

THE KILLER

by

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Third Draft
August 23, 1993

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"THE KILLER"

FADE IN:

EXT. VICTORIA PEAK - NIGHT

An extraordinary view of Hong Kong, splashed by millions of lights and massive neon signs. You can taste the power of money on this island of six million people -- but the bitter aftertaste is the grief and poverty that surrounds it.

SUPER APPEARS: "HONG KONG"

EXT. JEEN MA LOOK CATHOLIC CHURCH

High above the city, heavy fog hangs over a narrow dirt road that leads to a secluded church.

INT. CHURCH

The rundown church is ablaze as thousands of candles compete with smoldering joss sticks and incense. Acrid smoke of East and West fills the chapel.

An ELDERLY PRIEST kneels at the altar, mumbling an ancient prayer. He crosses himself and leaves.

JEFF CHAMBERS sits in a pew near the front. His handsome Caucasian features are chiseled against the firelight of the candles. In his mid-thirties, he is dressed eloquently in an Armani suit, longcoat and silk scarf.

A peacefulness floods through him as he watches a weathered porcelain figure of the Mother Mary that stands in the center of the altar. A large crucifix hangs high above her.

SIDNEY POONG suddenly appears from the shadows behind Chambers and sits beside him. Sidney is 52, Asian, well-dressed in Western style, and has the intelligent eyes of a survivor.

Eye contact tells us everything: the two men share a long history, an affection, a common bond.

SIDNEY

Do you believe in God?

JEFF

I like the tranquility here....

Sidney looks at him proudly, like father to son.

SIDNEY

You have reached a higher plane than I thought any American could do. If you were Chinese, you would be Red Pole by now.

JEFF

And what after that?

SIDNEY

There's nothing after that. That's the most you can be.

JEFF

Is that enough for you?

SIDNEY

In our profession, it's dangerous to question yourself.

Sidney opens a briefcase and shows Jeff a photograph of YUEN CHAT HAN: 60's, overweight, puffy.

SIDNEY

This is the first man....

He shows Jeff a photo of WAN SEE KONG, a 45-year-old weasel with a deep facial scar.

SIDNEY

And this is the second.

Reaching into the briefcase, Jeff picks up a nine millimeter Beretta. He presses the release on the automatic, and the clip slides out. Jeff thumbs out two green-tipped bullets.

SIDNEY

Teflon coated hotloads.... The way you like them.

Jeff clinches the lethal bullets in his hand, feeling their weight. He starts to check the sliding action, then stops. A glance at the porcelain figure of Mother Mary reminds him he's in a place of worship.

SIDNEY

We can count it...

Jeff glances down at the crisp banknotes inside the briefcase, then looks at his old friend.

JEFF

I trust you.

There's nothing more to say, and a lot to do. As Jeff closes the briefcase, his black-gloved hand seals his victims' fates.

Jeff rises and leaves. Sidney has a look of disturbed concern as he watches the young man go.

EXT. KOWLOON DISTRICT - NIGHT

An explosion of colors flashes off thousands of neon signs that advertise everything from Rolex to massage rooms.

This is after-hours Hong Kong, and the sidewalks of the hot night are crammed with people.

EXT. CLUB B BOSS

A car pulls to the curb, and Jeff gets out. He glances back at Sidney behind the wheel.

SIDNEY

You know the rules. No witnesses.

JEFF

Empty cup.

Jeff walks away, passing a large mural advertisement of JENNY QUAN, the headline singer at Club B Boss. At another time, he might have paused to stare at the spectacular beauty of Jenny Quan, but this is business. He gives the mural a glance and moves on.

Club B Boss stretches for a city block, and the face of the building is a massive neon sign. Sikh Indians wearing white suits and red turbans park Jaguars and Rolls Royces for CUSTOMERS who are filthy rich. Jeff moves past them and into the building.

INT. CLUB B BOSS - RECEPTION AREA

Smooth white legs flash seductively as sexy HOSTESSES in "cheongsams" (tightly slit Chinese dresses) greet new customers. They escort fat sugar-daddies to the escalator that takes them down to the club.

Jeff is careful to be unobtrusive as he blends in with the crowd.

INT. CLUB B BOSS - MAIN ROOM

The gigantic club is darkly lit and lavishly furnished in marble pillars, red upholstery and matching carpet. A disco ball shimmers with colors that reflects off the mirrored walls.

Jeff walks past a posh group of ex-patriots, rich Chinese and Japanese businessmen who are seated with beautiful hostesses of all nationalities. Their attention is focused on the stage where JENNY QUAN performs. Jeff is momentarily mesmerized by her beauty as she sings "Jenny's Song".

Their eyes meet. All other sounds seem blurred as he hears only Jenny's sultry voice, and she seems to be singing only for him. Stunned by her beauty, he almost forgets why he came.

From Jenny's point-of-view, we see the wild, rude crowd that gambles and drinks in the room. They are like a swarming, writhing pit of reptiles to her. But in the center of it all is a single figure who stops and listens: Jeff's eyes are locked into hers, and she has to force herself to look back to the noisy crowd.

With purpose, Jeff walks toward the frosted glass doors at the back of the room. Two white-gloved Sikh Indians simultaneously open the double doors for him, leading to another area of the club.

INT. MANDARIN ROOM

Jenny's song fades behind the soundproof double doors as Jeff enters the smoke-filled Mandarin Room.

Seductive HOSTESSES grope and tease the TIPSY CUSTOMERS at the bar. A THREE PIECE FILIPINO BAND plays an old disco tune: "Play That Funky Music, White Boy...."

INT. PRIVATE ROOM

YUEN CHAT HAN is the man from the first photo Sidney gave to Jeff. He is seated at a card table with his CRONIES, carefully positioning his hand of "Thirteen Cards".

Yuen Chat Han is flanked by armed Triad enforcers. Two of them have relaxed -- they sing off-key into microphones, harmonizing sourly with Jenny, who is seen on a karaoke monitor.

PRIVATE ALCOVE

Jeff walks down a small alcove that has the same quietness and feeling of an alcove in a funeral home. He passes a service exit door, then looks up at an elaborate light fixture hanging overhead. Glancing around to be sure he's alone, he reaches up and plants something in the curved glass portion of the light fixture.

Jeff moves to the private room's frosted glass door. He positions himself against the wall to the right of the door. Without hesitation, he pulls out an automatic in each hand and raps three times on the door.

One of the enforcers comes toward the frosted glass door. In one motion, Jeff burns two hotloads through the door, and the glass sprays the enforcer as he takes two rounds in the stomach. With his back turned Jeff drives the enforcer through the door's opening.

INT. YUEN CHAT HAN'S PRIVATE ROOM

The enforcer crashes into the card table, stunning Yuen Chat Han. Jeff lets loose with a barrage from both automatics. His hotloaded volley shreds the two enforcers who have guns and karaoke microphones in their hands.

One of the enforcers drops near the television set. The closeness of the microphone and karaoke amplifier creates a shrieking, high-pitched shrill caused by the audio feedback. The room is in total frenzy.

Jeff spins to Yuen Chat Han, who has his gun half drawn. They make eye contact for a moment, then Jeff unleashes three rounds into his gut.

Jeff catches a glimpse of another enforcer, carrying an Uzi. He keeps his automatic in his right hand trained on Yuen Chat Han's head, then swings the automatic in his left hand under the one in his right.

He caps off five rounds into the enforcer toting the Uzi.

The critically wounded enforcer lets loose with an uncontrollable barrage of Uzi fire, knocking out the lights. The television glows in the dark, and the Filipino Three Piece Band has replaced Jenny on the monitor.

SLOW MOTION now as the music turns into a bellowing monotone. Jeff blows a hole into Yuen Chat Han's forehead, and he drops like a heavy sack of concrete.

Jeff, knowing his bullet count on both automatics, instinctively presses the clip releases. The empty clips drop to the floor. He hears the sound of a shell being jacked into a shotgun by another enforcer behind the small private bar. Jeff flings both guns at him.

Jeff kicks down hard on the card table, causing it to catapult Yuen Chat Han's snub-nose .44 into the air. He catches it in mid-flight and ducks behind a table, using it as a shield.

The enforcer unleashes a heavy barrage into the table. Jeff blows a hotloaded round into the TV set. The tube blows to smithereens, and most of the light in the room is now gone.

Jeff suddenly rolls away from the table and fires three hotloads into the enforcer with the shotgun. One of the wounded enforcers wills himself to his feet, wobbles, then focuses on Jeff as he heads for the door.

Rocking on unsteady legs, the enforcer fires his Uzi wildly. Jeff blows two sizzling rounds into him. The Uzi gunfire ceases as the enforcer finally collapses.

INT. PRIVATE ALCOVE

Knowing he has only one bullet left in the .44, Jeff shoots it into the light fixture. The fixture blows to pieces, and the planted Beretta tumbles down. Jeff catches it, then discards the .44 as he makes his way toward the exit.

INT. SERVICE AREA

The service area is stacked high with crates of beer and wine. Jenny pops out from one of the doorways, colliding with Jeff. He instinctively swings his gun to her head.

Jenny looks frightened as she makes eye contact with Jeff. It's a moment of fast but incredible emotion: the fear of the moment clashing with the magnetism between them.

Suddenly, there is increased terror in Jenny's face.

JENNY

Behind you!

A flash-glance behind him: Jeff sees an enforcer with an Uzi. Jeff dives toward the beautiful girl, knocking her down and covering her with his body. She has saved his life, and he takes a bullet wound in his back as he saves her life in return. Crates of beer and wine explode from the automatic gunfire.

Contorting his body, Jeff gets off four successive rounds that drop the enforcer. Another enforcer pops out from one of the doorways and burns another bullet into Jeff's back.

Critically wounded, Jeff swings his pistol toward the enforcer. His weapon is very close to Jenny's face. Jeff fires off two rounds in the enforcer, and the muzzle flash from the hotloads burns deeply into her eyes.

Jenny bleeds profusely through both eyes. She screams and struggles to get away. Weakening, Jeff tries to keep her down and away from danger.

Two more ENFORCERS suddenly appear with their guns blazing. Chunks of wood are torn out of the floor around Jeff. Trapped, he picks himself up painfully and scrambles off like a wounded animal. Left alone, Jenny panics. She is in total hysterics as she screams at the top of her lungs.

Jeff stops, turns, and stares at the wounded girl. He is in great pain, but unable to leave her alone. He returns to her through a hail of bullets and quickly wraps his silk scarf around Jenny's eyes to control the bleeding.

Rolling away from her beneath the stream of bullets, Jeff shoots the remaining Enforcers and staggers out the door.

EXT. ALLEY

Jeff crashes through the rear service door in the alley. Sidney leaps out of his waiting car and helps his critically wounded friend into the passenger's seat.

Sidney throws the car into gear and shrieks off into the night. The passenger door slams itself shut from the forward momentum of the car.

EXT. DIAMOND HILL - NIGHT

Diamond Hill is a Hong Kong slum where even the police won't go. Young Chinese gangsters known as TEDDY BOYS cluster in small, dangerous groups, and teenage PROSTITUTES parade past open sewers under the watchful eyes of their PIMPS.

With Sidney's help, Jeff staggers painfully through the narrow, winding alleys between lean-to shacks. SQUATTERS peek out at them guardedly from slits in doors, and there is a sense of fear and danger at every turn.

Several Teddy Boys turn toward Jeff, like predators finding wounded prey -- but they recognize Sidney, and he backs them off with a glare.

TEDDY BOY

(with awe)

It's the Red Pole....

They divide, letting Sidney and Jeff pass.

EXT. FORTUNE TELLER'S SQUAT - NIGHT

The rundown storefront is in a complete shambles. Agonizing moans and painful screams seep through the Fortune Teller's broken door.

INT. FORTUNE TELLER'S SQUAT

Smoldering joss sticks and incense fill the squat with a dizzying haze. Haphazard shelves are jammed with jars of creepy dead objects, their preserved eyes looking out to a living world.

Stripped down, Jeff lies on an old wooden table in a wounded daze. Deeply concerned, Sidney watches over him.

Three badly wrinkled beggar women roll around on the dirt floor in agony. They are professional PAIN GRASPERS, who will endure the pain and suffering of victims -- for a price.

PAIN GRASPERS

(in Chinese)

Ai ya... Ohhh... Very painful!
Very painful! Ai yaaa....

The ancient, filthy FORTUNE TELLER digs the bullets slowly out of Jeff's back with a pair of tongs. Each time he digs in, the Pain Graspers scream and moan more loudly than before in a harmony of agony.

Jeff's face is slick with a thick coat of sweat. His hands grab an iron bar to brace himself against the pain, and his teeth grind hard into a smooth cylinder of wood. Everything in his body and mind is screaming in pain.

The Fortune Teller pulls out another slug. Sidney leans low to Jeff and speaks quietly into his ear.

SIDNEY

Jeffrey -- take the heroin. It
will kill the pain.

Jeff's eyes are steel as he glares at the heroin. He speaks through the cylinder of wood in his mouth.

JEFF

Get that shit away from me.

Sidney flinches as the Fortune Teller yanks the last slug out. The wailing of the Pain Graspers hits its peak as they slap the dirt floor.

Somehow, Jeff's will is stronger than the pain. He doesn't pass out until the last bullet is removed. The last thing he hears is the chorus of wailing cries from the old women.

Relieved, Sidney wipes the sweat from Jeff's face. One of the Pain Graspers suddenly realizes that the ordeal is over.

PAIN GRASPER

Your friend had a lot of pain. We
endured it all for him.

Sidney gives them money, and the screaming abruptly stops, instantly replaced by wrinkled smiles. They pocket the bills and quickly shuffle out of the squat.

The Fortune Teller wipes his hands on an oily rag. His ancient eyes light up as Sidney pays him.

SIDNEY

I want you to live to spend this.
Take care of my friend. If he
dies, there'll be no place for you
to hide.

The warning is understood. Sidney turns and leaves.

CUT TO:

A BLACK SCREEN:

A fuzzy soft white light crosses the BLACK SCREEN from right to left. We hear people speaking in Chinese.

DR. SUNG (V.O.)

Can you see the light?

JENNY (V.O.)

It's fuzzy.... I see shapes, but
they're blurred.

WE CUT TO REVEAL:

INT. QUEEN ELIZABETH HOSPITAL WARD - DAY

DR. SUNG is a young surgeon. He turns off the flashlight he was shining in Jenny's eyes. Behind him, a police official -- CAPTAIN HONG -- observes with anxious anticipation. He is a heavy man with a wrinkled suit and unshined shoes. Dr. Sung steps off to the side with Captain Hong.

DR. SUNG

There's nothing more we can do for
her, Captain Hong.

Hong nods, then looks at Jenny with disappointment. He steps close to her, and she turns sharply at the sound of his voice.

HONG

Jenny?

JENNY

Please, Captain Hong. You've been
asking me the same questions for
months.

HONG

But you're our only witness.

JENNY

I told you everything was fast and confused. I only remember that he was a Westener.

HONG

If you could see again, would you recognize him?

Jenny nods, then suddenly begins to cry in silence, knowing she can't recognize anyone anymore. Hong wants to ask her more, but Dr. Sung urges him away. They speak in quiet tones so she can't hear.

HONG

Is there any chance for her?

DR. SUNG

There's a handful of specialists in the world who might be able to help her, but this peasant girl certainly doesn't have the money for that type of operation.

Both men watch sadly as a nurse leads Jenny out of the room.

EXT. WATERFRONT - NIGHT

The area around the harbor is teeming with activity. A salvo of barrel bombs and firecrackers fills the street with billowing smoke. Drums pound out a primitive beat, followed by the clang of cymbals and gongs.

Two LION DANCERS battle, each wearing a ceremonial Black Fighting Lion that flashes in the shadows. The ornate paper mache lions butt heads, and then the two men throw a frenzy of kicks as each tries to maim the legs of the other. Excited ONLOOKERS cheer the fighters on.

Two men walk together across the street from the Lion Dancers. Both are well-dressed in sharp black suits, but one wears clothes better than the other. He is RICK MITCHELL, 30, handsome, with a chiseled jaw and rich dark skin. The other man is STEVE LANGE, in his late twenties, with shaggy hair over his collar.

Lange glances across the street as one of the Lion Dancers takes the other one down for good. The victor drives a vicious kick to the fallen loser, finishing him off.

LANGE

The man was down, and he kicked him. Is that allowed?

RICK

It's even encouraged.

Both men stop to watch the ritual. The drums beat louder, and the gongs and cymbals pierce the air as the victorious dancer suddenly leaps onto an oversized steel tub. He dips his lion head into the tub, then snaps it into the air, throwing shreds of wet lettuce in every direction. Puzzled, Lange looks at Rick for an explanation.

RICK

Sai Phoon. It chases away the evil spirits.

LANGE

I guess if some nut threw wet lettuce at me, I'd run away too.

They walk again toward the waterfront.

RICK

Speaking of running away -- what do you say we take the boat out this weekend?

LANGE

I'll bring the beer.

RICK

I'll bring the chili.

LANGE

No jalapenos. Every time you put jalapenos in it, I end up barfing over the side of the boat.

RICK

I know. I want to get it on videotape this time.

Lange gives him a look, and Rick smiles. Then Rick's face suddenly turns serious as they approach the gangplank of an old freighter that bobs heavily in the water. FOUR ENFORCERS stand at the bottom of the gangplank, watching them and looking dangerous.

LANGE

Nasty.

RICK

What did you expect -- bankers?

LANGE

I feel a little dampness in my shorts.

Rick says something in Chinese. Lange looks at him, not comprehending. Rick translates.

RICK

"Fear none, respect all."

LANGE

Yeah. Easy for you to say.

The four Enforcers meet them at the gangplank. The lead enforcer, LAN FAN, is a spiky-haired punk who stands face to face with Rick.

LAN FAN

Just you, big dealer.

LANGE

No way. Where he goes, I go.

Rick backs him off with a motion.

RICK

Relax. These punks are like bugs on a windshield. Wait by the car.

The insult has not escaped Lan Fan, and that's the way Rick meant it. Lange doesn't like it, but Rick assures him with a nod as he strides up the gangplank without fear.

At the top of the gangplank, the Enforcers suddenly surround Rick. Lan Fan frisks Rick quickly, then thrusts his hand roughly down Rick's pants and searches his crotch area.

