

THE LAST EMPEROR

A Film by Bernardo Bertolucci

Screenplay

by

Mark Peploe
Bernardo Bertolucci

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1. A SILENT DESERT. A CLOUDLESS SKY.

Nothing moves except a few grains of sand shifted by the faintest breeze...Then a gust of wind raises a thin column of dust into the air and swirls it away towards the horizon.

The whirlwind, growing stronger every second, carries us across the desert:

2. ...PAST AN ANCIENT TEMPLE

- overgrown with weeds, devoured by time - and out through a lonely gateway.

3. A CARAVAN OF DROMEDARIES

- laden with heavy sacks of coal -- emerges through the blizzard, heading for:

4. THE GREAT WALL OF CHINA...

The world's largest monument, snaking over mountains and valleys, is in a state of collapse. The sun is setting. The wind HOWLS across the crumbling ramparts.

TITLE: "THE LAST EMPEROR"

The wall disappears in the blinding sandstorm...

5. A STEAM ENGINE. WINTER

bursts into view -- vast, black, belching smoke. The furnace is white hot, fed with coal by two ENGINE DRIVERS. Their faces are wrapped in cloth, their eyes protected by goggles.

6. All the train windows are blanked out by sheets of old newspaper glued to the glass. Russian writing. Copies of Pravda.

7. IN THE TRAIN. LATE AT NIGHT. MID-WINTER

Two blond RUSSIAN SOLDIERS sit with rifles and bayonets at either end of a dimly lit carriage, packed with CHINESE PRISONERS OF WAR.

TITLE:
 Manchuria. 1950
 The Russian-Chinese Frontier

9. Three other CHINESE SOLDIERS, with rifles and bayonets, enter the carriage. One of them sits down on the bench across from Pu Yi.

The train lurches forward, picks up speed. The grim silence continues.

10. FUSHUN STATION. MANCHURIA. WINTER. DAWN

The train stops again, HISSING STEAM. The Chinese P.O.W's, about 500 of them, climb down with their luggage. They are returning to their own country, but none are smiling, all look frightened.

A menacing line of CHINESE SOLDIERS with gleaming bayonets and red stars on their caps keep them under guard.

AN OFFICIAL in a blue Mao-style tunic watches Pu Yi as an old loudspeaker CRACKLES noisily to life.

HARSH VOICE (OFF)
 The war criminals will proceed
 in orderly fashion to the main
 waiting room and await instructions.
 No talking! Obey the guards!

11. THE ENORMOUS WAITING ROOM

-- built in the showcase style of 1930's fascism -- is already full with prisoners when Pu Yi, carrying a small black leather suitcase, accompanied by his brother and former valet, enters the hall. The little group finds a space to stand at the back near the station office, facing a huge Propaganda mural -- the triumph of the Red Army.

Pu Yi tries to remain unnoticed, but several of the prisoners begin staring at him, whispering, wondering who he is...until an old P.O.W. suddenly falls to his knees, and kowtows in his direction. Another MAN follows -- then a third. All with their heads to the ground.

The Official in the blue tunic observes the strange scene from the door. Pu Chieh and Big Li are dragging the Men to their feet, pulling them up by the hair.

PU CHIEH AND BIG LI
Get up! Get up! It's dangerous!

Pu Yi notices that the office door is ajar and slips inside.

12. IN THE BARE STATION OFFICE

Pu Yi locks the door. He is sweating. A Red Army calendar - some red and green signal flags on a small table - one chair - a wall-clock - a few pikes and brooms - a coal stove.

Pu Yi shoves the table into the middle of the room and takes off his overcoat. He pulls off his white silk scarf, ties it into a noose. Then steps onto a chair and onto the table.

Beyond a FLAPPING windowpane he can see the empty station square...The wind is stronger again, the dust rising... Someone KNOCKS loudly on the door. Pu Yi ties the scarf to the lamp hook overhead.

VOICE (OFF)
(shouting)
Open the door! Open the door!

The BANGING gets louder and louder...

DISSOLVE TO:

13. PU YI AGED THREE...

He is fast asleep but fully dressed, his face nestled against the bare breast of a sixteen year old PEASANT GIRL, his wet nurse AR MO (also dressed). His hair is tied in a short queue. The sound of BANGING in the distance wakes him up.

TITLE:
Peking 1908

14. IN THE FRONT HALL OF A GRAND CHINESE MANSION. WINTER. NIGHT

The BANGING continues until an old PORTER hurries along and draws the bolts.

15. *A CAPTAIN of the Imperial Guards wearing a black bamboo helmet, steps inside followed by EIGHT BEARERS carrying an empty green palanquin. The Captain raises his fist, clenching a yellow silk scroll. (Like the Porter, and every man at the time, his hair is tied in a long black queue). The Porter and two other SERVANTS fall to their knees.

CAPTAIN

By the Command of Her Imperial Majesty also called the Compassionate and Blessed, the Upright and Protected, the Bright and Pleased, the Solemn and Honest, the Respectful and Long Living! The Empress Dowager commands: Pu Yi, son of Prince Chun, will be transferred immediately to be educated and to study in the Imperial School! Respect this!

16. IN A BEDROOM IN THE MANSION

The beautiful LADY AISIN-GIORO, wearing a long silk gown and the traditional high platform shoes of the Manchus, hurries in followed by a LADY IN WAITING carrying a dark blue overcoat.

Pu Yi lies on the bed with Ar Mo, while another BABY (PU CHIEH), sleeps in a cot wrapped in swaddling clothes.

Lady Aisin-Gioro, her face streaming with tears, shakes Ar Mo awake, hands her the coat and - whispering urgently - starts to dress her son in a thick jacket.

LADY AISIN-GIORO

They've come!...You have to go with him!...You must look after my son!...Always!...Do you understand?

The boy's father, PRINCE CHUN, a stocky middle-aged man pulling on an embroidered overcoat with a fur collar, appears at the door, looking flustered.

PRINCE CHUN

Hurry! Hurry!

17. IN THE FRONT HALL

A group of SERVANTS watch Lady Aisin-Gioro carrying her little son.

CAPTAIN

Quickly! Quickly!

Pu Yi, frightened, cries out as his mother hands him over to Ar Mo, already in the green palanquin.

LADY AISIN-GIORO
I am giving you my son!...My
son is your son!

The Captain jerks the curtains shut. The eight
Bearers hoist the palanquin onto their shoulders.

18. OUTSIDE THE MANSION

The green palanquin is carried out into the windy night
where Prince Chun is mounting a horse. Protecting them
is an escort of Imperial Cavalry, lit by a lantern
swaying from the end of a pole. The hooves of their
horses are wrapped in bags of straw.

19. THE GREY TILED ROOFS OF PEKING...

Twilight glimmers in the night sky as the lantern-lit
20. procession moves down a narrow empty street -- and past
an execution ground. Five decapitated heads are
hanging by their queues from the top of some high poles.

21. INSIDE THE MOVING GREEN PALANQUIN

To calm Pu Yi, who cries louder and louder, Ar Mo gives
him her breast to suck, then continues staring wide-eyed.
through a parting in the curtains.

Looming up in the distance, are the walls and battlements
of the Forbidden City -- the heart of Imperial China --
dark red, massively thick, eighty feet high.

22. THE GATE OF MARTIAL VALOUR

-- the main North entrance to the Forbidden City -- is
a castle-like tower with three huge bronze-studded doors:
one for dignitaries, one for servants, and the middle one,
double the size, for the Emperor alone. It is never open.

TWELVE EUNUCHS, giants in dark yellow tunics, emerge from
the shadows. Silently, they take over from the other
Bearers while Prince Chun transfers to an open sedan chair.

23. INSIDE THE FORBIDDEN CITY. JUST BEFORE DAWN.

Blood-red walls, yellow tiled roofs, flickering oil lamps.
The vast maze of pavilions and courtyards, the biggest
palace on earth, is deep in silence, apparently deserted.

Huge bronze lions at the doors and long carved dragons on the roofs look down on the twilight visitors. The procession, led by Prince Chun in his sedan chair, hurries across a vast white marble courtyard...

24. AT THE PALACE OF TRANQUIL REST

Prince Chun lifts his son out of the palanquin, while saffron-robed MONKS in the background, some wearing masks, whirl round with clubs and rattles to frighten away the evil spirits.

25. INSIDE THE PALACE OF TRANQUIL REST

Prince Chun appears at the threshold and kowtows three times with his head to the floor, presenting his son.

The room is a great dark chamber with laquered walls and fantastic jewelled sculptures and clocks. Nearby is a life-size ornamental tree with TINKLING copper leaves hung with bird-cages.

On an enormous bed at the end of the room, propped against the cushions with her favourite Pekingese dog beside her, is the eighty-year-old EMPRESS DOWAGER TZU HSI -- effective dictator of China for more than fifty years. She is wheezing and coughing, near to death.

A whispering group of DOCTORS, DIVINERS and ASTROLOGERS hover round, burning incense and tortoise shells.

Another group, observing events from a slight distance, include the CHIEF EUNUCH, the LORD CHAMBERLAIN, and the four HIGH CONSORTS (wives and concubines of previous Emperors) - the most important being LUNG YU.

The Empress Dowager stares silently at the little boy standing near the door...then beckons him over.

Pu Yi toddles up to her. He seems strangely unafraid -- in fact, entertained by the sight of this old Chinese witch, with her long strings of black pearls and the six inch jade and gold nail covers on her fingers.

EMPRESS DOWAGER

(in a wheezing voice)

Pu Yi...how small you are...Do
you know who I am?

Pu Yi doesn't answer.

EMPRESS DOWAGER

I am the Grand Empress Dowager...
and I have lived here for...a
long long time.

She peers off into the dark, then back at Pu Yi.

EMPRESS DOWAGER

Aren't you afraid of me?
(she smiles)
Everyone else is. They call
me the Old Buddha.

She tickles him with one of her long jade-covered
finger-nails. Pu Yi smiles.

EMPRESS DOWAGER

(rambling)

Men, you know, aren't allowed in
the Forbidden City after dark...
Even little men like you...The
only man who can live here is the
Emperor...

(pleased)

But he's ascended to be a guest
on high, riding the dragon.

(she whispers in his ear)

He died today...

She laughs, coughs, then leans back on her cushions as
a group of Eunuchs come up from behind and start to
trundle the huge bed forward into the middle of the chamber.
Pu Yi, standing on a platform attached to the bed, moves
with her.

EMPRESS DOWAGER

These other people -- they're
not real men. They're all Eunuchs
...and now they're all waiting for
me to die -- that's why they're
putting my bed in the middle of
the room...Under the black pearl...

She stares up at a replica of a huge black pearl suspended
from the ceiling, then rambles on. Pu Yi yawns and rubs
his eyes.

EMPRESS DOWAGER

Do you like my dog?...She loves
me...Little Pu Yi...Do you know
what I've decided?...You will be
the Lord of Ten Thousand Years...
You will be the Son of Heaven...

She leans forward to whisper in his ear. Pu Yi can't hear properly, but when he looks at her again, her eyes and mouth are wide open -- frozen in death.

One of the Doctors places a large black pearl in her mouth, while other ATTENDANTS begin to cover everything with white drapes, anything red, even the columns.

26. IN THE HALL OF SUPREME HARMONY. WINTER MORNING

Pu Yi, a tiny figure dressed in a robe of brilliant Imperial Yellow, embroidered with a five-clawed dragon, sits at the top of a dais on the great Dragon Throne -- so much too big for him that his little legs dangle in the air.

Aged 3, Pu Yi is receiving the Mandate of Heaven -- becoming Emperor of China.

There are twenty BANNERMEN (Manchurian noblemen in the Imperial Guards) ranged behind him in leopard skin cloaks, five ACOLYTES on either side burning incense, a MASTER OF CEREMONIES, and two HIGH LAMAS seated in front at two small tables, one with the Sacred Scrolls, the other with the jade seals of the Dynasty. His father Prince Chun kneels on the step beside him.

Otherwise, the huge cavernous hall...a forest of red and gold columns, thirty feet high -- is completely empty. The mortal world -- the hushed sound of a great crowd, standing or kneeling -- is all outside, hidden from view by a huge yellow blind which covers the main entrance.

Pu Yi looks unhappy and stands up.

PU YI
Pee-pee...Pee-pee...

PRINCE CHUN
(flustered)
Ssssh...It will all soon be over.

But Pu Yi can't wait any longer...His urine trickles out from his silk tunic making a small wet patch on the carpet.

The Master of Ceremonies mounts the dais, kneels down and presents him with the jade and silver seals.

Pu Yi stops crying, distracted by the lovely carvings. He claps them together, presses them into the yellow cushion on his throne, then looks up.

The ceremony is over. An Acolyte is ringing a bell. And suddenly through the cloud of incense Pu Yi sees the great yellow blind covering the entrance begin to rise.

PU YI

Look!

He runs down the steps, and darts under the blind.

27. ON THE TERRACE OUTSIDE

-- stand a corps of sixty saffron-robed LAMAS plus the ruling elite of the Ching (Manchu) Dynasty -- about 300 people in full ceremonial uniform, hushed and silent who have just risen to their feet.

Below the terrace in the vast surrounding courtyard of white marble, thousands of other COURTIERS and NOTABLES are ranged in long lines with rows of Imperial Guards on either side.

At the surprise appearance of the Emperor, two Lamas CRACK their heavy ceremonial whips on the ground, and are copied by the Guards in the distance. CRACK! CRACK!

The entire congregation on the terrace and in the courtyard below immediately fall to their knees and kowtow to the new Emperor.

Pu Yi stares round at the sea of backs. -- thousands of men with long black queues touching the ground with their foreheads...He seems pleasantly amused by the sight of so many grown-ups lying flat, lower than himself. It must all be a game.

By now a Bannerman has run out to cover him with a yellow parasol, quickly followed by Prince Chun, the Master of Ceremonies, and a flustered little group, no one quite knowing what to do.

PU YI

Cricket!

He darts off again through the sea of bodies, first in one direction, then another, tracking a mysterious sound -- a faint kind of CHIRPING. Suddenly, he stops in front of a scholarly-looking MAN in his mid-forties -- the scholar CHEN PAO SHEN.

PU YI
 (pointing at him)
 Cricket! Cricket! Where is
 cricket?

Chen looks up at the boy Emperor...and produces a strange box from under his arm, a small carved gourd.

CHEN
 He's my friend, Your Majesty.
 He kept me company on my journey
 here.
 (he unscrews the lid)
 He can be the Emperor's cricket
 now...

Pu Yi stares in wonder at a bright green cricket inside the gourd...

DISSOLVE BACK TO:

28. STATION OFFICE. MANCHURIA. 1950

The locked door is RATTLING loudly, the handle turning back and forth.

VOICE (OFF)
 (shouting)
 Open the door!

A boot kicks in the lock. The door flies open. Pu Yi's feet standing on the table, kick the table away -- and swing in the air...

The Official in the Mao-tunic and a Red Army SOLDIER stare from the doorway. The Official grabs hold of the Soldier's bayonet and jerks it out of the sheath.

OFFICIAL
 (barks)
 Keep them out!

He rushes forward. The Soldier jerks the door shut.

The BAYONET slashes at the white silk scarf. The sound of the body falling to the floor.

29. IN THE PACKED WAITING ROOM BEYOND

Most of the Prisoners, who have been issued with bowls of soup, haven't noticed the incident, but nearby Pu Chieh and Big Li are staring at the Soldier guarding the door.

BIG LI
(trembling, holding a bowl)
His soup is getting cold...

30. IN THE STATION OFFICE

Pu Yi lies on the ground, while the Official SLAPS him across the face again and again. Pu Yi comes back to consciousness, choking and coughing.

PU YI
Where...am I?

OFFICIAL
In the People's Republic of
China.

Pu Yi blinks up at him - a hard, intelligent face, about 50 -- then sees the end of the white silk scarf still tied to the lamp hook, cut by the bayonet.

PU YI
Why...did you stop me?

OFFICIAL
You are a criminal. You must
be judged.

He gets up on the table and unties the scarf.

PU YI
(quietly)
The Lord of Ten Thousand Years.

The Official looks at him with a certain contempt, and gets down again.

OFFICIAL
Your scarf is dirty.

He tosses it into Pu Yi's lap.

PU YI
You will kill me anyway...

OFFICIAL
Whatever we do with you, you
will be judged first.

Pu Yi notices his glasses lying on the floor. He picks them up and looks at the broken gold hinge.

DISSOLVE BACK TO:

31. THE FORBIDDEN CITY. THE EMPEROR'S BEDROOM. WINTER MORNING

Pu Yi, aged 3½, barely awake, sits on a yellow chamberpot clutching his cricket cage, looking at a child's model of the Forbidden City -- a labyrinth of wooden blocks with yellow roofs.

Nearby, the Emperor's bed is set in an alcove, framed by a carved ebony screen with embroidered lace curtains.

Four or five EUNUCHS of the Imperial Presence -- an elite amongst the 3,000 other servants -- glide silently in and out through a moon-shaped door.

They set a small silver bath tub in the middle of the floor, fill it jug by jug, adjusting the temperature, and lay out the Emperor's clothes for the day.

The Eunuchs, barefoot, in orange uniforms, are supervised by their Chief, CHANG, a tall, plump but handsome man about 30, and his principal assistants, BIG FOOT, almost a giant, about 25, and HUNCHBACK, a little man about 50.

Chang shows him one of the wooden blocks.

CHANG

Look! This little one is Your Majesty's bedroom! This is where we are.

He sets the block in its place on the model city...

PU YI

Are we going home today?

AR MO

Not today...Not yet...

CHANG

(quickly)

And here - look - this is the Hall of Supreme Harmony -- where you were crowned!

Pu Yi gets off his potty onto all fours, and silently presents his baby's bottom for Ar Mo to wipe clean with a small cloth.

32. IN THE ~~COURTYARD OUTSIDE~~ SALOTO VITTORIANO (APP. IMPERIAL)

Hunchback hurries across to another pavilion bearing the Imperial potty under a silk cover.

~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~

An old DOCTOR peers under the cover, sniffs the contents.

DOCTOR

Hmmm. More vegetables today...
And no meat...

33. BACK IN THE EMPEROR'S BEDROOM

Pu Yi is standing in the bath laughing and kicking water at the Eunuchs, when he notices Ar Mo watching him from the bed. Abruptly, his expression changes...

PU YI

I want to go home! I want
to go home!

He jumps out of the bath and throws himself, sobbing, into Ar Mo's arms.

Chang hurries over with a robe. He draws the curtains shut on the bed, and shoos the anxious Eunuchs out of the room, leaving the Emperor and his nurse alone.

Ar Mo, ever patient, cradles Pu Yi on her lap, opens her robe and gives him her breast to suck. She starts to sing...

As Pu Yi calms down and his eyes slowly close, Ar Mo gazes at the elaborate picture embroidered on the curtains...and begins a story.

AR MO

Once upon a time, there was a
great tree and a great wind...
The tree and the wind were
always fighting...

The outline of a lace tree on the curtain...

URNS INTO:

34. AN ENORMOUS OLD BAOBAB TREE

- solitary freak of nature -- with a massive trunk rooted into the ground outside a couple of mud-walled houses.

AR MO (VO)

But one day when the wind came
back it was angrier and stronger
than ever before and they fought
a terrible battle.

Green leaves, torn from the branches by the hurricane wind, are blown:

THROUGH THE PASSAGE

- between the mud-walled houses. A crack in one of the walls grows longer...The ground CREAKS -- then SPLITS APART as the roots of the tree RIP the earth.

THE ENORMOUS TREE

- CRASHES onto one of the houses.

AR MO(VO)

When the tree fell, everything changed. Only one little girl and her poor father were left alive. The whole district was destroyed. The land was covered with dust.

35. IN A VAST CHINESE LANDSCAPE

A strong wind fills a small sail, stitched out of rags, hoisted on a large wheelbarrow.

AR MO(VO)

One day her father found a carriage with a big wheel... and he put a sail on top of it.

On the wheelbarrow, the little girl, huddling behind a bundle, looks up at her FATHER pushing the wheelbarrow. He puffs at the sail -- pretending to be making the wind himself.

36. IN ANOTHER BEAUTIFUL LANDSCAPE

A small caravan of Peking carts (two wheeled mule-drawn carriages) has stopped for a picnic lunch -- a rich family on the move.

A small group of half-starving PEASANTS squat nearby, in the dark shadows of a mud wall. They sit there in complete silence, impassive and fatalistic. Amongst them is the little girl and her father - so thin by now he is barely recognisable.

As the rich family climb back into the carts, a SERVANT is dispatched with the remains of their picnic. He lays the food on the ground near the wall, and hurries back.

