



MORTAL KOMBAT

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Producer Larry Kasanoff



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FADE IN:

1 EXT. LIU KANG'S VILLAGE - DAY

In a disjointed DREAM SEQUENCE a young Asian man, LIU KANG, wanders through his native Chinese village as the inhabitants go about their daily affairs, seemingly oblivious to his presence. Liu is dressed in modern American clothing and carries a small carry on bag, as if he has just arrived. An ancient temple nestles in a hillside at the far end of the village.

Liu smiles at the familiar scene and turns to look out over a verdant rice paddy - the ripe stalks of rice waving in a gentle breeze under a sunny sky. Then, a dark cloud covers the sun, and the wind turns cold. Liu looks to a nearby hill. Two figures fight, silhouetted against the sky, circling around an ancient altar of stone.

A raven calls high overhead. Liu looks up at the bird, which soars and circles. When Liu looks back at the hilltop, one of the figures is staggering back as the other attacks. Because this is a dream, Liu can suddenly see the face of his brother, CHAN. Chan falls back before the attack of his opponent, clad in black silk, whose face he cannot see. Chan, strangely, seems to look right at Liu, and in a frightened, despairing voice, cries out....

CHAN

Liu!

The second fighter lands a deadly blow, and Chan crumples to the hard stones. The second fighter stands over his inert form a moment, and then turns to gaze impassively down on Liu. Again, in the dream, Liu can clearly see the features of SHANG TSUNG. Shang now turns and looks straight at Liu. He thrusts his hand skyward in a talon-like gesture. It summons a flock of shadow birds that burst into the sky, devouring all light in their path, bringing Darkness, which spreads from the hill, toward the village. The Darkness reaches out to envelope everything... a surging Void which flutters, pulsates, swarms over the dreamer, WIPING THE FRAME.

In dream time it is later. The rice paddy is now muddy and foul; the raven circles in a leaden sky above the deserted village. An evil wind moans through the mysteriously empty houses. The raven croaks its odd staccato call, like someone rapping with a staff on a hollow wood chime. Chan's body is now laid out on the stone altar.

LIU

(SCREAMS)

Chan!

END THE DREAM SEQUENCE.

2 INT. LIU KANG'S APARTMENT - AMERICAN CITY - DAWN

Liu awakens in a tangle of sheets, calling his brother's name.

NOT FOR DUPLICATION 0324

LIU

Chan!

Liu blinks at the familiar surroundings of his room, simple but modern furnishings, a stereo... and nearly smiles at the reassurance the familiar things give him after the dream. A nearly packed suitcase reminds him of something. His eyes fix on the crumples telegram on the night table next to his bed, and another nightmare floods over him.... Only this one will not go away. Liu switches on the lamp, picks up the telegram and rereads it. But the message has not changed...he hasn't dreamed it.

LIU

(grieving)

Chan.

Liu throws the telegram down and goes into the bathroom to start his shower.

ZOOM IN ON

The telegram which reads, simply: BROTHER DEAD. RETURN HOME. GRANDFATHER.

3 INT. POWER PLANT - AMERICAN CITY - DAY

Establishing. Rain pours down outside - and inside through gaping holes in the roof - as a young American man, JOHNNY CAGE, dressed like a very hip cop with a turtleneck sweater wearing an Italian sports coat, fights six very tough looking thugs armed with, clubs, brass knuckles, and lengths of pipe. But, in an incredible display of grace and martial arts skill, Johnny takes down one tough guy after another, until there remains only one huge dude with the lead pipe. Johnny drops to one knee, punching the thug very low. The big dude stands over Johnny, frozen, confused.

JOHNNY

This is where you fall down.

Enlightened, the big dude dramatically keels over. Johnny shakes his head, rises and turns away, throwing his arms up in despair.

JOHNNY

Where do you get these guys!

DIRECTOR

Cut!

And the rain immediately stops!

NEW ANGLE

We now see the camera and lights and rain towers. Johnny and the others have been acting a scene from an action film. The DIRECTOR approaches, apologetic. The stunt men climb to their feet.

DIRECTOR

Sorry, Johnny.

JOHNNY

You'll be sorrier when they pull you off
my next picture, Paul.

The FIRST ASSISTANT DIRECTOR now bellows into his headset.

FIRST ASSISTANT

All right, everybody. Reset! We go
again in fifteen minutes!

JOHNNY

(stalking off)
I'm not doing it, again.

Johnny heads for his star trailer.

DIRECTOR

Johnny, it's the last shot of the
picture. We're losing our light here.

But Johnny continues to his star trailer where his agent, NANCY,
intercepts him.

NANCY

Johnny, there's someone in your trailer,
who wants to talk to you....

JOHNNY

It better not be a reporter, Nancy.

4 INT. JOHNNY'S TRAILER - ON TABLOID

The Tabloid headline reads: JOHNNY CAGE A PHONY!... with a picture of
Johnny yelling at a paparazzi underneath. A man sits casually in the
trailer, reading the inside story as Johnny storms in.

WIDER

LIU

Hey, I don't give interviews without....

The man reading the paper, BILL BOYD, lowers it, smiling. Johnny's
expression turns from anger to one of awe and respect.

BOYD

Hi, Johnny.

JOHNNY

Master Boyd! Sorry, I didn't....

Johnny has lost his arrogance. He bows and eagerly shakes the older
man's hand.

BOYD

(nods to paper)

I see the press is still giving you a hard time.

JOHNNY

They think I'm a big fake.

BOYD

I know you're not.

JOHNNY

(new thought)

Sensai, you were my idol, growing up. It means a lot, you saying that.

BOYD

Johnny, you're one of the best martial artists in the world. And I know a way you can prove it.

JOHNNY

Prove it? How?

BOYD

A tournament. The Tournament. Held once a generation.

Boyd takes a small scroll with ebony handles out of a pocket and hands it to Johnny.

THE SCROLL

When unrolled, is inscribed with Chinese characters and the Mortal Kombat logo in the center.

JOHNNY

I've gotta brush up on my Chinese.

BOYD

It's the most ancient tournament in the world.... Held on an island in the South China Sea.

JOHNNY

I've never heard of it.

BOYD

All the participants are sworn to secrecy.

JOHNNY

How can a secret tournament get me better press?

BOYD

The best fighters in the world are invited. If you win The Tournament, you'll win their respect. They'll tell the enter world you're the real goods.

JOHNNY

I... I'm supposed to be prepping for my next film as soon as this one raps tonight. I just don't see....

Boyd stares silently at him, then reaches for the scroll.

BOYD

Of course. If your reputation isn't as important as the box office, then....

JOHNNY

No! I mean... I'll work around it. I'm honored.

BOYD

(smiles)

I've got a lot of faith in you.

JOHNNY

How do I, uh...?

BOYD

There's a boat, The Dragon's Wing, docked at pier forty in Hong Kong, tomorrow night. Be on it.

Off Johnny's thoughtful reaction:

5 INT. POWER PLANT - MOVIE LOCATION - DAY

Boyd steps from the trailer, shakes hands with Johnny.

JOHNNY

Thanks for everything.

BOYD

See you in the movies.

Johnny goes back into his trailer as Boyd walks away. Boyd walks past the electricians and grips, and, once out of sight, we hear, very faintly, the cacophonous sound of many voices crying out in anguish... a dissonant music we will hear again... as "Boyd" morphs slowly into the features of Shang Tsung, the Sorcerer.

6 EXT. HONG KONG PANORAMA - DAY

Establishing. Superimpose: HONG KONG.

7 EXT. HONG KONG WAREHOUSE DISTRICT ON VAN - DAY

The van is parked discretely between two buildings.

7A INT. VAN

A band of black-clad commandoes loads automatic weapons and riot guns as PAN THROUGH the van. Stop on the gloved hands of the Team Leader, moving quickly through the lock and load procedure, then PAN UP to reveal that the Team Leader is a woman, SONYA BLADE, beautiful and hard as nails. She speaks softly to the second in command, JAXX, an African American.

SONYA

Kano will be heading out the back door
as we come in the front. Be there to
cut him off.

JAXX

Oh, ye of little faith. Trust me.

SONYA

I trust one person on the planet, Jaxx,
and you're talking to her. We go in
ten.

Sonya adjusts a tiny headset. Jaxx does the same. She nods and the team pours from the van.

8 EXT. WAREHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

The black-clad commandoes swirl around the building almost silently. The guard at the door is overwhelmed without a shot being fired. The two teams split up and Jaxx heads for the back with his men. Sonya and her team group around the door.

SONYA

Stun grenade.

A team member takes a stun grenade from his satchel. Two other members heave a battering ram against the door, breaking it in with one blow. The stun grenade is thrown inside. The team back off and hold their ears as it goes off inside. Then they rush through the door.

9 INT. WAREHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Sonya's strike team fan out inside, The criminals inside go down bloodlessly in hand to hand combat.

SONYA

Moves in a direct line through the building, knocking aside anyone who gets in her way. She is driven, kinetic, never stopping as she uses all available cover to further infiltrate the building.

Shots are fired at her. She returns fire with her automatic weapon. She can hear Jaxx's team crashing through the rear entrance with a loud stun grenade explosion. Shouts, gunfire, and more hand to hand combat all round. Sonya ignores most of the battle and keeps searching. She's looking for someone. A ruffian surprises her. She kicks his weapon away, and slams him hard with the butt of her gun, then continues, as if he were nothing but a nuisance.

10 INT. WAREHOUSE OFFICE - DAY

The office has a window to the warehouse interior. A large man with a shaved head and a patch over one eye peers out the window. This is KANO. He smiles, saunters over to a large packing crate, shoves it aside with his incredible strength, to reveal a large, heavy grate, leading down into the sewer. Shang Tsung sits across from him, watching impassively. Again using his brawn, Kano lifts the heavy grate.

KANO

You sure she'll follow me down here?

SHANG

After what you did to her partner,
she'll follow you into hell. Just make
sure she gets on that boat.

KANO

She'll be there... Special Delivery.

SHANG

Deliver her alive.

INSIDE WAREHOUSE

Sonya crouches near the office, and speaks into her headset.

SONYA

Jaxx? Have you seen Kano?

JAXX (O.S.)

(over headset)

Negative.

SONYA

I think he's in the office.

Sonya moves quickly toward the warehouse office, gun ready.

JAXX (O.S.)

(over headset)

Sonya! Wait for backup!

11 INT. WAREHOUSE OFFICE

Sonya crashes through the door, tucks, rolls, and comes up ready to blow anyone in there away.

The only living thing inside is a large raven on a perch. Then Sonya sees the open grate.

SONYA

Damn.

The raven croaks, a strange "wood chime" sound, which catches her attention. She stares at the large, impassive bird, puzzled. Then she spots a list pinned to a bulletin board on the wall behind the bird on its perch. She examines the list.

INSERT - SHIPPING SCHEDULE

A sailing schedule with many ships listed. One is circled in red. The Dragon's Wing.

12 EXT. LIU KANG'S VILLAGE - DAY

Liu Kang, in his leather jacket, blue jeans and work shirt, stands just outside his native village as a bush taxi - marked Hong Kong Taxi Co. Ltd. - drives off. The village looks exactly like his dream - so much so that he actually looks over the rice paddy at the neighboring hill. No one stands there, now. Liu's GRANDFATHER, comes slowly toward him, his back bowed with grief, but his face full of joy at seeing Liu. The old man embraces his grandson.

GRANDFATHER

It's good you are here.

LIU

I wasn't here for Chan.

GRANDFATHER

(a moment)

He spoke of you, daily. You were his big brother... almost a father since your parents "left us." He was so proud of you, living in America. He wanted you to be happy.

Liu is pierced by pangs of guilt as they walk into the village.

LIU

How did he die, Grandfather?

GRANDFATHER

After you left he followed in your footsteps... preparing for The Tournament.

Liu stops and stares. His voice rises in anger.

LIU

The Tournament? It wasn't enough you filled my head with that... nonsense?

The Grandfather is hurt. Liu feels even more guilty.

GRANDFATHER

To save the world from an...
unspeakable fate is not nonsense.

LIU

Men fighting in a simple contest do not
decide these things, Grandfather! How
can you, a wise man, believe this?

GRANDFATHER

Chan believed in it. He trained very
hard. He could never be as good as
you... but he tried to be worthy to
represent the Order of Light.

LIU

How did it happen?

GRANDFATHER

I don't know for certain. I was away
when... a stranger came.

NEW ANGLE - THE VILLAGE

In FLASHBACK as the Grandfather narrates we see the stranger enter the
village, dressed in black silk, his back to us. High overhead, a
raven turns in a narrowing gyre, croaking its strange "wind chime"
call. The stranger continues through the village to...

13 EXT. RICE PADDY

The stranger stops. Liu's brother, CHAN, a large, genial youth of
twenty, is working knee deep in the rice paddy. When he sees the
stranger he is puzzled, but then offers a friendly smile.

GRANDFATHER (V.O.)

He sought out your brother and told him
that he, too, was training for The
Tournament. The two decided to train
together... Chan was very naive... he
mistrusted no one.

REVERSE ANGLE

We now see that the stranger is Shang Tsung.

13A EXT. HILLTOP - ALTAR OF LIGHT

Chan now stands facing Shang atop the hill.

GRANDFATHER (V.O.)

When I came back that evening, Chan had
not returned.

(MORE)

GRANDFATHER (V.O.) (cont'd)
We found him on the crest of the hill,
near the Altar of Light. It was
strange. There were bruises... but it
was more like... life had been
sucked from him.

At that moment, the ravel calls out loudly. END FLASHBACK.

14 EXT. VILLAGE - PRESENT

Liu looks to the hill, but it is deserted.

LIU
(haunted)
Grandfather.... it's my fault. I
dreamed his death.

GRANDFATHER
(puts consoling hand on
Liu's shoulder)
The dreamer does not cause the thing he
dreams.

Liu puts his arm around the frail, and they walk toward the
village.

14A INT. VILLAGE TEMPLE - LIU - DAY

Liu recounts solemnly, trying to recall the details.

LIU
(voice echoes)
I dreamt Chan was fighting on the Altar
of Light. He calls my name, then he
falls. And the stranger turns to look
at me. In the dream, everything in the
village suddenly changes. Houses are
empty.... Crops... ruined. But....
something else happens after Chan's
death. Something I can never remember
when I wake up. As if... it were
too...evil to recall.

WIDER

We now see that Liu, still in his American clothes and leather jacket,
has been recounting his dream to a circle of priests and elders. The
priests wear simple white robes. In the center of the circle is a
large, bowl-like torch, its flame fed by sticks of wood. The
Grandfather sits to one side. The CHIEF PRIEST has listened. He now
turns his eyes on the Grandfather.

GRANDFATHER
You see. Liu Kang has been given The
Dream. He is the Chosen One.

SECOND PRIEST

(angry)

No! He left our village... turned his back on The Order of Light and its teachings!

GRANDFATHER

For many years he was the best student among you! He was a monk, like you!

SECOND PRIEST

Look at him! Look at the clothes he wears. He's no longer one of us! He's forgotten everything he's learned!

CHIEF PRIEST

(to Liu)

Is this true?

LIU

I remember everything. I tried to forget.... But you taught me too well.
(then; humbly)

I want to represent The Order of Light at The Tournament.

CHIEF PRIEST

Why?

LIU

The man who killed my brother will be there. I know this.

The Chief Priest is disappointed.

GRANDFATHER

That cannot be your only reason for going! Or you will fail! The Tournament is not a quest for vengeance. There is so much more at stake....

LIU

(angry; sarcastic)

Oh, yes, I forgot. We're fighting for the fate of the World!

CHIEF PRIEST

(shocked)

He mocks our sacred teachings? He can't fight in the Tournament. It's impossible.

The Grandfather approaches Liu and speaks solemnly.

GRANDFATHER

In your heart, you remember the teachings and know they are true.

LIU

I know you've poured fairy tales into my ears since I was a child! You want to know if I remember the teachings? All right.

(paces; agitated)

The teachings say that I am the direct descendent of Kung Lao. Five hundred years ago he returned from The Tournament victorious! But a generation later he was defeated by...

(eyes glow with derision)

...Goro, the four-armed monster!

(then, matter of fact)

Once a generation since that time a monk of this temple has been chosen to fight in The Tournament. And for five hundred ears, they have lost.

Liu's eyes blaze as he walks around the circle, challenging the old men and the monks with his look.

LIU

The teachings say the last blood descendent of Kung Lao must be chosen. Listen to your own teachings. You must send me! I promise that I--

Suddenly, a voice like thunder booms into the temple, cutting Liu off.

RAIDEN

Promise nothing, you babbling idiot!

Everyone turns to find a large figure standing in the doorway: a coolie hat keeps his face in shadow. His clothing is in rags, his feet bare; he carries only a simple wooden staff. The imposing figure approaches.

RAIDEN

You reject all you've learned,
but dare to come back here...spraying
pronouncements around the sacred flame
like donkey spit!
(mocking tone)
'I remember everything.'

Raiden moves face to face with the stunned Liu and raises his head, revealing his features at last: RAIDEN. Liu's Grandfather is the first to recognize this.

GRANDFATHER

(awe; fear)

The Lord Raiden.

The others murmur in astonishment. As one, they throw themselves to the ground and prostrate themselves, still in a circle, around one of their principal gods. Liu is too astounded to react. He stares at the priests and elders, then back at the wizened face before him.

RAIDEN

You have forgotten everything of value.

Liu's Western experience takes over.

LIU

Grandfather. Get up! He's just a beggar.

