

THE GOLDEN CHILD

by

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SECOND DRAFT
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"But down these mean streets a man must go who is not himself mean, who is neither tarnished nor afraid. The detective in this kind of story must be such a man. He is the hero; he is everything. He must be a complete man and a common man and yet an unusual man. He must be, to use a rather weathered phrase, a man of honor -- by instinct, by inevitability, without thought of it, and certainly without saying it. He must be the best man in his world and a good enough man for any world."

Raymond Chandler

FADE IN

SOUND: The eerie CHANT of a Buddhist ritual.

PICTURE: A child's face. The face is suffused in a soft golden light, the light of a thousand butter lamps shining through a haze of incense.

PULL BACK to reveal the CHILD, perhaps 5, who wears the traditional peaked hat of a Tibetan Lama. He is dressed in golden robes. He sits in the lotus posture on a golden cushion.

CONTINUE PULLING BACK to reveal the main hall of the monastery.

Four presiding officials stand just behind the seated boy.

Two rows of facing monks in purple ceremonial robes sit at perfect attention down the length of the hall.

A LEGEND comes up on the SCREEN:

TIBET
PRESENT DAY

A MOUNTAIN PATH

One by one, mounted on shaggy tailed Tibetan ponies, a sinister group moves up a narrow mountain path.

WE WATCH as they file past...

FU, the monkey man. A flat simian face, hair growing low on his forehead in a widow's peak, his resemblance to a monkey is unmistakable. Ominously coiled around his chest is a nine sectioned steel whip, one of the most vicious weapons of the Chinese martial arts.

KHAN. A Tibetan sorcerer dressed in an apron and robe ornamented with carved human bones. His face is stony and impassive. He carries a spear.

TWO TIBETAN MERCENARIES, a pair of rough looking men in sheepskin chubas. Suspended by a staff between their two ponies, they carry a strange steel contraption.

SARDO NUMSPA, dominating the group. Dark with black hair, he is at least half a head taller than any of the others. Dressed like a modern Italian count in the most stylish European clothing. His elegant appearance is accentuated by the cloth overcoat he wears draped over his shoulders.

The evil eunuch YU. Dressed in the clothes of a 19th Century Mandarin courtier. He carries an ancient Chinese short crossbow made of aluminium and fiberglass.

Two more TIBETAN MERCENARIES armed with daggers and swords.

TOMMY TONG. Chinese, in his twenties, dressed in a Grateful Dead T-shirt and WWII leather flight jacket. Crossed over his back are two zebra skin sheathes holding Chinese semi-circular swords.

TIL. A huge man with a large pad-like leather callus on his forehead. He is apparently weaponless.

He is the last of the raiding party (for that is what they are).

BACK IN THE HALL

CHANTING... A silver bell CLANGS and the chanting suddenly stops.

The presiding official motions to the side of the hall.

A monk carries out a tray containing four shiny toy balls made of multicolored thread.

He holds them out to the child.

Without hesitation, the child reaches out and touches one of the balls.

A flicker of excitement shines in the eyes of the officials. The chief among them nods to the monk holding the tray.

The attendant puts the ancient ball down next to the child and goes off with the other three.

SOUND CUT -- RAPID SERIES OF SHOTS

WHOOSH!THUP!... One of the guards at the post on the mountain path drops to the ground, an arrow in his heart.

The steel whip SLASHES into the FRAME, coils around a guard's throat, yanks him off his feet, snapping his neck.

Tong drops from above. Shhhh-THAP!... his semi-circular sword cuts down another guard.

BACK IN THE HALL

The attending monk holds out a second tray. Four sets of Tibetan rosary beads. The child glances briefly at the beads... then reaches up and takes the rosary from around the monk's neck and puts it over his own.

A MURMUR of astonishment from the monks in the hall.

All eyes turn to the presiding official... He nods confirmation... The child is right.

The excitement in the hall builds...

SOUND CUT -- RAPID SERIES OF SHOTS

Whhsss-THUP!... Another guard falls, a steel throwing knife in his chest.

Til reaches into FRAME and grabs a guard by the throat. THWAP!... he smashes his callused forehead into the guard's face.

BACK IN THE MAIN HALL

The head official motions and again a monk steps forward holding out a wooden tray. On it, four dead birds. They lie on their sides, their tropical plumage folded against their bodies, their stiff legs outstretched.

The child reaches out and touches one... it BURSTS up into the air. The child reels back, a pleased smile on his face.

The entire hall watches as the resurrected bird flies toward the rafters.

Amazement, tears of joy, embraces, and the murmuring over and over of the words, "Gompen Tarma" (the Golden Child).

With a beautiful TRILLING song, the bird flies across the darkened ceiling toward the massive steel studded doors.

CRASH!!!!... The doors of the temple entrance slam open... there outlined in the doorway is the raiding party.

A BEAT... and everything is mayhem... the men in the doorway dash into the room cutting down everything in their path... the steel whip LASHES out, snagging a monk, ripping him off his feet... the WHOOSH of the semi-circular sword as it drops another monk... an arrow ZINGS across the room and THUMPS into one of the officials...

Sardo Numspa, weaponless, walks calmly through the carnage... he approaches the child... he looks down at the little boy robed in gold... a self satisfied expression spreads across his face...

The child looks around frightened, but turns back to Sardo determined to be brave. Good and Evil... It is a confrontation as old as time.

All around, monks are meeting their death.

A loose arrow flies through the air, headed straight for the boy... as it approaches, it veers off as if deflected by an invisible force. There is a power that protects this child.

Sardo turns after having watched the strange course of the arrow. He motions toward the doorway and two of the Tibetan mercenaries hurry in, carrying the large metal contraption suspended from the heavy staff.

The dozen arms of the contraption SNAP outward, creating an opening at the bottom.

SARDO
(sternly to the men with the cage)
Don't let him touch you!

Sardo turns back to see...

Khan spears one of the red-robed officials. As he does so, he trips over a falling monk and tumbles to the stone floor close to where the boy is seated.

The Golden Child reaches out and touches him gently on the arm.

Khan's expression undergoes a strange transformation: bliss, tenderness, a burst of understanding. It hardens into sudden resolve.

Khan leaps to his feet and darts out with his spear, impaling one of the Tibetan mercenaries holding the staff. The other jumps back letting the contraption CLANK to the ground.

Khan stands in front of the Golden Child ready to protect the child with his life.

He anxiously scans the room... Tong is coiling the steel whip... Yu raises his crossbow...

Khan looks around desperately... Sardo stands in front of him, regarding him silently...

Khan leaps forward jabbing the spear at Sardo...

Just as the spear tip pierces his custom-made silk shirt, Sardo vanishes!

Khan looks around... To his amazement, Sardo stands calmly staring at him from the other end of the hall, far out of range.

An arrow THUDS into Khan's chest and he tumbles over dead.
Sardo coolly surveys the scene...

SARDO
No witnesses.

The three remaining hired Tibetans strike down the final official and the last living terrified monk.

Sardo makes a sign with his hand...

Tong, the Monkey Man, and Yu stand at the three Tibetans' backs. WHOOSH! SHUUUT! THWAP!... Simultaneously sword, arrow, and whip sail through the air. The Tibetans drop to the ground, never having seen what killed them.

SARDO
(confirming the fact)
No witnesses.

Til and the Monkey Man pick up the steel contraption, carefully lower it over the Golden Child, and SNAP it shut, encasing the little boy inside.

They hoist it gently in the air...

Sardo nods. He leads the way out.

CLOSE ON: The face of the Golden child as he looks out of the steel cage...

HIS POV: Everything in the room is dead... except, perched high in the rafters... the tropical bird he brought to life....

The bird looks back at the child and tilts its head.

An understanding passes between them...

CLOSE UP: The worried FACE of the GOLDEN CHILD as he is carried out through the massive temple doors.

FADE OUT:

WHITE OUT AND THEN DOWN

HONKING. A sun drenched street. Santa Monica and La Brea at noon. A swelter of high power wires, telephone poles, revolving gas signs and billboards.

A stack of cars shimmers in the heat and exhaust.

Through the dusty windshield of a late 60s blue Impala the CAMERA isolates CHANDLER JARRELL. He's chewing gum.

He looks around... quick, sharp glances that take in everything. He's working.

TO HIS RIGHT: A Rastafarian in long dreadlocks.

TO HIS LEFT: A man in a duck costume waves wildly from in front of the grand opening of a fast food joint. This is LA... where anything fits.

MINUTES LATER

Chandler shoves his car door shut and jay walks across Santa Monica Boulevard toward Roy's Hamburger Shack.

Roy's is orange, the building, the awning, tables, umbrellas, fence along one side... all orange.

On a paper shredded bit of orange wall that serves as Roy's bulletin board, Chandler pins up a one-sheet.

REWARD: for information leading to the recovery of Cheryl Mosely, 16.

The picture is a yearbook shot of a shyly smiling clean-cut teenager.

Chandler looks around... out in the dazzling light of the parking lot, two young guys in bun hugging jeans are leaning in the window of a black Caddy tastefully underflecked in gold.

In the orange shade under the umbrellas... a girl in a sex wax T-shirt mindlessly gulps down a hamburger... a muscular guy with a stylishly razor slashed T-shirt prods a half dead cockroach back and forth in front of his styrofoam cup... a couple of zonked out girls with stars and crescents painted on their faces stare out into space... a guy in a sailor outfit looks up at Chan and glares hostilely...

CHAN'S FACE: He doesn't think much of his world.

SANTA MONICA NEAR WESTERN

Chan walks up Santa Monica and cuts into a porno shop which advertises in bold red letters: LIVE NUDE DANCING.

INSIDE INT. SIX 04.6

A bulky guy sits at the desk behind a machine that dispenses tokens.

Chandler, chewing his gum, comes through the front door.

He holds up the Cheryl Mosely one-sheet to the guy.

CHANDLER
Mind if I put this up?

HULK
Suit yourself.

Chandler looks behind the door.

CHANDLER
What happened to the ones I put here
last week?

HULK
Who the hell knows. Maybe some of the
freaks we've got coming through here take
'em home to jerk off in.

CHANDLER
You seen a kid--

HULK
I told you last time, we've got no underage
stuff here.

Chandler pins the poster behind the door, smiles at the
guy who shoots him a very unwelcome look, and goes out.

The hulk pulls himself out of his chair and walks over
behind the door and rips the poster off the wall.

CRASH!... The door flies open slamming the guy into the
wall.

The guy starts to call out. Chan slams it again and all
we hear from behind the door is GROANING.

Three figures dash into the end of the hall and throw
open the back door and race out.

Chandler dashes after them.

CHANDLER
MARY BETH! MARY BETH, I WANT TO TALK TO
YOU!

Chandler comes out into the light at the back of the
store.

Running across the parking lot is Mary Beth in a gold lame
halter top and pants that zip all the way around. Running
on either side of her are two street tough guys in their
early twenties.

They disappear up the alley.

Chan fires after them.

They burst out of the alley into the street.

The BLARE of horns and brakes as traffic does its best to miss them.

On the other side, the threesome disappears around a brick building.

Chan tears around the side of the building. One of the toughs leaps out and rolls a garbage can right in front of him.

Chan hits the can at full speed, falls forward, and skids along the sidewalk on his hands.

The tough darts into the alley.

Chan jumps to his feet shaking his stinging hands.

Toward the end of the block a foot disappears in an apartment building door.

The tough rips around a corner and joins Mary Beth and the other guy in the alley that leads up the length of the block.

RAPID SERIES OF SHOTS

Chan charges through the door of the apartment building.

Mary Beth and the two guys dash up the alley.

An apartment door SPLINTERS as Chan shoulders his way through it.

Flagging but running hard, the threesome race toward the top of the alley.

Suddenly a fire escape ladder CLANKS into FRAME, and Chan leaps off the end of it, knocking one of the toughs off his feet. Chan fires around and lays the second guy out with a right cross.

Chandler and Mary Beth stand there looking at each other, both breathing hard.

Mary Beth glowers at Chandler.

MARY BETH

You can take me back to my parents, but you can't make me like it.

CHANDLER

It's not my job to make you like it.

A beat...

MARY BETH
(softly)
So when we going?

CHANDLER
(bent over, his lungs pumping wildly)
Give me a minute.

Chan, still catching his breath, looks at the brick wall next to him where a few deteriorating one sheets are pasted. He reaches in his pocket, pulls out one of the Cheryl Mosely posters, and, using the gum out of his mouth, adheres it to the wall.

SLOW MOVE IN on the black and white face of the missing teenage girl.

QUICK MATCH DISSOLVE

CHERYL'S FACE in color. Lifeless. WIDEN OUT to taken in her nude body lying in the dried brush of a Southern California hillside.

Chan, a Polaroid camera in his hand, flanked by BOGGS, black, sergeant LAPD, looks down at the body of Cheryl Mosely. In the b.g. a line of railroad tie stairs lead down to a modest Studio City home.

BOGGS
That her?

CHANDLER
Yeah. Cheryl Mosely.

BOGGS
How long she been missing?

CHANDLER
About three weeks.

Chandler snaps a shot of the body. The picture WHIRS out in his hand.

Chan crouches down... on the girl's thigh is a small tattoo -- a yellow dragon. He snaps a close-up.

BOGGS
Want to see the rest?

CHANDLER
Yeah, sometimes the parents want to know.

MOVING DOWN THE STAIRS

CHANDLER

Got anything?

BOGGS

Not much. Three days ago the rental sign goes down and a white truck backs over the lawn, right up to the front door. The neighbors hear this continual "low murmur" night and day. Then at ten o'clock last night the white truck pulls up again and the murmuring stops.

CHANDLER

Anybody get the plates.

BOGGS

No plates. So the next morning one of the neighbors comes out to shut up his dog who won't come down the hill. He looks over the fence, and finds the body.

CHANDLER

Who rented the place?

BOGGS

She did, by phone, in cash.

Chandler and Boggs step aside so two white clad paramedics can carry a gurney up the hill.

CHANDLER

The neighbor got an alibi.

BOGGS

Come on Chan! He's a CPA and a dog owner for Christ's sake. Don't you trust anybody?!

Chandler considers...

CHANDLER

Nope.

BACK ROOM

Chan stands next to Boggs in a back room of the house.

Chan looks around...

Arcane red letters are painted all over the walls. (the bars, attached circles and crescents of Sanscrit or a related language).

Chan notices something on the floor. He stoops down... shadowed by the light from the back window, slight impressions in the rug. Twelve broad lines radiating from a hollow center.

Boggs crouches down and takes a look.

CHANDLER
You know what made them?

Boggs shakes his head in the negative.

Chan snaps a picture... rises and starts to photograph the walls...

BOGGS
You take that referral I sent you?

CHANDLER
Nope.

BOGGS
Easy job.

CHANDLER
Yeah.

BOGGS
You only take the kid cases, huh, Chan?

CHANDLER
Yeah.

BOGGS
Yeah.

BOGGS' FACE: Watching Chan, thinking about the kind of guy Chan is and what that costs him.

FRONT ROOM

Chan stands alone in a front room of the house... Empty, no sign of habitation.

A large front window lets light into every corner.

Chan walks to the window and looks out...

A yellow police tape stretches across the lawn. On the other side of the quiet residential street, nervous little clumps of neighbors have gathered in front of their homes. A little way down the street an old Chinese man and a young Chinese woman are talking with a Korean gardener in front of his truck.

Chan watches a second...

The gardener gestures toward the house and the young woman turns around. She is beautiful.

Chan watches her...

She notices him...

They watch each other... watching each other...

Chandler breaks it off, turns from the window, and walks toward the kitchen.

IN THE KITCHEN

Chandler looks down at a pot of oatmeal that sits on the stove.

A skin has hardened on the cold oatmeal.

Something in the oatmeal catches Chandler's eye.

He reaches in and pushes the congealed oatmeal away from the side of the pot.

Red liquid collects in the crack... blood.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. STREET - DAY

Eagle Rock. A little tree lined street. Every few feet the vegetation stained concrete is buckled by the gnarled roots of the old trees.

Chandler accompanies MR. and MRS. MOSELY along the sidewalk toward their house. They've just returned from Cheryl's funeral.

They turn up the walkway to one of the little houses.

Mrs. Mosely's done her best to look respectable at her daughter's burial with clothes that haven't seen the light of day in 10 years.

Mr. Mosely turns with the screen door in his hand.

MOSELY

Well, I guess that's the end of that.
(to Chandler) I owe you money?

CHANDLER

I'll send you a bill.

MR. MOSELY
I'm sure you will.

He opens the door and goes in the house.

Mrs. Mosely stands in the walkway with Chan.

MRS. MOSELY
He doesn't mean it like that. He loved Cheryl so much. It's just that he had such high expectations of her. She tried but...

Chandler nods his head slowly in sympathy.

MRS. MOSELY
Mr. Jarrell, I want you to continue with the case. I want you to find the people who killed Cheryl.

CHANDLER
Excuse me, Ma'am, but--

Mrs. Mosely, determined, breaks in and pushes bravely on.

