there. They trained you.

Meachum stares hard at Danny, fascinated. Danny's silence is all the yes Meachum is looking for.

MEACHUM (CONT'D)

(snaps to his staff)

Get out.

(turns to Danny)

I owe him...

They exit, reluctantly. Surprises Danny a little. Meachum sizes him up. Is he conceding or playing poker?

MEACHUM (CONT'D)

For a dozen years, I chased rumours, hired expeditions, tried to find the western kid supposedly taken in by a secret order of monks in a temple that no one had ever seen. How'd you find it?

DANNY

They found me.

MEACHUM

And you learned.
(takes a chance)
Your father would be proud.

Danny narrows his eyes, grits his teeth and steps forward. He raises his fist and it begins to glow --

MEACHUM (CONT'D)

Go ahead. I'm half-dead already. I knew you'd return one day to finish the job. I expected it.

Danny's breathing is shallow with rage. He looks down at the helpless cripple he's come to kill.

On the wall behind Meachum - a picture of Meachum from the beginning of that expedition, young, dashing and limbed.

Meachum watches as Danny lowers his fist.

DANNY

What happened?

MEACHUM

Where's the rest of me? Karma. That day on the mountain, I was alone and hurt, that freak storm... I wandered for days before I collapsed with frostbite. I woke up two weeks later in a hut near Khambu-me. I was a changed man. It went deeper than the primitive surgery that "saved" my life.

He looks down at his missing limbs.

MEACHUM (CONT'D)

I know nothing can absolve me from what I did on that mountain but if you give me one day, I can explain
(MORE)

MEACHUM (CONT'D)

some things to you that might help you..

DANNY

Help me?

Danny listens. Meachum looks Danny in the eye, measures him. Not a bargain, a gift --

MEACHUM

To get on with your life, which is clearly an issue here. Help you understand your father and mother and what happened. Give me one day.

DANNY

Why? Did you give them one day?

MEACHUM

No, I didn't. But you're better than I am Danny.

Danny is listening.

MEACHUM (CONT'D)

I know I owe you. Half of what I have is yours, if you want it, you're entitled. I can't bring him back but I can offer you that much.

DANNY

I don't care about your money. My father trusted you.

Meachum's head collapses forward.

MEACHUM

(softly)

I know.

Then Meachum looks up --

MEACHUM (CONT'D)

Your father was like a brother to me. Our business partnership was always intended to be a way to travel the world and explore. Like the trip to Kunlun. But it went bad. While I sold art and antiques we brought back to bored millionaires... He was using the business as a front

(MORE)

MEACHUM (CONT'D)

for more profitable activities. Selling drugs, secrets, weapons, money. Your father was into some bad stuff, Danny. His businesses were responsible for the deaths of hundreds, perhaps.

DANNY

Why should I believe you?

MEACHUM

You shouldn't. I'll show you the books. I kept them in case. I discovered the truth just before we left for Nepal. I asked him to stop. He got very angry, said this was his ticket and he'd take me down with him if I did anything. On the trek, I found the gun in his pack. He was going to make sure I vanished up there, after we found Kunlun. All I did was beat him to the punch.

Danny sizes up Meachum, a pathetic reduction of a man.

MEACHUM (CONT'D)

I honestly didn't want to hurt you or your mother. That part was an accident. I was scared and confused. Not a day passes where I don't think about what I could have done differently. I looked but never found you or Kunlun. I hope you found peace there.

DANNY'S FISTS RELAX --

MEACHUM (CONT'D)

When I got back, I tried to atone the only way I knew. My businesses have grown and through them, I've been able to do a lot of good for a lot of people. In fact, tomorrow night I'm doing something very important, that will help a lot of people.

Meachum pushes a printed invitation across the table. Danny takes it and looks it over.

MEACHUM (CONT'D)

I'm endowing a children's wing at the hospital. Come and see for yourself. Just 24 hours, Danny. After that... well, I'm ready.

Danny turns the fancy invitation over in his fingers. Meachum is the honoree at a gala banquet.

JOY MEACHUM races into the room -- the girl in Danny's pictures -- now a full-grown big city knockout.

JOY

Daddy, are you alright, they said...

MEACHUM

I'm fine. There was a misunderstanding. Security didn't recognize him...

She looks at Danny, her jaw drops --

JOY

Danny..? My god, Danny..

MEACHUM

Danny, you remember my daughter, Joy. Dear, it's Danny Rand.

Danny turns to her, his resolve continuing to soften.

DANNY

Joy...

She smiles just like in Danny's super 8 memory -- then falls into his arms -- whether he's ready for it or not -- years melt away.

JOY

You're alive! All those years, Daddy always said he knew you survived the avalanche --

Meachum gives Danny a conspiratorial glance --

JOY (CONT'D)

-- he said you were probably living in some Tibetan monastery learning ancient magical secrets. I thought it was just a fairy tale he told a little girl so she wouldn't cry.

She hugs him tightly.

JOY (CONT'D)

It's so good to see you. Welcome home...

Danny's lost childhood, now a beautiful grown promise of a future, stares him right in the face.

JOY (CONT'D)

You look good. Hmm, you've been working out...

DANNY

A little.

JOY

Let me take you to dinner. Do you have plans?

Danny is thrown by Meachum's Joy's warm, smiling invitation --

DANNY

Well I...

JOY

If you do, break them. Danny, it's been too long... I've waited... We have a lot to talk about.

Danny looks at Meachum.

MEACHUM

It's up to you Danny. Your business with me can wait. I'm not going anywhere. Come to the benefit... tomorrow night.

ON DANNY -- thinking long and hard. He stares hard at Meachum, looks at the invitation in his hand.

DANNY

(with finality)

Alright. Tomorrow night.

Meachum closes his eyes, deflates a little in resignation, an imperceptible nod of thanks for the stay of execution.

MEACHUM

Yes. Thank you. If you'll excuse me, I have work to do. I'm sure you and Danny want to catch up.

Meachum presses a button on his desk and a pair of ultrafit personal nurses enter.

Total pros in every sense of the word, they push the broken furniture out of the way as they lift him into a hi-tech wheelchair.

MEACHUM (CONT'D)

Dear.

Joy bends and kisses her father. A tender moment. MORE than good night, perhaps goodbye. Meachum is wheeled helplessly into his private chambers. Danny watches him go.

Joy breaks Danny's focus by sliding an arm around his shoulders and looking him right in the eye.

JOY

So..? Where've you been?

ON THAT WE --

CUT TO:

INT. WESTON'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Misty sits across from a big desk. Behind it sits Associate Deputy Director of Operations AGENT PAUL WESTON, military bearing by way of the Ivy League. Flags on either side, fishing photos on the wall. Misty wears a dark coat over her evening dress.

MISTY

-- I'm telling you you've never seen anything like this guy.

WESTON

Back up. What were you doing at Meachum's casino in the first place?

She shifts in her chair.

MISTY

It was my day off.

WESTON

Exactly. You were sniffing around Meachum.

MISTY

(points the photos)

It's a hobby. You like fishing --

WESTON

This isn't a joke, Agent Knight.

(MORE)

WESTON (CONT'D)

Meachum is a powerful and well-respected businessman. If he feels persecuted and decides to turn up the heat in Washington... they'll take his call.

MISTY

I was just keeping my eyes and ears open for anything unusual --

WESTON

Unusual, like what?

MISTY

Like I don't know. Like a one man army making a light meal of Meachum's security force, breezing his way upstairs into the man's private suite.

Weston reacts with concern.

WESTON

Well whoever he is, it's a private matter. There was no police report.

MISTY

That's the question. What does this guy want?

WESTON

The question is how long are you going to keep stroking this hard-on you have for Harold Meachum?

MISTY

Long as it takes. Until something turns up, until Meachum makes a mistake I can use to take him down. I think this may be our break.

WESTON

Our break? This is your vendetta, Knight, yours alone. You're a good agent, if you'd stop pushing so hard. Your father was a dirty cop but that was a long time ago...

MISTY

This isn't about him.

WESTON

No?

MISTY

If Meachum's mixed up in half the stuff I think he is...

WESTON

Like funnelling money to a ring of bad cops to look the other way while this secret criminal "organization" of his prospered? Like letting your those cops and your father take the fall for a police corruption scandal?

Misty glares at him. Weston doesn't care, just calls it like he sees it. Misty tries to stay professional.

MISTY

My father made his own choices. He was weak. I was reminded of that every night when he came home drunk and smacked my mother around. He deserved what he got.

WESTON

But he was still your father. Is that they only reason you became a federal agent, because you blame Meachum? This office is not the proper forum for a personal crusade.

MISTY

No sir.

Misty represses her rage, clenches her teeth and stays professional --

MISTY (CONT'D)

I became a federal agent to uphold the laws, same as you. I just happen to think Meachum's been breaking them for a long time. I just want to take a criminal off the streets. I thought that was the job. I've seen this Danny Rand, he's very determined, and I think one way or another he's going to force Meachum's hand. I intend to be there when --

WESTON

The good one, you mean? The hand that writes the checks to the charitable foundation and shakes the hands of Senators.

(MORE)

WESTON (CONT'D)

You've got a thing for rich, powerful white men, Agent Knight?

MISTY

Doesn't everyone these days?

(leans in)

That kid said Meachum killed his father. He was there. That makes him an eyewitness.

Weston consults his file.

WESTON

Wendell Rand was Meachum's first business partner, he was killed in an avalanche in Tibet 15 years ago, his body never recovered. That would make your eyewitness what, an 8 year old child at the time?

Weston stares hard at Misty.

WESTON (CONT'D)

You're going to take Meachum down with that? The unreliable fifteen year old memory of a little kid who lost his father?

Misty's expression falls. He's right. She knows she's grasping. But Weston doesn't do the obvious --

WESTON (CONT'D)

Okay, wait. Benefit of the doubt. Let's assume you're right, for the purposes of discussion, let's say Meachum's running a clandestine criminal empire no one's been able to catch him at. So this kid comes back after 15 years and he wants revenge for his father's death...

Weston sighs, motions for her to continue --

MISTY

Or he wants his cut of the action...

WESTON

(nods, granting it)
Whatever that is.

MISTY

What if this is our big break? It's worth keeping an eye on them. If only to protect a fine, upstanding citizen like Meachum... assuming you're right.

Weston smiles. Touche. Mulling it over. It makes sense. He's hard but reasonable. He sits back and nods.

WESTON

Okay, Agent Knight. Just because you're always smelling smoke doesn't mean that one day there might not be a fire. We all have to trust our instincts. I'll assign a few men to a task force, under your supervision. Keep on eye on both of them.