CHIEF PRIEST

(bowing, reciting from
Sacred Text)

Thus it is written. 'The god Raiden
comes begging humbly, dressed in rags.
Woe to him who turns away.'

The other monks wail and groan in unison, truly terrified. Liu is amazed.

LIU

Raiden? This isn't your god of thunder
and lightning. You've scared yourselves
stupid with the stories you tell your
children!

GRANDATHER

(desperate plea; prostrate)

Spare him, my lord Raiden. American
life has enfeebled his mind. Too much
television...! He will learn.

Raiden squints at Liu. Then he turns his back, and speaks with surprising gentleness.

RAIDEN

I doubt that very much, my friend.

Raiden helps the Grandfather to his feet. The others are in awe, now, of the Grandfather.

RAIDEN

His skull is as thick as these temple
stones.

LIU

Leave my grandfather alone. Play your
con game somewhere else.

A flash of anger illuminates Raiden's face. Then he turns to Liu.

RAIDEN

Spoken like a great champion and
defender of his people. So, you're
going to win The Tournament? Something
you didn't even believe in, yesterday?

LIU
(surprised; recovers)
Yes. I am.

Raiden nods, as if pondering this as he walks around the young man. Then, he lunges in with his staff. Liu parries the stroke, tries to counter, but Raiden moves the staff with lightning-like speed, and sweeps Liu's feet out from under him. The younger monks laugh. The elders look grave as Liu gingerly climbs to his feet.

RAIDEN
(desperate plea; prostrate)
The last living descendent of the great
Kung Lao. You are indeed the last of
the last. Your brother at least had
Kung Lao's heart, if not his skill.

LIU
If you are Raiden, why did you let Chan
die? Why didn't you protect him!

The temple falls utterly silent. Raiden speaks simply.

RAIDEN
Why didn't you?

Liu is devastated. His face flushes with guilt.

LIU
I should have.

Raiden softens at this real show of sorrow and contrition.

RAIDEN
The gods do not control men's destiny...
and they cannot protect you from it.
I'm not your bodyguard.

Liu still thinks he's talking to an old fraud. He looks around the temple once more, and sees he has convinced no one.

LIU
I've had enough of this... I'm going
to find my brother's killer at The
Tournament... with or without your
consent!

Liu stalks out of the temple. The Grandfather speaks quietly to Raiden.

GRANDATHER
You're right, of course, my lord: he
isn't ready. And we've lost so much
time. But.... There is no one else.

RAIDEN
I know.

Raiden begins to walk out of the temple, then he turns and speaks to all of them.

RAIDEN

You shouldn't have tried to replace him
with his brother. Whether any of you
like it or not... he is The Chosen One.

And, with a weary, regal tread, the beggar-like figure leaves the temple, leaving the men inside with their guilt.

SCENES 15-16 OMITTED

17 EXT. VILLAGE - SUNDOWN

The old bush taxi once more waits outside the village. Liu says goodbye to his Grandfather. In the distance, all the monks are on the crest of the hill, lighting an enormous bonfire, which sputters, catches, then towers high into the darkening sky and reflects off their white robes. Other villagers stand at a respectful distance from Liu and the old man, watching them silently.

GRANDFATHER

We light the beacon fire from the Sacred
Temple flame... lit once a generation at
the time of the Tournament. Keep it
here...
(he touches Liu's chest)
It will light the way home.

Liu sees that the old man is frightened for him.

LIU

I remember the first time you rode me to
the top of the hill on your shoulders.
I thought I could see the whole world
from up there....
(gently)
I'll come back.

GRANDFATHER

(choking up)
Chan didn't.

LIU

I'm not Chan. I'll come back,
Grandfather.

Liu nods, moved with affection for the old man. The two men hug, then Liu gets in the battered vehicle, which drives off down the winding dirt road.

GRANDFATHER

(alone)
Raiden, give him wisdom. Watch over
him.

The old man fights back his tears. Out beyond the village, heat lightning dances for a second in the sky, followed by a distant rumble. Grandfather nods with a small smile and turns, along with every villager, to gaze up at the magnificent beacon of fire - brighter than the setting sun - on the hilltop overlooking the temple.

18 EXT. PIER - HONG KONG - NIGHT

A dark, ragged-looking "junk" is moored at the pier, its mast tops half in shadow. Men walk up the gang plank and go aboard, staring at the strange craft in disbelief. Men and women from many different walks of life congregate on the dock. Others already go on board. A black limousine pulls up and stops. The rear window slides down and Johnny Cage gawks at the vessel. Nancy sits beside him.

JOHNNY

This can't be right.
(to driver)
I said Pier forty.

DRIVER

This Pier forty.

NANCY

(amused)
I figured you for more of a Love Boat
kind of guy, Johnny. I'm impressed.

JOHNNY

You can be replaced, you know.

OUTSIDE THE LIMO

Johnny climbs out. She joins him. Neither takes this threat seriously.

NANCY

Don't be a grouch. I'm the one who
should be upset. My star client is
disappearing to some mysterious island
for a secret tournament.
(looks around, aghast)
Who are these people?

JOHNNY

The best fighters in the world.

The menagerie of fighters is growing more bizarre by the moment.

NANCY

If you say so. Johnny, you don't need
to prove anything. You're a star.

A gaggle of young teenage boys spot Johnny. They rush toward him, waving pens and autograph books, taking pictures and shouting Johnny's name.

JOHNNY

What's this?

As they swarm around their hero, Johnny begins signing autographs.

NANCY

The local fan club.

JOHNNY

You organized this? I told you I was travelling incognito.

NANCY

Oh, and I was supposed to believe you?

ART LEAN, a well built Black man, easily shoulders a large duffel bag. He stops to watch the fans swarming around Johnny. He looks up when Art Lean - the only adult - hands him a piece of paper.

ART LEAN

It's for my nephew, Damien. He's a big fan.

JOHNNY

Sure.

(studies Lean)

You're Art Lean! I saw you fight in London. You were great.

ART LEAN

Thanks. I've seen a couple of your films. You can't fake those moves....

JOHNNY

Tell that to the press.

Johnny signs and hands the autograph back.

Art Lean grins, slaps Johnny on the arm and goes up the gang plank. The driver has unloaded the last bag and slams the trunk, looking a little disgusted. Nancy is worried in spite of her jokes as she eyes the decrepit wooden ship. She is paying several Asian dock hands to carry Johnny's bags up the gang plank. They shoulder the big Gucci suitcases, and head onto the boat.

NANCY

They'll take your bags on board. I already paid them. Last chance to change your mind.

JOHNNY

No. I'll be back in a week.

NANCY

I tried. Take care of yourself, Johnny.

She gives him a little kiss on the cheek and gets back into the limo. The Driver is already behind the wheel.

NANCY

Driver, take me to the nearest bar. One
with lots of sailors.

Johnny smiles at her last joke as the limo drives away. But now he feels alone and friendless.

NEW ANGLE

Liu Kang has just left his battered taxi and pays the driver. The taxi drives off. Liu stands next to one of Johnny's suitcases, wearing more traditional Chinese shirt and slacks, now. He looks up at the junk. Johnny turns, sees him, and mistakes him for one of the dock hands.

JOHNNY

You missed one?

LIU

One what?

JOHNNY

The suitcase. Don't get cute. You've
already been paid.

LIU

(glares; then slyly)

Oh? The suitcase? Very nice.

(fake coolie accent)

Oh, shuah thing, Mistah! Chop chop!

And with a demonic grin, Liu takes the suitcase and shuffles with gleeful exaggeration up the gangplank. Half way up, he turns, loses the grin, and throws the heavy suitcase into the black water. It floats away. He turns to Johnny, astounded, back on the dock.

LIU

(mocking)

So solly!

And he turns and walks onto the boat.

JOHNNY

Hey! Heyyy!

Johnny hustles after him.

NEW ANGLE - VAN

The same unmarked commando van is parked just off the pier.

SCENE 19 OMITTED

20 INT. VAN

Jaxx sits behind the wheel, Sonya next to him, peering through night vision binoculars. A half dozen team members ride in the back, weapons ready.

JAXX

Nothing says he's getting on this boat.
He could be miles from the waterfront
by now.

SONYA

I know Kano. He's in his element
here... with the other wharf rats.

SCENE 21 OMITTED

22 EXT. PIER - JUNK - NIGHT

The gang plank is taken up, and the mooring lines are cast off.

THROUGH NIGHT VISION BINOCULARS

Sonya scans the deck, holding briefly on several passengers.

JAXX (O.S.)

Well, even if you're right, he just
missed the boat.

Then she spots him. A silhouette at first, but then Kano steps into the dim light, and the night vision glasses enhance Sonya's view of his. Almost as if he knows she is watching, he grins crookedly, and steps back into the shadows.

SONYA (O.S.)

He's already on board!

THE VAN

door springs open and Sonya leaps out. Jaxx steps from the cab as well.

JAXX

Hold on. We don't have a warrant to go
on board.

SONYA

Paperwork was never my strong suit.

Sonya fastens her web belt, and begins running toward the mooring line, just as two dock hands cast off. She grabs the line, and swings over to the hull of the junk.

23 EXT. JUNK - DECK - NIGHT

Johnny Cage spots Liu Kang, unrolling a mat on deck and storms over to him.

JOHNNY

Hey, you!

Kano has been watching Sonya.

KANO

Come on, baby. Come to papa.

Kano turns and hurries into the central hold. Johnny confronts Liu Kang. He spins him around.

JOHNNY

Hey, I want to--

Just then, Sonya swings like a pirate onto the deck and crashes into Johnny, sending him flying. She tucks, rolls, and jumps to her feet, her eyes sweeping the vessel for Kano. Johnny jumps to his feet and spins her around.

JOHNNY

You want to play rough, asshole?

He sees two things simultaneously, her pretty face... and the nine millimeter pistol she points at his chin.

SONYA

No. Do you?

JOHNNY

(movie star charm)

Oh. I mean... I'm Johnny Cage. And
You are...?

SONYA

Where did he go?

JOHNNY

(deflated)

Who?

Sonya looks around, heads for the hatchway and climbs down the ladder. Liu Kang has seen it all.

LIU

Just another star struck fan....

SCENE 24 OMITTED

25 INT. JUNK - BELOW DECKS - NIGHT

The wooden ship creaks and objects sway as Sonya makes her way through the bowels of the ship. She sees a door at the end of the passageway and makes for it. A burly brute, the junk's CAPTAIN, suddenly steps in her way.

CAPTAIN

Help you, Missy?

SONYA

What's on the other side of that door?

CAPTAIN

Private quarters. No admittance. But I
can give you a special tour of my
cabin.

SONYA

(shows her identification)

I'm looking for a murderer. He boarded
this ship.

CAPTAIN

I'm the Captain. You got no authority
on my ship, Missy.

Johnny comes up behind Sonya and overhears. Liu is just behind him.

JOHNNY

Be nice to the lady. She's just doing
her job.

SONYA

(annoyed)

When I want backup, I'll radio for it,
okay?

Just then, two Ninja-clad figures step from the shadows behind her.
The larger figure is SUB-ZERO, the smaller, wearing gloves, is
SCORPION.

LIU

(to Sonya)

You got that radio handy?

She turns to see the two odd figures. Johnny faces off against
Scorpion.

JOHNNY

Trick or treat.

Sub-Zero steps in front of the door, blocking it.

SONYA

Move aside.

Nothing. She draws her sidearm and shows her badge.

SONYA

Stand aside!

Sub-Zero looks down at the weapon, then his hand darts out, incredibly
fast, touching the gun and freezing it to frosty brittleness. Sonya
stares at it.

THE GUN

Sub-Zero's hand snaps off the barrel.

WIDER

In the blink of an eye, a brawl develops. Liu moves in and the Captain takes him on. Liu evades the charge and counters, driving him against the bulkhead. Meanwhile, Johnny fights Scorpion, and he uses a jujitsu move to get the Ninja in a wrist lock. The glove rips away, however, revealing a giant pincer claw! Johnny shouts and leaps back just as the second pincer-claw rips through Scorpion's other glove and tries for Johnny's throat. The Captain comes back at Liu with a boot knife forcing him back. Sonya throws several powerful kicks at Sub-Zero to no apparent effect. He moves toward her and raises a strange, blue-tinged hand, when...

RAIDEN (O.S.)

Enough!

Everyone freezes. The hold begins to crackle with static electricity. Then

AN ENORMOUS BLUE BALL

of electricity streaks down the passageway, knocking the three attackers aside like bowling pins, causing them to glow in the dark for a moment, while miraculously leaving Sonya, Johnny and Liu unharmed. The two strange beings disappear into the bowels of the ship. The Captain lies groaning on the deck. The Blue Ball streaks back down the passageway, brushing past Sonya, Johnny and Liu and leaving them crackling with residual electricity which plays over their clothing. Every metallic object below decks crackles with this charge, as well. They turn to Raiden standing at the far end of the passageway, leaning on his staff like an ordinary man... except that his eyes are glowing brightly! A moment later, they return to normal as well.

LIU

You!

RAIDEN

(ignores him; thunder
voice)

Shang Tsung!

The preternaturally loud voice nearly deafens the three humans. The oaken door swings open, and Shang Tsung steps calmly through it. Liu stares, struggling to remember where he's seen him before.

SHANG

Lord Raiden. How good of you to grace
us with your presence.

RAIDEN
Your sideshow freaks attacked my
fighters. That is expressly forbidden
before the Tournament, as the Emperor
well knows.

Sonya, Johnny and Liu huddle together to one side and listen.

SHANG
(to Raiden)
My apologies. It won't happen again.

RAIDEN
I shall see to that.

SHANG
Of course.... Until we reach the
Island. Where you have no dominion.

RAIDEN
My dominions are well known to me,
Sorcerer.

Shang turns to go back inside. Sonya grabs his wrist. Shang
bristles, then looks into Sonya's pretty face. He softens.

SONYA
Hold on. Who says I was participating
in a Tournament?

SHANG
(simply; as if to a child)
You have been chosen, Sonya.

And he goes back through the door, closing it firmly. Raiden turns
and starts back down the passageway.

LIU
You really are... him!

With a pained look of annoyance, Raiden turns his attention back to
them.

RAIDEN
(thunder voice)
Come with me!

Raiden is enveloped in a blue ball of electricity and vanishes.
Johnny cautiously waves his hand over the space Raiden had just
occupied.

JOHNNY
(mutters to himself)
Easy for him to say.

26 INT. SHANG'S QUARTERS - JUNK - NIGHT

The quarters take up the entire stern of the boat below decks, luxuriously appointed with Chinese silk screens and elegant ebony furnishings. Shang waits calmly as the Captain slinks in. Kano sits on a chair, legs dangling over the arms, peeling a fruit with a knife, and grinning at the Captain's terror.

CAPTAIN

Yes, sir?

SHANG

Is it so difficult, Captain, to prevent a noisesome female from disturbing me in my quarters?

CAPTAIN

I... she... There were three of them.

SHANG

I'm impressed. You can count to three. I was humiliated just now... forced to apologize to a Being I detest. Do you know how much I loathe apologizing, Captain?

CAPTAIN

I'm sorry, sir. It won't ever happen again.

Kano loses interest in the fruit and stares.

SHANG

I believe you.

The Captain transforms into a huge rat! Then Shang blinks.

We hear the strange clamoring of many voices in anguish, chantlike, atonal... yet strangely musical.

WIDER

Shang transforms into an enormous cobra, coiling and rising until the hooded head brushes along the bulkhead, moving toward the rat/Captain, who squeals and cowers in a corner, his own rodent eyes transfixed by the hypnotic gaze of the serpent/sorcerer. The cobra hovers over the rat another long moment, then lunges...

KANO

swallows the bite of fruit in his mouth as he watches in horrified fascination. The squeals of the rat are now muffled...

then silent.

WIDER

Shang once more stands before him in his normal shape. Only his eyes are still those of the snake's, yellow and menacing. He fixes Kano with that same hypnotic stare, freezing him in his tracks. Then Shang blinks, and the eyes are once again normal. The strange chorus of voices ceases.

SHANG

Any questions?

Kano can't think of any.

27 EXT. DECK - NIGHT

Johnny, Sonya and Liu come up on deck confused. Johnny brushes at some pesky electricity which continues to cling to him.

SONYA

How did he disappear like that? Who is he?

JOHNNY

Let's just... think this through.
There's a rational explanation for this.

LIU

He is Raiden. God of Lightning, and
Protector of the realm of Earth.
Although I didn't believe it until this
minute.

JOHNNY

(ironic)
See, I told you there was a rational
explanation.

They are now in the bow of the ship away from the others. Raiden appears right behind Johnny, who senses him there without turning, and winces.

RAIDEN

(thunder voice)
Listen!)
(they cringe; he softens
his tone)
The time for doubt... is past! The
time for your petty quarrels... is past.
What you are about to face is vastly
more important than...
(to Johnny)
...your ego!
(to Sonya)
...your enemy!

(MORE)

RAIDEN (cont'd)

(to Liu; quieter)

...or your quest for revenge. You are embarked on a sacred mission. You have been chosen to defend the Realm of Earth in a Tournament called Mortal Kombat!

SONYA

Defend it from who?

RAIDEN

Your 'world' is but one of many parallel realms. One of them is a forsaken land called Outworld, ruled by an Immortal who has crowned himself emperor. Now he seeks new worlds to conquer and enslave.

JOHNNY

If he's so powerful, why doesn't he just invade us?

RAIDEN

To enter the Realm of Earth, the Emperor's demon Sorcerer, Shang Tsung and his warriors must win ten straight victories in Mortal Kombat... against ten generations of Earth's best fighters. They have won nine. This will be the tenth Tournament.