MRS. MOSELY
Here's 320 dollars. It's mine, I saved it up myself. I want you to find Cheryl's killer.

CHANDLER
Mrs. Mosely. I can understand how you feel, but the police will be doing that.

MRS. MOSELY
Mr. Jarrell, look me right in the eye and tell me you honestly think the police are going to find the ones who killed Cheryl.

Chan looks her in the eye but doesn't say anything.

MRS. MOSELY
Mr. Jarrell, I haven't done much with my life and I'm not likely to do much with what's left of it. (firmly) But I'll be damned if I don't do something to try to find the ones who killed my only child... 320 dollars, here take it.

Chandler looks at the money, but doesn't make a move to take it.

CHANDLER
Did Cheryl have a tattoo before she left home?

MRS. MOSELY
(shocked)
No.

CHANDLER
You're sure?

MRS. MOSELY
Positive... Are you going to take the money?

CHANDLER
I'll do a preliminary investigation to see if there is anything I can do that the police can't.

MRS. MOSELY
You're going to take the money?
I want you to take it!

CHANDLER
I'll take 25 dollars.

MRS. MOSELY
That doesn't seem like very much?

CHANDLER
That's my price. Take it or leave it.

Mrs. Mosely is satisfied and with relief drops the huge effort she's made to be assertive.

MRS. MOSELY
Thank you.

Chandler gives her a faint encouraging smile.

CUT TO:

INT. BAR - NIGHT

STARTING TIGHT on a drink as the bartender sets it down in front of Chandler.

Chandler picks it up, takes a good slug, and then carries it down the bar to where a cute little blonde is sitting.

CHANDLER
Hi.

BLONDE
(perky)
Hi. I'm a cosmetologist. What do you do?

CHANDLER
I'm a private detective.

BLONDE
Nobody's a private detective. What do you really do?

CHANDLER
Investment banker.

BLONDE
(excited)
An investment banker. You must make lots of money?!

CHANDLER
Tons. You live near here?

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. CHANDLER'S STREET - NIGHT

A modern overhanging street light illuminates an empty street in the Silverlake district.

Opposite the street light, a crumbling concrete stairway runs up an eroding dirt hillside.

Chandler, his coat thrown over his shoulder, trudges up the stairway to his Silverlake home. Not large, in a deteriorating part of town, it occupies its own lonely little hilltop backed by a small grove of eucalyptus trees.

Chandler disappears over the top of the stairs.

INSIDE THE HOUSE

Chandler stands in his kitchen, in the dark, eating a sandwich over the sink.

He looks out the window...

HIS POV

Down in the street, backlit by the street light, Chan can see someone sitting in a brand new Buick with paper plates.

As Chan chews on the sandwich, he considers the probable reasons for someone to wait in a parked car out front of his house...

He shoves the last corner of the sandwich into his mouth and pulls a jar of instant coffee out of the cabinet.

There's not much left. What there is, is stuck to the bottom. He takes a spoon and reaches in to scrape it off. Spoon's too short.

He thinks about it a second.

He goes to the stove, takes the kettle off, and pours hot water into the jar, swishes it around, and holding it carefully by the rim, carries it out to the livingroom.

In the livingroom, Chan pulls the yellow pages out from under the telephone.

He takes them over to the couch and lays them open on the coffee table. He rustles through the T's, to TATTOOING... Five listings...

Chandler scans them. He swirls the coffee jar and takes a swallow.

He rips out the page, takes a red marker, and starts to number the listings by location...

MINUTES LATER

Chandler puts the empty coffee jar down in the sink.

He glances out the window... The person in the Buick is still there.

Chan slowly walks toward the living room, ducks down, crosses over to the back door, eases it open, and slips out.

Chan darts silently through the shadows of his backyard.

He runs down a steep dirt path and leaps over the concrete retaining wall at the bottom. He dashes up to the Buick and throws open the door.

CHANDLER
Okay, you--

The car's empty!

Chan leans in, looks around. He opens the back door. Definitely no one there.

Chandler shakes his head, shuts the car doors.

He walks over to the stairs, turns, and looks back at the car. Puzzled, he turns around and goes up the stairs.

As he disappears over the top, the CAMERA turns and TRACKS UP... There, 30 feet above the ground, delicately balanced on the cross arm of the street light is the beautiful Chinese woman from the murder scene.

With a WHOOSHING SOUND (traditional to Chinese martial arts movies), she jumps from the street lamp. She sails to the ground and lands on her feet with a cat-like lightness. She watches as light floods from Chan's front door and then disappears... then, she walks calmly back to the Buick.

CUT TO:

EXT. INDUSTRIAL STREET - NIGHT

Long Beach. A bleak street near the harbor. Factories, warehouses, empty storage lots surrounded by chain link.

We MOVE down the street toward a warehouse marked SEVEN STAR TRADING COMPANY. There is an ominous MURMUR... as we approach, it gets louder...

INSIDE THE WAREHOUSE

A weird Hari Krishna type, totally nude, his head shaved, sits against a wall chanting like a crazy man. His eyes are glazed over, as if he'd been hypnotized.

A stone THUMPS into the wall just inches from his head. He doesn't react, just keeps up the incessant drone.

In the center of the warehouse, the Golden Child sits trapped in his cage.

The walls are covered with the same red arcane writing as the Studio City house and in the center of each wall sits a chanter pumping up and down, endlessly mumbling some kind of antiprayer.

Til, the giant with the pad on his forehead, sits a dozen feet in front of the child.

He picks up a stone from the pile near his feet and loads it into a slingshot, pulls back, and fires straight at the child.

The little boy sits there impassively.

The stone flies right at the boy... At the last moment, it veers off, drops to the ground, SKIPS across the floor, and THUDS into the wall.

Til picks up another rock and this time aims a little higher.

The stone angles up over the boy and THUMPS into the wall ten feet above the back chanter.

Til tries to think of something to make the game more interesting. He picks through the pile for something special... Nothing. He chooses a little pebble and lets go.

This time as the stone approaches, the boy quickly waves his hand and the stone flies off in the direction he motioned. It PINGS into one of the overhanging lights.

Til is astonished. He looks at the boy... The boy sits there impassive, with a blank face, as if nothing had happened.

Til, squinting curiously at the boy, picks up another rock and fires.

The boy suddenly motions his hand in the other direction and the stone CLANGS into a light on the other side.

Til looks up at the light which swings wildly... then down at the little boy...

The Golden Child's face reveals the hint of a smile.

Til hurriedly loads another stone and fires it straight at the little boy.

The boy puts his hand right in the path of the stone. It reverses direction and zips straight back at Til.

Shocked, Til ducks just in time.

Til sits back up in amazement.

The little boy is looking back at him with a mischievous little smile.

Til's quizical face.

The child's impish smile.

Til, his eyes still on the child, gets up, goes over, and gets a waste basket full of discarded aluminum cans from near the soft drink machine.

He places the basket out in the floor, a safe distance from the little pile of stones. He points to the basket several times so there will be no mistake.

He sits back down in his place and loads the slingshot.

He fires and simultaneously ducks.

The little boy motions with his hand toward the waste basket and the stone flies that way and CLANKS in, knocking a empty aluminum can on the floor.

Til straightens up with a smile.

Til goes over to the basket picking up the aluminum can as he goes. He tosses it into the basket.

The can stays on the top of the pile an instant... then moves, turns, and tumbles onto the ground with a hollow CLINK.

Til is stunned. He looks over at the little boy.

The boy is looking right at him with that impish smile.

With one eye on the boy, Til picks up the can and tosses it back in.

The boy looks at the basket and the can pops out at Til's feet.

Til looks at the boy. The boy looks at Til, then over to the can.

To Til's amazement the can starts to roll... curves off... stops.

The boy looks at Til with a frustrated grimace, then concentrates on the can.

The can rolls the other way... stops.

Til looks at the child. The boy smiles, then, focuses his attention on the can.

THUPPPP!... Half of the can collapses downward.

Til can't believe it.

THUPPPP!... The rest of the can flattens against the ground.

The little boy concentrates with all his might.

The can rips and slowly folds over. Rips, and another part folds over. Rips, folds. Rips, folds.

The can slowly tilts up on one edge... It's been folded into the shape of a little man! Flat, like a paper doll.

Til's mouth drops open, he looks over at the Golden Child who's eyes are twinkling in his direction.

The child looks back at the can.

One of its aluminum legs bends up... too high, straightens, bends again lower, at the knee... and steps forward. The other leg bends and steps forward... step... step, step, step.

Til, mesmerized, walks toward the little can man.

The little man bends his neck and tilts his head toward Til.

The little man raises an aluminum arm, bends it at the elbow, and waves.

Til, delighted, waves back.

The little can man dances a little jig...

A foot comes down crushing the little man.

The CAMERA TILTS UP to reveal Sardo Numspa.

Sardo points to the soft drink dispenser and waste basket and addresses Til in a fury.

SARDO
(in a rage)
Get that out of here! Everything out!

Til, terrified, hurries to obey.

Sardo turns. His eyes burn at the child.

Frightened, the little boy holds his own, looking bravely back at him.

Sardo glances down at the bowl of oatmeal on the ground near the cage... it is untouched.

SARDO
Eventually you will have to eat! And when you do...

Sardo turns with an angry flourish of his coat and exits the room.

Til throws a guilty glance at the child as he carries the waste basket of cans out the door.

G.K.
Numspa to
Til. to
Sardo
B. Numspa
130...

The child looks down at the bowl of oatmeal...

It flips over with a PLOP!

The boy pulls something out of his robe.

CLOSE UP: In his hand, a twig with four little leaves.

The little boy takes one, puts it in his mouth, and returns the other three to their hiding place.

CLOSE ON: The determined face of the little boy, chewing the leaf.

FADE OUT:

WHITE OUT AND THEN DOWN

HONKING. The sun blares down on Main Street, downtown.

ON CHAN, through his windshield, looking around.

He pulls into a red zone, hops out, snaps open the hood of his car, and leaves it up.

He walks down Main... past a little white box of a building that advertises CIGARETTES - ALL BRANDS 85c, and walks into THE MAIN STREET TATTOO PARLOR...

PICK UP Chandler as he comes out, slams down the hood of his car, drives off.

CLOSE ON: The list of tattoo parlors from the yellow pages.

Chandler's hand marks off the Main Street listing.

EXT. HOLLYWOOD BOULEVARD - DAY

Chan walks into COAST TATTOOING on Hollywood near Vine.

He hands the Polaroid of the yellow dragon on Cheryl Mosely's thigh to a guy with a needle in his hand.

The guy looks at it and shakes his head.

EXT. SOUTH REXFORD - DAY

Chan puts a paper bag over a Beverly Hills parking meter and walks into an office building on Roxbury south of Wilshire.

On the second floor, Chan goes through a door with fancy lettering that reads LOVELY LIL'S.

Inside, a two hundred pound woman is working with a tattoo needle on the face of a woman with her back to us.

The woman in the chair turns to look at Chan. She's got no eyebrows except for the half Lil just tattooed in.

EXT. SUNSET NEAR ROBERTSON - DAY

Chandler walks into STAR TATTOO.

He comes out again.

He X's out the listing for Star. All but one of his listings are crossed out.

EXT. VICTORY NEAR VAN NUYS - DAY

Chan walks up Victory... Tarot Readings... Bail Bond place... Tattoo Parlor (THE WORLD FAMOUS EMPORIUM OF TATTOOS).

There's a Hell's Angel's legal defense fund poster in the window.

Chan goes in.

We watch through the window. Chan hands a huge guy with a big pot belly and a long beard the Polaroid. Chan says something. The guy shakes his head. Chan asks another question. Another shake. Chan takes back the Polaroid.

Chan comes out the front and heads back the way he came.

Suddenly he turns around. He walks past the tattoo parlor and down the street. He makes a sharp right turn into the alley beyond the Vacuum Cleaner Repair place.

Chan stands looking down the dead end alley.

CHANDLER

Come on out. You've been following me all day. Here I am. Come on out!

VOICE FROM BEHIND HIM (O.S.)

I am out.

Chan rifles around to find the Chinese woman standing right behind him.

CUT TO:

INT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY

Chandler shovels a large forkful of boysenberry pie into his mouth. Mei Lei sits across a grungy coffee shop table, regarding the voraciousness with which he eats.

Chan looks up, over his plate.

CHANDLER
I'm listening.

MEI LEI
A child has been kidnaped and you're the
only one who can get him back.

CHANDLER
That so. When was the kid snatched?

MEI LEI
Five days ago in Northeastern Tibet.

CHANDLER
You received a ransom note?

MEI LEI
No. But we have reason to believe the
child is being held somewhere here in Los
Angeles.

CHANDLER
Oh yeah. Why's that?

MEI LEI
This child is special, Mr Jarrell.

Chandler looks over at her.

CHANDLER
All children are special.

MEI LEI
Yes, that's true, but this child is the
spiritual leader of two hundred million
people in China, Tibet, and southeast
Asia.

CHANDLER
So this kid's an important world leader.
How do you know he's in LA?

MEI LEI
400 years ago the Nechung Oracle predicted
that the Gompden Tarma, that is Tibetan for
Golden Child, would be taken to the new
city, a city of the angels, and would be
rescued by a man who was no angel.

Chan puts another forkful of pie in his mouth without
comment.

CHANDLER
(pointedly)
So where do I fit in?

MEI LEI
We've had a computer throw the I Ching for every person in the Los Angeles phone book. You were picked independently by all three computers. New York, London, and Delhi. It is your profession to find missing children. It is your destiny to find the Golden Child.

CHANDLER
And that's why you've been following me around?

MEI LEI
Yes.

Chandler looks over at her.

The expression on her face gives no doubt she believes every word she is saying.

CHANDLER
Why would anyone who snatched a kid in Asia bring him all the way to LA?

MEI LEI
They think because no one will believe us here--

CHANDLER
(breaking in)
Well they got that one right.

MEI LEI
No one will help us either.

CHANDLER
They got that one right, too.

Chandler takes the last bite of his pie and washes it down with a slug of coffee.

CHANDLER
(getting up)
Sorry, can't help ya, I'm already on a case.

MEI LEI
Mr. Jarrell, finding this child is more important than anything else in the world.

CHANDLER

I don't doubt that. But like I said, I've got a client.

MEI LEI

Is there any chance I could appeal to your better nature?

CHANDLER

I wouldn't advise your going around appealing to people's better nature.

MEI LEI

Why not?

CHANDLER

Because they haven't got one.

He gives her a phony little smile...

CHANDLER

Nice meeting you. Gotta dash.

... and walks off.

CUT TO:

EXT. UCLA CAMPUS - DAY

Chandler walks along one of the concrete paths through the grass, trees, and sculpture of UCLA.

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

Chan steps through the door of an empty classroom.

Up at the front, taped to the blackboard is a giant blow-up of a sculptured inscription in Sanscrit. The stone is very worn and all or part of several letters are chipped away. MIKE KLETT, professor of Far Eastern Studies, is at work on the blackboard trying to reconstruct the original.

He looks over at Chan.

MIKE

I haven't got time for you!

CHANDLER

(pulling out the Polaroid of the writing at the murder scene)
I just want you to look at this and--

MIKE

I haven't got any time. I'm working on something, Chan. Do you mind?!

CHANDLER

You had time for me when you wanted me to find your brother's kid.

MIKE

You got paid for that, didn't you?

CHANDLER

I was meaning to mention that. Your brother keeps losing my final bill. It's funny how people say they'll pay anything to get their kids back and after I bring 'em back, they keep losing my bill.

MIKE

That's not the point. I'm working on something and I don't have time for your problems.

VOICE (O.S.)

The good man looks at the person, not at the use he can make of him.

They both look at the back of the room...

Mei Lei stands near the back door.

MIKE

What?!

MEI LEI

It is the inscription you are trying to decipher. It is a Sanscrit translation of the sacred Tibetan Book of Wisdom.

The professor turns around, it's instantly clear to him she's right.

He turns back to her excitedly.

MIKE

You've read the Secret Book of Wisdom?

Mei Lei nods.

Chandler studies Mike's reaction to Mei Lei. She's a bigger expert than he is.

MIKE

I'd be very interested to talk to you about it.

MEI LEI

I'm with Mr. Jarrell. We're on a very important case.

Mike turns to Chan solicitously.

MIKE

I'd very much like the two of you to come to my house for dinner. Would tonight be all right?

Chandler looks at Mei Lei. He holds out the Polaroid.

CHANDLER

Can you read this?

Mei Lei nods.

Chandler turns to Mike and shrugs with mock regret.

CHANDLER

We'd love to come, Mike. But you heard her, we're on a big case. If we get some time, I'll give you a call.

CUT TO:

EXT. UCLA CAMPUS - DAY

As they walk through the campus, Chandler turns to Mei Lei.

CHANDLER

Okay, I'm considering taking your case.

MEI LEI

You are already on it.

CHANDLER

How do you figure that?

MEI LEI

The Golden Child was held in the house where the girl was killed.

