

MISHIMA

By
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Note to readers of the English-language script. Mishima's narration (V.O.) will be read in English, or in whichever language the film is subtitled. All other dialogue will be spoken in Japanese and subtitled.

"An extraordinary incident that shocks the whole society always contains an eternal mystery."

Yukio Mishima
Diaries, 1955

I

Beauty

A white Roman numeral and letters on a black screen. The beginning of the first section of the film.

Yukio Mishima, 1949:

"Beauty is a terrible and awful thing.
Within the beautiful both sides meet and
all contradictions exist side by side."

--Dostoevsky, The Brothers Karamazov

Yukio Mishima, 1969:

"If literature is not a responsible activity,
then action is the only course."

--Goethe, Sorrows of Young Werther

1 EXT. OCEAN - NIGHT

A grassy plain stretches toward a vast oceanscape.
The dark green foreground anticipates the purple darkness
beyond.

A scarlet sun suddenly rises from the ocean, drenching the
waves and grass in a bloody glow.

The feverish music crescendoes; the title splashes on
screen:

MISHIMA

CUT TO:

2 EXT. MISHIMA HOUSE - DAWN

Mishima's three-story "neo-Victorian-Spanish" house in the Magome district of Tokyo is bathed in morning light. In the courtyard, a statue of Apollo casts its shadow across the zodiac sundial.

CUT TO:

3 INT. MISHIMA BEDROOM - MORNING

November 25, 1970. YUKIO MISHIMA, age 45, wakes up on the last day of his life. A row of books lines the shelf behind his head. He stares at the ceiling. The alarm rings. He turns it off, thinks. There are FOOTSTEPS OUTSIDE THE DOOR.

MISHIMA
(calls out)

Good morning.

MAID (O.S.)
Good morning, Mr. Mishima.
Your breakfast is ready.

MISHIMA
What about the children?

MAID (O.S.)
Your wife's already taken them
to school.

CUT TO:

4 INT. BATHROOM - MORNING

Mishima steps from the shower, wrapping a towel around his waist. His upper torso is spectacularly muscled and bronzed from years of body building.

He applies shaving cream on his face and starts to shave with a safety razor. He scrutinizes his face in the mirror; for a moment it looks, in white makeup, like a Kabuki mask.

CUT TO:

5 EXT. TERRACE - MORNING

Mishima sips coffee on the third floor terrace. In the distance are the rooftops of suburban Tokyo.

He reads the morning paper, puts it down with a smile.

CUT TO:

6 INT. BEDROOM - MORNING

Mishima binds his torso with a white belly-band loincloth. He unfolds his freshly pressed Tatenokai winter uniform.

The Tatenokai ("Shield Society") was formed by Mishima in 1966 -- a private army of 100 student soldiers. He had designed their brown woolen uniforms in classic regimental style: double-breasted vests adorned with brass buttons and epaulets. The high-beaked caps resembled those worn by American motorcyclists.

Mishima ceremoniously dresses. Looking in the mirror, he adjusts his cap. The beak bears the samurai helmet emblem of the Tatenokai.

In BLACK AND WHITE, his mirror face quickly cuts to three "masks": Mishima in a Noh mask, a kendo mask and the oxygen mask of a jet pilot.

Back in COLOR, the camera pans from a copy of the "Hagakure" to the mirror. Mishima pulls on his white gloves.

CUT TO:

7 INT. MISHIMA'S STUDY - MORNING

Mishima's briefcase, samurai sword and manuscript are neatly arranged on his desk. He places the manuscript in an envelope and inscribes it:

"To Shinchosha Publishing Co.
The Decay of the Angel
Yukio Mishima
November 25, 1970"

He places his short sword in his briefcase and closes it. Over this we hear Mishima's adult voice narrating (from Sun and Steel):

CONTD.

6 CONTD.

MISHIMA (V.O.)
Recently I've sensed an accumulation
of many things which cannot be
expressed by an objective form like
the novel. So I found another form
of expression.

The doorbell rings.

CUT TO:

8 INT. "FOYER" - MORNING

A young cadet in a Tatenokai uniform waits in the foyer.

MISHIMA
Is everything as planned?

CADET #1
Yes, sir.

Mishima hands the cadet three envelopes.

MISHIMA
Take these to the car and give
them to the others. I'll be
out in a few minutes.

CADET #1
Yes, sir.

The first cadet leaves.

CUT TO:

9 INT. STUDY - MORNING

Mishima is on the phone.

MISHIMA
Did you get my letter.
(pause)
Yeah, I think our little drama
will be newsworthy.
(pause)
And don't forget to bring a
photographer.

CUT TO:

10 EXT. MISHIMA HOUSE - MORNING

Briefcase in hand, Mishima closes the front door and strides across the patio. His uniform is starched, his posture erect.

As he passes the statue of Apollo, we see the dim glint of someone spying on him from the traditional wood-frame house alongside. The camera closes in on the voyeur.

CUT TO:

11 INT. GRANDMA'S BEDROOM - DAY (1930)

BLACK AND WHITE. KIMITAKE (Mishima's given name), five years-old, wearing short pants and a loose shirt, peeps through the heavy curtains in his Grandmother's third-floor room. On a Yotsuya street corner, uniformed school children play war, using broomsticks as rifles.

His GRANDMOTHER awakes on her sickbed. The tray is a sea of medicine bottles. She squints at the beam of sunlight coming from the window. The air is thick and cloistered; the room reeks of a bygone era.

GRANDMOTHER

Close the curtain!

Kimitake, frail, shy, complies. Cloistered darkness again envelopes the sickroom.

GRANDMOTHER

Come here.

Kimitake doesn't move; he stares into the curtains. A NURSE enters, steps to the night table and pours Grandmother's medicine into a stemmed wineglass.

NURSE

Is anything wrong, ma'am?

(no answer)

It's almost time for him to visit his mother.

(to Kimitake)

Isn't it?

Kimitake walks over to the nurse.

GRANDMOTHER

No! I need him to rub my legs.

CONTD.

11 CONTD:

NURSE

But...

GRANDMOTHER

(groaning)

Tell her I'm too sick this week.
Next week.

The nurse, knowing the scenario, demurely leaves.
Kimitake's Grandmother calls him over.

GRANDMOTHER

Ko-chan, how can you leave when
I'm suffering so much? You owe
me your life. You would have
died in her hands.

(softens)

A delicate plant like you must
not go outdoors. Besides, we
have everything we need here --
storybooks, crayons...

(suddenly harsh)

If you want her so much, just
go! Leave me forever!

Kimitake bursts into tears. His Grandmother, now also
crying, wraps her sickly arms around his frail body.

GRANDMOTHER

Be a good boy and rub my legs.

She wipes his tears. Kimitake rubs liniment on her legs.

GRANDMOTHER

That's wonderful. You always know
how to make your Grandma feel
better. A little higher. You're
such a good boy. I'll read you
a story.

For the first time, Kimitake smiles.

GRANDMOTHER

Get "Robe of Feathers." You read
to me. You read better than I do.
Read about the Heavenly Maiden.

(responds to rubbing)

Yes.

CUT TO:

12 INT. PHOTO STUDIO - DAY (1934)

Kimitake, nine years old, poses with his MOTHER for a professional photographer. She puts her arm around his shoulder. He looks at her, then back at the photographer. His mother is dressed in a formal kimono, Kimitake wears his double-breasted Peers School uniform.

CUT TO:

13 EXT. TOKYO STREET - DAY (1934)

Kimitake holds his mother's hand as they walk down a narrow side street. Kimitake hesitates, then speaks.

KIMITAKE

Mom...

(a beat)

Are we going back to Grandma's?

(she nods)

Why?

MOTHER

Because, my sweet.

She puts her arm around his shoulder. He looks from side to side.

KIMITAKE

(upset)

I want to live with you and...

MOTHER

Don't talk like that. She's your father's mother...

They turn the corner; only the empty street remains.

CUT TO:

14 INT. KABUKI LOBBY - DAY (1935)

The lobby doors fly open with the clap of ki sticks. The audience files into the prewar Kabuki Theater lobby. Behind them a striped curtain hangs over the stage.

Soon chatter fills the corridor. Here and there, soldiers in uniform stand out in the otherwise female crowd.

CONTD.

14 CONTD:

Kimitake's Grandmother leads him toward the lunch box counter. He wears his black high-collared school uniform; she, her best -- now dated -- kimono.

Her health has noticeably deteriorated. Kimitake has grown into a frail, anemic youth. They make a good couple.

She pushes her way through the crowd with the arrogance of faded aristocracy. Kimitake assists his Grandmother, following in the wake of her sciatic complaining prattle.

He collects their bento boxes from the countergirl, returns the "thank you's" his Grandmother has neglected and rushes to catch up with her.

She selects an out-of-the-way ledge near the stage door and sits. Kimitake apologizes to a woman his Grandmother has bumped, then takes his place beside her. Although he is 10, his Grandmother still treats him as if he were six or seven -- and he still lets her.

GRANDMOTHER

Sit, Ko-chan. Yes, that's my angel. Don't apologize to these people. Can you believe these crowds? Commoners. When I was a girl, people still had a modicum of manners.

Kimitake removes the cloth from her lunch and hands the box to her.

GRANDMOTHER

Thank you, sweet. Eat your lunch. You're just a fragile plant -- don't eat so fast...

The backstage door opens. A STAGEHAND stands in the open doorway chatting with someone out of view. Kimitake stares backstage as his Grandmother continues:

GRANDMOTHER

...You need proper nutrition. The theater is very stimulating. But you're old enough now. I don't know what would have happened if you had been allowed to go earlier...

CONTD.

14 CONTD:

All the while, Kimitake's eyes are fixed backstage: a samurai walks past joking loudly with a kuroko (black-veiled stage assistant). Behind them, an onnagata lights a cigarette as she listens to the news from the war front on a box radio. Kimitake peeps in just as he had from his Grandmother's bedroom years before.

GRANDMOTHER

...or allowed you to play with
boys on every street corner.
Ko-chan, look, you've dropped
your chopsticks.

Kimitake awkwardly retrieves his chopsticks as the Stagehand moves on. The backstage world is abruptly out of sight.

CUT TO:

15 INT. KIMITAKE'S ROOM - DAY (1937)

BLACK AND WHITE. Kimitake, 12, pages through an illustrated survey of European art.

He turns a page, then stops. His eyes close in on a painting of the martyrdom of St. Sebastian by Guido Reni.

Sebastian, wearing a loin cloth, is tied to a tree. His pale body stands out against dark skies; his eyes are lifted toward Heaven. One arrow pierces his left armpit, another his right side.

MISHIMA (V.O.)

Suddenly I came across a picture
whose only purpose was to wait for
centuries and ambush me.

The camera examines the details of Reni's sentimental painting.

Kimitake leans back and unzips his fly. The camera returns to Reni's painting as Kimitake masturbates.

MISHIMA (V.O.)

The instant I saw it I trembled
with joy. My body was filled with
a passion as strong as anger. My
hand began its unconscious dance.

CUT TO:

16 EXT. SCHOOLYARD - DAY

Kimitake, age 12, watches a schoolyard contest from a distance. His School uniform blends with those of his classmates; his shy expression, however, stands out. He is the "sensitive type."

Mishima's adult voice introduces the scene:

MISHIMA (V.O.)

When I was 12, my Grandmother, sick and dying, permitted me to return to the care of my mother. Later that year I entered the Junior level at Peers School.

TOSHI, a robust classmate, wins one game of "King of the Mountain," then another. He tosses each challenger down from a two-foot brick wall. After each victory he raises his hands like Reni's St. Sebastian, clasping his white gloves in victory.

TOSHI

Alright, you cowards! C'mon, who's next?

The schoolmates turn to each other: there are no volunteers.

Kimitake surprises himself by stepping forward. His classmates are equally surprised. They quickly join in a chorus of familiar taunts: "Forget it, runt," "You'll get killed," "Mama's boy," "Jack-off artist."

Kimitake climbs atop the wall and faces Toshi.

TOSHI

Well, well, who is this? The poet? Oh, you're so tough and strong.

(others laugh)

Look, I'm shaking.

They prepare to fight. Kimitake closes his eyes as he strikes out. Their white gloves instinctively meet. Toshi loses his footing and inadvertently slips off the wall. Kimitake stumbles and tumbles beside him.

The classmates fall silent. Toshi and Kimitake, momentarily stunned, look around. The class whistle sounds.

CONTD.

16 CONTD:

Toshi quickly stands, brushes off his uniform and strides away with the older boys. Kimitake, left alone, watches him as he goes. His expression is glazed over -- just as during the "Visitation" of St. Sebastian.

MISHIMA (V.O.)

I wanted to walk with him to the
end of the world. But he turned
and never looked at me again.
Over and over again I studied my
gloves and compared the stains
on his gloves to mine.

Kimitake looks around the now empty schoolyard. One other student sits across the yard. Kimitake walks over to him.

Kimitake opens his mouth to speak, but only stutters.

CUT TO:

17 EXT. PARK/STREET - DAY (Golden Pavilion)

VIDEO. Screenwriters' note: The film will be shot in three formats: 35mm color, 35mm black and white, and video transformed to 35mm color. The "last day" will be in color, Mishima's memories (flashbacks) will be in b&w and excerpts from three of his novels in video. Thus, the viewer will immediately know which "reality" he is watching by the medium through which it is presented.

The "video" sections will be overtly theatrical, perhaps employing blue screen (chromakey).

Kimitake, stuttering, faces the schoolyard youth:
KASHIWAGI, 17, tall, the possessor of a "certain severe beauty" -- and two club feet.

But Kimitake is no longer Kimitake, he is MIZOGUCHI, 16, the shy stuttering protagonist of The Temple of the Golden Pavilion. The actor who plays Kimitake has been replaced by another, although the action is continuous. And the image is no longer b&w; it is color video.