RICK

Having fun?

Lan Fan gives him a hard look.

LAN FAN

We check everything.

RICK

Well, that's one weapon you can't take.

The boat rocks and creaks like old bones as Lan Fan leads Rick to a stairway, then down to a lower level.

INT. CAPTAIN'S QUARTERS

Lan Fan and the Enforcers escort Rick into the small quarters of the Captain's cabin.

The burning stench of joss sticks fills the air with a heavy, thick smoke. A cooked chicken with its head still attached lies in offering on a cabinet supporting a statue of Kuan Kung, the god of war.

WAN SEE KONG suddenly appears with his bodyguard, GWAI JOONG. The scar on Wan See Kong's face reminds us that he is one of the men Jeff was assigned by Sidney to kill. He sits patiently, waiting for Rick to approach him, and he speaks in broken English.

WAN SEE KONG

They didn't tell me you were
a black boy.

RICK

They didn't tell me you were
yellow..."boy".

Wan See Kong wheezes out a gleeful laugh, then gets down to business.

WAN SEE KONG

Did you bring the money?

RICK

Show me the cargo first.

WAN SEE KONG

I don't do business that way.

RICK

Then you don't do business with me.

Rick turns to leave. Wan See Kong stops him. He likes Rick's style.

WAN SEE KONG

This way, tough guy.

Wan See Kong opens a door that leads into a narrow hallway. Rick follows him cautiously, and the bodyguards follow.

WAN SEE KONG

You're a big man in America?

RICK

I'm the Statue of Liberty, pal.

WAN SEE KONG
You must want this bad.

RICK
I have a growing business....

Wan See Kong opens a door that looks down into a hull.

RICK
I need workers to keep me going.

Crouched below, pathetic and terrified, are FIFTY ILLEGAL CHINESE IMMIGRANTS packed into a filthy lice-infested hold. Rick looks at them coldly.

RICK
How many of them will live?

WAN SEE KONG
They are guaranteed.

Rick turns to Wan See Kong.

RICK
I'll send a truck for them tomorrow.

Wan See Kong sneers at Rick as his bodyguards draw guns and point them directly at Rick's head.

WAN SEE KONG
How I know you're not a cop?

RICK
How I know you're not a crook?

A pause, then they share a cynical laugh. Wan See Kong turns serious.

WAN SEE KONG
Now, where's the money?

RICK
Half of it is down in the car.
I'll bring the rest tomorrow when
I pick the cargo up.

Wan See Kong smiles with satisfaction.

EXT. STREET

The lion prances around as exploding firecrackers climb the chain toward the top. The explosions are like thunder as they smother the street with an acrid smoke.

Rick and Wan See Kong and his enforcers walk through the cloudy mass of gun powdered thunder to the littered alley across the street. Lange waits there beside a parked car. Rick nods at him.

RICK

I've seen the cargo. Pay the man.

Lange opens the trunk and pulls out a briefcase. He gives it to Wan See Kong, who opens it with a greedy smile as he sees bundles of large bills packed together.

Suddenly, Wan See Kong's body arches and he pitches forward face first into the briefcase of money. A pool of red blood appears on the green bundles of bills.

EXT. ROOFTOP

We look down to the street THROUGH THE SCOPE of a high power rifle, and the cross-hairs stay for a moment on the fallen, dead Wan See Kong.

Then the cross-hairs shifts over to Rick, who is looking straight into the scope. Rick is as good as dead, and the look on his face tells us he knows it.

But a handgun suddenly enters the scope's field of vision, pointed directly at Rick's head. The cross-hairs swing slightly to the right, and Ban See, one of the enforcers, is dead in its sights.

The scope jerks as the high power rifle fires, and Ban See drops like a blood-covered rag.

We see the gunman for the first time. It is Jeff.

EXT. STREET

Gwai Joong pulls out his gun.

GWAI JOONG

It's a set-up!

As Gwai Joong aims his gun at Rick, Lange pulls out his gun.

LANGE

Freeze! Police officers!

The words are barely out of his mouth when Gwai Joong cuts him down with a blaze of fire. Lange's procedural hesitation has cost him his life.

RICK
You son-of-a-bitch!

Rick whirls with a scream of rage and a lightning karate chop that slashes Gwai Joong's throat like a meat cleaver. Clutching his adam's apple, Gwai Joong drops to his knees and gasps for air.

Rick grabs Gwai Joong's loose gun and gets off three fast shots, sending Lan Fan flying back through a plate glass window.

Realizing the gunshots are not firecrackers, the crowd panics. They seem to run in every direction at once.

Rick rushes to Lange. Kneeling, he feels for a pulse, but finds none. Then he sees Jeff scurrying down the fire escape to the alley, about thirty yards away.

RICK
Freeze!

Jeff runs in a serpentine pattern, and Rick can't get him in his sights. The assassin reaches the fence at the end of the alley, and scales it with the effortless grace of an athlete.

Rick is on the move, dashing up the street to the corner, then turning it and finding himself in the heart of the Chinese festival. There are giant masks everywhere, more fireworks, thundering drums, a dragon that is stretched out as long as a city block, and even a Chinese opera on a stage, with singers piercing the air and adding to the overall din.

Rick dodges through the mobs of people and streaks past the colorful storefront businesses, running another block to the street directly behind the docks.

EXT. HYDE STREET

As Rick turns the second corner, he spots Jeff jumping onto a cable car as it rounds the tracked turntable.

WE NOW REALIZE WE ARE IN SAN FRANCISCO -- NOT HONG KONG.

The cable car turns around and starts its trip up the long hill. Rick continues to dodge through the crowds as he rushes to catch the cable car. Halfway up the hill, he reaches it with a desperate lunge and pulls himself on-board.

The cable car is crowded with celebrants of the festival, and Rick tries to peer between faces to search for Jeff. He has pocketed his gun, but his hand is still on it.

Cautiously, Rick makes his way around the cable car as it rattles up the long hill. The people on the car are in a festive mood; laughing, talking, waving Chinese feather-sticks at each other.

Rick sees him. Or does he...? The cable car rocks side to side, and his view continues to be obstructed. He continues to move cautiously around the car, his hand on the gun in his pocket.

Then Rick suddenly freezes. He feels it in his side, and he knows what it is. The voice behind him speaks quietly.

JEFF

A bullet passing through the fifth
rib will explode the heart. My gun
is aimed at your fifth rib.

Rick's eyes glance back to a glimpse of the assassin.

RICK

Your mistake -- I have no heart.

A flicker of a smile from Jeff -- he likes Rick's cocky manner in the face of doom. Perhaps he lets down his guard because of that, because Rick suddenly whirls with an elbow that is faster than light, slamming Jeff's temple. The gun goes off, ripping a bullet through the roof of the cable car. Most people think the gunshot is just another firecracker.

Rick grabs the hand that holds the gun, and he cracks Jeff's wrist down on his knee. The gun drops and rattles across the floor, then falls out to the street. A few people jump off the cable car in confusion and fear, but most don't know anything is happening yet.

Jeff drops Rick with a powerful fist, but Rick grabs his legs as he tries to run away. Both men spill to the floor, roll over several times, and the panic spreads as more people jump off.

Rick can't get the gun out of his pocket. Jeff rams his head against a steel pole, dazing him, then he scrambles free and runs toward the front end of the car. Again, Rick trips him up with a lunging hand, and Jeff falls against the CABLE CAR OPERATOR..

The Operator is knocked away from his panel, and he falls off the car and into the street. The cable car suddenly stops, then hangs there for just a moment before it suddenly rolls backward, down the hill.

Picking up momentum, the cable car begins to speed on its backward plunge toward the waterfront. The street flies past like a bad dream, and the cable car barely stays on the tracks. There are screams of panic as the remaining passengers realize they're in trouble and it's too late to jump off.

Rick finally has the gun out of his pocket, but Jeff makes a pinwheel move and kicks the gun out of Rick's hand. It bounces across the floor and hits a bench.

Jeff lunges for the gun, but Rick grabs him, spins him around, and holds him back. The cable car is picking up more speed, rocking wildly on the tracks, almost tipping into a tragic bounce-and-roll several times.

The gun is in plain sight as the two men struggle to keep each other from reaching it. Rick can see the terror in the faces of the Passengers. His eyes meet Jeff's in close quarters. Both men realize the cop has a choice to make. It's a dilemma that makes Jeff smile just slightly.

Rick rips himself free of Jeff's grasp. He's closer to the gun than Jeff, but the screams of the Passengers surround him. Spitting a curse, he makes the right choice -- just as Jeff somehow knew he would.

Rick moves quickly to the control panel, grabs the brake firmly, then pulls it with all his strength.

Sparks fly as the steel wheels of the cable car lock up hard. The car rumbles, lurches, jerks, and finally comes to a bumpy stop. It barely holds on the tracks as people leap off to safety.

Rick whirls and looks for Jeff, but catches only a glimpse of him a half block away as he mingles into the crowd. Suddenly, Jeff turns back toward the cable car, smiles openly, and tosses Rick a salute as a tribute to his persistence and professionalism. Rick can only watch in frustration as Jeff disappears into the night.

CUT TO:

EXT. KAI HING WAI VILLAGE - NEW TERRITORIES - DAY

A thick layer of early morning fog blankets an ancient city that was build in the early 1600's. In contrast, two modern black stretch-limousines approach its ancient gates.

INT. LIMOUSINE

The man in the back seat is WOO JUNG, a cold and ruthless killer whose viciousness shows in the hard lines of his face. He looks around at the village fortress with its surrounding stone walls that are 18 feet thick. Tall guardhouses are located in each corner, and crumbled arrow-slits in the guardhouses have been eroded by the centuries.

The Ancient City is very close to the Chinese border. Long lines of trucks take black market goods back and forth across the border. It's a sight that puts a gleam in Woo Jung's eyes.

INT. ANCIENT CITY

The limos turn into the Ancient City and drive through the cobbled stoned streets. The local VILLAGERS line the streets and watch in silence as the black limousines drive slowly by.

It's all from another world where time has stood still. Every open space and courtyard, and the architecture itself is ancient, crafted with care and artistry. Dense circular timber logs, the thickness of telephone poles, jut out from the walls every two feet.

The limos stop in a central courtyard and a DOZEN BODYGUARDS get out to secure the area.

The Villagers avoid Woo Jung's glance as he steps from the limo. His brother, BOK JUNG, steps out of the car, looking annoyed. He glances contemptuously at the frightened villagers that cower nearby.

Sidney comes out of a nearby building, and Woo Jung greets him warmly. They speak Chinese.

WOO JUNG

My Red Pole. My top assassin.
Has the general's aide arrived yet?

SIDNEY

I have word that he just entered the city. I have also heard the job in San Francisco has been completed successfully. Soon, the only Dragon Head left will be you.

WOO JUNG

Bring your assassin back to Hong Kong. He must kill the witness -- the blind girl. I want him to empty the cup.

Sidney nods.

WOO JUNG

Why have so many of my enemies fallen, while I live on?

BOK JUNG

Because my brother looks to the future.

WOO JUNG

The day is coming. Soon. 1997.

Suddenly, an entourage of expensive cars pulls into the area. Sidney watches carefully as doors are opened for a GENERAL'S AIDE in full communist military uniform.

Woo Jung motions Sidney to accompany him, and Bok Jung is clearly disappointed to be left out. Woo Jung and Sidney meet alone with the Aide.

AIDE

The General is displeased. The deal is off. He says you are not a man of your word.

Woo Jung is thunderstruck and angry. Bok Jung steps forward with a threatening glare.

BOK JUNG

Be careful. You are talking to the Dragon Head of the Seen Bao Yee.

AIDE

Your people are smuggling Chinese immigrants on their own and not paying us for them.

Woo Jung relaxes and smiles assuredly.

WOO JUNG

I've already taken care of that.

Woo Jung makes a small motion toward KANG WEH ENG, a tall, lean man with sharp piercing eyes. He is Woo Jung's top collector at the Village. He drags a frightened VILLAGER into the center of the square. The other villagers watch with alarm and seething anger.

The Aide is impressed as Kang throws the villager to the ground at Woo Jung's feet.

WOO JUNG

This is one of the men responsible. When we find the ringleader, he will pay the ultimate price.

On the edge of the crowd, a young hot-head named YIN FANG steps forward to defend the villager.

YIN FANG

We all have to steal to survive here! We are bled dry by your tribute! All our money goes to the Triad!

Bok Jung suddenly whirls toward Yin Fang with the flashing blade of a knife that slashes across the hot-head's cheek, drawing a streak of blood. Yin Fang falls to the ground, clutching his face in pain.

Bok Jung looks defiantly at the crowd.

BOK JUNG

Does anyone else here question the authority of my brother?

The Aide looks on with approval as the villagers look to the ground in silence.

WOO JUNG

(to Kang)

Tell me, Kang, what is the punishment for a man who steals from the Triad?

Kang smiles cruelly. The bodyguards point their guns at the terrified man.

KANG

The punishment is lightning and thunder.

Kang takes out the tools of his pleasure for moments like this: a hammer and chisel. He shows the chisel to the villager as he walks toward him.

KANG

The lightning....

The villager is sobbing uncontrollably now. The surrounding crowd looks on in horror, knowing what's coming. Kang shows his victim the hammer.

KANG

...and the thunder.

With hands that flash like lightning, Kang raises the chisel to the side of the villager's neck, then swings the hammer and severs one of the two tendons that hold up his head. Even the Aide winces.

Whack! Kang severs the other tendon, and the villager's head hangs limp and useless like a puppet. Woo Jung observes Kang's work with approval and pleasure. He turns to the Aide with a look of confidence.

WOO JUNG

This is how I will control Hong Kong.

Kang raises the hammer above the villager's head.

KANG

You have felt the lightning. Now
hear the thunder!

He swings the hammer viciously with a sadistic smile.

EXT. HONG KONG STREET - DAY

Jeff gets out of a taxi and walks into a park in the heart of the city. He finds Sidney on a bench, tossing seeds to wild birds that have gathered around him.

SIDNEY

The Dragon Head is concerned that
the Club B Boss job has not been
completed. There is still the witness.

JEFF

The girl is blind.

SIDNEY

The girl is alive. She can
identify you, and that could lead
to the Triad.

Sidney looks away from the birds. His eyes are stern: the
mentor is speaking to the student.

SIDNEY

Empty cup.

JEFF

Yes, empty cup.

Rising, Sidney dumps the rest of the seeds on the ground. He
looks at Jeff again.

SIDNEY

Do you still play handball?

JEFF

Not lately.

SIDNEY

I play three times a week. It's a
good way to take off pressure.

JEFF

Do I seem pressured to you?

SIDNEY
(choosing his words carefully)
You seem...dissatisfied. Like a
man with no more worlds to conquer.

JEFF
I have everything I need.
Everything I dreamed of. I thought
it would feel different than it
does.

Sidney nods and seems to understand from his own experience.

SIDNEY
Inform me when the girl is dead.
I have more work for you.

He walks away. Jeff doesn't like it, but he is resolved that the girl must die.

EXT. CEMETERY - DAY

Lines of uniformed POLICE OFFICERS stand in ritualistic formation in a cemetery. A volley of shots is fired as a farewell salute. A bugle plays "Taps".

Close to the grave, Rick bites back bitter tears.

EXT. SAN FRANCISCO BAY - DAY

Boats of every size, shape and color are moored in a marina. Police Captain DAVID CHIN, an Asian-American, gets out of a police car and signals his uniformed DRIVER to wait. Smart, efficient and tough, Chin carries a briefcase as he walks with purpose toward the docks.

EXT. "MARILU"

It might be the least impressive boat in the marina. The twenty foot skiff is at least thirty years old, and it needs a paint job and other repairs. The name on the side of the boat is "Marilu".

INT. BELOW DECK

The small quarters below deck are cluttered and cramped. Music fills the air from the portable C.D. player: Billie Holliday's classic "Body and Soul".

Rick drops ice into a glass and pours a drink. It isn't his first. Carefully, he is putting things into a box -- Lange's personal possessions -- a coffee mug, a photo of Lange with a marlin, a racy paperback novel. Each item goes into the box slowly and thoughtfully.

Rick glances around as David Chin comes down the stairs.

CHIN

I figured you'd be here.

RICK

Yeah. Sorry. Dock me a day's pay.

CHIN

Give me a beer and we'll call it even.

Rick reaches into a cooler and tosses a can of beer to Chin. He opens it, sips and watches a battered old softball glove go into the box.

RICK

Want to buy a boat?

CHIN

Don't sell it. You'll regret it later.

Rick nods. He knows it's true.

RICK

Lange and I busted some drug runners about three years ago. We confiscated the boat, then bought it at the police auction. It's not pretty, but it's a hell of a tough little boat.

CHIN

Like Lange. He was a great cop, Rick.

RICK

No, Lange was an average cop -- but he was a great guy. He had too much heart to be a son-of-a-bitch like you and me.

Chin takes the "son-of-a-bitch" as the compliment it was intended to be.

RICK

He got killed because he was following procedure while the other guy came up shooting. It stinks.

CHIN

It always does.

Chin opens his briefcase and takes out a police artist sketch of Jeff. He gives it to Rick.

CHIN

Marty drew this up from your description. Close?

RICK

Damn close. This is the guy who's responsible. If he hadn't been there to screw up the deal, Lange and I would be out fishing today.

Rick stares out across the Bay, lost in thought. Chin takes an envelope slowly out of his pocket.

CHIN

Everybody liked Lange. The entire department worked all night trying to dig up what they could. We think this hit could only be sanctioned in Hong Kong. If you want to find the guy on the roof, that's where to start.

Chin gives the envelope to Rick. Opening it, Rick is shocked to find a plane ticket to Hong Kong.

RICK

You're going to let me go after him?

CHIN

You're no good to me here until you settle this thing. Go get him.

Chin starts up the stairs.

RICK

Captain -- you're a hell of a guy.

CHIN

Yeah -- for a son-of-a-bitch.

The two men smile at each other.

CUT TO:

EXT. MON KOK - HONG KONG - NIGHT

A sleazy area of upstairs brothels and cheap hostess clubs. STREET HAWKERS of every type hustle the crowds that cram the streets. Every building is luridly lit with overhanging neon. Among them is a dive called "Club X-stasy".

We hear Jenny's voice as she sings a touching love ballad that is laced with sadness and loss.