SONYA

A handful of people on a leaky boat are going to save the world?

RAIDEN

That is the point... the essence of Mortal Kombat. It isn't about death... but about mortal men and women... rising to your greatest potential and defending your world.

SONYA

Why are you telling us all this? What about the others?

RAIDEN

They are all superb fighters... but I have looked into their souls... and yours. You three will decide the outcome of the Tournament. The fate of billions of people will depend upon you three.

JOHNNY

I'm glad there's no pressure, here.

RAIDEN

I've given you much to consider. You must prepare yourselves for what is to come.

Raiden starts to dematerialize.

LIU

Wait!

Raiden hovers, half apparition.

LIU

My ancestor defeated a great sorcerer, five centuries ago. In a dream, I saw the sorcerer return to kill my brother! (quietly; containing his rage)
Tonight... I saw him again.

RAIDEN

His name is Shang Tsung, second only to the Emperor in power and ferocity. If you challenge him now... you will lose your life and your soul. And the Realm of Earth will be lost with you.

Raiden disappears in a blue ball of light... but his voice remains as a strange fog begins to pour in over the bow.

LIU

He's going to pay for my brother's death.

RAIDEN (O.S.)

You are not ready!

OFF THE BOW

a huge, fog bank begins to engulf the ship.

RAIDEN (O.S.)

(ethereal near whisper)
It's begun.

Sonya, Liu and Johnny stand staring at the approaching wall of fog as it rolls over the junk.

IN THE RAISED STERN

The sorcerer, Shang Tsung prowls, near the helmsman. He stops and raises his arms to the enveloping mist, exalting.

SHANG

It has begun!

ON DECK

Johnny, Liu, and Sonya stare up at the masts overhead. Through the fog... they begin to glow with a phosphorescent light! In a moment the boat, and everyone on it are glowing as well, staring at their hands and at each other in amazement. The boat radiates a cool light from stem to stern.

28 EXT. BAY - NEAR ISLAND - DAYBREAK

Morning finds the junk anchored off a beautiful yet forbidding island, whose cliffs rise up into the mist and clouds, thousands of feet above the masts. A cleft in the cliff face is carved with a stone stairway, which winds up the fissure into the mist. On a promontory above the clouds, the ruins of an ancient temple built into the mountain gleam in the first rays of the sun.

SCENE 29 OMITTED

30 EXT. BEACH - ISLAND - DAY

The junk rides at anchor in the distance. A half dozen long boats transport the remaining combatants to shore. Johnny sits pensively on his four pieces of luggage. Liu stands nearby, studying the stone staircase. Next to him, Sonya tries to raise someone on her uplink phone, a small contraption with a circular antenna.

SONYA

Black Hawk to Cardinal. Black Hawk calling Cardinal. Is anyone monitoring? Jaxx, this is Sonya. Do you copy?

JOHNNY

Order in some coffee while you're at it.

SONYA

Do I look like your secretary?

JOHNNY

I was just.... Forget it.

SONYA

What's the matter? No snappy comeback without a script?
(fidgets with antenna)
Come on.

LIU

What are you doing?

SONYA

That electrical disturbance last night must have blown out the transistors.

LIU

Your radio equipment's fine. Look at your compass.

Johnny is as curious as Sonya, who opens her wrist compass.

THE COMPASS NEEDLE

spins wildly, not fixing on any direction.

WIDER

Johnny and Sonya exchange a glance.

LIU

(turns)

We're not in the South China Sea.

JOHNNY

(realizes)

We're not even someplace with a North Pole.

They fall silent. Liu peers around them.

LIU

(shakes head; smiles)

What if... all the legends were true?

A mute MONK in a black robe, acting as a sort of Beach Master for the landing, walks along the shore with a scroll, checking off names. Sonya falls in next to him, Liu and Johnny observing.

SONYA

Can you tell me if there's a phone on the island? A police station? Navy base?

JOHNNY

Club Med?

He won't acknowledge them. She pulls out her badge.

SONYA

I'm Lieutenant Blade, on special assignment with--

He stops, finds her name, checks it off. She sees.

SONYA

Wait a minute? What's my name doing on that list? Hey, you!

She grabs the Monk's arm. The cowl partially falls away, revealing that the monk's lips have been sealed with old rawhide stitches, now overgrown with scar tissue. Amazed, she and the others follow him with their eyes as he continues down the beach.

JOHNNY

His lips are sealed. Takes on a whole new meaning.

Johnny contemplates his remaining four bags, piled at his feet, then looks up at the steep, winding staircase. Many of the others have already begun the climb, appearing smaller and smaller until they disappear into the low clouds.

LIU
(heading for stairs)
Gonna hire someone to carry those up for
you?

Johnny actually brightens for a beat, then realizes it's a joke. Grimly, he gathers up his four bags.

31 EXT. TOP OF STAIRS - DAY

Johnny arrives sweating from head to toe at the top of the stairs with only one small bag. Liu walks beside him. The stairs end at

A STATUARY GARDEN

which has several dozen statues of ancient warriors... some of them distinctly non-human. Sonya is stationed at the top of the stairs, looking like she could still run a four minute mile. The two men exchange a glance. She falls in with them and they walk among the statues.

JOHNNY
(refers to statues)
So, who are all these guys?

LIU
In the legends they are the great and
ancient warriors of all Mortal Kombats.

The others absorb this, almost in shock.

SONYA
(shakes it off)
I'm here nodding like any of this makes
sense.

Johnny nods to a statue as they pass. It is humanoid, but has a gargoyle's head, its features worn smooth with great antiquity.

JOHNNY
Look at this one.

LIU
(wryly)
Old Chinese proverb. Never fight with
an ugly man. They've got nothing to
lose.

This gets a smile from Johnny as the three continue on.

THE GARGOYLE STATUE

suddenly opens its grey eyelids, revealing pale green eyes. The creature, REPTILE, the chameleon, turns its head to watch them a moment, scowling, then the head swivels back the other way to watch...

A SILK-SHROUDED PALANQUIN

carried by dark monks across the garden. The curtain sways open for a second, revealing an exotic woman of startling beauty, KITANA. As the palanquin comes abreast of Liu, Sonya and Johnny, she looks straight into Liu's eyes, until it is carried toward the Great Hall on the other side of the garden. Liu's gaze continues following the palanquin.

JOHNNY

When a woman looks at you like that, it usually means something.

SONYA

(mutters)

It means she's a bimbo.

Liu is ashamed, remembering his mission. He begins striding away in another direction.

LIU

I didn't come here for that. Shang killed my brother.

JOHNNY

Sorry.

They walk on, Sonya's own thoughts darkening her face.

LIU

is stopped in front of an enormous statue at the far end of the garden, just before The Great Hall, which looms in front of them. He is joined by Johnny and Sonya. The three stand looking up at the statue as they stand in the shadow of a four-armed monster reaching toward him on the paving stones.

REVERSE ANGLE

The sun is directly behind the statue of a huge four-armed creature standing at the very entrance to the hall.

LIU

Prince Goro.

31A INT. HALLWAY - DAY

A monk leads Liu to a door, and opens it for him.

31B INT. LIU'S QUARTERS

Liu stands just inside his lodgings, startled. It is exactly like his American apartment right down to the decorations. He turns to the mute Monk who accompanies him.

LIU
All the comforts of home. Very
thoughtful.

The mute Monk studies him, then turns and leaves. Liu is uneasy among such familiar trappings from his own life. He opens a sliding door screen to reveal...

A MINIATURE STONE GARDEN

With a few well trimmed shrubs, rocks, and a fountain.

31C INT. OUTSIDE JOHNNY'S ROOM - DAY

Johnny is escorted by another monk - mouth sealed - to his lodgings and let in. Johnny whips out a fiver to tip him, but the monk is already heading back down the corridor.

JOHNNY
Can I ask you something? How do you
guys eat?

31A INT. JOHNNY'S ROOM - DAY

The digs look exactly like the trailer on the set of his last movie. Same really cramped dimensions, same impossibly narrow bunk. The same posters of his films are on the narrow walls.

JOHNNY
Wait. This is like... my trailer.
(moves inside, bumping into
things)
Great. I'm on location in hell.

SCENE 32 OMITTED

33 INT. SONYA'S ROOM

The room is Spartan, looking more like a personal gym than living quarters. Most of the space is taken up with weight equipment, and a suspended kick bag. A cot with army sheets and a blanket you could bounce a quarter off is tucked down tight. Alone inside, Sonya explores, finds a closet with clothes in it, most of it your basic black fatigues and turtlenecks, like the clothing she has on. She holts it up, amazed to see it is her size. Then she realizes she's been wearing the same duds for forty-eight hours, holds up her armpit and takes a whiff... and recoils. She pokes her head into the bathroom, then peels off her other clothing, revealing black, no-nonsense underwear and a superb, athletic body. She begins pulling off her athlete's halter top just as she steps into the bathroom and disappears from sight. We hear shower water running.

SCENE 34 OMITTED

SCENES 35 AND 36 OMITTED

37 INT. GREAT HALL - CONTINUOUS - NIGHT

At a welcoming banquet in a long tracking shot we follow Liu, Sonya and Johnny through the great diversity of the competitors in The Tournament, whose icon (i.e. the Mortal Kombat logo) hangs on banners from balconies. The décor is largely ancient Chinese. The human contingent is a study in contrasts and cultures from around the world. Sonya sees someone who resembles Kano from the back, moves in cautiously, and sweeps him to the ground. It isn't Kano!

SONYA

Sorry.

They move on as the man's friends help him to his feet. Johnny speaks above the incredible din and clatter of plates.

JOHNNY

I noticed you apologized to him.

Sonya tries to ignore him. Johnny smiles. He's getting to her.

JOHNNY

Don't you ever smile?

SONYA

Smiling at every stupid thing a man says
is an idiotic feminine reflex.

And she moves on, leaving Johnny forewarned.

NEW ANGLE

Even stranger are the non-human competitors - denizens of Outworld...as we shall learn. Some seem perfectly human, like a small woman, JADE. Others are hooded, like the many monks in the hall. We get glimpses of strange appendages, strange deformities, but no more.

KITANA

sits at a raised table, where she is served like royalty by cowed Outworld monks. Liu hesitates as he passes her table. She lets her gaze linger on him as she did earlier. Liu passes her on his way to

A LONG TABLE

Where he rejoins Sonya and Johnny, who straddles a bench across from Art Lean, who seems completely amazed by what they see on the other side of the hall.

ART LEAN

Hell of a show, eh?

A frenzied thudding of oriental drums silences the hall.

SHANG TSUNG

appears amidst great pomp and ceremony, preceded by a cortege of black cowled monks. He steps onto a dais. He is dressed in his most elegantly embroidered silk. His eyes sweep the hall. The denizens of Outworld practically shrink from him, their heads lowered, cowed. His appearance commands silence in the hall.

SHANG

Welcome! You are here to compete in Mortal Kombat, the greatest of all tournaments. You should be proud! Each one of you has been chosen for your excellence, your skill, and your courage! You are the best fighters of your generation, worthy to represent the Realm of Earth... and the Realm of Outworld!

The human contingent mutter among themselves, a little baffled.

38 INTERCUT LIU AND RAIDEN

Liu spies the humbly garbed figure of Raiden standing aloof from the others. Raiden instantly senses the gaze and turns to meet Liu's eyes.

SHANG

Tomorrow morning, the great combat begins. The opponents to be chosen by lots... The winner of each combat will progress to the next.... Until only one remains!

(wicked gleam in his eye)

Some will even have the privilege of fighting Prince Goro, the reigning champion.

(chilling smile; to human contingent)

You are all witnesses to one of the great turning points in the history of the World!

(slyly ironic)

Treasure these moments... as if they were your last.

Shang steps from the dais. Once more the drums roll, echoing through the hall.

NEW ANGLE

Liu is deeply troubled. He starts after Shang. Johnny and Sonya see, rise and go after him.

JOHNNY

Where are you going?

LIU

After Shang.

JOHNNY

You can't. Remember what Raiden said.

Frustrated, Liu hesitates. But Sonya continues past them.

SONYA

He didn't say anything to me. Shang knows where Kano's hiding.

She spots the departing Shang Tsung, and heads after him.

JOHNNY

You gotta admire her. When she sets her Mind on something....

Both men watch her go after Shang Tsung. They exchange a silent look, and slowly followed after her.

A RAISED, STONE LATTICEWORK WALL

is set about ten feet off the ground, unnoticed by most in the hall. But a huge shadow stands on the other side of it, peering out.

BEHIND THE LATTICEWORK WALL

The figure, back to us in a long silk cloak, reveals only massive shoulders and long black hair, which fans out over the cloak to waist level. This is GORO. Golden earrings gleam in the torchlight as he watches through the latticework

THROUGH LATTICEWORK - JOHNNY AND LIU

who walk just below him and out of the hall. A low murmur, nearly a growl, comes from Goro's throat.

REVERSE ANGLE

We see Goro's back receding as he descends a secret stone staircase leading into a dark cavern below. Goro's retinue of torchbearers are all lean, frightening humanoid soldiers, BARAKAS, with strange exoskeleton armor. They wear helmets of bone, hiding all their features except dull red eyes. The Barakas long wooden spears tipped with razor sharp obsidian points, scrap along the narrow tunnel roof and walls, sending down a shower of sparks as they light they way for their master with torches.

39 EXT. STATUARY GARDEN - NIGHT

Shang Tsung leaves the Great Hall unescorted and makes his way across the garden, when he is accosted by Sonya.

SONYA

I want to talk to you.

Suddenly, two shadows loom, the ninjas Sub-Zero and Scorpion. Sonya wheels to face them, but Shang waves them off.

SHANG

It's all right. Leave us.

Like bass sinking back into deep water, they recede into the night. Shaken, Sonya turns back to Shang, more conciliatory in tone.

SONYA

Do they always follow you around?

SHANG

That is one of their functions.

SONYA

Ugly job.

SHANG

(ignores the insult)

Yes, especially since they hate each other.

SONYA

Why am I here?

SHANG

I already told you. You had to come.

SONYA

You shanghai'd me!

SHANG

You boarded the boat of your own free will.

SONYA

I was chasing someone.

SHANG

Kano, the man who murdered your partner.

SONYA

How could you know that? Unless you're hiding him.

SHANG

Catching him is the most important thing in your life. The only thing.

SONYA

Where is he?

SHANG

Oh, he's here... and you will meet him. In fact, you are going to fight him... provided you survive the preliminary bouts.

SONYA

I didn't come here to fight in The
Tournament.

SHANG

Then you'll never meet Kano face to
face.

(almost sensuous)

Tell me you haven't dreamed of killing
him.

(unctuous)

I know I'm not supposed to play
favorites, but I sincerely hope you
win.

The attraction that Shang seems to feel for Sonya gives her the
creeps. Shang smiles, and starts off again across the moonlit
statuary garden. Johnny and Liu step from hiding. They are close
enough to have heard everything.

SONYA

What are you doing here?

JOHNNY

Watching your back.

SONYA

In case you haven't noticed, I don't
need protection.

JOHNNY

We couldn't help ourselves. It's a
stupid masculine reflect.

Liu, meanwhile, starts after Shang, who has crossed the garden and
disappears as they watch.

SONYA

What are you doing?

LIU

Following him.

SONYA

I can shadow him better alone.

LIU

(coldly)

Shang... is mine.

Liu silently moves through the garden. Exasperated, Sonya follows.
Johnny reluctantly brings up the rear.

40 EXT. ORNATE TUNNEL ENTRANCE - NIGHT

Shang disappears through the portal. Moments later, Liu, Sonya and
Johnny appear. Liu starts to move forward. Sonya grabs his shoulder.

SONYA

You can't just follow him in. It's bad tactics.

LIU

Maybe you should radio for backup.

She scowls and studied the tunnel entrance. Liu peers in just as Shang disappears around a bend in a long tunnel. Liu follows him. The others reluctantly follow.

40A INT. TUNNEL - NIGHT

Liu peers around the bend in the tunnel.

THE TUNNEL - HIS POV

gives way to naked rock. Ancient stone steps have been carved leading down into a cavernous darkness below.

JOHNNY, LIU, SONYA

The three peer around the corner, now.

JOHNNY

She's right. In all those old black and white movies on TV, whenever the good guys went into a dark cave, bad things happened.

Liu ignores them, and creeps toward the stairs.

LIU

We didn't have television in my village.

Sonya goes down after Liu. Johnny follows reluctantly.

JOHNNY (O.S.)

No television? What did everybody do at night? You know... For fun?

LIU (O.S.)

Human sacrifice.

41 INT. CAVERNS - NIGHT

Johnny strikes a match, dimly illuminating the three faces and a stone stairwell carved in the rock, which leads down into the darkness, as well as another tunnel leading off at an angle.

SONYA

(whispers)

Face it, we're lost.

JOHNNY
I prefer 'directionally challenged.'
Ouch!

The match burns his fingers. He drops it. Darkness. Far below, there is light.

LIU
There's a light down there.
(hears something)
Listen.

Johnny strikes a match as they listen. There is the rumble of male voices coming from somewhere. They creep down the stairs toward the light source.

41A INT. CAVERN - ON STAIRS

Sonya, Liu and Johnny are much closer to the light source below them, and can see the topmost part the far wall of Goro's throne room, with shadows of stalactites and stalagmites enlarged and projected on it by the flickering torchlight. Suddenly, Liu puts up an arm and stops both of them. They all look where he is staring, and their eyes register his amazement.