AR MO(VO)

Another time, when they were very hungry, and her father had no more food to give her, he tried to leave the girl behind...

The starving peasants rush forward grabbing and fighting for the food like wild animals.

But the girl's father runs after the caravan, which is already moving off. Unseen by the DRIVER, he dumps the little girl into the back of the last cart...

AR MO(VO)

But someone gave her back...

From the moving cart, the Little Girl sees her father being left behind -- and starts to HOWL.

The Driver looks round and sees her -- then sees her father, who quickly turns his back, pretending ignorance.

Shouting angrily, he stops the cart, grabs the girl and hurries back. Catching up with her father, he pops the baby into the empty sack of rags on his back.

The little girl can't see her father's face, but when he turns, bowing and nodding, we see that his eyes are full of tears.

The Driver realizes from the sincerity of the man's expression that he had left the girl out of love -- for her sake, not his own. Gruffly, he shoves a coin into his hand and hurries back to the caravan.

37. A BUSY STREET IN OLD PEKING.

AR MO(VO)

Years later, I grew up and had my own child, the same thing happened. My husband had died and my father was very old...

Ar Mo (the little girl) is telling the story of her life. She is 16 years old now, the mother of a small baby.

which she carries in her arms...Followed by her ageing father (half bald now, dressed in rags) she turns a corner -- and walks towards the same large mansion we saw on the night Pu Yi was taken to the Forbidden City. The same old Porter at the door.

38. IN THE FRONT HALL OF PRINCE CHUN'S MANSION

Ar Mo is lined up with ten other YOUNG MOTHERS, all giving suck to their babies, while a MIDWIFE and an old DOCTOR inspect their teeth, nails and the quality of their milk.

Lady Aisin-Gioro watches from a distance. The Doctor points at Ar Mo...Tenderly, she hands her baby to her father, tears in her eyes.

AR MO

I'll send the money every month.

The Porter shoves some money into the old man's hand.

The old man, left with the baby, gazes dumbly down at the coins, then at Ar Mo, escorted by two Servants, disappearing across the courtyard...

AR MO (VO)

The only way I could save my child was by giving her away and selling my milk...

DISSOLVE BACK TO:

39. THE EMPEROR'S BEDROOM. IN THE FORBIDDEN CITY

Pu Yi has fallen asleep in Ar Mo's arms. She strokes his face.

AR MO

(quietly)

And that's how you became my child.

DISSOLVE TO:

40. A CONVOY OF ARMY TRUCKS

drives through a flat dusty countryside, brown with winter, almost like in Ar Mo's story:

MANCHURIA 1950

An old PEASANT, tilling the fields, picks up a stone and hurls it at one of the trucks.

41. IN THE DARK TRUCK

-- no way to see out -- a tall MAN with grey eyes stands squashed up beside Pu Yi (44, no glasses) in the crowd of Prisoners.

42. THE CONVOY

- drives into an enormous isolated building overlooking a frozen river -- the prison of Fushun. Heavy steel gates close behind the last lorry.

43. IN THE MAIN PRISON BUILDING

The Prisoners, already changed into drab black quilted uniforms, stand in line with large numbers sewn on their jackets. Pu Yi is 981.

While a tough-sounding WARDER barks instructions through a tin megaphone, the same Official who slapped Pu Yi back to life in the station appears again, walking down the line.

TOUGH WARDER
(through megaphone)
Prisoners going to their cells
will walk with their heads bowed!
Keep your eyes on the ground! No
looking forward or to the side!
The Guard will give you directions
and tell you when to turn!

The Official goes past Pu Yi without the slightest sign of recognition. Just a snap of the fingers -- a signal to a SECOND WARDER to pull off Pu Yi's leather gloves -- the thing he kept to the last.

SECOND WARDER
Move!

Pu Yi and a group of Prisoners are marched away. Going through the door, a GUARD returns one piece of luggage to each man. To Pu Yi, his small black suitcase...981 chalked on the side.

44. IN ONE OF THE CELLS

Prisoner 981 (Pu Yi) sits alone on the communal shelf-bed, his suitcase beside him, staring at the toilet -- a pair of tar-lined buckets in a small cubicle in the corner.

Warders and groups of prisoners keep passing in front of the door which is still open. Feet, faces, uniforms.

Suddenly, one of them, acting on orders, pauses in front of the entrance, eyes lowered.

PU YI

Pu Chieh!

His brother glances up at him, smiles...Brusquely, a Warder points him into the cell...

Pu Chieh comes in, and sits quietly down opposite Pu Yi. Both men are clearly relieved to find themselves together, but still scared, too nervous to talk...

Pu Yi looks at his brother's face...

DISSOLVE TO:

45. THE COURTYARD OF THE EMPEROR'S QUARTERS. THE FORBIDDEN CITY. SUMMER, 1912

Prince Chun appears outside the main gate riding a white horse, with a LITTLE BOY on the front of his saddle. A dark green palanquin stops behind them.

Pu Yi, now 7½, waits on the threshold of his apartments, nervously clutching Ar Mo by the hand. Chen -- the man who gave him the cricket cage -- now his Chief Tutor, stands beside him. Pu Yi watches his father set the little boy on the ground, and then ride away. Silence.

PU YI

(whispers)

He's smaller than me!

AR MO

(whispers)

He's younger, Your Majesty...

The newcomer is six years old and a foot smaller. Bravely, he advances into the courtyard, followed by a Lady in Waiting, and stops in front of the pavilion steps.

CHEN
 (formal introduction)
 The Emperor's brother - His
 Excellency Pu Chieh.

The little visitor, obviously well rehearsed, kneels down and kowtows to the seven year old Emperor...

The sound of a faint cough. A delicate woman's hand appears between the curtains of the green palanquin in the avenue outside the gate.

Lady Aisin-Gioro, holding a beautiful painted fan, watches the meeting of her two sons with intense curiosity.

Pu Yi, refusing to let go of Ar Mo's hand, comes down the palace steps -- past his brother (left lying on the ground) -- and up to the green palanquin - where he makes a solemn bow.

His mother parts the curtains. A severe-looking beauty with a strange melancholy in her eyes. Ar Mo bows to her. Pu Yi looks down.

PU YI
 How is the health of His
 Majesty's mother?

MOTHER
 It is better, thank you...

Pu Yi keeps his eyes lowered, very shy in spite of his excitement.

MOTHER
 How much His Majesty has grown...
 I have heard he even has two new
 teeth...

AR MO
 Three new teeth...

Pu Yi bares his teeth.

PU YI
 This one is wobbly! Do you
 want to touch it?

His mother smiles and touches his tiny tooth.

MOTHER
 Hmmm...very wobbly!
 (she sits back, watching him)
 A new tooth deserves a special
 present.

She reaches down and hands him a large yellow kite.

MOTHER

When you have all your teeth
you can use them to bite. To
bite hard.

Pu Yi smiles and pretends to bite. Then, glancing round, he sees that his little brother has followed him into the avenue and is now staring at a line of Eunuchs standing at attention guarding a long row of portable chests, jugs of water, and a silver tea service.

PU YI

(proudly)

That's the Imperial Tea Bureau!
My cakes are in that big box!
And he carries my medicines!
And that one's for my chamberpot!

He laughs and starts to run -- trailing the kite behind him.

46. THE YELLOW KITE

hovers above the peaked roofs of the Forbidden City -- a sea of yellow and green tiles.

47. A LONG RED AVENUE. EARLY AFTERNOON

Pu Yi, hanging onto his new kite, is carried in a yellow sedan. His little brother walks beside him, holding on with one hand.

Two Eunuchs at the front of the procession shout like car horns, warning everyone in the vicinity to leave the area; two other Eunuchs walk sideways like crabs beside the Emperor's chair. Others, supervised by Chang and Big Foot, carry chairs, silk parasols, changes of clothing, and the Imperial Tea Service.

Pu Chieh notices that everyone they pass either freezes and faces the wall, or hurries to get out of sight.

PU CHIEH

Look! Everybody's hiding!

PU YI

Ordinary people aren't allowed
to look at the Emperor. I'm
too important.

PU CHIEH

Is it true that you can do
whatever you want?

PU YI

Of course! I'm the Son of
Heaven! I am ten thousand
years!

THEY TURN A CORNER...

PU YI

Have you met other children
before?

PU CHIEH

I've got three sisters and two
friends. If you come to our
house, you can meet them.

PU YI

The Emperor never leaves the
palace...

PU CHIEH

We play games together.

PU YI

We know a game too!

He halts the procession. The sedans are put down. Pu
Yi hands his kite to Chang and starts walking.

The stately procession follows behind until -- quite
suddenly - Pu Yi grabs Pu Chieh by the hand -- and breaks
into a run, forcing the entire company, thirty or forty
people, to race after them, huffing and puffing, stopping
and starting, until the entire procession is reduced to
shambles.

48. A SMALL LAKE IN THE IMPERIAL GARDENS

Water lilies, willow trees and little marble bridges,
like in a Chinese painting.

The Imperial party is having tea in the shade of one
of the open air pavilions; two brothers surrounded by
yellow porcelain...

The seven year old Emperor watches Pu Chieh gobbling a
cake, drinking from a cup...A strange expression comes
over his face, a kind of loneliness.

Suddenly, he leaves his place, takes Ar Mo by the hand, and draws her aside. Ignoring the faintly disapproving gaze of Chang, he waits for her to (reluctantly) unbutton her shirt, then sucks hungrily from her breast.

DISSOLVE BACK TO:

49. THE PRISON CELL. MANCHURIA. WINTER 1950

Only minutes have passed. The door is still open. Pu Yi and Pu Chieh are sitting opposite each other in tense silence, when Big Li enters the cell followed by the Second Warder.

SECOND WARDER

We are still short of books.
Prisoners will have to pass
this around or read it aloud!

He shoves a thick battered book into Pu Yi's hands, and goes to the door.

SECOND WARDER

The sooner you begin to learn,
the better.

Everyone stares as he goes out. But this time the door slams, the lock turns, the bolt closes...silence.

Pu Yi glances down at the book, and gives a dry, ironic laugh.

PU YI

"The History of the New
Popular Democracy..."

He searches through some pages, then reads aloud:

PU YI

"In February 1912, two thousand
years of Imperial rule came to
an end with the abdication of the
Manchu Dynasty. The Emperor was
six years old..."

Pu Yi stops reading and stares into space.

PU YI

It was the year of the Rat.

Aggressively, he shoves the book into Big Li's hands.

PU YI

Would you like to learn some
ancient history?

He stands up and stares at the bars on the window.

PU YI

Do they want us to think this
is a school? This is a prison.

Big Li puts the book down. Outside they can hear
doors opening and closing, other prisoners being locked
up, the shouted instructions of the Warders.

Silently, Pu Yi hands his glasses to Big Li, who automatically
begins to repair the broken hinge. Then he looks at the
door. The Second Warder is staring at them through a small
window.

SECOND WARDER

(furious)

I told you to start reading!
You, there! Read aloud! Read!

Frightened, Big Li picks up the book again and begins
to read aloud. The Warder watches as the two brothers
are forced to listen:

BIG LI

"According to...according to the
Treaty between the Empire and the
new Republic, the Emperor's title
was retained and not abolished.
He...he would retain his palaces
and be paid an annual subsidy of
four million dollars. The Republic
also guaranteed to protect the
Imperial tombs in perpetuity. In
return...the Dynasty surrendered
forever its right to rule the
country.

The window closes again. Pu Yi and Pu Chieh stare
at each other.

DISSOLVE TO:

50. THE IMPERIAL CLASSROOM IN THE FORBIDDEN CITY. SUMMER MORNING

The windows are covered with frost. A huge old clock covers
almost an entire wall. At the door one pair of feet
replaces another -- the Eunuchs' silent half-hourly change
of guard.

The Emperor (7) and Pu Chieh (almost 6) sit at a long table with inkstones and brushes, practising their calligraphy.

Chen stands in front of a long scroll pointing at the ideograms they are supposed to copy. Another old TUTOR sits quietly by the stove.

CHEN

"Man -- in the beginning --
his nature -- originally good.
Experience of life -- draws him
away. Without teaching -- his
nature will change..."

The two boys dip their brushes in the ink and start to write. Chen leaves the room. The old Tutor falls asleep.

Suddenly, Pu Yi glimpses the yellow silk lining in the sleeve of Pu Chieh's tunic.

PU YI

(loud whisper)

Why are you wearing that?
You aren't allowed to wear
yellow!

PU CHIEH

But...it's ordinary yellow -
not Imperial yellow.

PU YI

It's Imperial yellow!

PU CHIEH

No it's not!

Pu Yi grabs Pu Chieh's sleeve - spilling the ink stone.
The Tutor continues to sleep.

PU YI

(furious whisper)

We say it is! Only the Son of
Heaven can wear that yellow!
Take it off.

PU CHIEH

No!

PU YI

(twisting the sleeve)

Take it off!

PU CHIEH

No! And you're not the Emperor
any more! There's a new Emperor
now! He's cut off his queue!
And he's got a car!

Pu Yi trembles with rage, takes a wild swing and knocks
his little brother clean off his chair.

The Eunuch at the door runs off, just as the old Tutor
wakes with a start, and finds his pupils punching and
kicking in a pool of ink on the floor.

TUTOR

What are you doing? Stop it!
Where's the guard? Guard!

Pu Chieh digs his teeth into the Emperor's queue,
fraying the ribbon. Big Foot races in with the young
Eunuch.

He grabs the two boys by the collar, drags them apart,
and holds them at arm's length, his head bowed, as if
asking forgiveness for his own action.

PU YI

Am I the Emperor or not?

TUTOR

(flustered)

Your Majesty will always be
the Emperor...

PU YI

You see?

PU CHIEH

Prove it!

Pu Yi looks at Big Foot, then points at the ink stone,
filled with ink.

PU YI

Drink it! Go on! Drink it!

Big Foot shuts his eyes and drinks. Black ink dribbles
from the corners of his mouth. Pu Chieh is impressed --
but won't give in.

PU CHIEH

(fierce whisper)

I'll show you!

51. IN THE VAST COURTYARD OF SUPREME HARMONY

A long brick wall, half hidden by bamboo scaffolding, is being built across the middle, dividing the Forbidden City in half.

At a completed section with no workers around, Big Foot keeps watch as Pu Yi and Pu Chieh climb up a ladder onto a bamboo platform at the top.

In the other half of the courtyard a detail of REPUBLICAN SOLDIERS trots into view and lines up near a side gate.

Pu Yi and his brother stare, mesmerised, listening to the ROAR of approaching engines...

As the Guards present arms, two khaki motorcycles with sidecars swerve in through the gate, followed by a huge open chauffeur-driven car.

A MAN (without a queue) sits in the back in a marshall's uniform, hung with medals, and an impressive Napoleonic-style plumed hat.

This is the first motor vehicle Pu Yi has ever seen.
This is power.

PU CHIEH

(excited whisper)

See? That's a car! He's the
President of the Republic!

The President, a tall ox of a man, steps out of the chauffeur-driven car and, protected by a parasol-bearer, climbs up the marble steps towards the great hall where Pu Yi was crowned.

Pu Yi picks up a stone, hurls it impotently in his direction, and turns on his heel.

Gathered below him, on his side of the wall, he now sees a crowd of Courtiers and Eunuchs, staring anxiously up at him.

Pu Yi scrambles back down the ladder, helped from platform to platform by Eunuchs, who are all on the verge of tears.

When he reaches the bottom, Big Foot throws himself at his feet, crying, beating his head on the ground.

BIG FOOT

You are the Lord of Ten Thousand
Years! You are the Son of Heaven!

Pu Yi turns around. The crowd is even larger now. One of the High Consorts is getting out of her sedan. The Lord Chamberlain has only just arrived.

PU YI
Why is this wall here?

LORD CHAMBERLAIN
It is just a wall, Your Majesty
...Nothing has changed.

The seven year old Emperor stares at the old Courtier's face, trying to judge him.

PU YI
You are lying!

He swings round to face Chen Pao Shen, and the second old Tutor cowering behind him.

PU YI
Am I still the Emperor?

Chen hesitates. The Lord Chamberlain and his coterie wait nervously for the Chief Tutor's reply.

CHEN
You will always be the Emperor
-- inside the Forbidden City...
But not outside.

PU YI
(pained frown)
I don't understand...

He really doesn't.

CHEN
Outside, China is now a
Republic -- with a President.

Complete silence. Pu Yi looks round.

PU YI
Where is Ar Mo?

Nobody answers. They look embarrassed, they look down.

PU YI
(rising panic)
Where is Ar Mo?!

HIGH CONSORT
Your Majesty -- please --

PU YI
(yelling)
You are all liars!

He shoves Chen aside and breaks into a crazed desperate run...

Pu Chieh, still on the scaffolding, puts his fists into his eyes and starts to BAWL -- appalled at what he's done.

52. EXT. SERVANTS' COURTYARD. OUTSIDE AR MO'S ROOM

Ar Mo sits down in a waiting sedan chair, with her old blue overcoat over her lap. She doesn't look at Chang or the other Eunuchs standing silently round; and even less at the three High Consorts and their Ladies in Waiting watching from a diplomatic distance. Her back is straight when her heart is breaking.

AR MO
(very quietly)
Please -- let me say goodbye.

No one answers. A Eunuch hands her her bundle of belongings.

AR MO
He's my child...

Chang nods to the two bearers -- who quickly carry her away...

53. IN AR MO'S ROOM. MOMENTS LATER

Plain whitewashed walls, paper windows. Pu Yi reaches the door, panting, and stares round...Nothing left except a bed and a rolled-up mattress in the corner.

Nervous Eunuchs crowd the door, watching helplessly as Pu Yi throws himself on the bed...

PU YI
(sobbing)
I don't understand...I don't
understand!

Suddenly the room fills with women -- the High Consorts and Ladies in Waiting.

WOMEN'S VOICES

Your Majesty is a big boy now...
 He can't have a wet nurse any
 more...It's much better like
 this, much healthier...

Pu Yi keeps his back turned, refusing to look at them...
 After a moment:

PU YI

(controlling his voice)

If I am the Emperor, then kneel
 down...Kneel down!

The Eunuchs all kneel, the Ladies in Waiting bow, the
 High Consorts bunch up.

PU YI

And shut your eyes...Everyone!

Everyone shuts their eyes -- even the High Consorts.
 Pu Yi turns and sees them -- the whole crowd playing
 his game, acting blind.

He runs past the kneeling Eunuchs, shoves a Lady in
 Waiting aside and races out across the courtyard.

PU YI

(desperate)

Ar Mo!

54. IN THE LONG RED AVENUE

Ar Mo is being carried away in the sedan when Pu Yi
 appears, far behind her, running, shouting her name.
 She can just hear his voice, but can't bear to look
 back until the sedan has already turned a corner. Her
 eyes are full of tears.

Pu Yi keeps running.

55. AT THE MAIN GATE OF THE FORBIDDEN CITY

Pu Yi brakes to a halt. Ar Mo's sedan is parked near
 the open side door. But his nurse has already gone.

PU YI

Ar Mo...

His appearance is so unexpected, that the GUARD has no
 time to react before he races past him down the dark

vaulted passage.' But as he gets closer to the square outside he starts to slow down, then stops. Ar Mo has disappeared into the great world beyond the walls. The glaring light becomes a blur...Pu Yi stands there, motionless, blinking his eyes.

56. THE MAIN PRISON COURTYARD. WINTER 1950

From the watchtowers SOLDIERS with machine-guns aim down at the Prisoners assembled below.

Pu Yi stands in line with the others, dressed in his prison-issue white shirt and black trousers, his (repaired) gold-rimmed glasses and brown lace shoes. Heavy silence.

The Governor steps up onto a stool and begins to speak through a tin megaphone.

GOVERNOR

This is the detention center of the Fushun Bureau of Public Security and I am the Governor... Five years ago it was a Japanese prison...Many of you may remember it, because you worked with the Japanese, you were responsible for building it -- and you filled it with innocent people. How could this happen? What turned you into war criminals? We believe that men are born good. We believe that the only way to change is to discover the truth, and to look at it in the face. That is why you are here. You will begin by writing the story of your lives and by confessing your crimes. Your salvation will lie entirely in the attitude you take. I advise you to be frank and sincere. Otherwise things can still go very badly for you.

While he speaks, Warders issue the Prisoners with cheap exercise books and metal nibs for penholders...

57. IN THE PRISON CELL. AN HOUR LATER

Pu Yi sits at a table with the others, facing a bottle of ink.

PU YI

We must stick to the same
story...

He dips his pen in the ink. The others follow. They
begin to write...

58. EXT. PRISON COURTYARD

The Governor crosses the empty courtyard, past a huge
empty stage.