CHANDLER

So that's the real reason you've been following me. You think I'll lead you to the people who took your kid?

MEI LEI

That and to protect you.

Chan takes that with a grain of salt and considers the situation...

CHANDLER

I'm already looking for your missing kid? Don't you find that a little coincidental?

MEI LEI

It is your destiny. You can not avoid it.

CHANDLER

What makes you think the kid was in the house?

Mei Lei points to the Polaroid of Tibetan writing.

MEI LEI

That is a restraint curse. They must restrain him both spiritually and physically. They need to keep evil on all four sides of him. Just the writing wouldn't be enough though. They'd need to augment it with something else.

CHANDLER

Or what?

MEI LEI

The child might project himself astrally.

Chandler throws her a sideways glance.

CHANDLER

And show up in my living room?

MEI LEI

Mr. Jarrell, your TV projects people into your living room. You have no trouble accepting your own magic, but you scoff at everyone elses.

CHANDLER

Okay, we'll let that ride. (holding out the Polaroid) What does it say?

MEI LEI

"The world is wicked. Let it perish."

CHANDLER

Well, at least, they've got their basic facts right.

MEI LEI

You don't see much good in the world, do you?

CHANDLER

I don't see any, and I get around quite a bit.

Chandler sums up.

CHANDLER

So what you're telling me is -- the people that killed Cheryl Mosely are the ones who snatched your kid. So when I find Cheryl's murderers, I'll be finding the people that are holding your Golden Child.

MEI LEI

Yes, that is exactly what I'm saying.

CHANDLER

Why was Cheryl killed?

MEI LEI

I don't know.

CHANDLER

I do. They wanted her blood. Why are they putting blood in the kid's oatmeal?

Mei Lei is shocked, worried.

MEI LEI

Are you sure?

CHANDLER

Yeah, I'm sure.

MEI LEI

I don't know.

(pause)

You believe me?

CHANDLER

No, but this is LA, anything's possible.

MEI LEI

There is someone we can ask about the blood.

CHANDLER

Oh really, somebody in this world?

CUT TO:

EXT. CHINA TOWN GATE - DUSK

A yellow light from the sinking sun filters through the Chinatown gate.

Chan looks up at it as he and Mei Lei pass under.

-50-

The ornate piece of bric-a-brac meant to attract tourists looks strange in this light. It is a passageway, not just to a tacky square of shops, but to other beliefs, other ways of life, other possibilities:

MEI LEI

Are there other leads we should be pursuing?

CHANDLER

Lady, if I had any other leads,
I wouldn't be hanging around with you.

Mei Lei takes that by swallowing hard and leads Chan into an Herbalist Shop across the square.

The CAMERA passes through the store with its dried sea-horses, snake skins, antelope horns, and exotic cures... to the back room, where DR. HONG, the man who accompanied Mei Lei at the murder scene, is burning a punk on a toothless old man's back.

A wisk of smoke rises from the conical punk.

Hong smiles and bows to Chan.

HONG

Mr. Jarrell, you honor my shop with your presence.

The toothless man smiles at Chandler and speaks to him in Chinese.

Chandler draws a blank.

HONG

He says he is very pleased to meet a man as great as you.

Chandler looks suspiciously at Hong... at the bowing man, all smiles.

Chandler dips his head to the old guy.

MEI LEI

(urgently)
We must speak to Kala.

Hong turns to his toothless patient.

HONG

Please, excuse us.

Hong leads them through a curtain at the back of his office... down a hallway... darker and darker...

Both sides of the hallway are hung with posters of mythical Chinese beings -- dragons, demons, heroes.

Chandler checks them out... not his kind of thing.

They pass through another curtain and come into a large dark room.

Chan's eyes slowly adjust to the lack of light...

Behind a screen, at the back of the room is the shadow of a woman seated on a raised platform. From her outline, we can see she is naked from the waist up.

Dr. Hong turns to Chandler.

DR. HONG

You may speak with her. She will hear you.

Chandler lets that go and addresses the woman behind the screen.

CHANDLER

Okay, tell me about the kid: The Golden Child.

Kala speaks in an EERIE RASPING VOICE...

KALA

Every thousand generations a perfect child is born. A Golden Child. This is the fourth. He has come to rescue us.

CHANDLER

Rescue us from what?

KALA

From ourselves. He is the bringer of compassion. If he dies, compassion will die with him.

CHANDLER

So without the kid the world will go to hell? Right?

KALA

The world will become hell.

CHANDLER

We're not that far off now. So who would want to take the kid?

KALA

Those who want evil rather than good.

CHANDLER
Could you be more specific?

KALA
No, we do not know who took him.

CHANDLER
Why are they trying to make him eat blood?

KALA
Nothing in this world will hurt him. The smallest pebble will not strike him, the largest fire will not burn him. But if he were to pollute himself with anything impure, he would become vulnerable.

CHANDLER
You're saying as long as he doesn't eat the blood nothing can harm him?

KALA
Yes, but there are things in this world that are not of it. These things could harm him... Do you have any other questions?

Chan looks at the outline of the naked woman behind the screen.

CHANDLER
Yeah, what are you doing Saturday night?

Shhhhhh... Shhhhhh... there is a strange RATTLING SOUND.
Chan looks around for the source but doesn't see one.

KALA
This is the Chosen One?

HONG
Yes.

KALA
Strange are the ways of destiny.

HONG
Yes.

CUT TO:

INT. CHINESE RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Chandler shovels Chinese food into his mouth with a fork.
Mei Lei eats delicately with chop sticks.

CHANDLER

You people certainly put on a good show.
Where did you get her from?

MEI LEI

She is the librarian of the secret
repository at Palkor Sin. She was flown
here to help us. She is over 300 years
old.

CHANDLER

Oh yeah, how does she manage that?

MEI LEI

One of her ancestors was raped by a
dragon.

CHANDLER

That happen a lot where you come from?
Because it barely ever happens around
here.

Chandler takes another forkful, and then, looks up at Mei
Lei who watches him calmly. He decides to let up a little.

CHANDLER

You were right, the food's good... Look,
I want to thank you for helping me out
back there with your Tibetan wisdom.

MEI LEI

If I asked you a favor, would you do it?

CHANDLER

Maybe.

MEI LEI

Promise you'll do your best to save the
Golden Child.

CHANDLER

Sorry. I don't make promises.

MEI LEI

Why is that?

CHANDLER

Because I might not be able to keep them.

Chan takes another forkful.

A THIN MAN, in an ill fitting suit, with his twelve year
old DAUGHTER under his arm, comes over to the table.

MAN
(hesitantly)

Mr. Jarrell... I know I owe you money.

Chandler looks up, goes back to eating.

CHANDLER
Don't worry about it.

MAN
Wendy is doing real well in school. She's
in the band.

The little girl stands there impassively -- timid and nervous.

Chandler throws a quick glance at Wendy, and goes back to his food.

CHANDLER
Good.

The man shifts from foot to foot.

MAN
Thank you again for bringing Wendy back.

CHANDLER
It's what I get paid for.

The man and daughter turn and go.

Suddenly the daughter turns back, kisses Chandler quickly on the cheek, and hurries away.

Chandler flushes with pleasure, instantly suppresses it, and buries himself in his food.

CHANDLER
(dismissing it)
People I worked for.

MEI LEI'S FACE: Watching Chan, thinking about him.

OUTSIDE

Mei Lei and Chan walk through Chinatown.

MEI LEI
Why do you do this? Find lost children.

CHANDLER
Because I can't think of anything better to do.

He looks up at her... and softens.

CHANDLER

Because I don't like to see kids used,
abused, passed around, and discarded.

Mei Lei considers the intent expression on his face.

MEI LEI

That happened to you, didn't it?

CHANDLER

My parents could have wanted me a little
more. Then, maybe they would have stuck
around a little longer.

MEI LEI

I can understand how you feel.

CHANDLER

Oh yeah, how do you figure that?

MEI LEI

My father left us when I was very young.
For a long time, it was very difficult for
my mother and me.

CHANDLER

Why did he leave?

MEI LEI

He had a calling to the religious life.
He had to follow his destiny.

CHANDLER

So he ran out on you?

MEI LEI

It is part of our culture to go if you are
called. It was a great sacrifice for him.
Each must give what he is asked to give.

CHANDLER

Personally I don't think that's much of an
excuse.

MEI LEI

He is my father. Why are you so angry?

CHANDLER

I just don't like that kind of a guy.
Mind?!

CUT TO:

EXT. CHANDLER'S STREET - NIGHT

Mei Lei pulls the Buick up to the bottom of the concrete stairs that lead to Chandler's house.

Chandler gets half out and turns back.

CHANDLER

So you want to come up?

MEI LEI

No, thank you.

CHANDLER

If I got a little harsh, I'm sorry.

There's a slight pause...

CHANDLER

You want to come up, have a drink or something.

MEI LEI

No, thank you.

Chandler gets out, walks a few feet, turns around, comes back.

CHANDLER

I almost forgot. They say you should always give a woman two chances to say no. In case...

MEI LEI

That's no twice.

CHANDLER

Maybe another time?

MEI LEI

Maybe.

CHANDLER

Promise?

MEI LEI

I never make promises. I may not be able to keep them.

CHANDLER

Good policy. Night.

Chandler turns and goes up to his house.

Mei Lei sits in her car watching the lone figure mount the steps.

INT. CHANDLER'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Chandler picks last night's coffee jar out of the sink.
He rinses it out and pours in a stiff shot of bourbon.

He carries it out into the living room and lays back in an upholstered chair.

He takes a slug from the drink, exhales deeply.

CHANDLER

The world will go to hell... It's already gone to hell. Ask Cheryl's mother.

He takes another slug, leans back, and coasts.

EXT. CHANDLER'S STREET - NIGHT

Mei Lei's car sits at the bottom of Chan's stairs at the edge of the pool of light thrown by the street lamp.

A choked sounding VOICE comes from out of the darkness down the street.

VOICE (O.S.)

Help!... Someone, please!...

As if someone was dying, calling out with their last strength.

Mei Lei focuses on the sound...

She gets out of the car and walks up the street...

In front of her, a concrete staircase leads, halfway up the hill, to an empty lot.

Mei Lei walks up to the indentation at the bottom of the stairs.

Five threatening male faces stare out of the darkness...

The runt of the group smiles and calls out in a pitiful voice...

RUNT

Help... help...

The five faces smirk out of the darkness...

The leader with a knife scar down his cheek steps toward her.

LEADER

Want to go to a party?

SNICKERING as they close in...

The leader reaches out for her...

She twirls backward, her foot makes a Shhhhhh as it cuts the air and THWAP as it slams into his face. In a continuous motion, she whirls around again, catches him as he staggers, and he drops to the ground.

Mei Lei throws out her fist in one direction and her foot in the other.

She hits one of the toughs in the throat... he sinks to the ground GROANING... and a second in the stomach.

She immediately whirls and catches another with a round-house kick to the head... knocking him unconscious.

She turns, jumps in the air, and snaps out a left and then a right kick to the face of the last. He drops to the ground... senseless.

She calmly turns and walks away from the toughs, either out cold or writhing on the ground.

She walks up the street to her car.

She opens the door to the Buick, sits back in.

She looks back up at Chan's house. Nothing has changed.

CUT TO:

EXT. WESTERN FISH CANNERY - NIGHT

The water laps against the little pier of the Western Fish Cannery. Ice and rotting fish lie on the darkening boards of the pier.

Sardo and Yu come down the wooden walkway and enter the foul smelling building.

INSIDE

Their shoes CRUNCH over the ice strewn floor.

Yu pulls the latch on the huge freezer door and they go in.

In the florescent green light of the freezer, two hundred pound fish hang from hooks in even rows. Sardo and Yu face the rows of hanging fish.

They wait, their breath pluming out in the icy air...

A frightening milky RED LIGHT starts to glow from between the rows of fish...

The LIGHT intensifies... and there is the SOUND of some massive object being dragged across the floor...

From between the rows of fish, steps a man dressed in a sharkskin suit and shiny purple tie. Except for the shocking fact that his head is the head of a rat, he is human in every way. This is TARVU.

He looks around with his ferret eyes and, satisfied the area is secure, he takes up a position near the door where he quietly pulls a pack of cigarettes out of his pocket and taps one out of the box.

From out of the red light that shines between the fish comes a VOICE, a melodious voice, the slick oily voice of evil.

THE THING

Congradulations, you have the child.

Sardo bows slightly with pride.

SARDO

Thank you, lord.

THE THING

But he is still alive.

SARDO

It is only a matter of time. After he eats the blood, he will no longer be impervious to the things of this world and his fate will be sealed.

THE THING

I will not return to this world until he is dead.

SARDO

You have no reason to fear him. He is surrounded at all times, in all the four directions, by evil.

THE THING

Do not underestimate the power of good.
Do not dismiss the strength of the child.

SARDO

I guarantee he will be dead soon.

THE THING

And the Chosen One?

SARDO
No sign of him.

THE THING
I will go back and wait. It is too hot for me in this world. I will not return until the child is dead. I will leave Tarvu here. He likes this hothouse world of yours. Make sure he does not frighten the child... (with a smirk) too much.

The rat man smiles. A curl of smoke comes from the cigarette he elegantly holds in his hand.

THE THING
Do not fail me.

SARDO
Yes, my lord

The end of a huge tail, halfway between the tail of a slug and a dinosaur, flips around, SMACKING one of the hanging fish... then the SOUND of a massive weight being dragged across the floor.

The red light disappears and the CAMERA HOLDS on the fish struck by the tail...

Pink slime oozes slowly down its tail and ominously drips to the floor.

CUT TO:

INT. SEVEN STAR WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

The Golden Child sits in the center of the great warehouse.

Til comes over and picks up the bowl of oatmeal. He holds it out toward the child.

The Golden Child resolutely shakes his head no.

Til goes out to change it.

The little boy reaches in his robe and pulls out the little twig... Three more leaves. He plucks off one and puts it in his mouth.

OUTSIDE

Sardo, Tarvu, and Yu approach the warehouse.

The ember on Tarvu's cigarette glows in the darkness.

Sardo looks up.

Crouched at the edge of the roof, Fu, the monkey man stands guard. He nods obeisantly to Sardo.

INSIDE

Sardo comes through the door followed by Yu and the rat man.

Til, who is putting down a new bowl of oatmeal for the child, eyes the rat man with amazement.

Sardo walks across the rough concrete floor toward the back rooms.

He looks at the child with a confident smile.

CHILD'S FACE: A look of concern.

Yu follows Sardo into the back.

The rat man saunters up to the cage.

The little boy leans backward, instinctively expressing his fear. A chill of revulsion runs down his spine.

Tarvu sneers at the boy, takes the cigarette from his mouth, and flips it at the child.

The cigarette flies at the child only to change directions as it approaches. It sails off and skids across the floor.

The rat man gives the boy a ferret eyed look of contempt.. then goes into the back offices.

Til is shocked by Tarvu's appearance. He gives the worried little boy a sympathetic look and hurries into the back, no doubt to see more of the ratman from a safe distance.

The Golden Child sits nervously alone in his little cage.

EXT. CHANDLER'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Various establishing shots of Chan's house in the dead of night... Mei Lei sits silently in the Buick... The little grove of eucalyptus trees behind Chan's house... the flat leaves of the trees sway gently in the wind...

INSIDE THE HOUSE

In the half light of his living room, Chan lies asleep in the chair.

The curtain blows gently in the open window...

CUT TO:

INT. WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

Except for the Golden Child and the four hypnotized chanters the room is empty.

The Gopen Tarma sits in his cage. Deep concern troubles his face.

The chanters sit against the walls, the constant beat of their MURMUR fills the air...

Suddenly one of the chanters collapses from exhaustion and slumps forward in a heap on the floor.

The child turns in the direction of the fallen man. It is an important chance! The little boy stares off that way, focusing all his attention.

CUT TO:

EXT. CHANDLER'S BACKYARD - NIGHT

In the little grove of eucalyptus trees behind Chan's house, a rainbow-colored sheet of light appears... and then, in front of it, the astrally projected form of the Golden Child.

As the lovely rainbow shimmers behind him, the boy raises his hand. On his finger is the beautiful tropical bird he brought to life in the Tibetan monastery on the other side of the world.

The Gopen Tarma lifts his hand releasing the bird.

INSIDE THE HOUSE

Chan lies asleep in the chair. Heavenly RAINBOW LIGHT filters through the window. The fluttering curtain is awash in radiant color.

The COLORED LIGHT washes across the side of the TV.

The beautiful TRILLING song of the bird.

Chan opens his eyes. Looks around him...

He looks at the window where the multicolored light pours in...

Chan watches it in amazement...

BACK TO THE WAREHOUSE

In a backroom of the warehouse, Sardo Numspa closes an elaborately ornamented Chinese cabinet. He makes a strange hand motion in front of it, magically locking it.

He senses something. He looks over his shoulder and stares off into space...

IN THE MAIN ROOM OF THE WAREHOUSE

Numspa followed by Tarvu comes out into the main room of the warehouse. Sardo sees... the collapsed chanter... the child meditating...