Misty smiles in surprised satisfaction. She's won one.

MISTY

Thank you.

WESTON

But low key and I mean invisible. No super hero bullshit, you got me? We watch. No drama. We're not passing off Harold Meachum without a damn good reason....

CUT TO:

EXT. SANDWICH STAND - NIGHT

Danny inspects his hamburger as Joy talks while she chews.

JOY

I swear, there's no meat in it. Look I'm a vegetarian too. It's soy and vegetables and shit.

Danny looks up suddenly.

JOY (CONT'D)

That's a figure of speech. There's no actual shit in it. It's a vegi-burger. Vegetables.

Danny tries it.

JOY (CONT'D)

Not bad. Just like you remember
only different.

Danny chews.

EXT. PLAYGROUND - AFTERNOON

A victim of urban blight. Signs of graffiti and vandalism.
Danny and Joy walk through.

JOY

Remember this place?

DANNY

No.

Joy stops at the swings.

JOY

We used to play here as kids.
Remember we used to see who could
swing the highest?

Danny looks at the urban decay.

DANNY

It's changed.

Joy sits on a swing.

JOY

Everything changes Danny. It's not
always bad.

Danny sits beside her and looks across the park.

THEIR P.O.V. - PICNIC TABLES AND BARBEQUE AREA

Desolate and abandoned.

BACK TO SWINGS - DANNY AND JOY

JOY (CONT'D)

The last time we saw each other was
here...

THE PICNIC TABLES - FLASHBACK

The years slip away and suddenly it is bright and sunny and
15 years ago like a super 8 movie. A younger and vital
Meachum and Wendell grill hotdogs and hamburgers.

On the picnic table has a checkered cloth covered with food, maps, old leather-bound books.

Danny and Joy, 9 years old, play catch with a football, hiding their attraction in a game.

INTERCUT - DANNY AND JOY

JOY (CONT'D)

I wanted to go. My father wouldn't let me, he thought it was too dangerous. I guess he had a feeling...

DANNY

A feeling.

Danny watches across the park --

FLASHBACK - WENDELL AND MEACHUM

As they were 15 years ago. Sharing beers, flipping burgers.

MEACHUM

I can't talk you out of it?

WENDELL

-- they're coming, Hal, and that's that. You should bring Joy, she'll love it. It's a moderate trek, we're fully prepared.

Wendell points with the spatula to the stack of maps and books spread out on the table

WENDELL (CONT'D)

We've read everything. And planned for anything.

WENDELL (CONT'D)

A little adventure builds character.

MEACHUM

I think this is too important an expedition to turn it into a family vacation, Wendell.

WENDELL

It is important. That's why I want my family to be there when we find Kunlun. We'll protect them. We can do this. We're going to do this.

Wendell toasts his beer bottle into Meachum's.

YOUNG DANNY

Hey Uncle Hal, catch...

Young Danny throws a football to Meachum and he gracefully one-hands it without dropping his beer.

MEACHUM

Go long, Danny.

Young Danny takes off running. Hal cocks and throws, graceful and powerful like an NFL quarterback.

Young Danny races past Danny and Joy on the swings as he is knocked over by the powerfully thrown ball. But he doesn't drop it.

WENDELL

Easy Hal...

Young Joy cheers and raises her hands like a touchdown. Young Danny does the Icky shuffle, a stylized endzone dance, with all the carefree joy of childhood. Young Joy comes over to join in as Young Danny finishes his practiced celebration and spins the ball like a top. A real emotional contrast to the Danny we know now. This is the childhood that was taken from him.

ANGLE - DANNY

Watching and remembering --

OVERLAPPING FLASHBACK - SUPER 8 MEMORIES

Finished, Young Danny turns to Young Joy with a big smile and she spontaneously pecks him with an innocent kiss --

YOUNG DANNY

What's that for?

YOUNG JOY

You're leaving on Saturday. It was a goodbye kiss.

YOUNG DANNY

Oh. Okay.

Young Danny kisses her back.

ON DANNY AND JOY - ON THE SWINGS

Joy leans in close to Danny --

JOY

Do you remember? Right over there.
My first kiss. While you were gone
I decided we were going to be married
one day. I was going to tell you
when you came back.

DANNY

That was a long time ago.

She leans in and gently kisses him.

CUT TO:

EXT. INDUSTRIAL AREA - NIGHT

A run-down industrial neighborhood that has seen better days.
Hope and opportunity fled this area since Danny's photo was
taken. Boarded up buildings. Across the street, behind
graffitied fencing, a rail yard.

EXT. WAREHOUSE - MEACHUM & RAND/MOUNTAIN IMPORTS - SAME

Looks abandoned. Paint peeling.

JOY

Abandoned. He closed it down years
ago. Couldn't bring himself to sell
it for sentimental reasons.

A BOTTLE BREAKS O.S. A couple of scary-looking drunks stumble
out of the shadows.

JOY (CONT'D)

Lousy neighborhood now. It's not
safe here. Come on.

Danny takes a last look at his father's legacy and follows.

DRUNK

Hey young lovers. Can you spare a
few dollars for a broken heart?

The second drunk stands menacingly off to the side.

DANNY

Sorry, I don't...

DRUNK

Bullshit! Everyone's got something.

The Drunk lunges at Danny. Danny ducks easily, doesn't even
take his hands out of his pockets.

DANNY

Really, I don't have anything.

The Drunk grabs a bottle and takes a commando stance.

DRUNK

You want to hand it over or you want to play? I got a black belt.

JOY

Wait, stop.

Joy pulls out some bills.

JOY (CONT'D)

Here, take it. Go. Leave us alone.

The Drunk and his buddy look at the money and then at Danny.

DRUNK

This's your lucky night, bud.

The drunk tosses the bottle and stumbles off for a bender.

JOY

It's easier.

DANNY

You taught him a lesson.

JOY

What's that?

DANNY

Crime pays.

Joy laughs. Danny doesn't.

CUT TO:

INT. MEACHUM'S PENTHOUSE - HALL OF WEAPONS

Meachum's huge living area is lined with martial-themed art, sculpture -- a backdrop for the cases of weaponry -- an amazing collection from around the world, spanning history.

Joy and Danny at the door. An awkward moment. Danny's mind is on his mission.

DANNY

Good night, Joy. It was good to see you again.

JOY

You too. Hey, lighten up. You're back, right? I'll see you tomorrow? I'm sure we can find a room for you here. A suite even.

DANNY

No. Thanks.

MEACHUM (O.S.)

Danny has a big day ahead of him.

They turn. Meachum is silhouetted in the dark, his wheelchair parked in front of huge windows that look out on the city.

JOY

Daddy, I thought you'd be in bed.

Meachum wheels into the light.

MEACHUM

I couldn't sleep. She give you the grand tour, Danny?

JOY

Maybe tomorrow.

MEACHUM

No time like the present. Come on.

Meachum starts to wheel past the cases of weapons.

MEACHUM (CONT'D)

You know I devoted my life to the martial arts, Danny. Your father and I would train and train. Before the accident I was something too...

Meachum's good hand swings and checks in a powerful move.

MEACHUM (CONT'D)

I've still got it, up here at at least...

Meachum taps his head.

MEACHUM (CONT'D)

Ah, the secrets we were going to find in Kunlun. I wanted to learn everything. To be the best. Instead I've amassed the best collection. And I live vicariously through this...

Meachum gestures to his impressive weaponry collection.

MEACHUM (CONT'D)

Is it true what they say about about
Kunlun?

DANNY

I wouldn't know what they say.

MEACHUM

That they can work miracles. A human
hand can be become like iron.
(a pointed look at Danny)
Even stop bullets...

DANNY

I never saw any miracles. Only
practice.

MEACHUM

I've heard at the higher levels,
they have even found a way to conquer
death.

DANNY

I've never seen death conquered.

Danny gives a pointed look back at Meachum. A subtle threat.

MEACHUM

Pity. So I collect things. Weapons.
Arms from around the world. Note
the irony.

Meachum stops in front of a case -- a simply wrought,
unassuming sword inside.

MEACHUM (CONT'D)

And this is the closest I ever got
to Kunlun.

Meachum takes it out of the case -- hefts it casually with
his good hand.

MEACHUM (CONT'D)

A sword hammered from Kunlun steel.

Meachum tosses it to Danny -- who catches it with a grip and
a flourish that hints at great talent -- but he handles it
gently, reverentially.

DANNY

Who told you this was from Kunlun?

MEACHUM

The man who sold it me got it from a
Kunlun monk.

DANNY

How?

MEACHUM

He traded for it. Though he charged
me quite a lot of money. Look at
the exquisite workmanship, the
simplicity --

DANNY

He was lying to you.

MEACHUM

What?

DANNY

Kunlun steel is forged with the spirit
of its maker and user.

MEACHUM

This is a fake?

DANNY

In Kunlun, there is a spirit to the
weapons. Called *la*. The spirit and
a life forged within it.

Danny flips it around, hands it back to Meachum --

DANNY (CONT'D)

Do you feel it? The spirit? Do you
feel anything?

Meachum concentrates but clearly it's just a piece of metal
in his hand.

MEACHUM

No.

DANNY

Then you were cheated.

MEACHUM

(sighs)

Well, it's better to know the truth,
isn't it?

He replaces it back in the case -- now like melmac in the
china cabinet.

MEACHUM (CONT'D)

Good night, Danny. I expect I'll see you tomorrow.

JOY

You're coming to the benefit?

DANNY

I'll be there.

Joy smiles, leans in and kisses him.

JOY

Good. 'Night Danny.

After Danny exits, Joy pushes her father's chair down the hall.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. CITY - NIGHT

Various shots. Late night. Danny walks through the modern landscape.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. KUNLUN TEMPLE - CHAMBER - NIGHT

A bare room. Straw mat. A grown-up Danny lays his robe in his knapsack. The Old Man is at the door.

THE OLD MAN

Were you going to say goodbye?

DANNY

I thought it might be easier if I didn't, Sifu.

THE OLD MAN

You turn your back on your studies.

Danny looks at him, genuinely conflicted.

DANNY

No one here can challenge me.

THE OLD MAN

Your skills are uncontested. But there is more knowledge beyond this, physical, world. Things you haven't seen yet...

DANNY

It's time I fulfilled my promise.

Danny slings his knapsack.

DANNY (CONT'D)

I have to do this.

And walks out.

MATCH CUT TO:

INT. DANNY'S SHITTY HOTEL ROOM - DAWN

Danny enters and crosses past --

THE OLD MAN (O.S.)

So why didn't you do it?

The Old Man sitting in the corner of the room.