INT. "CLUB X-STASY" - NIGHT

The place is cheap and tacky. Red Naugahyde booths with formica table tops circle a performing stage. The performer on stage is Jenny.

Jenny is accompanied by a dead-looking THREE PIECE BAND, but the depressive surroundings have not killed her spirit. Her voice is pure and beautiful, and her appearance is stunning. She is an orchid in a garden of weeds.

Most of the patrons are TEDDY BOYS: young Chinese gangsters. They sit at tables with drug-addicted, topless Chinese HOSTESSES. As the Teddy Boys take "business" calls on their portable phones and beepers, we see the gold flash of their Rolex watches on their bony wrists.

The Teddy Boys stare at the stage with intense interest -- but the object of their interest is not Jenny. She is flanked by two large-screen television sets that broadcast the day's horse-races. As a winning horse crosses the finish line, the Teddy Boys shout their joy over their winnings or curse their losses.

Jenny's song is lost in it all. We TIGHTEN ON her eyes, then:

REVERSE THE ANGLE: JENNY'S P.O.V.

The rude audience is little more than moving, colorful shadows. Lights are blurs. It's a world without detail.

Jeff sits alone at a table in the back of the club. He watches Jenny without expression. He's here to do a job.

A fat MAMASAN waddles up to Jeff's table. Like all the Chinese in this scene, her accent is broken-English.

MAMASAN

Hey, big stud -- how come you don't
take girlie? I got cute one
special for you.

Jeff just shakes his head and doesn't take his eyes off Jenny. He shoves money into Mamasan's fat hand. She stuffs it between her flabby breasts and leaves him alone.

Determinedly and defiantly, Jenny finishes her song, fighting against the cheers and jeers of the Teddy Boys as they watch the races. Jeff puts out a cigarette as he rises from his table. He walks to the stage and slips some money into Jenny's tip cup.

She reaches out and touches his hand -- the only appreciative person in the audience -- and it almost startles him. The nearly-blind eyes are grateful, but prideful.

JENNY

Thank you.

We see Jeff become wooden, cautious not to be affected by the girl. He turns and leaves.

With her act over, Jenny picks up her tips cup. She starts to leave the stage, but Mamasan cuts her off.

MAMASAN

Got a man for you. He's ugly,
but you can't see anyway.

Mamasan laughs. Jenny is ice.

JENNY

I don't go with customers.

MAMASAN

I know how much you need money.
He's German. He's got BIG
bratwurst! If you don't go with
him, I lose big tip!

Jenny is tough. She can't see, but she stares Mamasan down.

JENNY

Your problem, not mine.

Jenny starts away, but Mamasan grabs the tip money out of her hand. Jenny whirls -- grabs the air -- searches frantically with her hands -- grabs Mamasan's throat.

JENNY

Give it back!

The Teddy Boys laugh with amusement as the fat Mamasan fights for breath in Jenny's grasp. Her thin fingers dig deeply into the folds of Mamasan's flabby throat.

Finally, Mamasan drops the money. Jenny falls to her knees and grovels on the floor, feeling for her money. Recovering her breath, Mamasan laughs.

MAMASAN

I was just kidding, blind girl.

EXT. DARK ALLEY

The stage door behind the club leads to a dark, dangerous alley. Jenny uses a white cane to feel her way as she leaves the club and comes into the night.

Alone in the shadows, Jeff screws a silencer onto his gun. he has his eye on his prey -- Jenny. She is history.

Poking the pavement each step of the way, Jenny walks into the light of a street lamp. Jeff hesitates for a moment, then brings her into his sites. His trigger finger tightens. The moment of kill is now.

But suddenly, a hand reaches out of the darkness and pulls her out of the path of death. Jeff lowers his gun and watches closely. Two TEDDY BOYS jerk Jenny into the shadows, laughing as they dodge the angry swing of her white cane.

JENNY

Bastards! Leave me alone!

TEDDY BOY #1

You've been late on your payments!

The cane whips the air, striking the arm of one Teddy Boy. He winces in pain, shaking his arm. His friend laughs at him.

TEDDY BOY #1

Blind bitch!

He rips the purse off her shoulder and fishes money out of it while Jenny grabs and scratches at the face of Teddy Boy #2.

TEDDY BOY #1

Is this all the money you have?

TEDDY BOY #2

Maybe we should just take it out between her legs....

Teddy Boy #2 grabs roughly at her crotch, lifting her dress and ramming his hand into her pants. He slams her against the wall, spreading her legs around him.

Suddenly, from nowhere, a hand rips Teddy Boy #2 away from Jenny. Teddy Boy #2 is startled as the hand straightens him up, then smashes his face with a series of quick, short Wing Chun punches.

Rescued, Jenny is confused.

JENNY

What? Who's there?

Her eyes are looking right at Jeff, but she can't see him.

Teddy Boy #1 charges Jeff, who sidesteps him, then turns and drives him head-first into a wall. Dazed, Teddy Boy #1 slumps to the ground.

Teddy Boy #2 comes back at Jeff, flashing a knife.

TEDDY BOY #2

Fucking gweilo!

Jeff steps on the pointed end of Jenny's fallen cane. The handle pops up into his hand, and he swings the cane viciously, cracking Teddy Boy #1 across the wrist so that he drops the knife.

Possessed, Jeff steps toward him with a look in his eyes: he might kill the man. Jeff strikes savagely at his throat with a karate chop. Teddy Boy #2 cries out in pain, wailing like a wolf at the moon. Jeff finishes him off with a spinning rear crescent kick to the face, and the young man crumples to the ground, huddling next to his whimpering partner.

Jenny is terrified, nearly crazed by the battle she has only been able to hear. Jeff scoops her up with one hand, pulling her away from the danger zone as the Teddy Boys stagger away into the night.

Feeling his hands on her, Jenny spits out with rage: her blind eyes are on fire as she claws at his arms and face.

JEFF

It's over! They're gone!

It's over!

Jenny is a wildcat, slapping and swinging at Jeff -- but he finally grabs her wrists and calms her down. She feels his hands. A moment goes by, and she "recognizes" the touch of his hands, the ring on his finger.

JENNY

The man from the club....

Jeff is taken back. He thinks she recognizes him from the Club B Boss shootout, and he doesn't know how to respond.

JENNY

The one who gave me the tip....

Jeff recovers. He picks up her cane and gives it to her.

JEFF

You're shaking.

JENNY

What's your name?

JEFF

Jeff.

JENNY

American?

JEFF

Not anymore.

Jenny seems to like his voice. She is comforted. Jeff is touched by the warmth of her smile, but he forces himself to draw back.

JEFF

I'll take you home.

Jenny smiles gratefully. Jeff leads her gently into the night.

EXT. KOWLOON CITY - NIGHT

A drab canyon of ten-story tenements. Jenny knows the way. Her cane raps the pavement, feeling the path through the maze of alleys.

JEFF

These alleys are all the same. How can you tell them apart?

JENNY

Because I have to.

The neighborhood is a slum. Every small apartment is crammed with people. Even the rooftops are teeming with SQUATTERS who cook meals in shared outdoor kitchens.

Jeff and Jenny walk in silence for a moment. Jeff almost speaks, but holds back. Jenny picks up on it.

JENNY

You started to say something...
You're a very guarded man,
aren't you?

Jeff looks at her: how could she know?

JEFF

You hear everything, don't you?

Jenny smiles, leads him into a small, cramped elevator.

INT. ELEVATOR

The doors close, and the elevator rattles upward.

JENNY

You still haven't told me what you started to say.

JEFF

I was going to say...how much I admire...the way you fought those men.

INT CORRIDOR

The elevator doors open, and Jenny leads Jeff down a dark, ugly hallway. The walls are stained, the floor is cluttered.

Every door in the hallway has a picture or calligraphy of Shea Kung (Earth God). As she walks, Jenny trails her hand along the wall, touching the frame of each door, counting.

Jeff studies her -- the way she gets around -- and is impressed by her independence. Finding her door, Jenny fishes for her keys. She guides the key into the lock and opens the door.

JEFF

You live alone?

JENNY

I have to. If I had a roommate, she might move the furniture.

Jeff smiles: she can laugh at herself.

INT. JENNY'S APARTMENT

Jenny leads the way into the apartment, but they're barely inside when they hear a loud CRASH! Jeff pushes her back against the wall and draws his gun. He whispers.

JEFF

Don't move.

Creeping farther into the apartment, he turns a corner and looks into the living room. A smashed lamp lies on the floor. Jeff is all business, his eyes searching the room. Suddenly, a cat leaps from behind a chair and sprints to an open window. Jeff relaxes.

JEFF

You have a cat?

Jenny appears behind him.

JENNY

He belongs to everyone. He's a stray.

She pauses and adds as an afterthought:

JENNY

Like you and me....

Jeff picks up the broken lamp and moves it out of the way. She moves to the kitchen and opens a cupboard.

JENNY

I have some wine if you're not in a hurry.

Jeff screws the silencer onto the gun and follows her into the kitchen. He notices how each dish and glass is carefully placed in perfect order so she can find them. Jenny takes an elegant cut-glass bottle of red wine from a shelf.

JENNY

I don't know anything about wine, but I love the feel of the bottle.

Jeff moves toward her, approaching from behind. A quick shot behind the ear, and she'll feel no pain and never even know it happened. She glances over her shoulder with a smile. Jeff can't bring himself to shoot her in the face. He lowers the gun.

JENNY

I picture the bottle as red with a gold label. Don't tell me if I'm wrong.

JEFF

You're not wrong.

She is, of course, wrong. Jeff watches with growing fascination as Jenny "sees" with her fingertips: barely brushing things, knowing where they are and finding them effortlessly. She takes a corkscrew from a drawer, then turns back to Jeff. He still holds the gun in his hand.

JENNY

Will you open the bottle?

Jeff hesitates, then takes the corkscrew with his free hand. Jenny reaches into the cupboard to feel for her favorite wine glasses. Jeff raises the gun to the back of her head again, and his finger begins to slowly squeeze the trigger.

JENNY

Please do it now. I can't stand the suspense.

Jeff freezes, confused.

JEFF

What do you mean?

JENNY

The cork. Sudden sounds startle me. Every unexpected sound seems like thunder when you're blind.

Jenny turns back with the glasses. Pocketing the gun, Jeff screws the corkscrew into the cork and takes it out with a quiet pop. He follows Jenny into the living room.

JENNY

I'll let you pour. That way we won't have to mop it up off the floor.

Jeff continues to be caught offguard -- even charmed -- by her forthright humor in dealing with her blindness.

Filling two glasses with wine, he gives one to her, being careful to close her hand securely around it. Jenny raises her glass in a toast, and Jeff clinks his glass against hers.

JENNY

To my hero...who saved my life.

Her laugh is a little throaty, and there's a deadened part of Jeff that is jolted by her warm, teasing attitude. She feels something coming from him -- a magnetism -- and it gets her attention.

JENNY

It's hot in here. Let's go outside.

She opens doors that lead to a fire escape.

EXT. FIRE ESCAPE - NIGHT

Jeff follows her outside, and Jenny leans against the railing. She feels the warm breeze drift through her hair. The quiet of the night is laced with police and ambulance sirens in the distance.

JENNY

Hong Kong sounds dangerous tonight.

JEFF

Every night.

JENNY

Do you always run around in dangerous cities, saving people?

JEFF

Never.

JENNY

Then why did you put yourself in danger to help me?

JEFF

No reason.

JENNY

People don't do things in Hong Kong for no reason. Tell me why you did it.

JEFF

There were two of them, and one of you. Although you were giving them a hell of a fight.

Jenny smiles indulgently.

JEFF

You don't believe that's the reason?

JENNY

You'll tell me the real reason when you want to.

JEFF

What makes you think I'll ever even see you again?

JENNY

I hear it in your voice. Am I wrong?

JEFF

No.

Jenny smiles confidently. There's no question about it: He isn't going to kill anyone tonight. Jeff has never felt anything like this before.

EXT. HONG KONG SKYLINE - DAY

A jetliner flies dangerously close, between two highrises, on its approach to the Kai Tak Airport. It's like threading a needle on one try.

INT. KAI TAK TERMINAL

In a hurry, Rick grabs his small suitcase from the luggage conveyor. On his way to the exit, he meets CHANG, a young man who greets everyone in the crowd with a friendly smile and a hand-painted sign that reads: "Detective Rick Mitchell".

CHANG

Welcome to Hong Kong, Detective Mitchell.

RICK

Call me Rick.

CHANG

Rick. Okay. I am Detective Chang.

RICK

(in Chinese)

Aren't you kind of young to be a detective?

CHANG

(in Chinese)

You speak Chinese?

RICK

Enough to get by.

CHANG

That's great! The last American I had to guide around kept ordering chop suey and telling "Confucius Say" jokes.

RICK

Were any of them funny?

CHANG

Not to me.

RICK
Take me to Police Headquarters,
okay?

Chang leads the way to the door.

INT. ROYAL HONG KONG POLICE HEADQUARTERS - DAY

Captain Hong looks up from his big desk as Chang leads Rick into his office.

CHANG
Captain Hong, this is Detective
Mitchell of the San Francisco
Asian Task Force.

Hong is polite as he looks the American over.

HONG
Welcome to Hong Kong. It's an
honor to have you here. How can I
help you?

RICK
I'm investigating the recent
assassinations of Triad leaders.
Nine Dragon Heads have been killed
in the last six months.

HONG
(impressed)
I'm surprised that you're aware of
the murders.

RICK
One of the killings took place in
San Francisco. A policeman was
killed because of it.

Rick unfolds a police artist's rendering of Jeff, the killer.

RICK
This is the man I'm looking for.
He's caucasian. He may have been
involved in the Club B Boss shootout.
I'd like to begin with those files.

Hong shoots a sharp glance at Chang and speaks in Chinese.

HONG
How does he know about the Club B
Boss shootout? This big dick black
ghost knows more than you do!

Realizing that Rick has understood every word, Chang looks at him with embarrassment.

HONG

He comes in here and makes us all look bad!

Rick gives Chang a nod that tells him it's their secret. Hong turns back to Rick with a pleasant smile and speaks in English again.

HONG

Detective Chang will help you with the files you need.

The two men shake hands pleasantly, but Rick has a look of distrust in his eyes.

INT. DETECTIVE SQUAD ROOM

Chang leads Rick through the main squad room.

RICK

Nice guy, your Captain. Why didn't you tell him I speak Chinese?

CHANG

Because he's what you call...a royal prick. Right?

Rick chuckles at Chang's American slang.

RICK

You got it, ace. Now let me see those files.

EXT. HONG KONG HARBOR - NIGHT

A full, white moon milk-coats the harbor. Strings of white lights are draped like party decorations between the docks. High-rise buildings reach for emerald mountains, and their top floors disappear into the night.

Beneath all this, a ninety-foot luxury Dining Boat called "The Evening Flower" drifts out toward the nearby islands.

EXT. THE EVENING FLOWER

The main deck of this luxury boat is ringed by DINERS in evening clothes, sitting at tables. WAITERS in white jackets serve

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

expensive wines and elaborate meals of duck, seafood and sauces that are thicker than gravy. Lush music adds romance to the scene as lovers, old and new, dine.

Jeff and Jenny stand at the railing, sipping wine from crystal glasses. The sea breeze is warm and light as it brushes across her hair.

JENNY

I keep wondering. Why would a wealthy man like you come into that sleazy nightclub in the first place?

JEFF

You don't know I'm wealthy. Maybe I'm spending all my money on this boat ride.

JENNY

I touched your coat. It's cashmere. You're wealthy.

Jeff glances down at his coat. She's just so aware -- and she keeps coming at him.

JENNY

And why do you carry a gun?

Stunned, Jeff pulls slightly away from her.

JENNY

I felt it when you put your arm around me.

JEFF

You "see" too much. It's dangerous.

JENNY

(playfully)

The blind girl sees too much?
How can that be?

She moves close to him again. Carefully, he accepts her into his arms.

INT. DINING ROOM

The silver platters are served, crammed with steaming luxury and dripping sauces as Jeff and Jenny begin their meal.

Jeff just looks at this girl for a moment, then the things he feels almost scare him. He watches her clamp a shellfish and break it.

JENNY

I'm a Tanka girl from the Mainland. Tanka means egg people. My ancestors paid their taxes with eggs, instead of money. Other Chinese look down on us. It has always made me angry.

JEFF

So that's the source of your fire.

JENNY

I was smuggled here very young. I grew up at Kai Hing Wai -- the Ancient City.

JEFF

What brought you to Hong Kong?

JENNY

I paid for the honor of singing at the Club B Boss.

JEFF

The honor? I understand. Who do you owe?

JENNY

Not important.

JEFF

Which Triad owns you?

JENNY

(glaring)
Nobody owns me!

JEFF

Who is your sponsor?

JENNY

Why do you want to know?

JEFF

Because, those thugs that attacked you will be back.

JENNY

Kang Weh Eng from the Ancient City.

Jeff is quiet. The name is familiar to him.

EXT. ROYAL HONG KONG POLICE HEADQUARTERS - NIGHT

Rick leaves the building with a briefcase full of papers, and Chang is right on his tail.

CHANG

Where do we start on this thing?

RICK

I work alone -- but thanks.

CHANG

I say we start with the blind girl.

RICK

I say we start with a good night's sleep.

CHANG

Come on, Rick -- I'll show you the big sights in town, okay?

RICK

Just show me a hotel with a clean bed and a shower.

CHANG

Boy, I'm glad you said that. I don't know any of the big sights in town. Can't afford them.

They walk toward the entrance to the parking lot.

CHANG

But I tell you what -- with your American money, I can get you all the girls you want. How does that sound?

RICK

I don't want any girls.

CHANG

Oh man, that's a relief. I don't know any girls like that.

They reach the parking lot, and walk toward Chang's car.

CHANG

I bet you like to gamble, right? I can show you some big-time gambling stuff.

RICK

Chang -- I'm not a tourist. I'm a cop. Get it?

CHANG

I get it. But I'm your host. And anyway, I'm supposed to spy on you for Captain Hong. How am I gonna spy on you if you don't do something to spy on?

RICK

That's another reason I work alone. Go away.

CHANG

But I don't like Captain Hong. I like you. We can be partners.

They reach Chang's car, and he unlocks the doors.