Schmaltzy music now plays from the loudspeakers on
the watchtowers.

59. IN THE GOVERNOR'S OFFICE.

The Governor closes the door, sits down at his desk,
and takes out a brown paper parcel, already open.
There is a book inside called "Twilight in the Forbidden
City" -- by Reginald F. Johnston...A photograph on the
cover shows Pu Yi, aged 14, sitting on the Dragon Throne...

The Governor glances at a couple of other photographs
inside, then starts reading...

DISSOLVE TO:

60. THE DUSTY STREETS OF PEKING. MAY 1919

A black limousine, HONKING loudly, crawls through a
teeming mass of PEDESTRIANS, carts, rickshaws -- and
bicycles (the one great novelty).

The chauffeur is TANG, 29. Another SERVANT, perched
on the running board, flays about with a long bamboo
cane, shouting furiously as he tries to clear a path
through the crowd.

JOHNSTON (VO)

After seven years the Republic
had fallen into the hands of
ambitious generals and corrupt
bureaucrats. The era of the
warlords had begun. By May 1919
China was in turmoil.

Banners and slogans begin to appear in the crowd.

IN THE LIMOUSINE

Chen Pao Shen sits in the back with REGINALD JOHNSTON ("RJ") -- a Scotsman, tall and fit, about 50, his fair hair touched with grey. He is wearing a coat and tails, with a top hat on his knees. Both men have fans.

CHEN

(gazing out of the window)
What do you think of bicycles?

R.J.

I love bicycles. I'm not so sure of cars. They seem rather slow...

CHEN

I wouldn't be in such a hurry if I was you, my friend. Though the Forbidden City has decided to employ a foreigner...they still feel threatened. Any change is a threat to them.

R.J.

Should I bring a gun?

CHEN

Bring patience.

The car comes to a complete stop, halted by the swelling crowd.

RJ stares at the faces which begin to peer in through the car windows. A grinning TWELVE YEAR-OLD slaps a poster against the glass.

R.J.

(points at the ideogram
on the poster)
"China awake..."

Another poster is slapped against the window beside Chen.

CHEN

(reads it)
"Parliament for sale"
(he turns to RJ)
Do you know they're now selling votes on the Stock Market? Nothing has really changed since the Abdication either inside or outside the Forbidden City. Except the bicycles...

RJ stares at the sea of people...

R.J.

China was in the Great War against Germany. And what do they get? The Treaty of Versailles rewards them by giving the German concessions to Japan!...It's shocking.

CHEN

But what can they do -- except shout?

R.J.

(pensive)

"A typhoon can begin at the top of an apple tree, Your Excellency, and an ant hole is large enough to cause a dam to fall..."

(quietly)

The shops are closing...

CHEN

(ironically)

The Astrologer won't be happy. It took him two months to decide on the propitious moment for your meeting. But it looks as if we'll be late.

R.J.

Shall we take a short cut?
Use our feet.

61. EXT. PRIMITIVE LEVEL CROSSING

Another large crowd, mostly STUDENTS, are lined up along the railway track as a great black steam engine CHUGS into view, dragging cattle wagons filled with YOUNG GIRLS, barely into puberty sold to the bordellos.

The Students stop the train and begin to shout: "China is not for sale!" "Chinese women are not for sale!"

They surround the wagons, demanding the release of the Girls.

POLICEMEN and a group of smooth-looking GANGSTERS are trying to get the train moving again -- or to make a deal.

They plead ruin and bankruptcy; they threaten reprisals. Unfortunately, for them, the few listless SOLDIERS on the train are not prepared to intervene.

The Students smash open one of the wagons and start releasing the Girls. But quite a few, simple ordinary children, seem reluctant to leave -- still frightened of the gangsters, or by the idea of freedom.

Further down, RJ (with his top hat under his arm) and Chen emerge from the crowd and duck under the coupling between two wagons.

62. SQUARE OUTSIDE THE FORBIDDEN CITY

RJ and Chen walk towards the towering red walls ahead, and the Gate of Martial Valour. A troop of Republican Cavalry gallop past the other way...

Chen and the Foreign Devil disappear into the high vaulted tunnel which passes through the 50 foot thick walls.

63. IN THE TUNNEL

CHEN

Remember, you are one of the first foreigners with an official post in the Forbidden City since Marco Polo...

R.J.

(putting on his top hat)
It makes me very nervous.

64. INSIDE THE FORBIDDEN CITY

Chen and RJ -- wearing the top hat -- are carried side by side in two sedan chairs, shaded by parasols.

Chen watches with dry amusement as RJ takes in the daily life of the city: Court Officials, Eunuchs, sedans, Ladies in Waiting, a scene almost unchanged for a thousand years...

Chen notices the Lord Chamberlain and a small group of assistants watching from a gateway, surrounded by a bevy of Pekingese dogs.

CHEN
 (from behind his fan)
 The enemy.

RJ, clutching his briefcase, makes a small half-bow, the best he can manage from a moving sedan chair. The Lord Chamberlain gives a deep bow in return -- which is immediately copied by the rest of his retinue.

R.J.
 Is there a dagger in my back?

CHEN
 Not yet.

Jokingly, RJ glances over his shoulder. The Bearer at the back of his chair has a scar on his face. The Lord Chamberlain is still watching them from a distance.

CHEN
 My friend, it isn't easy to
 forgive a Foreign Devil who
 knows Confucius better than
 they do -- and grows the
 finest peonies in Peking.

65. IN THE THRONE ROOM OF THE EMPEROR'S QUARTERS

Pu Yi is 14 years old, an adolescent in a dark blue tunic embroidered with a yellow dragon, waiting solemnly on a small gold throne. At the bottom of the dais, Big Foot holds the ceremonial fan - as nervous as his master.

EUNUCH'S VOICE(OFF)
 May the new tutor present himself!

In the tense silence, the approaching SQUEAK of RJ's leather shoes gets louder -- then stops outside the door.

Chang comes in first and bows, followed by the ASTROLOGER, the three old Tutors, then Chen.

CHEN
 The Honourable Visitor has
 arrived, Your Majesty.

He glances at the door, cueing RJ. The Foreign Devil steps inside, carrying his top hat, with Hunchback behind, bearing his briefcase.

CHEN
Your Imperial Highness --
the new tutor.

The tall Scotsman bows stiffly towards the throne.
Pu Yi bows in return, very grave.

PU YI
The Emperor is honoured to
welcome his tutor.

R.J.
Your tutor is honoured to have
been chosen, Your Majesty.

Chen signals RJ back to the door...

Everyone walks out again and -- a moment later -- troops
back in, lining up exactly as before.

CHEN
Your Imperial Highness --
Mr. Reginald Fleming Johnston.

Pu Yi comes down from the throne -- and holds out his hand.

PU YI
How do you do.

RJ is thrown for a moment, then takes the Emperor's hand.

R.J.
How do you do, Your Majesty.

Pu Yi looks at Chang with a triumphant smile, then keeps
pumping RJ's hand up and down, up and down...

Chen has to smile. Chang smiles. Everyone smiles.
The ceremony is over. The old Tutors congratulate the
Astrologer on his obvious success.

PU YI
Now we will go to school.

He walks out -- followed by the others.

66. IN THE CLASSROOM

RJ's cold blue eyes check round with intense interest --
the huge old clock, the ancient scrolls. Chang hangs
his top hat on the hatstand. Hunchback sets the brief-
case on the large table -- neatly laid out with ink stones
and brushes.

The two Eunuchs step backwards out of the door, leaving the teacher and his pupil alone. The Emperor gestures to the new tutor. They sit warily down on adjoining sides of the table, both of them trying to get each other's measure.

PU YI

Please begin the lesson.

RJ restrains a smile, takes out his gold fountain pen.

R.J.

Your Majesty...in my country
it would be usual to begin
with...eh...some kind of an
examination.

PU YI

(beams)

The Emperor cannot be examined!

R.J.

Well, that may have to change...
But first Your Majesty might
like to ask me some questions?

The Emperor hesitates, then:

PU YI

Where are your ancestors buried?

A beat...

R.J.

In Scotland, Your Majesty.

PU YI

But then...where is your skirt?

(RJ stares at him)

In your country men wear short
skirts, do they not?

R.J.

No, Your Majesty...

(he opens his briefcase)

Scotsmen do not wear "skirts".

They wear "kilts"...

PU YI

"Kilts"?

RJ takes papers and magazines out of his briefcase.
"The London Illustrated News", and "The Saturday Evening
Post".

R.J.

Kilts. A matter of words,
perhaps, but words are
important.

PU YI

Why are words important?

RJ leans back...

R.J.

If you cannot say what you
mean, Your Majesty...you will
never mean what you say...And
a gentleman should always mean
what he says.

PU YI

Ah yes! "A gentleman"...Are
you a gentleman?

R.J.

I...I would like to be a
gentleman...I try to be...

PU YI

I am not a gentleman! I am not
allowed to say what I mean!
They are always telling me
what to say!

R.J.

Your Majesty is still very
young...

(change of subject)

I thought he might like to see
some English and American
magazines...I just received them.

Pu Yi points at a portrait on the cover of the Post --
a special "Independence Day" issue.

PU YI

Who is this "George Washington"?

R.J.

Eh...A famous American, Your
Majesty. A revolutionary General.
The first American President.

PU YI

Ah! Like Mr. Lenin in Russia?

R.J.
Nnn..not quite...

PU YI
Does he have a car?

R.J.
He lived a long time ago,
Your Majesty.

PU YI
I want a car!

RJ notices a small white mouse with bright red eyes
emerging from the Imperial pocket...

R.J.
I think your mouse is trying
to escape, Your Majesty.

The Emperor grabs it, just in time, shoves it back.

PU YI
Please do not tell anyone
about my mouse...
(he stands up)
The lesson is finished.

67. ON A VERANDAH IN THE EMPEROR'S QUARTERS

Pu Yi and RJ sit at opposite tables with white
embroidered table cloths, and two Eunuchs wafting large
coloured fans. RJ's foreign magazines lie on a stool
beside the Emperor, as if too precious to part with.

RJ sees the Imperial lunch trotting into view -- twenty
Bearers who file up the steps and onto the verandah
carrying huge red lacquer chests. Over fifty delicious
looking dishes, steaming hot, or cooled in ice, are
presented for inspection.

RJ is impressed, and looking hungry. Pu Yi watches him
with a mischievous glimmer, while the OFFICIAL TASTER
(hugely fat) begins testing a selection of dishes with
a silver spoon...

PU YI
The official taster is a brave
man. Many of my ancestors
have been poisoned, you know...

RJ, lost for a reply, coughs and looks at the side table. Unbelievably, the covers are now going back on the dishes; the dishes into the lacquered chests; and the chests being carried off into another room...RJ's stomach rumbles. Pu Yi bursts into laughter.

R.J.

Does Your Majesty have lunch
like this every day?

PU YI

Oh yes! Every day! Like
theatre! I don't know why...
It has always been like that...

Chang and Hunchback come out from the adjoining pavilion followed by two Eunuchs pushing silver trolleys.

PU YI

This is my real food.

The new meal, beautifully presented in yellow porcelain bowls, is equally delicious, but on a more realistic scale -- about eight dishes each. As they get served:

CHANG

Bear's paw, one hundred year
eggs, snake bile, angels hair,
garlic sprout, steamed turtle,
goat nipples...

RJ notices that the Official Taster doesn't intervene.

R.J.

Has the danger of poisoning
passed?

PU YI

My food comes directly from
the High Consorts. Their
taster has already tried them...
It always arrives a bit cold...

He picks up his ivory silver-tipped chopsticks -- the longed-for signal to begin. RJ, who is obviously an old hand with chopsticks and Chinese food, starts with the bear's paw.

PU YI

How do they kill Emperors in
the West?

RJ looks up...

PU YI

The Austrian Emperor was
shot, wasn't he?

R.J.

No. But his son was
assassinated -- at the
beginning of the Great War.

PU YI

But the Russian Emperor has
been shot! He was called
the Tsar.

R.J.

Yes...

PU YI

He took lots of our land in
Manchuria! I am Manchurian!
Even after the Republic, it's
still my country!

RJ glimpses the white mouse crawling out of the Emperor's
sleeve...

R.J.

The...eh...secret, Your Majesty,
is emerging again.

Pu Yi grabs the mouse just in time, and pops some cabbage
up his sleeve. Nobody notices. Chang supervises a change
of finger-bowls. Some Eunuchs are chatting noisily at
the back of the courtyard.

They eat in silence. Suddenly, Pu Yi stops moving,
head lowered, brow furrowed.

R.J.

Is something the matter,
Your Majesty?

PU YI

Something is happening...
(to Chang)

Silence! Tell them to be quiet!

CHANG

Silence!

Everyone stops moving...RJ watches the Emperor, who
listens, head down, to a distant sound...

PU YI
 (quiet, eyes lowered)
 What is happening, Mr. Johnston?

CHANG
 Nothing is --

PU YI
 Shut up!

He walks out into the middle of the courtyard followed by a parasol bearer, and listens intently -- to something like the distant roar of a crowd.

PU YI
 I want to know, Mr. Johnston...

R.J.
 (touched)
 ...On my way here, Your Majesty, we were held up by students from the University...They were protesting against the... Republican Government...because it has agreed to give away Chinese territory to Japan.

Chang steps forcefully forward, and bows to RJ.

CHANG
 It is time for the Emperor's rest.

PU YI
 The students are right to be angry...I am angry! But I am not allowed to leave the Forbidden City!...I want to go out, Mr. Johnston! I want to go out!

CHANG
 (intervening)
 My Lord --

Pu Yi stands up abruptly, points at the magazines, (snatched up by an Attendant), and nods respectfully to RJ -- who scrambles to his feet and bows in return. Pu Yi looks at Chang -- who bows to RJ.

CHANG
 The Emperor awards you with the Order of the Ruby Hat Button... and with the right to be carried in your own chair with two bearers.

A Eunuch runs forward and presents him with a strange looking hat on a cushion.

RJ, deeply honoured, takes the cushion and gives another stiff little bow.

PU YI

The last Emperor Kuang Hsu
died on the night I was
brought to the Forbidden City.
When I was three.

He goes to the door, then looks back.

PU YI

I think he was killed. But
who killed him? And why? And
who will kill me?

He leaves, followed by Chang, Big Foot and the magazine carrier, all looking very uncomfortable.

RJ sits pensively down again...rinses his fingers in a crystal bowl then tries on the hat and sees himself in a mirror (laid under the hat).

Just then, getting ready to go, he hears a strange noise and glances round the corner:

68. ...INTO A DILAPIDATED COURTYARD BEYOND

Twenty or thirty Eunuchs squat on the floor, consuming the Imperial lunch out of the red lacquer chests.

They all stare at RJ with his morning coat and mandarin's hat, then simply turn their backs and continue their silent munching, like greedy monkeys.

SCARFACE

The chair, Your Excellency.

69. CORTILIE VERANDA

RJ turns and finds Scarface behind him, holding his briefcase and top hat. A sedan chair has appeared, grander than the one he arrived in. RJ climbs in. Scarface hands him his things, then kneels, hands cupped above his bowed head.

SCARFACE

The traditional gift, Your
Excellency...

RJ stares at him, incredulous.

SCARFACE
Many thanks! Deeply grateful!

R.J.
If it is official practice...

SCARFACE
Official! Official!

RJ drops a couple of coins in his hands.

R.J.
In which case, I would like
an official receipt.

Scarface looks up, an ugly angry expression -- which suddenly switches to panic. His arm covers his face. He cringes.

THE VICIOUS CRACK OF A BAMBOO CANE

knocks him to the ground. Big Foot showers him with blows across the head and shoulders. The coins spill from his hand.

The two Bearers are already prostrate, trembling with fear. Big Foot looks towards the adjoining pavilion -- the Emperor's private quarters. RJ sees Pu Yi (holding the London Illustrated News) and Chang watching from the verandah.

BIG FOOT
(returns the money)
The Emperor extends his
apologies.

R.J.
Please tell His Highness that
there is no offence.

BIG FOOT
It is the Emperor who has been
offended.

He snaps at the Bearers, who make a quick U-turn and hurry off with RJ in the sedan. Behind him, the thrashing resumes.

R.J. (VO)
As I left I thought he was
probably the loneliest boy
on earth...

DISSOLVE TO:

70. IN THE GOVERNOR'S OFFICE. PRISON. MANCHURIA. 1950

The Governor looks up from Johnston's book. It is growing dark. He turns on the light, sips some tea, and continues reading.

DISSOLVE BACK TO:

71. THE FORBIDDEN CITY. JUST INSIDE THE MAIN GATE. SUMMER

A group of Bearers sit in the shade beside a row of sedan chairs -- a kind of taxi stand.

They hear a strange sound, a kind of CLICKING, then stare in amazement as RJ appears through the vaulted gate pushing a new green bicycle...and goes straight past without looking.

Two Bearers jump up and hurry after him with his sedan.

72. IN THE FRONT HALL OF THE EMPEROR'S QUARTERS

Pu Yi is supervising a favourite game. Hunchback -v- Big Foot heading two teams of Eunuchs are separated by a white silk curtain which rises between them.

PU YI

Go!

The two teams start to feel each other through the sheet, trying to recognise who the others are -- both doing their best to mislead the other side. Hunchback rides piggy back on someone's shoulders, Big Foot crawls on his knees pretending to be short. Wild laughter and excitement.

Suddenly Pu Yi stops being an observer and throws himself into the game.

From behind the thin white silk, groping hands begin to touch his face. They recognise him almost at once, but pretend not to.

EUNUCHS' VOICES (OFF)

And who could this be? Who's this?!

More hands join the search, pressing through the silk, feeling his whole body -- and then starting to tickle him.

As Pu Yi bursts into laughter, RJ appears in the doorway behind, wheeling the new green bicycle. He stops abruptly, staring at the strange scene -- until Pu Yi catches sight of him.

R.J.
(very serious)
I hope the Emperor hasn't
forgotten that this is the day
for his maths class.

Pu Yi stops playing and comes over, his eyes fixed on the green bicycle.

R.J.
For Your Majesty...

Silence. The curtain drops. The Eunuchs all stare at Pu Yi -- now proudly displaying the bicycle.

PU YI
(sudden doubt)
My doctor said -- he thinks
bicycles are bad for you.

R.J.
Bad for you? Nonsense!!

PU YI
(thrilled)
How does it work?

R.J.
Oh, it's simple.

Calmly, he mounts the bicycle, and pedals round between the startled Eunuchs.

R.J.
Head up and eyes forward --
as in life.

He glances sideways at the Emperor and crashes into one of the Eunuchs.

73. IN THE COURTYARD OF THE EMPEROR'S QUARTERS. A FEW WEEKS LATER

Pu Yi -- now quite a good bicyclist -- pedals silently round, watched by a small group of Eunuchs. But there is something unusual about everyone's mood.

Defiantly, Pu Yi raises his arms and bicycles for a moment without hands. The Eunuchs are clearly admiring but their clapping is reluctant.

When Chen hurries in, already looking sombre, he seems shocked by the scene.

PU YI
(not stopping)
My mother is dead, isn't she?

CHEN
Yes, Your Majesty. I am
terribly sorry.

PU YI
I'm not.

He TINKLES his bell, and keeps circling on his bicycle...

PU YI
She killed herself, didn't
she? She swallowed a ball of
opium.

Chen doesn't know how to answer. Nobody speaks. Suddenly:

PU YI
I'm going to see her!...And my
brother!

Without warning, he leaps the ground beam at the gate --
passing Chang and the old Doctor.

74. EXT. LONG RED AVENUE.

The Emperor pedals furiously away -- with Chang and
the other Eunuchs racing after him.

75. EXT. MAIN GATE OF THE FORBIDDEN CITY.

Pu Yi brakes to a halt...Slowly, he wheels his bicycle
over to the three huge doors -- only one of them open.
The Imperial Guards form up, looking nervous.

Through the vaulted passage, Pu Yi sees a car, rickshaws,
traffic -- a brief glimpse before the great bronze-
studded door CLOSES in his face...

The Imperial Guards prostrate themselves on the ground.
Pu Yi stares at the Captain, the only one still standing
-- the man who brought him to the Forbidden City as a baby.

PU YI
Open the door.

The Captain prostrates himself in the dust like the others. Pu Yi walks over him with his bicycle, goes to the largest central door, and stares at the ancient bronze bolts.

PU YI

Open the Emperor's door!

Nobody moves. Pu Yi wheels round. Chang, Big Foot, Hunchback and ten of his Eunuchs are also lying behind him now, hiding their faces in the dust.

PU YI

(tormented)

Open my door!