Tarvu rushes over and stands in front of the wall, taking the place of the fallen chanter.

The boy breaks off and looks down at the rat man, then over at Sardo.

Numspa glares at him.

The child looks confidently back at him, unafraid.

SARDO

It is too late. You can not hold out much longer.

The Golden Child looks back at Numspa, unruffled.

A BEAT...

CUT TO:

EXT. CHANDLER'S BACKYARD - NIGHT

Chan walks toward the eucalyptus grove. There is nothing there. Whatever the source of the beautiful colored light, it is gone.

Chandler runs his hand along the ground. He stands up and looks around, puzzled.

CHANDLER

I've got to stop living like this.

He starts to go inside. Something catches his eye...

He looks up. High in one of the trees -- a splash of color. He moves a little to get a better look...

The beautifully-colored tropical bird looks back at him.

From inside the house, the phone RINGS...

Chan stares at the bird a moment... certainly not local...
escaped from a pet store?... A home?...

The telephone RINGS insistently. Chan goes to answer it.

TELEPHONE

Chan picks up the receiver.

CHANDLER

Hello.

From the other end of the line comes the voice of a
girl (19).

GIRL'S VOICE (V.O.)

Are you the one looking for Cheryl Mosely?

Chan considers.

CHANDLER

(his tone gives nothing away)
Yeah.

GIRL'S VOICE (V.O.)

I know who she was with last Thursday.

CHANDLER

Okay, who?

GIRL'S VOICE (V.O.)

The poster said there's a reward.

CHANDLER

Yeah.

GIRL'S VOICE (V.O.)

Could you please bring it to the Church of
Our Heavenly Savior on Cattaraugus. Come to
the back door and knock lightly. I'll be
waiting.

EXT. CHANDLER'S STREET - DAWN

The sun is coming up as Chandler comes down the concrete
stairs.

Mei Lei sits out front in the new Buick.

CHANDLER

Nice timing. You drive.

He gets in the car.

CUT TO:

EXT. CHURCH OF OUR HEAVENLY SAVIOR - EARLY MORNING

Mei Lei's Buick pulls off the alley and into the open back yard (used as a parking lot) of a little house on Cattaraugus. On top of the house, red neon letters shine brightly against the early morning sky:

CHURCH OF OUR HEAVENLY SAVIOR

Chandler and Mei Lei hop out of the car.

Chandler stands blocking her way.

CHANDLER

Let's get something straight. You're looking for your lost kid and I'm trying to find the ones who killed Cheryl Mosely. If they're the same people, fine, great! But remember I'm just letting you tag along. It's my show and I'll run it. Understood?

MEI LEI

You can't help but look for the Golden Child. It is your destiny.

CHANDLER

Oh yeah, and what's your destiny?

MEI LEI

To see that you do yours.

CHANDLER'S FACE: There's no talking to this woman.

They turn and go to the back door.

Chandler knocks.

A GIRL'S VOICE whispers from inside.

GIRL (O.S.)

Rob?

A 19 year old GIRL in a dark red turban sticks her head out the door.

GIRL

Who are you?

CHANDLER

I'm the man interested in Cheryl Mosely.

The girl slips out the door closing it lightly behind her. She wears a full length robe the same color as her turban.

CHANDLER

Okay, what do you know about Cheryl?

GIRL

My old boyfriend's picking me up. I told him I had gas money.

CHANDLER

How much you tell him you had?

GIRL

I mentioned fifty dollars.

CHANDLER

Sure you didn't mention twenty?

GIRL

I might have.

CHANDLER

Good.

Chandler reaches in his pocket and gives her the twenty.

GIRL

Thursday, she had this appointment to get a tattoo at the Spotlight on Melrose.

CHANDLER

What else do you know?

GIRL

Nothing. I barely knew her. She just wanted somebody to go with when she got the tattoo... Can you believe it, she goes off to get tattooed and I join the Church of Our Heavenly Savior.

CHANDLER

Who's our Heavenly Savior?

GIRL

He's a little fat guy who's been hitting on me all week.

A station wagon pulls up in the b.g.

The girl pulls off her robe, her street clothes are underneath. She unwraps the turban, she's totally bald!

GIRL

(adjusting her clothes)
How do I look?

Chandler looks at her gleaming dome.

CHANDLER

Great.

The station wagon pulls to a lurching stop, the door swings open.

The girl runs over to it and jumps in.

ROB

What happened to your hair?

GIRL

I cut it.

The station wagon backs into the alley. Chandler and Mei Lei watch it go.

Mei Lei looks up at the red neon sign.

MEI LEI

When people believe in nothing, they are ready to believe in anything.

CHANDLER

You should talk.

CUT TO:

EXT. MELROSE - DAY

Chan and Mei Lei walk into the Spotlight Tattoo on Melrose.

INSIDE

Chan and Mei Lei come into the tattoo shop.

A bearded HEAVYSET GUY is sitting up behind the counter.

Chan throws the guy a smile and pulls out the Polaroid of the yellow dragon tattooed on Cheryl Mosely's thigh.

CHANDLER

Ever see this before?

The guy takes it and gives it a quick look. He shakes his head.

HEAVYSET GUY

Naw. Never seen it.

He hands the Polaroid back to Chan.

HEAVYSET GUY

Might be the work of a guy who used to have a shop on Figueroa, but who can tell, ya know?

He shrugs.

OUTSIDE

Mei Lei and Chan come out.

CHANDLER

He's lying.

MEI LEI

How do you know?

CHANDLER

I know.

Chandler takes her elbow and steers her into an alley near the building.

ON THE FRONT OF THE BUILDING

The heavysset guy comes out of the building and walks up the street.

As he passes the alley, Chan steps out, grabs him by the jacket, and yanks him into the darkened alley.

IN THE ALLEY

Chan SLAMS the guy in the stomach and SMASHES him into the wall.

Chan holds him propped up to the wall.

CHANDLER

If necessary, I'm going to beat it out of you. But before I do, I'm going to make an appeal to your better nature.

Chan pulls the one-sheet of Cheryl out of his pocket. The picture of the sweet, clean-cut kid looks out at the guy.

Then Chan holds up a Polaroid of Cheryl's dead body.

CHANDLER

This is what Cheryl Mosely looked like a few weeks ago and this is what she looks like today. Now, you want to tell me who you did the tattoo for?

The heavysset guy looks over at Mei Lei.

HEAVYSET GUY

She dead?

Mei Lei nods. The guy believes her.

HEAVYSET GUY

That's the emblem of the Yellow Dragons.

CHANDLER

Who are the Yellow Dragons?

CUT TO:

EXT. BOYLE HEIGHTS - NIGHT

The yellow dragon insignia. Circling it the words: YELLOW DRAGONS MOTORCYCLE CLUB.

PULL BACK to REVEAL a massive biker, wearing Yellow Dragons colors, getting off a Harley parked amid a dozen similar Harleys.

The biker weaves his way to the sidewalk in front of the GOOD FOOD CAFE where a sign proudly announces: No Topless, No Bottomless, No Video, Just Good Food.

It's out of business.

The biker walks next door to PANDORA'S BOX, a bar which advertises both Topless and Bottomless and a chance for amateurs to show their stuff on Tuesdays.

Even at this distance, we can hear the crowd inside.

Chan shakes his head, he's watching from the Buick parked across the street. Mei Lei watches with him.

INSIDE THE CAR

MEI LEI

What do we do now?

CHANDLER

We wait. When they split up, we'll single one off and politely ask him about Cheryl.

MEI LEI

And if he won't tell us?

CHANDLER

We act real offended and ask him again... not so politely... I can tell you right now these guys don't have your kid.

MEI LEI

It is all part of your destiny. You will find the child.

CHANDLER

Listen, even if your kid has been snatched, I don't buy he's some magical kid sent to bring good into the world.

MEI LEI

It is not important that you believe in the child. It is only important that you believe such good can exist in the world.

CHANDLER

Look around! You see any good in the world?

She looks right at him.

MEI LEI

(pointedly) .
Yes.

Chandler has a confused moment before he realizes she means him. He's flustered an instant, then sighs with resignation.

CHANDLER

Okay, get some sleep, I've got a feeling these guys stay up late.

TIME BLEND

Chan sits in the car watching Pandora's. Mei Lei is asleep in the seat next to him.

The bikes are still out front and the street is totally deserted.

Chandler looks over at Mei Lei, sleeping peacefully beside him. She looks lovely.

He looks at her with a tenderness we've never seen him show. He admires her a moment. He reaches over and gently moves a strand of hair out of her face... then turns back to keep watch on Pandora's.

As soon as his head's turned, Mei Lei opens one eye. She watches him a moment... then closes the eye. There is just the hint of a smile on her face.

CUT TO:

EXT. WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

An ominous MURMURING comes up on the TRACK...

The deserted industrial street in Long Beach. The warehouse of the Seven Star Trading Company sits in a light mist off the ocean. The outline of Fu is visible, sitting guard on the roof.

INSIDE

Tarvu flips his butt at the child as he walks toward the back of the room, getting out another cigarette. The chanter that collapsed hangs by the neck against the back wall.

Til carries out a bowl of oatmeal for the child. He looks both ways... no one looking... he reaches in and scoops out a giant gob with his fingers and puts it in his mouth. He hurriedly puts the bowl down next to the cage...

He looks up to see the child looking at him sympathetically through the bars. He quickly averts his eyes.

Yu comes out of the offices. His eyes light on the oatmeal... the missing gob!

YU
HE'S EATEN THE BLOOD!!!

A guilty look on his face, Til nervously drifts toward a corner of the great room.

Tarvu turns around excitedly inhaling on his cigarette.

Sardo comes into the room. He looks at the oatmeal. His eyes flash with victory.

Tarvu inhales deeply savoring the smoke.

Sardo snaps his wrist forward and a throwing knife appears in his hand.

The rat man smiles, circulating smoke out through his mouth and up through his nose.

Sardo hurls the knife at the child in the cage...

The knife flies straight toward the cage... as it approaches the cage, the child waves his arm toward the rat man. The knife veers in that direction...

It flies across the room...

With a THUMP, it strikes Tarvu dead between the eyes.

The rat man's shocked FACE. Smoke floods out of his mouth.

The rat man falls straight backward. He lies on the ground, his head shaking erratically.

Yu looks at Tarvu amazed...

Til tries to look as inconspicuous as possible.

Sardo fumes with rage. He looks over at Yu who's mistake caused this. Yu's eyes go wide with terror.

Sardo walks up to him and rips the crossbow out of his hands and aims it at the writhing rat man.

SARDO
(angrily)
He's no use to us now.

Sardo releases the trigger and an arrow flies across the room and THUDS into the rat man's chest. Tarvu's head instantly goes lifeless.

Sardo turns his anger on the child.

SARDO
You will submit!

The little boy deliberately shakes his head to the contrary. He holds his head up bravely returning the Archfiend's stare.

Sardo storms out of the room.

CUT TO:

EXT. PANDORA'S BOX - FIRST LIGHT

It's about dawn outside Pandora's. The twelve bikes sit out front.

The twelve bikers come out of the bar and start to mount up.

INSIDE THE CAR

Chan gently nudges Mei Lei.

The Yellow Dragons rev up their hogs and peel out.

Chandler waits until they're up the street and pulls out after them.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Chandler drives up a quiet residential street in Boyle Heights. It's dawn, the little houses are dead still, and the Dragons are nowhere to be seen.

As the car approaches the cross street, Chan looks left... He gets a glimpse of the last of the bikers traveling the same direction on the next block. Parallel tailing, trick of the trade.

Chandler keeps his eye on them and heads up the next block.

At the next cross street, he sees them disappear up a freeway ramp.

Chandler makes a hard left and picks up speed.

EXT. FREEWAY - EARLY MORNING

Chandler follows the bikers up the almost deserted Golden State.

The bikers, frequent targets for harrassment, ride in formation at an even 55.

Chandler pulls in behind a semi, using it for cover.

EXT. FREEWAY - MORNING

It's about an hour and a half later and there's a fair amount of traffic moving north up the Golden State.

Chandler rides amid the other cars. The Dragons ride in formation on the right at 55.

INSIDE THE CAR

CHANDLER

This a big job? Protecting the Chosen One.

MEI LEI

Yes, I have been trained for it most of my life. I can do things you would not believe.

Chan looks over at her.

CHANDLER

I'll bet... What's the kid going to do to keep the world from becoming a living hell?

MEI LEI

He will do much for many.

CHANDLER

Oh yeah, what's he going to do for me?

MEI LEI

You will see.

Chandler looks over at the bikers. Two of them have pulled up to confer with the leader.

A 16-wheel job is coming up in the lane next to him.

Chandler decides to use the big truck as cover to get a better look.

He fades a lane left... then another.

MEI LEI

What are you doing?

CHANDLER

Don't worry. I've got everything under control.

As the 16-wheeler comes up, he speeds up in its shadow.

Chandler pulls almost even with the bikers... when suddenly they veer off onto the exit.

MEI LEI

I hope you know they're exiting.

CHANDLER

Thanks for the help.

He's three lanes away and almost on top of the exit. He'll have to do some driving.

Chan drops out of the truck's shadow and cuts across two lanes.

A horn BLARES...

He swerves around one car.

Between him and the exit is an old station wagon packed with a family on an outing.

He hits the brakes hard, fishtails out, and slides right behind the station wagon.

He bumps over the shoulder and down the dirt embankment toward the exit lane... He decides to take it.

A shocked look comes over his face.

The embankment ends in a twelve foot drop off.

He jerks the car around.

The wheels spin in the dirt and the car fishtails around. Its back end slides toward the drop off.

Chan floors the accelerator. The back tires shimmy and catch in the dirt. The car ROARS up the embankment... toward a retaining wall.

Chan cuts the wheel hard, avoids the retaining wall, THUMPS over the shoulder and out onto the freeway.

He skids into the right lane... the car behind him BLARES its horn and its brakes SCREECH...

Chan guns the engine to keep from being rear-ended and swerves onto the shoulder around the semi in front of him.

He rockets up the shoulder... toward a guy and his girlfriend changing their tire.

He swerves back into the right lane.

He's about to rear-end a tanker in front of him.

The writing on the tanker truck gets larger and larger: TOXIC CHEMICALS, CORROSIVE, and a cute little skull and crossbones.

CHANDLER
Figures.

Chandler bites down hard and swings the car onto the shoulder again.

The car ROARS up the shoulder throwing gravel and dirt. The shoulder narrows, and there is a WRENCHING METALLIC SCREECH as the car rubs up against the guard rail.

The car rebounds off the metal rail and angles toward the tank of corrosive chemicals. On the side there are painted flames and a sign that reads -- FIRE EXTINGUISHER INSIDE.

Chandler pulls the car into the guard rail. The RIPPING, SQUEALING sound of metal against metal until the car comes to a SKIDDING stop.

Chan takes a deep breath.

Mei Lei turns to him calmly.

MEI LEI
(coolly)
You missed the exit

CHANDLER
Yeah, but not by much.

She sits there glaring at him.

An angry beat...

CHANDLER
I made a mistake, okay?!

MEI LEI
(almost tenderly)
Okay.

EXT. - STREET - DAY

Chandler slowly cruises a Lancaster residential street looking for the bikers.

CHANDLER
Relax, I'll find 'em.

TIME CUT

It's hot on the little desert streets with their identical ranch style houses, their front yards spread with colored beds of gravel.

Chan's sweating it, they're not having much luck.

Chan spots the tropical bird, the one he saw in his backyard, the one the Golden Child brought to life.

He looks up at it curiously. He's got a hunch, just a feeling.

The bird takes flight down a side street. Chan makes a sharp turn to follow it.

He looks over at Mei Lei, who sits stoically in her seat, she takes this to be just another case of his erratic driving.

The bird waits on a telephone wire two blocks up, and then, takes flight up another street.

Chan follows up the street.

He comes to the next block... no bird... he looks around...

A FLASH of chrome catches his eye on the next block.

He anxiously hangs a left...

... And twelve hogs sit parked in front of a house entirely encircled with a ten foot corrugated metal fence.

Chandler breathes a sigh of relief.

Chandler turns to Mei Lei with a smile.

CHANDLER

See, I told you I'd find them.

MEI LEI

What happened to your plan about singling one off?

CHANDLER

Don't worry, I came prepared for other eventualities.

He reaches over her and pulls his .38 out of the glove compartment.

CHANDLER

You wait here. If anything gives you the impression something's happened to me, don't stick around. Get help... quick.

Chandler slips the gun into his belt and struts out toward the driveway next to the fence.

AROUND BACK

He hops the neighbor's small fence into the alley. The whole house is surrounded by the ten foot fence.

He looks at the fence annoyed and then resigns himself.

He jumps up and grabs the top with his hands and starts to pull himself over.

OUT FRONT

Mei Lei cranes her neck to make sure Chan's out of sight. She slides across the seat and gets out of the car.

She walks across the street to the ten foot corrugated fence and looks both ways... nothing.

She jumps... ten feet, over the top of the fence.