MIZOGUCHI

H...h...hello.

CONTD.

17 CONTD:

A subtitle reads:

"The Temple of the Golden Pavilion, 1956"

Kashiwagi stands with the aid of a walking stick.

KASHIWAGI

I can't hear a word you're saying.
All I hear is your stuttering. I
know very well why you came to me.
Mizoguchi -- that's your name, isn't
it? You think we should be friends
because we're both cripples -- your
stuttering and my frog feet.

MIZOGUCHI

W...w...wh...

They stand in the Kinkakuji gardens in Kyoto. Kashiwagi turns and starts to hobble off. Mizoguchi follows. The Gold Pavilion shimmers in the distance. The year is 1945.

Mizoguchi, sweating in his school uniform, seems afraid of life itself. Kashiwagi is the opposite: he not only exudes the cynicism of youth, but also of experience.

KASHIWAGI

That's alright. I do, too.
(studies Mizoguchi)
You're still a virgin aren't you?
Yes, I thought so. You have no
success with girls and you don't
have the guts to go to a whore.
But if you came over to me hoping
to make friends with another virgin,
you were wrong. I'm no virgin.

MIZOGUCHI

I...I...I...

The camera cuts to Mizoguchi's reaction as Kashiwagi slides down an embankment off screen. The camera pulls back to reveal the stage set in front of the blue screen. Kashiwagi enters the stage and looks up at Mizoguchi's giant face on the blue screen. Mizoguchi slides off the screen and enters the stage alongside Kashiwagi. They "walk" in place as the blue screen background recedes and moves behind them.

CONTD.

17 CONTD:

KASHIWAGI

Stutter! Go ahead and stutter.
They say virgins are beautiful
but there's nothing beautiful
about you. Guys like us are just
like beautiful girls -- we get
sick of being stared at all the
time. (laughs)
That's funny, isn't it? Mizoguchi;
the rabbit has no sense of humor!

MIZOGUCHI

It's like a m-m-mirror you can't
b-b-break.

KASHIWAGI

You make too big a deal about
yourself. As a result, you
make too big a deal about your
stuttering. I suppose you're a
poet too?

MIZOGUCHI

(shakes head, points)
G-g-golden Pavilion...

KASHIWAGI

An acolyte? Even worse. Face
the fact you'll never be loved.
It's the same for everybody.

MIZOGUCHI

B-b-but...

KASHIWAGI

That's right, then you can trick
girls into loving your deformity
instead of hating it.

Mizoguchi, embarrassed, looks at his hands. Kashiwagi
spots two girls headed toward them.

KASHIWAGI

C'mon, I'll show you.

Kashiwagi hobbles quickly toward the girls as Mizoguchi
watches in amazement. Kashiwagi "accidentally" bumps into
one of the girls and falls to the ground, clutching his
feet.

CONTD.

17 CONTD:

FIRST GIRL

Ah! Sorry.

KASHIWAGI

Damn you! You did that on purpose!

The girls, frightened, confused, sympathetic, look at him.

KASHIWAGI

Are you going to just walk off?

The FIRST GIRL looks up at Mizoguchi as he approaches.

FIRST GIRL

What can I do?

Kashiwagi extends his hand toward her.

KASHIWAGI

Help me up.

(she tries to help)

Is there a doctor nearby?

FIRST GIRL

My house is just around the corner.

Kashiwagi turns to Mizoguchi with a self-satisfied look.

CUT TO:

18 EXT. MOUNTAINSIDE - DAY (Golden Pavilion)

Mizoguchi, Kashiwagi and their new "dates" walk along a footpath overlooking the Hozu River. The girls "ooh" and "aah" over the scenery.

They pause at a fork in the path. Kashiwagi pulls Mizoguchi aside:

KASHIWAGI

Scenic beauty is hell, isn't it?

(sotto voce)

Take the short one down the other path and fuck her -- she wants it.

CONTD.

18 CONTD:

MIZOGUCHI

B-b-but how?

KASHIWAGI

Stutter! Make her pity your
stutter. Make her worship it.
That's why we're here.

Kashiwagi walks back to the girls, saying loud enough for
all to hear:

KASHIWAGI

Go ahead, stutter! For all you
know, she may fall in love with
a stutterer.

SECOND GIRL

(to Mizoguchi)

Do you stutter? Well, well, are
all the deformities here today?

KASHIWAGI

Why don't we split up? We'll
meet here again in two hours.

Mizoguchi watches as Kashiwagi ducks off with the First
Girl; they reappear in the distance.

Mizoguchi awkwardly turns to the SECOND GIRL:

MIZOGUCHI

D-d-do you want to go home?

She smiles, takes Mizoguchi's hand and leads him to a
grassy hillock. She sits, inviting him to join her. He
does, not knowing what else to do.

SECOND GIRL

He's gone off and made that girl
think she's a saint. That's his
usual trick.

MIZOGUCHI

How do you know?

SECOND GIRL

How do you think?

CONTD.

18 CONTD:

She leans back, then places his hand on her breast. Mizoguchi looks toward the river as he tries to unbutton her blouse. She helps him and unfastens her bra. He looks everywhere but at her: he's terrified by "her desire for contamination."

He turns to examine her breasts. As he does, the Golden Pavilion, which had been but a shiny speck in the distance, grows larger and larger.

Finally, the glow of the Pavilion, ablaze and transcendent in the setting sun, fills the background. It engulfs Mizoguchi, obliterating his carnal desires.

 SECOND GIRL

Well, come closer. What are you doing?

Mizoguchi is frozen. She fastens her bra and blouse.

 SECOND GIRL

Just as I thought.

She takes out a pocket mirror and checks her hair.

CUT TO:

19 EXT. GOLDEN PAVILION - DAY (Golden Pavilion)

Mizoguchi passes the Pavilion and heads for the Head Priest's room. He glances back at the Pavilion: its beauty is too perfect.

CUT TO:

20 INT. HEAD PRIEST'S OFFICE - DAY (Golden Pavilion)

The Head Priest, his back turned, practices "go" openings. Mizoguchi bows, then enters.

 HEAD PRIEST

 (cold)

Why have you been cutting classes?

 (no answer)

Have you been sick?

 MIZOGUCHI

N-n-no, your G-G-Grace.

CONTD.

20 CONTD:

 HEAD PRIEST
Is this the pathway to Zen
priesthood?

 MIZOGUCHI
N-n-no, your G-G-Grace.

CUT TO:

21 INT. KASHIWAGI'S ROOM - NIGHT (Golden Pavilion)

Mizoguchi fingers a miniature bamboo model of the Golden Pavilion. Kashiwagi cuts a floral arrangement in his humble room.

 KASHIWAGI
Nothing's that unbearable.
You'll get over it.

 MIZOGUCHI
No. Everything is p-p-powerless.

 KASHIWAGI
What happened? She ran away?

 MIZOGUCHI
 (indicates model)
It was as sm-small as this, but
grew so b-b-big it filled the
world like tremendous music.
I was s-s-surrounded by eternity.
My arms were p-p-paralyzed.
 (clutches model to his chest,
 extends his other hand)
How can I reach out and t-t-touch
life with one hand, when I've got
e-e-eternity in the other? I
tried to c-concentrate on my lust
but she just va-vanished. That's
the p-p-power of beauty's eternity.
It poisons us. It blocks out our
lives.

 KASHIWAGI
Maybe it's not beauty that has so
much power. Maybe it's just you.

CONTD.

21 CONTD:

MIZOGUCHI

Beauty!

KASHIWAGI

What makes you so sure?

MIZOGUCHI

I've d-d-devoted my life to it.

KASHIWAGI

(laughs)

Please, enough of your pride! Beauty is like a rotten tooth. It rubs against your tongue, hurting, insisting on its importance. Finally you go to a dentist. Then you look at the small bloody tooth in your hand and say, "Is that all it was?" Knowledge can turn the very unbearableness of life into our weapon. Only knowledge can set us free.

MIZOGUCHI

N-nothing else?

KASHIWAGI

No, everything else is madness or death.

MIZOGUCHI

There must be some p-power.
Something we can d-d-do.

As they speak, the background slowly turns into a solid GOLD screen. Yellow smoke drifts across the floor.

KASHIWAGI

(teasing)

You forgot beauty already?

MIZOGUCHI

(shoves model in pocket)

Beauty is now my enemy. Life is b-b-bearable only when I imagine the G-gold Pavilion has been destroyed. The American b-b-bombers will come. Then I'll be free.

CUT TO:

22 INT. AIR RAID BUNKER - NIGHT (1945)

BLACK AND WHITE. We return to Mishima's memories. Uniformed Peers School students crouch as planes and flares pass overhead. Bombs drop in the distance.

Kimitake -- in open danger -- stands watching the night sky.

MISHIMA (V.O.)

At nineteen, my first book was published. I selected the pen name, Yukio Mishima.

His face is lit by a distant explosion.

CUT TO:

23 INT. MOTHER'S BEDROOM - DAY (1944)

Kimitake, 19, on leave from school, shakes one of his mother's cosmetic bottles and holds it to the light. Flecks of powder dance in the liquid and settle to the bottom. Memories reflect in his eyes.

His mother enters removing her kimono shawl:

MOTHER

What are you doing?

KIMITAKE

(sets bottle down)

Nothing.

She caresses his hair as she passes.

MOTHER

I thought you were at Lit. Club?

KIMITAKE

You kidding? That mediocre bunch?

MOTHER

You should try to make more friends, sweet. It's not good to be alone so much.

Kimitake withdraws a folded piece of paper from his shirt pocket and hands it to her.

CONTD.

23 CONTD:

 MOTHER
What's this?
 (reading)
"This is no precocious genius.
This is just a vulgar freak.
He is not a writer. And never
will be." What's this?

 KIMITAKE
That's a "respected" poet. He's
talking about me.

She tucks the paper in her dress.

 MOTHER
Don't let your father see it.
He'd only agree.

Kimitake barks a laugh: he has begun to assume an
independent personality.

CUT TO:

24 INT. ARMY RECRUITMENT FACILITY - DAY (1945)

The teenage Kimitake stands in a line of draftees,
awaiting his army physical. The war is drawing to its
close; the recruits are no longer the cream of the crop.
Even so, Kimitake is uniquely frail.

The ARMY DOCTOR presses a stethoscope to his chest.

 DOCTOR
Cough.
 (he does)
You can stop now.
 (he can't)
Do you sometimes cough blood?

Kimitake is chalk white.

 KIMITAKE
Yes, sir.

 DOCTOR
How long have you had a fever?

CONTD.

24 CONTD:

 KIMITAKE
 About six months, sir.

The doctor makes some notes.

 DOCTOR
 "Unfit for military service.
 Incipient tuberculosis."
 (hands him paper)
 Here. Get dressed and go home.
 (to Orderly)
 Next.

Kimitake reaches for his clothes with a twisted smile.

CUT TO:

25 INT. ARMY DRESSING ROOM - DAY

Kimitake dresses as new, even younger recruits prepare for their physicals.

 MISHIMA (V.O.)
 I'd always dreamed of dying on
 the battlefield. So why did
 I lie? Why was I afraid?
 (bitter)
 I never really wanted to die.

Kimitake leaves the dressing room.

CUT TO:

26 EXT. GOLDEN PAVILION - DAY (Golden Pavilion)

VIDEO. Mizoguchi sweeps the grounds with a bamboo broom.
An acolyte races past.

 ACOLYTE
 Did you hear? The war is over?

Mizoguchi, stunned, cannot respond. The acolyte dashes off. Mizoguchi turns toward the Pavilion.

 MIZOGUCHI
 B-b-but the American bombers?
 (shouting)
 Where are the bombers?

CONTD.

26 CONTD:

The Pavilion grows steadily larger. Mizoguchi drops his broom and gathers twigs and papers by hand.

MIZOGUCHI
(to himself)
Who'll set the Pavilion free?

CUT TO:

27 INT. WHOREHOUSE - NIGHT (Golden Pavilion)

The outer room is shabby, befitting wartime conditions. The MADAME takes Mizoguchi's money with a smile.

MADAME
Did you steal this from the
Head Priest?
(he is taken aback)
Just be careful. You acolytes
are my best customers.

MARIKO, 22, takes Mizoguchi by the hand, leads him upstairs.

CUT TO:

28 INT. WHOREHOUSE BEDROOM - NIGHT (Golden Pavilion)

Post-coital. Mariko, wrapped in an inexpensive robe, sits on the edge of the futon. Mizoguchi lies beside her, the quilt pulled up to his chin.

His uniform is folded on the floor. She looks out the window:

MARIKO
I wonder why they didn't bomb
Kyoto?

She notices Mizoguchi: his eyes are fixed on the ceiling, his expression frozen, determined.

MARIKO
That really was your first time,
wasn't it?

MIZOGUCHI
Yes.

CONTD.

28 CONTD:

MARIKO

I thought so. Don't worry,
you did alright.

Mizoguchi's sexual experience has only intensified his
obsession.

MARIKO

Are you always so serious?
Didn't you enjoy it?

He is no longer stuttering:

MIZOGUCHI

I hope you remember my name.
In a day or two I'm going
to be famous.

Mariko bursts out laughing.

MIZOGUCHI

What's so funny?

MARIKO

(still laughing)
You're such a terrible liar! And
you keep such a straight face!

MIZOGUCHI

It's no lie. I'll soon be
in the papers. Really.

MARIKO

(choking)

You're too much.

CUT TO:

29 EXT. GOLDEN PAVILION - NIGHT (Golden Pavilion)

The Pavilion glows golden against a cobalt sky. Mizoguchi
approaches with a bundle of straw. He tosses it on a
straw-pile stacked against the Pavilion.

He lights a match. His eyes gleam in the firelight. A
gust of wind blows out the flame.

He lights another match, touches it to the straw. A small
fire flickes against the Pavilion.

