

WHITE TITLES ON BLACK --

Just talk about going to the land of the Flowery Flag  
and my countenance fills with happiness.

Not without hard work were one thousand pieces of gold  
dug up and gathered together.

There were words of farewell to the parents,  
but the throat choked up first.

There were many feelings, many tears flowing face to face,  
when parting with the wife.

Waves big as mountains often astonished this traveler.

With laws harsh as tigers, I had a taste of all the  
barbarities.

Do not forget this day when you land ashore.

Push yourself ahead and don't be lazy or idle.

-- *Poem by One Named Huie from Heungshan, Encouraging the  
Traveler, discovered on the walls at Angel Island*

CUT TO:

INT. MORNING. VICKY SUN'S HOUSE -- SERVICE ROOM

HAN LEE, a uniformed BUTLER who speaks impeccable British English, 50s, irons a copy of the *San Francisco Chronicle*. It is 1971. PAN UP TO REVEAL the headline:

"NIXON WILL TRAVEL TO CHINA BEFORE MAY TO 'NORMALIZE  
RELATIONS'"

With a photo of the President beneath. Off the headline,

CUT TO:

INT. MORNING. VICKY SUN'S HOUSE -- BREAKFAST ROOM

A woman, 73 years old, spoons caviar onto a toast point,  
breakfasting in her robe, a white MALTESE in her lap.

She wears reading glasses. As she scans the headlines, she feeds the caviar to the dog. This is VICKY SUN.

MR. LEE

...That is our finest caviar,  
Madame.

VICKY

I can't eat like this.

MR. LEE

Considering the occasion.

VICKY

Caviar for breakfast.

MR. LEE

Certainly, Madame.

VICKY

Elizabeth Taylor eats nothing for  
breakfast but dry toast.

MR. LEE

That is to say, the occasion of  
your --

VICKY

I know what you meant.

MR. LEE

With my compliments.

He hands her a PINK ENVELOPE addressed to "MADAME SUN." She looks at it a beat, but doesn't take it...

VICKY

It is our custom, Mister Lee, to  
celebrate our birthdays when we  
grow *old*.

A look between them.

MR. LEE

Certainly, Madame.

Snappish, she takes the envelope. Doesn't open it. He busies himself in the kitchen. She resumes reading the newspaper...

VICKY

What do you think of Nixon, Mister  
Lee?

MR. LEE  
I like him.

VICKY  
Why?

MR. LEE  
Because you do.

VICKY  
I like him less today.

She lights a cigarette with a gold Cartier lighter.

MR. LEE  
Regarding the occasion --

Abruptly, she stubs out the cigarette.

VICKY  
I am not lonely, Mister Lee.

MR. LEE  
I never said that you were.

VICKY  
I don't wish for a single thing to  
have been different.

She resumes reading her paper. Off Mr. Lee,

CUT TO:

INT. DAY. DRESSING ROOM

Vicky puts on her makeup. Armoring herself. Then she glances at the pink envelope. Opens it. "Happy Birthday!", and a photograph of ROSES arranged to form the numbers, "76".

VICKY  
Oh, God.

A long-haired CAT prowls the Chanel shoes arrayed on the window sill, nearly identical high-heel pumps in subtly different shades of pink, nude, and taupe, and then black...FOLLOW the cat and, as it passes, HOLD ON a PHOTOGRAPH of a Chinese man, taken early in the century, handsome and dandyish, his fedora raked, and a cigarette in his hand. This is TOM SUN.

CUT TO:

INT. LATER. DRESSING ROOM

Vicky talks in CANTONESE on a Princess telephone. Reaches for the pink envelope and, with a ballpoint pen, jots down on its back a column of six figure sums. The skim from the casinos in Macau.

CUT TO:

EXT. LATER. SAN FRANCISCO -- ESTABLISHING

Mister Lee drives Vicky in her Rolls-Royce Silver Shadow. Through the windows, a city midwifes a decade of violence.

CUT TO:

INT. DAY. CITY HALL

A ceremony at City Hall in Vicky's honor.

VICKY

This morning my houseman served me caviar for breakfast. I thought this was absurd so I fed it to my dog.

(laughter)

It made me remember -- when I was growing up -- in the Bay -- the crabs were so plentiful they would jump into your bucket -- and when you cleaned a she-crab and discovered the orange roe -- that was a special day. My uncle would put it in his soup dumplings. He would keep a nickel in his ear -- for convenience -- all the old-time Chinese did that.

(struggles)

It seems like pioneer days.

The audience shifts uncomfortably, almost as if they are eavesdropping on a private reverie.

CUT TO:

INT. LATER. CITY HALL

MAYOR JOSEPH ALIOTO presents Vicky with the KEY TO THE CITY...As they both smile and the photographers FLASH! --

CUT TO:

INT. DAY. BANK OF AMERICA CENTER -- CONFERENCE ROOM

Vicky meets alone with JOSEPH FONG, 40s, a representative of the 14K TRIAD from Hong Kong, unctuous and snake-like. He pours tea for her.

FONG  
...I understand congratulations are  
in order, Madame Sun.

VICKY  
For what?