CHANG

So, what do you say, Rick? What should we do tonight?

RICK

Two things. First, I want you to take me to a hotel.

CHANG

Okay. Then?

RICK

Then I want you to move to Japan.

Rick gets into the car. Chang shrugs -- he tried. He gets into the car and drives away.

EXT. JENNY'S NEIGHBORHOOD - NIGHT

Jeff and Jenny walk together toward her building. She almost glows in the moonlight as the only beautiful thing in the neighborhood.

JENNY

You try very hard to be a mystery, but you're easy to figure out.

JEFF

Why do you want to analyze me?

JENNY

It's a game I play -- like guessing what color the label on the bottle is.

JEFF

All right -- surprise me. Tell me one thing about myself that is absolutely true.

JENNY

You love to ski.

Jeff reacts: it's true. He becomes guarded.

JEFF

How do you know that?

JENNY

Your face is tanned but your hands are not.

Jeff glances at his white hands.

JENNY

Touch the tanned hands of a young Caucasian. The sun tightens the skin and makes it rough. But your hands are smooth -- untanned -- like a man who wears gloves. You have the rough, tan face and smooth hands of a man who loves to ski.

JEFF

You're scary.

JENNY

It's just observation.

(as an afterthought)

Without eyes....Hong Kong is full of women. Why are you spending your time with me?

It takes a moment before he can find the answer.

JEFF

When I'm not with you, I wish I was....

Jeff pulls her tenderly into his arms, and for the first time in his life, he is gentle with a woman. His kiss is as soft as a rose. Jenny takes his hand and leads him into the building.

INT. JENNY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Candles glow in mirrors. Jenny is on one side of the room, and Jeff is on the other. They are both naked.

Music plays: soft Rock, Oriental style.

Swaying with the music, Jenny crosses the room slowly toward Jeff, trailing a long silk scarf on the floor. He can hear her breathing.

Jeff moves slowly toward her, his arms opened, his fingers spread.

They meet. The tips of their fingers touch. Jenny suddenly raises the scarf and ties it gently around Jeff's eyes.

JENNY

I want you to "see" me like I "see" you.

In darkness, Jeff becomes more sensuous than before. He runs his hands up Jenny's arms, touching lightly.

Her hands fall on his shoulders, then run down his strong arms and touch his back. She gasps slightly and pulls her fingers back. Jenny has just touched the bullet-scars on his back. Her fingers touch the scars again, and her voice is warm and gentle.

JENNY

You have had so much pain....

Slowly, they pull close to each other. Their breathing increases.

Skin touches skin. Her breasts against his chest. Her thighs against his thighs.

Sweat glistens in the candlelight.

Then, as if they can't bear it any longer....

Jeff unites with her. Jenny moans.

They fall to the bed in a tangle of passion.

He's still blindfolded. Jenny sits up on Jeff, and "blindly", he reaches up and defines her breasts with his hands. She looks down at him, "seeing" him in her heart.

Jenny opens a bottle of oil and sprinkles it on his chest. She massages gently. He breathes hard with the pleasure of her touch.

She sprinkles the oil over her own body, and then suspends herself over him, just barely touching his body with her own. Jenny "massages" Jeff, using her whole body to stimulate his....

Jeff's head rocks back and forth with the carnal euphoria of her touch.

And when he can't bear it any more, he reaches to grab her and pull her down on him -- but she pushes him back down.

JENNY

Not yet....

And she continues to work on him...moving her breasts down his chest...across his stomach...and Jeff can barely keep himself from screaming with pleasure....

EXT. SKYLINE - DAY

Early morning in Hong Kong: the streets are already jammed with traffic. This is one of the most prosperous cities on earth, and the Oriental Yuppies are out to earn their shares of the fortune.

EXT. TEEMING STREETS

Rick and Chang walk among the massive crowds, and almost everyone seems to be talking into cellular phones. Many of the cars that pass are Rolls Royces or Mercedes. The energy and activity are astonishing, even to Rick.

RICK

Look, kid -- it's nothing against you. I just like to work alone.

CHANG

Hey, I'm no problem. Whatever you tell me to do, I'll do it.

RICK

You're a kid -- an amateur. Amateurs get professionals killed.

CHANG

Just give me a chance. I know this city -- you don't. I can help you. We should start by talking to the girl....

Somehow in the past few seconds, Rick has simply disappeared. He took a quick turn into an alley or something. Puzzled, Chang looks in every direction.

CHANG

Rick...?

EXT. ALLEY

Rick walks briskly up an alley. Glancing at his watch, he climbs some shaky wooden stairs to the back of an apartment building, then goes inside.

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING

Rick walks along a cluttered hallway, steps over a passed-out DRUNK, then squeezes his way past TWO LOVERS who lean against the wall in a passionate embrace.

RICK

(grumbling)

Eight-thirty in the morning. No wonder there's so damn many Chinese....

He bounds down a stairway to a side exit.

EXT. SIDE STREET

Glancing quickly in each direction, Rick slips down a second alley, turns a corner, then ducks into the back entrance of a open air market.

INT. OPEN AIR MARKET

Rick finds himself in the middle of throngs of people. He pushes his way through the frenzy of sights and sounds: dead chickens hang upside-down and skinned, fish heads with bulging eyes glare with vacant stares, and skinned sea-turtles look like slimy beasts from another planet. Throughout it all, buyers bid to lower prices, while vendors hold their ground in noisy arguments.

Rick winces as a VENDOR grabs a live snake, inserts a razor at its throat, and slits it from end to end with one smooth stroke. The vendor offers the snake to Rick, who grimaces.

RICK

No thank you, I've already had breakfast.

Turning to the nearest exit, Rick finds himself on another busy street. He signals for a taxi with a wave and a whistle. The taxi stops on a dime, and Rick opens the back door.

INT. TAXI

Rick gets into the back seat and begins to close the door -- but Chang suddenly slides quickly in beside him.

CHANG

The girl, right? We should start with the girl.

Rick looks over at Chang incredulously and starts to laugh.

RICK
(impressed)
The girl, right.

Chang smiles. The taxi drives away.

EXT. KAI HING WAI VILLAGE - NEW TERRITORIES - DAY

A dark Mercedes is parked near a small shop, and a DRIVER sits alone in the front seat. The street is clear, because the villagers are hiding.

INT. YIN FANG'S SHOP

TWO LARGE ENFORCERS have pinned the village hot-head, Yin Fang, against the back wall of his cluttered shop. Kang Weh Eng, the collector, drives a heavy punch into the young man's stomach, bending him over in a breathless gasp.

KANG
You never learn your lesson, do
you?

YIN FANG
(sucking air)
I won't raise my prices...and cheat
my friends...just to pay people like
you...

Kang's fist drills Yin Fang in the jaw, and the young man hangs limp in the arms of the enforcers. Contemptuously, they drop him to the floor.

KANG
Search for money. Tear everything
apart. Teach him again.

The two enforcers begin to rip the shop to pieces. Shelves come down with heavy crashes, and tables are turned over and broken. One of them suddenly uncovers an old coffee can that has a small amount of money in it. Kang snatches it.

KANG
If there's this, there's more.
Keep searching.

He leaves the shop, counting the money.

EXT. STREET

Outside, the driver opens the rear door of the Mercedes for Kang, closes it behind him, and opens the driver side door.

WHACK! A hand chops the Driver across the back of the neck. He numbs and falls silently to the street. Jeff grabs the Driver's hat and slides into the car, behind the wheel.

INT. MERCEDES

Sitting in the back, Kang never looks up.

KANG
(Chinese)
Take me to Sham Shui Po.

Jeff pulls smoothly into traffic, rounds a corner, turns into an alley and stops. Kang suddenly looks up, alarmed. There's a gun in his face.

Jeff never turns around. He aims the gun by using the rearview mirror -- so the only thing Kang can see is the gun and Jeff's eyes.

KANG
Who are you!?

JEFF
I'm a .44 magnum looking right down your throat, so shut up and answer some questions. There's a girl who owes you some money.

KANG
Lots of girls owe me money.

JEFF
Jenny Quan.

KANG
That wildcat bitch! I told her we could make a deal in my bedroom, but she scratched my face!

JEFF
How much does she owe you?

KANG
What do you care?

JEFF
How much?

Kang's quick eyes are thinking fast.

KANG
Sixty thousand, Hong Kong.

Jeff cocks his gun.

KANG

But I would be willing to settle
for fifty....

JEFF

Forty thousand. That's it.

Jeff tosses a wad of Hong Kong bills over his shoulder, into Kang's lap.

JEFF

Don't think about it too long, or
I'll kill you and keep the money.

KANG

(counting the bills)
No, no. It's a good deal,
it's a good deal.

JEFF

You and Jenny are even. She owes
you nothing.

Jeff slips out of the car and tosses the chauffeur's hat onto the front seat. Kang is a little shaken, but richer.

EXT. ABERDEEN HARBOR

Aberdeen Harbor has a character that is unlike any other part of the colony. A floating slum of junks and sampans, it is home to twenty thousand "boat people" and illegal immigrants.

Rick and Chang get out of the taxi.

CHANG

That's her -- with the children.

Chang nods toward Jenny at the dock. She is surrounded by TWENTY TANKA CHILDREN who sit on their haunches and listen to her with intense interest. Rick and Chang approach quietly. A scraggly little girl named CHOY LING blurts out the answer to one of Jenny's questions.

CHOY LING

Capitol of U.S.A. is New York!

JENNY

No, Choy Ling. The capitol of the
United States is Washington, D.C.
Everybody....Wa-shing-ton, D.C.

The children try the word in unison.

CHILDREN
Was-seen-tons, D.C.

Rick and Chang move closer to the group. The children are not accustomed to seeing a black man, and one by one, they begin to glue curious eyes on him.

JENNY
The American form of government is called "democracy". Who can tell me what that means?

Jenny is puzzled by the silence. The children all stare directly at Rick, who stands behind her. Suddenly, one of the boys stands and points at Rick.

BOY #1
Homeboy!

RICK
"Homeboy"?

BOY #2
Yo, Homey! Do some yo-raps, Hammer-man!

RICK
Who the hell are these kids?

CHANG
Illegal immigrants from China. They don't have food or toilets, but they all have television. American programs are very popular here.

Jenny is bewildered. Another boy is pointing at Rick now.

BOY #3
Miss Jenny, behind you is the hakgui!

JENNY
(firmly)
"Hakgui" is not a word we use. I don't ever want to hear you say it again.

Rick steps close to Jenny, touching her arm so she can "see" him.

RICK
Thanks -- I've been called worse.

Rick opens his wallet and touches her fingers with his badge.

RICK
I'm an American police officer.
Can I talk to you for a minute?

Jenny nods uncertainly. Rick leads her away and glances back at Chang.

RICK
Teach the children, Chang.

CHANG
Who, me?

He looks at the dirty faces that stare up at him.

CHANG
Okay. Let's move on to what was
always my favorite subject in
school. Recess!

Cheering, the children all get up and run away in a dozen different directions. Chang sits on the edge of the dock to wait for Rick.

Rick and Jenny walk together. He guides her with a hand placed lightly on her arm.

RICK
How do you speak such good English?

JENNY
The same way the children have
picked it up. Television, movies,
American Rock and Roll.

RICK
(in Chinese)
It's easy if you do it when you're
young.

Jenny is surprised and delighted to hear him speak Chinese.

JENNY
So, you have some surprises too.
How did you learn?

A short distance away, Jeff suddenly appears. Rick doesn't see him, but he sees Rick and is surprised. Jeff slides into a doorway and watches Rick and Jenny walk.

RICK
I grew up in the Orient. My father
was a Navy man.

JENNY

An officer?

RICK

Not quite. Machinist's Mate. The man loved foreign cultures -- loved the languages, customs, foods. We learned it all together, my old man and me.

There's a lot of pride in Rick's voice as he says that.

JENNY

Where is he now?

This isn't easy for Rick.

RICK

He retired from the Navy after twenty years, and we all went home to Oakland. Three weeks later, a street punk put him against a wall, stole his wallet and wedding ring, then put a bullet in the back of his head.

Jenny winces. Rick is silent for a moment, then hard.

RICK

I don't know who the punk was, but someday I'm gonna run across him....

The coldness in Rick's voice is both a threat and a promise to the man he's never met. Then he recovers from the memory and smiles at Jenny.

RICK

How'd you get me talking about all that?

JENNY

You probably wanted to for a long time.

From the doorway, Jeff eyes Rick carefully, calculating the San Francisco cop's sudden appearance in Hong Kong.

RICK

I need your help, Jenny. My partner is dead because of a professional killer. I think he's the same man who blinded you.

Rick sees Jenny become tense.

RICK

There were two types of blood on the scarf he wrapped around your eyes. One was yours -- was the other his?

JENNY

He threw me to the ground, protecting me. I heard him cry out like he was shot.

Her eyes are far away for a moment, thinking perhaps of the scars she found on Jeff's back. Then she snaps back curtly.

JENNY

I told all this to the police. I don't want to repeat it again.

RICK

Please. You saw his face. Can you describe him for me?

She turns to get her bearings, but is confused.

JENNY

I don't want to remember that night anymore.

RICK

I understand....

JENNY

I don't know where I am. You've got me all confused here. Will you take me back to my students?

Jeff watches with a look of concern as Rick takes Jenny's arm and guides her back toward the group of children.

INT. CHANG'S CAR

Rick and Chang drive away from the docks.

CHANG

A dead end?

RICK

She knows more than she's saying.

CHANG

Where does that leave us?

RICK

Dragon Heads are being killed.
There's got to be a reason. What
has changed?

Chang thinks it over carefully.

CHANG

The only thing I can think of is
that we're a year closer to 1997.

RICK

1997 - When the British leave Hong Kong.

CHANG

Every cop is a little worried about
that, because the Communists might
dump us all and put their own people
in control.

It takes only a moment for that to sink in.

RICK

Control -- that's it. If they're
going to control the police, they
sure as hell want to control the
Triads too. The best way to do
that is if you only have to deal
with one.

Chang is impressed, and it shows.

EXT. BANK OF CHINA - DAY

The sixth tallest building in the world, the Bank of China is a
massive structure that towers above its competitors. Sharp,
gleaming angles point aggressively at the surrounding buildings.

INT. BANK OF CHINA

Jung Enterprises takes up the entire 38th floor. The main office
is tastefully decorated in modern design, except for the Kuan
Kung (God of War) shrine with its wretched stench of burning joss
stick.

Woo Jung and Bok Jung look out the window at the panoramic view
of the city. A third man sits in a chair with his back to us,
and there are several enforcers present. Chinese is spoken
throughout the scene.

BOK JUNG

A spectacular office. This
powerful building was made for a
god. Our ancestors are proud of you.

WOO JUNG

My geomancer picked this building because of its sharp angles that point toward my enemies. It creates a bad wind-water omen for them.

They turn to Sidney as he enters the office.

SIDNEY

You sent for me?

Woo Jung heatedly smashes the top of his desk with his fist. He moves to the man in the chair and spins him around to face Sidney.

WOO JUNG

Cousin Eng informs me that your friend, the foreign devil assassin, did not kill Jenny Quan!

We recognize the man as Kang Weh Eng, the man Jeff bought Jenny's chit from. Sidney's legs are unsteady. Bok Jung smirks, amused at Sidney's discomfort.

SIDNEY

I don't know anything of this.

WOO JUNG

No? Then how about this?

Woo Jung waves the police composite drawing of Jeff in Sidney's face and screams at him.

WOO JUNG

The police even have the face of the killer! He was hired because he was a gweilo and couldn't be traced. Now he can be traced to you, and then to me! This puts our plans for 1997 in jeopardy!

Sidney bows humbly, realizing the importance of 1997. Woo Jung nods, and Kang Weh Eng pulls Sidney into a chair. Bok Jung puts a gun to the side of Sidney's head.

WOO JUNG

Are you a traitor, Sidney? Are you planning to betray me to my enemies?

Sidney looks Woo Jung directly in the eyes.

SIDNEY

I am not a traitor. I would never betray you. But if you believe I am a traitor, kill me now.

Woo Jung studies him for a moment, then reaches for his brother's gun. Bok Jung wanted to do the hit himself, and he is disappointed. Reluctantly, he gives the gun to Woo Jung.

Woo Jung points the big gun at Sidney's forehead, half an inch from touching skin. Slowly, deliberately, he pulls back the hammer.

Sidney looks straight into the eyes of Woo Jung and doesn't flinch. Woo Jung squeezes the trigger -- but just before the gun goes off, he catches the hammer before it drops. Sidney quietly catches his breath as Woo Jung eases the hammer back into the safety position.

WOO JUNG

I believe you.

Sidney nods placidly. Woo Jung motions his enforcers to get away from Sidney and leave him alone. He gives Bok Jung his gun back, and the younger brother looks like a disappointed child that the execution was canceled.

SIDNEY

You have always said to take a bad situation and turn it to your advantage. Jeff is still in Hong Kong, let's use him.

Woo Jung eyes Sidney with interest.

SIDNEY

I told Jeff you needed another job done. We'll make him a generous offer to make the kill. After the job, I give you my guarantee he will leave Hong Kong forever. When he does, the girl will be dead.

BOK JUNG

(bitterly)

What good is your guarantee, old man?

Woo Jung considers Sidney's offer carefully, then takes a briefcase from his desk and gives it to Sidney.

WOO JUNG

I like your idea.

Sidney opens the briefcase. His eyes flick slightly, but he composes himself and doesn't reveal his shock. The picture in the briefcase is of Bok Jung, Woo Jung's younger brother. No one else in the room is in a position to see it.

WOO JUNG

I have learned that this person has betrayed me. See that the kill is quick and clean.

Sidney closes the briefcase, nods his respect, then leaves the room.

Woo Jung glances at his enforcers.

WOO JUNG

And when the foreign devil has finished the job, you will all be waiting at the getaway car to pay him off...with bullets.

Bok Jung laughs with glee.

KANG

I'll empty my gun into the bastard!

BOK JUNG

But tell us -- who is the foreign devil going to kill?

WOO JUNG

It's better that you don't know, little brother....

Bok Jung smiles at his brother's constant secrecy.

EXT. STAR FERRY - DAY

The ferry glides across Hong Kong Bay. Jeff and Sidney stand together at the rail.

SIDNEY

All at once, you're making mistakes.