CUT TO:

II

Art

White letters and Roman numerals
on a black screen. The beginning
of the second section of the film.

30 EXT. MISHIMA RESIDENCE - MORNING

COLOR. The final day. Mishima crosses the patio and walks down the steps to the front gate. His samurai sword hangs at his side. Stepping onto the sidewalk, he locks the gate behind him.

CUT TO:

31 EXT. MAGOME STREET - MORNING

The First Cadet stands at attention beside a white sedan. Three additional Tatenokai members wait inside the car. The Cadet opens the door for his "commander." After Mishima enters, the Cadet gets in the driver's seat.

CUT TO:

32 INT. WHITE SEDAN - MORNING

CADET #2, slight, unimposing, CADET #3, tall with a thin moustache, and MORITA, stocky and full-faced, sit in the back seat. All are college age and dressed in brown Tatenokai uniforms.

Mishima's mood is casual, almost cheerful.

MISHIMA

Good morning. It's a nice day.

FOUR CADETS

Yes, sir.

MISHIMA

You've read the letters?

They nod. Mishima points to Cadets 1, 2 and 3:

MISHIMA

You three are not to follow our example under any circumstances.

CADET #2

(protests)

We're ready...

MISHIMA

(interrupts)

The letters are very clear.

(MORE)

CONTD.

32 CONTD:

MISHIMA contd.
Make sure that the General
does not commit seppuku.
This is our day, not his.

CADET #3
Sensei, we've talked it over.
We want to die with you. Why
must we be left behind?

CADET #2
This is my final day. I've
said goodbye to my parents,
my girlfriend, everyone.

Mishima is moved by such strong words from a slight boy;
he touches the Second Cadet's knee.

MISHIMA
No. You must stay alive. You
have to represent the Shield
Society in court, defend our
actions.

CADET #1
We want to be with you to
the end.

MISHIMA
(stern)
Are you refusing to obey
instructions?

The First Cadet falls silent. The others also accept
their "bitter pill" (as they later described it) in
silence.

MISHIMA
Morita and I are going to
Ichigaya to do our duty. You
must also do your duty.
Understand?

They nod.

CONTD.

32 CONTD:

 MORITA
 (to the others)
 We'll meet again.
 (no response)
 Don't worry.

Mishima clears his throat, checks his wristwatch: 10:20 a.m. He smiles at the others, hoping to raise their spirits.

 MISHIMA
 Okay! Everyone ready?

 FOUR CADETS
 (enthusiastic)
 Yes, sir!

 MISHIMA
 (to Cadet #1)
 Let's go.

The First Cadet starts the car and engages it. The white sedan pulls away from the curb. Mt. Fuji watches from a distance.

CUT TO:

33 EXT. TOKYO STREETS - MORNING

The white sedan moves through the busy traffic, then stops at a traffic signal.

Mishima glances out the window:

A bookstore window advertises a "Mishima Festival." The display features photos of Mishima and copies of the domestic and international editions of his books. He has written forty novels, eighteen plays, twenty volumes of short stories and an equal number of essay collections.

A frail office worker looks at the display.

CUT TO:

34 EXT. BOOKSTORE - DAY (1949)

BLACK AND WHITE. Kimitake, 24, is the office worker at the window display. He is "Yukio Mishima." His hair is longer: curly and "fashionable" in Western terms.

CONTD.

34 CONTD:

A new actor now plays Mishima.

The spare post-war window display now features only one book: a "new arrival" -- Confessions of a Mask by Yukio Mishima.

MISHIMA (V.O.)

At the end of the war, I felt left behind. I thought I was the symbol of my times -- a kamikaze for beauty. But I'd just been a boy who wrote bad poetry.

CUT TO:

35 INT. WRITING NOOK - NIGHT (1949)

Mishima, wearing a black kimono, writes on a cluttered desk. Books fill every nook, cranny and shelf of the 4½ mat room. Mishima sips a cup of tea, continues writing.

MISHIMA (V.O.)

...I quit my job at the Ministry of Finance to write Confessions of a Mask in six months. Thirst for Love took five months. Forbidden Colors took nine...

CUT TO:

36 INT. AWARD MONTAGE - DAY (1951-1957)

Three award ceremonies -- each in the same room, but with different characters.

In each Yukio Mishima, age 29, 30 and 32, is given a prestigious literary award. Mishima, very much the "dandy" young writer, is a literary prodigy, much younger than those who share the stage with him. He relishes the attention paid to him by his elders.

--1954. Mishima, 29, receives the Shinchosha Prize for Sound of Waves.

--1955. Mishima, 30, accepts the Kishida Prize for Five Modern Noh Dramas.

CONTD.

36 CONTD:

--1957. Mishima, 32, accepts the Yomiuri Prize
for The Temple of the Golden Pavilion.

MISHIMA (V.O.)
...Sound of Waves four, Modern
Noh Dramas three, Temple of the
Golden Pavilion ten.

CUT TO:

37 INT. BUNGAKU THEATER BACKSTAGE - DAY

Mishima walks backstage with the PRODUCER of his new play,
The Hall of the Crying Deer. Japanese actors in ludicrous
Victorian dress edge past them, "sumimasen"-ing every step
of the way. Crying Deer depicts the feverish attempts of
Meiji-era Japanese to emulate Western dress and customs.

An actor asks Mishima to autograph his copy of the play.
Mishima scribbles as he walks. Mishima cannot suppress a
grin: he's earned this moment in the limelight and enjoys
it.

PRODUCER

Don't worry. It smells good.
Take my word for it.

MISHIMA

That's easy for you to say.

PRODUCER

(watching autograph-seeker)
What are you worried about?
You're already the youngest
writer to have his Collected
Works published.

Mishima barks a self-depreciating laugh. Under the laugh
is genuine anxiety: he wants "more."

MISHIMA

What good does it do if I'm
not translated in the West?

PRODUCER

But Sound of Waves has been
translated...

CONTD.

37 CONTD:

MISHIMA

Yeah, one book. What good is that?

PRODUCER

Four, five languages?

MISHIMA

Six.

PRODUCER

(protesting)

It's like a dream come true.

MISHIMA

(relents)

I suppose -- but it feels like having my disease diagnosed and confined to a hospital bed.

PRODUCER

(interjects)

A luxurious hospital bed.

MISHIMA

(laughs)

But why the hospital? Can't I just have the bed?

They both laugh as the Producer removes the "call back" sheet from his clipboard and pins it to the backstage billboard.

Mishima looks at the actors who have gathered to inspect the "call back" sheet.

CUT TO:

38 INT. BACKSTAGE - DAY (Kyoko's House)

VIDEO. A half dozen actors wait to read the call sheet which has just been pinned to the bulletin board. The actors are on stage; in the background, on blue screen, an actress rehearses an upcoming production. The actors wear Fifties clothes.

Fourth in line is Osamu, 29, handsome, pale, narcissistic. Everything about him says: "actor." He has spent too much time looking in a mirror.

CONTD.

38 CONTD:

The First Actor moves on and the line edges forward.
Something is out of place: Osamu is too old to be waiting
with such obvious newcomers.

A subtitle reads:

"Kyoko's House, 1959"

On blue screen, a Director and ACTRESS pace across a
narrow opening in the curtain. The Director, resembling
Mishima, scowls as the Actress reads Juliet's soliloquy
from Act III, Scene II:

ACTRESS

"...Come night! Come, Romeo!
Come gentle night; come, loving
black-browed night,
Give me my Romeo: and, when he
shall die,
Take him and cut him out in
little stars,
And he will make the face of
heaven so fine,
That all the world will be in
love with night,
And pay no worship to the
garish sun..."

During the rehearsal, the Second and Third Actors, close
friends, talk as they examine the call back sheet for an
upcoming, untitled production.

SECOND ACTOR

(to Third)

You got a call back.

THIRD ACTOR

(excited)

Which role?

SECOND ACTOR

"Youth D."

THIRD ACTOR

Youth D?

SECOND ACTOR

He watches the hero get killed.

CONTD.

38 CONTD:

The Third Actor realizes his friend has not got a call back. He throws his arm around the Second Actor:

 THIRD ACTOR
 Hey, let's get a drink.

Osamu steps up to the sheet as they walk off. He quickly glances at the sheet, then turns away expressionless.

He peeks behind the stage curtain at "Juliet" on stage. The new "Romeo" approaches him from behind.

 ROMEO
 Excuse me.

Osamu steps aside and watches "Romeo" stride onto the stage.

CUT TO:

39 INT. SHIBUYA BEDROOM - NIGHT (Kyoko's House)

Osamu, lying on a futon mattress, uses a hand mirror to straighten his hair. Beside him, MITSUKO, 26, a "slightly dark, pretty woman with an oddly proportioned body," examines her polished fingernails.

 MITSUKO
 This stuff sure chips easy.

The futon is on stage; the shabby room on blue screen. An open window looks out onto the entertainment district around Shibuya station.

Osamu sets the mirror down as Mitsuko kisses his upper arm. He swings his legs outside the quilt and raises them toward the ceiling.

 OSAMU
 What do you think. Would they
 look good in tights?

 MITSUKO
 I guess so. Why?

 OSAMU
 They're so thin. What if I
 (MORE)

CONTD.

39 CONTD:

 OSAMU contd.
got a nude role? These
damn legs! Legs like this
will never play Romeo.

 MITSUKO
Forget your legs. You've got
the face of a poet.

 OSAMU
That's just it. I've paid too
much attention to my face. But
if I had a body... like, a
matador -- then my whole body
could be my face.

Mitsuko stands and steps nude to the "window." The lights
of Shibuya twinkle in the distance. Osamu leans back,
exposing his hairy armpits.

 MITSUKO
That's not very realistic.

 OSAMU
I'm going to take up weight lifting.
 (she laughs)
I mean it.

Mitsuko turns and straddles Osamu on the mattress. She
pins his outspread arms with her knees, pretending to be
more jealous than she really is.

 MITSUKO
Oh no you don't. Then you'll
have more girls chasing you.
Who were you with last night?
Keiko or Masako?
 (tickles his armpits)
C'mon tell me who. Someone new?

Osamu, sick of this game, struggles to throw her off but
can't. She continues to tickle him.

 MITSUKO
Alright, muscle-man. Ha!
You are a weakling.

CONTD.

39 CONTD:

OSAMU

Cut it out.

His fingers scour the floor until he finds his mirror.
Mitsuko grabs it, tosses it away.

OSAMU

What?

MITSUKO

(tenderly)

I'll be your mirror. This is
your hair.

As Mitsuko speaks, the blue screen turns into her face --
his mirror.

She touches her hair, then kisses Osamu's hair:

MITSUKO

This is your hair.

(kisses his forehead)

This is your forehead.

(kisses his eyebrows)

These are your eyebrows. See?

Isn't this better than a mirror?

Osamu, helpless, lets her continue, as if she were a "fly
crawling across his face."

CUT TO:

40 INT. "ACACIA" COFFEE SHOP - DAY (Kyoko's House)

The small coffee shop, recently remodeled, is typical of
1958. Osamu's MOTHER, 47, sets their breakfast on the
counter: coffee and toast. She wears heavy makeup and
Western clothes -- clothes, which, although new, seem
already dated.

Through the shop windows, on blue screen, pedestrians pass
a row of grey buildings.

Osamu, dressed in baggy pants and a plaid shirt, checks
his appearance in the glass cupboard. Walking past, his
Mother checks her hair as well.

O'S MOTHER

Who were you with last night?

CONTD.

40 CONTD:

OSAMU

I don't remember. Who'd you
sleep with?

Smiling, she sits on a counter stool.

O'S MOTHER

What a thing to say to your mother.
Besides, he was too drunk to walk.
(sighs)

Nothing goes right for me anymore.
You won't believe the insurance on
this place. I can't even buy lipstick.
Or visit the doctor and my back is
getting worse every day. I could
die and nobody would care.

Osamu laughs into his coffee.

O'S MOTHER

What's so funny?

OSAMU

I love the way you exaggerate
your misery. Your life is like
some cheap movie poster. You
even look the part, with all
that makeup. You look like the
Madame of a French brothel.

Osamu's Mother pretends ot be offended; it's part of the
fun.

O'S MOTHER

How would you know? You've
never left Tokyo. Besides, I'm
not exaggerating. You're never
around when the loan sharks
come. Why don't you go see them?
I need six months more. It's
getting so I can't sleep anymore...

OSAMU

(stands to leave)
I'm busy.

O'S MOTHER

Doing what? Daydreaming? That
seems to be your full-time job.

CONTD.

40 CONTD:

OSAMU

Just like you.

O'S MOTHER

Are you going to the theater?

OSAMU

You'll be surprised.

O'S MOTHER

You got a role?

Osamu exits and reappears walking down the street.

CUT TO:

41 EXT. S.S. PRESIDENT WILSON - DAY (1952)

BLACK AND WHITE. Overhead view of the steamer Wilson in the Pacific Ocean.

MISHIMA (V.O.)

As the ship approached Hawaii,
I felt as if I'd emerged from
a cave and shook hands with
the sun.

Mishima, thin, pale, stands at the ship's rail in a windbreaker. He looks toward the sun.

MISHIMA (V.O.)

I'd always suffered under a
monstrous sensitivity. What
I'd always lacked was health --
a healthy body, a physical
presence.

Mishima rests on a ship deck chair. He wears an open trenchcoat over slacks. Next to him, two returning American servicemen sunbathe in trunks. Mishima's ideological sun worship appears incongruous beside the Americans' natural enjoyment of the sun.

MISHIMA (V.O.)

Words had imprisoned me from
reality. The sun released me.

CUT TO:

42 EXT. GREEK PARTHENON - DAY (1952)

BLACK AND WHITE. Mishima wanders through the sunlit Acropolis. He wears white slacks, a Greek peasant shirt and camera -- trying to look very much the tourist.