DANNY

He wasn't what I thought he was.

Danny goes into some practice movements as he talks. Controlled at first, they grow faster, increasingly emotion-filled throughout the scene.

THE OLD MAN

Will he be what you thought he was tomorrow? What will be different?

DANNY

I will be. I'll be stronger tomorrow.

THE OLD MAN

Maybe you were stronger today.

Danny does a kicking sequences. He's conflicted. The anger comes out in his movements.

DANNY

This is what I trained for.

THE OLD MAN

Revenge. It's given your life purpose but will it bring them back? Will more killing give their lives or their death any meaning they didn't have?

DANNY

I'll let you know tomorrow.

Danny finishes his movements with a final flourish of intensity, breathing out with a scream of anger.

Danny pauses, turns, but the old man is gone.

CUT TO:

AN EGG --

Source of life, resting in a steel cup. The egg is picked up delicately by a prosthetic arm made of sleek high-tech composites --

INT. HOTEL BALLROOM - DAY

A charity event banquet in progress. Meachum sits beside a CRIPPLED BOY, missing an arm. Wires run from the boy's stump to a lap-top computer then back out to the prosthetic arm. Calculations race by under a wire-frame model on the computer. The boy's face screws up as he concentrates and the arm places the egg in a silver soup spoon --

The audience erupts in APPLAUSE --

The boy grins.

CRIPPLED BOY

I did that? Kewl.

Meachum puts his hand on the boy's shoulder.

Signs announce the dedication and endowment of the new Children's Hospital. Meachum as the guest of honour, recipient of the Humanitarian Guiding Light Award.

Business and community leaders. Joy sits at a table beside an empty seat. Waiting for Danny.

The boy concentrates and the arm lifts the egg. The boy smiles and the prosthetic crushes the egg. The boy looks embarrassed until Meachum smiles and reassures him.

MEACHUM

Trust me, it just takes a little practice.

Meachum takes the mike --

MEACHUM (CONT'D)

On behalf of my daughter Joy and the Meachum Family foundation, I'm honored to present this check for twenty-two

(MORE)

MEACHUM (CONT'D)
million dollars to endow the
rehabilitation center at St. Joseph's
Children's Hospital to continue the
research we've pioneered at Meachum
Industries. But I'd like to make a
change...

The room quiets.

MEACHUM (CONT'D)
I know plans call for renaming the
center the Meachum center but that's
wrong. I would like to ask that it
be renamed the Rand Rehabilitation
Center... to honor an old friend.

Meachum looks up --

ANGLE - THE BACK OF THE ROOM

Danny stands alone just inside the door, watching.

BACK TO SCENE - MEACHUM

Meachum quiets them and continues --

MEACHUM (CONT'D)
And we should not stop with money,
for it's a poor substitute for
knowledge and technology. There is
much work to do, let every day be a
fresh start. Thank you.

Meachum looks up.

MEACHUM'S P.O.V. - BACK OF THE ROOM

Danny is gone.

LATER. Meachum making his way through the crowd, shaking
hands, accepting congratulations, treated like an admired
figure.

EXT. HOTEL - PARKING LOT - DAY

Limo drivers wait by limos, smoking, talking. Across the
lot, Danny stands, staring out on the city. He turns as the
hotel doors open --

Joy, Meachum, Bos and Stefan exit the hotel -- Meachum's
limo at the curb --

DANNY'S P.O.V. --

Joy gives her father a big hug. Meachum looks up, sees Danny across the lot.

INTERCUT - MEACHUM heading for his limo --

DANNY making his way toward him --

BOS, Stefan and additional SECURITY move to intercept Danny, hands go inside jackets --

Meachum is helped into his custom limo. He looks at Danny as the door shuts behind him.

The limo starts up, makes a half turn away from the curb traffic.

Danny heads toward it. Bos, Stefan and Security converge on him. Joy turns and sees Danny.

SUDDENLY - BOOM! A huge EXPLOSION. The limo disappears in a ball of fire. BOOM! BOOM! In an instant it is gone -- nothing left but shrapnel.

People are hurled to the ground, including Danny. He looks up. The car is in flames.

Joy watches, weeping.

JOY

Daddy! No!!

The limo pieces burn -- no way anyone survived that.

Bos and Stefan move to protect Joy --

Police converge en masse -- dozens of guns pointed directly at --

DANNY stops where he stands, staring at this new development.

POLICE

Freeze! Hands where we can see them!

Too many guns from too far away even if he felt like doing something about it. He doesn't. Slowly he holds his hands out.

Joy stares at Danny as Bos and Stefan restrain her.

MISTY KNIGHT appears from somewhere. She's running onto the scene, trailed by armed federal agents.

She takes command, flashes a badge, goes right to Danny.
Past all the guns focussed on him --

MISTY

What happened here..?

She gets there and doesn't know what to do. She looks around
and has no choice --

MISTY (CONT'D)

Danny Rand, you're under arrest for
the murder of Harold Meachum.

FADE TO BLACK:

INT. INTERVIEW ROOM

Misty faces Danny across a table.

MISTY

You understand your rights? You
don't want a lawyer?

Danny nods and shake shis head in response.

MISTY (CONT'D)

Did you kill Harold Meachum?

DANNY

No.

MISTY

You didn't plant that bomb?

DANNY

No. I don't know anything about
bombs. That wasn't how I was going
to kill him.

Misty stops cold.

MISTY

You're saying you were going to kill
him.

DANNY

That's why I came back. To make him
pay for killing my parents.

MISTY

You're telling me someone beat you
to it?

Danny shrugs.

DANNY

Maybe.

MISTY

Who?

DANNY

I don't know. He said he had information for me about my father. That other people were involved in his death.

MISTY

Any ideas?

Danny shakes his head.

MISTY (CONT'D)

You'll tell me if anything occurs to you.

DANNY

Just like you'd tell me what you know.

MISTY

Hey, I'm in law enforcement. You're a vigilante. I don't owe you shit. He and your father were partners. For all I know you came back to claim your share of the business.

DANNY

If that's all you know, you don't know much.

MISTY

Well if you're so smart, what are you doing here? Enjoy the accomodations hotshot.

Misty gets up, pauses at the door, stares at him, trying to figure things. Danny is escorted out by a trio of GUARDS.

INT. JAIL CELL

Danny is put into a large cell. He takes a seat on the floor, against the wall, gets comfortable in a meditation position.

INT. JAIL OBSERVATION ROOM - SAME

Misty watches Danny on a closed circuit monitoring system as Weston enters the room.

WESTON

Alright, Agent Knight, bring me up to speed.

MISTY

Wish I could.

WESTON

You had it all figured out yesterday.

MISTY

Yeah, things change.

WESTON

I'll remind you. This guy came back to stake his claim to his father's share of Meachum's business. Now Meachum's dead.

MISTY

Yeah, but I don't think he did it. I've seen him work. He doesn't need bombs. He's good with his hands.

WESTON

So who?

MISTY

I don't know. Meachum had plenty of enemies.

WESTON

Not even counting you. But he's still one of this city's leading citizens - a man you were staking out by the way - he's killed and we have no clue who the murderer is.

MISTY

Just because he didn't do it doesn't mean he's not the key.

Weston watches Danny in the monitor.

MISTY (CONT'D)

Maybe his showing up scared someone.
(MORE)

MISTY (CONT'D)

A guy like Meachum is bound to do business with people who don't like attention or questions. When Danny didn't go through with it, maybe one of them wanted to make sure those questions didn't get asked.

WESTON

Scared of this guy?

Misty gives Weston a look.

MISTY

You haven't seen him. There's no background on him other than some rumour about his spending the last fifteen years in some secret monastery in Tibet.

WESTON

Is that right? Some kind of magic monk?

MISTY

Weston, he could take out half the department without breaking a sweat.

Weston smiles, shrugs it off.

WESTON

Yet you arrested him without a fight.

MISTY

He was even polite.

INT. CELL - NIGHT

Danny sits on the floor, gets comfortable, settles his muscles in. CAMERA CIRCLES DANNY as he relaxes, closes his eyes --

YOUNG DANNY (V.O.)

This is a waste of time.

CUT TO:

CAMERA COMPLETES ITS CIRCLE and we are --

INT. KUNLUN TEMPLE - MEDITATION CHAMBER - FLASHBACK

Young Danny opens his eyes to see the Old Man sitting across from him.

YOUNG DANNY

*Sifu, what can I learn sitting alone
in a room?*

THE OLD MAN

You can learn about yourself.

YOUNG DANNY

I want to practice.

THE OLD MAN

*You are. You are practicing sitting
alone and still in a room.*

YOUNG DANNY

But what's the point?

THE OLD MAN

You want to hit things.

YOUNG DANNY

Yes.

THE OLD MAN

*Okay, then hit things if you think
that will help. But in this room.*

YOUNG DANNY

There's nothing in this room.

THE OLD MAN

Ah. Then what do you do?

The Old Man shuts the door behind him and exits.

CUT TO:

INT. JAIL CELL - NIGHT

Danny sits motionless in the darkness. Same position. He's
actually sleeping.

Sound of key in lock, door opening and closing.

Danny opens his eyes to find --

Three nasty looking cellmates. TEXAS, DUTCH and BRASIL. No
sign of the guards. How did they get in?

TEXAS

*Looks like you got some new roomates,
son. Ain't you going to welcome us?*

(MORE)

TEXAS (CONT'D)

I got a riddle for you. If the Easter Bunny, God and a monk from Kunlun had a fight, who would win?

(beat)

The Easter Bunny, because God is dead and everyone knows Kunlun doesn't exist.

Laughter from these guys. Stone cold killers. Mercenaries. Contract killers. Each a specialist in a deadly killing art. They spread out.

BRASIL

Legends say Kunlun monks master all the fighting arts. I say there's only enough time in one life to master one.

Brasil attacks with a kick -- Danny rolls and evades but Brasil only wanted to get close to him -- he wraps him up, Brazilian Jiu-jitsu style, close-range fighting -- behind him like a snake, trying to choke him out from behind -- Danny has no angle to punch or kick --

BRASIL (CONT'D)

Good night.

Danny runs at the wall -- runs up it and does a half gainer, with Brasil still on his back -- Brasil's body breaks their fall -- Danny uses the moment to escape and reverse the hold -- Danny chokes him out, using his art against him.

Danny rolls off, sits on Brasil's prone body and looks up at the two remaining opponents. He smiles and motions Texas forward.

DUTCH tries to blindside him with a brutal thai kick -- Danny ducks, squares off with Dutch who kicks and spins as Danny blocks, picking up his rhythms.