THRONE ROOM WALL - THEIR POV

Although the "throne room" is still well below them, the shadow of Goro as he crosses to his throne is immense, covering most of the far wall. Goro and the others are invisible from the vantage point of the stairs. Goro's shadow reaches to a throne, whirls--revealing just for a moment the shadow of four arms. Then he sits.

RESUME JOHNNY, LIU, SONYA

The three are speechless, staring at the shadow as Goro roars again. Johnny tries to combat his own fear... whistling in the graveyard.

JOHNNY
(whisper)
I don't suppose there's a little guy
down there, doing... shadow puppets?

LIU
Come on.

Liu sees a narrow ledge leading off from the stairs. They silently creep crawl onto it. Hidden behind large stalactites, they can now see down into the "throne room".

42 EXT. GORO'S THRONE ROOM - CAVERNS - NIGHT

The natural subterranean chamber is studded with stalactites and stalagmites, and illuminated by the flames from a dozen torches. Gold and silver ornaments and tableware gleam in their flickering light on a polished ebony table with high-backed chairs.

An ornate oriental rug spreads out in a circle from the center of the huge, vaulted "room." Beautiful tapestries are hung behind a massive throne where Goro sits, draped in his cape, one arm holding a jewel encrusted mirror, while "the" other hand rather daintily holds a metal file, which he uses to sharpen points on several of his teeth. Four Barakas, Goro's retainers, stand nearby. Across from him, at a table laden with food, Kano eats his fill, speaking with his mouth full, but nervously eyeing the giant across from him.

KANO

So then, he changes into this big snake
and swallows the rat whole. Almost lost
my lunch.

GORO

(mock horror)
Disgusting.

Kano misses the irony; and belches.

KANO

Guy gives me the creeps.

ON THE LEDGE

Sonya recognizes the human below her.

SONYA

(murmurs)
Kano....

Almost unconsciously, she starts to rise. Liu and Johnny, on either side of her, reach out simultaneously and pull her back down.

THRONE ROOM

examines his teeth with the gold hand mirror.

GORO

That was his intention. Shang Tsung is
a great sorcerer. The wise cultivate
his favor. Those who challenge his
power... become his slaves.

KANO

Haven't seen any of them around.

GORO

He enslaves souls...
(uneasy at the thought)
He learned the black crafts from the
Emperor himself.

KANO

You're some kinda royalty, too, right?

GORO

(ironic)

That's very perceptive of you.

(bored)

I am Goro, general of the armies of
Outworld and Prince of the subterranean
Realm of Shokan.

KANO

Subterranean? That's like...
Underground?

GORO

(condescending)

Yes, like that.

KANO

Yeah, well I'm kind of an underworld
chief myself. You know, back home.

GORO

How lucky for them... "back home."

Shang's voice burst in on them, startling the four Barakas, who never
heard him coming. They fall back, bowing low.

SHANG (O.S.)

It's true, Prince Goro. Why else would
I chose such a disreputable-looking
cretin?

SHANG

stands at the foot of the stairway, haughty, amused. The Barakas grovel
at his feet and inch away from the sorcerer.

SHANG

Look at him. No dignity. No manners.
But in the realm of Earth, men like him
can amass wealth and almost godlike
power.

Goro has risen. He bows formally to Shang. Shang nods back.

KANO

(nervous; miffed)

Yeah, well, I'd like to get back to my
amassing as soon as possible. When do
I get paid?

SHANG

After you've fought the girl. That was
our "deal." Only remember, she mustn't
be harmed... only humiliated. I have...
plans... for the beautiful Sonya.

KANO

Well, let me at her, then. Think I like
hiding down here in a cave like some
kinda slimy toad?

He suddenly realizes that Goro might take this the wrong way. Goro plants two big three fingered hands on the table, leans down until his huge head is on a level with Kano's.

KANO

(nervous)
No offense intended.

Kano smiles nervously as a third massive arm suddenly appears from the lower folds of the cape and a huge hand with a gold wrist ornament reaches out toward Kano, the palm outstretched a foot from Kano's throat.

GORO

(quietly menacing; over
polite)
None taken.

And Goro lightly--almost playfully--slaps Kano on the face, like Marlon Brando conveying some subtle sense of immense power to a foot soldier in the Mafia. Kano manages a weak smile. Shang is amused. Goro sits back in his throne, and a fourth hand shoots from the other side of the cape and snaps its fingers.

GORO

Where is my dinner?

Instantly, two more Barakas hurry into the "throne room", bearing a large, silver platter with a domed cover between them. Goro impatiently arches an eyebrow, waiting to be served.

A MOTH

flits around a candle in Goro's line of vision. Almost unthinkingly, his hand shoots out with tremendous speed and snatches the insect out of the air. Kano recoils, thinking Goro is about to strike him. Goro opens his hand under Kano's nose, revealing the moth, still alive. Kano breathes a sigh of relief. Then Goro crushes the moth.

WIDER

One of the Barakas cautiously approaches the huge silver cover, grasps the handle and hoists it off while the other points his spear at it. Underneath the dome is a large creature - half komodo dragon, half gila monster in appearance - who snaps at the retreating Baraka and whips him with his spiked tail. The Baraka retreats into a corner. Goro leans over to examine his meal, eyes gleaming.

GORO

One of my favorites. Anyone care to
join me?

Goro rises and throws off the cape, revealing the four massive arms. He wears only a simple loin covering, a wide, jeweled belt and golden armlets.

KANO
(astounded)
Thanks.... I'll pass.

The lizard-dragon springs tries to scurry from the silver platter, but Goro literally pounces on it! His pointed teeth gleam as he prepares for the first bite as the lizard writhes and howls strangely.

ON THE LEDGE

Johnny, Liu and Sonya watch in horror and astonishment.

SHANG AND KANO

Even Shang can't help register some disgust at the spectacle. A large drop of the black ooze squirts into Kano's good eye. He wipes it away and sees what it is, appalled.

GORO

finishes his meal, licks his finger, then picks up a napkin and daintily dabs at his chin. A Baraka brings him his crimson silk robe, which he dons.

GORO
Delicious
(to Shang; arrogant)
To what do we owe the honor of your visit, Shang Tsung?

SCENE 43 OMITTED

SCENE 44 OMITTED

SHANG
I came to warn you that Kung Lao's descendant is in the Tournament. You must handle him carefully.

GORO
I saw this Liu Kang in the hall. He reminds me of his ancestor. He'll pose no problem.

SHANG
Don't underestimate the power and resourcefulness of these...humans! It will be your downfall.

GORO
You lost to Kung Lao, a village monk!
I defeated him...
(arrogance growing)
And every human since. This time will be no different.

Shang is chagrined. He glowers, then controls his emotions.

SHANG

This is no time for foolish pride. We have never been so close to absolute victory.

GORO

There was another time. You won nine victories in a row. But you lost the tenth to Kung Lao!

SCENE 44A OMITTED

SHANG

(simmering)

Yes, because I was as arrogant as you, And for that, I suffered the terrible fury of....

(catches himself)

...our merciful and benevolent Emperor.

GORO

(to Kano, sneering)

He was banished to the cobalt mines of Shokan....

Shang is angered by this new humiliation.

SHANG

But I began again. I made a pact with a young, ambitious... but ignorant Shokan prince...

(enjoys the barb; then)

Who has since become our friend, ally... and subject.

42 INT. THE LEDGE

Liu, Sonya and Johnny hear the words echoing up to them, and exchange glances.

SHANG (O.S.)

When the Emperor at last enters the Realm of Earth, those who have been loyal to him, will be rewarded with undreamed of power, unimaginable spoils. But, if we should fail....

GORO (O.S.)

I do not fail.

SCENES 46 AND 47 OMITTED

48 INT. THRONE ROOM

The three almost shiver.

SHANG

(warning)

Be ready to fight with all your skill
and cunning, tomorrow. If you saw Liu
Kang, you also saw the Princess Kitana,
the Emperor's ward.

GORO

Why is she here?

SHANG

(through clenched teeth)

Perhaps she's observing for our Beloved
Master...? Seeing that Outworld's
champion doesn't become careless, or
lazy?

(calmer)

In any case, I have charged my most
loyal agent to watch over her... keep
her from unpleasant contacts with the
other warriors. She can bear witness to
my greatest triumph.

(soft; menacing)

Because, my prince, The Emperor must
not be disappointed again. There are
worse things than the cobalt mines of
Shokan.

There is a darker meaning here, and Goro gets it.

GORO

(worried, now)

The Emperor will not be disappointed.

SHANG

No.

(to Kano)

I have every confidence in Prince Goro.
He fears only one thing, and this thing
motivates him more than gold...or dreams
of conquest....

Goro wraps his cape around him, as close to humble as he can be, his
eyes fixed on Shang. Shang's voice is a raspy whisper, his eyes
bright with malign delectation.

SHANG

He fears the loss of his warrior soul...
to me! But that... unfortunate event
will only happen...

(steely; directly to Goro)

...if you lose!

Goro sits in his throne, huddling under his cape as if seized by a sudden chill. Kano, too, is cowed by Shang's power.

A BARAKA

near the stairs, turns his head, sensing something.

49 INT. LEDGE

Johnny, Liu and Sonya have heard most of this enlightening conversation. Liu points to the Baraka. They edge from the ledge as silently as they can.

50 INT. THRONE ROOM

The Baraka nearest the stairs is joined by a second, both peering up. Shang and Goro become alert. Kano looks up, wondering.

KANO

What is it?

Shang Tsung closes his eyes and lets his mind expand, probing the cavern tunnels.

SHANG

We aren't alone.

Goro raises a hand. The Baraka bodyguards move quietly up the stone stairway.

51 INT. CAVERN STAIRS

Liu and the others are already on the run, back up the stairs.

52 INT. THE LEDGE

The Barakas search the ledge out thoroughly, and continue up the stairs.

53 SIDE TUNNEL - CAVERNS

Kitana stands in the narrow passage way, holding a torch. Liu nearly passes by the narrow entrance as he climbs the stairs; then he sees her. Kitana turns and hurries away.

LIU

(to others)

She must be the Princess Kitana. I think she's trying to help us.

JOHNNY

Just because they don't trust her, doesn't mean we can.

LIU

Come on. She's trying to lead us out.

Liu heads down the narrow passage and disappears.

JOHNNY

(to Sonya)

Oh, yeah, he's gone.

He turns back and sees that Liu is, indeed, gone! Sonya isn't happy about this, either, but she starts into the narrow passage. Johnny reluctantly follows.

INT. NARROW PASSAGE - LIU - NIGHT

Liu, far ahead of the others, follows a distant light down the dark passageway. Then the natural cave tunnel is replaced by hand hewn stone walls and a curved ceiling. Stone stairs lead upward.

FURTHER BACK IN THE TUNNEL

Johnny strikes a match again, and whispers. They peer down two separate tunnels, which meet at this juncture.

JOHNNY

(whisper)

Liu!

(no response; to Sonya)

I hate this. Which way do we go?

SONYA

If this were one of your films, you'd know the way out.

JOHNNY

(smiles; "gotcha")

So.... You have seen my films. Which ones?

SONYA

(annoyed at herself)

Does it matter? They all have the same plot.

JOHNNY

They do not!

SONYA

The woman is always in jeopardy, and you always rescue her.

JOHNNY

Hey... just like in real life.

Sonya, disgusted, turns, then tenses. They can see the shadows of Barakas down below. Silently, they duck down the side corridor after Liu.

54 INT. THE CATACOMBS

are lit by narrow holes in the ceiling, leading to the outside. Shafts of moonlight come down through them and leave round, barred shadows on the paving stones of the floor. Liu sees Kitana disappearing around another bend in the tunnel and moves toward her. As Liu advances, the wall seemingly comes to life as Reptile steps away from the stones.

THE GARGOYLE (REPTILE)

opens his green eyes. His pale mouth hisses hot, vaporous acid.

LIU

Momentarily blinded by the steam, Liu cannot react as Reptile trips him. He falls to the paving stones, and can only hear, not see the thing which rushes past him.

LIU
(cries out)
Aaaahhh!

Moments later, Sonya and Johnny appear and pull him to his feet.

JOHNNY
What happened? Liu?

Sonya quickly wipes the acid from his face and eyes.

LIU
There's something... it's following her,
too, I think.

Behind Johnny, down a dark side tunnel, a pair of dull red eyes blink! A huge Baraka behind Johnny, charges with its spear! Sonya turns, sees, drops to the ground and sweeps Johnny's legs from under him.

JOHNNY
Hey!

As Johnny goes down, the Baraka's spear point passes him, slashing Sonya's arm. Liu, breaks the spear with a karate chop, and finishes the Baraka with some no-nonsense punch kick combination. Johnny sees the wound on her arm, and shakily helps her to her feet. He gently examines the wound.

JOHNNY
You okay?

SONYA
Just a scratch.

LIU
(sees more Barakas)
Look out!

Six more Barakas appear from the gloom, encircling them warily. The three humans take a three point defensive stance.

JOHNNY

(to Sonya)

Anyway... Thanks for... you know.

Sonya is surprised. She studies him out of the corner of her eye as the Barakas close in.

SONYA

Don't mention it.

JOHNNY

(his old self)

Believe me, I won't tell a soul.

She is once again annoyed. Then the Barakas attack. Our three heroes fight off the first wave, using karate, jujitsu, whatever it takes to evade the deadly spears and lightning like attack of the partially armored attackers. A second rush is even more vicious, and it takes all our heroes skill to neutralize it. But finally, using the Barakas broken spears as fighting staffs and escrimas, Sonya, Johnny and Liu defeat the vicious Outworld denizens.

LIU

(keeps eyes on Barakas)

Anyone hurt?

They finally turn to look at one another, and can't help smiling.

JOHNNY

(a little amazed)

We did it! I've never done it for real before.

Johnny and Liu give a "fist touch" salute. Johnny turns to Sonya, she hesitates, then gives him a "high five"... and a smile.

JOHNNY

(to Sonya; still excited)

I guess you know that.

Someone claps in slow, steady applause. They turn to discover...

RAIDEN...

his features chiseled into a scowl in the circle of moonlight from a grate high overhead, still applauding.

RAIDEN

Congratulations. And what are you going to do against...

(nods behind them)

...them?

The threesome turn to find many more Barakas, red eyes gleaming through the slits in their bone helmets, closing in.

Three of the surliest approach. Raiden steps between them and our heroes.

RAIDEN
(veiled thread)
We were just leaving.

The largest Baraka grunts. The three lower their spears at Raiden and edge in. Raiden raises his hand.

NEW ANGLE

Raiden's eyes glow for a second, his hand sparks with electricity. He raises a warning eyebrow... and the Barakas leap back. Raiden moves calmly forward, and the Barakas jostle one another, bony "armor" rattling, to make a path for him. He turns back to Sonya, Liu, and Johnny.

RAIDEN
What are you waiting for?

They cautiously follow him through the Barakas, parted like the Red Sea to let them pass.

55 EXT. TUNNEL ENTRANCE - NIGHT

Bathed in the moonlight, as they step outside, Johnny, Sonya and Liu follow Raiden. He stops, fixes them with a stern eye.

RAIDEN
I'm glad you're so proud of yourselves,
but that little scrap is nothing
compared to what you'll face in the
Tournament.

JOHNNY
You mean Goro.

RAIDEN
And Shang.

LIU
Will he fight in the Tournament?

RAIDEN
Perhaps. Shang is far more dangerous
than Goro. His demon power comes from
the souls of vanquished warriors... To
fight Shang is to face not one, but a
legion of adversaries.
(directly to Liu)
Remember that.

SONYA

But, how can Shang or Goro be defeated, then?

RAIDEN

They can be killed. Shang's power can be destroyed by mortal men and women... you must believe that, absolutely! You can vanquish any adversary, no matter how bizarre their powers may seem. No matter how strong! There is always a way! Only one thing can defeat you... your own fear.

JOHNNY

What if we're not afraid?

RAIDEN

If you believe that, you've already lost.... You must first face your fears if you are to conquer them. You, Johnny, are afraid you're a fake. So, you'll rush into any fight to prove you're not. You'll fight... bravely enough... but foolishly... carelessly... and you'll be beaten.

(to Sonya)

You, Sonya, are afraid to admit even you sometimes need help. If you are afraid to trust... you will lose.

LIU

(challenging)

What about me?

The others turn to see what Raiden will say. Raiden approaches and speaks almost gently, but with the darkest urgency.

RAIDEN

You fear your own destiny. You already fled it once, when you went to America... and now that fear has brought you guilt for the death of your brother.

LIU

I am responsible for Chan's death.

RAIDEN

No! Every mortal is responsible for his own destiny! Chan believed this. Why can't you?

LIU

I've tried!

RAIDEN
(intense; hoarse whisper)
Despair is the most dangerous fear of
all. Guilt over the past.... Dread of
the future. These are your enemies.
(to them all)
I know all this. And so does Shang.

SONYA
How?

RAIDEN
He can peer into your soul and use the
fear he sees there against you. You
must be prepared!

SCENES 56 AND 57 OMITTED

58 EXT. ISLAND - SUNRISE

The island is beautiful, majestic, mysterious as the red sun
illuminates it.

59 EXT. TOURNAMENT GROUNDS - DAY

Establishing. The grounds are bustling with activity as the
participants follow mute, black-clad monks to their matches. Johnny
meets Art lean at one arena, warming up. Art sees him.

ART LEAN
Hey, good luck!

Johnny is led by a monk, who turns and gestures him on.

JOHNNY
You, too!

Art disappears. Johnny turns and almost bumps into Liu.

LIU
Watch yourself.

JOHNNY
No sweat.