MISHIMA (V.O.)
Greece cured my self-hatred and
awoke a will to health. I saw
that beauty and ethics were one
and the same. Creating a
beautiful work of art and becoming
beautiful oneself are identical.

CUT TO:

43 INT. GYM - DAY (1962)

BLACK AND WHITE. Ten years have passed. Mishima, nude but for shorts, shoes and a gold neck medallion, does arm-curls in front of a full-length mirror. His hair is short.

His metamorphosis is nothing short of miraculous: he has transformed himself from an anemic, ascetic youth into a mid-age adonis.

His now bronze torso glistens with sweat; pecs and lats bulge from his new-built body. He radiates a vitality and confidence unseen in his youth.

The run-down Shinjuku gym excretes the eroticism of men at exercise: sweat-stained benches, worn leather straps, racks of black iron, peeling paint chips on concrete. A rattling wall fan expels the male odors.

Although the oldest man in the gym, Mishima has earned the respect of the younger weight-lifters. A young body-builder stops to watch him.

MISHIMA (V.O.)
I obtained physical health after
becoming an adult. Such people are
different from those born healthy.
We feel we have the right to be
insensitive to trivial concerns.
I developed a contempt for thinking
about death.

Wiping the sweat from his face, Mishima walks into the showers.

CUT TO:

44 INT. GYM SHOWER - DAY (Kyoko's House)

VIDEO. Osamu, muscular and suntanned, turns the faucet. The shower jet hits him like a spotlight. Grinning, he thrusts his head under the cold water.

Around him, gymnasts joke as they lather themselves. Osamu nods to TAKEI, a rugged spectacularly handsome professional body-builder. Osamu's body, though well-built, pales in comparison to Takei's.

CUT TO:

45 INT. SHINJUKU STATION - DAY (Kyoko's House)

Osamu and Takei, wearing exercise pants, slurp soba noodles in a small shop in the station. Takei wears a black T-shirt, Osamu a grey sweatshirt. Takei's tight shirt is an extension of his physique: each bulging muscle is etched in black.

They talk as NATSUO, a friend of Osamu's, walks by. He has the dress and demeanor of an intellectual. Osamu interrupts Takei and calls out. Natsuo stops, recognizes him, smiles and enters the soba shop.

NATSUO

Osamu! Where have you been?

OSAMU

(makes introductions)

Natsuo, this is my friend Takei.
He introduced me to body-building.
This is Natsuo, he's a landscape
painter.

TAKEI

(bows)

Oh, yes; Natsuo Yamagata.
Landscapes. I've seen some
of them.

NATSUO

(takes a seat)

Thank you.

TAKEI

At least you don't attempt
to paint human bodies.

CONTD.

45 CONTD:

Natsuo is taken back by Takei's blunt manner and words; yet, at the same time, attracted by his intensity and conviction. He studies Takei as the waiter brings another cup of tea. Osamu attempts to alleviate the tension:

OSAMU

Forgive his bluntness. We
were just talking about art.

NATSUO

And what did you decide?

Takei speaks in a direct, emotionless manner:

TAKEI

I only got interested in art
because of the way sculpture
treated the body --Michaelangelo,
Laocoon, Rodin. I found they
were just as phony as landscapes.
Inferior copies of the original.
The human body is the work of art
itself. It doesn't need
imitations. The body is both the
raw material and final product --
both the paint and the painting.
The body doesn't need artists.

(a beat)

That's what I decided.

NATSUO

Okay, let's say you're right.
But what good does all your
sweating and grunting do? Even
the most beautiful body is soon
destroyed by age. Where is
beauty then? Only art can make
human beauty endure. That's the
test of art --it's timeless.

(pointed)

If you want your beauty to endure
like a work of art, you must
devise an artist's scheme to
preserve it. If you care so much
about your muscles, you must
commit suicide at the height of
your beauty. You -- all of you --
are going to get old.

CONTD.

45 CONTD:

Osamu stammers, not knowing how to respond. Takei gladly jumps to the bait:

TAKEI

On the other hand, there are people like you who were born old. Pathetic, weak artists. Because you could never defeat us physically, you want all muscles to be destroyed. Forgive my bluntness.

NATSUO

Not at all. I just wish you could also be right.

CUT TO:

46 PHOTO-TAKING MONTAGE (1966-1970)

BLACK AND WHITE. A series of scenes of Yukio Mishima: writer, actor and now model.

- OUTSIDE HIS MOGOME HOUSE, Mishima poses behind a statue of Apollo. The nude buttocks of the statue are in the foreground. Mishima instructs the photographer to move a little to the right.
- IN MOUNTAIN SNOW, Mishima, wearing only a loincloth, poses with his samurai sword.
- OUTSIDE HIS HOME, Mishima, again nude except for a loincloth, poses in a fetal position on an old stone bench.
- IN A DEPARTMENT STORE MOVIE SET, Mishima, wearing white gangster duds, is shot as he walks toward the escalator. He play acts an exaggerated death as the escalator drags him upward. The director finally calls, "Cut." The film is called Karakaze Yaro.
- IN A WOODED AREA, Mishima, wearing a cloth around his waist, poses by a large tree. His hands are bound by a rope and pulled above his head. Three arrows pierce his muscled, oiled trunk: one in the left hip, another in his right side, another in his left armpit. It is an exact replication of Guido Reni's portrait of St. Sebastian -- the painting which inspired Mishima's first ejaculation (scene 15).

CONTD.

46 CONTD:

MISHIMA (V.O.)
A writer is a voyeur par
excellance. I came to detest
this position. I sought not
only to be the seer, but also
the seen.

CUT TO:

47 INT. ACACIA COFFEE SHOP - DAY (Kyoko's House)

VIDEO. Osamu's Mother serves two customers, then walks to
his table. Osamu wears sunglasses, white jeans and a red
Hawaiian shirt adorned with orchids. The loose shirt
exposes his new body.

O'S MOTHER
What've you been doing? You
promised we'd go to the theater.

He rubs his chest.

O'S MOTHER
What's wrong? You need money
again?

Osamu, offended, removes his sunglasses:

OSAMU
Don't you notice anything new?

O'S MOTHER
Just that awful shirt. And you
call my taste gaudy. Looks like
blood.

OSAMU
I've put two inches on my chest.
(gestures)
Exercising.

O'S MOTHER
You? Why? Oh, is that what the
girls go for now?

OSAMU
One even said my ass looked like
a foreign sailor's.
(MORE)

CONTD.

47 CONTD:

 OSAMU contd.
 (taps his butt)
 Feel that muscle, how firm it is.

 O'S MOTHER
 (playful)
 Cut that out!

 OSAMU
 Here, feel my chest.

She squeezes his chest:

 O'S MOTHER
 I can hardly pinch it.

 OSAMU
 Soon it'll repell fingers like
 a shield.

The door bangs open. In struts a THUG and his docile GIRLFRIEND. The Thug, short and wiry, has had a lot of experience pushing others around; the girl has had a lot of experience being pushed around.

 THUG
 Lady! Get us some lunch!

 O'S MOTHER
 I'm sorry, we only serve snacks.

 THUG
 Then go out and get us some.
 Until you pay back your loan,
 this dump belongs to me. Now
 get your ass moving.

The two customers scurry outside. Osamu watches silently. He tenses his muscles, prepares to attack.

 O'S MOTHER
 Just a minute...

The Thug picks up one of the customer's coffee cups, pretends to drink from it, then throws the cold coffee into Osamu's Mother's face. She screams.

Osamu jumps to his feet, charges the smaller man.

CONTD.

47 CONTD:

The Thug swings the cup at Osamu; he blocks it. The china cup crashes against the wall. the Thug kicks Osamu's leg and slams his fist into his stomach. Osamu doubles over, gasping for breath.

The Thug pummels Osamu's ears then delivers the coup de grace, a rabbit punch to the back of the head. Osamu drops to the floor, unmoving.

The Thug looks around, motions to his Girlfriend and stomps out. Osamu's Mother, crying softly, bends over her son's body. He comes to, looks around:

OSAMU

Where's my mirror?

The coffee shop transforms into night.

CUT TO:

48 INT. ACACIA - NIGHT (Kyoko's House)

KIYOMI, 55, a dowager dressed in a floral skirt and white blouse, stands at the door of the darkened coffee shop.

Osamu, his face still bruised from yesterday's fight, sits at a counter stool.

She carries a nylon bag of documents. Her average height is offset by thick, heavy legs. Her angular face is, Mishima writes, "not at all bad, but her angry flaring nostrils ruin its whole effect." Put more simply, she's ugly.

KIYOMI

I hope you accept my apology.
I'm sorry about yesterday. I
fired that young punk immediately.
Unfortunately in this business
you have to hire such people. It
seems I'll soon take possession of
the place. Your mother is very
difficult. It seems that people
are often driven to suicide in
situations like this. I was
wondering if we could work it
out.

CONTD.

48 CONTD:

OSAMU
(confused)

Why?

KIYOMI
(she sits)

I'm not as unreasonable as
people say.

OSAMU

Why us?

KIYOMI
I didn't feel this way before
I came. But now that I've met
you, I've changed my mind.

OSAMU
(sits across from her)
What do you mean?

KIYOMI
You're like me. My beautiful
shadow. You're vain and bored
and like childish games. You're
an actor, aren't you?

OSAMU
(coy)
I feel that a certain woman
wants something.

KIYOMI
No, please don't pretend you love
me. I'm much too old for that.

OSAMU
I don't love women much, anyway.
They make me feel emptied out.

KIYOMI
All the better.

OSAMU
What do you want?

Kiyomi reaches into her bag and places several papers on
the table top. She takes out a ballpoint pen.

CONTD.

48 CONTD:

 KIIYOMI
This is your mother's loan.
It comes to one and a half
million yen. I'll destroy
it if we make a contract.

She slides him a pen and blank sheet of paper.

 KIIYOMI
Write: "I hereby... certify
that my life and body... belong
to Kiyomi Akita."

Osamu, puzzled, looks at her.

 KIIYOMI
I want to buy you.

CUT TO:

49 INT. KIIYOMI'S APARTMENT - DUSK (Kyoko's House)

Osamu, wearing only his white jeans, lies on the tatami
floor. The air is heavy with oppressive mid-summer heat.
Kiyomi, dressed in a black slip, wipes his torso with a
chilled oshibori cloth. Osamu closes his eyes; the
cooling sensation fills his body.

She massages his chest. Osamu opens his eyes, cocks his
head.

 OSAMU
Don't tickle me.

Kiyomi backs off. He sits up and touches his side:
there's blood on his fingertips. Examining his side, Osamu
notices a thin cut. A straight razor lies on the tatami
beside Kiyomi. Puzzled, he looks at her.

 KIIYOMI
It's just a little cut.

 OSAMU
Why?

 KIIYOMI
Your skin is so beautiful...
I just had to cut it.

CONTD.

49 CONTD:

Osamu puts his hand over the cut, closes his eyes:

OSAMU

It felt pleasant.

Kiyomi impulsively leans over and passionately sucks Osamu's "wound." Osamu lays his head back, enjoying the sensation.

Kiyomi walks to the kitchenette, takes a melon from the small refrigerator and places it on the table. Her "small" apartment is very luxurious by postwar Tokyo standards. She slices the melon with a long knife.

Osamu turns toward her.

OSAMU

A thought just occurred to me.

(Kiyomi turns to listen)

"This must be the woman I've been looking for. I've finally found her." For the first time I feel like I exist. I don't need a mirror.

Kiyomi jokes as she cuts the melon:

KIYOMI

Perhaps you should die with me. I could watch your face in a pool of blood until it stopped moving. Then I would poison myself.

OSAMU

You have to promise not to kiss me...

(they both laugh)

...until after I'm dead.

(laugh again)

CUT TO:

50 INT. KABUKI LOBBY - DAY (Kyoko's House)

Osamu and his Mother sit on an out-of-the-way ledge near the backstage door. They share a snack from a common bento box. A Stagehand exits the stage door and passes them.

CONTD.

50 CONTD:

O'S MOTHER
I'd almost forgotten about
theater.

(he shrugs)
Are you at the gym?

OSAMU
I don't need to go anymore.

O'S MOTHER
(missing his point)
Yeah, you are in good shape.

Osamu wipes his Mother's lips. A couple of old women --
"Kabuki widows" -- look askance at them, then pass on.

O'S MOTHER
Look at those ladies. They're
jealous. They don't think we're
mother and son.

OSAMU
Let 'em think what they want.

O'S MOTHER
It's such a relief, not to
worry about money anymore.
I'm finally able to sleep
again. Thanks to Mrs. Akita
-- and to you, of course.

Osamu stares off blankly.

O'S MOTHER
You're not having trouble with
her, are you?

OSAMU
Not at all. In fact, I
decided to go all the way
with her.

O'S MOTHER
Do you love her?

OSAMU
Not at all.

CONTD.

50 CONTD:

O'S MOTHER

Isn't that a little extreme?
On the other hand, we've got
to be nice to her.

(Osamu nods)

But there's no reason to go
any further than necessary.
Just find a way to cancel
the loan.

OSAMU

Don't worry about money.
I've got a good part.

O'S MOTHER

You did? Which role?

The house lights flicker, indicating the next act.

OSAMU

It's a surprise.

CUT TO:

51 INT. KIYOMI'S APARTMENT - NIGHT (Kyoko's House)

Osamu strips off his black T-shirt. His torso is laced
with bruises and rope-burns.

Kiyomi, again in her black slip, watches him from a
zabutou cushion. He kneels before her; she caresses his
wounds.

KIYOMI

You've got the body of a matador.

OSAMU

I can't even go to the gym.

(smiles)

Those guys at the theater are even
worse. They're still having the
same boring discussions about the
"wounds of art."