RJ (just arrived, watches from the far side of the courtyard. Nobody moves. Complete silence...

Suddenly, Pu Yi pulls his pet mouse out of a pocket and HURLS it at the gate. The white fur SPLATTERS against the bronze lock. Pu Yi jumps on his bicycle and races off.

76. ANOTHER COURTYARD

Chang and others run in and find the green bicycle lying on its side...a loose tile falls from the roof and SHATTERS on the flagstones...

The Emperor is silhouetted against the sky, crawling up a sloping roof to the peak of a high pavilion.

The old Doctor hits out at the hated bicycle with his stick.

DOCTOR

Trouble! Nothing but trouble!

(sees RJ)

Look where you lead him!

R.J.

And you're a cruel, ignorant old man! His mother's dead -- and they won't even let him see her!

77. ROOF OF GREEN AND YELLOW TILES

Pu Yi blinks into the winter haze, slips, catches onto a gutter...

Two more tiles SPIN through the air and SMASH on the ground. RJ shoves the Doctor aside and yells up:

R.J.
Stop it, you fool! Stop
where you are!

Pu Yi kneels down - almost at the edge of the overhang. But the ground below, like the view beyond, is completely blurred...he stands up again. Tears well up in his eyes...

R.J. (VO)
Give me your hand!

RJ, who has climbed out through a hatch, clings onto a human chain, Chang, Hunchback, Big Foot...He stretches out and grabs Pu Yi by the arm.

78. IN THE EMPEROR'S CLASSROOM. NEXT DAY

A HUGE BROWN EYE -- viewed through a magnifying glass. The pupil dilates.

A WESTERN OCULIST is examining the Emperor's eyes. RJ and the old Doctor stand beside him. Chen, the Four High Consorts and four Ladies in Waiting, watch in silence, while Chang, Big Foot and Hunchback guard the door.

The room has changed since RJ's appointment. A map of the world hangs on the wall, a model aeroplane, a Western armchair, piles of Western books and magazines.

OCULIST
It's perfectly simple, Johnston.
The Emperor needs glasses.

Deathly silence...

PU YI
Like Harold Lloyd!

SENIOR HIGH CONSORT
(stands up)
Impossible! An Emperor does
not wear "glasses"!

The High Consorts and other Ladies troop out en masse. The Lord Chamberlain stands up.

OCULIST
(closes his bag)
If he doesn't get glasses,
Johnston, he could lose his
sight. Now please show me the
way out of here.

RJ signals to Hunchback, who leads the Doctor away - then goes over to the Lord Chamberlain -- out of earshot of the others.

R.J.

(quietly)

If the Emperor does not get glasses, Your Excellency, I will resign.

LORD CHAMBERLAIN

Unfortunately, our decision is final...

R.J.

And unfortunately, what I have to say will be published in every newspaper in China...

The Lord Chamberlain glances nervously at the others (who are all watching), then leads RJ into a hall (where they are still visible).

LORD CHAMBERLAIN

What do you have to say, Mr. Johnston?

R.J.

The Emperor has been a prisoner in his own palace since he was crowned -- and has gone on being a prisoner since he abdicated. But now that he is growing up he may wonder why he is the only person in China who cannot walk out of his own front door! How sad if he becomes blind! And how convenient!

LORD CHAMBERLAIN

Blind, Mr. Johnston?

R.J.

To the "expense", Your Excellency. To the cost of maintaining 1200 Eunuchs, 350 Ladies in Waiting and 185 cooks. To buying 120 sable furs a month and 3000 chickens a week...to the fact that 840 Guards and employees of the Household Department plus one Lord Chamberlain care only about one thing -- filling their own rice bowls!

LORD CHAMBERLAIN

You're very good at accounts, Mr. Johnston.

(RJ doesn't blink)

The Emperor may have abdicated, but he is still a symbol of great importance to many people.

R.J.

If I didn't agree with that, I wouldn't be here.

LORD CHAMBERLAIN

And some of us believe that one day soon he may be more than a symbol.

Silence, except for the ticking of the huge clock on the wall.

LORD CHAMBERLAIN

The glasses are a detail. What do you really want, Mr. Johnston?

R.J.

Just the glasses.

79. IN THE PALACE OF TRANQUIL REST. A MONTH LATER

In the great chamber which was once used by the old Empress Dowager, Pu Yi takes his place at a small desk draped in yellow brocade -- the only man in a room full of women.

Lung Yu sits behind him, symbolically concealed by a transparent gauze screen. The three other High Consorts -- small, delicate, and very tough, all wearing their finest robes -- sit nearby on separate thrones, each with their own team of excited Ladies in Waiting.

One of them, the beautiful LADY OF THE BOOK, lays a large volume in front of the Emperor. Another one presents him with an ink stone and brush.

The Lady of the Book turns to the first page; an oval photograph of a girl in a garden. Almost impossible to see her face.

LADY OF THE BOOK

The Princess Wan Jung, Your Highness. Seventeen years old.

Pointedly, Pu Yi takes out a spectacle case and puts on a pair of new gold-rimmed glasses...

The Lady of the Pen presents him with the brush, expecting an immediate assent -- but Pu Yi ignores her and defiantly turns the page.

There is a tremor of excitement as he flicks briskly through the other photographs of Manchu Princesses, not listening to the names, and points at the last one - the face of a child.

PU YI

Who is this?

LADY OF THE BOOK
(reluctantly)

Princess Wen Hsiu, twelve years old.

PU YI

She's got a funny face.

Ignoring the brush, he produces a new gold fountain pen and defiantly initials the page. An outburst of murmuring. Angrily, Lung Yu, behind the screen, SNAPS her fan shut on the arm of her chair.

LUNG YU

No!

80. IN THE CROWDED ANTE-CHAMBER OUTSIDE

RJ sits tapping his shoes with the end of his cane. Chen checks through the door and strolls back into the garden. Chang sighs and hangs about. Pu Chieh looks bored.

The Lord Chamberlain, the Chinese Tutors, Doctor and Astrologer, keep to themselves. Prince Chun sits alone at the back.

When Pu Yi strides in, everyone jumps up, bowing and scraping.

PU YI

(whispering to RJ)
Not just one wife! One
Empress and one Secondary
Consort!

PU CHIEH

Two wives!

R.J.

But, eh...who did you choose
to be the Empress?

PU YI

"They" chose her! She's very
old, Johnston! She's seventeen!

R.J.

That's not so old, Your Majesty...
What does she look like?

PU YI

Old-fashioned!

A solemn announcement comes from the doorway:

MASTER OF CEREMONIES

The Emperor has chosen the
Princess Wan Jung of the Manchu
Kung clan to be the future
Princess! Princess Wen Hsiu, of
the Manchu Ordet clan has been
selected as Secondary Consort!

While the assembled Court reacts to the news, Pu Yi
climbs brusquely into his waiting palanquin. To RJ:

PU YI

I want a modern wife, Johnston!
Who speaks English! And French!
And who - who can dance the
quickstep!

The Bearers carry him away in the palanquin -- then stop
abruptly in the doorway.

PU YI (VO)

Johnston!

RJ hurries over and peers in:

PU YI

(loud whisper)

I'm going to escape, Johnston!
I've got a suitcase! And a
ticket to England! I'm going
to go to Oxford University!

R.J.

(tries not to smile)

Your Majesty, if you get married
you will become the master of
your own house...A wedding might
be a more practical way to escape...

Pu Yi stares at him -- not appreciating the truth.
He jerks the curtains shut.

81. IN A DARK SECRET CORRIDOR

Pu Yi and Pu Chieh stare through a small round grille,
with Chang standing beside them in the shadows.

PU CHIEH
(whispers)

I told you, you don't have to
take your clothes off!

82. Through the grille, in the room beyond, they can see the
Lady of the Book and the Lady of the Pen, with two Lady
COMPANIONS, acting out a kind of erotic mime, intended
for instruction. All of them are smiling. They use an
ivory penis.

83. IN A DARK SECRET CORRIDOER

PU CHIEH

You see...They will do it all
for you -- everything...

Pu Yi puts on his glasses. His expression becomes even
graver than before.

CHANG

They know you are watching
them, Your Majesty...It is a
great honour...

Pu Yi darts back from the grille.

84. INSIDE A DARK RED PALANQUIN

-- a red silk box without a kink to see through. A young
woman sits there dressed entirely in red, her hair
entwined in a jewelled crown. A red veil, hung with
pearls, conceals her face.

Outside, she can hear strange music and the distant
CRACKLE of fireworks...She draws a pin out of her hair
and stabs a hole through the curtain...

85. IN THE EMPEROR'S APARTMENTS. LATE AFTERNOON

Pu Chieh watches the Eunuchs dressing his elder brother
in his ceremonial wedding robes. Chang and Hunchback
supervise.

PU YI
 (deep gloom)
 I suppose she's on her way
 by now...

PU CHIEH
 It'll be all right. They do
 it all for you!

RJ is standing by the windows, looking splendid in a green tartan kilt, buckled shoes and ruffled dress shirt. He coughs disapprovingly and goes over to a jar covered with an embroidered cloth which Hunchback has just brought in. He reads the scroll which comes with it, and turns to Pu Yi, trying to lighten the mood.

R.J.
 Your Mongolian cousin, Prince
 Demchukdongrub, has sent you
 12 racing camels...
 (he removes the cloth)
 Plus this..."From the heart of
 Manchuria..."

He hands Pu Yi a large glass jar containing a shiny lump of coal, like a huge black diamond.

PU YI
 (stares at the coal)
 Why didn't you ever get married,
 Johnston?

86. IN THE PHOENIX CHAIR (THE RED SILK PALANQUIN)

The girl in red is WAN JUNG, the Empress-to-be.

THROUGH THE PINHOLE

-- on the terrace of the Palace of Cloudless Heaven
 -- her EYE sees a group of WOMEN, and a row of bronze
 and jade triangles, some more than 10 feet high, plus
 gongs and giant copper drums.

Their strange ancient music echoes across the courtyard
 as she approaches between two files of umbrellas, banners
 and incense burners.

Suddenly she is thrown back against the cushions as the
 palanquin tilts up and starts to climb.

The mysterious music grows louder...The chair straightens, the music stops...Only the soft sound of the Bearers' footsteps...then a gentle BUMP.

87. OUTSIDE THE PALACE OF CLOUDLESS HEAVEN. TWILIGHT.

Through the peephole, Wan Jung sees the High Consorts in ceremonial robes surrounded by their Ladies in Waiting.

The Emperor's Secondary Consort, WEN HSIU, stands at the front facing the Phoenix Chair. A chubby little 12-year old girl from the steppes.

The High Consorts bear formal witness to the undamaged wax seal on the Phoenix curtains and step back.

The Mistress of Ceremonies nods to Wen Hsiu, who snips the sealed ribbons with silver scissors. The curtains fall open...

Wen Hsiu curtsies prettily and offers Wan Jung a shining red apple. Wan Jung takes a small nibble from under her red veil, then climbs out on Wen Hsiu's arm. She is terribly nervous, but poised and graceful.

WEN HSIU
(timorous)

The Secondary Consort welcomes
the Empress...

WAN JUNG
(softly)

The Empress greets the
Secondary Consort...

Contented titters, smiles, much waving of fans. The women form up in procession.

88. ON A WHITE MARBLE RAMP. TWILIGHT

The procession of women travels the short distance between the Palace of Cloudless Heaven and the Palace of Terrestrial Peace. Their high satin shoes FLAP softly on the ground.

Wan Jung still hidden by her veil, walks behind Wen Hsiu. They talk in whispers.

WAN JUNG
You are doing everything
very well...

WEN HSIU
Thank you. I rehearsed many
times.

WAN JUNG

We must be friends, Wen Hsiu...

WEN HSIU

Yes...

89. IN THE OPEN-AIR THEATRE OF THE FORBIDDEN CITY. SAME NIGHT

A double storey building surrounding an apron stage on which a large company of singing and miming actors descend on papier mache clouds or rise up through the floor on clockwork lilies.

Packing the balconies, the sophisticated court Officials seem almost lost amongst the audience of visiting Manchurian and Mongolian relatives, half-drunk and in raucous mood.

RJ (in his kilt), the only foreigner, sits beside a huge MANCHURIAN CHIEFTAIN.

90 IN A RED CHAMBER

A high-ceilinged chamber, almost without furniture, lit by the flickering light of candles and oil lamps.

Half of them are slowly extinguished by the soft breath of the last Ladies in Waiting, who retreat backwards, until they vanish into the darkness, Wen Hsiu included.

Pu Yi and Wan Jung sit in silence, on the edge of the great Dragon-Phoenix bed, set back in an alcove.

Everything around them is dark red; walls, curtains, carpet -- even the bed and the sheets -- even the Empress, who sits with her hands in her lap, completely still. Pu Yi takes off his glasses. The silence continues until:

WAN JUNG

(quietly)

What is the Emperor thinking?

PU YI

(not looking at her)

I was thinking...If I was a real Emperor, I would become the ruler of China now...

WAN JUNG

And what would the Emperor do if he was the ruler?

PU YI

I would change everything...
Even the way we get married...

WAN JUNG

(softly)

Is the Emperor against arranged
marriages?

PU YI

It is humiliating not to choose
who you marry!

WAN JUNG

...Even I was not allowed to
choose...

(Pu Yi glances at her
for the first time)

And yet Westerners might be
amazed how much happiness can
come from arranged marriages...

PU YI

That is what old-fashioned
women say - like the High
Consorts!

Suddenly, Wan Jung slips off her shoes, draws the
Emperor to his feet, turns and stands against him, back
to back...

WAN JUNG

In another year or two, the
Emperor will be taller than me...

Pu Yi remains stock still, utterly surprised. After a
moment:

WAN JUNG

(still with her back to him)
Is it true that the Emperor has
a suitcase under his bed, and is
going to Oxford?

Pu Yi's face goes white.

WAN JUNG

And will the Emperor take Wan
Jung with him?

Pu Yi turns and stares at her back...

WAN JUNG

Perhaps he would like to see
my face before he decides...

Long silence.

PU YI

Yes...the Emperor would like
to see the face of the Empress.

Wan Jung turns around. Pu Yi doesn't move. Wan Jung
sits down again on the bed.

WAN JUNG

(softly)

It is the Emperor who must
remove the kai t'ou...

Pu Yi sits slowly down beside her...Wan Jung takes his
hand and guides it towards her red veil...which drops
from the pins holding it in place -- and reveals the
face of a woman -- only 17, but an age away from him.
She is stunningly beautiful.

WAN JUNG

(raises her huge brown eyes)

I also had a tutor like Mr.
Johnston...Miss Windsor. She
was American.

Pu Yi continues staring at her...

WAN JUNG

She has taught me how to do the
dance of the quickstep. Does
the Emperor know how to do the
quickstep?

Pu Yi shakes his head...unable to speak. They are very
close now, only inches apart. Pu Yi can feel her
breath on his face...

CLACK-CLACK the sound of a stick against a hollow block.
And another one. CLACK-CLACK.

91. AT THE THEATRE

The audience watches in sudden hushed silence, as the
King of the Monkeys and the Queen of the Lilies --
famous characters in Peking opera -- rise up onto the
stage, SOMERSAULT away from each other, and FREEZE into
two dramatic, opposing positions...CLACK-CLACK.

92. IN THE RED CHAMBER

Wan Jung's lips are now touching the Emperor's -- so softly it is barely a kiss...His eyes are closed. Her lips brush over his face...

At the same time, Ladies in Waiting become visible in the shadows, kneeling on the floor...suddenly there are hands on Pu Yi's shoes, hands on the buttons of his coat...Pu Yi opens his eyes and begins to panic.

WAN JUNG

(sensing the danger)

Leave us!

The hands vanish. The shadows retreat...Pu Yi remains motionless, staring at his wife...

WAN JUNG

If Your Majesty thinks it is
old-fashioned to make the rain
and the wind with a stranger,
we can be like a modern couple...
to begin with.

She stands up -- and holds out her hand. Pu Yi rises...

WAN JUNG

(sweetly)

Goodnight...

PU YI

(shakes her hand)

Goodnight...

He turns and hurries out of the room. He is in love. The Lady of the Book and the Lady of the Pen reappear from the shadows, laughing gently.

WAN JUNG

I like him...I'm sure I'm
going to like him!

The two Ladies begin to undress her.

WAN JUNG

And he will grow up...

DISSOLVE TO:

93. PRISON CORRIDOR. MANCHURIA WINTER 1950

Pu Yi's brown lace-up shoes tread along a concrete floor...and stop in front of a green office door -- No. 41.

SECOND WARDER

Eyes down!

Pu Yi, still in shorts, stands head bowed in the middle of a long office corridor.

SECOND WARDER

Report your arrival!

PU YI

Prisoner 981.

SECOND WARDER

Louder!

PU YI

Prisoner 981! Reporting!

MAN'S VOICE (OFF)

Open the door!

94. PRISON OFFICE NO. 41

A plain, high-ceilinged room with a small stove and a clock and a large map of China on the wall. There are two tables. Sitting behind them are an INTERROGATOR and a SCRIBE, both in their mid thirties, civilians in blue Mao-style tunics.

The Interrogator gestures towards a stool in the centre of the room with a piece of chalk on it. Pu Yi picks up the chalk and sits down.

INTERROGATOR

Name?

PU YI

Aisin-Gioro Pu Yi.

INTERROGATOR

Write it.

Pu Yi writes his name on the floor -- large white ideograms. The Interrogator points at a sign on the wall.

INTERROGATOR

Now read that, aloud.

PU YI

"Leniency to those who confess,
severity to those who resist,
redemption to those who obtain
merits, rewards to those who
gain big merits."

INTERROGATOR

(smiles)

Now then, there are two types of
confession. We call them Tooth-
paste and Water Tap. The Tooth-
paste prisoner needs to be squeezed
every so often, or else he forgets
to keep confessing. The Water Tap
man needs one good hard twist before
he starts, but then everything
comes out. Now, you are an
intelligent person. I am sure you
understand me?...Good, then we'll
begin. Why do you think you are in
here, Pu Yi?

PU YI

I'm accused of being a traitor, a
collaborator and a counter-
revolutionary.

The Interrogator waves Pu Yi's exercise book in his face.

INTERROGATOR

It is not an accusation! You
are a traitor! You are a
collaborator! And you are a
counter-revolutionary!

(he leafs contemptuously
through a couple of pages)
Did you write this?

(Pu Yi nods)

And do you call it a confession?
This is nothing but a list of
dates! A medieval fairy tale!

Silence.

PU YI

What do you want me to confess?

He hears the door opening behind him, and sees the
Interrogator look up past his shoulder. The Governor
comes in and sits quietly down at the back. Pu Yi
never looks round.

INTERROGATOR
(resumes)

You know what you did...and
what others did. So why don't
you volunteer the information?

PU YI
I don't understand...

INTERROGATOR
We don't tell people what to
confess. We already know
everything about you.

PU YI
I...

Long pause.

INTERROGATOR
Go on.

Another pause.

PU YI
I wanted...reforms.

INTERROGATOR
What did you want to "reform"?

PU YI
(quietly)
Everything.

DISSOLVE TO:

95. THE IMPERIAL QUARTERS IN THE FORBIDDEN CITY. WINTER. DAY

Pu Yi is 18 years old now, with gold-rimmed glasses,
handsome, elegant.

He is sitting on his throne, staring at his lap,
holding a dagger, excited and tense.

Chang, Big Foot and Hunchback stand nearby, nervously
waiting. No one speaks, until Pu Chieh (17) hurries
in with Wan Jung(20) and Wen Hsiu (15). All three look
mystified. Pu Yi nods for them to sit down.

PU YI
 (trying to hide his
 excitement)
 Chang, you have a house outside
 the Forbidden City, don't you?
 It has twenty rooms, I think.

Long pause.

CHANG
 Yes, Your Majesty.

PU YI
 (to Hunchback and Big Foot)
 And you also have houses?

HUNCHBACK
 (low murmur)
 For when we are old, Your Majesty.

PU YI
 I recently learned that many
 pieces from the Imperial collections
 are on sale in the antique shops of
 Peking. Isn't that so, Chang?
 Your cousin, I believe, owns a
 large antique shop in the Foreign
 Legation?

Chang looks down.

PU YI
 The Forbidden City is a theatre --
 without an audience. The audience
 left long ago, when China became
 a Republic. So why do all the
 actors remain here on the stage?
 To steal the scenery, piece by
 piece, isn't that so?
 (he holds out the dagger)
 Now cut off my queue.

He lowers his head, baring his neck. Chang stares in
 horror, unable to move. The three Eunuchs drop to
 their knees.

CHANG
 Your Majesty! Please!