Sonya appears next to them.

SONYA
Don't either of you forget to duck!

There's a silent moment... a Three Musketeers kind of moment. The three touch fists again... make eye contact, and go their separate ways.

LIU - CONTINUOUS

Liu follows the monk, weaving through throngs of fighters doing the same. Some warm up in their rings. Others are already fighting. He stops in front of one match in progress, ignoring the monk for a moment.

59A EXT. GROUNDS - SUB-ZERO'S BOUT

The Outworld ninja, Sub-Zero faces off against an agile Baraka. Sub-Zero begins to lower his own body temperature, until frosty mist surrounds him. The Baraka leaps high into the air, fangs and claws bared. In SLOW MOTION we see Sub-Zero exude a frigid blast of air from his fingertips. The pouncing Baraka passes through the frigid blast, and freezes solid in midair its features frosted over like a chilled beer mug. Sub-Zero shifts slightly to let the hurtling popsicle streak past. The Baraka shatters into a hundred pieces when it strikes a nearby pillar. Match over.

SHANG AND LIU

Shang suddenly steps up next to Liu, seeming to ignore him as he praises the winner of the fight.

SHANG

Excellent. Flawless victory.

Unable to contain his rage, Liu turns and storms off. Shang watches him, pleased.

59B EXT. GROUNDS - JOHNNY - CONTINUOUS

Johnny is in search of a match: Sonya's. He stops when he sees her in a ring.

59C EXT. GROUNDS - SONYA'S BOUT - DAY

Sonya bows to her opponent, JADE, a diminutive woman dressed in an ornate Kabuki kimono. Sonya speaks to her as the monk/judge stands between them.

SONYA

Listen, I really don't want to hurt you.
But I've got to get through this bout.
Okay? Hello?

The monk withdraws and Jade begins a graceful Kabuki-like ritual dance, circling around a puzzled Sonya. Jade reaches behind her head and undoes the ritual hair bun held by a long wooden spike. But the wooden spike sheathes a long, thin stiletto. Jade's long black hair falls wildly down her back.

That and the gleam in her eye make Jade look more like a demented witch than the demur dancer of earlier. Jade's stylized movements take on a darker purpose as she moves in on Sonya!

Sonya decides to take this bout seriously. She removes her heavy leather belt and swings it, buckle first, to counter the stiletto. In the quick paced fight, Sonya barely avoids being impaled by the long, thin blade. Finally, using the whirling belt, Sonya snags the stiletto and sends it flying through the air, where it lands, point imbedded in the ground at...

JOHNNY'S FEET

Johnny stares at the deadly weapon for an instant, then goes back to the fight. The two women battle furiously another few moments. Sonya wins.

JOHNNY

makes a triumphant gesture.

JOHNNY

(to himself)

Yes!

Then, a little surprised at himself, he hurries away before Sonya can see him.

SHANG

stands near the arena. Sonya only notices him as she leaves.

SHANG

Excellent.

She scowls and moves past him.

SCENES 60, 61, 62, 63 OMITTED

SCENES 64, 65, 66 OMITTED

67 INT. GREAT HALL - DAY

Liu waits on a raised platform, warming up. He turns to discover he is fighting Kitana. His surprise is written on his face, but she eyes him coldly. The monk brings them to the center of the mat, where they bow, then begin to circle. She probes his defenses, but he goes easy on her, evading her, but not counterattacking. Kitana's eyes grow colder. She faints again, he evades, but does not counter punch, and she sweeps him and pins him with her powerful legs.

KITANA

(hisses quickly)

If you won't fight with all of your heart... there is no hope!

LIU

What?

Liu is bewildered, but realizes the truth in what she says. He uses his fighting skill to throw her off. She attacks skillfully again, but with a brilliant display of kung fu and aikido, he attempts to counter. Still, she pins him in a shoulder bar and forces him to the mat. While she holds him down, she whispers to him.

KITANA

To win your next match, use the force
which brings life.

LIU

(puzzled; whispers)
Why do you care if I win or lose?

SHANG

Stands watching with a puzzled frown, from his lofty vantage point on the balcony.

RESUME FIGHT

Kitana sees him. In a deft jujitsu move, Liu Kang turns the tables on Kitana, and pins her forcefully to the mat. As his head hovers close to her mouth....

KITANA

Remember my words.

WIDER

Kitana doesn't speak to Liu again, as the mute Monk approaches and gives the contest to Liu. He releases her. Kitana quickly rises and leaves the platform, sweeping under Shang's balcony. Shang bows to her with mock courtesy, then scowls and exits as well.

LIU

Tries to follow Kitana through the hall, but as he passes, two Barakas bar his way. He glances up to see Shang, watching him. Kitana disappears through the doors.

68 EXT. GROUNDS - SONYA - DAY

Sonya lurks behind a pillar and watches another match which is about to get underway: Johnny's!

JOHNNY

warms up, keeping loose, practicing high-low kicking combinations. Then he spots Sonya who thinks about ducking out of sight, then realizes it is too late.

JOHNNY

Hey.

SONYA

(awkward)

I... was between matches. Just passing by.

JOHNNY

Yeah. Well... want to watch?

SONYA

Nah. Gotta go.

JOHNNY

Sure.

She goes. He follows her with his eyes, then senses, rather than hears his opponent enter behind him and turns to see

WIDER

a cowed figure, face in shadow... Scorpion!

JOHNNY

I remember you....

He turns, reaches into his tote bag, and brings out two long fighting daggers - sai. He turns back, grim, ready. The two opponents bow. Johnny must use all his skill to avoid Scorpion's deadly pincer claws, wielding the fighting daggers expertly and forcing the Outworld denizen to respect him. The fight seems to be a stalemate, until a claw firmly grasps one of the daggers, the second claw grabs the other. Johnny is lifted off the ground as he clutches them, but kicks savagely with both feet, right between Scorpion's strange eyes. A few brutal moves later, Johnny has won. Match over.

69 EXT. RUINED TEMPLE - LIU'S POV - DAY

The roof of the temple has caved in several places, and the walls are pierced with jagged holes. It is set into the side of the mountain. A "coolie" stoops under the weight of twin buckets, attached to a long pole carried across the shoulders. The "coolie" enters the temple.

70 INT. RUINED TEMPLE - DAY

The temple is dim in places, and blazing with sunlight which pours through the roof in others. The temple doesn't seem abandoned so much as defiled.... cluttered with debris. Only the banners of Mortal Kombat hung from the ceiling are new, swaying in the slight breeze. Several kerosene lanterns are hung from spikes. The "coolie" stops in front of the bowl-like torch which once burned with the sacred flame... extinguished now. The "coolie" puts down the yoke of water buckets, takes a ladle from one and sips. When he turns, we see it is Raiden. Raiden scowls at the blackened torch... and with a mini-bolt of electricity, he relights it! Voices from outside cause him to turn and leave.

71 INT. RUINED TEMPLE - DAY

LIU (O.S.)
I fight here? In the temple?

A mute monk shows Liu inside. Liu's eyes are drawn to the familiar flame.

LIU
Hey?

Liu watches the monk leave, then turns back and enters the darkness of the temple. A kerosene lantern hangs on a wall, lit. He takes it.

NEW ANGLE

An enormous shadow of a figure sprawls over the temple floor. Even in shadow, tendrils of mist curl around the body of the massive figure. Sub-Zero stands backlit in the fissure of a ruined wall, watching him. Icy mist swirls around him, and his breathing is deep and sonorous, like the lowest, almost inaudible notes of a pipe organ. The temple seems to vibrate with the sound.

As Sub-Zero slowly advances, Liu retreats, using the entire temple to dodge the icy aura of Sub-Zero, as he closes in on him. Liu remembers the kerosene lantern in his hand, throws it hard. It shatters on Sub-Zero's body, engulfing him and several of the fallen beams around him in a sheet of flame! Liu steps back, hopeful as the tinder dry wood roars into a red hot inferno. Liu uses a burning board to ignite the Mortal Kombat banners, which burn like fireworks around the hall. Sub-Zero's flame covered form is in the center of the firestorm.

72 EXT. RUINED TEMPLE

Black smoke pours from holes in the roof. Other combatants and monks gather at the sight, and move toward the temple. Johnny is drawn to the orange glow from within the temple, as is Sonya.

JOHNNY
(sees Sonya)
Liu's in there! Come on!

They hurry toward...

73 INT. RUINED TEMPLE

Fire is everywhere, now. Sub-Zero bats at the flames that cover his body. Liu takes up a piece of beam from the fallen roof, and runs at his adversary, using it like a battering ram!

LIU
(kiyai)
Aieeeyah!

The force of the blow knocks the huge figure of Sub-Zero back into the debris.

Liu takes a second lantern and hurls it into the collected mass of fallen beams and roof tiles. It explodes in massive, red hot flame! Sub-Zero is invisible in the heart of the fire.

NEW ANGLES - VARIOUS

Every door, window and hole in the wall is full of faces, peering in at this ferocious combat. Johnny, breathless stands in the doorway. Sonya comes up beside him. Neither speaks. The fire spreads to the roof rafters overhead. A cold, gray cloud rises from the heart of the fire, a freezing mist.

WIDER

It rolls along the stone floor, enveloping Liu, who winces in pain as the frigid mist turns his hair and eyebrows white with frost. He staggers back, and falls, overturning one of the water buckets near the sacred flame. The water fans out on the floor and freezes solid as the frigid mist rolls over it. Liu staggers to his feet, backing away from the rolling mist, his eyes on the fire where Sub-Zero is imprisoned. But the fire is dying, chilled to extinction by Sub-Zero!

SUB-ZERO

stands stock still in the heart of the burning timbers, willing the tremendous biological engine inside him to lower the temperature further and further, until the flames which engulf him dim, turn blue, and flicker out. The flames around him begin to die as well, quenched by the incredible cold generated by the massive form as it once again steps forward. Sub-Zero is covered in frost, his features cobalt blue, his smile glistening like polished lacquer. He raised a hand and another icy blast emanated from it.

WIDER

The flaming banners are quenched by a blast of frigid, frosty air. The scorched cloth falls like panes of glass to the stone floor and shatter.

KITANA

appears in the fissure in the far wall. Liu sees her, and remembers once again, her riddle-like message. Liu frowns.

LIU

Use the force which brings life....

He is standing next to the second bucket of water, still attached to the pole. Finally he realizes, and looks down at the frozen puddle of water spreading out from the overturned bucket near his feet, reflecting the red flames of the burning ceiling overhead.

LIU

Not fire. Water!

SUB-ZERO

approaches slowly, moving in for the kill.

A FLAMING SECTION OF ROOF

suddenly plummets to the very center of the temple, creating a new, towering wall of flame between Sub-Zero and Liu, hotter and brighter than anything so far.

SUB-ZERO

lowers his body temperature still further, until the very air around him freezes and falls like crystal to the stone slabs. He begins to walk slowly through the wall of flame.

LIU

clutches the pole attached to the remaining bucket and - two handed - he begins spinning it around like an Olympian making a hammer throw, faster and faster, as Sub-Zero passes unscathed through the last wall of flame separating them.

LIU'S POV - THE TEMPLE

appears to spin faster and faster. With each revolution the faces of the onlookers become blurred streaks in the doors and windows. Sub-Zero looms larger and larger, moving in for the kill.

SUB-ZERO

releases another icy blast from his raised hands.

THE BUCKET

now has so much centrifugal force, that Liu can barely hold the pole attached to it. With a fierce cry, he releases his grip. The bucket flies off in a straight trajectory IN EXTREME SLOW MOTION. It tumbles through the air, releasing its contents: water. The water separates into several smaller streams that elongate as they hurtle through the air, and one long, jagged stream that stretches out into jagged conical form just as it passes through the FRGID BLAST OF AIR. The water freezes instantly, forming several smaller icicles and one long, heavy one.

SUB-ZERO

is struck - STILL IN EXTREME SLOW MOTION - in the face by the smaller icicles. They drive in like needles, then spikes, jagged darts piercing his face. He opens his mouth to scream in pain, the SOUND SLOWED TO A STRANGE, LOW GROAN - and his hands slowly rise toward his injured face. Then, brutally, RESUME NORMAL SPEED, as the much larger icicle, now a long jagged crystal spear, transpierces Sub-Zero. The sharp jagged point sticks well out his back, and the thick end of the icicle cone lodges in his chest.

LIU

Stands, his mouth gaping. Even he can't believe it.

SUB-ZERO

is bewildered as he stares, in no apparent pain now, down at the huge icicle sticking through him. Then, as if the frigid internal reactor inside him had reached critical mass and imploded, his own body begins to freeze to solid ice. Starting at the feet, and moving quickly upward, Sub-Zero is transformed into a strange ice sculpture, dully translucent, lit as if from within by the wall of flame behind him, flickering a dull, opaque reddish orange. His hands try to yank the giant ice spear from his chest, but they freeze to immobile crystal as well. Now, only Sub-Zero's head is still alive, moving, as he looks to the ceiling and bellows a lament to his own death. The head freezes. The light within the "ice statue" dims. The eyes turn frosty and opaque.

WIDER

None of the onlookers utters a sound as they stare inside the temple. Liu and the "ice statue" form a strange tableau inside a circle of burning timbers - fire and ice. Liu's own momentum has brought him to his knees in front of Sub-Zero. He stares up at the frozen creature towering over him as the flames dance and reflect off the ice.

NEW ANGLE TEMPLE

From a gaping hole in the temple wall, someone else is watching the bout along with the others... Raiden. Then he turns and moves away.

74 EXT. RUINED TEMPLE - RAIDEN - DAY

Smoke rises high in the air and wafts over the grounds as Raiden moves away. He stops. Kitana stands in the distance. They exchange a glance.

SCENE 75 OMITTED

76 INT. GREAT HALL - SUNDOWN

It is the last bout of the long first day, and torches illuminate the hall. Johnny and Sonya enter through the crowd, and spot

SHANG TSUNG

sitting in a balcony in the place of honor, above the fighting arena. Shang notices Sonya and, smiles chillingly. She almost cringes.

WIDER

Johnny notices, and pushes Sonya away from the hypnotic gaze. They make their way toward the ring. Art Lean is already there, warming up, staying loose. His shadow punches and kicks are beautiful to behold. Johnny watches in admiration as he approaches Art's corner. Art sees him.

JOHNNY

Hey! How's it going?

ART LEAN

So far, so good.

JOHNNY

Who you fighting, now?

ART LEAN

(takes a deep breath)

Goro.

Art continues warming up. Johnny tries to hide his alarm. He keeps his tone upbeat.

JOHNNY

Luck of the draw, huh? Hey, I'll give you some tips. Let me be your cornerman.

ART LEAN

Cornerman? Why?

JOHNNY

I've seen Goro.

Art nods grimly, and continues his vigorous punch kick combinations. Then, there is a terrific roar--a sound Johnny has heard before in the caverns: Goro.

JOHNNY AND ART

both turn at the sound and watch the far entrance.

GORO - CONTINUOUS

A retinue of surly Barakas come first, clearing a path. The huge drums are beating in a slow cadence as Goro makes his appearance, in his crimson cape. There is a wave of exclamations from the hall at the sight of him. He moves majestically to the arena, and climbs up onto the platform. Then he unbuckles his cape and lets it drop, revealing the four arms. The crowd gasps. The drums beat more rapidly.

SONYA AND LIU

Liu silently joins Sonya both almost hypnotized by Goro's presence.

SHANG TSUNG

watches from his place of honor, attentive, missing nothing.

ART AND JOHNNY

study Goro. Art is amazed, but forces himself to remain calm.

ART LEAN

Any advice, Coach?

JOHNNY

Stay out of the clinches.

Art's smile is tight and crooked as he continues warming up.

WIDER

Goro turns his back on his adversary, and with two of his arms, ties his flowing mane of hair in a long pony tail, reaching down to his waist. Then he turns, with no further warm up and eyes Art Lean coldly. The mute Monk, obviously the head referee for the Tournament moves solemnly to the center of the mat and holds his hand out. The two fighters advance and bow. The Monk withdraws. Art doesn't hesitate. He attacks full out, punching, kicking, landing many of his blows, but if Goro feels them, he doesn't react.

Johnny cheers wildly from the sidelines. The human contingent of the crowd joins in, while the fighters from Outworld watch silently. Art Lean feints, then leaps and lands a powerful kick, staggering Goro. Goro bellows with rage, his voice shaking the rafters, and counterattacks, his four fists flailing like windmills. Art dodges the mighty fists, but is forced to give ground. Art cannot get through the four-armed defense to follow up on his momentary triumph. Goro stalks Art, now, studying him for weaknesses.

JOHNNY

Make him come to you! Don't let him
grab you!

But Art Lean is not a defensive fighter. He attacks, appearing to drive Goro back, but it is only a ruse. Suddenly, Goro's lower two arms snake out and grab Art.

ART LEAN

is pinned by the massive hands, and lifted off the mat. He struggles ferociously to free himself!

GORO'S EYES - ART LEAN'S REFLECTION

Art Lean's struggling form is seen in the pupil of Goro's large, dark eyes as he is lifted up, face to face. Art tries to claw the eyes, but Goro holds him at arm's length.

JOHNNY

falls silent, fearly for his newfound friend.

LIU AND SONYA

look on grimly. The crowd falls nearly silent.

GORO AND ART LEAN

are face to face. Goro studies the struggling man in his grasp.

GORO

You fought well.

SHANG

becomes enraged at this. He holds his hands up, commanding.

SHANG

Finish him!

GORO

looks up toward Shang, and a trace of fear flickers in his eyes... then something very like regret.