Jeff avoids Sidney's eyes, knowing it's true.

SIDNEY

Mistake number one was not killing the girl. Mistake number two was pulling a gun on a Triad brother and not using it. In this business, you can't afford
(more)

SIDNEY (Cont'd)
mistakes. Mistake number three
might be the one that kills you,
Jeffrey.

JEFF
There will be no mistake number three.

SIDNEY
I've always taught you that when
you kill, it's like wiping out a
cancer that spreads through us. In
order to sustain life, we must
sometimes take life -- and anything
in its path, whether it's good or
bad, must be taken down with it.
Empty cup.

JEFF
(a weary voice)
Yes, empty cup....

SIDNEY
Pour out all emotions.

JEFF
And be left with nothing in the
end....

SIDNEY
That's the sacrifice for the life
you've chosen. And now you've made
the biggest mistake of all. You've
fallen in love with a woman you
have to kill.

Jeff looks at him sharply, as though he hasn't allowed that
thought to be real until now.

SIDNEY
Years ago, I was in love with a
woman from another triad. She was
the highest rank for a woman: 424,
White Paper Fan.

Jeff looks at him. Sidney has never become this personal before.
There's a deep regret in the old warrior's eyes.

SIDNEY
One day, my people gave me an
ultimatum. Either I would kill
her, or they would. I knew that if
they did, they would torture her
first, to get information. So, I
killed her....

Jeff is stunned. There is an edge of dangerous anger in his eyes.

SIDNEY

It's going to hurt you badly when they send someone to kill Jenny Quan.

JEFF

If they do, they're going to have to come through me.

SIDNEY

(sharply)

There are hundreds who are willing to do the job, to move up in rank. You can't stop all of them. And when they kill her, they will be brutal and torturous, as a lesson to you. Save her the pain, Jeffrey. Kill her yourself.

Jeff is silent, revealing nothing. He looks hard at Sidney, who suddenly unfolds a piece of paper. Jeff is stunned to see that it is a police artist's sketch of him.

SIDNEY

The police know what you look like.

Jeff snatches the drawing and stares at it, amazed at the resemblance.

SIDNEY

We have one more job for you and then you'll leave Hong Kong forever.

JEFF

I don't want anymore jobs. I'm through with all of this.

Jeff starts to leave, but Sidney speaks quietly.

SIDNEY

One million dollars.

Jeff stops, turns, and looks. Sidney offers the briefcase again.

SIDNEY

You can go anywhere, do anything, find peace.

Struggling with himself, Jeff finally takes the briefcase. He opens it to find a photo of Bok Jung, some teflon bullets, a disassembled long-range rifle, and a handgun.

Jeff picks up the handgun and looks at it coldly.

JEFF
So easy to pick up. So hard to put
down.

INT. JENNY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

By candlelight again. Jeff and Jenny are in bed in each other's arms.

JEFF
I have something for you. Your
freedom.

Jenny is not sure what he means. She hears him tear up a piece of paper.

JEFF
Your debt has been paid off. You
no longer owe Kang Weh Eng.

JENNY
You did this for me?

JEFF
I did it for us...so we could
leave Hong Kong together.

JENNY
What about your work?

JEFF
Before you, my work was everything
to me.

Jenny waits for an explanation.

JEFF
I came to Hong Kong with my parents
when I was a child. They died in an
accident when I was only ten. I had
nothing but the streets, the doorways,
the markets. I had to fight everyone
I met, just to sleep in a dry spot.

Jeff opens up a little more.

JEFF
One night, I attacked a man and
tried to steal his wallet. He broke
my arm in three places, then he
realized I was just a child. He took
me to the hospital, paid all my bills.
I lived in his house and he trained me
for my work. My work became my life.

Jenny listens with complete attention.

JEFF

I'm very good at it. I understand the rules of my profession. I have never broken those rules....until now.

Jenny caresses his shoulders, finds the scars on his back and traces them with her fingertips.

JENNY

A policeman came to see me today. He's looking for the man who blinded me.

JEFF

What did you tell him?

JENNY

Everything I know -- nothing.

Jeff pulls her into his arms with passion, and his face is drowned by her long black hair.

INT. ROYAL HONG KONG POLICE HEADQUARTERS - NIGHT

CLOSE ON a stark police photograph of a man gunned down on a dark street. A broad stain of his blood runs into the gutter.

CHANG'S VOICE

Tee Rae Ding, Dragon Head of the
Doa Chou Triad. Murdered January 3rd....

A second photograph falls into view. Another man is dead in the back seat of his car. Blood is smeared on his shirt and tie. We PULL BACK TO SEE Chang and Rick looking at photographs in Chang's office.

CHANG

Kin Hue Zea, Dragon head of Xing
Triad. Assassinated January 15th.

Chang continues to drop photographs onto the pile.

RICK

Six months ago there were thirty-six
Triads in Hong Kong. Maybe a dozen
were major players and nine of their
Dragon Heads have been murdered.

CHANG

So the killer must work for one of
the remaining three.

CHANG

Over there is the Fing Tue See Triad. They control illegal currency. The bright orange boat is the Sung We Sae Triad. They have the gambling in Kowloon. And there is the Seen Bao Yee Triad. They control the New Territories that boarder China.

RICK

Which one is consolidating power?

Rick follows Chang's gaze to a sleek limo that pulls up near a ceremonial floating platform that is attached to the dock.

CHANG

Them.

Woo Jung and Bok Jung get out of the limo and make their way through the crowd to the floating platform. They are surrounded every step of the way by enforcers, including Kang Weh Eng.

CHANG

The tall one is Woo Jung, Dragon Head. A bad one -- more powerful every day. The one next to him is his brother, Bok Jung.

RICK

Who are the guys with their hands inside their jackets...?

CHANG

Bodyguards, enforcers, recruits. They have enough guns in their jackets to build a battleship. And they're ready to use them....

RICK

Punks.

CHANG

Yes, punks. But this is their initiation. Many are joining the Triad. They will be taught and trained. In a year, they will be killers with cold blood.

Chang's voice is laced with bitterness as he says that. Rick looks at him and likes him: he's a good cop.

RICK

Right. And the other two Dragon Heads must know they're targets. What rock would they be hiding under?

CHANG

Hiding would be a loss of face. If anything, they'd strut their power for everyone to see.

EXT. DRAGON BOAT FESTIVAL - DAY

Yaumatei District is a rundown area that is known for its large typhoon shelter and bobbing brothels (one-girl sampans). Boat people anchor their junks here. Chang has seen it all before, but Rick is fascinated by all the colorful activity.

RICK

You mean the Triads compete in the Dragon Boat Festival? That's like the Mafia having a float in the Rose Bowl Parade.

CHANG

Triads have become very bold. They are now a part of all levels of society. Events like this give them stature -- face. This is how they recruit new members.

Hundreds of the boats are lined up to race with their dragon-heads carved at their bows and dragon-tails at their sterns. Each boat is manned by up to eighty oarsmen who feather their oars to stabilize the huge canoes.

Drummers on the dragon boats bang out a thunderous roar, followed by the clang of cymbals and gongs to ward off evil spirits. Thousands of people watch from shore or from the decks of every conceivable type of floating vessel, and the race course itself is littered with hundreds of junks.

Large, colorful banners indicate group affiliations as they snap briskly in the salty air. Five dragon boats are already racing, and their oarsmen are rowing furiously.

RICK

Which are the three Triads that haven't been hit?

As Chang says their names, CAMERA PANS from one major Triad to the other.

EXT. BAY

Three hundred yards from shore, an ocean racer floats on the edge on the harbor. Jeff kills the motor and stares in at the colorful dragon boats. He opens the leather case and begins to assemble the high powered rifle.

EXT. DRAGON BOAT FESTIVAL

Chang and Rick watch as Woo Jung and Bok Jung shake hands with various DIGNITARIES. Woo Jung gives his brother the honor of Painting the Eyes of the Dragon Head on the dragon boat. Chang is surprised.

CHANG

Something's wrong here....

Rick tries to read him. Chang studies closely. Woo Jung steps clearly out of the way, giving his brother center stage.

CHANG

It's supposed to be the Dragon Head who paints the eyes of the dragon for luck. This is ritual, tradition. It's never broken. Why is the brother doing it?

RICK

Maybe the brother is taking over the company store.

Chang has no other explanation. Bok Jung dabs red paint on one of the dragon boat's eyes.

EXT. OCEAN RACER

Jeff has Bok Jung fatally centered in the cross hairs of his high powered rifle scope. Ready to squeeze off a perfect shot, he hesitates for the first time in his life.

Jeff lowers the rifle. He has gained something from Jenny, but he has lost a lust for killing. He feels weak, and he doesn't like it.

Bok Jung finishes the paint job and waves to the cheering crowd. Hundreds of drummers pound their drums with a thunderous roar.

The frenzied, ritual beat begins to grab Jeff instinctively. He instantly re-shoulders the rifle and searches for Bok Jung in the cross hairs again. The kill is quick and clean: three shots and Bok Jung is dead before he falls.

Pandemonium. Frantic movement and panic everywhere. But in the eye of it all, Woo Jung is still for a moment. Rick is watching him. Woo Jung stares out to the water, because he knew the shot was coming from there. Now Woo Jung hurries to his brother, but Rick is looking at the ocean racer as the man on board slips the murder weapon into the water.

Racing to the water's edge, Rick leaps into an empty powerboat. Chang is right behind him, confused but following. Rick points to the ocean racer as it slips away from the scene.

RICK
There's the killer!

Chang draws his gun. Rick shoots the powerboat forward, driving a serpentine path around the many boats that clog the area. Not knowing he is being pursued, Jeff heads leisurely toward open water.

Suddenly, a bullet shatters Jeff's windshield from behind. Shocked for a moment, he looks back at the two men in the powerboat who are hot on his trail. Another bullet splinters the rear wood railing.

Jeff throttles both outboard motors to full-out. The ocean racer seems to grab the water like a drag-strip car, bolting forward like a colt in a meadow, streaking away from Rick's boat.

Rick's frustration blazes in his eyes. Far ahead, Jeff hooks a hard left and disappears. He streaks through a maze of turns that finally lead to a cove, and he docks the ocean racer and ties it up.

EXT. KU KAN LAN VILLAGE

It's an old village built on a steep hill -- a Nationalist Chinese holdout. Thousands of Nationalist flags flip in the breeze as Jeff walks through a playground, heading toward a parked car. He fishes car keys from his pocket as he walks.

A group of CHILDREN plays a big "spin-go-round". Jeff watches them as he walks. CHUN JING XU is a young girl who plays on the spin-go-round and catches Jeff's eye. She is so fresh and innocent, a complete openness in her expression, and she seems fascinated by the handsome Westerner.

Jeff smiles at her. Chun Jing Xu smiles back. He walks on. Her eyes flit. She sees something disturbing. He stops and looks, follows her gaze.

Taking off his sunglasses for a better look, Jeff turns back to the little girl. In the sudden reflection of his sunglasses, Jeff sees the glint of a high power rifle as it flashes from a wooded area.

Jeff dives into a roll as AK-47 firepower lets loose all around him. Breaking out of the tumble, he has both guns drawn. Jeff gets off a volley of shots. The man with the AK-47 drops hard and cold, his blood staining the sand.

Children are running in every direction. Swarms of men come from everywhere. The fire fight is furious. Jeff drops a man who rushes him, then dives into a roll behind some gasoline drums. He quickly works his clip releases, and both empty magazines fly out. Jeff slams in fresh clips.

More automatic fire breaks out, and the gasoline drums explode into a fiery inferno. Jeff comes out of the dark smoke with both guns blazing.

EXT. KU KAN LAN COVE

Rick and Chang see the smoke and flames from the explosion and Rick banks hard left. They beach the boat near Jeff's ocean racer and run to shore.

EXT. KU KAN LAN VILLAGE

Rushing to the playground, Rick and Chang run directly into the gunfight. Bullets whistle through the air as they hit the ground.

Chun Jing Xu, frozen with fear, is hit by a stray shot. Jeff screams with rage as he sees her fall. He opens up with both guns as he runs in a crouch to the little girl and scoops her up in his arms.

Rick watches with amazement as Jeff clutches Chun Jing Xu protectively and dashes for the getaway car. Bullets bite the ground all around him and rip off the bark from the trees.

One man has Jeff in his sights. All it will take is the squeeze of the trigger. He squeezes -- but too late. Rick takes him down with one clean shot.

Jeff has seen it. A flash-glance at the African American cop. A recognition. Both men know that Rick has saved Jeff's life.

Bullets fly again. Jeff takes out one man, and Rick brings down two. The little girl is dying. Jeff streaks for the car, and Rick pursues him. As he reaches the car, the side window shatters from one of Rick's bullets.

RICK
Set the girl down!

Jeff whirls with a blaze of bullets that burst at Rick's feet. He's not shooting to kill. Rick is afraid to shoot back because of the girl. He reels back behind a tree.

Jeff puts Chun Jing Xu into the car, jumps in, and slams the car into gear. The wheels spin wildly in the dirt as the car fish-tails out of the parking lot and streaks away.

The last of the bad guys is shielded by the open door of his car as he lets out a long burst of machine gun fire at Rick. Several small trees are chopped to the ground by the bullets as Rick rolls out of the way. Chang appears. He shoots the man through the neck, killing him instantly.

Rick and Chang commandeer the dead man's car. They streak off in high-speed pursuit of Jeff.

INT. CAR

Chang's eyes suddenly open wide with fear. Cars are driving directly toward them. Rick skirts around them, missing a couple of head-on collisions by inches while Chang ducks for cover.

CHANG

What're you doing? Wrong side!
Wrong side!

RICK

Yeah, right! I got it, I got it!

Rick dodges another car and veers to the left side of the road, British style. Chang peers up over the dashboard.

CHANG

There he goes -- up there!

Chang points to Jeff's car going over a ridge far ahead. It's a huge lead, insurmountable, but Rick gives it all he's got. Rick jams the pedal to the metal, and the momentum throws Chang back in his seat.

INT. JEFF'S CAR

Jeff's getaway car flies through a wooded area. He feels for a pulse on the little girl.

JEFF

We'll make it. I promise.

INT. RICK'S CAR

Coming over the ridge, Rick finds a fork in the road. Jeff's car has disappeared. Rick pulls the car to a stop and slaps the steering wheel with frustration.

RICK

Damn!

(then: an idea)

The nearest hospital -- where is it?

Chang thinks quickly, then points to the left. Rick kicks up gravel as he floors the gas.

EXT. SACRED HEART HOSPITAL

The rundown little community hospital is surrounded by the towering trees of the wooded area. Jeff slams down hard on the brakes as he power slides to a dusty halt. Jumping out of the car, he carries the girl gently into the hospital.

INT. RICK'S CAR

Rick rips along the dusty road, hitting ninety.

RICK

How much farther is it?

CHANG

You don't even know he's going to the hospital!

RICK

I'm starting to get a line on him. This killer's got a conscience. He didn't kidnap that kid. He's taking her to the hospital.

The car leaps over a hill, with all four wheels leaving the ground.

INT. SACRED HEART HOSPITAL

The little hospital is dead quiet. Jeff rushes in with the little girl in his arms, then runs to an English NURSE and a NUN.

JEFF

Emergency room!

The Nurse notices how critically injured the girl is. She and the Nun rush Jeff and the girl down a hallway.

INT. EMERGENCY ROOM

A DOCTOR and other NURSES quickly surround Chun Jing Xu. They slip an oxygen mask over her face.

DOCTOR
Start C.P.R.
(to Jeff)
What happened to her?

JEFF
She was shot.

The Doctor looks disturbed and shocked, but he's a professional. He goes quickly to work on her.

EXT. SACRED HEART HOSPITAL

Rick slides his car to a stop next to Jeff's car. He and Chang leap out and run into the hospital.

INT. EMERGENCY ROOM

Jeff watches the little girl's life slipping away. A Nurse approaches him.

NURSE
We need you to fill out some forms.

Jeff backs away, shaking his head.

INT. HOSPITAL LOBBY

Rick and Chang enter, flashing their badges to an English NUN.

RICK
A man brought a little girl in here. Which way?

NUN
Emergency....

She points the direction, and they take off on the run with their guns out.

INT. EMERGENCY ROOM

Jeff's instincts are taking over. He knows that danger is near, and he keeps backing away from the Nurse.

NURSE

I need some information! You have
to fill out these forms!

No way. Jeff takes off, rushing past curtains that surround long rows of beds. Rick and Chang enter, and everyone is frightened by their guns.

CHANG

Police! Where's the American?

The Doctor keeps working on the girl, but the others point toward the row of drawn curtains. Rick motions Chang in one direction, then goes in the other to cover the entire area.

Rick carefully pushes through the drawn curtains, one at a time. Some PATIENTS are startled, but Rick hushes them.

RICK

(in Chinese)

Police -- it's okay -- police.

Rick and Chang move swiftly in a wide arc, moving through the curtained areas until they finally meet in the middle, facing each other. Jeff has somehow eluded them.

And then suddenly, he appears. Jeff has his gun point blank to Chang's head. Rick has Jeff in his sights, but Chang is his shield.

JEFF

Put your gun down -- now!

Rick gnashes his teeth. He just can't give up his weapon.

JEFF

Don't make me regret not killing
you in San Francisco. Put your gun
down, or your partner dies!

Rick hates to do it, but he finally sets his gun down on the floor. Jeff holds all the cards. He keeps an eye on Rick, but also watches the Doctor's progress with the little girl.

JEFF

I admire your persistence. You've
chased me half-way around the world.

RICK

I'll chase you all the way around
it if I have to.

JEFF

You're a bulldog.

RICK

With teeth. Keep looking over your shoulder. One day, when you least expect it, I'll be there.

The Doctor glances over at them. Jeff snaps at him.

JEFF

Concentrate on the girl!

The Doctor goes to work again. Jeff looks at Rick. There is a glistening challenge in the eyes of each man.

JEFF

It's a shame only one of us can survive this chase.

RICK

I'll send flowers to your funeral.

It's obvious the two men are enjoying the confrontation. Jeff looks sharply at the Doctor as he coughs life back into the girl. Relief crosses Jeff's face, and Rick sees it.

JEFF

Kick your gun over to me.