Leaning forward, holding the dagger, Pu Yi saws off his
 queue, the Gordian knot of his youth.

Wan Jung, Wen Hsiu and Pu Chieh stare in amazement. Pu
 Yi looks up at them. His short hair falls loose.

PU YI

My predecessor, Kuang Hsu,
was murdered because he
wanted to reform the Empire --
wasn't he, Mr. Johnston?

Everyone looks round at RJ, who is suddenly revealed
standing behind him in the shadows with another man --
CHENG HSIAO-HSIU -- over 60, but handsome, and impressive
looking.

R.J.

Yes, Your Majesty. Probably.

PU YI

(looking at Wan Jung)
Well, let's see if they'll kill
me for reforming the Forbidden
City.

Timidly, Wan Jung picks up the queue from the floor.
She smiles, proud of him.

PU YI

I am nominating Mr. Johnston's
friend Cheng Hsiao-Hsiu to be
the new Lord Chamberlain. I
want him to supervise a detailed
inventory of the Imperial
storerooms.

(to Chang)

So that we can learn exactly how
much has been stolen.

WEN HSIU

(whispers)

Can I see it?

(she takes the queue from
Wan Jung)

It's so heavy...

Pu Chieh darts forward, grabs the dagger and starts to
saw off his own queue, like his brother.

96. IN THE EMPEROR'S BEDROOM. NIGHT

Pu Yi lies in bed. Suddenly he opens his eyes, listens
intently, then whips around, aiming a gun -- at Wan Jung.

WAN JUNG

(quietly)

Can I sleep here? I'm
frightened...

Pu Yi relaxes, then draws the sheet back. Wan Jung drops her robe and gets quickly in beside him.

WAN JUNG
(whispers)

Are you afraid too?

PU YI
(nods)

...But I'm excited. I don't want to escape any more. I want to rule!

WAN JUNG

Kiss me.

Pu Yi leans over her, looking deep into her eyes, then kisses her on the mouth.

WOMAN'S VOICE(OFF)
(timid)

Can I stay with you as well?

Pu Yi and Wan Jung jerk round again, and find Wen Hsiu standing by the bed...They both laugh.

PU YI

Get in, get in.

Wen Hsiu climbs in beside them. Pu Yi pulls the sheet over their heads.

UNDER THE SHEET...

The three together.

WAN JUNG

Aren't you going to give the Secondary Consort a kiss?

Pu Yi kisses her, then sits up from under the sheet -- keeping the girls covered. He laughs.

PU YI

This is how I used to play with the Eunuchs -- trying to guess who's who.

He starts to feel the girls through the sheet, tickling them until they begin to laugh.

And then suddenly he stops. There are flecks of black on the sheets, and a strange light outside, red and flickering...

Pu Yi grabs the gun and hurries to the window. Distant voices, people shouting...

The two girls come up beside him, looking shocked and frightened again.

Above the roofs of the Forbidden City, the sky is lit up by the flames of a huge fire.

Behind them, Big Foot and two other Eunuchs race into the room and prostrate themselves on the ground.

BIG FOOT

Your Majesty! The storerooms
are on fire, Your Majesty!

97. THE CHARRED RUINS OF A HUGE PAVILION...DAWN

A silent crowd of courtiers and dignitaries gaze at the wreckage. Ash and rubble, broken vases, golden Buddhas melted out of shape, pieces of timber still smoking.

Pu Yi and HSIAO-HSIU, stand alone in the middle of the smouldering ruins.

PU YI

Didn't you write a poem,
Hsiao-Hsiu, about a spider
who gets caught in his own
web?

HSIAO-HSIU

I didn't know Your Majesty had
read my poetry. I am very
honoured.

PU YI

The Eunuchs set fire to this
place to stop me knowing what
they'd stolen. I'm going to
expel them from the Forbidden
City.

HSIAO-HSIU

There are 1200 Eunuchs, Your
Majesty. You will need help...

PU YI

Do you think the Republican
Government would help me?

HSIAO-HSIU

The Republicans will do almost anything, if you know who to speak to...

PU YI

It must happen quickly --
before they burn the whole place
-- with us inside.

98. IN THE SQUARE OUTSIDE THE FORBIDDEN CITY. DAY

Over 1000 Eunuchs, unknown and familiar, rich and poor, are camped outside the gates, sheltering under their umbrellas, refusing to move.

Republican SOLDIERS, with rifles and bayonets, keep them under control.

98A. IN THE GUARD ROOM. ABOVE THE GATES

RJ, Chen, Hsiao-Hsiu and three REPUBLICAN OFFICERS are already there when Pu Yi arrives with his two wives.

The Officers salute him. Pu Yi goes over to the parapet and gazes down at the murmuring crowd below. The people who knew him best, his childhood.

WEN HSIU

What's happening?

WAN JUNG

I don't know...

A sudden HUSH as three more Eunuchs come out under armed escort, each of them carrying a large jar. Chang, Big Foot and Hunchback.

WEN HSIU

(whispers to Wan Jung)

What are they carrying?

WAN JUNG

(whispers)

Their organs...

WEN HSIU

Oh, how terrible...

WAN JUNG

They can't be deprived of the right to be buried as whole men.

Silently, ambiguously, the three Eunuchs of the Imperial Presence kneel down and kowtow to the Emperor for the last time, lifting up their jars.

A thousand pairs of eyes stare up at the Emperor.
Pu Yi turns away. There are tears in his eyes.

DISSOLVE BACK TO:

99. PRISON OFFICE NO. 41. MANCHURIA. WINTER 1950

Pu Yi has fallen silent. The Scribe has stopped writing.

INTERROGATOR

Well?

PU YI

I...I forgot what I was saying...

From behind him, the Governor speaks for the first time.

GOVERNOR

What we want to know about
is the Japanese.

Pu Yi stiffens, recognising the voice.

INTERROGATOR

Why don't you tell us how
your great friendship with
the Japanese fascists began?

Pu Yi looks suddenly nervous. He re-crosses his legs.

PU YI

Parliament had been dissolved
again, the President had fled
...It was 1924. At first we
thought it was just another
coup d'etat by another warlord
...Only this time was different.

DISSOLVE TO:

100. FROM THE TOP OF A HILL OVERLOOKING THE FORBIDDEN CITY

The long steel barrel of a huge piece of artillery aims slowly down at the Forbidden City.

As the empty courtyards come into close up, we begin to hear the sound of a tennis ball...

RE-WRITE: 1st July 1986

101 EMPTY HALLS, EMPTY COURTYARDS

The Forbidden City is already half deserted. The steady sound of the tennis ball continues.

102 A BRAND NEW TENNIS COURT

Looks out of place in the middle of a huge courtyard.

Pu Yi (18), and Pu Chieh, Wan Jung and Wen Hsiu, still dressed in semi traditional style, are playing a very amateur game of mixed doubles with RJ presiding from the comfortable height of the umpire's chair. It is a windy day.

Pu Yi is just about to serve, when a detail of SOLDIERS in brown uniforms march into view and halt at the edge of the court. The CAPTAIN marches over to Pu Yi..

CAPTAIN

The rotten Government of the Republic is in flight. Now we shall remove the foreign stench of the Manchurian rats who still hide in the Forbidden City.

He hands him a document. As Pu Yi reads it and everyone waits, the only sound comes from the tea-cups shaking on the silver tray of the new young servant who will accompany Pu Yi for years - BIG LI, 30 (not ~~to~~ Eunuch). He stands beside the umpire's chair, next to Tang (RJ's chauffeur).

PU YI

"Mr. Pu Yi, and his family have been given one hour to leave the Forbidden City

(he reads aloud)

"They will be escorted to the home of his father and remain there under guard as state prisoners till further notice".

Everyone stares at him, looking stunned.

PU YI

(blazing)

What are you looking at?! Why are you all standing there? You always wanted to leave the Forbidden City! Now you've got an hour to pack! Go! Go!

Angrily he hurls his racquet away. The Soldiers stare as it spins through the air then falls clattering to the ground.

PU YI

(to the other)

Go ! Go !

Pu Chieh and the two women hurry away with the Ladies in Waiting and Servants. Big Li and Tang remain. Pu Yi turns to RJ.

PU YI

(quietly)

I always thought I hated this place...Now I'm afraid to leave.

(he looks up)

Do you think they'll kill me?

R.J.

You must reach the Foreign Settlement! You can get asylum there -- but you have to reach it!

(to Tang)

Tang! Use my car. You'll have to drive them. The Emperor must get to the Foreign Settlement!

From the umpire's chair, he watches Pu Yi walk off the court...Then, with his little box camera, he takes a last snap of the deserted scene, climbs down and hurries in the other direction.

103. OUTSIDE THE GATE OF MARTIAL VALOUR

Tension, fear and chaos. Soldiers stand round, their rifles aimed at a convoy of army limousines piled with luggage, motors running, crowded with the retinue of Imperial refugees.

The rifles swing round at Pu Yi, as he walks through the gate -- alone, and outside for the first time since he was a baby. He is dressed in a black Manchu gown, black skull cap, sunglasses and bamboo cane.

He stops -- his hand shaking slightly -- then decides not to look back. He gets into RJ's car with Pu Chieh and his two wives. A strong wind has blown up, swirling dust into the air.

As the cars set off with two Guards on the running boards and an escort of motorcycle outriders, the trunk of the car in front bursts open. Clothes fly out of it.

Everyone begins laughing and crying at the same time, excited and moved, looking back at the clothes flying away - and at the red walls of the Forbidden City receding into the distance...

Wan Jung, the most upset, looks at Pu Yi -- the only one who never looks back.

104. PRINCE CHUN'S MANSION IN PEKING

-- the home Pu Yi left when he was three -- is already surrounded by SOLDIERS as the limousines drive up. The car with the Emperor disappears into the courtyard. The other cars and motorcycles park outside. Soldiers and Servants begin to dismount and unload.

105. IN THE COURTYARD

Pu Yi's father, Prince Chun, looking hysterical, hurries towards the limousine.

TANG

Now!

Suddenly, Wan Jung and Pu Yi on one side, Wen Hsiu and Pu Chieh on the other, SHOVE the two Soldiers off the running board. As Tang makes a sudden screeching U-turn, everyone ducks and keeps their heads down.

106. OUTSIDE THE MANSION EXT. DAY

The limousine roars out through the gates -- leaving the escort shouting and shooting impotently into the storm.

107. IN THE CAR THROUGH PEKING STREETS. EXT. DAY

The four passengers, heads down, are thrown back and forth against each other as Tang turns left and right.

108. OUTSIDE THE ENTRANCE TO THE FOREIGN CONCESSION

RJ and Hsiao-Hsiu wait anxiously beside the checkpoint which is guarded by SIKHS and U.S. MARINES --

The black limousine ROARS towards them through the sand-storm. The barrier opens and closes behind it. The car brakes to a halt. The passengers get out, protecting themselves from the dust, laughing excitedly.

R.J.

Well done, Tang.

PU YI

Wan Jung -- we must buy a car!

He tosses a tennis ball at her.

WAN JUNG

A white one!

WEN HSIU

With Tang as our chauffeur!

Two young JAPANESE ATTACHES smile happily in the background.
One of them has only one arm.

HSIAO-HSIU

Your Majesty - I would like
to introduce Mr. Amakasu
and Colonel Doihara.

Pu Yi turns to greet them.

PU YI (VO)

The Japanese were the only
people prepared to help me...

109. PRISON OFFICE NO. 41. MANCHURIA 1950

Only a few minutes have passed.

INTERROGATOR

Help you for nothing?

PU YI

I was 18. I thought it was
kindness... Suddenly I realised
that for many Chinese I was an
alien -- just because I was
Manchurian. There was even an
Anti-Manchu League who wanted
to execute me... So...

(he glances at the map
on the wall)

So I went to live in Tientsin...
The Japanese wanted me to go
there. They thought it would be
safer for me there.

The Governor is still sitting at the back of the room,
watching Pu Yi from behind.

GOVERNOR

If you had read the books we
gave you more carefully you
might have learned that the
Anti-Manchu League was largely
financed by the Japanese.

Silence.

INTERROGATOR

Cigarette?

He holds out a pack. Pu Yi takes one. As he lights it for him:

INTERROGATOR

Were the Japanese paying for you in Tientsin?

Pu Yi glances at him, then laughs dryly.

PU YI

Oh no. I had to rent a villa... the Villa Chang, and it was very expensive. I spent a lot of money in Tientsin...

He sits down again, never once having looked at the Governor, still with his back to him.

INTERROGATOR

Did you believe in a restoration of the Imperial system?

PU YI

(hesitates)

...Others did. The little court-in-exile. I can't remember how much jade and jewellery they made me spend to buy the friendship of some warlord or other, or some white Russian general. I even financed an English speaking newspaper. It closed after three days. It was unreadable.

INTERROGATOR

Whose jewellery were you selling?

PU YI

Mine. And my family's.

INTERROGATOR

And what else did you spend your money on?

PU YI

(caustic)

Oh, I was never tired of buying pianos, watches, radios...

INTERROGATOR
As long as they were foreign.

PU YI
(returning the irony)
Of course. Anything Western
was good. Especially Wrigley's
chewing gum and Bayer aspirin --
and Buicks.

Suddenly from behind him:

GOVERNOR
What were your relations with
General Chiang Kai Shek and
the Kuomintang?

Pu Yi stiffens again, knowing the voice.

PU YI
None...I felt useless in
Tientsin. I dreamed of going
to the West. I became a
playboy...

DISSOLVE TO:

110. THE ENGLISH COUNTRY CLUB. TIENTSIN. SPRING.DAY

A sign on the front gates says "Dogs and Chinese not
allowed!.

111. IN THE BALLROOM OF THE CLUB

A portrait of King George V hangs above an orchestra
of amateur English jazz fanatics dressed like black and
white minstrels.

On the dance floor, the blond Western couples have
stopped to listen to "Am I Blue" -- with Pu Yi finishing
a brief guest appearance at the piano. He is 21. For
the first time we see him dressed in a well-cut Western
suit. He has diamond cuff-links, a diamond tie-pin, a
diamond ring -- and white gloves.

TITLE: TIENTSIN 1927

At the end of the set, Pu Yi returns smiling through the
applauding crowd to his table -- and his two wives.

Wan Jung is now 23, tall and elegant, with a new hairstyle,
high-heeled shoes, and a slashed skirt -- more beautiful

than a Shanghai filmstar. Wen Hsiu, 19, is less glamorous, but equally elegant, and has an irresistible smile.

Mr. AMAKASU, the Japanese with one arm, watches them from his own little table near the back. He sees Wan Jung get up, and Pu Yi leading her onto the floor -- the only Oriental couple in a crowd of Western dancers. By now he dances very well.

Wen Hsiu watches them doing the quickstep...then starts to look through their two handbags...Powder, compacts, lipsticks, jade cigarette holders -- all matching, almost identical. Then she finds a brochure with a picture of an ocean liner and two tickets inside. One is for "Mr. and Mrs. Henry Pu Yi; Tientsin-Hong-Kong-London." The other is for "Mrs. Wen Hsiu".

AMERICAN (VO)

That's a great ship -- if
you're going first class.

Wen Hsiu looks round at a tall young AMERICAN who has obviously just arrived. She slips one of the tickets into Wan Jung's bag and tears the other ticket in half.

WEN HSIU

I'm not going anywhere.
(she looks up)
Would you like to dance?

Mr. Amakasu watches the American escort her from the table -- onto the dance floor.

WEN HSIU

You are a brave man. Nobody
here would have danced with me.

AMERICAN

Why's that?

WEN HSIU

Because I'm Chinese.

AMERICAN

Well, I'm American.

He whirls her round. They like each other. Meanwhile:

WAN JUNG

(whispers to Pu Yi)
You say California. I say
Cote D'Azur!

PU YI
(whispers back)
San Francisco!

WAN JUNG
Monte Carlo!

They both laugh. Over his shoulder Wan Jung glimpses Wen Hsiu dancing with the American.

WAN JUNG
Are we really going this time?

PU YI
By "P & O!" By "Wagon Lit!"
If the Japanese Emperor can,
why can't we?

WITH WEN HSIU:

AMERICAN
Who are those two?

WEN HSIU
Oh..."Henry and Elizabeth".

AMERICAN
That's the Emperor of China?

WEN HSIU
The ex-Emperor and his wife.

AMERICAN
She's beautiful.

WEN HSIU
Yes, very.

AMERICAN
And who are you?

WEN HSIU
I'm His Highness' other wife.

AMERICAN
(stops dancing)
His other wife?

WEN HSIU
Number two wife.

AMERICAN
Well...Some people have all
the luck.

As they resume dancing, two young ENGLISHMEN run into the ballroom, holding a radio above their heads.

ENGLISHMAN

(shouting)

Ladies and gentlemen! Chiang Kai Shek has taken Shanghai! The Kuomintang have broken with the Reds! They've knocked them for six!

A spontaneous roar of applause. Music from the orchestra.

2ND ENGLISHMAN

(with champagne bottle)

The Reds are finished!

He pops the cork. Wild excitement. Pu Yi and Wan Jung glance at each other and discreetly leave the dance floor. Everyone else crowds round the stage, where the radio is being set up on a chair.

AMERICAN

Well...I guess that makes China safe for tourists again.

He glances round. Wen Hsiu has disappeared.

112 IN AN OPEN WHITE LIMOUSINE OUTSIDE THE CLUB

Tang now drives for the ex-Emperor. In the back, Pu Yi leafs through "The Tientsin Times". Pictures of General Chiang Kai Shek, of a city in flames, of a racecourse...

His two wives climb in beside him with their two Pekingese dogs. No one speaks. They drive out of the Club gates in silence, followed by a smaller second car with two JAPANESE BODYGUARDS.

113. DRIVING ALONG THE WATERFRONT OF TIENTSIN

Steamers, junks and sampans. Colonial villas, Western NANNIES, and civic fountains.

WAN JUNG

What do you think about General Chiang Kai Shek?

PU YI

(keeps reading)

Just another warlord.

WAN JUNG

He's smashed the Communists...

PU YI

The Communists were his sworn allies till a few days ago. I expect he betrayed them for money. Do you want some gum, Elizabeth?

(Wan Jung shakes her head)
Wen Hsiu?

But Wen Hsiu stares silently at the passing street.
Until:

WEN HSIU
(quietly)

I want a divorce.

Pu Yi stares at her, then smiles.

PU YI

What are you talking about?

WEN HSIU
(quietly)

I don't want to be your mistress...

PU YI

I thought you were the Secondary Consort.

WEN HSIU
(looks at him)

In the Forbidden City you were the Emperor and I was your Secondary Consort. But now you are "Henry", Wan Jung is your wife "Elizabeth". And who am I? I'm nothing.

Long pause.

PU YI
(touches her)

I didn't know you were unhappy.

WEN HSIU

You can only have one wife in the West.

The distant HOOT of a ship. Wan Jung lays her hand on Wen Hsiu's.

WEN HSIU

I want a divorce.

Pu Yi goes white with anger.

PU YI

No one can divorce me!

He resumes reading. The white limousine turns in through the guarded gates of:

114. VILLA CHANG

A large 1910 neo-classical building surrounded by a private park.

115. Tang goes up the drive and stops in front of the main entrance. Big Li and a couple of Servants. Pu Yi waits for them to open the car door and gets out first without a glance at the women. A Servant kowtows to him at the main door.

WEN HSIU

(shouts)

I want a divorce!

Pu Yi pauses...then goes on in -- quickly followed by Big Li. Nobody else moves.

116. IN THE FRONT HALL

A strange looking group -- members and hangers-on of the little court-in-exile - hover in the background. Half Chinese, half Western...Pu Yi holds out his hands. Big Li takes off his gloves. Another Servant presents him with a fresh pair on a silver dish. Pu Yi starts up the stairs.

117. OUTSIDE IN THE CAR

WAN JUNG

(softly)

Come...come inside.

WEN HSIU

Leave me alone.

Wan Jung gets out. Wen Hsiu continues to sit in the car, with her dog in her lap. Tang has never looked round.

118. A SINGLE YELLOW LEAF

Flutters down onto a bed of others, rustling in the wind. It is autumn...

119. IN AN UPSTAIRS CORRIDOR. VILLA CHANG. AUTUMN MORNING

Wen Hsiu comes out of her room, wearing a light overcoat and a hat. She slips an envelope under a door, and another under a second door.

120. IN THE HALL DOWNSTAIRS

The daily life of the little court-in-exile has already begun. Chen Pao Shen (white haired, but still with his queue) and Hsiao-Hsiu (now without a queue) go in and out of their offices, while an odd mix of White Russian conmen, poor Manchu cousins, and ageing ex-retainers wait for their appointments.