She kisses a raw welt on his chest:

KIYOMI

If only they could see you.

CONTD.

51 CONTD:

Kiyomi gets up, walks over to a chest and withdraws a rope. The blue screen slowly drips blood red.

OSAMU
(dreamy)

They don't even know that they
don't exist. That art is the
shadow of a shadow.

Kiyomi binds one of Osamu's hands to a beam. She steps over to the table, picks up the knife.

CUT TO:

III

Action

White letters and Roman numerals
on a black screen. The beginning
of the third section of the film.

52 EXT. TOKYO EXPRESSWAY - DAY

COLOR. The final day. The white Toyota Corona drives past the wide expanse of Tokyo rooftops.

Mishima leads his four followers, the Tatenokai cadets, in a pop movie song about valor and manly heroics:

GROUP

(beaming smiles)

"When duty and sympathy are on
the scales,

A man always finds duty heavier.

(chorus)

We stubbornly follow our dream
Until the coming of the dawn."

In Japanese gangster films, such songs are commonly sung as the hero prepares to do battle against overwhelming odds. The Tatenokai sedan turns off an exit ramp.

CUT TO:

53 EXT. ARMY HEADQUARTERS - DAY

The car approaches the guarded gate of the Eastern Army Headquarters in Ichigaya province. The administrative offices and barracks sit atop the hill beyond the gate.

A hush falls over Mishima's group.

CADET #1

There it is.

He eases the sedan to a stop. An armed soldier stands guard at the gate. Mishima checks his watch.

MISHIMA

We're a little early.

(to Cadet #1)

Swing around the loop.

The First Cadet pulls the car back into traffic; the Second Cadet nervously glances back.

CADET #2

What if something goes wrong?

Mishima censures him with a glance.

CONTD.

53 CONTD:

MISHIMA
Just stick to the plan.

The army gate recedes from view.

CUT TO:

54 EXT. MILITARY ACADEMY GATE - DAY (Runaway Horses)

VIDEO. When the Second Cadet looks again, he sees teenage boys entering the main campus gate. They wear military uniforms and carry schoolbooks. Their dress and hairstyles place the scene in the 1930's. The sign above the gate reads: "The Academy of Patriotism."

Inside the gate, violent shouts reverberate from the kendo hall. The shouts are echoed by the sound of wood against wood.

A subtitle reads:

"Runaway Horses, 1968"

CUT TO:

55 INT. KENDO HALL - DAY (Runaway Horses)

Two rows of students stand poised in an ancient structure. They wear the traditional kendo outfit: jacket, trousers, chest protectors, helmet, quilted gloves and wooden swords.

At the INSTRUCTOR'S command the students attack the opposing row, clash swords and retreat.

INSTRUCTOR
Again! -- Again! -- Halt!

The students snap to attention. The ear-splitting clashes are suddenly replaced by silence.

INSTRUCTOR
Prepare to rest! Fall out!

Students release exhausted gasps as they sprawl across the hardwood floor. Their heavy uniforms are sweat soaked.

CONTD.

55 CONTD:

ISAO, 19, removes his helmet and wipes his brow. He is the Mishima ideal: the body of Takei wedded to the sensitivity of Mizoguchi. The worshipper of beauty who is also beautiful. The true man of action.

Isao rests his chin on the butt of his kendo sword.

A fellow student slides next to Isao. Glancing furtively at the Instructor, he whispers to Isao:

 FIRST CLASSMATE
Has anything changed?

 ISAO
No.

 FIRST CLASSMATE
You're going through with it?

 ISAO
Of course.

 FIRST CLASSMATE
Why?

 ISAO
Why ask such a stupid question?
 (no reply)
Because the Emperor's face is
not pleased. Don't you
understand? Japan is losing
her soul.

Another classmate has been listening in.

 SECOND CLASSMATE
But why you?

 ISAO
I was lucky enough to be
chosen.

The classmates do not respond. Isao speaks with an unaffected authority: he is a natural leader.

The Kendo Instructor approaches.

CONTD.

55 CONTD:

INSTRUCTOR

Isao! Why did you pull out
of the tournament?

Isao leaps to attention. His classmates discretely slip
away.

ISAO

I lost interest, sensei.

INSTRUCTOR

What! Because you win so easily?

Isao glances at his sword:

ISAO

I lost interest in wooden swords,
sensei. They have no real power.
No real danger.

INSTRUCTOR

(snide)

And you think you're old enough
for a sword of steel?

ISAO

Yes, sensei.

INSTRUCTOR

(repressing his anger)

How about your team and your
school? They can't win
without you. Are you too
good to show them any respect?

Isao, silent, lowers his head.

INSTRUCTOR

Report to your dorm, Isao. Spend
the rest of the day contemplating
a real danger. Contemplate the
danger of a man who thinks only
of himself, who wastes his talent
and his life. Understand?

ISAO

Yes, sensei!

CONTD.

55 CONTD:

INSTRUCTOR

Dismissed!

Isao bows, spins on his heel and walks briskly across the room. He exits stage left.

CUT TO:

56 EXT. ARMY GARRISON - DAY (Runaway Horses)

Young soldiers respond to drill commands:

OFFICER (O.S.)

Right face! Left face!

Isao, dressed in his school uniform and white gloves, approaches TWO ARMED SOLDIERS at the gate. He glances at the soldiers on the drill ground: their swords press against their stiff, dark uniforms.

Isao hands the gate officers a slip of paper.

ISAO

I have an appointment with
Lieutenant Hori.

The soldiers let him enter.

CUT TO:

57 INT. LT. HORI'S OFFICE - DAY (Runaway Horses)

LIEUTENANT HORI, 28, sits behind his desk. He is a man who cares "little about the impression he made on others." He reads the letter Isao has given him.

HORI

I've been hearing about your
kendo exercises. We expect
great things from you.

ISAO
(bows)

Yes.

Isao's laconism gives Hori pause. He returns to the letter.

CONTD.

57 CONTD:

HORI

You wrote this with your
classmates?

(Isao nods)

How many of you?

ISAO

Twenty.

Hori folds the letter and points it at Isao.

HORI

Isao. Cadet Iinuma. Step
closer.

(Isao does)

Who do you plan to overthrow?

(Isao doesn't answer)

The Imperial Army?

ISAO

No. Just the opposite. The
army is already defeated. The
capitalists have already over-
thrown the Emperor and the army
by stealing his power. If no
one acts soon, Japan will be
lost forever.

Hori hands Isao the letter with a studied -- but approving
stare. Isao tucks the letter into his uniform.

ISAO

We know you agree with us.

HORI

How will you do this?

ISAO

A single stroke. In one night
we'll assassinate the leaders
of capitalism. We'll burn down
their "Bank of Japan." At dawn
law will restore power to the
Emperor.

HORI

And you? What will happen
to your group?

CONTD.

57 CONTD:

ISAO

(stammers)

At sunrise... at the top of a
cliff, paying reverence to the
sun... looking down on the sea...
we... we'll commit seppuku.

HORI

Hmm.

(a beat)

And you want me to join you?

ISAO

We'd never ask anyone to join
us in death. That's a decision
every man makes for himself.

HORI

Who would you kill?

ISAO

If we could kill ten, Marquis
Nagasaki, Baron Shinkawa...

As Isao mentions the capitalist targets, they appear on
blue screen, conducting their daily business..

HORI

(interrupting)

And if only five?

ISAO

Premier Saito...

HORI

And only one? ..

ISAO

Busuke Karahara.

Hori nods approvingly.

ISAO

Japan will be purified.

HORI

What do you want from me?

CONTD.

57 CONTD:

 ISAO
An airplane to drop leaflets.
Explosives to knock out the
power station.

 HORI
You already have firearms?

 ISAO
We'll only use swords.
 (a beat)
Our best weapon is purity.

 HORI
And you schoolboys can use
swords?

Hori's office transforms into the kendo hall.

CUT TO:

58 INT. KENDO HALL - NIGHT (Runaway Horses)

The hall is dark and empty. Isao and Hori, in kendo uniforms, but without masks, stalk each other with wooden swords.

They approach and retreat.

 HORI
Yaaah!

Hori launches his attack. Isao dodges Hori's sword, feints, then strikes a lightning quick counter blow, leaving Lt. Hori vulnerable.

Isao taps him on the forehead: Hori nods ever so slightly.

CUT TO:

59 INT. MODERN KENDO HALL - DAY (1966)

BLACK AND WHITE. Mishima, 40, sitting formally, pulls on his mask; then stands, sets his stance and attacks his kendo partner.

His blow is deflected. Mishima and his partner reset.

CONTD.

59 CONTD:

 MISHIMA (V.O.)
 Kendo quenched my thirst.

NIGHT: Mishima is now alone in the kendo hall. Dressed in white, he practices his kendo drill with his gleaming samurai sword. His drill has the poetry of dance. His eyes, sweat and sword glisten in the night light.

 MISHIMA (V.O.)
 Words are a deceit. In order to
 express the unexpressable, the
 writer must be deceitful. But
 action is never deceitful.
 (pause)
 Can art and action ever be united?

He's in his own world:

 MISHIMA (V.O.)
 (continuing)
 Bunburyodo -- "to harmonize pen
 and sword." The samurai motto
 used to be a way of life, now
 it's a cliché. The truth is
 that harmony can only happen in
 a moment, a flash. The average
 age for men in the Bronze Age
 was eighteen, in the Roman era
 twenty-two. Heaven must have
 been beautiful then. Today, it
 must look dreadful. When a man
 reaches forty, he has no chance
 to die beautifully. No matter
 how he tries, he will die of
 decay. He must compel himself
 to live.

CUT TO:

60 EXT. MILITARY ACADEMY GATE - NIGHT (Runaway Horses)

VIDEO. Isao and a classmate, still wearing sweaty kendo undergarb, walk from the darkened campus. A VOICE from a 1933 Mercedes calls to Isao. He turns his head.

 HORI (O.S.)
 Isao. Get in.

CONTD.

60 CONTD:

Isao excuses himself and gets in the Mercedes. They drive off.

CUT TO:

61 INT. HORI'S CAR - NIGHT (Runaway Horses)

ISAO

What's wrong?

HORI

You've got to call off your plan.

ISAO

Has someone found out?

HORI

No, but they will. I'm being transferred to Manchuria. Without me, it's too dangerous.

ISAO

Can you get the airplane?

HORI

It won't work. Call it off.

ISAO

Why?

HORI

I don't want to see you and your friends throw away your lives.

ISAO

"Don't fear the death of the body, only the spirit."

HORI

Your intentions are... but...

Hori is making no headway with Isao:

CONTD.

61 CONTD:

HORI

Please, swear you'll call it off.

(no response)

And destroy any reference to me.

Do you swear?

CUT TO:

62 EXT. HIKAWA SHRINE - SUNSET (Runaway Horses)

The window of the Mercedes turns into an amber sunset. Nineteen military students appear silhouetted against the setting sun.

Isao turns to address them:

ISAO

There won't be an airplane;
there won't be any explosives.
The army has deserted us. The
capitalists have bought them out.

There is no response. Isao continues:

ISAO

This meeting is useless. Do
you understand?
(again no response)
Go home. Go back to your books.
This is my final command. I
want to be alone now. Go.

Isao sits on the temple steps. Five students quietly exit. The rest remain in place.

ISAO

What's wrong? Didn't you hear
me? Go home. We have no plan,
no hope. Nothing.

A pause. Then one voice speaks with "forceful dignity:"

CADET VOICE

We understand.

"For the first time," Mishima writes, "Isao sensed a firm response. It was hot, it had an animal smell, it was filled with blood, its pulse throbbed."

CONTD.

62 CONTD:

 ISAO

And you're willing to pay the
price, pay the price for
something which may accomplish
nothing?

 GROUP

Yes!

Isao, choked with emotion, turns away. He bows at the
Hikawa altar, claps twice in prayer. The group does the
same.

Isao stands and, with a gesture, invites his followers
from the blue screen onto the stage. One by one, they
file in.

Clearing the lump in his throat, Isao addresses them:

 ISAO

Let us renew our vows before
the gods.

Like an approaching locomotive, their voices gather
momentum:

 GROUP

(unison)

We vow that we, giving no thought
to personal gain, go forth to
death to purge our nation of its
capitalist evils. We hereby vow
to forge eternal friendship among
ourselves. We will become the
foundation stones for the
restoration of His Imperial
Majesty.

Their faces are not morbid, but enthusiastic.

CUT TO:

63 INT. MEETING ROOM - NIGHT (1968)

BLACK AND WHITE. The second floor room is crowded with
stacked desks and scattered papers, looking much like the
office of an underground newspaper.

CONTD.

63 CONTD:

Ten young academic students stand around a desk. Mishima, wearing white jeans and a red T-shirt, writes with a calligraphic brush.

Mishima examines what he has written, then reads it to the students.

MISHIMA

"We hereby vow to be the
foundation of Imperial Japan."
Now let's sign.

One by one, the students slit their finger tips with a pen knife. Each lets his blood drip into a small cup, then passes the cup on. One student is reluctant; the others offer moral support. Mishima -- beaming -- is buoyed by their unity and courage.

Morita hands the cup to Mishima. He cuts his finger deeply and lets the blood flow into the cup. He dips a clean brush into the cup and signs the oath. He passes the oath to Morita:

MISHIMA

After the signatures, we'll pass
the cup and drink a toast to our
new society.

(deadpan)

That is, if no one is sick.
No one has V.D. here, I hope?

The students break into laughter. Mishima laughs the loudest, emitting his familiar guffaw.

Even though he appears to be deadly serious, there is, in this action, as in all his actions, a high degree of contrived drama. That is the paradox: the contrivance is serious.

CUT TO:

64 EXT. NATIONAL THEATER ROOF - DAY (1969)

The Tatenokai, now 85 strong, stand at attention atop the roof of the National Theater. The Tokyo skyline (including, prominently, the Emperor's Palace) gives resonance to these over-serious young men lined in straight rows and starched uniforms.