Rick hesitates. Jeff jams his gun into the soft skin of Chang's temple. Rick kicks the gun hard. It almost slides past Jeff, but he stops it with his foot. He bends quickly, picks up the gun, and shoves it into his belt. Then he shoves Chang into Rick and takes off.

Rick and Chang untangle themselves from each other and hustle after Jeff.

INT. HALLWAY

Rick and Chang fly down the hallway when they suddenly hear two gunshots ring out in the parking lot outside.

EXT. SACRED HEART HOSPITAL

Rick and Chang are out the door when they see Jeff screeching off in his car. They run to their car and rip open the doors, but then stop in their tracks. Looking down, they realize that two of their tires have been blown out by the gunshots.

Frustrated, they watch Jeff's car drive away.

INT. HONG KONG POLICE STATION - DAY

The public assassination of Bok Jung has caused all hell to break loose. Phones are ringing off the hooks. Uniformed COPS bring in SUSPECTS and INFORMANTS by the dozens.

Captain Hong leads Rick and Chang into the room, haranguing them in Chinese in front of the other detectives.

HONG

Thousands of people there and a man
is assassinated right before your eyes!

Chang's head is down, he says nothing.

HONG

You and this bastard black fly let
the killer get away! You have no
guts!

CHANG

He held the little girl in his arms.

HONG

A peasant girl! A nothing girl! And
you and the black fucking ghost let
him get away!

Rick finally takes a step forward. He speaks in fluent Chinese.

RICK

Excuse me, Fatso, but I've about
had it with this "black fucking
ghost" bullshit. Am I coming
through to you?

Captain Hong is shocked that Rick speaks Chinese.

RICK

If you want to insult me, stand up
man to man and look me in the eye.
And if you had half a brain, you'd
know that this kid Chang has
potential to be a great detective.
Get off his ass, and don't you ever
mention the color of my skin again
unless you do it with respect!

Hong is jolted out of his socks. Rick feels good. He leaves the room, slamming the door behind him. Chang is afraid to breathe.

HONG

I'll revoke his visa! I want him
out of here tonight!

Chang swallows a thousand years of culture and tradition. He stands up to his superior with an idea.

CHANG
Captain, sir, you can turn this to your advantage.

Hong frowns, but is willing to listen.

CHANG
He is the best cop I have ever seen. He is smart, resourceful, and determined. He can catch this killer. When he does, you will get the credit.

Hong considers all that.

HONG
I give him three days. No more.

Chang hurries to the door before Hong can change his mind. He calls quickly back to the Captain.

CHANG
Yes, sir -- and three more if he needs them.

Before Hong can answer, Chang is out the door. Hong grumbles to himself, knowing he has been hustled.

EXT. POLICE HEADQUARTERS

Still angry, Rick emerges from the building and walks briskly up the street. He goes only a short distance before Chang runs out the door and pursues him.

CHANG
Rick! Good news!

Rick keeps walking and never even looks around. Chang catches up with him.

CHANG
Captain Hong has had a change of heart. He say you can stay in Hong Kong and finish your work.

RICK
How'd you talk him into that?

CHANG
I have a gift of gab.

RICK

I guess your Captain figures the longer I'm here, the more chances I'll get killed.

CHANG

It probably entered his mind. So, what's our next move?

RICK

Lunch. You got any good Chinese restaurants in this town?

CHANG

Got something better.

They turn a corner and come face-to-face with a McDonald's.

EXT. MCDONALD'S

At an outdoor patio table, Rick and Chang fill up on cheeseburgers and strawberry shakes.

RICK

I've been a detective for seven years. Before that, five years in a uniform doing the grunt jobs. I've seen every kind of killer.

Always eager to learn, Chang listens carefully as he munches a french fry.

RICK

Passion killer, impulse killer, greed killer, revenge killer, hate killer, love killer, and kill-for-the-hell-of-it killer. I've seen parent killers, spouse killers, drive-by killers, eat-your-victim killers, and blow-the-boss's-head-off-because-he-didn't-give-you-a-raise killers.

Chang is silent. He has stopped chewing.

RICK

I hate killers.

There is a deep resolve in Rick's eyes. This is all very personal to him. Chang waits a beat, then dares to speak.

CHANG

Somebody once tore up your guts pretty good, huh?

RICK
Pretty good.

CHANG
You really need to get this guy,
don't you.

RICK
That's my problem, Chang. I'm
starting to admire this son-of-a-
bitch, and I don't know how to
handle it. It's like I'm looking
at myself in a crooked mirror. He
lives by his own personal code.
Look who he has killed. Bad guys.
Triad killers. People I'd like to
kill myself.

Rick begins to pace the room with rising energy.

RICK
I can see him, man. I can see
where he lives. Everything in
place. I can see his guns, and
they're well-cared for. He cleans
them, he locks them away, he takes
them out only with a purpose.

CHANG
You make this guy sound wonderful...
Like he's a golden eagle or something.

RICK
He's better than an eagle. He's a
vulture. He keeps the prairie clean.

Rick lets that hang in the air, and Chang nods his understanding.

EXT. ORIENTAL GARDENS - DAY

A beautiful park that is full of blossoming flowers and plants.
Jenny sits alone on a bench, looking worried. Suddenly, she
feels the presence of Jeff beside her, and she smiles.

JEFF
Sorry I'm late.

JENNY
(alarmed)
Something's wrong.

JEFF
No.

JENNY

You are afraid. It must be something terrible.

JEFF

A friend -- a former friend -- betrayed me....

JENNY

The man who saved you.

JEFF

I could always count on him before.

Jenny turns her face to him. He kisses her gently, and she caresses his face.

JENNY

You said you wanted to leave. Forget the past. New lives together.

JEFF

I have to get my money first. They cheated me. They have to answer to that.

JENNY

We can leave today. Forget everything bad that ever happened to us.

JEFF

I need to make them pay.

He is grim in his determination. It worries Jenny. She looks away, discouraged.

JEFF

After that....

JENNY

There is no "after that". You will have another deal to make, another score to settle. You are the man with the shadow and the footsteps.

JEFF

What's that?

JENNY

There was a man who was so disturbed by the sight of his own shadow and so displeased with his
(more)

JENNY (Cont'd)

own footsteps that he decided to get rid of both. He tried to run away from them. But everytime he put his foot down, there was another footstep, while his shadow kept up with him every moment. He ran faster and faster, without stopping, until his heart burst and he suddenly dropped dead. He failed to realize that if he had simply stepped into the shade, his shadow would have vanished, and if he had sat down and stayed still, there would have been no more footsteps to fear.

JEFF

I promise you --

JENNY

Don't promise anything. I am your shelter and your shade. But only if you stop running.

Jeff realizes he is at a crossroads. He stares off vacantly into the distance.

INT. WOO JUNG ENTERPRISES - DAY

Woo Jung is flanked by his enforcers as Sidney enters the office, unannounced and unwelcome. They speak in Chinese.

WOO JUNG

You weren't asked to come here!

There is a momentary silence. Sidney knows he is over-stepping his bounds, and the enforcers would all be more than willing to kill him at any moment.

SIDNEY

Why did you try to kill my man? He did his job. You must pay him for his work.

WOO JUNG

I owe the western devil nothing! He put everything in jeopardy!

SIDNEY

There is no jeopardy. He doesn't even know who you are.

WOO JUNG

He knows who you are! That's close enough!

Sidney understands Woo Jung's trigger-temper, but he pushes just a little more with a quiet voice.

SIDNEY

Please...pay him and let him leave.

Woo Jung's veins are bulging in his temples as he tries to control his rage. He speaks slowly, with a deadly chill.

WOO JUNG

You will kill the Westerner for me.
You will do this -- or else you
will die in his place.

There is a moment of stand-off. Both men's eyes are equal, but only for a moment. Sidney blinks.

WOO JUNG

My brother is dead. I am in mourning. Show respect for that.
And kill the Westerner before the next sun rises.

The enforcers are barely concealing their snickers. Sidney knows he has failed. He turns and leaves the office with his shoulders slumped.

INT. REPULSE BAY APARTMENTS - DAY

Grim-faced, Jeff sits in an office chair with a .44 magnum on the table next to him, looking like a deadly iron claw. Just as Rick envisioned, everything in the apartment is organized and in perfect order.

There is a knock on the door. Jeff grabs the gun, moves quickly to the door, and waits poised. A second knock. Jeff jerks the door open and rams the barrel of the gun into the soft flesh of Sidney's throat.

JEFF

If you brought a weapon, I'll kill you before your next breath.

Startled, Sidney almost drops his briefcase. Jeff yanks him into the room, slams the door shut, and frisks him all over for a weapon, but finds nothing.

Sidney places the briefcase onto the desk, and Jeff shoves him into a chair.

JEFF

Is this my money -- or just another trick?

SIDNEY

I didn't know about the ambush.

JEFF

I'm supposed to believe that?

SIDNEY

You are.

JEFF

I don't.

Jeff looks at Sidney for a moment with both contempt and regret. Placing the gun down, he spins the briefcase toward him and snaps it open. There is nothing but bundles of blank paper inside.

Jeff doesn't seem surprised as he looks at the blank paper with a cynical smile. In that moment, Sidney lurches for the gun on the desk, grabs it tightly, and aims it at Jeff's head.

SIDNEY

You went too far! You broke the code -- and now you force me to break the code or kill you!

JEFF

I force you to do nothing.

Sidney is stopped in his tracks for a moment.

JEFF

You're not a machine. You're a man -- with choices.

SIDNEY

I gave up my choices when I was fourteen. I took 37 oaths. Breaking even one of them is punishable by death! "Thunder and lightning"! I will not break my oaths!

JEFF

Then kill me, Sidney. Look me straight in the eyes and kill me.

SIDNEY

Damn you!

JEFF
Something wrong? You have
feelings? That's not supposed to
happen.

SIDNEY
You have changed.

JEFF
Yes. I have.

SIDNEY
It's that girl.

Jeff takes a step toward Sidney, and then another. Sidney backs away.

JEFF
Forget about me. What are you
going to do?

Sidney is torn with emotion.

JEFF
You taught me everything, Sidney.
You taught me that whenever you're
in close contact with someone you
distrust, always leave the clip
full and the chamber empty. That
way, if he fires at you, you know
where he stands. Now you have to
ask yourself: did I trust you?
Is the chamber empty? Only one
way to find out.

Jeff continues to move toward Sidney. The Red Pole cannot bring himself to pull the trigger. Jeff stands directly in front of him.

JEFF
Think about it, Sidney. Is there
a bullet in the chamber or not?
Would I trust you with my life?

Sidney looks at Jeff's eyes. Then a flash of sudden movement. Sidney wheels toward the door and fires three times, smashing the glass.

A MAN with an Uzi is lifted off his feet by Sidney's shots. He falls dead. Jeff spins away, slipping a gun from the back of his belt, then drops to one knee and fires at FOUR MEN who rush through the front door.

Sidney drops another man. Jeff kills two.

There is silence. The two old friends look at each other.

SIDNEY

There was a bullet in the chamber.
I could have killed you. You
trusted me. Why?

JEFF

I've learned to trust.

Sidney nods his understanding.

JEFF

Why did you kill your Triad
brothers?

SIDNEY

To save my son.

There's a moment between them. Eye contact, nothing more.

SIDNEY

You're through in this business.
You're too vulnerable now.

JEFF

I'm glad to be through.

SIDNEY

Woo Jung will never rest until
you're dead. He'll use everything
he has to destroy you now.

JEFF

He'll have to find me first.

SIDNEY

There is no escape. The Triads are
everywhere now. They will hunt you
down and kill you.

Both men glance at the window as they hear sirens in the
distance.

JEFF

I'll make a deal with Woo Jung. I
broke the code by not killing Jenny.
He broke the code by not paying me.
If he lets us walk away and live
our lives, I'll forget the money.

Sidney thinks about this for a moment.

SIDNEY

That might work... Woo Jung meets with the communist general tomorrow night at Kai Hing Wai, the Ancient City. In that meeting, the mainland government will legitimize Woo Jung as the head of all Triads. The fact that his entire organization can't bring down one renegade killer doesn't make him look good.

The oncoming sirens begin to get louder.

SIDNEY

I'll convince him that he's saving face by not paying you. But, you must get Jenny now. She's not safe. Meet me at my house tonight.

Jeff starts for the door, then turns back.

JEFF

I'm sorry I forced you to break the code.

SIDNEY

It's a new and complicated world, Jeffery. I don't know if anyone can live up to codes anymore.

They leave quickly as the sirens fill the street.

EXT. REPULSE BAY APARTMENTS - LATER - DAY

Police cars and coroner's vans are everywhere as Rick and Chang arrive on the scene. They push through the taped-off area and go into the building.

INT. APARTMENT

There are chalked outlines on the floor, and a couple of dead bodies are being zipped into body bags. Rick calculates angles quickly, then walks around the apartment -- getting a feel for the place. He looks at Chang.

RICK

It's him.

CHANG

You don't know he did this.

RICK

It connects. Our guy did this.
It's him.

Rick prowls the room like a tiger. He feels it.

RICK
What'd I tell you? Nothing out
of place.

Rick sits down in the chair behind the desk. He swings slowly in one direction, slowly in the other.

RICK
And he's not stupid. He arranged
this room. He set up the chair so
it had an angle on every flank.

Chang watches the Coroners carry the bodies away. He turns back to Rick, and is shocked to see the long barrel of a gun pointed directly at him.

CHANG
Hey, man....

RICK
One down, two down, three down.

CHANG
You get weird like this all the
time, Rick?

RICK
I'm in the man's apartment. I'm
sitting in his chair. I've got to
be in the man's mind.

Rick closes his eyes for a moment. He sucks in a breath of air. Opening his eyes, Rick notices that there is a tape in the stereo across the room. Rising from the chair, he crosses to the stereo. His forefinger presses the "play" button, and Jenny's passionate voice suddenly fills the room.

The voice sings "Jenny's Song", and it takes only a moment for Rick to recognize it. He looks out the window that faces the China Sea. He listens to Jenny's voice, and he knows.

EXT. JENNY'S BUILDING - DAY

Jeff gets out of his car and rushes into Jenny's building.

INT. JENNY'S APARTMENT

Jenny looks around quickly as Jeff runs into the room.

JEFF

There's no time to explain, we're leaving now.

JENNY

What's wrong?

JEFF

I'll tell you later. Pack quickly.

Jenny is confused, but she hurries into the bedroom to pack..

EXT. JENNY'S APARTMENT BUILDING

Chang pulls his car to the curb across the street from Jenny's apartment, and Rick gets out.

RICK

I'm going to ask Jenny a few more questions. Cover the back.

Chang nods, and Rick hurries into the building.

INT. ENTRANCE

In the passageway, Rick finds Jenny's name on one of the mailboxes. He moves quickly up the stairs to her apartment.

EXT. BACK ENTRANCE

Chang approaches the back entrance to Jenny's building.

INT. HALLWAY

Rick steps close to Jenny's door and takes out a lock pick, but he hears the floorboard beneath his foot squeak.

INT. JENNY'S APARTMENT

Jeff suddenly freezes. He senses something -- the sound of the creaking floorboard outside the door. The two men sense each other's presence.

INT. APARTMENT HALLWAY

Rick pulls out his gun and puts his hand on the door handle when suddenly the door flies open. Instantly, the two men are face-

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

to-face, guns pointed at each other's heads. Blue steel is less than an inch from each of their foreheads. Trigger fingers are tense.

RICK
If I shoot, you're dead.

JEFF
My last act will be to take you with me.

RICK
Maybe I'm too quick for that.

JEFF
Maybe you're not.

Rick and Jeff circle each other, never lowering their guns even an inch. Each has a confident smile.

JEFF
Hong Kong is a dangerous place.
You should go home as fast as possible.

RICK
When I go home, you'll be with me --
in handcuffs or a bodybag -- your choice.

JEFF
Why am I so important to you?

RICK
You're responsible for the death of my partner.

Jenny enters from the bedroom and sees the vague shadows of their shapes.

JENNY
Who is it? Who's there?

JEFF
It's all right, Jenny. It's just a friend of mine.

She walks closer to them.

RICK
It's Rick. We talked yesterday.

JENNY
Yes. You and Jeff know each other?

Rick finally has a name for the killer.

RICK
Of course. "Jeff" and I are old
friends.

Rick and Jeff hold their positions, eye-to-eye. Wherever they
move, their guns stay on each other.

JENNY
Your voices are...so tense.

JEFF
We just haven't seen each
other in a while.

JENNY
Something's wrong....

RICK
Nothing. We were just talking
about old times in San Francisco.

JEFF
Love those Forty-Niners.

RICK
You bet. Love 'em.

Jenny isn't fooled.

JENNY
I have some tea on the stove.

Jenny goes into the kitchen. Rick and Jeff eye each other
closely.

EXT. BACK ENTRANCE

Chang paces nervously in the alley behind the building. He
glances at his watch and looks up to the vacant windows of the
second story. Rick is taking too long.

Chang takes out his gun and begins to slowly climb the fire
escape.

INT. JENNY'S APARTMENT

Jenny is busy in the kitchen as Rick and Jeff circle each other
with their guns drawn.

RICK
Be smart. Put down your weapon.

JEFF

You first.

RICK

Jenny's already been the victim of one shootout. Don't put her in jeopardy again.

Jeff blinks. Rick scored a bull's-eye with that one. Jenny comes into the room, carrying tea cups on a tray.

JENNY

I can't see you. You have to say something.

JEFF

Over here.

Jenny walks toward them.

JENNY

Is Rick still here?

RICK

Right here.

That's all she needs: the sound of his voice. Jenny moves closer, then suddenly shovels the steaming tea cups toward Rick. The scalding liquid splashes on his hand and he spins in pain as he drops his gun.

JENNY

Run, Jeff! Run!

Jeff has the advantage. He looks at Rick. He could kill him now.

JENNY

Please, Jeff! Run!

Jeff points the gun at Rick's head. The killer-instinct is there, but the will to kill isn't. Lowering the gun, he grabs Jenny's hand and pulls her out of the apartment on the run.

EXT. FIRE ESCAPE

Chang reaches the second floor and starts to open the door.
INT. HALLWAY

Just as Chang enters there is a flash of movement.

Jeff kicks the gun out of Chang's hand and drives him down with a swing of his gun to the head.

Jeff and Jenny run down the fire escape together.