ART LEAN

makes one last desperate ploy to free himself, sensing the worst.

GORO'S FIST

rises high over his head. It hesitates a moment, then plunges down.

JOHNNY

turns his back, sickened.

LIU AND SONYA

cringe. Sonya cannot hide the tears which suddenly well up in her eyes.

GORO'S OTHER FIST

Comes up, and strikes brutally down.

ART LEAN

hangs unconscious, like a rag doll in Goro's monstrous grip.

GORO

studies his handiwork with a little grunt. He is neither pleased, nor displeased. It was inevitable.

THE HALL - VARIOUS

is suddenly enveloped in a strange light. A mysterious wind begins to blow, causing the torches to flicker and dim. Everyone looks around, baffled... even frightened.

SHANG TSUNG

is enveloped in a glowing aura - not just light and smoke--there is just a trace of something else... some ghostlike entities swirling around him. His eyes are closed, his bony finger outstretched, pointing down at Goro.

GORO

stares up at his master. His huge head sags a moment, then he carries the limp form of Art Lean to just below Shang, and goes down on one knee. His two free hands form a gesture of offering.

SHANG

The aura is brighter now - there are glimpses of something within the aura...faces, ethereal, distorted, fleeting! And now there is a terrible sound, a mixture of moaning and shrieking, a dissonant chorus, almost musical.

SHANG
(eyes closed; almost
chantlike)
Flawless victory!

SCENES 77 AND 78 OMITTED

79 INT. HALL - SHANG - NIGHT

Shang reaches out, his arm extending impossibly far, the hand forming a talon-like claw, which seems to reach out and wrench something from Art Lean's form.

ART LEAN'S SPIRIT

begins to stream like smoke from his mouth, pouring out, twisting, being pulled toward Shang. Johnny, Liu Kang and Sonya watch as, for a second the wispy ectoplasm forms into the features of Art Lean, contorted, anguished...damned.

SHANG

The aura receives this new spirit. Shang breathes in deeply, as if inhaling the new soul. The ectoplasm is absorbed. The aura dims, diminishes... disappears.

SHANG'S EYES

blink once... and double reflections of Art Lean, as if encased in two glass marbles, pleads and beats at two concave walls of his glass like prison. Then he slides away and tumbles into darkness. The eyes blink again and return to normal.

LIU

stands numbly, overwhelmed by the realization that this horror happened to Chan... and could happen to him.

THE HALL

Every eye is on Shang, every face shows awe and fear. Goro remains in his submissive posture, knee to the mat, Art Lean's lifeless corpse in his arms. Then, respectfully, he lays the body on the ground in front of him, contemplating it as

SHANG

sweeps his triumphant gaze over the assembly below him.

SHANG

Your friend is in excellent company,
now! He has joined a formidable band of
warriors!

(eyes fix on Liu)

Who will join him? Who will be next?

WIDER

No one, not even Liu, dares meet Shang's cold gaze. Exhilarated,
Shang leaves the hall.

80 EXT. GREAT HALL - DUSK

Johnny, Sonya and several other humans carry from the hall - shoulder
high - Art Lean's body, now wrapped in a white shroud. A solemn,
solitary drum beats a slow cadence from somewhere inside the hall.
They carry the corpse past Raiden, who watches stoically. Liu accosts
Raiden.

LIU

You could have stopped that.

RAIDEN

I told you, I cannot interfere.

LIU

That's why I left the temple! All this
mumbo jumbo about... about the power
of reason and Light. But where are you
when we need you? Where is that power?

RAIDEN

The power is in you. If the gods decide
man's destiny, then there is no free
will. No choice. In Outworld, the
Emperor makes every decision. You have
only to obey. Is that what you want?

Liu glares at him fiercely, and Raiden, saddened, turns and walks
slowly away. Liu points to the pallbearers and the corpse.

LIU

What choice did he have?

RAIDEN

(just as fierce)

He chose to fight and die a free man!
If Outworld wins this Tournament, no
mortal man will ever have that choice
again!

It is a blistering rebuke. Raiden stands his ground, eyes blazing
until Liu, frustrated and angry, stalks off.

Raiden shakes his head and turns to see that Johnny Cage has left the funeral cortege, and stands studying him. He has heard everything. Raiden turns and walks away.

SCENE 81 OMITTED

82 INT. LIU'S ROOM - NIGHT

Liu sits on the floor, lit by a single candle, meditating. BEGIN FLASHBACK as he relives his nightmare:

82A EXT. HILL - NEAR VILLAGE - DAY

Shang Tsung stands over Chan's body, extending his talon-like hand above Chan's head, wrenching the soul from the body. We see the soul drawn from Chan's corpse... which seems to call his brother.

CHAN (V.O.)

(in despair)

Liu!

82B INT. LIU'S ROOM - NIGHT

The FLASHBACK ENDS. Liu stares at the flickering flame; then senses a presence outside, rises and slides open the door to the garden.

83 EXT. LITTLE GARDEN - NIGHT

Raiden sits on an ornamental rock, waiting for Liu, who joins him.

LIU

I'm sorry for what I said.

RAIDEN

I am not here for apologies. What are you going to do, now?

LIU

(frustrated)

I don't know! I thought I had it figured out, but I'm not like my ancestors. I don't get this stuff!

RAIDEN

You won't win just trying to be like your ancestors.

LIU

What about Kitana, then? Can she help me?

RAIDEN

Perhaps. But there is someone else you should trust, first. Someone who has been trained for this day. Someone with a sharp mind and a fierce will.

Who?

(aggravated)

Who, he asks? You, you dolt!

How can I defeat a... a sorcerer like Shang Tsung?

Your problem is, you spend your life running from who you really are.

(beat; intensely)

Everything you need to win is within your grasp, but you must learn to trust your judgement. It will guide you to victory.

Raiden peers into Liu's eyes, looking for some glimmer of hope that he has chosen well. He thinks... just for a second... that maybe he sees that glimmer. Then he vanishes. Liu walks back to...

HIS ROOM

and steps inside. His eyes go to the single candle, burning brightly there.

EXT LIU KANG'S VILLAGE - DAY

In the DREAM SEQUENCE, the figure of Shang Tsung stands over Chan's body. A strange aura forms around the sorcerer, and the same, strange cacophonous chorus of tormented voices cries out. Shang extends his hand - talon-like - above Chan's head, then pulls back, as if yanking something out of it. Just for a moment, we see some ethereal matter rise from the body, as the voices reach a crescendo...then...

CHAN (V.O.)

(ethereal voice)

Liu!

Shang turns and looks straight into the dream's soul....

INT. LIU'S ROOM - NIGHT

Liu awakens with a start, lights a candle, revealing a face drenched in sweat. The room and its modern decorations mock him.

He rises, and rips the decorations from the wall.

DISSOLVE TO:

LIU'S ROOM - LATER

The room is empty. All decorations have been removed, showing only bare walls and a simple mat on the floor. A glow comes from the little garden outside the sliding doors.

CONTINUE THROUGH DOORS TO GARDEN

where Liu sits cross legged in front of a bonfire, made from the furnishings. Sparks float up like prayers, fiery stars blending with the first faint glow of dawn.

DISSOLVE TO:

83A EXT. THE ISLAND - PANORAMA - DAWN

A huge red sun begins to peer above the fog.

83B EXT. NEAR CLIFF - DAWN

Sonya walks in the early light, lost in thought. She spies a lone figure in the mist, performing an intricate and impressive kata - a martial arts form - with grace, speed, and power, using a three piece sectional staff. The sectional staff whistles and whirls around the figure's body. She approaches the figure, silhouetted by the rising sun through the mist and recognizes him.

SONYA

Johnny?

Johnny stops, the staff sections folding back into his palm as if they had a life of their own--click, click. He turns, and comes toward her. His black gi is bathed in sweat from long exertion.

SONYA

Oh. I thought...

JOHNNY

(impish grin)

Go ahead, say it.... You're impressed.

She smiles. It's a nice smile.

JOHNNY

Aha! Is that a smile?

A beat. Neither speaks, but....

SONYA

I... wanted to talk to you. I came by your room last night, but you were out....

JOHNNY

I was here.

SONYA

You've been practicing all night?

JOHNNY

And thinking.

SONYA

I'm sorry about your friend, Art Lean.

JOHNNY

I never had time for friends. Art was just a decent guy.

(remembers)

I don't know what it's like to lose someone close, like Liu....

(remembers)

Or you. I heard you talking about your partner the other night. Sorry.

She falls silent, then decides to confide.

SONYA

He was more than my partner. We were engaged to be married.

Johnny is really rocked back. He searches for words, finds none.

SONYA

He was the only man I ever trusted.

JOHNNY

What happened?

SONYA

He went into a building after Kano without waiting for backup. I guess he didn't think he could count on me.

JOHNNY

So now, you go in alone... no backup, no overprotective guy.

She doesn't respond for a second, then tries to throw it off.

SONYA

Something like that.

JOHNNY

When did it happen?

SONYA

It's been two years. Time enough get on with my life.

JOHNNY

But you haven't.

She shrugs, looks out at the view.

SONYA

Now you know what I'm doing here. What about you? Was Raiden right? Are you afraid you're just a phony?

JOHNNY

(dissimulates)

I want to prove I'm the best. Is that so complicated?

SONYA

(sarcastic)

A couple million fans already think you are. Can they be wrong?

JOHNNY

Maybe. I'm tired of just bluffing my way through life.

SONYA

Who'd have thought? Johnny Cage isn't a fan of Johnny Cage.

JOHNNY

Well, maybe it's time for me to become one. I've got an idea I can make a difference here.

SONYA

Look, you are one of the best fighters I've ever seen. You've just got to fight your own way. Be yourself, but don't do anything stupid.

JOHNNY

Wait a minute. Are you worried about me?

SONYA

You're being absurd. Why would I worry about you?

JOHNNY

You are worried. You like me.

SONYA

You are the most egotistical, self deluded, person I've ever met!

Infuriated, she wheels and leaves him there.

JOHNNY

Oh, yeah. She's crazy about me.

84 EXT. TOURNAMENT GROUNDS - SECOND DAY

In another long TRAVELLING SHOT, we see that the mood among the remaining few competitors from Earth is very somber as they prepare for combat.

85 EXT. GROUNDS - SONYA'S BOUT

Sonya is waiting impatiently in her fighting area. Liu approaches.

SONYA

(worried)

Have you seen Johnny?

LIU

No. Why?

Just then, she sees Shang approaching her. He and Liu face off. Then Shang turns to Sonya. His smile chills her anew.

SHANG

I've arranged a present for you.

SONYA

I don't want anything from you.

SHANG

That's not true. There is one thing you want very much....

He steps aside, and Sonya sees Kano approaching. Kano gives her the Death Stare with his one good eye, then turns his back and begins warming up.

SHANG

I arranged this match just for you. I know how impatient you've become. I have every confidence you'll win.

SONYA

He's your stooge.

SHANG

But of limited use as my queen and consort.

SONYA

(realizes what he means)

In your dreams.

SHANG

Nearly all of my dreams have already come true.

Shang steps back and the mute Monk comes forward to begin the bout. Kano swaggers forward.

LIU

Sonya.... Stay cool.

KANO

How ya doin', Babe? Did you miss me?

Sonya is deeply conflicted between the hate she feels for Kano, and Shang's words. The mute Monk withdraws. The two circle warily. Kano and Sonya trade blows. She batters his face with a quick series of round kicks. Kano lunges, misses, rolls, and comes up with a knife from his boot. He smiles.

KANO

Now this baby brings back memories.

SONYA

Let me guess. You used it to knife your mother in the back.

KANO

(grins)

Guess again. It put a big smile on your boyfriend... ear to ear.

Sonya's face goes white with rage. She searches for something to defend herself.

LIU

(grabs something)

Sonya!

Liu tosses her a pair of bamboo fighting sticks... escrimas... to defend herself as Kano expertly probes her defenses with the boot knife.

KANO

That's the spirit. I like 'em mean and feisty.

Sonya kicks him in the balls! Then she attacks with a flurry of blows, and the battle is on in earnest. Shang looks on with interest. The fight continues until both opponents are tired and sweating. Finally, she disarms him with the fighting sticks, and he uses his strength to break the bamboo batons. Bare handed, Kano uses his superior size and strength to gain an advantage.

LIU

Don't go head to head with him! Fight smart!

Sonya doesn't take her eyes off Kano, but she nods. When he moves in again, she uses aikido to nullify his charge.

LIU

That's it!

But Kano is a savvy street fighter. He knows aikido, too, and suddenly the tables are turned. He has Sonya in a powerful hammerlock.

SHANG

becomes tense. Kano looks to him for permission to kill her, knowing it won't be granted. Shang shakes his head.

RESUME BOUT

Kano looks like he just might do it anyway. He exerts more pressure on her neck. She brings a heel crushing down on his instep. He yowls in pain as she repositions a leg, swivels her feet and throws him off of her. She kicks him twice in the face, dazing him. Then, she does a springing handstand, catches Kano's neck between her legs and throws him to the ground, squeezing tighter and tighter, strangling him.

LIU

Sonya, that's what he wants!

SHANG

beams with pleasure. The same strange aura begins to form around him, the same dissonant music of voices in anguish.

SHANG

That's right. Finish him! Pay me
tribute with his death!

The aura becomes brighter, more intense. His claw hand begins to reach in to take Kano's warrior soul.

SONYA AND KANO

Sonya stares down at the struggling Kano, his face bright red, his exertions weakening. She could kill him now.

LIU

(pleading)
If you do it, Shang will own you.

She realizes he's right.

SONYA

No!

She releases Kano from the death grip. He flops weakly onto the ground, defeated. Sonya stands, looks down on him, then turns and walks away. Shang, returned to his normal form, steps in front of her, barring the way.

SHANG

You disappoint me. That isn't wise.

Raiden appears. He has seen everything.

RAIDEN

She doesn't answer to you, sorcerer.

Shang's eyes flash with anger, then he bows almost mockingly.

SHANG
Quite right, Lord Raiden. But one day
soon... she will.
(eyes sweep the humans
around him)
All of you will!

Ans Shang sweeps off. Liu approaches Sonya.

LIU
You okay?

She holds up her fists. He touches them with his.

85A EXT. GROUNDS - VARIOUS - DAY

In a brief, kinetic MONTAGE, we see that Liu's prediction about the fights is true. Several human combatants are shown in TIGHT CLOSE UP crashing to the ground, defeated by the warriors of Outworld.

DISSOLVE TO:

85B EXT. ISLAND - VARIOUS ANGLES - LATE AFTERNOON

The sun has swung through its arc and now throws long shadow from the buildings and statues. Suddenly, we hear it... a faint echo....

JOHNNY (O.S.)
Goro! Goro!

The island echoes with the cool, and the other fighters hear. The monks look curiously around.

JOHNNY (O.S.)
(echo)
Goro! Goro!

85C EXT. STATUARY GARDEN - LATE AFTERNOON

Johnny falls silent and waits among the long shadows of ancient warriors. Shang appears at the far end of the garden near the Great Hall.

SHANG
What do you want?

JOHNNY
An Oscar and a film with Michelle
Pfeiffer. But I'll settle for that big
four-armed sonofabitch.

SHANG
(amused)
You're challenging Goro?

JOHNNY

What? I need a written invitation?
Yeah, I'm challenging him. Here. Now.

SHANG

You're very foolish.

JOHNNY

That's what people say.

SHANG

Very well. I will grant your demand.
But as a former champion, I reserve the
right to challenge--

JOHNNY

Yeah, yeah. The winner. You got it!

SHANG

The winner... or another of my choosing,
at the place appointed by me.... For
the final battle.

RAIDEN (O.S.)

(voice like thunder)

No!

Raiden materializes, furious.

SHANG

The rules are quite clear, Lord Raiden.

RAIDEN

He didn't know!
(to Johnny)
Withdraw your challenge.

SHANG

Too late, I'm afraid. How do you say
it: 'A deal's a deal?'

Shang turns and walks away.

RAIDEN

What have you done?

JOHNNY

(defiant)

Exercised my own free will. Made a
choice. I thought you'd be pleased. Or
was that just a crock?

RAIDEN

Are you mocking me?

JOHNNY

(hard edged)

No. I'm telling you to go away. Get lost! This is our Tournament, remember! Mortal Kombat! We fight it!

Raiden stands mutely appraising Johnny. Behind him, other fighters, including Sonya and Liu have gathered.

LIU

(urgent)

What's he done?

RAIDEN

Made a choice. At least, one of you has understood!

KITANA

(as she passes; quietly)

Your turn will come.

The stillness is shattered by a terrible sound: Goro's ferocious roar! The crowd parts. Prince Goro appears in the tunnel entrance. He raises his arms and roars his savage challenge again!

JOHNNY

You're gonna hurt yourself, doing that.

Goro stops to consider the man in front of him. He reaches for the buckle to loosen his cape.

GORO

Strange. We've just met... and already I don't like you.

JOHNNY

If you don't like me now, wait till later.

IN THE STATUARY GARDEN

the mute Monk stands between the two fighters. The red sun is low in the sky, behind Johnny. Goro holds up one huge hand to shield his large eyes. Johnny removes his own dark sunglasses and offers them.

JOHNNY

Want to borrow these?

Goro takes the glasses and crushes them.

GORO

I'm going to enjoy dismembering you.

The Monk lowers his arms and moves quickly out of the way. The match has begun.

Johnny takes the two long objects from behind Kung Lao's statue - a pair of sectional staffs, attached by chain links. He whirls them impressively.

JOHNNY

Now we both have four arms and a long reach.