FONG  
That this is your birthday.

VICKY  
I could have saved you a long trip.  
Our family's interests in Hong Kong  
and Macau are not for sale.

FONG  
The world is changing.

VICKY  
Well, I'm still here.

FONG  
In time, Hong Kong and Macau will  
revert to China. That is what  
"normal relations" means.

Vicky lights a cigarette.

VICKY  
Nixon worries that people don't  
like him -- with the election  
coming -- he's right.

FONG  
These colonies belong to the past.

VICKY  
There's nothing worse than a weak  
man.

FONG  
China rules China. Not the United  
States -- or Great Britain -- or  
Portugal. These great nations  
understand this. And Madame Sun  
does not?

(off her look)

(MORE)

FONG (CONT'D)

I'm offering you full value today  
for your casinos -- the banks you  
control -- assets that in twenty or  
thirty years might be worthless.

VICKY

You seem to forget that I am also  
Chinese.

FONG

You are not Chinese, Madame Sun.

Vicky takes a beat.

VICKY

The Chinese have been trading with  
the white man for centuries.

(beat)

I have seen many Presidents. Till  
they all look alike.

(beat)

And I have seen many tong wars.

FONG

The Hong Kong Triads will unite  
against you. Backed by the Chinese  
government.

Vicky French--inhales her cigarette. Stubs it out.

VICKY

My father used to say that a life  
is twenty thousand days. I've  
beaten that already.

(beat)

So it will be us against the  
Triads.

A look between them. Off Vicky,

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT. BANQUET ROOM -- CHINATOWN

Vicky, who is childless, is surrounded by nieces and nephews  
and their children. While Vicky is Americanized, these  
succeeding generations are American in a way she is not.  
(They have forgotten how hard life can be.) As the WAITERS  
bring a cake full of candles and sing, Vicky struggles gamely  
to participate...

Then visibly brightens as TOM SUN III, 20s, known as "THIRD," her favorite great-nephew, enters. A law student at Berkeley, with his beard and long hair and granny glasses, named after her father.

THIRD

I'm sorry I'm late, Auntie.

He kisses her and looks her in the eye. They exchange a smile. Then her smile drops as a blonde, willowy flower child joins Tom. He takes her hand.

VICKY

And who is this?

THIRD

I want you to meet my girlfriend,  
Jennifer.

Vicky barely extends her hand.

JENNIFER

I made these myself -- for your  
birthday. They're supposed to bring  
good luck.

She hands Vicky the box. Vicky sets it aside without opening it. Third leads Jennifer to the empty seats. UNCLE HARRY watches Vicky watching Jennifer.

UNCLE HARRY

(shrugs)

Chinese girls have a bitchy  
attitude.

Third and Jennifer share a laugh and he kisses her.

VICKY

I need to go home. My head is  
spinning.

Vicky gets up and exits abruptly. Off Third, watching her,

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT. RESTAURANT

Vicky smokes. Third emerges with the package.

THIRD

You forgot your gift.

VICKY

I'm flying to Hong Kong tomorrow. I want you to come with me.

THIRD

I have responsibilities.

She fixes him with an icy look.

VICKY

Yes, you have responsibilities.

The Rolls Royce approaches. Vicky hands the package to Mr. Lee and climbs in the back. Off Third, as the Rolls pulls away,

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT. VICKY'S HOUSE -- RED ROOM

Vicky lies on the couch, in her housecoat, idly watching TV. A COMMERCIAL plays...

ON THE TELEVISION

A Chinese LAUNDRYMAN greets a CUSTOMER.

CUSTOMER (O.C.)

How do you get your shirts so clean?

LAUNDRYMAN (O.C.)

Ancient Chinese secret.

LAUNDRYMAN'S WIFE (O.C.)

My husband. Some hotshot. Here's his 'ancient Chinese secret.'  
Calgon...!

Bored, Vicky opens the package from Jennifer. RED CHINESE EGGS -- hard-boiled eggs smeared with red calligraphy paper, to bring prosperity and good fortune. Hungry, Vicky cracks one and peels it. Eats it. Mr. Lee enters.

MR. LEE

Is there anything I can get you, Madame?

VICKY

Go home, Mr. Lee.

MR. LEE

The dog needs to be walked.



VICKY  
I'll walk the dog. Go home.

As Mr. Lee exits and Vicky eats more of the egg,

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT. VICKY'S HOUSE

In her yellow Valentino coat, Vicky walks the Maltese. She instinctively braces as a BLACK MAN approaches, walking the other direction. But he passes her uneventfully on the sidewalk. The Maltese sniffs at a stain on the sidewalk. Vicky coaxes the dog to move on, shaking the leash...

Another man passes on the sidewalk. Too late Vicky realizes that the man is Chinese. Suddenly he takes out a knife and plunges it repeatedly into Vicky. She collapses on the sidewalk and the ASSASSIN runs...