Mei Lei sails through the air and drops gracefully to her feet in the front yard.

IN BACK

Chan struggles to the top of the fence and jumps down into the back yard. It's a good drop and he comes down hard.

He picks himself up and walks toward the weathered little back door of the low slung track house.

HOLD on a tall bush as Chan passes by.

One of the Dragons, taking a piss, backs out of the bush just far enough to watch Chan. Still pissing, he watches curiously as Chan takes the gun out of his belt and prepares to kick in the back door.

IN THE FRONT YARD

Mei Lei peers in the front window... the living room's empty.

Mei Lei sneaks over to the front door and gently rotates the knob... It's locked.

BACK ROOM OF THE HOUSE

The door SPLINTERS and Chan comes barrelling in.

Three amazed Dragons look over at him.

CHANDLER
(brandishing his gun)
Hi, fellas. Just thought I'd drop by and ask you a few questions.

WHAP!... The Dragon from outside bowls into Chan from the back... and the other three are all over him, kicking and punching.

IN THE FRONT YARD

Mei Lei is gently slipping a metal paint scraper into the front door jamb.

She carefully works the door at the latch. The lock CLICKS open.

She gently opens the door and walks in.

INSIDE THE ROOM

She gets to the middle of the room and turns around.

HER POV

Eight Dragons stand up against the wall looking at her.

DRAGON
Come on in.

The one closest to the door swings it shut.

One of the Dragons reaches for her.

She twirls backward, her foot makes a Shhhhhh as it cuts the air and a THWAP as it slams into his face. In a continuous motion, she whirls around again, catches him as he staggers, and he drops to the ground.

A couple of guys leap out of the line and circle her.

One charges...

She parries with her wrist and lets his momentum carry him into her elbow which she SNAPS in his face. It hits with a CRUNCHING sound.

She kicks out in the other direction catching the second guy in the face.

She twirls around and finishes him with a foot to the side of the head.

IN THE BACK ROOM

Chan is standing with his hands roped behind his back. One of the Dragons has yanked his head back by the hair. Another one is wetting down a leather belt with a can of beer, while the other two are rigging a bracket on the wall.

The guy with the wet belt loops the buckle over one of the faucets on the laundry sink. He stretches the belt as best he can, unloops it, and saunters up to Chan.

He threads the belt through the buckle forming a noose.

Chan, his head yanked down almost to his back, smiles at him ingratiatingly.

CHANDLER
(brightly)
You know, I was thinking of getting a bike.
Do you think the new Harley--

DRAGON 1
Shut up!

He pulls the belt around Chandler's neck, and jerks it tight.

IN THE LIVING ROOM

The SNICK of a switchblade.

One of the Dragons jabs at Mei Lei with the knife. She parries at his wrist and staggers him backward with an elbow. She twirls in the air and kicks one of the watching Dragons, standing up against the wall.

He drops to the ground like a stone.

The remaining Dragons look down at him and then over at her angrily. Apparently, they didn't think that was fair.

The last three circle her.

One SNICKS open a knife. They rush her simultaneously.

She pushes one by her, kicks the second, and grabs the arm of the one with the knife and brings it down on her knee.

There is a sickening CRACK, and she finishes him with her elbow.

Mei Lei whirls and staggers the final Dragon with a kick to the face.

Mei Lei whirls the opposite way. He stumbles into her flying foot and drops to the ground.

IN THE BACK ROOM

Chandler hangs by the belt from the bracket in the wall. His toes just reach the floor, supporting some of his weight.

The biggest of the Dragons smashes him in the stomach with his fist.

BACK TO MEI LEI

Mei Lei moves up the hall toward the back of the house.

Two guys pulling up their greasy jeans come out of one of the bedrooms.

Mei Lei twirls and kicks, she catches one with a kick to the stomach.. and then, the face.

He smashes through the plasterboard wall and slumps to the floor.

The second Dragon charges her and she kicks him in the groin, leaps in the air and double kicks him to the head.

He skids down the hall and doesn't move.

BACK TO CHANDLER

Chandler is strung up by the neck, rotating slowly on his toes.

The belt must be drying and getting tighter because he's turning red and looks nervous.

The four Dragons are rifling the contents of Chan's pockets and arguing about what to do with the body.

DRAGON

I don't have to cut it up to get rid of it.
I stuff him in a garbage bag and dump him
off-road in Los Padres.

DRAGON

What if some animal drags him out into a
camp sight?

DRAGON

So what? He gonna spoil some little
old lady's dinner?

Mei Lei slips into the room by the inside door and almost disappears behind Chandler's hanging form.

Using one of the switchblades, she cuts the ropes
around his wrists and reaches up and shears the belt.

Chan pulls off the belt and GASPS for breath.

The four Dragons look over at him.

Chan puts out his arms to shield Mei Lei behind him.

Mei Lei is a little suprised by the unnecessary chivalry
but goes along.

CHANDLER

(to Mei Lei)

Stay behind me. I'll get us to the door
and whatever happens, you get away.

Mei Lei shrugs, a little charmed by his protectiveness.

Chandler edges toward the door, moving Mei Lei with him.

One of the Dragons rushes him.

Chan blocks the blow with his left and gives the guy a
right to the face that drops him.

CHANDLER
(to Mei Lei, over his shoulder)
These guys are the real sensitive type.
They just act tough.

MEI LEI
You should talk.

A second Dragon comes at them, head down, flailing. Mei Lei gracefully sidesteps as Chan is shoved into the back wall.

Chan gives the guy two vicious uppercuts and shoves him off.

Chan turns to Mei Lei.

CHANDLER
You all right?

She nods and gives him a brave little smile.

CHANDLER
Don't worry.

MEI LEI
I'm not.

The two remaining Dragons rush Chan at once.

Chan hits the first with a left, but the second one clips him. He's staggered and the guy is all over him.

The first one comes back in.

Mei Lei checks... Chan is totally occupied with his own problems.

She throws a fast kick to the guy's face. He staggers backward, crumbles into the wall, and retires for the day.

Mei Lei immediately goes back to the role of endangered damsel.

Chandler hits the remaining Dragon once... twice... picks him up by the shirt and slams his fist into him one last brutal time... and lets him drop to the floor.

He turns quickly with concern in his eyes for Mei Lei.

She stands there truly touched by his solicitude.

CHANDLER
(breathing hard)
You okay?

She nods in the affirmative. She stands there with a calm appraising look, not a hair out of place. She looks prettier than ever, maybe because she's just a little flush, maybe because she's just impressed us a great deal.

MEI LEI

How about you?

CHANDLER

I'll live. I don't want this to turn into a lecture, but I told you to wait in the car. You come running in here, you could have got hurt.

MEI LEI

I knew I'd be safe.

CHANDLER

I appreciate your confidence, but next time do what I ask. Okay?

Mei Lei looks at his concerned expression.

MEI LEI

Okay.

As Chandler walks over toward the fallen Dragons, he throws Mei Lei a cocky little smile over his shoulder.

CHANDLER

I thought you were the one supposed to be protecting me.

Chandler yanks the biggest Dragon off the ground. He drags him over to the sink, shoves his head under, and turns on the faucet.

The Dragon SPUTTERS to consciousness.

CHANDLER

You had a girl tattooed with a yellow dragon. What happened to her?!

DRAGON

Huh?

Chandler SLAMS him in the gut and the guy makes a real effort to remember.

DRAGON

(gasping for breath)
What girl?

CHANDLER
(shoving the Polaroid in the guy's face)
This girl!

He looks at the photo.

DRAGON
Yeah, her. Right. We sold her, man.

CHANDLER
(amazed and repulsed)
You sold her?

The Dragon doesn't see the problem.

DRAGON
Yeah, we sold her to Tommy Tong, he runs that porno place over on Broadway. He said he needed a girl cause he sold his soul to the devil.

CHANDLER
So you sold her?

DRAGON
(trying to be agreeable)
Yeah.

Chandler slams his foot up between the legs of the slimy fleshpeddler.

The Dragon rolls around on the floor, GROANING.

CHANDLER
Shut up!

The guy, still rolling around, stifles his groans.

Burning with outrage, Chan looks over at Mei Lei.

CHANDLER
They sold her.

One of the Dragons starts to get up. Chan brutally kicks him in the side.

The Dragon rolls around in pain.

CHANDLER
They sold her.

Chandler shakes his head in disgust. Mei Lei regards this man she's come to respect.

CUT TO:

EXT. BROADWAY - NIGHT

The Buick pulls up in front of Tommy's on Broadway.

Chan throws it into park.

Chan looks at Mei Lei like he means it.

CHANDLER
This time wait.

Mei Lei watches Chan go in the front door. She shakes her head and gets out of the car and goes around the back.

INSIDE TOMMY'S

Chan comes through the front... The place is a porno shop in a high tech setting, dramatic lighting, cyclone fencing dividing the place into sections. It's upscale, but full out. (like Drake's on Melrose).

Chan storms toward the back.

The guy at the counter rushes out to intercept him.

GUY
What do you want?

CHANDLER
Where is Tommy Tong? In the back?

GUY
Yeah, but you can't go back there!

Chan barges by him.

The guy spins Chan around. Chan nails him with a right cross.

CHANDLER
(stepping over him)
It's okay, I've got an appointment.

BACK ROOM

Chan bursts into the back room.

Tommy Tong, wearing his Grateful Dead T-shirt, sits in his office. The two zebra skinned sheathes hang crossed on the wall.

Chan storms across the room.

CHANDLER
I want some answers, you slug! What happened to this girl?

Chan flings the Polaroid down on the desk.

Tommy gets up and slowly moves to the back wall where his swords are hanging.

CHANDLER
I'm talking to you, asshole. Pay
attention.

OUTSIDE

Mei Lei comes up the alley in back of Tommy's and looks around... no one...

She jumps straight up, soars through the air, and lands on the roof twenty feet above.

She walks over to a large skylight and looks in... Chan is threatening Tong who moves slowly toward the crossed sheathes.

INSIDE

Chan is working himself up.

CHANDLER
Answer the question, asshole!

Tong grabs the swords and spins around--

CRASH!... Mei Lei explodes down through the skylight in a shower of glass.

She hits the ground between Tong and Chan just in time to parry to Tong's wrist and keep Chan from being cut in half.

Tong SLASHES out at her...

She leaps back, out of reach.

He SLASHES again...

She avoids the blow by walking up the wall apparently against the laws of gravity.

Chan watches in amazement.

She sidesteps to the other wall just as he SLASHES out again.

Chan watches, his mouth hanging open.

Tong looks around nervously, he's overmatched. He hits a button on his desk and a secret passage opens. He dashes into it.

Mei Lei jumps down from the wall.

Chandler can't believe it.

CHANDLER
How did you do that?

MEI LEI
Years of discipline.

CHANDLER
Yeah, yeah, but how did you really do it?

Mei Lei rushes down the secret passage after Tong.

As she goes, Chan lowers his head and checks the soles of her shoes for suction cups. He can't figure it out.

He dashes down the secret passage after her.

IN THE PASSAGEWAYS

Dark, dank sewer-like tunnels, originally made for hiding and housing illegal Chinese immigrants.

Chan takes the lead and races forward. Mei Lei grabs his shirt and yanks him backward--

SHHHHTTT!... Tong's sword LASHES out of a side tunnel, CUTTING the air where Chan was just standing. It was a very close call.

Chan's eyes roll heavenward thankfully.

MEI LEI
Could you be more careful?

CHANDLER
Didn't I tell you to wait in the car?

Together, they cautiously enter the side tunnel.

It divides. They split up, Chan heads down one of the choices, Mei Lei takes the other.

Chan moves down a slimy tunnel alone.

UP THE TUNNEL - OUT OF SIGHT

Tommy Tong, breathing hard and worried, stands with his back to the wall in one of the tunnel culs-de-sac.

Tong looks down.

A bloated rat slinks across the floor.

Suddenly a form TELESCOPES up from the ugly rodent...
Sardo Numspa!

Tong stands aghast. Numspa snatches the sword out of his hands and, with a long SWOOSHING blow, cuts him down.

With a smile of satisfaction, Numspa tosses the sword down on the lifeless body and TELESCOPES back to the floor...
A rat stands in his place!

The ugly rodent scurries across the floor and squirms into a drainage hole in the stone wall... and is gone!

Chandler comes up to the body and looks down... Tong's dead body lies there with the sword on top of it.

Mei Lei comes up behind him. She's suprised.

MEI LEI
You killed him?

CHANDLER
No, I found him like this.

Chan looks around, pokes his foot at the little drainage hole.

Chan is puzzled, he thinks about it...

CHANDLER
He must have killed himself when he saw there was no way out.

He's clearly not satisfied with his own explanation, but he hasn't got a better one.

CHANDLER
Do you buy that?

MEI LEI
No.

CHANDLER
Neither do I.

MEI LEI
I think I should tell you. We may be up against supernatural creatures.

CHANDLER
Like what?

MEI LEI
Demons.

CHANDLER

Just when I was beginning to take you seriously.

Chan shakes his head in disgust.

CUT TO:

INT. ROOM - NIGHT

Sardo Numspa sits crosslegged in the center of an empty white room.

He takes two deep breaths and folds his arms in front of him. Suddenly his hair starts to blow and the wall behind him gleams an unearthly red.

CLOSE ON: Sardo's face with his hair streaming in the wind.

PULL BACK to reveal he is sitting at the mouth of a cave on the rocky ledge of a cliff.

The VOICE of the Thing speaks from out of the cave.

THING (O.S.)

The child will never eat the blood. Time grows short.

Pink ooze drips out of the cave and down the rocky ledge.

Sardo shifts uncomfortably to avoid the slimy pink flow.

SARDO

What must I do?

THING (O.S.)

Move the child again before they discover where you are holding him.

SARDO

And to kill him?

THING (O.S.)

The Ajanti dagger. It is not of his world. With it you could kill the child.

SARDO

It is well guarded. How can I get it?

THING (O.S.)

Offer to exchange the child for it. They can refuse nothing for the safe return of the child. When you have the knife, come to me. I will tell you how to use it to kill the child.

The smirk on the Thing's face is almost audible.

Suddenly an evil LAUGH issues from out of the cave...

THING (O.S.)
Use the Chosen One.

The LAUGHTER heightens...

CUT TO:

EXT. CHANDLER'S STREET - NIGHT

The Buick pulls up to Chan's stairs. The lights go off.

Chandler looks at Mei Lei and gives her a little smile.

CHANDLER
We start again tomorrow.

Mei Lei's eyes catch on something. She gets out of the car and walks up the street.

Chan follows after her.

Mei Lei reaches up and picks a small yellow fruit off a low slung tree.

MEI LEI
Loquats. We had loquat trees in China near the house where I grew up.

She bites into the delicate yellow fruit. Her face takes on the tender expression of reminiscence.

MEI LEI
(tasting the fruit)
Life is sweet.

Chandler looks at the tree... pulls off one of the yellow fruit and bites into it.

His face contorts and he spits it out.

CHANDLER
It's sour.

MEI LEI
Of course, they're not ripe yet.

Chandler looks at her... she looks back at him...

A beat...

CHANDLER
Well, good night.

MEI LEI
Good night.

She walks back toward the car and he goes to mount the stairs.

INSIDE THE HOUSE

Chan drags himself through the front door.

IN THE BEDROOM

Chan slogs into his bedroom, collapses on the bed, kicks his shoes off, and closes his eyes.

The SCREEN starts to FADE slowly, just perceptibly, just enough to make us feel secure...

SHOCK CUT

Two figures pounce on Chandler.

His eyes pop open.

HIS POV

Til's ugly face comes rushing at us until the SCREEN goes BLACK! WHAP!... the sickening sound of impact. As the face rises, smiling, the SOUND goes DEAD and the grinning face BLURS and FADES OUT...

FADE IN

The BOTTOM portion of the SCREEN only. We're looking under a blind fold.

DOTS of LIGHT twirling and spinning.

Chan lies tied and bound in the back seat of a Mercedes limousine.

THROUGH THE BLINDFOLD

Snatches of the top stories of expensive houses...

The car comes to an abrupt halt.

Chan is yanked unceremoniously out.

Til and the Monkey Man pull him to his feet and march him across one of the godview streets in the Hollywood Hills.

CHANDLER'S POV - UNDER THE BLINDFOLD

Chandler tilts his head and catches a street sign:
CAMROSE 1400... a blur of light as he's spun past a
lighted window... his head is shoved down and we catch a
number painted on the curb: 1440... up a flowered
walkway... in a front door... an intricate Chinese rug...
through a door and into a panelled study... the SOUND of
the door shutting behind him... chest down of a man in
a custom made Italian suit...

The blind fold is ripped off Chan's face.

Chan stands face to face with Sardo Numspa.

Chan turns to Til.

CHANDLER

Thanks, I won't be needing you anymore
tonight.

SARDO

Mr. Jarrell, it's good to see you.

CHANDLER

Oh yeah, what's good about it?

SARDO

I'm sure you are wondering why I asked you
to see me this evening.