As if to prove the point, when Goro reaches in to grab Johnny, he gets his knuckles badly rapped by the whirling staffs. He pulls back with a grunt of pain, then charges, windmill fists flailing. Johnny does several quick back flips to avoid the onrush. He disappears behind a statue.

NEAR GARDEN

Liu and Sonya watch, puzzled.

SONYA

What's he doing?

LIU

Playing hide and seek.

RESUME FIGHT

Goro, disoriented by the long shadows, loses sight of Johnny, who dodges behind another statue. Suddenly one of the sectional staffs whistles through the air and wraps around Goro's wrist. Johnny uses the staff to hold the wrist in a "nutcracker" type grip. Johnny tightens the vice-grip on the wrist, breaking it! Goro yanks the sectional staff from Johnny's grasp. The crowd is startled by Goro's hellacious roar!

Johnny reappears atop the statue, then dives and rolls with Goro in hot pursuit. Goro holds his injured hand carefully away from Johnny, guarding it. Johnny makes his remaining sectional staff sing through the air, forcing Goro to respect the distance between them. The cheers from the crowd encourage Johnny.

GORO

That was very clever.

As he speaks, Goro lunges in, nearly catching Johnny off guard. Johnny dives, wraps the sectional staff around Goro's ankle, yanks hard, crushing the ankle and sending the monster sprawling face first onto the ground. With one of his lower arms, Goro reaches down and wrenches the second sectional staff from his ankle, hurling it over the cliff. Goro, seething with fury, rises and limps painfully toward his now unarmed opponent.

JOHNNY

moves in a crouch around the base of another statue. He doesn't see the long shadow of Goro appear behind him as the Shokan stealthily climbs up onto the statue. Goro springs! Johnny barely evades the massive body. Enraged, Goro corners Johnny, and a backhand fist sends him careening into a pedestal, knocking the wind out of him.

Johnny clutches his side in extreme pain and shuffles away from the slow moving Goro, who limps toward him with death in his eyes.

NEAR THE GARDEN

Raiden watches, his face a mask. Liu and Sonya fear the worst.

LIU

Fight your own fight, Johnny! Don't
fight him!

IN THE GARDEN

Johnny takes another punch to the body, reels back, and Goro lands a blow that sends Johnny flying. He lies there, unconscious.

SHANG

allows the gleam of pleasure come into his face. Then... the aura begins to grow around him. The chorus of the damned raise their hellish clamor.

AROUND THE GARDEN

The crowd implores Johnny.

LIU

Johnny! Get up!

SONYA

Johnny! Johnny please!

STATUARY GARDEN NEAR CLIFF

Goro scoops up Johnny's inert form with his two good lower arms. He raises his good upper fist to finish Johnny, but sees that won't be necessary. Goro knows what he must do, now. He turns toward Shang.

SHANG AND GORO

Shang's aura is now very bright, the dissonant music of the enslaved souls reaching all ears. Goro stands, war weary, before his master, not kneeling, a hint of defiance in his large black eyes. Shang sees. His talon-like hand reaches out. The aura around him is almost blinding... the dissonant clamor of the lost souls whirling invisibly within it cause Goro to turn his face away, squinting, fearful.

SHANG

Where is my tribute?

Goro goes down on one knee, holding Johnny's inert form up in offering to Shang, as his one good lower hand makes a halfhearted gesture of appeasement. Shang's visage shows his satisfaction. His hand reaches toward...

JOHNNY

who has seemed unconscious in Goro's grasp, but now suddenly comes to life as he is lifted to the Shokan's eye level. In one incredibly rapid motion, Johnny comes to life and lands a powerful karate punch right between Goro's eyes!

JOHNNY

(kiyai)

Aiyaah!

WIDER

Staggered, Goro loosens his grip on Johnny in pain and amazement, roaring until the statues tremble. Johnny grabs the long pony tail, loops it around Goro's thick neck, and swings himself onto Goro's back between the Shokan's massive shoulders, using his own body weight and leverage to slowly strangle him. Goro's arms cannot reach back to snatch Johnny off. He gasps, his tongue lolling in his mouth, unable to breathe or speak.

JOHNNY

What's the matter? Having a bad hair day?

Johnny increases his pressure on the strangle hold. Goro attempts to smash Johnny against a statue pedestal, then slumps to his knees. In a desperate move, he suddenly lunges backward, trying to roll over and crush Johnny under him. But Johnny leaps off, and now his attack on Goro is merciless, punch kick combinations rain down on the huge head, preventing him from getting back on his feet. Goro wheezes, trying to catch a breath, flailing with his good arms at Johnny, trying to regain his footing with one broken ankle. In a last lunge, he manages to pounce, nearly landing on Johnny who side steps. Goro misses him and rolls over the cliff! His upper hands manage to grab the edge of a rock outcropping, but before he can hoist himself back up, Johnny does a flip, and lands squarely on one of the hands with both heels, crushing it.

GORO

Bellows with pain and the crushed hand releases its grip. He now hangs suspended by his one good upper arm above the swirling clouds obscuring the beach far below. The good lower hand cannot reach up to help him regain the cliff edge. His own massive weight is now working toward his doom.

JOHNNY AND GORO

Johnny moves to the edge of the cliff and looks over. Below Goro, the clouds twist and whirl, seeming almost to reach up for him. A stiff wind tousles Johnny's hair. He doesn't gloat.

JOHNNY

In five centuries you've seen everything... except a good acting performance.

WIDER

Shang strides to the edge of the cliff, shocked and enraged.

SHANG

Finish him!

Goro realizes what this means. For the first time, we see his eyes dilate with fear.

GORO

No....

JOHNNY

So you can steal his soul? I've won.
That's enough.

Shang's face contorts with hatred.

SHANG

His soul now... Or yours later!

He is face to face with Johnny, but Johnny's calm visage shows no sign of fear. Johnny takes the discarded sectional staff in both hands, braces himself and dangles it to where Goro can grasp it with his good lower hand.

JOHNNY

Go on. Grab hold.

GORO

(weakening)

So I can slink back to my cave and die
in disgrace. I am a Shokan warrior!
We die in battle!

Johnny understands. The wind blows the clouds around below Goro, who still dangles over the chasm.

JOHNNY

You fought well.

Goro grunts. How many times has he said this, himself? Then he lets go of the outcropping! His huge body spins down, down, and plunges into the swirling mass of clouds.

NEAR CLIFF

Johnny approaches Raiden, who nods his approval. The wind is stiffening. Gray clouds begin to scud overhead. Raiden sees the abrupt change in the sky.

RAIDEN

Well done.

Just then there is a violent scream, not of fear, but anger.

SONYA (O.S.)

No! Let me go!

They turn to see

SONYA AND SHANG

Sonya is suspended in midair by some invisible force, that holds her, as in a net.

SHANG

I hereby exercise my right of challenge!
I challenge her!

RAIDEN

You're a coward, sorcerer! Stand and fight!

SONYA AND SHANG

Sonya is spinning now, and an invisibly cyclone kicks up dust and swirls it high in the air around her. Shang bows mockingly.

SHANG

The rules of The Tournament are quite clear, Lord Raiden. Mortal Kombat continues... I'm simply changing the place!

WIDER

The whirlwind grows larger, encompasses Shang as well, then - like a tornado, it whirls itself up into the low, flat ceiling of gray clouds.

JOHNNY

Sonya!

But she is gone. He rushes to Raiden.

JOHNNY

Where has he taken her?

RAIDEN

To the Emperor's castle in the wastelands of Outworld. Where I cannot follow.

LIU

But I can.

JOHNNY

Hey, I'm going, too.

Raiden nods. He turns to the other humans, all present.

RAIDEN

We must hurry! To the boat!

86 EXT. ISLAND - JUNK - DAY

Storm clouds sweep preternaturally low overhead, swallowing the junk as it rides at anchor with a last longboat full of human participants climbing aboard.

ON BEACH

Raiden stands on the beach with Liu and Johnny.

RAIDEN

I've got to take the others back, or they'll be trapped in Outworld. The cobalt mines of Shokan are a terrible place to die. I can only come for you after the final battle is won.

JOHNNY

Raiden.... Can Sonya beat Shang?

RAIDEN

No.

JOHNNY

There's gotta be something. We can't just quit on her.

RAIDEN

There is one last rule.... Shang neglected to mention it.

JOHNNY

What?

LIU

(remembers, brightens)

She has to accept the challenge.... Or there can be no final combat.

JOHNNY

But you know her.... She'll never back down. I've got to stop her! I can fight Shang! Tell me how to get to this... Outworld!

RAIDEN

(rueful)

You think you can beat Shang, but you can't even find him. Johnny Cage, you have played your part splendidly. But this battle you cannot win.

JOHNNY

Then who can?

Raiden doesn't speak, but his eyes drift to Liu, who understands.
Johnny lets this sink in.

JOHNNY

(to Liu)
I'm going with you.
(trace of humor)
I hope you know how to get there?

LIU

We're already there.

Johnny frowns, perplexed.

RAIDEN

(nods; small smile)
I have nothing further to teach you Liu
Kang. You possess the knowledge to
defeat Shang. All that is lacking now,
is the will.

He puts a fatherly hand on Liu's shoulders. There is a lightning bolt
and Raiden has vanished. The clouds swoop low, enveloping Johnny and
Liu in a heavy mist. The fog begins to blow away, revealing...

87 EXT. THE BEACH - OUTWORLD

The gray beach stones are the same, all else has changed. The cliffs
of the island and the stone stairway are gone. The slate beach gives
way to a blasted forest of gnarled trees and ancient trees. In the
distance a strange mountain rises above a desolate wasteland, as if a
tremendous inferno or lava flow had burned everything down to the bare
gray rocks.

JOHNNY

So, where are we, oh Chosen One?

LIU

Where we've always been....Outworld.
The island was the last connection to
home.... The figment of a formidable
imagination.

JOHNNY

Raiden's?

LIU

Or the Emperor's. It was created for
The Tournament. Now destroyed.

JOHNNY

(looks at gray desolation)
This is Outworld? I can see why they
would want a change of scenery.

They peer at the trees and the forbidding landscape toward the black
tower on the distant mountain.

LIU

It'll be dark soon. We should head for
that tower.

JOHNNY

You think it's the Emperor's castle?

LIU

If you were master of all you surveyed,
where would you put your castle?

JOHNNY

Good point.

They head up the beach, inland.

88 EXT. THE BLACK TOWER - FROM WINDOW - SUNDOWN

Brooding and ancient, it is hard to discern where the black mountain ends and the Tower begins. A slate road winds down from the Tower gates to a desolate plain below. To one side of the mountain, the brooding forest still grows almost to its base... the only living plants to be seen.

89 INT. TOWER - SUNSET

Sonya sits in the thick-walled window opening, illuminated by the last light of day. She wears black chains, but is otherwise unharmed. The mute Monk stands watching her. Sonya looks from the window to her chains, then at him. He stares at her placidly.

SONYA

What are you looking at, you
stitch-lipped sonofabitch?

The Monk remains impassive, then, slowly, his eyes turn to watch

LARGE OAKEN DOORS

off the outer circular corridor, leading to some inner sanctum. The doors begin to open outward on their own. Inside... is Nothingness! A complete and utter darkness. The Void. It is an absence of light so complete and demarcated that Sonya doesn't see it, until Shang Tsung backs slowly from the chamber, bowing - one part of his body in the light, and the rest in absolute Shadow! Finally he backs from the Darkness... or rather, It releases him. As if in gratitude, Shang goes to his knees, finally prostrates himself. Only then do the doors swing silently shut.

WIDER

Sonya, has felt the Dark Presence as well, and her mind is flooded with an unknown terror. But when the doors finally close, she comes out of the spell to notice not only Shang, but the Monk, prostrate on the floor.

SONYA

I've seen ass kissing in my time, but
you guys are world class.

Shang shakily regains his feet - and resumes his imperious demeanor.

SHANG

Your childish impertinence is beneath
the Emperor's notice. In time you will
learn respect for him... and all his
works.

SONYA

Who's going to teach me, you?

SHANG

I'm a very persuasive teacher.

SONYA

(unsettled; cracks wise)
So, the boss man wasn't thrilled with
the news, I guess. Did he chew you out,
or is he the brooding, silent type?

SHANG

Our Great Leader has no need for idle
chatter. What he doesn't like...
(near shudder)
He destroys.

SONYA

Do you expect me to cry and beg for
mercy, now?

SHANG

No, my dear. I expect you to fight
me... and lose!

SONYA

What if I refuse?

The mute Monk shifts uncomfortably, giving an obscure hint to Sonya
that she's on to something. Shang tries to mask his own discomfort at
this thought.

SHANG

You...? Back down from a challenge.
When have you ever done that? It's
simply not in your nature.

SONYA

What about Johnny Cage? He beat Goro,
and he'll come for me.

SHANG

I hope he does. Fighting a big
brute with pretensions of...

(MORE)

SHANG (con'td)
honor is one thing.... Fighting me is
something else, again.

SONYA
I noticed.

SHANG
If you want to spare him... you will
fight me... tomorrow, at dawn. And...
after I have entered the Realm of Earth
triumphantly with my Benevolent Master,
I will raise you up... my consort and my
queen.

SONYA
In which lifetime?

SHANG
Slave consort, if that's how you want
it. I'll lay the Realm of Earth at your
feet... or enough of it to keep you
occupied. We'll have fun.

SONYA
You're demented.

SHANG
Am I?

He starts to leave her.... Angry and desperate, she lashes out.

SONYA
And.... You're frightened!

SHANG
(hiding his disquiet)
Frightened? Of whom?

Shang turns and leaves.

90 EXT. OUTWORLD FOREST FRINGE - LIU - MOONRISE

A moon, five times larger than any moon ever seen in the Realm of Earth, and five times as bright, illuminates the desolate plain beyond the trees. Liu hides in the first line of giant, twisted trees, peering out.

A ROAD - LIU'S POV

The winding road is full of marching Shokan's - mere silhouettes in the moonlight - swinging one set of arms in perfect unison, carrying heavy battle axes slung behind their backs, upper arms draped over them like woodsmen. The figures are distant, but frightening.

RESUME LIU AND JOHNNY

who lies nearby, peering out.

JOHNNY

Tell me there aren't really a bunch of
Goro's out there?

LIU

A patrol from the Shokan army. We can't
use the road. We'll cut through the
forest.

They turn to inspect the towering trees, mere silhouettes as well.

JOHNNY

In all the books... travelling through
forests at night ranks right up there
with caves. Or don't you read, either?

LIU

You have a better idea?

JOHNNY

I will... eventually.

LIU

Come on.

Unsettled, peering suspiciously at the ominous trees, Johnny follows
after Liu, penetrating deeper into the forest. There is a movement...
a rustling. Johnny turns, looks, sees nothing, and hurries to catch
up with Liu.

91 INT. SONYA'S CELL - TOWER - NIGHT

The Monk has released Sonya from her chains. He now closes the door
on her and locks it. The cell is simple, with a meal spread out on a
wooden table. She walks around, frustrated. She then sits to eat,
opens a kettle and reaches in with a large spoon. As two twitching
antennae appear over the rim of the kettle, she slams the lid back
down, and shudders.

92 EXT. OUTWORLD FOREST - NIGHT

The immense moon illuminates our intrepid pair as they make their way
through the trees. The branches groan loudly...although there is not
even a rustle of wind.

JOHNNY

is disturbed by the sound, and looks up at the moon through the thick
canopy of branches.

JOHNNY

Notice anything funny about these trees?
Why are they making that noise?

Liu stops and puts up a hand. He closes his eyes, and hears, faintly, the sound of raspy breathing. Liu's hand shoots out from his side, and without opening his eyes, he grasps Reptile by the neck and pulls him from his perfectly camouflaged position.

LIU

Gotcha!

Reptile tries to spew acid, but Liu twists his neck around and it sprays away from him. Reptile thrashes and changes hews four, five six times... then finishes a ghastly moonlight white, red eyes staring defiantly. Reptile tries to claw Liu's eyes, squealing like a wild boar, but Liu grapples with him. The two spin and squirm across the forest floor, then Liu hurls him hard into the cleft of the ancient, blasted tree.

THE TREE

seems to hold Reptile in some invisible force field as he tries break away. Then, in the blink of an eye, his face and body are covered with rough bark, his hands reach out like branches, which then sprout leaves! Liu thinks its just another camouflage attempt.

LIU

Yeah! Like we can't still see you.

But there is something eerily real about this. Johnny approaches the bark-covered form and taps it. Then steps well back.

JOHNNY

Okay. All right. The tree ate him.

KITANA (O.S.)

You're learning the dangers of Outworld.
But you have much more to learn before
daybreak. Come.

They turn to see Kitana, in the moonlight looking luminous in her white garments.

LIU

Princess Kitana! You're not afraid of
the trees?

KITANA

They are old friends and wise
counselors. They will protect us until
we reach the tower. Shang plans to
fight your friend for the Final Combat.

JOHNNY

Sonya! Has she accepted?

KITANA

(shakes head)
Not yet. But Shang is persuasive. We
must hurry.

She turns and leads the way, deeper into the forest, so that the men have to hurry after her.

93 INT. SONYA'S CELL - NIGHT

The intense moonlight foils Sonya's attempts at sleep. She rises, paces, goes to the window.

THROUGH THE WINDOW

The desolate plain stretches out before her. Beyond it is the tree line of the Ancient Forest.

94 EXT. FOREST CLEARING - NIGHT

The blasted landscape oppresses Liu and Johnny as they keep up with Kitana.