Nobody pays much attention to Wen Hsiu until she meets Big Li coming in at the door:

BIG LI

Shall I call the car, Your
Ladyship?

Wen Hsiu shakes her head.

121. OUTSIDE ON THE DRIVEWAY

It is drizzling with rain. Big Li sends a servant hurrying after Wen Hsiu with an umbrella. She takes it, to get rid of him, and keeps going.

122. AT THE GATES

The Japanese BODYGUARDS are letting in a large black car with a WOMAN in the back, when Wen Hsiu walks past. One of the Bodyguards, slow to react, steps out and stares after her, walking calmly away up the street.

She goes past a small ROAD GANG (prisoners roped at the neck), folds her umbrella, takes off her hat, and disappears in the drizzle.

123. IN THE UPSTAIRS CORRIDOR

Wan Jung races out of a room, holding a letter, and bursts into:

124. WEN HSIU'S BEDROOM

A little Pekingese dog, scratching at the door, scampers out.

The cupboards are empty; a trunk and two suitcases stand in the middle of the room, already packed.

WAN JUNG

Wen Hsiu...Oh, Wen Hsiu...

She slumps down on the trunk, looking at one of the suitcases. She opens it, stares at the clothes, starts crying...

Someone knocks at the door -- then peers in; a strange-looking GIRL with a hat.

EASTERN JEWEL

Elizabeth? Can I come in?

She doesn't wait. High heels, white satin dress...

EASTERN JEWEL

Don't you remember your cousin?

Wan Jung sees the hat come off, the hair shake loose.

WAN JUNG

Eastern Jewel! We had dancing classes together!

EASTERN JEWEL

Just before your marriage!
You silly girl! Why do people
want to get married?

Wan Jung shakes her head, can't speak. Eastern Jewel perches on the trunk beside her and wipes Wan Jung's tears with a handkerchief.

EASTERN JEWEL

What's the matter?

WAN JUNG

...Wen Hsiu has gone. She
won't come back...

EASTERN JEWEL
Is that so bad?

WAN JUNG
She was my only friend.

EASTERN JEWEL
Well...At least now you've got
him all to yourself. Isn't that
a lot better?

She takes out a small silver pipe and prepares a dose
of opium.

EASTERN JEWEL
Why are you going to Europe,
by the way?

WAN JUNG
(surprised)
You smoke opium?

EASTERN JEWEL
Be wicked. It's the best in
Shanghai.
(she lights the pipe)
The place to go is Japan. It's
more fun than anywhere -- except
Shanghai! It's modern.

WAN JUNG
How did you know we're going
to Europe? It's a secret.

EASTERN JEWEL
Oh, I know everything. Here,
you smoke it like this.

She inhales sharply and holds out the pipe...Wan Jung
hesitates, then tries it.

EASTERN JEWEL
I know Chiang Kai Shek has got
false teeth. I even know his
nickname. "Cash-my-check"!
I'm a spy - and I don't care
who knows it.

WAN JUNG
(coughing)
It's sweet...

EASTERN JEWEL
I'll be your friend.

125. IN THE CORRIDOR

Pu Yi, carrying Wen Hsiu's Pekingese, is standing in front of the door, then pushes it ajar. He is furious and deeply wounded. He sees the luggage, then the two women -- now stretched out on the bed. The pipe has disappeared.

EASTERN JEWEL
(looking at him)
Well...I'd love to be the
Emperor's new Secondary Consort
...if the post was available.

Wan Jung looks round. Eastern Jewel sits up. Keeping the dog under one arm, Pu Yi lifts one of Wen Hsiu's dresses from the open suitcase, goes over to the bed, holds it up against Eastern Jewel's neck, then pushes her slowly down till she lies flat.

He looks at her with a certain contempt, then kisses her.

PU YI
The post is vacant, dear
cousin, but you don't fit
the part.

He turns to Wan Jung.

PU YI
(aggressive)
Wen Hsiu left her dog behind.
Do you want it?

He shoves the yapping dog into her arms and strides out. Wan Jung bursts into tears.

126. IN A PEACEFUL CHINESE COUNTRYSIDE

A dusty, poorly equipped COMPANY OF SOLDIERS, barely distinguishable from brigands, They watch a fuse burn its way up a hillside.

A huge distant EXPLOSION. A cloud of dust and debris... The marauding SOLDIERS move on in.

127. AN AVENUE OF LONELY STATUES. SUMMER AFTERNOON

Stone camels and elephants stand alone in the same landscape, with the low hill in the distance -- the site of the Imperial Tombs.

The Emperor's white car, followed by three others, drives towards them.

128. OUTSIDE THE TOMBS

The cortege halts in front of an opening in the ground where a flight of broken steps leads down into the tomb. In the surrounding area, amongst the dust and rubble, a scattered group of devout Manchus, rich and poor, mourn at small makeshift altars.

They look up in surprise as Pu Yi steps out of his car wearing white funeral robes.

He is followed by Wan Jung, RJ, Chen, Hsiao-Hsiu, Big Li and a small Japanese delegation. Everyone has black arm bands and sombre faces.

129. INSIDE THE IMPERIAL TOMBS

Pu Yi and Wan Jung come down the ramp with RJ, Chen and Hsiao-Hsiu.

Pu Yi stops at the entrance of the main chamber and stares round...Bones and human debris lie scattered amongst the smashed and broken coffins. Pu Yi holds onto Wan Jung's arm for a moment, then lets go.

PU YI

(quietly)

Please leave me alone, now...

130. OUTSIDE THE TOMBS

Wan Jung and RJ remain near the entrance, slightly apart from the accompanying Japanese delegation (a few diplomats and officers). As they wait:

WAN JUNG

(hushed voice)

What are you thinking about,
Mr. Johnston?

R.J.

I'm thinking how little
Westerners will understand
about this. The Imperial
Tombs have been robbed by one
of Chiang Kai Shek's armies.
The Republic has broken its
last promise. So they're
shocked. But not many of them
realise how much this sacrilege
means to the Chinese --

(CONTINUED)

R.J. (CONT)

-- or the Manchurians. They
don't understand about
ancestor worship.

While they stand there, talking, the Manchurian mourners
have started to gather in front of the tomb, many of
them kneeling, waiting for Pu Yi to come out.

WAN JUNG

I've never seen him like this,
Mr. Johnston! He talks about
Manchuria all the time now!...
You are lucky to be going home.
We will never leave China now.

R.J.

I'm going to be a professor at
London University. I'm not so
sure I'm looking forward to it.
I've been in this country for
28 years.

Chen and Hsiao-Hsiu separate. Hsiao-Hsiu joins the
Japanese. Chen strolls off on his own.

Wan Jung, who keeps looking at the group of Japanese,
becomes suddenly intense.

WAN JUNG

It's the Japanese who are
getting closer to him!...They
come to see him every day!

RJ glances at her, then at the Japanese.

WAN JUNG

He's sending Pu Chieh to the
Military Academy in Tokyo!...
I'm frightened, Mr. Johnston...
I think they will try to use
him...

R.J.

He must try to use them.

WAN JUNG

But do you trust the Japanese,
Mr. Johnston?

A beat, while RJ studies the Japanese delegation. At
the back is the discreet figure of Mr. Amakasu.

R.J.

Who else is there to trust?
They're the only foreigners
who cared enough to come here...

WAN JUNG

Yes.

Pu Yi appears between them, coming out of the tomb. He may have heard the end of their conversation, but doesn't show it. He stares at the surrounding crowd of Manchurians, kneeling on the ground, kowtowing towards him.

PU YI

(quietly)

China has turned its back on me.

As he walks on, Wan Jung watches the protective Japanese coming forward to surround him with bows and condolences.

WAN JUNG

(almost a whisper)

Mr. Amakasu never says hello to
me...

DISSOLVE TO:

131. PRISON OFFICE NO. 41. MANCHURIA. SUMMER 1951

The same room, a different season. The Governor, the Interrogator and the Scribe have short-sleeved shirts, straw slippers and bamboo fans. And the Governor's place at the back is now institutionalised by an old orange armchair...

The Interrogator is ordering the papers on his desk. Today there are two empty stools in front of him. A knock at the door.

PU YI (VO)

9811

INTERROGATOR

Come in.

The Governor keeps his back turned, pouring himself a glass of water, as Pu Yi comes in, notes the extra stool and sits down. He wears a blue cotton uniform and his same brown shoes, drab but neat. (He still has his valet to look after his appearance).

The Interrogator produces an exercise book from one of the two piles stacked beside him. (Piles 981 and 983). He turns the pages, not looking up.

INTERROGATOR

By the way, what do you call this part of China?

PU YI

The North East.

INTERROGATOR

And what did you call it as a child?

PU YI

Manchuria...

INTERROGATOR

Japan invaded North East China on September 18th, 1931...and began to set up a puppet state in Manchuria called "Manchukuo".

Pu Yi nods. The Governor sits down in the armchair behind him, lazily cooling himself with his fan. There is a brown paper parcel beside him.

INTERROGATOR

Shortly afterwards, Colonel Doihara came to see you in Tientsin, to request your collaboration.

(Pu Yi nods again)

Which you refused?

(another nod)

Speak up!

PU YI

(abrupt)

Yes.

INTERROGATOR

But a month later, on November 10th, there you are -- in Manchuria...

(he turns a page)

Now according to this so-called "confession" of yours, you didn't go of your own free will. You insist that you were "kidnapped" by the Japanese.

PU YI

Yes.

INTERROGATOR

And taken to Manchuria by force?

PU YI

Yes.

Pu Yi doesn't blink, but he's sweating. It is very hot. The Interrogator nods to the Scribe, who gets up and opens the door...

Fanning himself, the Interrogator watches Pu Yi's face as another man is shown to the stool beside him -- Big Li. The two prisoners are clearly very tense and hardly look at each other...The Interrogator takes an exercise book from the other pile (983).

INTERROGATOR

Is this your confession?

Big Li swallows, then nods.

INTERROGATOR

Isn't it unusual for a man who is "kidnapped" to have his luggage packed by his valet the day before he's kidnapped? ...Who told you to pack this man's luggage?

Pu Yi stiffens. Big Li cannot answer. The Interrogator picks up Pu Yi's confession and dangles the two exercise books in front of them.

INTERROGATOR

These two stories don't fit...

Silence...The Governor gets up and, for the first time -- comes round to sit beside the Interrogator, facing Pu Yi.

Calmly, the Governor unwraps a parcel and produces Johnston's book. Suddenly Pu Yi looks frightened.

GOVERNOR

Do you know this book? It is called "Twilight in the Forbidden City," by Mr. Reginald Johnston, your former tutor. Page 449: "The Chinese endeavour to make out that the Emperor had been kidnapped by the Japanese is wholly untrue...

(CONTINUED)

GOVERNOR (CONT)

He left Tientsin and went to
Manchuria of his own free
will..."

He glances up at Pu Yi...After an age:

PU YI

(in a low whisper)

Johnston was a liar...

The Governor stares at him with a mixture of anger and
contempt. The silence becomes painful. The Governor
takes out a cigarette. He lights a match.

GOVERNOR

What did you say? I didn't
hear you.

Pu Yi cannot speak...

INTERROGATOR

You're lying! You're both
lying!

Losing control, he flings the exercise books in their
faces -- and hurries out of the room. The Scribe looks
shaken -- nervous of the Governor's reaction. The
Governor, stony-faced, signals for him to leave.

Big Li picks up the exercise books, tries to hand them
to him, then lays them on the desk.

The Governor continues staring at Pu Yi. He pushes
Johnston's book into view between the two exercise books
...then follows the others out of the room, closing the
door behind him.

132. IN THE CORRIDOR OUTSIDE PRISON OFFICE NO. 41

The young Interrogator is staring out of a window,
clutching the bars.

GOVERNOR

(behind him)

Do you think you are the only
one who suffered?...Control
yourself!

INTERROGATOR

(almost sobbing)

My family was buried alive in
Manchukuo! I watched my mother
dig her own grave!

(CONTINUED)

INTERROGATOR (CONT)
We should smash the enemies!
Smash them forever!

GOVERNOR
Stop it! This isn't an
ordinary prison -- this is a
special prison! We're not here
for revenge, or just to punish
people. Our job is to prove that
they can change!

The Interrogator turns to look at him.

GOVERNOR
So we have to change ourselves...
Whatever happens in other places,
there will be no physical violence
here.

(a pause)
I had two children, you know --
they were blown up in front of
my eyes. I can never forget it.

He looks towards the closed door of the office...

133. QUAYSIDE OF TIENTSIN RIVER PORT. DAY

Pu Yi and RJ sit in the back of a new black Buick.
Nearby, we can see the bottom of the gangplank of the
lighter which will carry RJ out to the liner. The car
is surrounded by the last minute chaos of COOLIES,
luggage and departing WESTERNERS.

The HOOT of a ship.

PU YI
I'm going to miss you, Johnston.

R.J.
So am I, Your Majesty.

Long pause.

PU YI
Do you think a man can become
Emperor again?

R.J.
Yes...

They shake hands for the last time.

PU YI

Farewell...

R.J.

Farewell, Your Majesty.

Pu Yi hands him a small box and turns away. RJ boards the lighter.

ON THE DECK

RJ opens the box and takes out a beautiful hand-painted fan -- a yellow dragon. He looks back at the quay. A small Chinese band is standing beside the Emperor's car playing the haunting notes of an old Scottish song: "For Old Lang Syne..."

As the small ship casts off, RJ remains at the rail, with his fan, looking towards the car, listening to the music, saying goodbye to China...

IN THE CAR

Pu Yi sits alone in the back, watching the ship sail away. The band is still playing...

Suddenly, Tang jumps out and runs to the edge of the quay...shouting and waving.

TANG

Goodbye Mr. Johnston! We will
never forget you, Mr. Johnston!

As the last strains of "Old Lang Syne" die away:

134. PU YI'S OFFICE. VILLA CHANG. NIGHT

Pu Yi sits gazing at a brilliant lump of coal in a glass jar (one of his wedding presents). He is very tense, dressed in a dark cloak with white gloves and a cane walking stick.

He takes out the coal and sets it down on Manchuria -- part of a large map which covers the table.

Big Li can be seen in the doorway behind, wearing an overcoat, supervising a servant who carries Pu Yi's two black suitcases. (The same as he has in jail). Wan Jung appears a moment later, slightly breathless.

WAN JUNG

(quietly)

Chen Pao Shen wishes you a
safe journey...

PU YI

You mean he doesn't want to
come and say goodbye.

WAN JUNG

(suddenly)

Please don't go...

PU YI

He'll see me when he comes to
my coronation.

WAN JUNG

You can still change your mind!

PU YI

"My kingdom is my mind," as RJ
used to say.

WAN JUNG

You don't need a kingdom! You
can still choose!

PU YI

(stands up)

Coal! Oil! Railways!
Manchuria is the richest
frontier on earth! And it's
my country! I'm going to build
a country!

135. INSIDE THE GARAGE. NIGHT

A young JAPANESE OFFICER clicks his heels as Pu Yi
enters. Tang waits beside the black Buick, (parked
between the white one and a sports car). Everyone looks
tense.

JAPANESE OFFICER

Your Highness...The Kuomintang
has many checkpoints. It would
be better if you were not seen...

He indicates the boot of the black car, already open,
lined with a soft tartan blanket and provided with a
cushion.

JAPANESE OFFICER
You can also open it from the
inside...

Wan Jung smiles faintly. Pu Yi, with great panache,
folds himself into the boot.

PU YI
Is this the way to become an
Emperor?

WAN JUNG
(last try)
They'll never make you an
Emperor!

PU YI
(fiercely)
Yes, they will...

He pulls the lid shut. Tang and the Japanese Officer
climb into the front. Big Li opens the garage door.

Wan Jung at the window, puts her hand on Tang's arm --
asking him to take care of Pu Yi.

The car glides out, picking up Big Li. Wan Jung
follows, her eyes on the boot.

136. OUTSIDE VILLA CHANG. NIGHT

Chen Pao Shen, the old man with the long white queue,
waits in the shadows on the front steps and sees the
car go by...The back is empty.

Wan Jung stops in front of him. She watches the car
disappear into the night, then turns round. Chen is
already going indoors -- and Eastern Jewel coming out.

DISSOLVE BACK TO:

137. PRISON OFFICE NO. 41. MANCHURIA. SUMMER 1951

Pu Yi and Big Li are still sitting on their two stools,
alone, in deathly silence, with RJ's book on the desk
in front of them, between the two exercise books.
Finally, not looking at him, speaking quietly:

PU YI
Why did you write it?

BIG LI
It's the truth...

The Governor comes back in the room, and stops in front of them.

GOVERNOR
(to Pu Yi)
You went to Manchuria by your own choice, and of your own free will. You're the liar -- not Johnston!

The two men stare at each other -- a battle of wills.

GOVERNOR
Guard!

The Guard hurries in.

GOVERNOR
(turns his back)
Take these people away...

138. IN THEIR PRISON CELL. DAWN

It is twilight, 5 a.m. Pu Yi lies asleep on a mat on the kang (shelf bed) with Pu Chieh, and Big Li...The weak electric light bulb is kept on all night. An EYE appears in the peephole...

Suddenly, the prison reveille is sounded -- six loud BLASTS over the loudspeaker, which wakes everyone in the prison.

Pu Yi remains on the kang while the others get washed and dressed, and Big Li gets things ready for him -- vest, trousers, water, comb, toothbrush. A silent daily ritual.

Pu Yi is preparing to brush his teeth when he notes that there isn't any toothpaste on the brush. He holds it out to Big Li who is kneeling at his feet, doing up the Imperial shoelaces.

PU YI
You forgot my toothpaste...

But as Big Li looks up, Pu Yi notices the eye watching through the open peephole -- just before it shuts.

139. IN THE PRISON CORRIDOR

The eye was the Governor's. He turns to the Tough Warder.

GOVERNOR

Move him.

140. As he walks off, the Tough Warder unlocks the door of the cell -- and finds all three prisoners standing with tin spoons and empty plates -- ready for breakfast.

TOUGH WARDER

981! Collect your bed roll!

Pu Yi is taken completely by surprise.

TOUGH WARDER

I said, collect your bed roll!

Pu Yi puts his plate down, and picks up the bed roll...
Going out:

PU YI

(whispers to the others)
Keep to the story...!

BIG LI

(urgent)

What about the jewels? What
are you going to do?

PU YI

You must stick to the story.

141. IN THE CORRIDOR

Pu Yi, carrying his bed roll, his eyes down, follows the Warder past the other cells towards the barred door at the end.

Going through it, he passes the Governor who is standing there, watching him.

GOVERNOR

Stop.

He leans down and undoes Pu Yi's shoe-laces.

GOVERNOR

Your laces are undone. Do
them up.

Pu Yi kneels down and fumbles with his shoe-laces, frightened, humiliated, because he doesn't know how to do them up.

GOVERNOR

You'll have a lot of time
to practice in your new cell.

He walks away.

142. ANOTHER CORRIDOR. ANOTHER CELL...

Pu Yi stands in the doorway, head down, stared at by six other PRISONERS, five of them sitting at a table where they were writing in their exercise books.

THIRD WARDER

(finishing)

...Thursday you serve lunch,
Friday you clean the toilet,
Saturday you sweep the floor.

The door slams, the bolt closes. Pu Yi looks up. The other six nod silently or ignore him. One of them is the Man with Grey Eyes (from the lorry), another is old and half senile.

Shaken, Pu Yi stares at a prisoner kneeling in the cubicle cleaning the toilet...then raps hurriedly on the door. The little window flies open again. The Third Warden stares in.

PU YI

I've never been separated
from my family before...I'm
not used to it.

THIRD WARDER

So? Get used to it!

PU YI

I...

He can't speak. The window closes in his face.

PRISONER

(cleaning the toilet)

It's not so bad. People get used
to anything.

(he goes to wash his hands
in the basin)

(CONTINUED)

PRISONER (CONT)
You don't remember me, do you?
I was Minister of Trade, in
Manchukuo.

PU YI
You were all in Manchukuo...

2nd PRISONER
(stands up)
I am the Cell Leader, now. It
is important to follow the
rules here.

Suddenly, the window opens again.

THIRD WARDER
Since he is ill, Prisoner 981
is exempted from cleaning the
toilet.

He shuts the window. Silence. Nobody looks at Pu Yi.

DISSOLVE TO:

143. CHANGCHUN. MANCHURIA. A COLD AUTUMN DAY

An outdoor altar -- three concentric earth platforms,
about 30 feet high, surrounded by a wall of vast red
and white awnings -- has been specially erected in the
midst of a flat, open plain. Factory chimneys and
mountains of coal in the distance. An industrial frontier.