CONTD.

64 CONTD:

A reviewing stand has been set up for reporters, invited guests and dignitaries. There's an uneasiness in the air; many of the guests wonder why they've been invited to Mishima's "puppet show."

Mishima, for his part, is at ease, confident. He addresses the reviewing stand.

MISHIMA

The Shield Society is proud to welcome you on our first anniversary for the presentation of our new uniforms.

(polite applause)

We are a stand-by army, an army of shields to protect his Imperial Majesty. We are a spiritual army dedicated to purity. We oppose the corruption and modernization of the Japanese spirit, both from the right and the left.

Another chorus of polite applause. No one knows quite how to react.

Mishima signals to his troops. They commence a parade drill across the rooftop.

Mishima slips out a nearby door.

CUT TO:

65 INT. NATIONAL THEATER - DAY

Direct cut from previous scene. Mishima removes his Tatenokai jacket and hurries toward the stage. A dress rehearsal of one of Mishima's plays is in progress. On stage a SAMURAI prepares to commit seppuku in a pool of fake blood.

MISHIMA

(stepping on stage)

Wait!

He pulls the ASSISTANT DIRECTOR aside.

CONTD.

65 CONTD:

MISHIMA

This is just what I was afraid
of. Didn't you read my play?

The Assistant Director, embarrassed, nods silently.

MISHIMA

There must be much more blood.

DIRECTOR

Yes, of course.

(to Assistant)

More blood! Immediately!

Mishima gingerly dips his white glove finger in the blood:

MISHIMA

And this is much too dull.
It must glisten.

DIRECTOR

Glisten?

MISHIMA

(wiping his finger
on his uniform)

It must be visible in the
last row.

DIRECTOR

Yes, of course.

MISHIMA

(checks wristwatch)

I'm sorry. I've got to get
back to the roof. When I
return I'll stand in the last
row -- and I want to see the
blood glisten.

CUT TO:

66 EXT. ROOF - DAY

Mishima rebuttons his collar as he steps onto the roof.
His troops are still marching. A LITERARY FRIEND
approaches him and whispers:

CONTD.

66 CONTD:

FRIEND

Mishima, you can't use the
National Theater for a private
political party. This is a
scandal.

Mishima smiles, says nothing.

FRIEND

What's all this nonsense
about a private army?

Mishima gestures downstairs.

MISHIMA

Down there I create art in
the dark.

(points to troops)

Here I create action in the
sunshine. Isn't it perfect?
Who would have thought you
could still combine them in
modern times? Byron did it.
He had three hundred men.

FRIEND

Are you really serious?

Mishima ignores his question.

FRIEND

Look, it's just that the media
can make you look so ridiculous.

MISHIMA

Haven't I always looked ridiculous?

(tight grin)

I walk on stage determined to
make the audience cry; instead
they burst out laughing.

The Tatenokai have stopped marching and are now posing for
photographs. Mishima takes his position in the front
ranks. Another pose.

CUT TO:

67 INT. MISHIMA'S OFFICE - NIGHT (1969)

BLACK AND WHITE. The dead of night. Mishima, wearing casual clothes, writes longhand in a notebook. He pauses for a sip of tea, then continues.

CUT TO:

68 INT. MILITARY ACADEMY DORM ROOM - NIGHT (Runaway Horses)

VIDEO. Isao and his student corps (now only twelve strong) make final plans for their suicide attack.

Behind Isao, taped to the wall next to the official portrait of the Emperor, is the floor plan of the Bank of Japan.

ISAO

We will strike Friday night
at ten o'clock. This date
can change anytime, so always
be ready. Are there any
objections? Is it inconvenient
for anyone?

The students look quizzically at each other. After a moment, one student asks what the others are thinking:

IZUTSU

If we're going to die, how
can it be inconvenient?

They all laugh.

ISAO

Okay, Friday night. Where are
the maps to Kurahara's house?

A knock on the door. Silence.

STUDENT

Is that you?

VOICE (O.S.)

Yes.

The Student opens the door; twenty POLICE DETECTIVES burst into the room. Bedlam.

CONTD.

68 CONTD:

One student downs two Detectives with Karate kicks, but is subdued by two others. Izutsu dives for the window; a detective grabs his legs.

Isao pulls his short sword and opens his shirt, preparing to plunge the blade into his stomach. He is overpowered by two detectives who grab his arms, throw him to the floor and handcuff him.

CUT TO:

69 INT. ICHIGAYA PRISON - DAY (Runaway Horses)

TWO GUARDS lead Isao down a prison corridor. (They walk in place on stage while the corridor recedes on blue screen.) A young man's SCREAM: the sound of torture. Isao turns his head momentarily, then resumes his impassive gaze.

The guards place Isao in a cell.

CUT TO:

70 INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY (Runaway Horses)

Isao sits across the table from a pleasant-faced police INTERROGATOR. A small vase holding three winter camellias rests between them. A POLICEMAN stands at the window.

INTERROGATOR

Are you hungry?

ISAO

No.

INTERROGATOR

If so, I'll have them bring you something.

ISAO

No thank you.

INTERROGATOR

I think it's important to make someone feel at ease during an interrogation. To be congenial.
(to Policeman)

The sun's pleasant today, isn't it?

CONTD.

70 CONTD:

The Policeman nods. The Interrogator turns back to Isao.

INTERROGATOR

I've gone over the documents
by your society. Did your
group plan anything else?

ISAO

No.

INTERROGATOR

(smiles)

With patriots like you, there's no
need to worry about the future of
Japan. We all admire your sincerity
but you shouldn't have broken the law.

ISAO

The law's a joke. A bad one.
It forbids the beauty of personal
sacrifice and approves ugly acts
of personal gain.

The Interrogator nods. He has great respect for this
young man. He also has a job.

INTERROGATOR

You're third degree in kendo, I
hear. Too bad you got involved
in this business, otherwise you
and I might be having a pleasant
match down in the hall.

Muted sounds of torture echo from the cells below.

ISAO

Are they having a match now?

The Interrogator, understanding Isao's meaning, moves on:

INTERROGATOR

You're still too young and pure.
In the future you'll understand.
You have to tone down your feelings.

ISAO

If purity is toned down, it's
no longer purity.

CONTD.

70 CONTD:

INTERROGATOR

Total purity is not possible in
this world.

Isao's voice rises for the first time.

ISAO

Yes, it is -- if you turn your
life into a line of poetry
written with a splash of blood.

The Interrogator shakes his head with the "wisdom" that
time brings.

INTERROGATOR

Calm down. Dying isn't everything,
you know. I admire your loyalty,
but the Emperor also treasures
our lives.

(Isao doesn't respond)

I'm not attacking your beliefs,
I'm just saying: take it easy.

ISAO

You don't think I'm serious.
If my ideas aren't dangerous,
let me do my duty. If not,
torture me like the others.

INTERROGATOR

Like the Communists? You're not
like them at all. We approve of
your ideas. The problem is your
methods.

ISAO

Let me go or torture me. I insist!

INTERROGATOR

(amused)

Ah, such a debator...

ISAO

Torture me...

CONTD.

70 CONTD:

INTERROGATOR
(interrupting)
There's no need to torture you.
We torture those who won't talk.
You want to talk.

CUT TO:

71 EXT. TOKYO UNIVERSITY - DAY (1969)

BLACK AND WHITE. Mishima, 43, wearing white jeans and a black polo shirt, approaches the campus with several of the Tatenokai, also out of uniform.

A half dozen riot police line the entrance. Over the past six months, the campus has been the site of several violent confrontations between the police and the Zengakuren, the radical left. The buildings still bear the scars of these pitched battles.

A POLICE OFFICER joins them. They walk toward the main gate.

POLICE OFFICER
We can't guarantee your safety...

MISHIMA
(polite)
Yes. Thanks.

FIRST CADET
We can slip in as radicals...

MISHIMA
No. Their motives for inviting me were pure. Mine must be the same.

SECOND CADET
What if they take you hostage?
They have a reputation for torture.

MISHIMA
(steels himself)
I'm going in alone.

Mishima is scared; he is in danger -- but bravado rules the day. He could not refuse the invitation to address the radical left; he has already written the scene.

CONTD.

71 CONTD:

He strides through the campus gate.

CUT TO:

72 EXT. YASUDA HALL - DAY

Several RADICAL STUDENTS, polite but hostile, greet Mishima and escort him toward the main auditorium. The campus has the air of a city under seige.

Long banners hang outside the building. A poster depicts Mishima as a gorilla with the legend, "The Stone Age Gorilla Confronts the Modern Guerillas."

MISHIMA (V.O.)

I felt I was entering the realm
where action and art converge.

His face seems devoid of emotion.

MISHIMA (V.O.)

I felt myself moving farther
from the danger of beauty,
closer to the beauty of danger.

The Radical Students lead him into the auditorium.

CUT TO:

73 INT. YASUDA HALL - DAY

Two thousand students are crowded in the auditorium. They are polite, well-dressed -- but definitely antagonistic. Mishima is in the enemy camp.

A STUDENT stands to challenge him:

STUDENT

You're not only wrong, you're
not even logical!

Mishima, the blackboard behind him, paces the stage with a hand microphone. Photographers kneel in front.

MISHIMA
(sardonic)

Having got this far out of
sheer pride, I'm not going to
become logical now.

CONTD.

73 CONTD:

Mild laughter. Mishima is in fine form: he works this hostile crowd like a seasoned entertainer.

CUT TO:

74 EXT. KURAHARA'S HOUSE - NIGHT (Runaway Horses)

VIDEO. Isao, now free, scales the wall surrounding a western-style house. His overcoat rips on barbed wire as he hits the ground.

Moving to the window, he peers into the house. Reading inside is BUSUKE KURAHARA (seen in sc. 56), a short, stern old man dressed in a brown kimono.

Isao slips between manicured trees as he approaches the side door. He pulls his plain dagger from its wooden sheath and jimmies the door. He steps into the parlor.

CUT TO:

75 INT. KURAHARA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Hearing something, Kurahara puts down his book and looks up: before him stands Isao, his dagger drawn. A thin sheet of icy fear spreads across the industrialist's face. He stands near the fireplace.

KURAHARA

Who are you? What are you doing here?

ISAO

I've come to give you the punishment you deserve...

KURAHARA

What?

Terrified, Kurahara staggers back, vainly trying to place Isao.

In an instant Isao is across the room. He grips his right wrist with his left hand; the blade strikes Kurahara's abdomen. The job is done almost before it starts.

Kurahara's false teeth jut from his mouth as he tries to scream. Isao wrenches out his blade as Kurahara topples to the floor.

CONTD.

75 CONTD:

Isao rushes into the darkness as frightened VOICES call after him.

CUT TO:

76 EXT. ORCHARD - NIGHT

Isao runs top speed through a tangerine orchard. Ahead lies a dark expanse of ocean.

He races along the cliff.

CUT TO:

77 EXT. TOKYO PARK - DAWN (1969)

BLACK AND WHITE. Mishima, 43, runs past dark rows of trees. He's out for his morning jog. He wears sneakers and sweatpants. His chest shines with sweat.

He bursts into a grassy clearing as the sun rises.

MISHIMA (V.O.)

I was running in the dim light of dawn when I felt something emerging as slowly as my sweat -- the possibility of the ultimate verification of my existence.

CUT TO:

78 EXT. OCEAN CLIFF - NIGHT (Runaway Horses)

VIDEO. Isao slows to a trot. He stops at the edge of a promontory and gazes across the moonlit ocean.

He drops his torn, now bloody overcoat behind him. He unbuttons his student uniform jacket and removes it.

Police sirens echo in the distance. Flashlights flicker through the trees. The overlapping VOICES of a search party can be heard approaching:

SEARCH PARTY VOICE (O.S.)

The ocean! Hurry before he gets in a boat!

Isao sinks to his knees on the damp earth, folding his legs beneath him.

CONTD.

78 CONTD:

He removes his woolen undershirt. His naked chest reflects the moonlight. He gazes across the Eastern horizon. The voices grow closer. Isao unfastens his trousers, exposes his stomach. He picks up his dagger, unsheathes it, lets the sheath fall.

He draws a deep breath as he runs his hand caressingly over his stomach. Isao presses the point of the dagger against his stomach and guides it to the correct position.

CUT TO:

79 INT. FILM STUDIO STAGE - DAY (1966)

BLACK AND WHITE. Mishima, 40, wearing a 1930's army uniform, kneels in the seppuku position. He positions the point of a short sword on his abdomen and prepares to plunge it in.

This is a movie set. Mishima is alone on the barren, Noh-like stage. He looks up to the camera and says:

MISHIMA

Cut!

The camera pulls back to reveal the film stage. Mishima is writing, directing and starring in a film version of his short novel, Patriotism.

The ASSISTANT DIRECTOR walks over to Mishima.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR
Is something wrong?

MISHIMA
How does it look?

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR
It looks fine.

MISHIMA
Don't lie to me. It's hard enough to direct and act at the same time without somebody lying to you.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR
I swear it looks great, Mishima-san.
Honest.

CONTD.

79 CONTD:

Mishima surveys the set.

MISHIMA

I think the backstage should
be more in shadow.

(to crew)

After all, this will be your
first premiere in Paris and you
know the French love shadows.

The crew laughs as Mishima walks over to the makeup table.

LATER. The shadows have been darkened in the background;
everything is ready.

Mishima kneels on his "mark." His short sword is drawn.
He draws a breath as he caressingly runs his hand across
his stomach. He positions the sword, then looks toward
the camera:

MISHIMA

Action!

CUT TO:

80 INT. PRESS CONFERENCE - DAY (1966)

Flashbulbs. Mishima sits at a table cluttered with
microphones. Behind him is a large photo blow-up of
Mishima -- playing the army officer -- poised at the brink
of death.