DUTCH

Someone wants you dead, mate. I'm going to have fun doing it.

Dutch trips a boot knife from the toe of his shoe and attacks -- If Danny blocks, he's cut --

Danny kicks Dutch before he can get another off. Dutch loads up. Danny beats him to it. Same moves but Danny is faster. Danny hacks at him like chopping down a tree. Finally takes him out with a blow to the head.

TEXAS

You're good, kid. Too good to take chances with.

Danny turns -- Texas holds a gun, a big high-tech handgun -- and he's 25 feet away --

TEXAS (CONT'D)

Sorry, but you showing up is putting the heat on the wrong people.

Texas OPENS FIRE --

Danny spins as a massive shell craters the wall where he was an instant ago. He uses his momentum to race up and along a wall -- Texas FIRES, the shots shatter cement a step behind him --

But Danny is boxed in. The cell is about to become a tomb as --

Texas tracks him with the gun -- too far away for Danny to get to him through the hail of exploding shells --

Danny comes down from the wall, spins -- his fist glows with the Iron Fist -- Danny punches the nearest object, the cement wall -- it shatters into boulder-size frag and flies toward Texas --

Texas tries to react -- but is caught in the hail of debris -- Texas retreats, firing, races out the cell door --

Danny's fist glows with the Iron Fist chi -- he leaps and punches through a corner of the solid cinderblock wall -- sending a giant piece of wall rocketing down the dark hallway after Texas -- THUD.

CUT TO:

INT. JAIL - HALLWAY - MORNING

Footsteps echo. Misty Knight and a few police guards. They arrive at Danny's cell --

It's a disaster area, gaping holes in the walls. Danny sits on the floor waiting patiently. Texas' gun lays on the floor.

COP

Sweet jumping jesus...

Misty takes in the extensive damage. Danny stretches as if he's just waking up.

MISTY

What happened?!

DANNY

A few guys had the wrong idea about
me so I filled them in,

Misty runs a finger along a broken wall.

MISTY

Why'd you stick around?

DANNY

(smiles)

Cheapest hotel in town. And I'm
flat broke.

Misty is amused.

MISTY

Hate to put you over budget but you're
free to go. Meachum's daughter
alibied you and posted your bail.
She said you couldn't have done it,
she was with you the whole night.

DANNY

That's not true.

Misty stops him as he passes. They are close.

MISTY

I know. She doesn't seem like your
type.

(then)

Does she know you came to kill her
father?

DANNY

It was between me and Meachum. Not
her.

MISTY

Right. Like Meachum's business with
your father didn't concern you?

She motions him to the door, beside the broken wall.

MISTY (CONT'D)

Watch your back, Danny.

EXT. JAIL - STREET - HIGH P.O.V. - DAY

Danny greets Joy.

INT. WESTON'S OFFICE - DAY

Misty watches out the window.

MISTY

What happened in lock-up last night?

WESTON

I don't know. Maybe the guards decided to hold some unauthorized prize fights.

MISTY

Someone tried to kill him.

WESTON

We're looking into it.

MISTY

Along with Meachum's murder.

WESTON

Misty, can I give you some advice, as a friend?

MISTY

Sure...

WESTON

Get away from your suspicions for a few days. Go have a few drinks, maybe get yourself laid.

As creepy, offensive and presumptuous as it sounds, Misty gave him license. And though it's not her style to report that kind of thing, she'd love to smack him one.

MISTY

Thanks for the advice.

WESTON

Hey, I'm not trying to be an asshole here. It's the same advice I give myself after a confusing case. Life is messy. We don't always get all the answers. You've got to make due. Meachum is dead. Don't look a gift horse in the mouth. Take a break.

MISTY

Is that it, sir?

WESTON

(sighs)

That's it.

CUT TO:

INT. MEACHUM PENTHOUSE - NIGHT

To be young, single and worth a billion dollars in the big city. Danny in Joy's world. Among the art and weapons. Joy stares out the windows at the endless lights of the city --

JOY

Danny, do you remember how simple it was when we were kids? Baseball, comic books, 50-50 bars...

DANNY

Sure. I remember.

JOY

What happened? When did life get so complicated?

DANNY

Life is as complicated as we make it.

JOY

Maybe at the top of a mountain in Tibet. You know, finding that temple of yours was my father's dream.

She turns to face him, very close.

JOY (CONT'D)

Where is it?

DANNY

It's right there. Behind the clouds. But he would never have found it.

INTERCUT - TELEPHOTO P.O.V. - FROM THE NORTH - SAME

Voyeur's perspective -- someone watching -- from outside -- perhaps from another rooftop -- same height, a good distance away.

BACK TO SCENE - THE PENTHOUSE

Joy crosses to the bar.

JOY

Why not?

DANNY

Because he was looking for something that existed in his mind. His western fantasy of what Kunlun is. He was looking for the wrong reasons. Joy, I have to tell you something... about why I came back here...

JOY

Will you have a drink?

INTERCUT - TELEPHOTO P.O.V. - A DIFFERENT ANGLE - SAME

Looking through the windows of the penthouse from another direction. CAMERA FOLLOWS as she gets up, goes to a bar around the corner --

DANNY

(mic-filtered)

What are you drinking?

JOY

(mic-filtered)

Scotch. My father's drink.

DANNY

(mic-filtered)

My father didn't drink.

She smiles, holds out a box of teas.

JOY

(mic-filtered)

I can make you some tea...

DANNY

(mic-filtered)

No. I'll think I'll try the scotch.

JOY

(mic-filtered)

Kunlun monks can drink scotch?

INTERCUT - A SILHOUETTE

The lone voyeur, sitting in darkness, surrounded by high-tech telescopic equipment. It's Misty Knight. She sighs, sips a diet soda as she watches --

MISTY (V.O.)

I still don't believe she's your type, cowboy.

BACK TO SCENE - THE PENTHOUSE

Joy mixes the drinks and returns to the living area with them. She sits close to him -- places two scotch glasses on the table --

DANNY

I'm not a monk. I left before my training was completed.

Joy lifts her scotch and knocks it back in one. Danny watches her do it, smiles and joins her. Downs it. Joy smiles at him. Joy leans in, runs a hand along his leg --

JOY

Why?

DANNY'S LIPS IN SLO-MO as he takes the empty glass away -- he notices something -- stares at the glass -- then looks at Joy.

DANNY

Because your father killed my parents.

Joy's reaction is hard to read --

JOY

What?! Why do you think that?

DANNY

I was there. I wanted revenge. I came back to kill him.

Joy pulls away. She stands, avoiding eye contact --

DANNY (CONT'D)

Then I saw you and I remembered how I felt when I lost my father.

Danny sniffs the scotch glass, looks at her.

DANNY (CONT'D)

And I trusted you.

He knows. Joy reacts, she backs up, keeping furniture between them.

JOY

Why do you have to make it so hard?
My father meant it. This could have
been yours too.

DANNY

Your father never meant anything in
his life.

Danny gets up -- trips over a coffee table --

JOY

My father was right. He knew you
wouldn't just let things lie. He
knew you'd dig and dig until you
ruined everything.

Danny weaves. She overturns a chair in front of him. he
stumbles.

JOY (CONT'D)

The drug in that drink works on the
central nervous system. It'll destroy
your mind, Danny. First it'll break
your will. Before it kills you,
you'll tell me where I can find
Kunlun... then maybe for old time's
sake I can keep you alive long enough
to see it again.

Danny staggers -- The drug is hitting him hard -- he is weak,
helpless --

TELEPHOTO P.O.V. - DANNY AND JOY

A FILTER clicks over the image and we see --

A THERMAL IMAGING SCAN OF THE PENTHOUSE --

Danny and Joy in infra-red relief -- the telephoto image
whips around -- there are other figures in the penthouse!
Flat against the ceiling, at the top of the stairwell,
crouched at the periphery of the frame -- at least 6
silhouettes! A deadly game of where's Waldo --

MISTY (V.O.)

What's going on..?

BACK TO SCENE - PENTHOUSE

Joy throws a legal pad and a pen at Danny.

JOY

Kunlun. Where it is, Danny?

DANNY

You don't understand...

JOY

You don't get it. You don't have a choice. Where is it?

Danny struggles to stand -- suddenly he's kicked hard by --

A FIGURE WRAPPED IN DARK GREY CLOTH, a half-mask tied around the head. A NANDUN TEMPLE ASSASSIN -- they ooze out of the woodwork around him --

NANDUN #1

(subtitled Chinese)

So Kunlun, you are far from home...
and all alone.

JOY

What the hell?! What are you doing?!

The Nandun Assassin backhands Joy and she goes down.

Danny tumbles back under the Nandun attack. Danny defends himself -- weaving drunkenly, making a style out of his sickness --

But these guys aren't drugged. NANDUN #2 appears behind him, sucker punches him --

Danny goes down, rolls and comes up to face NANDUN #3 who has appeared from a stairwell --

The Nandun Assassins fight in concert -- synchronized, complementary attacks -- the whole greater than the sum of their parts -- they are too fast and too good. Danny might not beat these guys even if he weren't drugged --

The Nandun have swords, throwing blades. The fight continues into --

MEACHUM'S HALL OF WEAPONS -- Danny fights back with everything he's got -- but this one is not going to go his way -- there are too many, too synchronized -- he can't find a moment to gather himself, to clear his head --

DANNY allows himself to be thrown into Meachum's trophy case. As it SHATTERS, Danny comes up with a weapon to even the odds --

Now it's weapon against weapon as the Nandun use their own weapons and make use of Meachum's (a Ghurka Kukri; japanese daisho long and short combination; a swiss morning star mace c. 1530; rapier; Italian halberd, middle ages broadsword; Indian fighting axe; etc.).

MEACHUM'S PRIVATE GYM -- The fight rages as Danny fights a half dozen assassins, trashing the multi-million dollar penthouse -- and taking punishment -- his shirt is cut from his body, revealing the dragon brand on his chest --

Danny tries to shake off the drug and concentrate to summon the Iron Fist but he can't --

A Nandun Assassin launches a weighted blade at the end of a chain (in japanese: a kyoketsu-shogi or chigiriki) -- the blade hooks deep into Danny's forearm -- Danny's focus is broken, the Iron Fist never manifests -- The Nandun pulls the line -- Danny is jerked into --

Another Nandun hooks a staff into the back of Danny's leg like a fish gaff -- the Nandun yank and Danny spins off-balance, going down hard -- the Nandun Assassins secure their advantage and close in --

Another Nandun spears him through the palm, stapling him to the wall -- he hangs there, only human, bleeding and battered -- he is done --

DANNY

(subtitled Chinese)

Who sent you?!