CHANDLER

Did somebody ask me. I must have missed
that part.

The Monkey Man moves forward to restrain Chan if
necessary. Chan rifles around, rage burning in his eyes.

CHANDLER

GET YOUR MONKEY OFF MY BACK!

SARDO

Of course... Fu, please retire.

Fu gives Chan a hostile look and goes out.

SARDO

Mr. Jarrell, I've had you brought here to
make you a very attractive offer.

CHANDLER

I wouldn't consider getting married this
early in the season.

SARDO

Has it ever occurred to you how many men of less worth than yourself obtain so many of the rewards of living while you, who can imagine so much, have so little.

CHANDLER

No, I'm lucky that way, I don't have much of an imagination.

SARDO

If you'll consent to my service, I'm willing to give you luxury... power... position... whatever women you may desire...

Chan responds by YAWNING and patting his mouth with his hand.

SARDO

I don't like your attitude.

CHANDLER

That's okay, because it's not for sale.

Numspa glowers at Chan.

As Numspa fumes, Chan turns to Til and winks...

Til is astonished he would dare.

SARDO

I can see there is no use talking to you.

CHANDLER

I've been trying to tell you that for five minutes.

SARDO

I'm willing to make an exchange. I will trade the child for the Ajanti dagger.

Suddenly, Til grabs Chan's forearm and, using his tremendous strength, pins it to the desk.

Sardo puts his finger against Chan's arm and with his sharpened fingernail sketches something into the skin. Droplets of blood form along the scratch marks on Chan's arm.

SARDO

(pointing to Chan's bleeding arm)
That way you'll have a reminder of the evening. Something so you'll know you were here.

Chan smiles at Numspa defiantly.

CHANDLER

Thanks, I was just going to press my corsage.

SARDO

(threatening)

You're going to remember this evening for a very long time.

CHANDLER

I doubt it, I go out a lot, and I really haven't had a very good time.

SARDO

You'll have to excuse me a minute. I'll be right back.

CHANDLER

Take your time.

SARDO

Til, see that he doesn't do any harm while I'm gone. Oh, when you have the knife, we will contact you about the exchange.

CHANDLER

You do that.

SARDO

(with a smile)

Tell your friends that Sardo Numspa sends his greetings.

Sardo walks out of the room his overcoat hung over his shoulders.

Chan glances at Til and then around the room.

Til eyes Chan suspiciously.

Chan throws him a smile, looks around, and then reaches to look at a framed photo on the desk, knocking over a small Chinese vase on a delicately carved little wooden pedestal.

Til dives forward and catches the priceless vase with both hands just before it hits the ground.

Til looks up from his kneeling position on the floor.

Chandler looks down at him, smiling...

CHANDLER

Mistake...

THWAP!!!!... Chandler kicks him in the face and Til THUMPS to the floor unconscious.

CHANDLER
(stepping over Til's body)
Mind if I look around?

Chan walks over to the door, eases it open, looks up and down the hall, and slips out.

IN THE HALL

Chan slides up the hall, smiling. He's in his element.

He rotates the knob on the first door and peeks in.

HIS POV

Through the slit, he can see... ancient Chinese instruments of torture... Mei Lei bound against the wall, ropes and pulleys holding her arms and legs.

Chan saunters through the door.

CHANDLER
Hi. What are you doing?

He comes over and leisurely pulls down her gag.

MEI LEI
Hurry!

CHANDLER
Don't get all teary eyed just because I'm saving your life.

He gets one hand loose and starts on the other.

CHANDLER
The kid's probably here somewhere. What do you say after we rescue the kid, take care of these jerks...
(more serious tone)
we spend a little time together... no pressure... I could take you around L.A. Show you a few of the sights... get to know each other... what do you think?...

She looks at him fondly.

MEI LEI
I think I'm falling in love with you.

Chan takes her in his arms and kisses her long and sensually.

They separate. .

MEI LEI
I am in love with you.

LAUGHTER...

Sardo, Yu, the eunuch, and Fu, the Monkey Man, holding the nine piece steel whip stand in the doorway.

The steel whip LASHES out. It wraps around Chan's ankle.

Fu yanks it and Chan THUDS to the ground.

Chan lies there a moment, stunned...

SHHHHTTT!... Yu brings his sword down. Chan just manages to roll out of the way, the blade comes down inches from his head.

ShhhhtttTHWPTHWPTHWP... the steel whip swishes around Chan's neck.

Yu raises his sword and swings it toward Chan's arm...

Fu snaps the whip toward him jerking Chan upward... just as Yu's sword comes down at Chan's arm.

Chan watches with horror as the sword strikes his wrist--

MATCH CUT

Chan fires rigidly up in bed. Cold sweat covers his face. He's straining for breath.

He reaches out and clutches his arm. It's there. His face lights up with relief. He massages the arm thankfully...

He looks around... his own bedroom. It's all been a dream!

He looks down at his arm...

His shocked face... on his forearm, the drawing of the Ajanti dagger! Scratched into the skin!

Chan can't believe it.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET - DAY

CLOSE ON: The street sign for the 1400 block of Camrose, the sign we saw through the blind fold.

CLOSE UP: Mei Lei's face, as she watches curiously.

PAN to show Chan looking out at 1440 Camrose...

PAN along the asphalt road to show the number 1440 painted on the curb.

MOVE UP and WIDEN OUT to see the Los Angeles skyline spreading out before us. In the F.G.... 1440 is a vacant lot overgrown with weeds. There never was a house there!

CLOSE UP: Chan's face. Beginning to realize what he's up against, his hair prickles and cold chills run down his spine.

CUT TO:

INT. HERBALIST - DAY

The sketch of the Ajanti knife scratched in Chan's arm.

TILT UP to see the faces of Mei Lei and Hong looking down at it.

HONG

It is the Ajanti dagger. It has great power... (to Chandler) And it is what he wanted in exchange for the child?

CHANDLER

If you don't think it was just a dream.

HONG

Magicians in China have known how to speak to people in their dreams for centuries.

INSIDE THE BACKROOM

Kala's form behind the screen. She speaks in her deep RASPING VOICE.

KALA

So it is Sardo Numspa.

There is a heavy SILENCE in the room...

Mei Lei and Hong exchange uneasy glances...

They have the look of two people that know they are in way over their heads.

Chan looks from one to the other... he is none to comforted by their reaction.

KALA

The crossed dagger of Ajanti was hammered in Hell from 100 million souls of the damned. It took 400 years to make and all the labor of the demons of the lower world. They brought it to this world to kill the second Golden Child, the bearer of justice. His death was a great loss. It is why the innocent suffer, and terrible crimes go unpunished.

Kala looks at Chan.

KALA

It is, what you Americans call, a double edged sword. It has four blades and cuts in all directions. All are vulnerable to it. You must obtain the knife and lure Numspa into freeing the child. But you must never let him get possession of the knife!

Kala says nothing more... Chan looks around at the other two... They are both lost in their own worried thoughts.

IN THE HALLWAY

Chan, Mei Lei, and Hong stand in the back hallway.

Hong exhales deeply.

HONG

If need be, we will exchange the dagger for the child.

MEI LEI

If the Abbot of Karma Tang will let us have it.

CHANDLER

If the child is so important, why wouldn't he let you have it?

HONG

He is a very difficult man. There is never telling what he will do.

CHANDLER

Who is Sardo Numspa?

Both Hong and Mei Lei look at Chan in SILENCE a moment...

CHANDLER
Well, who is he?

HONG
In this stage of the world, he is the head
of the demons.

CHANDLER
And you believe that?

Hong and Mei Lei look straight at Chan... there is no
doubt they believe it.

HONG
Tomorrow you will go with Mei Lei to Tibet
to obtain the dagger.

CHANDLER
I think I missed something. I haven't
said I'd go to Tibet. I'm not going to
Tibet just because I had some crazy dream.

MEI LEI
You won't go?

CHANDLER
I haven't said that either.

MEI LEI
Will you go?

Chan eases up.

CHANDLER
I'll think about it. I'm not making any
promises.

Hong bows respectfully to Chan.

HONG
Could you please leave us for a minute.

Chan shrugs and walks out to the front of the shop.

Hong watches him go, and then, turns to Mei Lei.

HONG
We will sacrifice whatever need be for the
Gompen Tarma. If we have to give up the
knife, we will.

MEI LEI
What about Kala's warning?

HONG

She thinks of herself before the child.
What does she care if the world turns to
hell. Cursed as she is, she is already in
hell. The knife is the only thing that
can kill her, and Numspa the only one who
would dare.

They look at each other somberly... They are playing
against an unimagineably formidable opponent.

HONG

(motioning with his head toward the
departed Chan)
Do you think he's been turned? Sardo
Numspa can offer him anything.

MEI LEI

He is not that kind of a man.

HONG

I hope not... There is no chance that
anyone but the Chosen One can obtain the
knife and even for him it will be
difficult. Is he attracted to you?

MEI LEI

(quietly)
Yes.

HONG

We must be sure of him. We must make a
sacrifice to obligate him to us.

MEI LEI

Americans do not believe in this.

HONG

This one might. Do what you must and, in
the morning, explain what you have
sacrificed. He will be obligated to do
what you ask. Ask him to get the
knife. He will not refuse.

MEI LEI

I can not use him like that.

Hong looks at her pointedly.

MEI LEI

Even if we save the child, if we do it
this way, it will not be the same.

HONG

The child will be saved.

MEI LEI
But we will not.

HONG
It is your choice. Do what you think is
best. You know what is at stake...
Nothing is important but the child.

ON MEI LEI

There is a painful resolution in her eyes, behind the 18 layers
of control.

CUT TO:

EXT. CHANDLER'S STREET - DUSK

Mei Lei pulls her car up in front of Chan's house.

Chandler goes to get out of the car, but hesitates.

CHANDLER
You didn't see me last night?... At all?

MEI LEI
No. It was an illusion.

CHANDLER
You didn't dream anything? You weren't
there with me?

MEI LEI
No, why?

CHANDLER
No reason.

He gets out of the car.

Mei Lei leans over and speaks out the window.

MEI LEI
Aren't you going to ask me up?

Chan is taken by surprise.

CHANDLER
What?

She looks directly at him.

MEI LEI
Does a woman have to ask twice?

CHANDLER
(taken aback)
No.

CUT TO:

INT. CHANDLER'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

MONTAGE

Mei lei pulls the pins from her hair. Her hair falls to her shoulders.

Chan stands in the bedroom, watching.

She looks down at the pins... each one is crowned with an identically sized stone... a ruby, an emerald, a sapphire, and a yellow diamond.

She hesitates a moment and then gives Chan a little smile.

She closes the door. She sticks the jewel with the blue stone at the center of the wall above the head of the bed.

The pin with the ruby goes into the wall to the left...

Chan watches...

The emerald goes into the wall to the right...

The yellow diamond in the final wall...

Chan and Mei Lei lie down in each others arms and start to kiss. Very gently they begin to take each others clothes off... run their hands down each other...

PAN to the ruby pin... it gently starts to glow... the other three pins in turn... each starts to glow... green... yellow... blue...

The ruby pin again... as it glows we can HEAR a soft RYTHMIC SOUND like a heart beating or breathing... As the glow heightens a threadlike laser beam bursts out of the red stone... and each of the other jewels shoot out a threadlike beam of intense light...

The RYTHMIC SOUND builds...

AT THE CENTER OF THE ROOM

The beams of light strike each other in a shower of SPARKS... the bits of light mix in exquisite abstract patterns, flatten in sheets, and fold in and out of each other...

The BREATHING SOUND is still soft but faster...

As everything crescendos, the central core of light BURSTS out in all directions... the room is consumed in a RAINBOW...

As the rainbow burns in all directions, we...

FADE OUT:

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

CLOSE UP: The four jeweled pins in Mei Lei's hand.

Mei Lei stands there looking down at them.

Chandler comes into the bedroom happy as a lark.

Mei Lei turns around to face him.

CHANDLER

I guess it's only fair to tell you I'm not that easy to live with.

MEI LEI

(subdued)

Are you coming to get the knife?

CHANDLER

Of course, I'm coming.

MEI LEI

You don't have to if you don't want to.

Pause...

CHANDLER

(looks straight at her)

You know I'm going to get the knife... What's wrong?

MEI LEI

Nothing is wrong.

CHANDLER

Is it something about last night?

MEI LEI

Nothing happened last night.

CHANDLER

I sort of thought something happened.

MEI LEI

That was physical.

CHANDLER
That was just physical, that it?

MEI LEI
It was merely physical.

CHANDLER
It meant nothing?

MEI LEI
What could it possibly mean?

CHANDLER
Nothing. Hell, I don't know about you but
I barely felt it... So when we leaving to
get the knife?

CUT TO:

INT. AIRPORT - DAY

Chandler, Mei Lei, and Hong stand in the airplane
terminal.

Mei Lei turns to Chandler.

MEI LEI
I'll get the tickets.

Chandler looks at her, he's still hurt and angry that
their night together didn't mean more to her.

CHANDLER
Yeah, you do that.

HONG
You must not be angry with Mei Lei. It
was I who told her to obligate you to us.

CHANDLER
What do you mean?

HONG
She told you. In our culture a woman may
not give herself to any man but her
husband. She has given you what was most
precious to her. Her future. To obligate
you, so you would get the knife.

CHANDLER
She knew I was going to get the knife.

HONG
Then why would she give...

His voice trails off as the full implications race through his mind.

HONG

I should never have said this to you.
Please don't mention we spoke of it...
Only the Golden Child is important.

Chandler is stunned, he stands there trying to comprehend what last night meant to Mei Lei.

CUT TO:

INT. PLANE - DAY

Mei Lei and Chandler sit next to each other on a commercial airliner. Both are lost in their own thoughts.

Chandler glances over at her. She doesn't even seem to be aware of his presence.

Chandler turns back.

Mei Lei looks over at Chandler... sees his distracted expression and looks away.

CUT TO:

INT. TEMPLE - DAY

Five sticks of incense burn in a bowl of sand.

PAN UP to Hong's praying face.

HONG

Forgive me. I have sacrificed Mei Lei to bind the chosen one to us. I felt it was necessary. If I was wrong in not having trusted the American, take my life...
(with great feeling) but save the child.

From Hong's fervent face.

CUT TO:

INT. SEVEN STAR WAREHOUSE - DAY

A huge white truck sits in the center of the warehouse. Til and Yu lift the two ends of the staff that supports the cage and slide them into brackets in the truck.

Yu slams the door and motions for the truck to pull out.

INSIDE THE TRUCK

Inside the darkened truck, the little boy takes out the twig. Only one leaf left. He puts it in his mouth and consumes his last measure of hope.

CUT TO:

EXT. KATMANDU - DAY

Dressed in a Tibetan sheepskin jacket and fur lined hat, Chandler stands ten or so feet off, watching Mei Lei arranging for ponies and packs.

Also dressed for their trek into the Himalayas, Mei Lei comes over to Chan.

MEI LEI

The ponies and guides will be ready in an hour.

Chandler looks at her nervously, then assumes an offhand attitude.

CHANDLER

I want you to know I'm going to save the child, and after I do, I think you should marry me.

Mei Lei is shocked. She hesitates a long moment... studies his guilt ridden face...

MEI LEI

What would ever make you think I would want to marry you?!

CHANDLER

(stunned)
Well, I thought... I mean... Why wouldn't you marry me?

MEI LEI

Because you are a careless, irresponsible, intolerant man with no thought but your whim of the moment. A distrustful egotist who gives no consideration to the consequences of his actions. Why would I want to marry a man like that?

CHANDLER

(angrily)
Yeah, why would you want to marry a man like that?!?!

Chandler turns and walks away, angry, frustrated, hurt...

Mei Lei calls out to him.

MEI LEI
Where are you going?

CHANDLER
What do you care, as long as I'm back in
time.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Chan walks up one of the narrow stone streets of Katmandu. Lost in thought, guilt ridden, he's made a terrible mistake, one for which there is no quick fix. He's injured someone he cares about, and there's nothing he seems to be able to do to make it better.

He hears a TRILLING sound... and looks up.

It's the tropical bird with the colorful plumage. The one the Golden Child raised from the dead, the one that led him to the Dragons' hideout.

The bird looks at Chan, tilts its head, and takes flight up a tiny side street.

Chan gives it a quick moment's thought and heads up after it.

AT THE TOP OF THE STREET

Fifty feet ahead the little street takes a U curve and bends back out to the main street.

Chan looks around for the bird... it's gone.

Chan stands at the bottom of the U in the little alleyway... nothing but to go back out.

He follows the U around toward the main street.

About halfway down the little stone path, a beggar sits with a begging bowl in front of him, mumbling for alms.

As he approaches, Chan notices the old man's pant legs... spread out in the street in front of him, empty. The old man has no legs.

Chan winces in sympathy. He digs into his pocket and pulls out a coin and drops it into the old man's bowl.

The old man motions for him to come closer.

Chan comes forward... the old man motions closer...

Chan steps up to where the old man is sitting.

CHANDLER
(trying to get rid of him)
You're welcome.