Mishima, wearing a dark suit and tie, radiates health. He
is vigorous, confident -- the opposite of the exaggerated
death image hanging behind him.

FIRST REPORTER

Why did you make your film
without dialogue?

MISHIMA

(feeling surprise)

That's a surprise. You fellows
always say I use too much dialogue.
I thought I was doing you a favor.

Several reporters laugh. Mishima is in charge. The
bashful Kimitake, the stuttering Mizoguchi, are distant
memories.

CONTD.

80 CONTD:

He points to an obvious FAN MAGAZINE REPORTER in the first row, directing the press conference as he would a film.

 FAN MAG REPORTER
 (rapid fire)
Your favorite writer?

 MISHIMA
Thomas Mann.

 FAN MAG REPORTER
Your most unique habit?

 MISHIMA
Laughing for no reason.

 FAN MAG REPORTER
Who would you like to be?

 MISHIMA
Elvis Presley.

Having gotten a cheap laugh, Mishima redirects the questioning to a SERIOUS REPORTER:

 SERIOUS REPORTER
Does this mean you'll stop writing novels?

 MISHIMA
 (grins)
Sorry, I can't help you out on that one. I couldn't survive if I didn't continue writing one more line, one more line, one more line, one more line...

All the reporters are laughing now.

CUT TO:

81 EXT. OCEAN CLIFF - NIGHT

VIDEO. Isao sits on the cliff. He looks to sea and braces himself. The pursuing VOICES grow nearer. The night wind carries the sound of the waves.

He takes one last breath, poises his dagger and plunges it inward.

CUT TO:

IV

BUNBURYODO

"The Harmony of Pen and Sword"

White letters and Roman numerals
on a black screen. The beginning
of the fourth section of the film.

82 EXT. ARMY HEADQUARTERS - DAY

COLOR. November 25, 1970. The Corona carrying Mishima and his Tatenokai cadets drives through mid-morning traffic.

MISHIMA
Just follow the plan.

CADET #3
But what if we can't?

MISHIMA
Watch me. If something goes
wrong, I'll give you a signal.
(a beat)
Now is the time to be calm.

The sedan slows down as it approaches the Ichigaya gate. Mishima checks his watch.

MISHIMA
Okay.

The car turns deathly quiet. They drive through the gate and stop at the kiosk.

Two MPs with rifles walk over as Mishima rolls down his window.

1ST MP
Yes?

MISHIMA
We're here to see General
Mashita.

1ST MP
You have an...?

The MP Looks at Mishima closely, recognizing him.

MISHIMA
Eleven a.m.

1ST MP
Mishima-san?

MISHIMA
Yes.

CONTD.

82 CONTD:

1ST MP

Just a moment.

The MP mouths the word "Mishima" to the guard inside the kiosk. The guard quickly scans the drive-on list and deferentially bows to Mishima. The 1st and 2nd MP stand back and salute Mishima.

1ST MP

Go right ahead, Mishima-san.

MISHIMA

Thank you.

Mishima motions to the First Cadet to proceed. The sedan slowly winds its way up the steep road to the Army Headquarters.

Cadet #1 parks the car in a reserved parking space. Mishima and the others get out.

They approach the Army headquarters, a four-story 1930's granite structure with an imposing tower, protruding entrance and balcony. Its architectural origins owe more to Bismarck than to Buddha.

They stride across the parade grounds. Mishima carries his samurai sword at his side. One of the cadets follows with Mishima's briefcase.

They approach the entrance. The balcony above resembles a theater stage. Morita opens the large door for his commander; they enter.

CUT TO:

83 EXT. FUJI BOOTCAMP - DAY

BLACK AND WHITE. Mishima and a cadre of Tatenokai cadets, stripped to the waist wearing combat fatigues, jog in two precise rows. Their boots strike the pavement in unison.

Mishima beams: yet, beneath his smile, his age shows -- veins bulge on his forehead, wrinkles crisscross his cheeks. Although in excellent condition, he is nonetheless past mid-age. His over-muscled, oddly-proportioned body stands in direct contrast to the smoothly-muscled bodies of the teenagers around him.

CONTD.

83 CONTD:

Mishima jogs alongside the cadets, setting an example. His breath steams in the cold morning air.

CUT TO:

84 INT. BOOTCAMP MESS HALL - SUNSET

Tatenokai cadets line three long tables. They scoop rice from their bowls with good-natured intensity. Mishima, at the head of the table, sets the pace.

He points to a cadet who has finished before the others and laughs:

MISHIMA

Look at that one. At least he can eat faster than this old man.

The others laugh: Mishima gestures with his chopsticks:

MISHIMA

Alright: eat! Hup-two-three-four.

The other cadets join in, laughing, matching their "commander" mouthful for mouthful.

CUT TO:

85 EXT. BOOTCAMP MESS HALL - SUNSET

Mishima stands alone, studying Fuji in the last rays of sunlight. Morita and the First Cadet walk out and join him. They wait for him to speak.

MISHIMA

Beautiful.

They look at Fuji and nod. Mishima watches the lit mess hall where the other cadets talk and sip tea.

MISHIMA

What do you think?

He watches Cadets #2 and #3 inside.

MORITA

Yes, you're right about them.

CONTD.

85 CONTD:

Mishima nods to Morita; there's an unspoken communication between them.

MISHIMA
(referring to Cadets #2 and #3)
Yes. Are they "strong" enough?
Are they trustworthy -- "pure"
enough?

Morita nods.

CUT TO:

86 INT. PHOTO STUDIO - DAY (1970)

Mishima, posing, sits with military stiffness in a Meiji Era chair. Behind him stand the three Cadets and Morita; the inner circle. All five wear their Tatenokai uniforms and gaze sternly into the camera. Flashbulb.

CUT TO:

87 INT. ARMY HEADQUARTERS - DAY

COLOR. An AIDE-DE-CAMP waits for Mishima in the foyer.

AIDE-DE-CAMP
Mishima-san, General Mashita is
waiting for you. Please follow
me.

The five Tatenokai follow the Aide-de-Camp up an expansive, intimidating stairway.

On the SECOND FLOOR, the Aide-de-Camp escorts them down the long institutional corridor.

The Aide-de-Camp stops and opens one of the double wooden doors for Mishima.

CUT TO:

88 INT. MASHITA'S OFFICE - DAY

The military decor is simple, functional -- almost frugal. Three windows look out on the balcony. A lifeless Japanese flag stands next to the radiator. A wood and glass screen sections the room. Two black phones are

CONTD.

88 CONTD:

prominently positioned on the General's desk; a white phone sits on a stand next to the air conditioner. The General's chair is covered with a white furniture slip.

AIDE-DE-CAMP

Please have a seat, Mishima-san.
The General will be with you in
a moment.

MISHIMA

Thank you.

Mishima remains standing. The Aide motions for the cadets to take seats along the wall. They keep their eyes on Mishima.

The Aide-de-Camp leaves. There's a moment of silence: of unspoken tension.

GENERAL MASHITA, 57, enters through a second door, breaking the tension. His smile belies his appearance. Although he looks like a career officer, he greets Mishima warmly, as a friend or relative.

MASHITA

Ah, how good to see you again.
It's been too long.

MISHIMA

Yes, General. It's good to see
you again also.

Mishima gestures to the Tatenokai cadets, who stand.

MISHIMA

I brought these members of the
Shield Society to meet you.

MASHITA

(nods)

Please sit down.

The cadets sit in chairs along the wall.

MISHIMA

We've just finished an exercise
at Mount Fuji. During the
exercise some of our men were.

(MORE)

CONTD.

88 CONTD:

MISHIMA contd.
injured. These four distinguished
themselves by carrying the wounded
down the mountain.

MASHITA
Ah, is that so?

MISHIMA
I wanted them to have the honor
of meeting you. Later today
they will receive commendations
at our monthly meeting. That's
why we're in uniform.

MASHITA
I see. Your new uniforms are
very handsome. Who designed
them? You?

MISHIMA
Yes -- with some help from
DeGaulle's tailor.
(smiles in spite
of himself)

The Aide-de-Camp enters with a tray of green tea. He
places it on the table and leaves. Mishima and Mashita
sit. The General notices Mishima's sword.

MASHITA
Is that real?

MISHIMA
Yes. Very real.

MASHITA
Is it alright to carry it
around like that? Don't you
have any problem with the
police?

MISHIMA
I have a permit. It's a
certified antique. Made in
1620 by Seki-no-Magoroku.
Would you like to see it?

CONTD.

88 CONTD:

MASHITA

By all means.

Mishima slowly, expertly unsheathes the sword from its lacquered scabbard. The blade glistens under a coat of protective oil. He hands it to the General.

MASHITA

(examining sword)

Magnificent. As I expected,
it has the wave pattern.

MISHIMA

You must be an expert.

Mishima looks at the seated cadets. Their eyes are all on him. General Mashita closely examines the blade.

MASHITA

Wonderful.

(squinting)

It's a little hard to see the
pattern through all this oil.

Mishima turns to the First Cadet:

MISHIMA

(to Cadet #1)

The polishing cloth.

This is a prearranged signal. The cadets prepare for action.

Cadet #1 stands and approaches the General from behind as if to gag with the polishing cloth. BUT -- the General moves away.

MASHITA

There's a cloth over here.

The General walks to his desk: Cadet #1 freezes. This wasn't in the plan. Mishima motions for him to remain calm, return to his chair.

The General returns with a polishing cloth and wipes the long sword.

CONTD.

88 CONTD:

MASHITA
Very impressive. A true
museum piece.

Mashita returns the sword to Mishima. He accepts it, then turns to the First Cadet:

MISHIMA
The cloth.

Cadet #1 hesitates, then suddenly bolts forward and throttles the General with the cloth. Cadets #2 and #3 rush to assist him, taking lengths of rope from their pockets.

MASHITA
Hey, stop joking around.

Morita has already opened Mishima's briefcase. He removes two short swords and coiled lengths of wire.

MISHIMA
Barricade the doors. Quick.

Morita secures the hall doors by wrapping wire around the doorknobs. He does the same to the side doors.

The Tatenokai cadets know exactly what to do: each has been given specific prearranged instructions.

The General, bewildered, is tied to his chair. The cadets barricade the doors with desks and cabinets.

CUT TO:

89 INT. OUTSIDE MASHITA'S OFFICE - DAY

The Aide-de-Camp approaches the side door with a note for General Mashita. The door is locked. Hearing muted sounds of moving furniture, he peeps through the keyhole.

THROUGH THE KEYHOLE: the Aide sees Mishima and Morita pushing a heavy table against the opposite door. The General is bound and gagged. Cadet #1 stands behind him with a short sword.

MISHIMA
Put your hachimaki on.

CONTD.

89 CONTD:

Mishima removes his cap and takes a white headband from his briefcase. He ties it around his head. The hachimaki is adorned with a red sun and the samurai slogan, "Serve the Nation for Seven Lives." (This is the same headband he wore while posing for photographs in scene 46.)

CUT TO:

90 INT. MASHITA'S OFFICE - DAY

The cadets have all tied their hachimaki. Mishima approaches the General, motions for Cadet #1 to remove his gag.

MISHIMA

Remove the gag.

The General, free to speak, is confused -- dumbfounded. He still doesn't realize what is happening:

MASHITA

If this is a demonstration of commando tactics -- it's gone far enough.

MISHIMA

Tell the garrison to assemble out front to hear a speech. If you do, I'll guarantee your safety.

MASHITA

Are you serious? Are you crazy?

MISHIMA

If you do, we will surrender our weapons thirty minutes after the speech.

MASHITA

Stop this play acting. I can't approve a speech until I've read it.

MISHIMA

If you try to stop us, I will kill you and commit seppuku.

CONTD.

90 CONTD:

Mashita studies Mishima -- gradually appreciating the seriousness of the situation while trying to make sense of it.

MASHITA

This is madness. What will you gain?

MISHIMA

Order your officers to obey me.

General Mashita just shakes his head. Mishima unfolds a sheet of paper:

MISHIMA

These are our demands.
(reads)

"One: the thousand men of the 32nd garrison will be assembled in front of headquarters at 11:30 a.m. Two: Commander Mishima will address the Ichigaya garrison. Three...

He is interrupted by the sound of breaking glass. A SOLDIER, having broken the small window in the door, peers into the room.

FIRST SOLDIER

What's going on? Is this another prank?

Mishima strides over to the window:

MISHIMA

(raises sword)
Stay out!

SECOND SOLDIER

Open the door!

FIRST SOLDIER

Release the General!

MISHIMA

Stay back! These are our demands.

He motions Cadet #3 to hand the folded paper through the broken window.

CONTD.

90 CONTD:

MISHIMA

Those are our demands! If you
accept them, the General will
not be harmed. Obey them --
now!

Mishima pushes a room divider in front of the broken
window. He surveys the room, then checks his watch. He
says to the others:

MISHIMA

Hang the banners.

Morita collects two rolled white banners and climbs out
the large window onto the large balcony.

The three remaining Tatenokai remain in position, guarding
the General and barricaded doors.

MISHIMA

Calm down. Save your strength.

CUT TO:

91 EXT. ICHIGAYA BALCONY - DAY

Mashita's office windows overlook a twenty by twenty-foot
balcony.

Morita, having crossed the balcony, drapes a long banner
down the front of the building. It reads: "Hear our plea
in silence and the General will not be harmed."

Morita unfurls the second banner. Mishima, long sword in
hand, steps from the window and crosses the balcony to the
parapet.

Mishima gazes down at the parking lot. None of the
soldiers have assembled yet: the parade ground is empty.

CUT TO:

92 EXT. FUJI BOOTCAMP - DAY (1969)

BLACK AND WHITE. Mishima, 43, dressed in olive drab
fatigues and a white Air Force helmet climbs the parachute
training tower. Mt. Fuji commands the horizon.