Rick runs out of Jenny's apartment and finds Chang at the end of the hall, dazed on the floor. Rick helps him up, and Chang shakes his head to clear his mind.

RICK

You okay?

Chang nods. Rick rushes down the fire escape, and Chang staggers behind him.

EXT. BUILDING

Rick and Chang reach the ground just in time to see Jeff's car drive away and turn a corner with screeching tires. They run to Chang's car and get in. Chang tears down the street at high speed.

EXT. BUSY STREETS

We see Chang's car pursuing Jeff's car through the heavy traffic of Hong Kong.

INT. CHANG'S CAR

Jeff holds a big lead, but Chang keeps him in view. He speaks quickly into his police radio in Chinese.

CHANG

In pursuit of the Club B Boss
killer. Heading west. Alert all
cars.

Rick watches Jeff's car up ahead with frustration.

RICK

Step on it, will you? I should
be driving!

CHANG

I've seen you drive. Forget it.

Chang increases the speed.

INT. JEFF'S CAR

Jeff's eyes are quick, flicking between the massive traffic and the rearview mirror as he catches glimpses of Chang's car. Jenny is shaking.

JENNY
What is going on? You're
scaring me!

Jeff whips the wheel to the left, then to the right as he dodges
through traffic at eighty miles an hour.

JENNY
Who is Rick?

JEFF
An old friend.

JENNY
Don't lie to me! I know he's an
American cop!

Jeff cuts between two more cars, practically forcing them off the
road. The pace of their voices matches the high-speed chase of
the cars.

JENNY
Why is he after you?

JEFF
My work.

JENNY
(insisting)
Why!

JEFF
You don't want to know.

JENNY
(demanding)
WHY!

JEFF
Because my work is illegal!

JENNY
Stop talking in circles! Just
say it!

Jeff looks at her. This is very hard for him, but he finally
blurts it out.

JEFF
I kill people!

JENNY
I'm not stupid! I know that! I
only hoped it was for the right
reasons.

JEFF

It was.

Jeff glances at her quickly for her reaction, then he watches the road and the rearview mirror again.

JENNY

And Rick is a policeman who is after you -- but why did he come to me?
What do I have to do with it?

Jeff just can't say it, but Jenny suddenly understands the reason with a sad awareness.

JENNY

Because you're the one who blinded me.

Jeff tightens his jaw. His silence is all the affirmation she needs, and she suddenly looks angry and bitter. Police sirens seem to echo from every direction.

JENNY

You felt responsible. You felt guilty.
That's why you came back to me.

JEFF

At first -- maybe. But that changed.

JENNY

You took pity on the poor blind girl.
You even bought out my contract because
you felt so guilty.

JEFF

That's not true! I came back to kill
you -- but I couldn't do it.

The words have come out of his mouth like a bomb. Jenny looks terrified and confused.

JENNY

Stop! Let me out!

Jenny grabs the steering wheel and Jeff tries to push her back but she is out of control. The car swerves violently toward oncoming traffic. Jeff hits the brake and the car skids out of control.

Fishtailing, then spinning, the car scrapes against a metal barrier, throwing a shower of sparks. The barrier is bent and ripped. He barely keeps it under control, then pulls it to a stop.

Jenny leaps out of the car and staggers blindly into traffic. Cars swerve past her with horns blaring, and she holds out her hands in terror.

Jeff jumps out of the car and grabs her in his arms as she fights him furiously to escape. He guides her back to safety as the sirens close in around them. Looking in every direction, he sees police cars swarming in.

Jenny pulls free from Jeff again as Chang's car screeches to a halt on the edge of the highway. Rick gets off two quick shots that shatter the windows of Jeff's car. Seeing that Jenny is safe, Jeff races back to his car. He floors the accelerator and races past two police cars that collide as they pull into the area.

Jenny is still confused and disoriented as Chang comforts her. Rick tries to position himself for a clean shot, but Jeff's car swerves through traffic and is gone.

EXT. JENNY'S APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY

Chang pulls his car to the front entrance of Jenny's building. He and Rick get out with Jenny and go inside.

INT. JENNY'S APARTMENT

Rick opens the door and leads Chang and Jenny into the apartment. He is suddenly confronted by Captain Hong, who stares at him like a thundercloud. Hong is flanked by TWO ARMED OFFICERS.

HONG.

Jenny Quan, I have papers here. You are ordered to be taken into custody for immediate deportation to mainland China.

Jenny is shocked.

JENNY

Why?

HONG

You're an illegal alien.

JENNY

I'm a good citizen. I have a job.

HONG

Not anymore. You were fired this morning. We leave for the airport in one hour.

Jenny is stunned as two officers lead her to the bedroom. Hong turns to Rick with a scowl.

RICK

She's not the one we're after. Why punish her?

HONG

I don't want to hear anything from you! I'm officially ordering you to leave Hong Kong within twenty-four hours, or else you'll be arrested!

Hong faces Chang.

HONG

And you. You're no longer a detective. Tomorrow, you go back on the streets in uniform!

Chang is crestfallen.

INT. BANK OF CHINA - PARKING GARAGE - DAY

Elevator doors open, and Woo Jung steps out with Kang right behind him. Bodyguards surround Woo Jung. A dozen hands flash, reaching for guns inside jackets as they all see Sidney in the same moment. They speak in Chinese.

FIRST EXECUTIONER

Let me have the honor to execute him!

Woo Jung silences him with a hand motion. He glares at Sidney.

WOO JUNG

You failed to kill the assassin!

SIDNEY

I went there to do my duty, to end his life. But you sent enforcers after me, to kill us both.

WOO JUNG

And I will send more if I have to. My supply of killers never runs out!

SIDNEY

There is so much at stake here. In 1997 you will be the most powerful man in Hong Kong. I have talked to
(more)

SIDNEY (Cont'd)
the killer and he offers a deal.
Let him and the girl go and he will
forget the million dollars you owe
him. That way, no unfinished business
will disturb your meeting with the General.

Woo Jung considers the offer carefully. After a long moment he
smiles at Sidney with satisfaction.

WOO JUNG
That's why you are my Red Pole.
We'll seal the arrangement with a
toast.

INT. JENN MA LOOK CATHOLIC CHURCH - NIGHT

Just as he was when we first met him, Jeff sits in the church and
stares thoughtfully at the altar. He is a man who is attempting
to find control.

Rising slowly with a look of resolve, he turns away from the
icons and walks out of the church and into the night.

INT. JENNY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Hong waits in the living room while Jenny packs a suitcase in the
bedroom. She wipes tears from her eyes and answers the phone.

JENNY
Yes? Jeff!

In the other room, Hong reacts to hearing Jeff's name.

INT. ANOTHER APARTMENT

In the room next door, TWO POLICE DETECTIVES listen carefully to
the conversation on Jenny's line.

JEFF'S VOICE
I know you hate me, but I have to
see you. You're in danger. I can
get you out of Hong Kong safely.

INT. JENNY'S BEDROOM

Jenny's voice is filled with despair.

JENNY
It doesn't matter anymore. The police
are here. They're deporting me!

EXT. CHURCH - NIGHT

Sitting in his car, Jeff talks on his cellular phone.

JEFF
Deporting you! When?

INT. JENNY'S APARTMENT

She lowers her voice as she speak quietly into the telephone.

JENNY
They're taking me to the airport
tonight. I can't talk anymore.

Jenny quickly hangs up the phone.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Rick stands at the window of his hotel room, staring down vacantly at the streetlights below. There's a knock on the door, and Chang enters, looking sad.

CHANG
It's almost time to go.

RICK
I'm not leaving Hong Kong.

CHANG
But Captain Hong will have you
arrested.

RICK
Something isn't adding up here,
Chang. This city is full of
illegals. Why is Captain Hong so
concerned with deporting Jenny?
And why tonight? What's the hurry?

CHANG
Because he's Captain Hong. He can
do anything he wants to. He
doesn't have to make sense.

Rick continues to look thoughtfully at the street below.

RICK
Bait.

CHANG
What?

RICK.
Hong isn't deporting anybody. He's
using Jenny as bait. He expects
Jeff to try to save her.

Rick picks up his gun and starts for the door.

CHANG
Where are we going?

RICK
Stay out of it.

CHANG
I'm not going to stay out of it.

RICK
You'll only get yourself in trouble.

Rick starts to open the door, but Chang blocks his path.

CHANG
Partners don't quit on each other.
Whatever happens to one happens to
the other. So, are we in this
together or not?

Rick looks at him for a moment, then smiles.

RICK
Hell yes, we're in it together.
Take me to the airport -- partner.

EXT. AIRPORT - NIGHT

Chang's car pulls into the airport parking lot. Rick and Chang
jump out of the car and run into the terminal.

INT. TERMINAL

Rick and Chang enter the busy terminal. They spot Jenny and Hong
with two detectives, and they duck behind a pillar to observe.

CHANG
I don't see any undercover cops. If
I was using the girl as bait, I'd
have them everywhere.

RICK
Just keep your eyes open for anything.

Chang takes a long, slow look around. Suddenly, he is puzzled.

CHANG

There are Triad enforcers all over the place. I don't get it. Why would Captain Hong set Jeff up for the Triad?

RICK

Maybe they told him to. Maybe he's following orders.

The truth dawns on Chang. He glares with anger at Hong and hisses to himself.

CHANG

Somehow I knew it all along.

Across the large room, we see a tearful Jenny turn to Hong.

JENNY

Please, Captain Hong. Don't send me to China. Let me stay just a few days, and I'll leave here forever.

HONG

Yes, with your boyfriend. Well, don't worry about that. Your boyfriend will never see another sunrise.

Jenny grasps a terrible truth.

JENNY

You're going to kill him! This has all been a trick!

She pulls away from the detectives and screams to the passing crowds.

JENNY

Jeffrey! Get away!

Rick and Chang watch nervously. Jenny is in the midst of the crowd, clawing at people, trying to stop them, feeling faces, looking for Jeff.

JENNY

It's a trap! Run, Jeffrey!

The detectives are trying to get to her. People shy away, thinking she's crazy.

JENNY

Don't worry about me! Just run!

There is confusion as the detectives finally reach Jenny and grab her. Hong is furious. And then Rick sees it coming....

The wall of windows behind Captain Hong. Headlights. Bright. Picking up speed. Heading directly toward the windows.

The car CRASHES through the windows, missing Hong by inches. The fat captain spills to the floor in a storm of flying glass and metal.

Screams and panic. The crowd divides in the path of the car that roars about twenty feet and slams into a pillar with a tremendous crash! Rick and Chang are too shocked to move.

Terror everywhere! The detectives forget Jenny and rush to the car with their guns drawn. They shoot indiscriminately into the car, then stop -- shocked to find no driver inside! The steering wheel has been tied down, and a brace keeps the accelerator to the floor. Suddenly, the car explodes and thick smoke quickly engulfs the entire area.

People drop to their knees, coughing and crying from the fumes. Captain Hong flails wildly with his arms, trying to feel his way.

RICK

Jenny!

Rick dashes into the smoke. Two Triad enforcers move to head him off, but Chang jumps them from behind. The three men battle it out with their fists.

Shielding his face with a handkerchief, Rick tries to see through the thick smoke, and for a moment a small path seems to clear before him: he sees Jenny.

Dodging between people, Rick fights his way toward Jenny. He still sees her -- vaguely, dimly -- and just when he can almost touch her, he doesn't see her anymore.

She has vanished. Rick gropes to go on.

Jeff emerges from the edge of the cloud with Jenny. She is completely confused and disoriented.

JEFF

Jenny -- it's me.

She smiles with joy.

JENNY

Yes!

They are on the run together.

Rick is practically blind as he staggers out of the cloud. Tears flow thickly down his cheeks but then he sees Jeff and Jenny hurrying toward the luggage conveyor. A Triad enforcer has Jeff in his sights, but Rick shoots first. The enforcer goes down, falling onto the conveyor where he is carried away with luggage.

Jeff turns his head quickly and sees it was Rick who saved him.

RICK

I couldn't let you leave without me.

Jeff smiles, amazed by this American's persistence. Then all hell breaks loose as Triad guns shoot at them from every direction.

Jeff lifts Jenny onto the luggage conveyor, then leaps up beside her. Rick fires off several shots at the enforcers and jumps onto the conveyor just as Jeff and Jenny disappear through the opening in the wall.

INT. LUGGAGE ROOM

A room that is almost the size of a warehouse. WORKERS load suitcases onto the conveyors, and they are startled to see Jeff, Rick and Jenny tumble into the room.

They help Jenny to her feet and run for the back door. Jenny almost stumbles over a suitcase, but Jeff keeps her from falling.

EXT. TARMAC

They come out of the building to the tarmac where jets fire up their engines. One lifts off, sending a wall of wind at them.

JEFF

Why are you doing this?

RICK

Just helping out an old friend. Twenty to one isn't my idea of a fair fight.

JEFF

Thanks for the help, "old friend". Now goodbye.

RICK

But "old friends" should never part.

JEFF

I'm not that fond of you.

RICK

The feeling is mutual.

Rick is surprised as Jeff pulls out his gun and suddenly has the drop on him. But a moment later he is shocked as Jeff whirls away from him and fires at something else!

An enforcer falls dead behind a luggage carrier. Jeff smiles at Rick.

JEFF

That makes us even.

Three more men quickly appear, guns blazing. Jenny screams as bullets hit the wall behind her. Rick turns and kills two of the men, while Jeff smokes the third.

More men appear. Bullets blaze in the night. Rick and Jeff are on the run, each with one of Jenny's hands to lead her. They shoot back behind them every step of the way.

Running farther onto the tarmac, they are surrounded by the high whine of engines warming up and the roar of planes taking off and landing.

Jenny suddenly stumbles, and Rick loses his grip on her hand. Jeff stops her from falling, then empties his gun to protect her.

An enforcer is about to shoot Rick, but Jeff throws his body at the man. The enforcer's gun goes off as he staggers backward, and the bullet rips a hole in Jeff's shoulder. The man is sucked with a scream into the engine of a jet that is warming up.

More shots ring out and Jeff recoils with a deep wound in his arm. Rick pulls him to his feet, and the three are on the run again.

Rick leaps onto a luggage carrier and starts it up. Wounded, Jeff staggers, and Jenny pulls him up onto the back of the carrier.

More bullets fly. Rick picks up speed. He is driving directly toward the wire fence that surrounds the tarmac. The luggage carrier hits the fence at full speed, and the fence curls up like an accordion. The vehicle doesn't break through, but it bends a section of the fence down and manages to drive over it.

A wild bullet hits one of the tires of the luggage carrier, and the whole thing tips over. Rick, Jeff and Jenny jump free as the carrier rolls over several times and hits a taxi, denting one door. The DRIVER jumps out, shakes his fist and shouts.

Rick grabs the Driver and pulls him away from the taxi as Jeff and Jenny climb into the back seat. The man doesn't speak English, but he has plenty to say in Chinese. Rick leaps into the taxi behind the wheel.

INT. TAXI

Rick streaks the taxi out to the street, then realizes cars are driving directly toward him.

RICK
I know, I know -- wrong side. I'm
catching on. Damn English
bastards....

On the correct side of the road, the taxi escapes into the night.

EXT. HIGH ROAD

Cruising above the city, the taxi clips along.

INT. TAXI

In the back seat, Jenny holds Jeff in his arms and he fights to stay conscious. He has lost a lot of blood from the wound in his shoulder.

JEFF
I'm sorry. I never meant to
hurt you...I love you.

JENNY
I know.

Rick sees them kiss in the rearview mirror.

EXT. RIVER - NIGHT

Far away from the airport, Rick pulls off the main road and parks the taxi beside a river. He and Jenny help Jeff out of the car.

RICK
We've got to get that bullet out
before you bleed to death.

Rick peels off Jeff's blood-soaked shirt. He takes out a pocket knife that glints in the moonlight.

RICK
Ready?

JEFF

You're going to enjoy this, aren't you?

RICK

Looking forward to it.

Rick makes the first cut into the wound, and Jeff winces. His eyes blaze with defiance and rage.

JEFF

Why are you trying to save me?

RICK

I'm going to save your ass so I can bust you.

JEFF

For what? Exterminating roaches in San Francisco?

RICK

You're responsible for my partner's death.

Rick digs a little deeper with the knife.

JEFF

You know better than that. He was doing his job, and I was doing mine.

RICK

You set the whole thing in motion.

JEFF

When I became an assassin, I knew someone would always be gunning for me. When your partner put on a badge, he knew he could get killed.

Jenny steps toward their voices.

JENNY

You're trying so hard to be enemies, but you're too much alike. For better and worse, each of you is exactly like the other.

Both of them look at Jenny, then at each other.

JEFF

Maybe.

RICK
Great, the only guy I understand in
this whole damn town turns out
to be a killer.

Rick's knife suddenly strikes metal. Jeff winces, but doesn't make a sound. Rick smiles.

RICK
You would have made a hell of a cop.

Rick finally pulls the slug out of Jeff's shoulder.

RICK
Got it.

Jeff is almost ready to pass out, but Rick admires his toughness. Their voices are deadly quiet.

RICK
I'm still going to take you back.

JEFF
If you try it, you will die.

The two men look at each other with begrudging respect.

EXT. SIDNEY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

The taxi climbs a hill and drives up to Sidney's house. The lights in the house are bright as they all get out of the car.

INT. SIDNEY'S HOUSE

Jeff leads the way into the house. Rick guides Jenny over the threshold. There is complete silence in the house.

JEFF
Sidney?

No answer. Jeff becomes immediately suspicious. He takes out his gun. Rick pushes Jenny gently into a corner and takes his gun out too.

JEFF
Sidney!

No response. Jeff looks at Rick, motions him to cover his flank, and he moves farther into the house. Rick has the eyes of a hawk as he watches every corner.

They move past the center of the house, past the fountain and the koi fish that swim to the surface around the floating lilies in the pond.

Jeff leads the way through the hanging plants in the solarium, into the hallway, and finally to the bedroom. Rick covers him as Jeff steps into the bedroom with his gun raised.

Then Jeff slowly lowers his gun.

Rick steps quickly into the room beside Jeff. He sees Sidney, hanging from the ceiling on a meat hook, twisting slowly, dead. Jenny comes in behind them.

JENNY
What is it?

RICK
(quietly)
A man is dead....

Jeff is stunned into total numbness. Jenny reaches out for Jeff, but Rick leads her out of the room.