NANDUN #1

(subtitled Chinese)

That question.

SUDDENLY THE WINDOW SHATTERS --

A BLACK-SUITED FIGURE swan-dives through from a still rotating construction crane, shakes off a calibrated suspension zip-line and armed for bear -- big high-tech guns with lazer sights in each hand blazing --

THE FIGURE whirls into action -- kicks an Assassin in the teeth -- cuts loose from the line, spins, fires under-arm

behind her, an impossible angle -- wings an Assassin --rolling and firing behind her without even looking -- taking another Assassin's knee -- These are impossible shots.

Danny takes the opportunity -- through great pain, he pulls the weapons from his body -- and tumbles to the floor --

THE FIGURE'S INSECT P.O.V. - THE ROOM FROM MULTIPLE ANGLES

MULTIPLE P.O.V. VIEW-SCREEN -- P.O.V.'s from outside the building looking in -- night vision, thermal imaging, all displayed at once on a goggle-screen readout -- views looking north and west, behind, in front -- technology has the place covered --

EXT. OPPOSING ROOFTOPS - VARIOUS ANGLES

Cameras, scanners and parabolic mikes -- pointed at the penthouse windows -- transmitters blinking --

BACK TO SCENE - PENTHOUSE

THE FIGURE turns to Danny. Under the goggles and body suit it's MISTY KNIGHT --

MISTY

Looks like you could use some help.

DANNY

You've used up your surprise. They'll kill you...

MISTY

Oh yeah? My toys are better than their toys.

Misty spins, fires behind -- a Nandun Assassin evades the shot -- throws a dagger -- Danny pushes Misty out of the way at the last instant. The dagger sticks in the wall and would have killed her.

A Nandun works the room's master controls and the windows and doors automatically shut -- blinds come down -- darkening Misty's cameras --

MISTY'S POV - HIGH TECH DISPLAY

One by one, her advantages fade to black --

BACK TO SCENE - SAME

Another Nandun decoys Misty, drawing fire, while others move closer and closer --

A Nandun leaps at her from behind with a sword, about to take her head off -- Misty drops, rolls under and kicks up -- When the Nandun hits the ground, Misty fires, but he is gone -- another attacks immediately from the other side -- Danny takes care of this one but is near collapse -- the poison is taking its toll --

MISTY (CONT'D)

Point taken. Let's go.

Misty heads him toward the shattered window --

Joy grabs Danny --

JOY

No!

Danny hesitates. Misty slugs Joy, pulls Danny away.

OUTSIDE - the construction crane swings around, locked in a circle -- Misty and Danny leap to it as it passes the window --

EXT. MEACHUM PENTHOUSE - SAME

The construction crane swings away from the building, putting distance between them and the Nandun Assassins --

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Misty and Danny race out of an alley. Misty kicks the window out of a parked car and dives under the dash to hotwire it. She pops out.

MISTY

Let's roll.

Danny is lying in the street beside the car, barely conscious.

MISTY (CONT'D)

Oh shit...

CUT TO:

A GUN FIRING

INT. MEACHUM'S PENTHOUSE - SAME

Joy fires the gun. Holds the Nandun Assassins at bay.

JOY

What the hell is going on?! Who ordered this?!

WESTON (O.S.)

I did.

Weston steps from the doorway.

JOY

I was this close. To finally finding Kunlun.

WESTON

Screw your fairy tale. He was that close too. To exposing the entire organization.

JOY

My father wanted Kunlun.

WESTON

Your father was an obsessed old man. Danny Rand was a liability and I'm not taking any chances.

JOY

That wasn't your decision to make. My father spent his life looking for...

WESTON

All due respect, Ms. Meachum, your father is dead.

JOY

So is Danny, without the antidote.

WESTON

Good. Then we're square.

JOY

Look Weston, you work for me now.

WESTON

You're misinformed, honey. Your daddy worked for me, not the other way around. And only as long as it was useful. But his obsession with finding this temple recently made him a liability.

JOY

So you're saying you had him killed?

WESTON

I don't see you complaining.

Joy stares daggers at him, a trace of a smile.

WESTON (CONT'D)

Now, excuse me, I have some loose ends to clean up to save both our asses. You can thank me later.

Weston turns toward the door. The Nandun are gone; we never saw them leave.

CUT TO:

EXT. /INT. CAR (DRIVING) - NIGHT

Misty drives. Danny in the back seat, sick, hallucinating.

MISTY

Danny, What happened back there?
You okay?

He's not. He'd been fighting it off but he's losing now.

INTERCUT - MISTY DRIVING

Looking at Danny in the rear view mirror.

DANNY

A nerve poison...

MISTY

I've got to get you to a hospital.
Now.

DANNY

No. They won't be able to do anything.

MISTY

Okay. I'm out of my element here.
Tell me what to do.

Danny finds a legal pad and pen on the floor of the back seat. Misty watches him in the mirror. He writes. Danny hands the paper across the seat to Misty.

DANNY

There is an antidote... this... but not enough time...

Misty takes the paper, like a Chinese medicine prescription --

INSERT - THE PAD OF PAPER

A scrawl of Chinese/Tibetan characters

MISTY

What is this? Where am I supposed
to get this? Danny?

But Danny is oblivious, eyes staring but not seeing --

DANNY'S P.O.V. - OUT THE WINDOW

Danny's distorted drug-induced hallucination of a jagged
frightening cityscape rushes by.

INTERCUT - MISTY DRIVING

Looking back at Danny in the mirror. He's no help. His
breathing is shallow -- his hands move slightly, describing
small gestures --

MISTY (CONT'D)

Okay, Misty, you're on your own with
this one...

THE CAR takes a hard SCREECHING turn and heads downtown.

ANGLE - DANNY

In the back seat. The Old Man is suddenly there beside him,
a hand on Danny's forehead --

DANNY

Sifu..?

The old man shushes him --

THE OLD MAN

Save your strength. You will need
it.

Misty looks up and jumps --

MISTY

Who the hell are y...?

When she looks up again, the Old Man is gone. She turns,
does a double-take.

MISTY (CONT'D)

What the..?

EXT. CHINATOWN - (VARIOUS SHOTS) - NIGHT

Misty drives through a strange and alien part of town --

Misty shows Danny's 'prescription' to a shop-owner, hosing down the sidewalk -- he points up the the street.

EXT. CHINATOWN ALLEY - NIGHT

Weirder and mystical. Misty helps a very weak Danny to annmarked door --

INT. CHINESE HERBALIST - NIGHT

An old CHINESE WOMAN opens the door -- Misty hands her the note -- the woman reads it, eyes widening -- sees Danny -- waves her in --

The Chinese woman leads them down a warren of narrow hallways and stairwells --

INT. TIBETAN MEDICINE MAN'S OFFICE - SAME

A tiny wizened TIBETAN MAN turns from his desk -- the Chinese hands the note to him --

Misty lays Danny on the beat-up sofa --

The Tibetan talks excitedly in Chinese to the woman as he consults the list, gathering herbs and exotic extracts -- finally he turns to Misty --

TIBETAN MAN

Who wrote this?

Misty points to Danny.

MISTY

He's sick...

The Tibetan pulls exotic herbs and wraps them in a *khata* prayer scarf he takes from his own neck -- he hands Misty the package --

TIBETAN MAN

Yes. Very sick. This is tea. And this, put on his heart and head like this --

The Tibetan mimes it and scrawls instructions --

MISTY

Please, in english...

The Tibetan crosses off his marks and writes in English. Misty sighs relief.

MISTY (CONT'D)

Thank you...

Misty takes out money to pay the man but he refuses --

TIBETAN MAN

No no no. You do not know this friend
very well? Whoever wrote this is a
holy man. A protector of others...

Misty takes this in. The man hands her the herbs.

The Tibetan pokes her emphatically --

TIBETAN MAN (CONT'D)

Now you protect him. Your
responsibility.

CUT TO:

INT. MISTY'S SAFE HOUSE - NIGHT

Danny lies on a sleek modernist sofa. He is wrapped in towels
and blankets. Sweating. Drifting in and out of
consciousness. The pain is intense.

A hand changes the compress on his forehead. Misty.

CAMERA CIRCLES TIGHT ON DANNY -- FLASHBACK

DANNY'S FLASHBACK -

Disjointed images.

*Danny falling. MORPHING into an infant. His father, Wendell
Rand, catching him.*

*His mother, vital full of life, smiling peacefully, laughing,
then mysteriously turning away. It's not his time.*

*Danny 9 years old again. Only this time it's his father
falling away from him in SLO-MO.*

Danny's anger. SCREAMING.

Meachum laughing.

*Danny, 9 years old, alone in a bare room. Supposed to be
meditating. But pounding the walls in rage.*

*Training at the temple. His movements growing more fluid as
he grows older. Defeating opponents easily, without anger.*

Bonding with the other students, a part of Kunlun, no longer an outsider...

The Old Man watching, a subtle nod of approval. He sees potential.

Danny, full grown, SCREAMING, as he stumbles in darkness, his body SMOKING, emanating from his chest, collapsing on --

MISTY (O.S.)

...Danny...

DISSOLVE TO:

DANNY ON MISTY'S COUCH --

INT. MISTY'S SAFEHOUSE - DAY

Danny opens his eyes. Takes in the place. An industrial loft. Stylish, like Misty, but cold. With a touch of paranoia. Weapons on the wall. Weight set. Blacked out windows reflect paranoia. A desk and banks of high tech equipment, closed circuit monitors, computer control console. This is how a self-made super hero might live.

Misty comes out of the bathroom, towelling off her hair, wearing his Kunlun robe.

MISTY

Rise and shine. How're you feeling?

Danny sits up. He's stiff, still weak. He's been bandaged and disinfected. His shirt is off. The dragon brand visible on his chest.

DANNY

Alive.

MISTY

Glad to hear it. Hope you don't mind, I borrowed your robe... Why are you looking at me that way?

The robe is very sexy on her, the way it falls open revealing a little, just enough. Danny tries to process the image: The robes that symbolized his discipline juxtaposed with Misty's undeniable sexuality.

DANNY

I've just never seen a woman in the robes of a Kunlun monk.

MISTY

(realizing)

Oh God, I'm so sorry. I thought it was a bathrobe. We've been here a few days and I didn't have clean clothes and... Do you want me to take them off...

DANNY

No, it's okay. It... looks good on you.

Misty self-consciously pulls the robe closed.

MISTY

Let's check those bandages.

Danny sits up as she ministers. Misty checks his injuries then gently traces the dragon brand on his chest --

MISTY (CONT'D)

What is that?