TITLE: MANCHURIA 1934.

Gathered outside the altar are Manchu and Mongolian
BANNERMEN and OFFICIALS, all dressed in their long
put-away ceremonial regalia. A collection of limousines.
A troop of TRIBESMEN mounted on camels. A small group
of DIPLOMATS, JOURNALISTS and PHOTOGRAPHERS.

A VERMILION COLOURED LINCOLN

with golden orchids painted on the doors and roof draws
up in front of a brilliant yellow carpet. Pu Yi steps
out wearing the Dragon Robes of the Manchu Dynasty. He
is twenty eight.

He passes through the awnings, reaches the altar, and
climbs up the ramps, past lines of uniformed PALACE
GUARDS, to the highest platform of all -- a temporary
"Temple of Heaven".

At the altar, facing the sacred flame, attended by LAMAS and ACOLYTES, he is handed the jade seals of the Manchu Dynasty -- the same seals he held as a boy.

The coronation is not only an event in Pu Yi's past. Many of the other men from the prison are there -- almost all of them.

Doihara, the young Japanese Officers, and Mr. Amakasu are grouped together. Not far away is Hsiao-Hsiu the new Prime Minister of Manchukuo, and behind him the Minister of Trade, and the senile old man from Pu Yi's new cell -- CHING HUI. Also the man with Grey Eyes -- a lieutenant in the palace guard.

On another platform Pu Chieh, in military uniform, is accompanied by his new Japanese wife, LADY HIRO SAGA, who is visibly pregnant. Wan Jung, in a strange mood, observes her with attention.

At a signal from the Master of Ceremonies all the Manchus and Mongols perform the traditional 9-fold kowtow. Pu Yi turns around. For a brief moment, the world looks almost as it did long ago...a carpet of humanity lying at his feet.

EASTERN JEWEL

(whispers into Wan Jung's ear)

Chen Pao Shen is a fool. How could he miss the return of the dynasty?

Wan Jung looks at Hsiao-Hsiu -- then at the mountain of coal in the distance.

WAN JUNG

It looks like the inauguration of a coal mine...

Pu Yi kneels down. The High Lama cuts the throat of a snow-white bull. Pu Yi raises up the seals to Heaven.

144. THE PALACE OF CHANGCHUN. NIGHT

A high, two-storey brick building with a roof of yellow tiles, severe but imposing. The lights are all on, cars and guests arriving...

145. IN THE GREAT HALL OF THE PALACE. NIGHT

Wan Jung and Eastern Jewel, both beautiful in Western-style ball gowns are coming along an upstairs corridor with two Ladies in Waiting. Wan Jung looks detached, almost dreamy, while Eastern Jewel is filled with excitement.

EASTERN JEWEL

You're an Empress now, and what
I'm going to be is a pilot.

A WAITER goes by with a tray of champagne glasses, Eastern Jewel grabs a couple, and gulps one back.

EASTERN JEWEL

I'm going to train at a secret
base near Yokohama. To learn
precision bombing.

She stops beside a small JAPANESE FILM CREW who are looking down over a balcony, starting to film.

EASTERN JEWEL

(gazing down)

I want to bomb Shanghai.

WAN JUNG

Bomb Shanghai?

EASTERN JEWEL

I hate China.

She laughs and drains the other glass.

WAN JUNG

I hate you.

EASTERN JEWEL

The Kwangtung Army! Quickly!

She runs on ahead, while Wan Jung lingers, looking down into the big marble hall below...

IN THE HALL

Two enormous crystal chandeliers shine and TINKLE. A big military band, canapes, and champagne -- the coronation party -- with the guests now dressed mostly in Western-style diplomatic or military uniform. Several Europeans and many Japanese amongst them. Flags hang from the balustrades with the Orchid insignia of Manchukuo.

The High Command of the Japanese Kwangtung Army, about ten people in full dress military uniform, enter the hall and stop in front of Pu Yi. The new Emperor stands at the top of a short flight of steps, dressed in a full dress uniform of the Concorde Party, flanked by members of his government.

The Japanese make a formal bow. GENERAL ISHIKARI speaks in short, clipped tones.

TRANSLATOR

"On behalf of the Emperor of Japan the Commander of the Kwangtung Army extends his warmest congratulations on the occasion of His Majesty's coronation!

For Pu Yi it is a moment of triumph. He bows in return. Another bow from the Japanese, another statement by General Ishikari.

TRANSLATOR

"Manchukuo will grow into a great nation. Japan will always be at her side to help it."

The military band strikes up...

FROM THE MAIN STAIRS

Wan Jung, coming down with a Lady in Waiting, sees Pu Yi sharing a toast with General Ishikari. The reception is now in full swing, taking place in several rooms. Eastern Jewel is flirting with a handsome Japanese Colonel who is giving her his sword.

Grey Eyes observes Wan Jung as she continues into the crowded main hall, keeping to the sides as if she wanted to be on her own. Her eyes are slightly glazed.

Pausing briefly, she watches Pu Chieh introducing his pregnant wife to Hsiao-Hsiu and then to Mr. Amakasu (civilian clothes). Lady Hiro Saga looks very beautiful in her traditional silk kimono.

PU CHIEH

My wife, the Lady Hiro Saga...
Prime Minister Hsiao-Hsiu...The
Honourable Chang Ching-Hui,
Minister of Defence -- and Mr.
Amakasu...He is the new Chief of
the Manchurian Motion Picture Studios.

Wan Jung finds a chair near the back and sits down. She stares at a huge bouquet of white orchids -- one of many in the hall. She pulls out one of the flowers, starts plucking at the white petals, then begins to eat them....

Pu Yi is in the midst of his guests smiling and laughing, when Big Li comes up and whispers in his ear.

Pu Yi glances round and sees Wan Jung eating the petals... He goes over to sit beside her, maintaining a formal front to the room, trying to control his anger.

PU YI

(furious whisper)

Why do you have to spoil it?

WAN JUNG

(dreamily)

Mr. Amakasu is the most powerful man in Manchukuo...

PU YI

What are you talking about?

(he glances at Mr. Amakasu
then back at her)

You didn't believe I could be
Emperor again! But I am!

WAN JUNG

(softly)

You're blind...

PU YI

Do you know what an Empress
is? You are an Empress!

Wan Jung tries to sit up straight.

WAN JUNG

(softly)

Why don't you make love to
me any more?

PU YI

Because you've become an
opium addict! Opium killed my
mother! Opium destroyed China!

WAN JUNG

You can buy opium anywhere in
Manchukuo. In any shop.

PU YI
Shut up! Shut up!

WAN JUNG
(slight tears)
Your brother is going to have
a child...

The CRACKLE of fireworks outside.

WAN JUNG
We must have a child...We must
have an heir!

PU YI
Emperor Hirohito has officially
invited us to Tokyo...I'm going
alone. You are staying here.

WAN JUNG
I would never go to Japan.

PU YI
Then go to your room.

A semi-circle has formed around them. Pu Chieh raises
a champagne glass in a toast.

PU CHIEH
Ten thousand years to His
Majesty the Emperor!

CHORUS OF GUESTS
Ten thousand years! Ten
thousand years!

146. IN HER BEDROOM UPSTAIRS

Wan Jung lies on her bed smoking a pipe of opium prepared
by an old Lady in Waiting...Beyond the window:

147. A FIREWORK

A huge five-clawed Dragon, EXPLODES in the night sky
outside and

DISSOLVES INTO:

148. THE SNOW CAPPED PEAK OF FUJIYAMA. DAY...

-- accompanied by the BOOM of an artillery salute...

149. AT TOKYO STATION. DAY

A train decorated with flags and bunting, is drawing in. The great steel buffers on the front of the engine MEET AGAINST the ones at the end of the line.

The full length of the platform is covered in red carpet, with Japanese Soldiers lined up presenting arms.

Pu Yi steps down from the train.

There to meet him is HIROHITO, Emperor of Japan. Only five years older, (30 and 35), wearing almost identical clothes, even the same kind of round glasses...

Hirohito starts to hold out his hand -- then has to wait -- while Pu Yi calmly removes his white gloves.

From a window, Big Li watches with pride as the two Sons of Heaven shake hands.

DISSOLVE TO:

150. CHANGCHUN. MANCHURIA. A FEW WEEKS LATER.

A grey winter sky over a white and virgin Manchurian wilderness...

Facing it is the dismal grey capital of Manchukuo -- a few factory chimneys in the middle of nowhere. Three black cars and a Japanese motorcycle escort follow the Emperor's vermilion Lincoln into town.

151. IN FRONT OF THE PALACE

The cortege draws up at the main entrance. Big Li jumps out of the Lincoln and opens the other door.

A Lieutenant of the Palace Guard (Grey Eyes) together with his troop, start to salute. Pu Yi steps out in a Marshall's uniform, smiling and confident.

He salutes the two lines of Guards, then, frowning, turns to the Lieutenant.

PU YI

Where is your gun, Lieutenant?
(he looks at the others)
Where are their rifles?

GREY EYES

(quietly)

Our weapons have been removed,
Your Majesty. On the orders of
Colonel Yoshioka.

PU YI

Colonel Yoshioka?

He looks at the faces of the small reception committee waiting in front of the door -- all Japanese. He recognises no one...but notices the newly placed, crossed flags of Manchukuo and Japan.

As he reaches them, his face blackening, a JAPANESE OFFICER, about 35, steps forward.

JAPANESE OFFICER

Colonel Yoshioka.

He bows and clicks his heels.

PU YI

What has happened here? Why
has my Guard been disarmed?

YOSHIOKA

Yes, it is very unfortunate,
Your Majesty. There have been
many changes -- while you were
in Tokyo...

Pu Yi catches sight of Wan Jung watching his arrival from the balcony above, half-hidden by the flags.

She steps quickly back out of sight. Pu Yi brushes past Yoshioka, ignoring the Japanese reception committee.

152. IN THE MAIN HALL

CHING HUI (the old man in his prison cell) stands before him, bowing, with a couple of CHINESE ASSISTANTS. The Japanese group hovers by the door.

PU YI

Why is Prime Minister Hsiao-
Hsiu not here to receive me?

CHING HUI

The Prime Minister has resigned,
Your Majesty. His son has been
assassinated.

Pu Yi stares at him...

PU YI
Assassinated?

CHING HUI
By Communist bandits, Your Majesty.

PU YI
I must see him at once.

CHING HUI
He refuses to see anyone, Your Majesty. He has retired to a monastery -- far away.

PU YI
(stares at him)
Who are you?

CHING HUI
Chang Ching Hui, Your Majesty.
Minister of Defence.

PU YI
Yes. Of course...

He walks past him up the stairs, followed by Big Li.
He looks shaken. From behind him:

CHING HUI
The Council Meeting will be
at 4.00 o'clock, Your Majesty
-- before the dinner.

CUT TO:

153. PRISON OFFICE NO. 41. MANCHURIA 1951

Ching Hui, sixteen years older - and senile -- is sitting
in front of a bright lamp.

CHING HUI
(eagerly)
Hsiao-Hsiu was an idiot! He
didn't understand a thing! He
opposed the opium policy -- when
the Japanese wanted cash!
(he grins proudly)
Well, I'd been in the opium business
all my life! I could get to anyone!
(CONTINUED)

CHING HUI (CONT)

To the Green Gang in Shanghai!
To Big Eared Tu! Even to
Cash-my-Check!...Opium, heroin,
all drugs! That's why the
Japanese wanted me to become
Prime Minister!

CUT BACK TO:

154. MANCHUKUO. THE THRONE ROOM OF THE PALACE

Looks like the living room of a luxury hotel apartment.

The Council of State is ready to start. Two double rows of chairs, Japanese on one side, Manchurians on the other, facing each other across a red carpeted aisle.

Everyone stands as Pu Yi, in coat and tails, walks past and takes his place on a pompous-looking gilded throne at the end of the room.

A Japanese hands a folder to an Imperial AIDE DE CAMP who lays it on the lectern in front of the Emperor...

PU YI

(looks at the audience)

We read:

(he looks down)

"After careful consideration we have decided to nominate the honourable Chang Ching Hui as the new Prime Minister of Manchukuo".

He glances at Ching Hui, sitting confidently on the side of the aisle, with the rest of the cabinet -- including the "Minister of Trade" and another face from his cell.

PU YI

"The first priority of our new government must be to increase the revenue of the State..."

He turns the page...stops -- then closes the folder.

PU YI

No...Today, on the occasion of our return from Japan, we wish to speak about something more important -- the future of our friendship with Japan.

Colonel Yoshioka and the other Japanese Advisers look uneasily at each other. But Mr. Amakasu who is sitting anonymously at the back (the only familiar face) shows no reaction.

PU YI

This is based on mutual respect, and respect means equality, and independence.

The audience begins to look increasingly uncomfortable...

PU YI

When the two Emperors stood together and saluted the two national flags, they recognised that Manchukuo had come of age. Manchukuo is not a colony.

Suddenly, without warning, Mr. Amakasu gets to his feet, turns his back on the Emperor and walks calmly out of the door...Almost immediately Yoshioka and the entire Japanese delegation follow suit...The Manchukuo Ministers look visibly shaken, and don't know what to do.

PU YI

...The relationship between our two countries is like the relationship between its two Emperors. It is rooted in fraternal trust, in the desire to preserve our ancient traditions, and in a mutual respect for our national identities.

Silently, led by Ching Hui, the Manchurian Ministers get up, bowing and scraping, and back out of the room, until Pu Yi is left alone -- with the two Footmen.

PU YI

...Already we have welcomed the Ambassadors of the Vatican, Costa Rica, and San Salvador. Soon, we are sure, other countries will follow their example...

His voice dries up...He stares at the empty room.

155. IN THE STATE DINING ROOM. MINUTES LATER

The long table is laid for an official dinner. Sixteen places, perfectly set, the plates decorated with the crossed flags of Japan and Manchukuo. But there is no one there except Wan Jung.

Pu Yi comes in, moving slowly, like an automat. He sits down at the far end -- three vases of orchids away from his wife. He pulls off his white gloves, drenched with sweat, and hands them to the WAITER, his hands still trembling.

PU YI
(quietly)
You were right.

Another WAITER presents him with an enormous silver platter. The Emperor nods without looking at the food. The Waiters serve him, then carry the platter to Wan Jung. She shakes her head, not hungry, her eyes dreamy.

Pu Yi takes one mouthful and puts down his fork.

WAN JUNG
I am going to have a child...

Pu Yi looks up. The TINKLE of a chandelier. The Waiters at attention.

WAN JUNG
(a whisper)
The father is Manchurian...

Pu Yi is still reacting, when Yoshioka and Mr. Amakasu enter the room, bowing.

WAN JUNG
(another whisper)
I did it for you.

Yoshioka lays the yellow folder on the table beside him.

YOSHIOKA
His Majesty forgot to sign the appointment of the new Prime Minister, Mr. Ching Hui.

PU YI
(still looking at Wan Jung)
I didn't forget.

Mr. Amakasu speaks for the first time in the film -- in an almost perfect English accent.

MR. AMAKASU
When an Englishman robs someone, Your Majesty, he becomes a gentleman. If he robs a lot he becomes a knight. Do you imagine the British run their empire as a charity? If India has to pay for the cost of its own occupation, so must Manchukuo...

Pu Yi gets quietly up and goes to stand behind Wan Jung. Gently he puts his hand on her shoulder.

PU YI

We hope Manchukuo will have
an heir...The Empress is
expecting a child.

The two Japanese barely react...

MR. AMAKASU

Yes, Your Majesty, we are aware
of the situation.

He jots down a name on a card.

MR. AMAKASU

This is the name of the father.

He hands the card to Yoshioka, who delivers it to Pu Yi.

Slowly, staring at the card, Pu Yi returns to his place. Incredulous, he stares at Wan Jung, whose eyes are lowered, then sits slowly down facing the yellow folder.

MR. AMAKASU

The Emperor cannot allow his
honour to be stained!

The Emperor and the Empress have been trapped. Pu Yi opens the yellow folder...and signs the nomination of Prime Minister Ching Hui...

MR. AMAKASU

The Japanese are the only divine
race on earth! We will take
Hong Kong, Vietnam, Thailand,
Malaya, Singapore and India!
Asia belongs to us!

156. IN THE GARAGE

Tang is polishing the vermilion Lincoln. He glances round. Someone SHOTS him through the forehead. He spins. Blood SPLATTERS across the bonnet of the car and over the mascot - a solid gold orchid.

A HAND picks up the rag and wipes the blood away.

157. IN PU YI'S SECOND CELL. MANCHURIA. WINTER. 1952

Pu Yi and the other six prisoners sit round the table next to a small fire -- six bricks of coal. All of them are re-writing their confessions.

Pu Yi listens to the scratch of their pen nibs and gazes at their faces...

PU YI

(quietly)

...You are all pretending,
aren't you? You are just
pretending!

Everyone stares at him...

CELL LEADER

(shocked whisper)

You can't speak like that...
That is counter-revolutionary
talk!

PU YI

But I know who you all are!

The Cell Leader stands up. All the prisoners look horrified except Grey Eyes, who watches with sympathy, and Ching Hui, old and senile, who keeps writing throughout.

PU YI

(pointing around)

You were a spy!...You...became
Minister of War!...You were an
astrologer!

CELL LEADER

(stands up)

Shut up! I'm the Cell Leader now!
I'll call the Guard!

PU YI

You're still the same people!
People don't change! They
never change!

He picks up his exercise book and goes to sit on the shelf bed alone.

DISSOLVE TO:

158. THE PALACE AT MANCHUKUO. MIDWINTER

The shutters on the windows are all closed, sealed with ice.

159. IN WAN JUNG'S BEDROOM

Wan Jung's face is covered with sweat. She is far into labour. She makes no sound.

A healthy new-born BABY cries loudly in the hands of a MIDWIFE.

A young JAPANESE DOCTOR goes to Wan Jung's bedside, preparing a syringe.

160. IN THE EMPEROR'S PRIVATE DINING ROOM

(smaller than the State dining room). Pu Yi sits alone, hardly eating, when Big Li comes in behind him -- followed by the Japanese Doctor.

BIG LI

Your Majesty...The Doctor is here.

The Emperor sits up sharply without turning...

DOCTOR

(from behind)

The child was born dead, Your Majesty...

PU YI

How is the Empress?

DOCTOR

It will be better if she goes to a clinic, somewhere warm...

Pu Yi gets up and goes silently over to the window.

DOCTOR

She has already left, Your Majesty.

Outside in the snow, Pu Yi can see a black car, like an ambulance, parked in front of the entrance. He turns on his heel and rushes out.

161. IN THE MARBLE HALL

Pu Yi runs towards the entrance.

162 OUTSIDE THE PALACE

The black car with a white cross on the back is already driving away.

Pu Yi hurries after it across the snow-covered ground, then stops, as the car passes out through the iron gates, and the gates swing shut.

When he turns round again, he finds Big Li standing anxiously behind him with an overcoat and an umbrella...

As he walks back, Pu Yi sees Yoshioka, Amakasu, and Eastern Jewel (in military uniform) watching him from the balcony, bowing politely, looking grave and concerned. Actors on stage...

163 ON THE BALCONY

As the Emperor returns indoors, Eastern Jewel takes Amakasu's hand. Their fingers entwine...

DISSOLVE TO:

164. THE PRISON COURTYARD. MANCHURIA. SPRING 1953

Pu Yi and a large group of Prisoners are lined up at attention, singing a patriotic propaganda song. When they come to the end, the Governor, who has been watching from a slight distance, murmurs to a Warder.

THIRD WARDER

9811

Pu Yi hurries over. The Governor looks him up and down. As usual, Pu Yi's uniform is creased and filthy, a pocket torn, his trouser legs seemingly different lengths, his shoelaces undone, his jacket buttons in the wrong holes.

GOVERNOR

How long have you been here?

PU YI

Three years...

GOVERNOR

You were issued with the same clothes as everyone else, you know. Why can't you learn to look after yourself?

(he touches one of Pu Yi's buttons)

There have been complaints from your cellmates. You must learn how to urinate at night without waking them all up...The thing to do is to urinate against the side of the bucket -- not into the middle...

Everyone is watching them, and everyone can hear. Pu Yi feels publicly humiliated.

GOVERNOR

(quietly)

By the way -- you were just pretending to sing, weren't you?

He moves on, leaving Pu Yi alone, and isolated, fumbling with his buttons...Big Li comes closer, and watches him in silence. Finally:

BIG LI

You still think I'm your servant, don't you?

He walks away, leaving Pu Yi shocked and paralysed, unable to look the other Prisoners in the face.