The old man holds up his arm. On it are several pendants, set inside them are glittering sapphires. Their cool blue as restful as the waters of the Costa Brava at dusk.

The old man holds one up to Chan. Chan reaches out for it.

CHANDLER
Thank you.

The old man shakes his head and RATTLES the coin in his bowl. He wants Chan to buy one.

CHANDLER
Okay. How much?

Chan reaches in his pocket and pulls out his money.

The old man plucks a bill out of Chan's hand and loops something over Chan's neck.

CHANDLER
Hey! That was a hundred!

Chan looks down at the pendant... it's a cheap piece of tin with a circle of fire stamped into the metal. It's held around his neck by a thin white string.

CHANDLER
Wait a minute, this isn't what you showed me.

OLD MAN
You're breaking my heart, asswipe.

Chan is stunned, the guy speaks perfect English.

CHANDLER
Okay, let's have it back, you cheap rip-off artist.

OLD MAN
Monkey dirt, puke face, eater of turtle scum, the stench of you clogs my hearing.

CHANDLER
Let's have my money back.

The Old Man cups his hand to his ear.

OLD MAN
What is that, scuzz bucket?

CHANDLER
You speak pretty good English.

OLD MAN
So do you. What of it?

CHANDLER
Listen, you low budget hustler, you cheap-
water two-bit jerk, I want my money back.

The old man cups his hand to his ear.

CHANDLER
Listen, punk, if you didn't...

The old man stands up. Quite the contortionist he's had
his legs folded up behind him and has slipped them back
into his pants.

OLD MAN
What was that?

CHANDLER
You little weasle--

The old man SLAPS Chan.

OLD MAN
You'll pay for this.

CHANDLER
I already did and I want my money back.

Chan grabs him by the shirt front and yanks him toward
him. The old man kicks him in the shins and stares over
Chan's shoulder...

Chan looks in back of him... there's nothing there... 

He turns back around...

He is holding onto an empty shirt, the old man is gone...
with his 100 bucks. The old weasle seems to be a master of
slipping in and out of his clothes.

Chan throws the filthy shirt down in disgust.

IN THE MAIN STREET

Chan comes out onto the main street trying to pull the
pendant off. Despite the fact that's how it went on, it's
now too small to fit over his head.

He yanks at it. Chan grimaces in pain as the string bites into the back of his neck, it won't break... he yanks harder, it holds fast. The only thing that is giving is his skin.

He starts up the street looking the string over, trying to find a knot or place where it's joined... there isn't one.

MONTAGE

On the trail, a procession of Tibetan ponies. Chan rides in the middle on one of the shaggy tailed little horses. He pulls on the pendant, then rubs an irritated red line on the back of his neck.

The procession fords a river. Chan sits on his horse trying to bite through the thin piece of string that holds the pendant around his neck.

Chan sits at camp trying to cut the string with a scissors... he works away... he looks down... it's not even frayed.

The line of ponies... up ahead the monastery at Karma Tang.

INSIDE THE TEMPLE

Chan and Mei Lei, backed by a formation of saffron-robed monks, stand in the main hall awaiting the arrival of the Abbot.

Suddenly everyone bows... but Chan, who glares in the direction of the man who has just entered.

CHANDLER'S POV

He stares dead in the face of the old beggar who took his money in the alley.

The Old Man throws Chan a broad smile.

Mei Lei nudges Chan.

MEI LEI

(to Chan, out of the side of her mouth)
Bow!

Chan, none too happy, tilts his head slightly to the old man.

The old beggar smiles at him knowingly.

OLD MAN

What do you twill bags want?

MEI LEI
(whispering to Chan)
That's how he speaks.

CHANDLER
I know.

MEI LEI
Don't do anything to anger him.

CHANDLER
No, we wouldn't want that.

MEI LEI
(in a loud formal voice)
We have come to ask for the sacred crossed
dagger of Ajanti.

OLD MAN
For what reason?

MEI LEI
For the Golden Child.

OLD MAN
He has no need of it.

MEI LEI
To save his life.

OLD MAN
It is for our sakes the child lives, not
for his own.

MEI LEI
I humbly beg you, let us have the knife.

OLD MAN
Let him ask... (meaning Chan)...

Stony SILENCE... Mei Lei looks at Chan, he relents.

CHANDLER
(hostilely)
I'm asking for the knife.

OLD MAN
Only a man who's heart is pure may wield
the knife. If you are such a man, you
will have it.

INT. ENTRANCE TO CORRIDOR - DAY

Chandler and the Abbot stand in a tiny room in front of
a curtain.

The Old Man pulls the curtain aside revealing a huge wooden door.

OLD MAN

Beyond that door is a 30 foot corridor. At the end is the sacred knife of Ajanti. If you can walk to the other end of the corridor and retrieve the knife, it is yours.

Chandler starts for the door.

OLD MAN

There is one thing. You must carry this cup of water without spilling a drop.

The old man hands him a cup. The surface of the water gleams at the very top edge of the cup.

OLD MAN

Keep your thoughts as pure as this water.

Chandler looks down into the cup... Some sludge and sediment float around in the clear liquid.

CHANDLER

It's not all that pure.

OLD MAN

Neither are you. We're giving you every chance.

Chan throws him a look.

OLD MAN

Remember, whatever you retrieve from that room, is yours.

CHANDLER

I'm just here to pick up the sacred knife and go home.

Chandler throws the Old Man a confident smile and, holding the cup carefully upright, goes over and pulls the door open and walks in.

INSIDE

Chandler stands with his back to the doorway.

At the end of the corridor, the sacred crossed knife of Ajanti gleams on its stand. It is in plain view thirty feet away, just as the Old Man said.

Down either side of the corridor are lifesize Indian sculptures. Like the temple at Bashra, these are wooden sculptures painted in naturalistic colors to resemble living entities.

Chan looks down the corridor at the Ajanti knife, and then, down at the cup of water.

CHANDLER

How hard could it be?

He starts slowly down the corridor keeping the cup dead upright. Held by surface tension the skin of the water bulges just over the top.

He's getting the hang of it. No big problem.

He comes to the first pair of statues.

From around the feet of the statues sacks fall to the floor.

Chandler glances down...

Gold and precious gems pour across the floor... emeralds and rubies the size of hens' eggs.

Chandler's eyes go wide... one of those jewels would buy you a modest block in downtown Manhattan, say at Park and 57th.

Chandler stoops down a little keeping his eye on the cup all the time.

Tries with his foot... the water in the cup moves... he decides he better not risk it... he resigns himself and keeps going.

As he gets to the next pair of statues, books tumble out at his feet.

He lowers his eyes as much as he can without lowering his head...

He watches the pages of one of the books flip... Model T Fords... an early passenger airliner... the space shuttle... some kind of super modern flying machine... space ships... a man greeting some kind of a creature that comes out of a space ship... an image representing a man passing to the world of the alien creatures... some pretty interesting stuff.

ANOTHER BOOK

Portraits... Lincoln... Gandhi... Einstein...

The pages are flipping too fast, he can't get a good look at anything... his own picture flies by!...

He's sorely tempted to find out why, but once again steels himself and goes on...

He keeps moving his eyes on the cup where the water gleams and jiggles at the brim.

SWOOOSH!!!... simultaneously from both sides two spears fly out at him... The point of one stops right in front of his nose, the other creases the hair on the back of his head.

Chandler stands perfectly still, holding the cup level despite the terrifying distraction.

He ducks under the point of the front spear and keeps on going.

He glances at the next pair of statues out of the corner of his eye... two voluptuous six-armed maidens, scantily dressed. Anxious to please, they smile out at him. They come to life.

They start to sway seductively.

CHANDLER

They know what you like.

Chandler keeps walking, only one pair of statues left.

Chandler looks over that way.

A fang-toothed demon plunges a knife toward the heart of a crying woman. The woman turns her head. It is Mei Lei!

Chandler goes white.

The SOUND OF DRIPPING WATER...

Chandler looks down... there are three huge water drops on the floor...

Chan looks up... Mei Lei is gone. Only the hideous fang-toothed demon is left. He has six arms.

Chandler tries desperately to fill the cup back up with spit.

Too late. The six-armed demon jumps down on Chan, knocking him to the ground, sending the water flying.

Chan struggles, but the being is incredibly strong.

He locks two of his hands around Chan's elbows... two around his wrists... with his fifth hand grabs Chan's hair and slams his head down on the stone floor... with his last hand he reaches over and takes the knife from its stand.

He raises it poised over Chan's heart...

Chan's life is flashing before his eyes...

Two of the demon's other hands go to join it... the air WHOOSHES as he plunges the dagger downward...

It strikes Chan's chest with a BURST OF SPARKS and a tiny metallic CLINK!

To Chan's amazement the knife doesn't enter his body, he yanks himself free, smashes his fist into the demon's face... but he's gone, vanished...

All the statues are gone and he holds the knife in his hand.

He looks at his chest, at the place where he was stabbed... the tin trinket lies peacefully on the spot... in the center of the flaming circle is a cross where the point of the double bladed knife struck.

He scurries to his feet with the knife in one hand and the cup in the other.

He looks the way he came down the corridor... it's empty... down at the water... it's full again... He gives it some thought...

He's not taking any chances. He puts the cup to his mouth and GULPS down the contents.

INSIDE THE MAIN HALL

CLOSE ON: The sacred knife of Ajanti gleaming in the darkness.

PULL BACK to reveal Chandler holding it triumphantly in the air in the main hall of the monastery.

The smiling faces of the monks. Amid them Mei Lei's face.

Chandler looks over at her with a smile.

She returns the look without emotion.

The smile dies on his face.

CUT TO:

EXT. MONASTERY GARDEN - NIGHT

Moonlight shines down on a leafless tree, its branches gnarled and clotted from two centuries of cutting back.

Beneath the tree, looking over the vast valley below, sits the Old Man, the head monk of Karma Tang.

Chan comes up to him and sits by his side.

He looks over at Chan without a word and turns back to the landscape.

Chan looks over at the revered monk who speaks without looking at him.

OLD MAN
What is it, asswipe?

CHANDLER
I wanted to thank you for giving me the pendant.

The Old Man turns and gives Chandler a mouthfart.

CHANDLER
We'll let that go because that's your style.

The monk does it again.

CHANDLER
I accept that's your way, but don't push your luck.

OLD MAN
HA! HA!

CHANDLER
Listen, I want to ask your advise. You're old and wise... at least you're old... What can I say to a woman from your world to make her understand I love her and want to marry her.

Gompa breaks out in LAUGHTER...

OLD MAN
HA! HA! HA! He thinks someone would marry him just because he said something.

CHANDLER
Okay, so what can I do to make her want to marry me.

OLD MAN

HA! HA! HA! If you took the short path and reached enlightenment before tomorrow, who would want you for a husband?!

CHANDLER

What's the short path.

OLD MAN

It is the fastest way to fulfill your destiny, slime turtle. One slip and madness, death, and damnation.

CHANDLER

Okay, so how do I do it.

OLD MAN

HA! HA! HA! You must remain pure until you have done what you must do.

CHANDLER

What do you mean pure?

OLD MAN

You know what I mean.

CHANDLER

Is there a long path?

OLD MAN

It takes a 10,000 lifetimes.

CHANDLER

I haven't got that kind of time. No women. What else?

OLD MAN

For you? You must trust someone you have no reason to trust. You must make a promise to someone you have just met. And you must love someone who loves you.

CHANDLER

How about I just walk on water?

OLD MAN

What would that accomplish?

CHANDLER

How will I know when to do these things.

OLD MAN

That is for you to decide. You must tell no one I've set you on the path. It is your own lonely way you must go.

CHANDLER
Okay, thanks for your help.

OLD MAN
HA! HA! HA! He thinks I helped him.

Chandler gets up.

CHANDLER
Thanks anyway.

He goes inside.

The great monk sits on the ridge watching the moon and the vast valley below... he rubs his shaven head.

Mei Lei sits down beside him.

The Old Man turns and looks at her with great compassion.

MEI LEI
Gompa, I have ruined myself for the American. I think I am in love with him.

He turns and gives her a sympathetic smile.

MEI LEI
He is a fool.

The old monk nods sagely...

OLD MAN
... but he is brave.

MEI LEI
He is irresponsible.

OLD MAN
... but he is generous.

MEI LEI
He thinks of nothing but his own feelings.

OLD MAN
But if you touch his heart, there is nothing he would not do for you.

MEI LEI
He believes in nothing.

OLD MAN
And still he does what is right.

MEI LEI

He is a careless, thoughtless, egotistical
undisciplined fool!

OLD MAN

Yes, I, too, like him very much. It is
hard not to... (rubs his head) Oh these
magnificent Americans, so much power and
so little understanding of what to do with
it.

MEI LEI

What should I do?

OLD MAN

Help him save the Golden Child... and
follow your heart.

MEI LEI

Thank you, Gompa.

OLD MAN

You are welcome, Daughter. When you want
to marry him, you have my blessing.

MEI LEI

Thank you, Father.

The Old Man turns and looks at her tenderly. She looks
back at him very seriously... He gives her a confident,
reassuring smile.

CUT TO:

INT. PLANE - DAY

Chan and Mei Lei ride home side by side, in silence....

CUT TO:

INT. CAR - DAY

A car wends its way toward Lake Arrowhead.

Chandler and Mei Lei sit in the back of the car jammed
between two massive Chinese bodyguards.

Chandler turns to Mei Lei.

CHANDLER

Where are we going?

MEI LEI

Somewhere safe.

CHANDLER

Well don't tell me too much.

Chan turns back and faces front.

EXT. HOUSE IN ARROWHEAD - DUSK

Two cars pull up in front of a handsome little wooden cabin. Chan, Mei Lei, and eight intent Chinese bodyguards get out.

Chan looks around at the woods that surround the little house.

EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT

Two of the massive guards stand watch in the woods to the north... two more to the east... south... and west.

INT. HOUSE - NIGHT

Chandler sits on the couch in the living room. In front of him on the coffee table is a briefcase packed with foam. The knife rests neatly in a hollowed area. Chan closes the briefcase lid and tests its lock, carefully fastening and unfastening it.

IN THE BEDROOM

Mei Lei takes the pins out of her hair.

She places the ruby pin dead center in the east wall.

She walks slowly to the north wall and places the sapphire pin.

OUT IN THE LIVING ROOM

Chan clamps one of the cuffs to the briefcase handle. He adjusts the other and fits it around his right wrist. He clamps it on and off, testing it.

IN THE BEDROOM

Mei Lei sticks the emerald pin in the center of the south wall. All four pins are in place.

She walks to the door of the bedroom.

IN THE LIVING ROOM

Mei Lei, her hair down, appears in the doorway to the bedroom.

Chandler senses her presence. He doesn't look up. With all his will, he fights to stay on the short path.

MEI LEI
Are you coming to bed?

CHANDLER
(without looking up)
You go ahead. I'm going to sleep out here.

There is a long SILENCE while Mei Lei looks at him, but he avoids her... finally...

MEI LEI
Good night.

Chandler still doesn't look up.

CHANDLER
Night.

Mei Lei turns and goes into the bedroom.

CUT TO:

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

CLOSE UP: Mei Lei's devastated face. She lies face up on her pillow. Tears begin to well in her eyes.

ESTABLISHING SHOTS

Two guards stand watch in the woods north of the house... Two more to the south... east... west...

IN THE BEDROOM

Mei Lei lies in bed, motionless. Two glistening tears begin to roll down her cheeks...

CROSSCUT

An arrow THUDS into one of the guards and the other is SNAPPED off his feet by the steel whip.

BACK INSIDE

Mei Lei, lying there... silently crying...

CROSSCUT

A knife THUMPS into the chest of one guard. The other guard turns toward him and a knife THUMPS into his chest.

BACK INSIDE

Mei Lei's tear stained face. The door begins to open.

Mei Lei quickly rolls her face across the pillow. When she lifts her head up, there is no sign that she was ever crying.

Chan comes in.

CHANDLER

I heard something.

He cautiously goes to the window and glances out.

CHANDLER

I don't like it. Let's get out of here.

Chandler slides up the window. The briefcase with the knife is handcuffed to his wrist.

Mei Lei gets up from the bed and holds Chan from going out the window. She looks out, and then, goes first.

IN THE WOODS

Chan and Mei Lei move silently through woods.

SHOCK CUT

The Monkey Man drops from one of the trees and LASHES out with the nine part steel whip... Yu steps out from behind a tree, his crossbow at the ready... Til sword in hand comes out from behind another... and Sardo appears literally out of nowhere...

SHHTT-THWIT-THWIT-THWIT... the whip wraps around the briefcase...

The evil eunuch aims the crossbow at Mei Lei and fires... She leaps backward eight feet... the arrow flies by her and SPLINTERS the trunk of a little pine.

Fu snaps his whip taut, pulling straight briefcase, cuffs, and Chan's arm.

Til SLASHES the sword towards Chan's outstretched arm...

Chan pulls it out of the way just in time.

The sword cuts through the chain of the cuffs.