DANNY

My education.

MISTY

It looks painful. Was it worth it?

DANNY

It was necessary.

Danny doesn't answer.

MISTY

I guess that truth serum is out of your system, huh? You were more talkative before.

DANNY

I was?

Misty smiles mysteriously.

MISTY

Afraid you told me some deep dark secrets? Don't worry, you didn't. I know you didn't kill Meachum, but that's it.

MISTY (CONT'D)

Who were those guys we were fighting?

DANNY
Nandun Temple assassins. Mercenaries.

MISTY
Meachum's daughter hired them...

DANNY
No. Someone else. She wanted me to
take her to Kunlun. They were trying
to kill me.

MISTY
And the old guy in the car? Who was
that?

Danny seems surprised --

MISTY (CONT'D)
I looked up, this old guys was sitting
beside you. Then he was gone.

DANNY
He was my teacher, from Kunlun.

MISTY
How'd he get in the damn car? And
where'd he go?

DANNY
He was here and not here. He exists
in the *chos nyid bardo*. I'm surprised
you could see him.

MISTY
Why?

DANNY
Most people can't see the truth even
when they're looking right at it.

Danny looks at Misty, seeing her in a different light.

MISTY
Is that why this Tibetan temple of
yours is so hard to find?

DANNY
Yes. Meachum believed the temple's
secrets would make him a powerful
warrior.

MISTY

And I thought Tibet was a peaceful country.

DANNY

That's a western myth. Tibet didn't renounce armed conflict when it converted to Buddhism in the 8th century. The 5th Dalai Lama assumed temporal control through intervention of his Qoshot Mongol patron, the Gushri Khan. Tibetan armies fought against Ladakh in 1681, against Dzungar Mongols in 1720, against Bhutan in the 18th century, against invading Nepali forces from 1788 to 1792, again in 1854, against Dogra forces invading Ladakh from Kashmir in 1842 and the British in 1904. Only the Chinese invasion overwhelmed them through sheer numbers beginning in 1959...

MISTY

Uh huh, which brings us to you. Who wants you out of the picture?

DANNY

Someone who still has something to lose.

Misty goes to the high-tech control console, punches up some video surveillance.

MISTY

Well, Meachum's dead and you say it's not his daughter.

DANNY

What is that?

ON VIDEO SCREEN - MISTY'S APARTMENT

Misty presses playback, uses multiple camera angles. In BLACK & WHITE surveillance, silhouettes slip in, attack the bed where a dummy lies. Nandun Assassins.

MISTY

That's my apartment. This is a safehouse. No one but me knows about this place.

DANNY

And me.

MISTY

And you. But right now, since I'm the only one you can trust, I'm thinking you're the only one I can trust. Someone's looking for you Danny and they seem to know exactly where to look.

Misty spins in the chair to face Danny.

MISTY (CONT'D)

Who has something to lose? Someone connected to your father and Meachum? I know it was a long time ago but is there anything you can remember?

DANNY

I wish I could. I was nine years old when he died.

Misty softens. Danny and her have a lot in common. She lets the tough guy act drop --

MISTY

I was sixteen when mine died. He was a cop. Who wanted a better life than cops are supposed to have. So he started taking money. Little things. Fixing things for one rich powerful white guy or another. At first, he used the extra money to buy my mom and me things. A coat, a car, a private school education. But the payouts got bigger. He spent more to drown the pain. Hookers, booze, drugs. He got careless and messed up. He didn't know how small-time he was until he tried to roll and cut a deal. It turned out he only knew low-level bagmen. He was sure he was working for Meachum but Meachum was smart, didn't leave a trail. My dad couldn't prove a thing. He hung himself in prison.

DANNY

I'm sorry.

MISTY

I dropped out of private school. No more money. I didn't care. I hated what he became so I became the same thing, a cop. I figured I'd do what he couldn't. I'd take on the bad guys and make them pay. I made this place so I had somewhere to go where they couldn't get to me... like they got to him. I thought I would feel better, knowing Meachum's dead. How about you?

On Danny's reaction --

CUT TO:

SAME - LATER

Misty works out on the weights as Danny nurses a tea, still weak. Between reps --

MISTY (CONT'D)

While you were recovering, I went through everything I have on Meachum, thinking I overlooked something. Bank accounts, money transfers, he was always clean. Intelligence reports came back spotless. Either Meachum's information and timing was perfect. Or maybe he had a partner.

DANNY

My father was his partner.

MISTY

When he started. When he was legit. What if there was someone else? Someone who wanted his connection to Meachum kept very quiet. Someone who would want you to go away, who didn't care if Meachum found Kunlun.

Misty sits up, towels off.

CUT TO:

EXT. MEACHUM'S PENTHOUSE - MISTY'S SECRET P.O.V. - DAY

REVERSE - MISTY'S COMMAND POST

Misty cues up her video tape surveillance of Meachum's penthouse from the earlier night.

ANGLE ON THE VIDEO MONITOR

One angle captured it. Through the broken window, Joy turns. A man's feet walk into frame. (Weston though Misty doesn't know it.) His face is obscured in shadows. There is no audio.

CUT TO:

INT. MISTY'S SAFEHOUSE - DAY

Misty enters. No sign of Danny.

MISTY

Danny?

She looks around, heads for a stairwell up.

EXT. MISTY'S SAFEHOUSE ROOF - DAY

Danny is on the roof of the building, surrounded by a decrepit industrial area. He stands still -- moving almost imperceptibly through what looks like a yoga pose --

MISTY exits onto the roof from a stairwell half-way through the following --

Danny's practice: From that stillness -- a series of yoga-like exercises flow seamlessly into -- soft-style tai-chi/qui-gong movements with some Tibetan hand mudra -- he's gaining speed -- his breathing slows as he moves faster now -- launching into a series of hard martial arts movements -- Southern Chinese styles flowing effortlessly into Northern style long fist -- precision -- balance -- now breaking out of patterns into freestyle -- no-style -- modern -- punches and kicks -- moving too quickly now to see -- his hands glowing with the power of the Iron Fist -- Finishing with a violent flourish --

Misty stares at the seamless display -- a history of martial arts in half a minute --

Danny sweating lightly -- hands smoking -- turns to her --

MISTY

So, you're feeling better. I've seen all sorts of martial arts and combat styles before but I've never seen anything like that. What do you call it?

Danny points down a rows of dead trees on the street below --

DANNY

What do you call the fourth tree on the left down there? It's just a tree. A punch is just a punch.

MISTY

Even one that can go through concrete?

DANNY

Technique is an illusion. Only your opponent is real. If you rely on technique, you don't listen to your opponent. I've seen you, you know how to fight. Do you know how to think?

Danny motions her forward --

DANNY (CONT'D)

Hit me.

MISTY

Hit you?

DANNY

You won't hurt me. But try anyway.

Danny smiles. Misty does too. She steps up. Throws a nice jab. Danny leans back out of range and it doesn't connect.

DANNY (CONT'D)

Don't hit where I was. Hit where I am. Hit me.

He encourages her to go for it -- she tries again -- Danny slaps it away with his hand --

DANNY (CONT'D)

Now hit through me. As if I'm not there. Your target is the back of my head.

Misty concentrates -- steps into it -- Pow! Danny absorbs the blow with distance and a rear hand cover but it's got zing --

DANNY (CONT'D)

Better. See that bulding?

The one behind him -- forty feet away --

DANNY (CONT'D)

Hit that. But go through me to get there.

Misty shuffles in and unloads -- covering distance and punching through Danny like he isn't even there -- but he is -- WHACK! She clocks him! Danny flies back toward the edge of the building --

Misty is horrified at what she's done.

MISTY

No...

Danny recovers acrobatically, rolls, flips and lands easily --

DANNY

Yes.

Even Danny is surprised at Misty's talent -- he looks at her with real admiration.

DANNY (CONT'D)

Good. Don't worry, I'm still weak from the poison.

MISTY

That's a neat trick.

DANNY

There's no trick. Don't focus on the object but on your intention. Which is to hit. That's all. Simple.

MISTY

So that's how you punch through walls?

DANNY

No. That's different. The iron fist. You must put all of yourself, your chi, your spirit, your essence, everything, into one place, until you empty yourself. There is nothing but the fist yet the fist is nothing.

MISTY

Iron fist.

DANNY

Or water. Or air. Or fire. It is not a fist. It is your mind. It is connected to everything that you are.

Misty considers this thoughtfully.

MISTY

I see.

Danny laughs -- knowing she doesn't.

DANNY

I doubt it. It took me a long time.

He dries down with a towel. Misty takes out the videotape.

MISTY

Danny, I recovered my surveillance of Meachum's penthouse. There was someone else there after we left. Someone who knew exactly where to stand to avoid my surveillance.

CUT TO:

INT. MISTY'S SAFEHOUSE - NIGHT

Misty plays the videotape for Danny.

MISTY

There's our silent partner. I've got some ideas but if I could get ahold of Meachum and your father's old business records I could be sure...

CUT TO:

EXT. WAREHOUSE - MEACHUM & RAND/MOUNTAIN IMPORTS - NIGHT

A cat-suited figure climbs to a high window.

INT. WAREHOUSE - MEACHUM & RAND - CONTINUOUS

Misty drops down into the darkened warehouse. Her flashlight plays over boxes and tarps as she makes her way into --

THE OFFICE. Misty finds old file cabinets, pries the locks. Rummages through files. Meachum & Rand Accounts Payable. She scans the names, finds one with recurring large payment entries: ALLIANCE GROUP.

Misty unslings her backpack and takes out a tiny fujitsu laptop. She connects it to a cell phone and logs onto the net, wireless.

ON SCREEN - Government Log-in screens. FBI task force on Organized Crime. A screen asks for an access code. Misty enters: PAUL WESTON and an ID number.

Misty keys in passwords and burrows deeper --

ON SCREEN - The Alliance Group corporate page. Hacking beyond that, Misty suddenly finds the screen filled with catalog pages -- images of arms, weapons, technology flash by. Black market stuff. This is big.

MISTY sits back in a chair and sighs, settling in.

EXT. WAREHOUSE - MEACHUM & RAND - NIGHT

Four unmarked blacked-out SUVs cruise to a stop on surrounding streets.

INT. WAREHOUSE - MEACHUM & RAND - SAME

Misty sits at the desk, reviewing files.

WESTON (O.S.)

Find anything interesting, Agent Knight?

Misty turns to find Weston standing in the doorway --

WESTON (CONT'D)

Did you forget the agency can monitor and locate cell phone transmissions? Stealing my password ID to get clearance to classified intelligence files? Shame on you. That's a serious security violation. You could lose your job for that.