CONTD.

92 CONTD:

Having reached the top, Mishima crosses the platform and looks over the edge: a 35-foot drop.

MISHIMA (V.O.)

Looking down, I realized that my existence would be an isolated black puddle. My body would be untied: free from its shadow.

He jumps off the training tower.

MISHIMA (V.O.)

For a brief moment I existed.

Mishima falls in SURREAL SLOW MOTION.

CUT TO:

93 INT. TOKYO THEATER STAGE - DAY (1970)

BLACK AND WHITE. Slow motion continued: Mishima, 44, wearing combat boots lands on stage. He has just jumped from the theater balcony. At his feet is a poster advertising "The Terrace of the Leper King -- by Yukio Mishima."

Mishima surveys the spectacular set of this, his last play. The set recreates the Temple of Bayon in Thailand, a monumental, ornate edifice overlaid with gold leaf. WORKMEN are applying the final touches.

Mishima silently stalks the set, then turns and calls to a crew member:

MISHIMA

Costumes?

The COSTUME DESIGNER steps forward:

COSTUME DESIGNER

Just a moment.
(dashes backstage)

Mishima examines the temple details.

MISHIMA

Very good. Very good work.

CONTD.

93 CONTD:

The Costume Designer returns with his ASSISTANT. The Assistant wears an ornate regal Thai costume. The Designer gestures toward his Assistant:

COSTUME DESIGNER
The Leper King before he discovers
he is dying.

Mishima nods approvingly.

COSTUME DESIGNER
After he contracts leprosy, when
he is played by two actors...
 (holds up one costume)
...this is the costume for his
Body...
 (holds up another)
...this is for his Spirit.

Mishima takes the costumes and walks toward the terrace where two CARPENTERS are working. He taps the first carpenter on the shoulder:

MISHIMA
Do you mind?

He drapes the austere Spirit costume on the old Carpenter; he places the more colorful Body costume on the Carpenter's young Assistant. Mishima, pleased, stands back to study the Carpenters. He turns to his staff:

MISHIMA
This is the final confrontation.
 (points)
You see, what good is the Body
when the Spirit is dying?

The staff, puzzled, look to each other. One crew member shrugs his shoulders.

Mishima suddenly realizes his mistake. He steps forward and reverses the two costumes, putting the "Spirit" costume on the Young Assistant, the "Body" costume on the old Carpenter.

MISHIMA
Here's a perfect example.
You should get more exercise
before it's too late.

CONTD.

93 CONTD:

The old Carpenter, blushing at all this attention, covers his toothless smile and nods vigorously. Mishima and the old man grin at each other; the staff joins in.

CUT TO:

94 INT. MASHITA'S OFFICE - DAY

COLOR. Crash! Six soldiers break through the barricaded side door and burst into the room.

They stop dead in their tracks: before them stands Mishima, his eyes blazing, his sword poised to strike.

MISHIMA
Get out immediately!

Three soldiers dash forward, attempting to grab Mishima's sword. He drives them back, spanking their legs and arms with the side of the blade.

MISHIMA
Out! Out! Out!

The six soldiers retreat through the double doors. One of them holds his left wrist, which is bleeding profusely.

Specks of blood spatter Mishima's gloves and sword. Cadets #2 and #3 quickly shut the door and reconstruct the barricade.

Mishima, tense, turns to the General. A soldier's VOICE calls from the broken window:

SOLDIER (O.S.)
Release the General!

Mishima walks over to the broken window:

MISHIMA
Who's in charge?
(no reply)
Who's in command!

COLONEL (O.S.)
Since you have the General, I
am. I'm the Colonel.

CONTD.

94 CONTD:

MISHIMA

Have you read our demands?

COLONEL (O.S.)

Let's talk this over.

MISHIMA

There's nothing to talk about!

Mishima removes a duplicate list of demands from his vest pocket and hands it to Morita:

MISHIMA

Read.

The cadets listen stoically as Morita reads:

MORITA

One: the thousand men of the 32nd garrison will be assembled in front of headquarters at 11:30 a.m.
Two: Commander Mishima will address the Ichigaya garrison. Three: the garrison will attend the speech in silence. Four: there will be no attempt to interrupt our action.

Mishima motions for Morita to push the list of demands through the window.

MISHIMA

If you accept, the General will not be harmed and we will surrender our weapons after a ninety minute truce.

COLONEL (O.S.)

We agree -- but it's already past 11:30.

Mishima looks at his watch: 11:35.

COLONEL (O.S.)

When do you want the garrison assembled?

MISHIMA

Immediately!

CUT TO:

95 EXT. ICHIGAYA HEADQUARTERS - DAY

COLOR. Soldiers file out of their barracks and offices. Each seems more confused than the former: what's going on?

Officers bark out instructions: the soldiers are to assemble in the main parking lot.

CUT TO:

96 EXT. ICHIGAYA HEADQUARTERS - DAY

The parade ground is a bedlam of police, soldiers and reporters. Officers, regulars, reserves and office personnel randomly mill about. Senior officers struggle to get them into formation.

Reporters in front of the soldiers shout a confusing barrage of questions. Helicopters circle overhead.

CUT TO:

97 INT. MASHITA'S OFFICE - DAY

Two Tatenokai cadets guard the door. Another stands by the General. Mishima, smoking a cigarette, calmly gazes out the window at the helicopters.

Morita, who has been on the balcony, climbs back through the window.

MORITA

The police are everywhere.

Mishima checks his watch.

MISHIMA

Our little drama has attracted quite an audience. A lot of guests for our party. Has the garrison assembled?

MORITA

Yes.

MISHIMA

Time for the last act.

Mishima puts out his cigarette, looks out the window.

CUT TO:

98 EXT. BALCONY - DAY

Mishima steps outside and starts toward the stone railing. Morita follows.

CUT TO:

99 EXT. AIR FORCE RUNWAY - DAY (1969)

BLACK AND WHITE. Mishima climbs into the cockpit of a F-104. Military officers stand nearby, beaming.

The PILOT in the first cockpit waits until Mishima is seated, then automatically lowers the canopy.

Mishima lowers his goggles and pulls down his oxygen mask (just as in scene 6). The Pilot starts the engine.

CUT TO:

100 EXT. BALCONY - DAY

COLOR. Mishima strides across the balcony. Chaotic noise bounces from every direction: helicopters, sirens, soldiers, reporters.

CUT TO:

101 EXT. AIR FORCE RUNWAY - DAY (1969)

BLACK AND WHITE. The silver F-104 thunders down the runway, bursts into the sky at supersonic speed.

CUT TO:

102 EXT. BALCONY - DAY

COLOR. Mishima jumps onto the parapet and looks down at the assembled soldiers, reporters and police. The crowd goes quiet.

Mishima, hands on hips, surveys the scene. He prepares himself for his last, most dramatic performance.

Suddenly, he bellows above the noise of the helicopters:

CONTD.

102 CONTD:

MISHIMA

Dear Soldiers! It's a terrible affair to have to speak to Army men in circumstances like these. I thought that the Army was the last hope of Japan, the last stronghold of the Japanese soul.

Mishima fights to be heard over the helicopters:

MISHIMA

(continuing)

But the Japanese people today think of money, just money. Where is our national spirit? The politicians care nothing for Japan. They are greedy for power. The Army must be the soul of Japan!

The recruits, young and uneducated, don't understand what's going on. Some don't know who Mishima is, most don't understand what he's saying -- in fact, they can barely hear him over the sound of the helicopters.

A few Jieitai (army) soldiers yell back at him:

MISC. SOLDIERS

--Shut up!
--Bakayaro!
--Asshole!

Mishima shouts over their jeers; the veins jut from his neck, his fists clench. Swirling helicopters drown out his words:

MISHIMA

Listen! Listen! Hear me out! Listen to me! We thought the Army was the soul of national honor!

(more taunts)

The nation has no spiritual foundation. That's why you don't agree with me! What will you do when you are just a big, soulless arsenal?

CONTD.

102 CONTD:

More insults:

MISC. SOLDIERS

--Kiss my ass!

--Stop playing the hero!

MISHIMA

(yelling back)

A man appeals to you! A man!

I have waited four years!

I have come to the last minutes.

I am waiting...

(helicopter noise)

Are you "bushi?" Are you men?

If you don't join me you have

no future! You will never be

saved! This is the end!

The reaction is confused, abusive: "Madman!"

MISHIMA

(continuing)

Don't you understand what's

happening? There you are in

your tiny world. You do nothing

for Japan. Rise together with

me! Have you studied the way

of the sword? What does the

sword mean to the Japanese?

We will show you a value greater

than life.

Mishima's arguments meet with increasing resistance.

MISC. SOLDIERS

--No one would follow you!

--Come down!

--Get him out of there!

Mishima realizes his efforts are futile. His voice grows calm:

MISHIMA

I appeal to you...

CUT TO:

103 EXT. THE STRATOSPHERE - DAY (1969)

BLACK AND WHITE. Mishima's exhortations dissolve into the hum of a F-104 slicing heavenward.

The jet creates a clean, curving white trail against the blue sky.

Sitting in the rear cockpit, Mishima gazes serenely at the blue outer edges of earth's atmosphere. At the moment of his seemingly greatest defeat -- his ridicule by the Jieitai soldiers -- his long-sought moment of transcendent awareness appears before him.

MISHIMA (V.O.)

Then I saw the snake which encircles
the earth with a ring larger than
death.

(a beat)

Here inner and outer finally
converged. Spirit and body
became one. Here was the point
I had always been seeking.

Sky and sea join in misty blue.

CUT TO:

104 EXT. BALCONY - DAY

COLOR. Mishima continues to shout over the helicopters and Jieitai insults. His voice becomes audible again.

MISHIMA

Aren't you soldiers? Aren't
you Japanese? Will no one
join with me?

Mishima looks down at the garrison: he has no support. The "coup" is a fiasco. He checks his watch. He speaks in a calm silent voice that only he can hear:

MISHIMA

I see you will not rise up.
You will do nothing. I have
lost my dream for you.

But he has not lost his dream for himself. He looks up to the sky, into the sun. He raises his arms in a farewell banzai:

CONTD.

104 CONTD:

 MISHIMA
 Long live the Emperor!
 Long live the Emperor!
 Long live the Emperor!

Morita, standing behind Mishima, repeats his commander's
banzai:

 MORITA
 Long live the Emperor!
 Long live the Emperor!
 Long live the Emperor!

Mishima turns from the soldiers, jumps off the balcony
ledge and strides back toward the window leading to
Mashita's office. He unbuttons his tunic as he goes.
Morita follows.

CUT TO:

105 INT. MASHITA'S OFFICE - DAY

Mishima steps over the radiator into the room and removes
his tunic. Cadets 1, 2, and 3 look to him. Morita
follows Mishima into the office.

 MISHIMA
 (removing his white gloves)
 I don't even think they heard
 me.

Mishima removes his boots and unbuttons his trousers.
General Mashita, grantically twisting and turning, loosens
his gag:

 MASHITA
 Mishima-san, stop! You must
 stop! There's no reason to
 do it!

Mishima's reply is calm but forceful:

 MISHIMA
 I am bound to do this, General.
 You must not take responsibility
 for it. Do not follow my example.

One of the cadets replaces Mashita's gag. Mishima removes
his wristwatch and hands it to the cadet.

CONTD.

105 CONTD:

Mishima kneels on the carpet in the seppuku position. He directly faces Mashita. His muscular torso shakes with anxiety; he steadies himself.

Morita stands behind Mishima, taking the position of the Kaishaku-nin, the faithful retainer who beheads his master after seppuku.

Mishima picks up his short sword. Morita raises Mishima's long samurai sword, poising it above his master's head. More police sirens are heard in the distance.

Mishima pricks his finger with his dagger. A dab of blood appears on his left index finger. He places the dab against his abdomen, marking the point of entry.

Mashita utters strangled pleas through his gag:

MASHITA

Stop! Please stop!

Mishima straightens his back. He looks to his four cadets, then lets loose a last barbaric cry:

MISHIMA

Haa....!

Mishima hunches his shoulders and expels a final breath. He drives the poised dagger homeward. His animal cry exhilarates the room.

CUT TO:

106 EXT. OCEAN CLIFF - NIGHT (Runaway Horses)

VIDEO. Isao, his short sword deep in his bloody stomach, buckles in the moonlight. He starts to bring the blade across.

CUT TO:

107 INT. KIYOMI'S BEDROOM - NIGHT (Kyoko's House)

VIDEO. Osamu lies sprawled in a pool of blood on the tatami floor. Kiyomi's limp feet protrude in the upper edge of the frame.

CONTD.

107 CONTD:

Osamu's eyes slowly close.

MISHIMA (V.O.)

"Sometimes Osamu was unable to tell whether he was dreaming of death on stage or the real thing."

CUT TO:

108 EXT. GOLDEN PAVILION - NIGHT (The Temple of the Golden Pavilion)

VIDEO. The gilded temple bursts into flames against the night sky. Intense heat drives Mizoguchi backwards.

MISHIMA (V.O.)

"Suddenly everything felt alive."

CUT TO:

109 EXT. OCEAN CLIFF - NIGHT (Runaway Horses)

VIDEO. A golden sun rises over the ocean. The sun gradually grows red; the ocean white.

Mishima's steady voice narrates this video montage: it comes from a place beyond life and death.

MISHIMA (V.O.)

"The instant the blade tore open his flesh, the bright disk of the sun soared up behind his eyelids and exploded.

A screen crawl reads:

"On November 25, 1970 Yukio Mishima and Masakatsu Morita committed ritual suicide at the Eastern Army Headquarters in Ichigaya district."

"On April 10, 1972 the three remaining Tatenokai cadets were tried in Tokyo District Court and sentenced to four years imprisonment."

THE END