RICK
Give him a moment with his friend.

Alone, Jeff just stares at Sidney. One slow step at a time, he crosses to his friend. He lifts the body gently off the hook and lowers it carefully to the bed.

EXT. HOUSE

Rick has walked Jenny outside. Suddenly, he sees a flash of light in the window of Sidney's bedroom. He backs away and pulls Jenny with him.

INT. BEDROOM

Fire climbs the drapes and spreads quickly across the walls. Jeff's eyes shine with firelight and tears. He watches the bed catch on fire, and Sidney's body is quickly consumed in flames.

Jeff turns away as the entire house begins to explode in fire.

EXT. HOUSE

Wild flames are quickly destroying the house. The heat on Rick's face shows his concern for Jeff. The shine in Jenny's eyes shows her confusion.

JENNY

Jeff! Where's Jeff? Let me go!

Jenny struggles with Rick, but he holds her back. The flames are on the roof now, leaping to the trees. Rick stares into the fire, worried.

Then Jeff appears, walking out of the inferno with his shoulders slumped in sadness. He comes out to the yard, turns back to the house, and glares at the flames with rage.

Rick is suddenly beside him.

RICK

Come on. They'll be looking for you.

JEFF

No...this time I'm looking for them and I know where they are.

EXT. ANCIENT CITY - DAY

The wide gates of the Ancient City swing slowly open as two lines of limousines pull into the area.

It's a show of force, power and wealth on both sides. The gleaming limousines of Woo Jung and his entourage are favorably matched against the limousines of the communist General and his soldiers. The only difference between the two is the small red communist flags on the General's cars.

Hovering over the city is a police helicopter carrying Captain Hong and his PILOT. The entire scene has a sense of formality and pomp as the cars drive through the gates and the helicopter sets down in the center of the city.

EXT. HIGH HILL

Rick, Jeff and Jenny stand on a high hill that overlooks the city. They watch the procession of cars that drives through the gates.

JENNY

The Ancient City. Five hundred years ago the peasants took their last stand here against the nobles.

RICK

It looks like they lost.

Jenny can't see the city, but her voice speaks warmly of it.

JENNY

They had no weapons, so they made weapons of their bodies. A finger became a knife, a hand became a hammer. They fought and they won. They created a school of warriors to defend the peasantry.

RICK

How do you know that?

JENNY

I was smuggled here as a child. It's still used as a holding pen for illegal Chinese immigrants.

JEFF

Is there a way to get in so nobody sees us?

JENNY

The southeast wall. By the river.

Together, they start down the hill toward the city.

INT. COURTYARD

The pomp and circumstance continues as the main participants come together in a large courtyard.

We get our first good look at the GENERAL. He is an old-line communist, a hard-liner who has fought the hard wars and political battles over the years -- a survivor who will take whatever comes and still survive.

The General's Aide is at his side -- the man we met earlier.

Woo Jung struts into the meeting. This is his shining hour.

Beside Woo Jung, in Sidney's place, is Kang who has become the new Red Pole.

The two sides meet over a long oak table. Woo Jung bows to the General.

EXT. SOUTHEAST WALL - NIGHT

Rick, Jeff and Jenny reach the southeast wall of the Ancient City.

JENNY
Somewhere along here the wall is
broken. We used to play here when
we were kids.

Rick and Jeff spread out along the wall, looking for the hole.

RICK
This is it.

Jeff and Jenny move quickly to Rick, who has found the hole in the wall. They squeeze through to the inside.

EXT. COURTYARD

The meeting continues, like the board meeting of a major corporation. The General studies Woo Jung like a hawk and listens to him speak passionately in Chinese.

WOO JUNG
This is a great moment, General.

GENERAL
For both of us.

WOO JUNG
I have consolidated all the Triads
into one. We are ready to work in
harmony with you.

The General nods his approval.

INT. PASSAGEWAY

The interior passageway is dimly lit. In the near-darkness, Jenny finds a narrow stairway.

JENNY
This will take us to the back
streets of the village.

Jeff takes the steps two at a time, reaching the door before Jenny gets there. He opens it and steps out to the street.

EXT. STREET

A series of small shops and living quarters, severely cramped and cluttered. The peasants look suspiciously at them and then suddenly disappear into the buildings.

Left alone on the street, they are suddenly surrounded by vicious chow dogs that bare their teeth and growl. Yin Fang, the hot-head with the scar, steps forward from the shadows and gives a command for the dogs to sit.

YIN FANG

Who are you? You don't belong here.

Jenny steps forward defiantly.

JENNY

I know your voice. I grew up here.
I am Jenny Quan.

YIN FANG

The Tanka girl.

JENNY

We need your help. There's a meeting going on here.

YIN FANG

Yes. The pigs are dining with the pigs.

JENNY

Where?

YIN FANG

In the Central Courtyard. I'll take you there, but you will not return.

They follow Yin Fang down the dark street.

INT. COURTYARD

Expensive wine is being poured and served in crystal glasses. Woo Jung continues his speech to the General.

WOO JUNG

General, I have the honor to introduce you to the man who will soon be Hong Kong's Chief of Police.

Captain Hong rises and bows.

WOO JUNG

Captain Hong is Seen Bao Yee Triad. We have the city in complete control.

The General nods with appreciation. Woo Jung offers a toast.

WOO JUNG
To a long and profitable
partnership.

The General rises and lifts his glass to the toast.

WOO JUNG
And to seal our good fortune, I
offer this gift of appreciation to
you.

Woo Jung nods to his subordinates, and they wheel in a large trunk. Opening the lid, he shows the General it is packed with bars of gold bullion. For the first time, the General smiles.

GENERAL
I have also brought a gift that
will help you control the city.

The General's Aide motions for a truck to be driven in.

EXT. COURTYARD WALLS

Yin Fang leads Rick, Jeff and Jenny up to the exterior walls of the courtyard. They hear celebrative laughter inside the wall. Jeff kisses Jenny, then turns to the Yin Fang.

JEFF
Take Jenny to a safe place.

Yin Fang leads her away.

Rick and Jeff look at each other and say it all with their eyes: a glance of respect and admiration.

Bright headlights from an oncoming truck shine on them. It is a Chinese military truck with a canvas top and a red star on the door. They step back into the shadows and watch as the truck draws close.

INT. COURTYARD

The military truck backs up into the courtyard. Woo Jung's enforcers step forward to open the canvas flaps. The truck is filled with high-powered weapons, and standing in the middle of them with a machine gun cradled in his arms is Jeff.

The machine gun flashes with fire as the two enforcers are cut to ribbons with bullets. Every gun in the place suddenly wheels toward Jeff, but before a trigger can be pulled, Woo Jung's glass explodes in his hand.

Rick stands on a balcony above the courtyard with a rifle aimed at Woo Jung's head.

RICK

If anyone moves, I'll kill him!

Everyone freezes. The General glares at Woo Jung and bristles.

GENERAL

I thought you had control.

Jeff leaps out of the truck with his machine gun pointed at the General.

JEFF

Let me tell you about this man, General. He is a scum sucking pig who butchered his own Red Pole!

Jeff glares coldly at Woo Jung. At the end of the table, Kang Weh Eng is watching carefully for an opportunity.

JEFF

Now Sidney was an honorable man. He was dedicated to his Dragon Head and to his code. All those years of service deserved an honorable death. But this man denied him even that.

Woo Jung's hand shakes with anger as he still holds the shattered glass.

JEFF

And this is the man you picked to control Hong Kong? As you can see, he can't even control a small village like this.

The General looks over at Woo Jung with contempt.

JEFF

My fight is not with you, General. Take your gold and leave.

The General doesn't have to be told twice. He and his party rise cautiously. They collect the gold and begin to leave the courtyard as quickly as possible. We see Captain Hong -- always the survivor -- slip into their midst and leave with them.

Jeff turns his attention back to Woo Jung.

JEFF

All you had to do was take the deal. Keep your money and leave me alone.

WOO JUNG
(barely audible)
I'll...take...the deal.

JEFF
Too late.

WOO JUNG
Don't kill me....

JEFF
That would be too easy. I want
you to live with the shame and
disgrace you deserve. The General
will never deal with you now. No
one will.

As the last Chinese soldier leaves the courtyard, Kang grabs him and spins him around. Using him as a shield, Kang takes the soldier's gun and shoots at Jeff, barely missing.

Jeff returns fire, killing the soldier Kang is using as a shield. Suddenly the fight begins as Woo Jung's enforcers scramble for their guns. Woo Jung screams with rage.

WOO JUNG
Kill the bastard!

As the shooting begins, Jeff dives to the floor and rolls behind a table. Rick sees that Jeff is caught in a crossfire with no exit. In desperation, he shoots at the gas tank of the truck that is loaded with arms and ammunition. With a tremendous explosion, the truck flies several feet into the air and lands on its side.

Several enforcers have been killed by the blast, and others lie wounded on the ground. In the confusion, Jeff manages to slip safely away.

EXT. STREET

Rick jumps down from the top of the wall, and he and Jeff run together down the empty street. Bullets spike chunks out of the walls around them. They turn, set, and fire, then run again and duck around a corner....

....and right into a hornet's nest. Woo Jung's main guards have taken positions on the rooftops and doorways.

A hail of bullets sprays the street as Rick and Jeff dive for cover. They roll into an alley and come up firing. Two men are hit on a rooftop, and they fall to the street like bags of

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bricks. Rick cuts down an enforcer in a doorway, and Jeff splatters the knees of a man who makes a wild and stupid charge at them.

Jeff motions Rick toward the back of the alley.

JEFF

This way.

RICK

How do you know?

JEFF

Because they're back there.

RICK

Good thinking.

Rick and Jeff duck into another dark alley. At the end of the alley they find they are trapped by a high wall. Surrounded, and with no way out, they stand with their backs against the wall as Woo Jung's enforcers move toward them.

Bullets suddenly fly all around them. Rick and Jeff go through round after round of ammunition until the barrels of their guns glow red with heat.

Sensing the kill, the enforcers move in. Suddenly, out of nowhere, an arrow catches one of them in the throat. He spins to the ground and dies.

Arrows rain down on the enforcers, driving them back. Villagers have suddenly appeared from nowhere, leading Rick and Jeff out of the alley and down a sidestreet. Yin Fang, the village hot-head, steps out of the shadows.

YIN FANG

You started the fight, now we will finish it.

Woo Jung's enforcers come down the street in a wide line. They are heavily armed. From the corner of his eye, Rick sees young men from the village climb the walls of the city with knives that gleam in the moonlight.

The well-trained and disciplined troops of Woo Jung stop and raise their weapons. Rick, Jeff, Yin Fang and his handful of followers are like fish in a barrel.

But before the enforcers can shoot, the gleaming knives of the young men on the walls flash in unison. They cut leather straps that hold ancient weapons: massive logs that swing down from the walls like flying telephone poles.

The swinging two-ton logs crush some of the enforcers. They swing back, then arc down again, crushing another rush of Woo Jung's men.

More Triad soldiers appear at the other end of the street, and the young men release more swinging logs. The logs come together like clapping hands that crush several soldiers like bugs.

Those that survive the logs are suddenly attacked by a released pack of chow dogs that leap on the soldiers and tear at their throats.

Suddenly, Woo Jung's enforcers take the high ground as they appear on top of several roofs. They are able to shoot down on the villagers, picking them off one by one. The rag tag group of villagers panics and scatters.

With an AK-47 in each hand, Rick and Jeff retreat with their allies one slow step at a time, and their guns blaze with every step.

As they fall back, the villagers break out other ancient weapons. An arrow cannon is fired, and dozens of arrows rip through the night. Triad soldiers fall, pierced by the arrows as they charge.

Jeff, Rick and the brave villagers are pushed back into a small, cramped section of the Ancient City where exposed pipes look like a nest of metal snakes. The enforcers fire away, but their bullets hit the metal pipes and ricochet back, killing an entire line of Triads with their own gunfire.

Woo Jung scrambles back to safety and screams at his men.

WOO JUNG

You're killing yourselves, you
fools!

An incredible flurry of movement is going on everywhere. Sheets of arrows fly from the lookout towers. More Triad soldiers are cut down like weeds. Rick and Jeff are lit up by the gunfire in the night, and they seem bigger than life as their machine guns blast at the enemy.

Woo Jung can see that he is now losing the fight. His men are being cut down and there are no more replacements. With revenge in his eyes, he searches for Jeff in the battle.

Jeff grabs Yin Fang and pulls him aside.

JEFF

Take me to Jenny!

Woo Jung watches as Yin Fang leads Rick and Jeff away from the fire fight. He and Kang follow them down a narrow side street. Turning a dark corner, they are surprised to see that Jeff and the others have disappeared.

WOO JUNG

They must have gone into one of these stores. I'll take one, you take the other.

They move cautiously into darkened village shops.

INT. GROCERY STORE

Jenny huddles in the corner of a dark room, listening to the gunfire in the streets. A door to the rear alley suddenly opens with a creaking sound, alerting Jenny to an intruder. She ducks behind a counter as Kang creeps into the room with his gun drawn.

Jenny wedges herself between two cartons, and pushes one of them a few inches to make more room. The moving carton tips another box above her, and it hangs perilously, ready to fall.

Searching the dark store carefully, Kang moves within inches of Jenny and stops. Jenny holds her breath. Finally, Kang takes another step even closer to her, and she tries to move silently back even farther between the cartoons. That causes the tilting box on top to tip over the edge and fall to the floor.

Whirling toward the sound, Kang sees Jenny scramble away to another hiding place. He lunges for her, grabs an arm, then spins her around to face him. His smile is cruel as he sees who he has caught.

KANG

My little Tanka girl. Don't we have some unfinished business?

Jenny tries to break free, but Kang explodes in anger and hits her with the back of his hand. She falls hard to the floor, but comes up fighting. Kicking wildly, she lands a painful foot to his crotch, and his gun goes flying across the floor.

Bent in agony, Kang wheels away from her, knocking over boxes and tins. Jenny scrambles toward the door, but Kang is after her with a flashing knife. Jenny trips and falls to the floor, and Kang moves in for the kill.

Just as Kang is on her, ready to slash her throat, Jenny's desperately reaching hand touches metal. It's Kang's gun! Her hand closes around it just as the knife is coming down. A loud explosion as the gun goes off! Kang stiffens, then falls backward with shocked eyes. The eyes turn dead before he even hits the floor.

Sobbing hysterically with both terror and relief, Jenny hears footsteps approaching. Holding the gun, she aims it at the door as someone runs into the room.

JEFF

Jenny!

She is relieved to hear Jeff's voice. Rick and Yin Fang are right behind him. Jeff sweeps Jenny into his arms and comforts her sobs.

JEFF

It's all right. Everything's all right now.

Rick quickly checks Kang's body.

RICK

Right through the heart. This lady's no one to mess with.

Jeff shelters Jenny as Yin Fang leads them out the door.

INT. PASSAGEWAY

Yin Fang takes them to a narrow passage.

YIN FANG

This will take you out of the village. We have won a great victory tonight. You gave us the courage to fight. Thank you.

They nod and head up the passage.

EXT. WALL

They step outside the wall to apparent freedom -- when suddenly Woo Jung appears from behind them and grabs Jenny. He places the hard metal of his gun to her temple.

WOO JUNG

Drop your guns!

JEFF

Don't hurt her!

WOO JUNG

No, I won't hurt her. I'll just kill her!

Jeff's eyes meet Rick's. He makes a small move so that Rick can see the gun in his waistband behind his back.

WOO JUNG

Drop your guns now, or she dies!

Woo Jung cocks his pistol at Jenny's temple. Jeff and Rick both drop their guns. Suddenly, Woo Jung points the gun at Jeff and shoots. The bullet rips into Jeff's side, and he drops to the floor.

But as Jeff is falling, Rick grabs the gun from his waistband.

One shot is all it takes: right between the eyes. Woo Jung is dead on his feet, his body lurching for a life that isn't there - and then he falls, still and lifeless.

Suddenly, they're bathed in a bright light -- the helicopter spotlight from above. They freeze in their tracks as machine gun fire draws a circle around them, pinning them down.

The chopper descends. Each time one of them moves, the machine gun pens them in again. They watch the small helicopter set down, and Captain Hong climbs out. Hong looks Rick directly in the eye.

HONG

I told you to leave it alone, black devil. Now I have to kill you for resisting arrest!

The Captain raises his gun to Rick's face. The shot rings out, echoing among the stone walls! But Rick doesn't fall -- Hong does, pitching face forward to the ground.

Rick whirls around, searching for the source of the gun shot. Chang steps out of the shadows with a smoking gun and a smile.

RICK

What? How did...?

CHANG

I was there when Hong called for the helicopter. I followed the bastard.

Their eyes lock together: they're proud to know each other. Then Rick turns to Jeff and sees Jenny wrapping the wound in his side with his torn shirt.

With her help, Jeff rises to his feet.

JEFF

Moment of truth, Rick.

Rick nods and points the gun at Jeff.

RICK
Let's go, partner.

JEFF
No way, my friend. You'll have to
kill me.

RICK
You think I won't?

Jeff looks back at Rick now.

JEFF
At least I'll be executed by a man
I respect.

Rick still has the gun on him. Jeff tosses a small salute,
turns, and with Jenny's help, walks up the deserted street.

CAMERA TIGHTENS on Rick. He sucks in a breath. He doesn't want
to do it, but he has to.

He raises the gun again.

We look down the barrel of his gun as he aims directly at the
back of Jeff's head. He eyes his victim with deadly resolve.

And we go TIGHTER and TIGHTER on Rick's face. It hurts him. He
bites his lip. There is a film in his eyes, but he is
determined.

His finger squeezes the trigger.

The gunshot echoes through the night in a terrible explosion.
We're still on Rick's face. He clenches his jaw. It was tough.

He looks at Chang.

RICK
All right. So I missed.

We see that Jeff and Jenny are still walking away together. Rick
lowers the gun. Chang smiles at him.

RICK
What're you looking at? Haven't
you ever missed?

CHANG
Sure.

RICK
Damn right, you have. Everybody
misses once in a while.

Rick and Chang walk away from the courtyard together.

RICK

It happens. The man got away.
Nothing I can do about it, is
there? Hell, nobody's perfect.

They disappear into the fog as we:

FADE OUT

THE END