Misty makes a move toward him, he uncrosses his arms, coming up with a gun in each, complete with silencer and laser sight.

He plays with the red laser dot, dancing it suggestively on Misty's body --

WESTON (CONT'D)

If you'd listened to me, you could have had a nice long career in middle management, worked your way right up to the glass ceiling and retired with a decent pension. But you had to dig. It's a shame when good cops turn bad, maybe it's in the blood.

Misty stares down Weston --

MISTY

You were working for Meachum all along.

WESTON

Bullshit. He worked for me. Who do you think ordered Wendell Rand's death?

ANGLE - MISTY'S LAPTOP

A window records the oscillations of the conversation in the room -- transmitting them to the cell phone --

WESTON (CONT'D)

Meachum and Rand Imports was a shell company. Rand didn't know Meachum was using him for legitimacy. He started asking questions, started an audit.

Misty taps a file.

MISTY

I know. Meachum kept it around, as insurance.

WESTON

I've been looking for that. We couldn't have that. We had big plans.

MISTY

Like brokering illegal drugs, arms and technology worldwide.

WESTON

The trip to Tibet was the perfect opportunity to make our problem go away. You fed Meachum intelligence information that he could turn a profit on - stealing arms shipments, reselling to the right buyers - and made sure to bury any investigations. Using the law to take out the competition along the way.

WESTON (CONT'D)

It works nicely.

MISTY

Until Rand's son returned looking for payback.

WESTON

An unforeseen event. I told Meachum to get rid of him but all he cared about was his obsession with finding that stupid temple. He saw this as his chance. I could care less about spiritual enlightenment. This world is the only one I'm concerned about.

MISTY

Then you killed Meachum because you thought he'd lead Danny back to you.

WESTON

No, I trusted Meachum. I think his daughter got impatient. He used to talk like he planned to live forever, with or without Kunlun, even if those mad scientists of his had to keep his head alive in a jar. She was never going to get her chance. Stop trying to figure out all the angles. You're not as smart as you think you are. Let's go.

Weston holsters one gun and picks up the files and her laptop with the other. He motions her out of the office --

EXT. WAREHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Misty and Weston exit the building and head toward the SUVs. Two young agents step out to meet them, REEVES and KIRK -- Misty nods with disgust, recognizing them.

WESTON

You know Agent Reeves and Agent Kirk from the academy.

MISTY

Sure, white and whiter.

REEVES

Sorry to hear about your career, Agent Knight. Shame. Top of your class too.

MISTY

I was going to say the same thing to you guys, except for the top of your class part.

Reeves and Kirk point their guns at Misty --

WESTON

Thank you for picking the abandoned neighborhood for me. You always were efficient.

Before Reeves and Kirk can fire, Danny drops off the rooftop, vaults off the car hood and takes out both men with a pair of kicks --

Danny turns and faces down Weston. Weston points his gun at Danny. The laser dot dances --

WESTON (CONT'D)

This is a fifty caliber Desert Eagle. Let's see you kung fu this --

In mid-sentence, Danny hurls something at Weston -- the cellphone Danny was using to listen to Misty and Weston talk -- it strikes Weston's gun hand, sends him to the ground and the gun flying --

Weston sees the cellphone --

DANNY

You had my father killed.

Danny advances on Weston --

WESTON

It was business, nothing personal kid.

DANNY

It's personal to me.

Weston grabs Misty's computer and runs for the SUV --

WESTON

You don't really think you could out-game me, Agent Knight?

Weston spins the SUV and guns it right at Misty --

Danny dives and pushes Misty to safety as the SUV barrels past --

MISTY

The evidence is on the computer, I recorded the entire thing...

Danny is already on his feet, running after Weston's SUV. Weston in the front seat, dialing his cell phone.

Weston's SUV has to take the surface streets but --
Danny is able to cut corners, vaulting a fence --
But the truck is too fast. Danny will never catch him.
A PAIR OF HEADLIGHTS bear down on Danny from behind. He
spins. Misty yells from the driver's seat of another SUV --

MISTY (CONT'D)

Get in!

Danny does. Misty chases after Weston --

EXT. INDUSTRIAL AREA (CHASE) - CONTINUOUS

SCREECHING CHASE through warehouses and debris strewn alleys
bordering a railyards.

EXT. RAILYARDS (CHASE)- CONTINUOUS

Weston swerves the SUV through a chainlink fence into the
switching yards --

Misty and Danny follow, weaving in and out of the trains --

Trying to keep up with Weston -- playing chicken with an
oncoming train -- swerving at the last minute --

Seeing a glimpse of Weston's SUV on the other side of the
train, Misty follows --

Suddenly Misty is broadsided by another, larger SUV (Hummer).
CRASH!

Misty's car crumples, pushed inexorably by the larger vehicle
toward an oncoming train --

Danny climbs out the window on the other side --

DANNY

Come on.

He pulls Misty with him and they dive and roll clear as the
truck they were in, disappears on the grill of the passing
train --

Misty and Danny are shaken. They get to their feet and are
suddenly surrounded by Nandun Assassins --

Weston's SUV pulls up, headlights lighting the scene --

WESTON

You didn't really think you could out-game me, Agent Knight? These Nandun are proud. I promised them another chance.

The Nandun Assassins close in. There are too many of them. Danny fights valiantly, back to back with Misty, keeping her protected away from the Nandun's flashing blades. But the numbers aren't in their favor.

NANDUN #1

You should never have left your temple, Kunlun. It's the only place on earth where you were safe.

Trains pass on either side, boxing them in.

MISTY

Danny, there are too many of them. We're out in the open.

Misty and Danny dive toward a hurtling train, barely clearing it before it flashes past. The Nandun are cut off.

As the train passes, Danny appears again, fights the Nandun, then vaults atop a nearby stopped train --

The Nandun follow him up. The train starts to move. Danny fights, then jumps to another train.

It's a ballet of action as Danny uses the environment and the trains to alternately evade and attack the Nandun -- divide and conquer--

Danny finishes off a Nandun and looks up to see --

Weston's SUV racing out of the railyards -- Danny tries to head it off -- leaping on top of rail cars to keep the Yukon in sight --

Danny races along the top of a moving train -- vaults to one moving in the opposite direction -- closing on Weston --

The train heads into a tunnel -- Danny leaps, vaults a fence on the road above and lands in the street as Weston's SUV bears down on him --

Danny races along the roofs of the cars with incredible agility -- cutting the angle on the Yukon -- vaulting a car going the other direction --

Danny lands on the street -- in front of the speeding Yukon --

Weston bears down on Danny --

Misty arrives on the scene but is too far away to do anything as --

Danny concentrates and manifests the Iron Fist! Launching himself into the air, Danny comes down on the speeding SUV -- fist first -- slicing through the truck! -- driving the engine block through the passenger compartment --

The SUV skids to a halt, trailing a shower of sparks from the undercarriage as Danny has split the truck in half --

Danny pulls Weston from the smashed wreck --

Weston's body is limp --

Misty runs full tilt down the street toward Danny --

Danny's face reveals a lifetime of anger --

Misty is almost there --

MISTY (CONT'D)

Danny! No...

Danny raises the raises the Iron Fist to finish Weston --

Misty arrives, grabs Danny's arm -- stays the Iron Fist --

MISTY (CONT'D)

(softer)

Danny... no...

(then)

He's dead, Danny.

And of course, no one could survive that wreck. Weston is lifeless in Danny's hands -- dead.

The Iron Fist fades --

Danny's anger turns to realization and horror at what he's done --

Weston's body is an empty shell.

Danny collapses to his knees --

DANNY

No...

MISTY

Danny, it's alright...

She holds him. Her laptop lays in the street nearby, thrown clear by the impact.

MISTY (CONT'D)

You had no choice. It was self-defense. I've got the evidence.

DANNY

No... I wanted to kill him. Just like I wanted to kill Meachum. I thought taking a life would avenge a life. That it would balance... but it's just more killing...

Danny is tortured. He looks around for some sign of the Old Man but he's not there. Misty can do nothing to comfort his pain.

DANNY (CONT'D)

Sifu... I'm so sorry... After everything, I'm no better. I'm just like they are. I understand now...that in death, life cannot win... Sifu, please...

Danny's plea is unanswered AS CAMERA PULLS UP AND AWAY FROM DANNY, MISTY AND THE CRASH SITE --

FADE TO:

EXT. AIRPORT - DAY

Misty and Danny. He's dressed like he was when he arrived, his knapsack around his chest.

MISTY

You're going back?

DANNY

If I can find my way. My training is incomplete.

MISTY

You're not a bad partner, you know.

DANNY

And you have the possibility of being a very good student. Find a good teacher.

A moment of regret between them.

MISTY

I did. He's just turned out to be geographically undesirable.

MISTY (CONT'D)

Take care, Danny.

She leans in and kisses him.

DISTANT P.O.V. - SAME - DANNY AND MISTY

Travellers pass in FRONT OF CAMERA as Danny and Misty say goodbye.

MISTY

If you come to the city, look me up.

MISTY turns and walks quickly away. Danny pauses, then heads toward his gate and the long trip home --

ON THE MASSIVE JET ENGINES FIRING UP. --

FADE TO:

THE WHEELS OF AN OXCART --

Bumping over a primitive rutted trail --

EXT. MOUNTAIN TRAIL - TIBET - DAY

The cart splashes through a puddle and comes to a stop.

A well-travelled Danny gets out, hefts his bag. He waves thanks to a smiling family of Sherpas in the back --

THE HIMALAYAS LOOM ABOVE --

Danny starts up the mountain pass on foot -- the final leg of his LONG journey home --

EXT. MOUNTAIN TRAIL - A SUCCESSION OF WIDER SHOTS --

Danny walking. Endlessly. Small against the landscape. Seemingly forever. The MUSIC of Kunlun grows louder --

A NARROW MOUNTAIN PASS

Vaguely familiar. And just when we think it's been short and sweet and expect to see the credits roll --

EXT. KUNLUN MONASTERY - OUTER COURTYARD - DAY

Danny enters.

CAMERA PULLS BACK FARTHER (PROCESS) --

Shrinking by powers of ten --

THE SHOT TURNS INTO --

A SATELLITE SURVEILLANCE SHOT --

The Himalayas are reduced to a relief map --

A locating grid superimposes over the picture --

CLICK. Co-ordinates are fixed. GPS numbers race across the bottom of the screen. Someone has been tracking him.