Then suddenly, Big Li returns. With tears of frustration he grabs Pu Yi by his jacket and roughly does up his buttons for him, the right way. Then:

BIG LI

If you don't tell them about the jewels, I will! I swear I will!

He hurries away. Pu Yi remains on his own...He gazes round the courtyard, takes a few paces, then stops again and stares at the ground, lost in thought...

165. , IN THE GOVERNOR'S OFFICE. THE SAME DAY

A large black suitcase -- one of the ones Pu Yi arrived in prison with -- stands open on a table. The clothes it contained (masses of gloves) are stacked on a chair. A panel has been cut out revealing a fake bottom -- the hiding place for a glittering collection of gems and jewellery.

Two young OFFICERS are solemnly counting and cataloguing the items -- including the famous jade seals.

PU YI

I was wrong to hide them...
I want to give them to the
Chinese people.

The Governor stands near the window, looking at him, trying to fathom his motives.

GOVERNOR

"Give them to the people" --
or protect yourself from
punishment?

(Pu Yi doesn't answer)

I mean, is it courage or cowardice?

He stamps a document on his desk and holds it out.

GOVERNOR

Anyway, here's your receipt.

PU YI

(thrown)

No! Please -- I want to give
them!

GOVERNOR

Your receipt. 468 pieces.

Pu Yi stares at him, lost for words. (The Officers have barely begun counting)

GOVERNOR

You must think we're very
stupid if you imagine we
didn't know about these since
the day you arrived.

PU YI

I --

GOVERNOR

You see we're more interested
in people than jewels...

He studies Pu Yi for a moment, looking for something
in his face, then turns back to the window.

GOVERNOR

The first time I saw you, you
weren't a person...You were a
puppet...

DISSOLVE TO:

166. A WOODEN STAGE IN A SMALL VILLAGE

- in the midst of an eternal Chinese landscape.

An ACTOR -- part of a travelling Red Army theatre group
-- plays the Emperor of Manchukuo, as if Pu Yi was a
puppet. His hat is made of cardboard, his dark glasses
of black paper, and there are thick strings attached to
his jacket which the "Evil Japanese" manipulate from the
papier-mache clouds above.

The peasant AUDIENCE, half children, roar with laughter.
Amongst them we recognise the PRISON GOVERNOR, twenty
years younger.

Suddenly, everyone looks up at a small plane with the
rising sun of Japan on its wings.

Everyone sees the bomb drop.

The stage EXPLODES in flame. The Governor stares at
his two children -- both of them dead -- and gathers
them into his arms.

DISSOLVE TO:

167. BLACK AND WHITE NEWSREEL FOOTAGE...

A SQUADRON OF JAPANESE PLANES flies over Shanghai in the
first large-scale civilian bombing in history.

Panic in the streets, upturned faces, fleeing crowds.

Bombs EXPLODING all over; thousands lie dead on the
ground; columns of smoke blacken the sky...

168. THE NEWSREEL CONTINUES...

-- with World War II-style commentary.

"On December 12, 1937, the invading Japanese armies captured Nanking and began a reign of terror. 15,000 women were raped, more than 200,000 civilians were massacred. Live civilians were used for bayonet practise. New-born babies were used as footballs."

"Millions of Chinese became refugees. By 1938 Japan controlled the entire Chinese coast and every major city. Chiang Kai Shek and the Kuomintang retreated into the interior and set up their capital in Chungking.

Meanwhile, the so-called independent State of Manchukuo became the strategic and industrial base for the Japanese offensive."

169. NEWSREEL: A HUGE OUTDOOR STADIUM. MANCHUKUO. 1940

Pu Yi, dressed in fascist-style military uniform, passes in front of the Italian, and Japanese flags, German swastikas...and steps up onto a podium. Thousands of TROOPS kneel in front of him, then stand up with raised arms and clenched fists -- roaring "Banzai! Banzai! Banzai!"

This is fact, and the effect is like Nuremburg. Pu Yi as a fascist God.

DISSOLVE TO:

170. THE PRISON COURTYARD. SUMMER NIGHT

The Prisoners are sitting on the ground facing a large open-air stage rigged up with a screen -- watching a film about the Japanese invasion of China and S.E. Asia.

From the shadows at the side of the stage the Governor watches their expressions as they stare at the screen... and sees the sudden sharp reaction on Pu Yi's face, as he sees and hears himself...

Pu Yi looks at the prisoners beside him -- then at the screen again, then back and forth. He stands up.

On the soundtrack, we hear the rising DRONE of more aeroplanes...Someone pulls him down by the sleeve.

171. IN NEWSREEL COLOUR: THE SUN RISES OVER THE PACIFIC...

Through huge clouds tinged with pink, come 182 Mitsubishi Betty Bombers and Zero fighters, flying in perfect formation.

The green mountains of a Hawaiian island appear below. The battle-ships and destroyers of the U.S. Pacific Fleet lie at anchor in the harbour, glistening in the early morning sun.

PILOT (VO)

Tora!...Tora!...Tora!...

Diving from 12,000 feet, the Japanese planes fall upon their unsuspecting target.

This is a Japanese propaganda film, shot in colour during the actual attack on Pearl Harbour. The S.S. Arizona, 32,000 tons EXPLODES in flame.

172. A CHINESE CITY UNDER JAPANESE OCCUPATION

Hundreds of thousands die of opium addiction.

CUT BACK TO:

173. THE PRISON COURTYARD. THE SAME SUMMER NIGHT

Pu Yi sits amongst the prisoners in front of the screen, staring down at the ground...

DISSOLVE TO:

174. A BUDDHIST CHAPEL IN THE PALACE. CHANGCHUN. SUMMER

Pu Yi, with TWO LAMAS and an ASTROLOGER kneels beside an altar, facing a great tray of yellow sand held by four silent PAGEBOYS. He looks drained and ill.

The Astrologer nods; the Pageboys shake the tray, the sand shifts...As the Astrologer peers intently at the new pattern, trying to divine the future in the grains of sand, we recognise the Cell Leader...

The faint sound of gunfire in the distance -- then silence again. Pu Yi remains staring at the patterns on the tray of sand. A fly buzzes in the air...lands on the arm of one of the Pages. He slaps at it. Pu Yi looks up.

PU YI
Killing flies is forbidden...
You know it's forbidden!

The Page drops to his knees, trembling, begging forgiveness.

PU YI
Beat him!

Another Page grabs a stick and strikes the other one across the back.

PU YI
Harder! Beat him harder!

The first Page gasps with pain as the blows get fiercer and fiercer -- But when they stop:

PU YI
Who told you to stop?! Beat him too! Beat him!

The Third Pageboy seizes another stick and starts to thrash the Second, while the Second resumes beating the First, and the First begins to cry...

Pu Yi leaves the room. He is drenched with sweat.

PU YI
(quietly)
Beat him...

175. IN THE DARK CORRIDOR

The drone of an aeroplane. A bomb EXPLODING in the distance. Pu Yi stops at a window. Sandbags are piled on the flower beds outside. Barbed wire is on the compound walls. Giant trumpets are aimed at the sky -- primitive stand-ins for radar. An anti-aircraft gun is in position. The war has arrived in Manchukuo...

When he turns around, he finds Pu Chieh hurrying towards him down the corridor, accompanied by Big Li. After a quick salute:

PU CHIEH
Your Majesty -- something terrible has happened. In Japan -- A bomb -- a new kind of bomb -- it...It -- the war is finished, Your Majesty! Emperor Hirohito is going to surrender...

He holds out a telegram which Pu Yi barely glances at.

PU YI

Will the Emperor of Japan kill
himself?

Pu Chieh looks down. He shakes his head...Then:

PU CHIEH

Your Majesty must abdicate!
He must prepare to go to Tokyo.
He must surrender to the Americans
-- not the Russians! The
Communists will kill everyone!

DISSOLVE TO:

176. THE GOVERNOR'S OFFICE. PRISON. SUMMER. 1958

The Governor, five years older now, is standing in front of a table piled with exercise books, leafing through one of them -- marked 981. The Interrogator waits behind him, looking excited and happy.

INTERROGATOR

He's read every confession and
he's signed them all! Every
accusation made against him!
All of them!

GOVERNOR

And you call that a success?
These confessions are still
full of lies!

(he sweeps a pile of
books onto the floor)

I call it failure!

(he sweeps off another
pile)

What are we here for?! To
teach men to lie in a new way?!

He stares at the books on the floor, then picks up book no. 981 and strides out.

177. OUTSIDE. THE SAME DAY

Eight years have passed since Pu Yi first arrived in prison. The place has grown friendlier, easier. A couple of buildings have been re-painted, a few trees planted. There is even a primitive tennis court.

The Governor strides purposefully towards some wooden sheds, ignoring the prisoners who are working here and there in the vegetable gardens.

178. SMALL PLOT IN THE PRISON

He turns a corner and finds Pu Yi working alone in a small field, breaking up the hard cold earth with a hoe.

Pu Yi sees him, but goes on working as if he wasn't there. The Governor pulls the exercise books out of his pocket.

GOVERNOR

Why did you sign everything?

Silence. Pu Yi keeps working.

GOVERNOR

Do you think I saved you from hanging yourself to see you like this? Someone who signs anything to please his enemies - to please me?...You didn't know about the Japanese biological warfare experiments in Harbin! And other things! So why did you sign them?

PU YI

(quietly)

I was responsible.

GOVERNOR

You are responsible for what you do! All your life you thought you were better than anyone else. Now you think you're the worst.

PU YI

(stops working)

Why can't you leave me alone?

(he looks up)

I'm Manchurian, I'm "the last Emperor" and you saved my life because I'm useful to you!

The Governor stares at him -- furious -- and deeply hurt.

GOVERNOR

...Is that so terrible, to be "useful"?

He turns on his heel and walks off. Pu Yi stares after him, clearly affected, then resumes tilling the ground, hitting it harder and harder. He shuts his eyes.

179. IN AN OFFICE IN THE PALACE. CHANGCHUN. AUGUST 1945

Mr. Amakasu, wearing a superb Japanese kimono, is kneeling on the ground with a sword embedded in his guts. Eastern Jewel is in front of him, a silent, motionless witness. The sound of Emperor Hirohito's voice interspersed by the occasional rattle of gunfire comes over a radio in the distance.

HIROHITO (VO)

Should we continue to fight
it would...result in an ultimate
collapse and obliteration of the
Japanese nation...Such being the
case, how are we to save the
millions of our subjects...

A pool of blood spreads up to a pair of black boots -- Yoshioka. Hurriedly, ignoring Eastern Jewel, he stuffs some documents into a briefcase, then stops and bows to the dying man. Eastern Jewel never looks at him.

180. IN THE EMPEROR'S BEDROOM

Big Li has almost finished packing the black suitcases.

HIROHITO (VO)

Or to atone ourselves before
the hallowed spirits of our
Imperial Ancestors? This is
the reason why we have ordered
the acceptance of the provisions
of the Joint Declaration of the
Powers...

Suddenly, Pu Yi hears a sound, grabs a gun, and aims at the door. Pu Chieh comes in with a couple of biscuits.

PU CHIEH

That's all there is. The
servants have gone...

Pu Yi takes a bite from a biscuit. Big Li kneels down to do up the Emperor's shoe-laces.

Yoshioka rushes in with the briefcase under his arm, and two Japanese COMMANDOS with machine guns and cartridge belts who block the door.

YOSHIOKA

(frightened)

The Russians have reached
Harbin! We must hurry!

(he stares round)

What is this? There is no room
in the plane! Only three pieces!

The electricity cuts off. The radio goes dead. In
the silence, distant gunfire.

YOSHIOKA

Hurry! There is no time left!

Big Li picks up a couple of black suitcases, Pu Chieh
another. Pu Yi slips a white silk scarf round his neck.

181. IN THE DESERTED FRONT HALL

The Astrologer (who became the Cell Leader) hurries in
with a bicycle through a sea of abandoned luggage. The
few remaining Japanese are busy loading filing cabinets
onto a truck.

182. EXT. THE GARDEN. DAY

The Astrologer, escaping on his bicycle, passes a black
limousine which draws up in front of the main door.

Three yapping Pekingese dogs jump out.

183. INT. THE FRONT HALL. DAY

Pu Yi, at the head of the group, is coming down the
stairs when the dogs race in, chasing each other through
the luggage. Pu Yi freezes.

PU YI

The Empress has returned...

Yoshioka hurries ahead to the door followed by everyone
except Pu Yi and Pu Chieh.

Wan Jung comes into the hall. She looks twenty years
older, destroyed by opium. She walks slowly with pain,
supported by a Nurse and another Woman.

As the two women lead Wan Jung across the hall, she
spits on the ground left and right, at every Japanese
she sees. She has been mad for years now...Yoshioka
wipes the spit away from his cheek.

ON THE STAIRS

PU YI

(almost whispers)

I'm 39 years old, Wan Jung...

She doesn't hear him, and hobbles on down the empty corridor. Pu Yi starts to follow her.

PU CHIEH

Please! The Empress mustn't know you've seen her!

YOSHIOKA

Hurry! There is no room on the plane, Your Majesty. The women are not in danger! We must hurry!

Pu Chieh takes Pu Yi by the arm.

184. EXT. CHANGCHUN AIRPORT. DAY

The wind has risen, the air filled with dust. A black limousine races down the tarmac towards a small aeroplane, still being re-fuelled -- with the propellers turning.

Pu Yi gets out, followed by Yoshioka, Pu Chieh, Big Li and the Commandos who run to the bottom of the steps of the plane and stand guard.

185. INSIDE THE PLANE

The small group strapped into the seats wait in tense silence; listening to the whirring propellers.

YOSHIOKA

Where is the pilot?

Crazed with impatience, he unstraps his belt and throws open the curtains of the pilot's cabin -- no one there!

Through the windscreen, out of the yellow sky, filled with dust, he can see hundreds of parachutists floating down like a snowstorm onto the airport -- and start running in all directions firing machine guns.

In the passenger compartment, the gunfire is suddenly all around them. No one moves. RUSSIAN SOLDIERS burst into the cabin, rifles aimed at the passengers.

Pu Yi fastens his white kid gloves, and raises his arms in the air like everyone else.

DISSOLVE BACK TO:

186. IN THE FRONT OF THE STAGE. PRISON. MANCHURIA

A red banner hangs above it: "Tenth Anniversary of the People's Republic of China. 1949-1959".

The occasion is being filmed by a small newsreel camera crew.

Pu Yi sits at the back of the audience patiently listening to the speeches from the platform, where COMMUNIST PARTY OFFICIALS sit with the PRISON OFFICERS. A pile of scrolls lies on a table beside the lectern.

When the high PARTY BOSS finishes speaking into the microphone, the Governor hands him the first scroll... the atmosphere becomes electric.

PARTY BOSS

Pu Yi Aisin-Gioro...

Complete silence. Everyone looks stunned.

For Pu Yi, the applause sounds far away, like a dream... It gets louder and louder as the realisation sinks in...

Someone pushes him to his feet. Other hands push him out into the bright lights in front of the platform.

GOVERNOR

(reads)

By order of the Supreme People's Court, the War Criminal Pu Yi Aisin-Gioro, male, 53 years old, of the Manchu nationality, and from Peking...is considered to be a reformed man...In accordance with Clause 1 of the Special Pardon Order he is therefore to be released.

Pu Yi keeps his head down to hide his tears. The Governor hands him the scroll.

TITLE: DECEMBER 4th, 1959

GOVERNOR

(between themselves)

You see? I'll end up living in prison longer than you.

DISSOLVE TO:

186A. FROM THE WINDOW OF A TRAIN

Mr. Aisin-Gioro Pu Yi, citizen of China, gazes out of the window, seeing his country for the first time in his life.

The Great Wall is under repair.

The rice paddies of the south are a brilliant green.

A towering stone statue of Buddha on the edge of the Yangtze River. An eternal, mysterious smile.

DISSOLVE TO:

187. THE BOTANICAL GARDENS OF PEKING. SPRING

Pu Yi, now one of the Head Gardeners, studies a huge bed of peonies, then waters the flowers with a large watering can. It is seven years since he left prison.

PU YI

(looking up)

Is this all right?

A two-man CAMERA CREW are filming him at work -- the same newsmen who covered the liberation ceremony at his prison.

CAMERAMAN

(laughs)

Very good! Very good! Thank you!

Pu Yi empties the can and goes off to collect his bicycle. As he pedals away, he waves ironically to the Newsmen.

PU YI

"The end of my day?"

188. IN PU YI'S BEDROOM/STUDY. PEKING. DAY

A calendar with a big photograph of the Great Wall. It is 1967, nine years since Pu Yi returned to Peking.

Pu Yi, just dressed, sits on a large dishevelled bed, doing up his shoes. He is 61. A WOMAN in a dressing gown can be glimpsed moving about in a small adjoining kitchen.

When he looks up he sees her watching him from the doorway, smiling, shaking her head.

Pu Yi laughs and finishes doing up his shoe-laces.

PU YI

Slowly, but surely even an
egg will learn to cross a
room on its own two feet.

He stands up, ready to go out.

189. A LARGE ROUND SQUARE. PEKING. 1967

A huge monument in the centre. Pu Yi comes into view on his bicycle, one of hundreds, and meets Pu Chieh. The two brothers wave a greeting and bicycle on together.

190. IN A BUSY STREET

Pu Yi and Pu Chieh come out of a shop and get held up by a gang of RED GUARDS parading some discredited officials and teachers through the streets - all dressed in dunce's caps.

Pu Yi stares, can't quite believe it.

PU YI

It's him isn't it?...

(shocked)

It is! It's the Governor of
our prison!

But Pu Chieh's view is blocked. Pu Yi starts pushing forwards, deeper into the Red Guards, trying to get another glimpse.

PU CHIEH

Pu Yi! Come back!

Pu Yi doesn't hear. Is it the Governor? It is the Governor! He grabs one of the Red Guards by the arm - a sixteen year old, still a boy.

PU YI

You've made a mistake! I
know that man! He's a good
man!

The Red Guard shoves him angrily aside.

RED GUARD

He's a rotten egg! A running
dog! And a capitalist-roader.

Pu Yi kicks him in the ass. The boy swings round in
fury. But there are already people between them.
Pu Yi grabs another Red Guard, holding him by the ear,
shouting and pointing at the Governor:

PU YI

He's a teacher! He's a good
teacher!

This time he gets flung to the ground. Legs, feet, people
shouting. When Pu Yi gets up again, the Governor is
out of sight...

Confused and disoriented, he looks round for Pu Chieh.
But he can no longer be seen either. The entire street
is packed by now, and the huge swelling CROWD carries
him away with it...

191 IN TIAN AN MEN SQUARE

There are more than a million people; most of them Red
Guards, very young, almost children. They are shouting
and waving, overcome with emotion, demonstrating their
support for Chairman Mao -- a distant figure on a
platform, standing in front of the vast red gates of the
Forbidden City, the home of Emperors...

192 INSIDE THE FORBIDDEN CITY

The sound of the crowd grows distant and dies away...

Pu Yi is walking alone through the kingdom of his
childhood. The vast white marble courtyard, the red
avenues, the yellow tiled roofs are now the largest
museum in the world. But at this moment Pu Yi is the
only visitor...

193. IN THE HALL OF SUPREME HARMONY

The yellow Dragon Throne is cordoned off by a red rope.
Pu Yi stares round, then steps over the barrier.

VOICE(OFF)

Stop! You are not allowed
in there!

Pu Yi sees a little BOY, about six years old, who has appeared from behind a column.

PU YI

Who are you?

BOY

(proud)

I live here! I'm the son of the Guardian!

PU YI

Ah. Well, I used to live here.

BOY

Who are you?

PU YI

The Emperor of China

The boy stares at him.

BOY

Prove it!

Pu Yi smiles, climbs the dais and sits slowly down on the Dragon Throne.

Keeping his eyes on the Boy, he feels about underneath it with one hand, and comes up with the old cricket cage of his childhood, hidden there all these years.

He blows off the dust and cobwebs and holds it out to the Boy, who is clearly impressed. The Boy stares at the little carved gourd, unscrews the lid and peers into the empty cage...

When he looks up again, Pu Yi has vanished...The throne is empty...The only sound is a faint CHIRPING. The Boy looks back at the cage out of it jumps a bright, green cricket.

Then, even the boy has gone - replaced by a GUIDE who stands in front of the throne, showing the hall to a group of TOURISTS.

GUIDE

This is the Hall of Supreme Harmony, where the Emperors were crowned. The last Emperor to be crowned here was Aisin-Gioro Pu Yi. He was three years old.

The Tourists are Chinese and Westerners. Thousands of them, flowing like a river through the Emperor's gate - open at last to all the world. Faces...