Another arrow... as it ZINGS toward her, Mei Lei jumps sideways avoiding it. It sails out of sight.

Yu fires again.

Mei Lei jumps straight up onto one of the branches of the pine trees and the arrow flies beneath her.

Numspa rips the crossbow out of Yu's hands and waves his henchmen off. With a cruel smile, he aims the crossbow at Chan who stands in the open with nowhere to go.

Mei Lei turns to see Chan's predicament... her face tenses with fear. She leaps to the ground and handsprings across the hillside.

Numspa fires the crossbow, his intense satisfaction gleaming in his eyes.

The arrow ZINGS from the bow...

Mei Lei spins through the air and comes to a stop right in front of Chan, facing him.

Mei Lei looks into Chan's eyes. There is a THUMP as the arrow strikes her full in the back, her body jerks... and slumps into Chan's arms.

Numspa lets out an amused LAUGH and then disappears after the others.

Mei Lei lies in Chan's arms, her eyes tenderly looking up at him, her face tightened with pain.

She smiles lovingly at Chan...

MEI LEI
If you had asked me to marry you again,
I was going to say yes.

Her eyes fall shut and the pain in her face dissolves... she is dead.

CUT TO:

INT. HERBALIST SHOP - DAY

Mei Lei, as beautiful as she was in life, lies on a table in the backroom of Hong's shop. The window covering has been thrown back and a square of sunshine illuminates Mei Lei's head and shoulders.

Chan and Hong stand looking down at her. The light obliterates Kala's shadow from across the screen.

HONG
She is beyond this world of pain.

CHANDLER
She saved my life.

The rasping voice of Kala HISSES out...

KALA

And you can save hers. The Golden Child
can bring her back. As long as sunlight
still shines on her body the touch of the
Golden Child will bring her to life.

Suddenly, everything in Chan boils over.

He rushes at the screen.

CHANDLER

She's dead! She's dead! No little child
can bring her back to life! No little
child can make the world better!

He swipes away the screen.

A terrible HISSING!

Kala arches her back. Her body is coiled at the waist.
It is the body of a snake. The tail rises high in the
air. A rattle trembles on the end of it.

SHHHHTTT!...SHHHHTTT!... SHHHHTTT!

Chan stands there, looking at Kala, body of a woman, tail
of a rattlesnake.

KALA

There is more on heaven and earth than is
dreamt of in your nightly newscasts!
BRING THE CHILD!

HISSSS!... a forked tongue shoots from her mouth.

Chandler steps backward, awestruck.

Hong steps to Chandler's side and takes him by the
shoulders.

HONG

You are the Chosen One. Seek. If it is
your destiny, it will find you.

CUT TO:

INT. HOUSE - DAY

Six or eight dead butterflies, their wings folded
backward, lie on a carpeted floor.

A hand reaches in and picks up one and tosses it forward.

The dead butterfly falls just inside the bars of the Golden Child's cage.

The Golden Child looks down at it with great tenderness in his eyes and gently reaches down and touches it.

A BURST of color as the insect flutters its wings, rises into the air, and flies off.

The hand reaches down amid the dead insects, picks up another butterfly and tosses it into the cage.

Once again the Golden Child puts out his hand and lightly strokes the colorful insect.

The butterfly immediately breaks into FLIGHT.

The hand takes another and tosses it toward the cage... it hits one of the bars and falls to the carpet.

The hand reaches forward to retrieve the dead insect and the Golden Child reaches through the bars and touches the hand.

The big hand trembles with the contact. The hand turns over and opens. The butterfly sits on the upraised palm, spreading and unspreading its wings.

The caged child reaches over and gently strokes the huge hand. The Golden Child smiles compassionately at the owner of the hand and then raises his fingers to his lips in a sign of silence.

CUT TO:

MONTAGE

Chandler drives. Aimlessly... over the freeways... anguish in his face... the billboards and gas station signs on stilts peek over the white concrete edges... out 60 toward the desert... up a curving pass that cuts between two little hills studded with dwarfed pines... Chan looks over at the eastern hillside... halfway down, the other hill cuts a sharp shadow across it...

INT. HERBALIST SHOP - DAY

The square of light shines down on Mei Lei's torso. Her face is shaded except for a minute triangle at the bottom of her chin. We watch as the little point of light shrinks and disappears.

BACK TO CHAN

Chan drives along rows of irrigated plants, rainbirds spray out over the crops...

Chan drives along a divided highway lined on both sides with shade trees.

Chan's face is harried... suddenly he pulls onto the shoulder, brakes the car to a stop, and leans forward against the wheel... after a moment his body goes rigid and he raises his head with determination... He locks his hand around the gear shift and...

A familiar TRILLING sound...

Chandler puts his head down, close to the windshield and scans the sky... high in one of the dusty trees, a dash of color... The bird the Golden Child brought to life. The bird tilts its head at Chan, and then, leaps from its perch and flies up the highway.

Chan puts it into gear, lets up the clutch, and pulls out after the bird...

The bird swoops through the tree lined drive. Chan zooms after him along the shaded roadway.

The bird with the car behind bursts out of the line of trees as the road opens up to the rocky desert floor.

BACK TO THE HERBALIST'S

The square of light has moved to Mei Lei's waist.

ROAD

The bird waits for Chan at the mouth of a dirt road on the far side of Palm Springs. As Chan approaches the bird drops from its perch and darts up the dirt road. Chan turns, following the bird.

His car moves up the dirt road trailing a line of dust.

The bird disappears into the trees of a luxury desert home. Ten green acres, lavish house and swimming pool, an oasis in the desert.

Chan pulls up in back of a fenced area thick with ivy.

Chan leaps the fence.

He moves through the heavy ivy.

Suddenly from all around him there is a terrifying HISSING...

Chan's face goes white. In the ivy all around him, a thousand snakes or maybe only five or six really big ones. We don't see them, but we know they're there.

Chan looks around... ivy, knee-deep in every direction for a hundred feet...

Chan springs up and grabs the low hanging limb of a tree and pulls himself up.

He sits there catching his breath... He senses something... he looks straight across from him. The Monkey Man smiling coolly from his perch on another branch.

Chan's face drops.

The Monkey Man uncoils his steel whip and, with a malicious smile, SNAPS it a quarter inch from Chan's head.

Chan jerks his head back and barely keeps his balance on the tree.

The Monkey Man smirks as he coils the steel lengths. He throws the whip forward and it loops around the branch Chan is on. He pulls on the whip a little, shaking the branch.

Chan, doing his best to hang onto the branch, looks around... no place to go... looks down at the ground where under the cover of the ivy whatever it is HISSES threateningly.

Chan looks over at the Monkey Man who smiles and yanks harder on the whip, almost throwing Chan off the branch.

Suddenly Chan leaps to his feet and steps out on to the extended whip. He tightrope walks along it.

The Monkey Man holds the handle of the whip watching amazed as Chan walks up to him and kicks him dead in the face with a THUD.

The Monkey Man drops out of the tree.

Chan catches hold of a branch and swings gently back and forth as he watches Fu CRASH through the ivy.

The HISSING intensifies...

The human simian is pulled down and disappears to terrible CRUNCHING noises.

Chan looks down at the ivy in horror, he doesn't even want to contemplate what's down there.

Chan struggles to the top of his branch and pushes off. He grabs a neighboring branch, takes advantage of his upward swing, and sails beyond the ivy into a hedge that cushions his fall.

Chan rolls out of the hedge and onto the concrete surrounding the swimming pool. He comes to a crouch and silently darts to the sliding glass door at the back of the house. He pushes it open and slips in.

The sunken living room is dramatically spotlit. At the far end of the huge room, GLISTENING on its stand is the crossed knife of Ajanti.

Chan hurries over and puts the knife into his belt.

A mammoth hand reaches out and closes over Chan's mouth.

Chan turns his head to see Til looking down at him.

Chan's worried face.

Til looks at Chan... and raises his finger to his lips. He gives Chan a gentle little smile, giving off a loving, encouraging reassurance, the kind one receives if one is touched by the full force of good. He motions for Chan to come with him through the doorway that leads to the hall.

Chan nods in agreement and the giant releases Chan.

As Til turns to go through the door, Chan considers burying the dagger in Til's back, relents, and decides to trust this creature he has no reason to trust.

In the hall, Til motions for Chan to wait.

Til disappears into the closest doorway.

Chan stands at the end of the hallway waiting. Chan starts to feel a little uneasy, vulnerable.

Suddenly, from a doorway a little ahead of him, Yu steps out with his crossbow raised.

Chan stands there, stunned, as Yu aims the crossbow at his heart and--

An arm reaches out and grabs Yu by the throat. Til's head shoots out from the side of the doorway and SMASHES into the face of the evil eunuch.

Til squeezes Yu's throat... lets go and Yu falls to the floor.

The giant motions for Chan to come ahead into the room.

Chan rolls his eyes heavenward and follows the mute giant.

Inside the room Chan looks around... seated in the center in his cage is the Golden Child. On each of the four walls hangs one of the four chanters.

Chan goes to the middle of the room, lifts up the cage, and takes the kid out.

CHANDLER

Don't worry, I'll get you out of here. (to Til) Where's the big guy?

Til points to the door leading to the next room.

Chan takes the crossed knife out of his belt and goes to the door.

Til, trembling, shakes his head don't.

CHANDLER

It's okay, I'm the Chosen One.

Chan opens the door to the next room and steps in.

INSIDE THE ROOM

An unearthly RED GLOW fills the room.

On the floor in the center of the empty room, Sardo Numspa sits deep in meditation. On the back wall is a frightening otherworldly landscape that seems to open on the bowels of hell... little fires burn, tiny figures wriggle and writhe in agony tormented by strange demons. A Bosch-like scene.

Numspa concentrates, the veins in his forehead swell.

Tiny fires FLARE, choruses of little shrieks come from the microcosm in the wall.

Chan is aghast, frozen in his footsteps.

CLOSE SHOT: Numspa sitting at the side of the Thing's cave, he senses something.

NUMSPA'S FACE: Intense, his hair streaming behind him in the wind.

BACK IN THE ROOM

Numspa opens his eyes and sees Chan. He leaps to his feet and the coat falls from his shoulders.

Two giant wings unfold from his back and stretch up over his head, filling the room. The tips virtually touch the opposite walls.

Chan blanches.

Sardo lets out a SHRIEK! An awful, terrifying sound.

Chan backs out of the room, pushing the door shut behind him.

IN THE OTHER ROOM

Chan swoops up the Golden Child on his way out.

Chan, carrying the Golden Child in his arms, races for the door.

In the other room, Numspa flaps his immense wings. As he is propelled forward, he wraps them around him.

CRASH!!!... Numspa comes CRASHING through the door, it bursts out in a thousand flying splinters.

Til is waiting for him. He leaps up and grabs Numspa, entangling him. The two tumble and roll across the floor.

OUTSIDE

Chan comes racing out of the front door, jumps in one of the cars out front, turns the ignition, and stamps on the gas.

INSIDE THE HOUSE

Numspa's powerful hands squeeze Til's neck, compressing and distorting it. It stretches like rubber. The mighty demon drops the prostrate body to the floor.

BACK OUTSIDE

The car SCREECHES around the driveway and comes to a lurching halt.

Pulled up in front of the gate, the only gap in the massive brick wall, is the Mercedes limousine.

Chan goes to back up. The Golden Child lays his hand on Chan's arm.

CHANDLER

What?

The little boy concentrates on the huge car.

THRRRCRASH!... The front end of the car flattens like an aluminum can.

Chandler watches, amazed.

The boy looks at the other end of the Mercedes.

THRRRCRASH!... It folds down into the ground.

Chandler looks over at the seat next to him. The little child is looking at him with a beatific smile on his face.

CHANDLER

I'm going to get you out of this. I
promise.

The child reaches over and gently touches Chan on the arm.

Chan is thunderstruck with the force of the touch.

CHANDLER

(in amazement)
I'm not angry anymore.

GOLDEN CHILD

I know.

It is the only time we will ever hear him speak.

The Golden Child nods and smiles knowingly at Chan.

CHANDLER

Fasten your seat belt, kid. I can't
promise it's going to be a smooth ride.

The Golden Child smiles and, by itself, the seatbelt folds around him and CLICKS locked.

The child looks at Chan and Chan's belt wraps around him and CLICKS into place.

Chan looks at the magical child with great tenderness... then guns the car and drives up and over the crushed Mercedes.

The car tears along the dirt road kicking up a trail of dust.

In the rear view mirror, Chan can see a black speck high in the sky racing toward him at incredible speed. He strains down on the accelerator.

The sky darkens above the car.

CRASH!... a hand bursts through the side window snatching out for Chan.

Chan SLAMS on the brakes. The car swerves to a stop.

Chan jumps in the back seat, pulls the kid over, and gets out on that side.

He runs from the car carrying the kid.

Numspa flaps his mammoth black wings and, holding the car, rises in the air.

Chan watches over his shoulder, amazed.

Numspa flies upward with the car. He turns and swoops toward Chan and the child releasing the car.

Chan shields the boy.

The car SLAMS to earth right behind Chan and the boy.

CHANDLER
You alright?

The child nods.

Chan sets the child down and pulls the Ajanti dagger out of his belt. He stands and waits as Numspa rockets down toward him.

Two swords appear in Numspa's hands as he sails through the air.

Chan dives to the ground as Numspa SLASHES at him, missing by only inches.

Chan jumps to his feet.

Numspa banks and drops into a stoop. As he swoopes through the air, he disappears.

Chan, horrorstruck, looks around for him.

EEEEIIII!... Numspa appears suddenly, screaming through the air only a few feet from Chan.

SHHTTT!... He swings out with his sword, slashing Chan's shoulder... and instantly disappears.

Chan looks at his bleeding shoulder and then over at the Golden Child.

The Child points in the air next to Chan.

The car speeds across the desert landscape.

Chan drives the car, concentrating for everything he's worth. The child sits tensely by his side, he seems to know what's at stake.

The car races up the tree lined road.

Shooting up the road, the trees flying past.

The car speeds through the pass between the two little hills. Only the very top of the second hill glows in the light.

The sun is low and the light yellow as Chan races into the outskirts of downtown.

Chan zigzags through the downtown streets.

The sun is dropping out of sight when Chan pulls the car to a stop in front of Chinatown.

Chan leaps out of the car.

He leads the boy by the hand as they run through the square and into Hong's shop.

They rush down the hallway.

Chan and the Golden Child come running into the room. The square of light is quickly disappearing up Mei Lei's toe, only the last half of the toenail SPARKLES in the sunlight.

MOVING WITH THEM as they cross the room...

EEEEEEIIIIII!... Sardo Numspa telescopes up from the floor right in front of them. Terribly burned and disfigured, on his face all the fury of his intended revenge. He raises the burnt remnants of his wings. Ripples of FLAME run up and down the ragged edges. In his right hand is poised the Ajanti dagger!

Chan's shocked face!

The evil creature plunges the knife down into Chan's chest!

A SHOWER of SPARKS as the blade CLINKS against the pendant!

Chan rips the knife out of Numspa's hand.

Numspa reaches out for the child as he starts to telescope back into the ground.

As Numspa funnels downward, Chan leaps forward and buries the knife into Numspa's heart.

An earthrending HOWL!

A RING of FIRE encircles the reigning Prince of Evil.

Everything in the circle collapses toward a burning point in the middle where the light seems to disappear into a shinning hole, that closes around itself and disappears.

Chandler rushes across the room to Mei Lei.

The light has disappeared from the end of her toe.

CHANDLER'S FACE: All is lost.

He takes her in his arms and kisses her.

The Golden Child quietly approaches.

The child lifts her foot in the air. The tip catches a last beam of sunlight.

He reaches out with his finger and gently touches the tip of her toe where the single point of sunlight GLISTENS.

As Chandler pulls back from the kiss, Mei Lei opens her eyes.

CHANDLER
(tears forming in his eyes)
I love you.

She nods yes and starts to cry.

They pull each other tight.

Chan looks over... behind the screen the bodies of Kala and Hong lie dead on the ground.

Chan looks over at the Golden Child.

The little boy shakes his head in the negative. This is their destiny.

Chan turns back to Mei Lei.

They kiss.

Chan and Mei Lei kissing...

PULL BACK to REVEAL they are standing under a cherry tree. Blossoms rain down on them.

HALFWAY AROUND THE WORLD

On a Tibetan hillside, another tree showers down petals.

The Abbot of Karma Tang and the Golden Child stand under a stand of loquat trees.

The Old Man notices the loquats, reaches up, and pulls a yellow fruit from one of the low slung trees.

OLD MAN
Life is sweet.

The Old Man bites into the fruit and his face contorts. He shakes his head, tosses the fruit away, and goes into the monastery.

The Golden Child watches him go... turns and touches the tree.

The leaves grow, the fruit plump and yellow.

The boy reaches up, takes a loquat, and bites into it.

CLOSE UP: The child's face. From the smile on his face and the twinkle in his eye, we know that life can indeed be sweet.

FADE OUT

END