CUT TO:

INT. MEACHUM'S PENTHOUSE - MEACHUM'S COMMAND CENTER

But now it's Joy Meachum at the controls, monitoring the government satellite tracking systems -- she keys her headset and talks --

JOY

Iron Horse One, target is stable,
repeat, target is stable. Transmitting
co-ordinates [GPS longitude/lattitude
TBD]...

CUT TO:

VERY TIGHT ON HAL MEACHUM'S FACE

Smiling. Alive and well.

MEACHUM

Co-ordinates received. Good job,
princess.

In the B.G., SOUND of wind rushing and helicopter blades --

CUT TO:

INT. MEACHUM PENTHOUSE - SAME

Misty Knight kicks in the front door, backed up by a STRIKE FORCE team.

MISTY

Knock, knock, bitch.

The strike force takes out Joy's security forces, leaving Misty to contend with Joy.

JOY

You don't get it. It's over. Once he gains control of Kunlun and learns its secrets, my father will be untouchable and unbeatable.

Joy blanks the screens on her monitors --

Misty kicks her out of the chair and sits down, trying to figure out the systems.

MISTY

Come on Danny, it's all up to you, why couldn't you keep that cell phone?

CUT TO:

EXT. HELICOPTER - DAY

Descending into a mountainous terrain --

Below are thick clouds --

PILOT

Mr. Meachum, sir, there's nothing down there.

TIGHT ON MEACHUM, determined, barking orders, shown only in ECU --

MEACHUM

I want you to take us down on those co-ordinates...

The Pilot is terrified.

PILOT

But radar shows...

MEACHUM

I don't give a good goddamn what radar shows or what your eyes can see. It's down there and we're going in. Land us on the those GPS readings.

The Pilot is terrified. Meachum puts his good hand on the man's shoulder.

MEACHUM (CONT'D)

Have faith, son, have faith.

THE HELICOPTER descends through clouds. It's a white-out. On either side, dangerous jagged cliffs rise up.

HELICOPTER P.O.V. - BELOW

There is nothing down there but rocks and clouds until -- the clouds suddenly fade and -- miraculously, the walled city of Kunlun appears out of the clouds and rocks -- plain as day now.

INT. KUNLUN TEMPLE - MEDITATION CHAMBER

Danny sits in meditation. Facing the body of the Old Man. AS CAMERA CIRCLES we realize that the Old Man is dead. In fact he's been dead a long while.

DANNY

I'm sorry I disappointed you. I did not understand death.

EXT. KUNLUN - OUTER COURTYARD

The air RUMBLES and suddenly, as if out of nowhere, a jet black APACHE HELICOPTER descends down into the outer or lower courtyard --

The helicopter sets down in the courtyard. Modern high tech clashing with ancient spirituality.

Bos and Stefan climb from the helicopter, armed with big automatic weapons --

But there is no Monks around.

INT. MEDITATION CHAMBER - SAME

Danny hears the helicopter and races outside --

INT. KUNLUN HALLWAY - CONTINUOUE

Danny runs. There are no signs of anyone else. He is alone.

Danny races through empty monastery rooms -- the library with books open as if the monks have left in mid-study --

Sitting alone in the back, is the Old Man -- he looks up as Danny passes --

EXT. OUTER COURTYARD

Danny races out and sees the helicopter --

Bos and Stefan flank him with their automatic weapons. They OPEN FIRE and Danny dives -- the bullets chunk pieces of ancient stone --

Danny comes up in one fluid motion and grabs spears from a weapons rack -- he whirls and throws them --

Spearing Bos and Stefan through the hand and forearm --

The drop to the ground, unable to fire their big guns --

A figure steps out of the helicopter, wearing loose-fitting clothing, sunlight glints off his ankles and a wrist -- it's MEACHUM -- still alive -- with limbs --

Danny whirls, picks up another spear and hurls it at Meachum --

Meachum slips and catches the spear with his left hand. He didn't have a left hand when he saw him last. The sun glints off this one. It's metal. Under his clothing we see he's been fitted with legs and an arm of high-tech metal alloy!

Meachum whirls effortlessly and hurls the spear back toward Danny with amazing force -- it embeds in the stone of the temple -- he wasn't aiming for him.

MEACHUM

What kind of a greeting is that, son? Aren't you going to shake my hand?

Meachum steps forward. He is fully a head taller than Danny and bigger, his steel muscles stretching at his clothing. Danny circles him.

MEACHUM (CONT'D)

I thought we were family. Show your big city uncle around. Technology got me this far but I expect the secrets of Kunlun to take me to that next level of enlightenment.

DANNY

You're not welcome here.

MEACHUM

Where is everybody?

Danny looks up at the mist-shrouded inner temple --

DANNY

In practice.

MEACHUM

Where? Show me.

DANNY

Never. You're not allowed.

MEACHUM

Apparently neither are you.

Meachum looks up the mountainside to the Inner temple, shrouded in mist and light.

MEACHUM (CONT'D)

Guess I'll take the self-guided tour.

Danny grabs him to stop him -- Meachum grabs, throws him twenty feet on his ass --

MEACHUM (CONT'D)

These limbs are adamantium, harder than steel, hot-wired into my nervous system. I'm faster and stronger than any human limbs could ever be, including yours.

Danny attacks -- Meachum counters --

It seems like Meachum is right -- he moves fluidly, effortlessly, faster and stronger than Danny -- each exchange ends with Danny taking a shot or on his ass --

MEACHUM (CONT'D)

I will have the knowledge of Kunlun, Danny.

DANNY

Never.

Meachum and Danny square off in the outer temple -- Iron Fist vs. A Man of Metal -- Science vs. Spirit --

Danny shows his best stuff but Meachum is faster --

When Meachum hits, he hits harder, his metal limbs pump like pistons -- it's John Henry vs. The Steam Engine -- and technology is winning --

Danny's Iron Fist is out-matched by Meachum's three steel limbs --

Meachum's legs and arm block and counter Danny's Iron Fist --

MEACHUM

I told you that I practiced for years
up here...

(points to his head)

To be able to do it here..

Meachum takes Danny down in spectacular fashion. How can
someone that big move that perfectly?

Danny manifests the Iron Fist --

But it doesn't matter -- the rest of Danny's body is just
flesh and blood -- and he takes a beating as Meachum's blows
find flesh targets --

Meachums uses his adamantium limbs to block the blows --

Danny is on the receiving end of a real beating -- but he
refuses to quit -- facing Meachum, bloody but unbowed --

Meachum grabs Danny's Iron Fist in a vise-like grip,
nullifying the Iron Fist -- he smashes him along the temple
stones -- tearing him up --

Meachum throws Danny to the ground -- like discarding a chewed
piece of meat --

Danny looks up to find the Old Man sitting on some broken
stones beside him --

DANNY

Sifu...

THE OLD MAN

Danny, you cannot let this outside
evil corrupt the inner temple or
Kunlun will be lost.

Danny is battered within an inch of his life --

DANNY

Then call the others, we must all
fight...

THE OLD MAN

They did not bring this evil. They
can do nothing here to stop it.
They cannot help. Their spirit can
only fight through your body.

DANNY

Look, this isn't the time for stupid rules. Kunlun is in danger. I've never seen anyone so powerful and fast...

THE OLD MAN

This isn't a rule, Danny. This is the way things are. Your failure will doom the whole temple as each of our failures has the power to doom the whole. This is your evil. You have brought this here. Only you can stop it. That was the danger we accepted when we let you leave.

DANNY

You shouldn't have let me.

THE OLD MAN

You are Kunlun's greatest fighter. It is up to you. If you fail, the spirit of Kunlun fails with you.

Meachum is back at the Helicopter --

MEACHUM

Take me up there.

He points to the inner temple --

DANNY

No.

As the helicopter lifts off, Danny grabs a length of chain and whips it around the chopper strut --

Danny is dragged across the courtyard as the helicopter lifts off --

Danny grits and summons the Iron Fist, grabs onto the stones and holds fast --

THE HELICOPTER, suddenly anchored, goes into a spin like a toy, the rotors taking out chunks of stone as the props chip and break off --

Meachum jumps from the helicopter onto Danny and the fight is renewed --

Danny defends himself from Meachum's attack -- Meachum's blows land with more power, driving Danny back toward the jagged broken edges of the temple --

Beyond is a sheer cliff --

MEACHUM

You'll die just like your father...

Danny steps back to the edge and stops --

Danny exhales -- he is stillness -- barely moving --

MEACHUM (CONT'D)

You don't stand a chance, son.
Technology has made me faster and
stronger than you could ever be.

Meachum attacks with blinding speed -- limbs pumping like pistons --

DANNY

(smiles)

Yes but your Kung fu is weak.

And with that, Danny summons all his spirit into the Iron Fist and punches clean through Meachum's kick, severing his metal arm at the elbow --

Meachum loses his balance and falls --

He grabs onto a rock outcropping with his human hand --

Meachum dangles over the chasm --

But Meachum's human hand can no longer support the weight of his metal limbs --

Danny dives forward to help him --

DANNY (CONT'D)

Grab my hand.

Meachum looks up -- their eyes lock -- Meachum doesn't trust him --

Meachum's hand slips from the rock --

DANNY (CONT'D)

Grab my hand!

Danny reaches but Meachum will not meet him half-way. As he slips and falls, his hand reaches to a holster to draw a gun --

but Meachum fumbles it as he falls and the gun clatters away down the rocks as Meachum falls into the chasm to his death.

MEACHUM FALLS. He SCREAMS all the way down -- falling for a long time -- until his body caroms violently off a jagged outcropping.

Danny pulls himself up and back into the temple.

MEACHUM'S HELICOPTER lays on its side, disabled -- the pilot slumped over and bloody -- Meachum's satellite phone crackles --

MISTY (V.O.)

Danny..? Come in... Danny, answer me, damnit... are you alright?

Danny walks over, finds the phone -- takes a moment to find the button --

DANNY

Misty?

INTERCUT - DANNY AND MISTY - A WORLD APART

Misty laughs with relief.

MISTY

I just thought I'd pick up the phone and say hey.

DANNY

(smiles)
Hey.

MISTY

How's the training coming?

DANNY

Good.

Behind him, at the inner temple, we can see Monks stepping from the mists and descending the steps --

DANNY (CONT'D)

I think they're going to have me cleaning things up for a while, though.

END CREDITS OVER SPLITSCREEN:

EXT. KUNLUN TEMPLE - SUNRISE

Danny practicing his movements in the temple courtyard as
the sun rises --

INT. MISTY'S SAFEHOUSE ROOFTOP - SUNSET

Misty practicing her own moves as the sun sets --

A world apart, but together.

FADE OUT.

THE END