LIU

What happened here?

KITANA

The same thing that will happen to your world, unless you prevent it. My father was the rightful ruler of Outworld. Then his best warriors lost ten Mortal Kombats, and the Emperor entered the Realm, killed my parents and adopted Me... to lay claim to the throne.

JOHNNY

Why didn't the people of Outworld rise up and fight him?

KITANA

The Emperor sent the Spreading Darkness over the land. It wiped out all memory of the past. The people forgot who they were.

LIU

(stunned)

I saw this in a dream. Only it was my Home.

KITANA

The dream is a warning. The reality depends on you. Before the Emperor enters Earth's portal, He will first send his armies, led by Shang, who will cast the Darkness before him.

(ominous)

Your soldiers will wander dazed from the battlefield. Your great universities will be razed to the ground...

(MORE)

KITANA (cont'd)
your libraries burned... So that no
one can relearn what has been forgotten.

The rising fury in Kitana's voice stuns Liu and Johnny.

KITANA
The strong will be enslaved, as they
were here. Shang, the Sorcerer, will
use their forced labor to engineer the
destruction of all that was good and
beautiful...
(her voice charged with
emotion)
Those unfit for hard labor - the old and
the children - will be exterminated.
Their burial mound will rise higher than
your tallest mountains. And on it the
Emperor will build his castle as their
only monument!

She stops, unable to continue.

LIU
(near whisper)
How can one person stop such horror?

KITANA
You have the same power to save the
world as Shang has to enslave it. He was
born a mortal and can still be
destroyed.

JOHNNY
(respectful)
Ah... I think the man's question
was... "How?"

KITANA
Look not to the weapon, but the hand
that wields it. Your eyes must burn
away all fear, all doubt... to see what
is true!

Liu and Johnny absorb all this, as the morning mist begins to rise
from the forest floor.

KITANA
If I did not believe you could do this,
Liu Kang. I would not have helped you.

She leads off; the trio strides across the clearing toward the looming

MOUNTAIN OF THE DEAD

and the Black Tower built upon it.

95 EXT. BLACK TOWER - DAWN

The gates to the Black Tower, guarded by Barakas, are thrown open for a procession of black cowled monks who make their way up the winding road from the plain below. Three more cowled figures fall in behind and enter before the gates are again closed.

95A INT. BLACK TOWER DUNGEON - ARENA - DAYBREAK

Below the conical tower is a round, mandala-like arena of mosaic design made from thousands of smooth, flat stones. At the center, in black onyx, is the emblem of Mortal Kombat, illuminated by the first shafts of light through a high windows around the dungeon. Black-cowled monks encircle the arena floor. Doors are thrown open and Sonya is nearly dragged in chains down winding stairs into the dungeon.

From the tower above, a huge drum sounds a solemn cadence, as Shang Tsung, dressed simply in black, is escorted by another cortege of monks.

SCENE 96 OMITTED

As the procession reaches the circle, three black-cowled monks step to the center of the arena and wait. They remove Sonya's chains.

SONYA

I won't fight you, Shang! I'm not playing into your game, whatever it is.

SHANG

There is no one else. The Realm of Earth will forfeit the Tournament, and its portals will open to our great emperor.

SONYA

No! I-- My friends are coming!

SHANG

Hoping against hope is such an endearing, human trait. I'm touched. Really.

(to monks)

Take her back upstairs. The emperor will be overjoyed.

Two of the cowled monks already in the circle step forward.

SONYA

No! Wait!
(hesitates; despondent)
I'll....

SHANG

Yes?

SONYA
(firm conviction)
My friends will come.

Now one of the monks throws back his cowl. It's Johnny.

JOHNNY
They're here already.

Sonya is thrilled. Shang is surprised. Several of his escorts move forward, but Shang holds up a hand to stop them.

SHANG
Right on cue. So much like an actor.
Are you challenging me?

The second monk now throws back his cowl: Liu.

LIU
No. I am.

Shang's face falls. Liu, Johnny and Sonya see it. Shang doesn't want to fight him.

SHANG
(enraged)
Seize them!

The escort of monks once more surges forward, but the third cowed figure in the circle now reveals herself: Kitana!

KITANA
Would you interfere with The Tournament!
And betray our... benevolent emperor.
In his great wisdom, he knows that
Mortal Kombat cannot be won by
treachery!

The monks fall back before the regal presence of the princess, her face flushed with righteous anger.

KITANA
Your stupidity will lose for all time
the keys to the Realm of Earth!

At that moment the entire Tower resonates like a gigantic drum, as if monstrous fist has crashed down upon the world. The doors leading to the Tower above are blown open by a great wind which sweeps through the dungeon.

IN THE CIRCLE

The monks cringe and hide their faces. The wind subsides.

KITANA
Our Beloved Master knows I speak the
truth.

0024

NOT FOR DUPLICATION

SHANG

Our Beloved Master also knows you are a
traitor! He can read your deceitful
heart!

KITANA

(solemn)

He reads what is there, but he cannot
change it.

Shang realizes he has been outwitted. Liu steps forward.

LIU

(proclaims)

I am Liu Kang, ancestor to Kung Lao! I
challenge you to Mortal Kombat! Do you
accept, or yield?

The monks quickly withdraw from the mandala. Kitana, Liu, and Sonya
draw back as well, leaving Shang and Liu alone.

SHANG

closes his eyes. His aura once again begins to glow around him.

SHANG

I accept.

WIDER

But this time, the voices of hundreds of warrior souls - louder and
more tormented than anything we have yet heard, seem to swirl around
the mandala, echoing off the round stone walls with an absolutely
deafening din! The circle of stones on the arena floor suddenly
begins to separate along jagged lines, opening into several deep pits
with long spikes waiting to impale anyone who should fall into them.
With the whirling, reverberating cacophony of lost souls, growing ever
louder as they shout their pain and hatred, calling out a terrible
warning to Liu in many, many tongues, Liu seems disoriented, and for a
moment... terrified!

JOHNNY, SONYA, KITANA

are forced to the edge of the mandala, astonished. Johnny covers his
ears.

JOHNNY

(shouting to be heard)

What is that sound?

KITANA

Hundreds of warrior souls crying out. A
thousand years of victories. The source
of all Shang's power.

SHANG

stands at the center of the mandala near the gaping pits. A spectral soul inhabits his body... he transforms into

A JAPANESE SAMURAI

who sits crosslegged at the very center of the arena, back to Liu, calm, eyes closed, waiting. Although the Spectral Cyclone of souls is invisible, the deafening sound of dissonant voices whirls around the arena, disorienting Liu as he moves along a narrow stone path toward the figure. Twice he nearly teeters into the spiked pits. Then he closes his eyes, waits, composes himself. He is ready.

WIDER

The Samurai Master rises, turns, bows, and the fight begins. Liu uses a combination of many disciplines to mount an attack. The two combatants battle long and hard, teetering several times over the pit. The Master's movements are strong and fluent. He waits for Liu's attacks... seems to anticipate every move and counter it. Liu is covered in sweat. He contemplates his next move, then stops, ponders... and waits....

JOHNNY, KITANA, SONYA

The three watch in surprise.

JOHNNY

What's he doing?

KITANA

Learning from his opponent. Very wise.

RESUME FIGHT

The spectral, invisible voices seem to mute, their chant becomes more rhythmic, as if they, too, are waiting for something. The Samurai Master allows just a flash of impatience play over his features. Liu has adopted his strategy. Finally, he attacks. Liu doesn't budge until the last possible millisecond, then - with movements as fluid as his adversaries - he hurls the Samurai Master toward the pit! The voices scream in near unison, a shock wave of noise, and

SHANG

reappears, does an aerial somersault and lands on a nearby walkway, separated from Liu by a long trench of spikes.

SHANG

My compliments. But that was just a warmup... light entertainment to amuse our gracious and sporting Emperor.

LIU

Well, I'm all warmed up, now.

SHANG

Excellent.

The voices once more become loud and agitated, as Shang transforms into

A DARK AGES WARLORD

his huge silhouette framed against light from the windows as it glints off his chain mail armor. The Warlord draws a long broad sword, which he wields with incredible strength, making it whistle effortlessly through the air. The Warlord moves along the stone walkway toward Liu, letting the sword whirl and flash as he comes. Liu's eyes betray fear. Then he takes a deep breath and begins to focus as the Warlord approaches... first, only on the dazzling, whirling sword... then....

ON THE HANDS

which wield the sword.

WIDER

The Warlord suddenly stops his whirling sword, and brings it down to decapitate Liu, who uses Jujitsu. His own hands flutter birdlike to intercept, not the sword, but the hands that hold it. His gesture nearly throws the Warlord into the pit. Recovering, the Warlord lunges straight in to impale Liu, who steps aside and again throws the Warlord to the narrow walkway. A third time the Warlord charges, enraged, sword held high to cleave Liu down the middle, but Liu ducks, and using his feet, hurls the Warlord over his head, sending him hurtling toward the spiked pit behind him as the voice of the damned souls reach a crescendo! The Warlord resumes the form...

SHANG TSUNG

His face twists into a taunting smile for Liu, who is once again prevented from pressing his attack by the gaping pit.

SHANG

(he scowls at Kitana)

I see you've been coached by your new
nursemaid!

And with that, the voices again clamor, as Shang transforms into...

TWO HUGE TIGERS

who snarl and begin to stalk Liu from across the pit, flanking him as he retreats back down his own narrow walkway.

SONYA, KITANA, JOHNNY

watch. Sonya is disgusted.

SONYA

Every time Liu starts to win, Shang uses
magic.

KITANA

Magic is only an illusion. He must see
beyond it.

JOHNNY

This illusion can eat him for breakfast.

RESUME FIGHT

One tiger leaps easily across the pit in front of Liu. The second tiger leaps to the walkway behind him. Slowly, they begin to close the distance. Liu sees that they are about to pounce. He times his own move until the two tigers spring!

LIU

leaps out over the pit, his hands grasping the next ramp, and swinging perilously over the spikes waiting to impale him as...

THE TWO TIGERS

leap at nothing, collide... and merge into a blinding explosion of

WHITE LIGHT

which hovers at the center of the arena. Shang's enslaved souls suddenly go silent, voices stilled! The light dims....

CHAN

stands before his brother. He smiles lovingly.

WIDER

Liu is disarmed by this unexpected apparition. Chan walks slowly toward him, the warm smile in place. Liu is as transfixed by the hypnotic eyes as the junk captain was by the giant cobra's. He begins backing away from the apparition.

CHAN

Liu. It's me. I've come to help you.

LIU

(disoriented)

Chan.

CHAN

Raiden sent me.

LIU

No.

Liu is backing toward the spiked pit, unaware.

CHAN

I died for you.

Liu is caught in "Chan's" mesmerizing stare, listens to his soft voice. He is only yards from the pit, now.

LIU
(nearly hypnotized)
Chan. It was my fault.

CHAN
Come with me.

LIU
(almost under the spell)
Yes.

CHAN
Give me your hand.

97 INTERCUT WITH JOHNNY, KITANA, SONYA

As they register their reactions.

CHAN
They've all lied to you. I will show
you what is true!

Chan holds out his hand toward his brother, only yards away.

CHAN
We can be together, now.

Liu turns his head, startled by these words.

LIU
(murmurs)
Let my eyes burn away all fear and
guilt....

CHAN
(slightly worried)
Look at me.

LIU
(fighting his inner demon)
No!

Chan steps forward, only moments from shoving Liu onto the spikes
behind him in the dark pit.

CHAN
Liu....

Liu is nearly under Shang's spell. With his last will power, he shuts
his eyes right, repeating a mantra to himself.

LIU
Let me see what is true!

Liu opens his eyes.

LIU'S POV SHANG/CHAN

At first, Liu sees only his brother Chan...

CHAN

Brother....

But then, a mere shadow at first, he begins to see Shang Tsung through the illusion. Shang's image grows brighter, overwhelming the magical spell until Liu sees not his brother's hand reaching out in friendship, but the long, talon-like fingers reaching straight for Liu's chest... as if to pierce it and pull his heart out, or wrench his soul from his body.

WIDER

Liu looks up just as "Chan" lunges to push Liu into the pit, but Liu's hand comes up even faster and grasps the hand. With all of his determination and strength, he begins to brush it. "Chan's" kind features melt away into the pained grimace of Shang, eyes glowing malevolently, fangs bared! The sounds from the unseen Spectral Cyclone begins to rotate faster and faster, as if energized with excitement. There is a babble of voices in many languages, hard to distinguish what is being said. The noise is again deafening.

Shang manages to break Liu's grasp, but Liu is now in full counterattack, using all his phenomenal skills as a fighter to force Shang back. The spectral babble of voices has now unified into one cry, from many voices. "Finish Him!" Shang hears them, and is bewildered.

LIU

You hear them, Shang! All the souls
you've stolen. The voices of your
slaves. They've turned against you!
Release them!

The voices of the invisible warrior souls whisper to Liu: "Finish Him." They no longer seem to whirl like a mad cyclone, but hover in need anticipation.

SHANG

(defiant)

Never! They are mine. And so are you.

And with that, Shang mounts a last, ferocious counterattack. For a brief few moments, it looks as if the sheer momentum of the assault will drive Liu back into the spiked pit. But at the last possible instant, Liu diverts the charge, and Shang's own elan carries him over the edge. He plummets into the deepest pit. Liu is on his knees, gasping for breath. He peers over the edge. It's over.

LIU

(near exhaustion)

Flawless victory.

Then, he rises and turns.

WIDER

Johnny, Sonya, and Kitana see it before Liu. Something is happening in the pit behind him... shafts of light, some ethereal presence. Liu stops, sensing it, as well. As he turns.

AN IMMENSE SPECTRAL CYCLONE

whirls from the pit, rises, to fill the high ceilinged dungeon.... For the briefest of moments we see the vaporous visages of dozens of warriors, mouths shouting with joy. Then the cyclone disintegrates. Individual souls float free, rising, spinning, the spectral music of their many voices forming some strange harmony now, as the ectoplasmic vision streams through the high open windows... free! Only one spectre remains....

CHAN

The sepctre of his brother does not smile deceitfully, as before. He hovers close.

INCLUDE LIU

Liu is moved to tears.

LIU

Brother. It's really you.

CHAN

It's really me. I can see the sacred flame, Liu. It's burning bright, inside you.

Liu reaches out to the spectre. Chan extends a hand. They cannot touch. Both smile. Liu lowers his hand first.

LIU

Go in peace, my brother.

And the spectre of Chan slowly rises, dissipating like the other spirits, rising, rising... gone.

WIDER

Liu joins his friends, and Kitana. Johnny hugs his friend to him, unable for once in his life to find the words. A moment later, Sonya does the same. Then...

LIU

Let's go home.

98 EXT. LIU KANG'S VILLAGE - DUSK

On the hill above the temple, the beacon fire burns joyfully on the Altar of Light. The village is in the midst of an enormous celebration. Among the cheerful and vivacious villagers, Sonya and Johnny walk side by side. They are both happy.

JOHNNY

Look, you probably think I came to
rescue you in Outworld, because of some
male pride thing, but....

SONYA

I know why you came.

JOHNNY

You do?

There is a look in her eye that hadn't been there before. Johnny
can't look away from it. To his amazement, she leans in and kisses
him gently. After his initial reaction, he returns the kiss.

ON ALTAR OF LIGHT

Raiden, stands near the Grandfather, both smiling and waving at the
celebrating throngs below.

GRANDFATHER

I knew he could do it!

RAIDEN

(disingenuous)

So did I. Never had a moment's doubt.

Raiden's expression seems to say otherwise as the Grandfather glances
sideways at him... but who is he to question a god!

99 EXT. OUTSIDE VILLAGE

Kitana and Liu talk as they walk along the dikes of the rice paddy,
the beacon and the lanterns of the village reflect on the still
waters. The noise of celebration is more muted as it carries across
to them.

LIU

Stay here. Don't go back.

KITANA

I can't. My people need me to lead
them. Your world is safe... mine isn't.

LIU

Then I'll go back to Outworld with you.
I'll help you fight the Emperor.

KITANA

You saved your world. By defeating
Shang you have given us hope for ours.
But only the people of Outworld can
save it.

LIU

I... I want to see you again.

KITANA
(flash of humor; teasing)
I don't know. What do the legends say?

LIU
I think from now on...
(bending toward her)
We make our own legends.
(then, tenderly)
Kitana....

She puts a gentle finger to his lips to keep him from saying more, and kisses him. Then she leaves. Raiden suddenly walks up behind Liu, smiling. Liu notices him.

LIU
(worried)
Am I going to see her again?

RAIDEN
(teasing)
Oh, I suppose you'll bump into her again, someday.

LIU
I won't wait long.

RAIDEN
(raises an eyebrow)
Those who look for trouble, seldom wait long.....
(mutters wryly)
If he's not off saving a world, somewhere, he gets bored!
(then)
There are more adventures ahead. And, knowing you... you'll managed to drag me into them... and those new friends of yours.

Johnny smiles at Raiden's sly way of twisting things.

LIU
Good. The sooner the better.

Raiden shakes his head, then turns to look at the magnificent beacon fire on the hilltop. Liu turns to watch it as well.

RAIDEN
(disapproving)
You're a very impatient man, Liu Kang...

RAIDEN
(then; confides)
It's what I've always liked about you!

Liu shoots a surprised look at Raiden, who smiles without taking his eyes from the beacon fire.

THE BEACON FIRE

burns brightly, sending sparks into the night sky. It fades into the Mortal Kombat logo as we...

SCENE 100 OMITTED

FADE OUT.

THE END