As the dog barks and Vicky looks up glassy-eyed and her blood soaks the yellow Valentino coat,

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. DAY. PACIFIC MAIL STEAMSHIP -- S.S. ACAPULCO (1905)

Chinese IMMIGRANTS crowd the deck -- steerage passengers eager for fresh air, despite the scouring wind and the storm-tossed sea. It is WINTER. From above, fedoras and newsboy caps, quilted. FOLLOW a young man in a newsboy cap, pushing his way through the crowd. This is TONG XI, mid-20s, twitchy and insecure, in a traditional tunic and loose pants, with a QUEUE beneath his black hat. At the railing near the prow, he finds the man he's looking for. Tong Xi reaches inside his overcoat, produces the NOTEBOOK, a half-inch thick, that is hidden there. Hands it to the man. PAN UP TO REVEAL his kinsman, TONG SHAN, 27, also dressed traditionally, smoking a cigarette. He has a watchful calm and a quiet confidence. (They speak in a Taishan dialect. Underlined dialogue is subtitled.)

TONG XI  
I'm not finished. I need it back.

Tong Shan flips through the pages of the notebook.

TONG SHAN  
Give me an hour.

Suddenly he sees something -- hides the notebook in his own overcoat.

Tong Xi turns and sees what Tong Shan saw -- a white SAILOR has appeared on deck. The two clansmen exchange a look. Off Tong Shan,

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT. STEERAGE

PANNING past HUNDREDS OF IMMIGRANTS packed between decks, stacked on canvas cots or asleep on the floor, a single toilet among them, the loud thrum of the engine room right behind them, to find Tong Shan and Tong Xi studying the coaching notebook.

TONG SHAN  
...What direction does your  
father's house face?

TONG XI  
East.

TONG SHAN  
How many steps were there to the  
attic?

TONG XI  
Eight.

TONG SHAN  
And what is the floor made of?

TONG XI  
Tile.

TONG SHAN  
And where is the clock?

Tong Xi rubs his sweaty palms on his pants legs. Tong Shan observes this. Offers him a cigarette.

TONG XI  
I'm tired. Let's study tomorrow.

TONG SHAN  
How many chickens did you have?

TONG XI  
They treat us like criminals.

TONG SHAN  
It's their country.

TONG XI

They act the same way when they  
come to our country.

TONG SHAN

We say Fifth Uncle is our father.  
We say we are brothers. We grew up  
in his house with eight steps to  
the attic and a clock in the  
kitchen. We must tell this story  
exactly or they will send us back  
to China.

TONG XI

I sold everything to buy these  
papers. I can't go back. I have  
nothing.

TONG SHAN

You have six chickens.

Tong Shan smiles. Tong Xi does not. In frustration, he storms off, past an OLD MAN, meditating with carved PRAYER BEADS. HOLD ON the old man, in prayer,

CUT TO:

EXT. DAY. PACIFIC MAIL STEAMSHIP

The usual crowd thirsting for fresh air, and the sound of someone idly picking out folk songs on Chinese instruments, the *yeung kam* and the *yi wu*...

Tong Shan whittles on deck -- a small figure of a Taoist idol -- the JADE EMPEROR, ruler of the heavens...He pockets the unfinished idol, takes out a pack of OLD JUDGE cigarettes, lights one as he leans on the railing...Glances down to the deck below...

HIS POV

A group of MERCHANT'S WIVES eats lunch, their WOVEN BASKETS lying beside them (policy segregates them on a different deck)...

Unseen by them, a tiny HAND reaches out, pulls a basket of APPLES under the table...

Tong Shan watches this, intrigued...The women finish lunch and exit...Then a LITTLE GIRL in a RED DRESS emerges from beneath the table, eating the APPLE she stole from the basket...Tong Shan smiles as he watches the Little Girl, intrigued by her...

Suddenly someone points up -- Tong Shan's gaze follows the others -- a SEAGULL flies above the ship, then alights on the mast. A sign of landfall -- a loud murmur among the men on deck, as others rush up from steerage to join them. An IMMIGRANT shinnies up the mast, shields his eyes from the sun as he looks into the distance, then shouts to the others...

The men press against the railing as the fog lifts and they catch their first glimpse of the new world they are about to enter...Shouts and jubilation from the immigrants, as they embrace each other and point into the distance...

FOLLOW Tong Shan as he sneaks away...With a furtive look, he takes the coaching notebook from its hiding place beneath his overcoat, throws it overboard...As the notebook slowly sinks and disappears,

CUT TO:

EXT. ANOTHER DAY. STEAMSHIP

The steamship has anchored in San Francisco Bay, within sight of land. (Five years later, the immigration station at Angel Island will be established, and the interviews will be conducted there.) A TENDER approaches, bearing the INSPECTORS and INTERPRETERS from the Bureau of Immigration. They tether to the steamship and climb aboard.

CUT TO:

INT. DAY. EXAMINATION ROOM

Tong Shan and the other immigrants line up to be inspected by a team of DOCTORS.

DOCTOR

Take your clothes off.

(off their looks)

Take your clothes off.

A TRANSLATOR translates. Reluctantly, the men disrobe completely...The doctors subject them to a series of "Bertillon measurements" -- a method of cataloguing criminals from the days before fingerprinting. Height, the curvature of the spine, the length of outstretched arms, the height of the trunk...

Ahead of them in the line, an IMMIGRANT is handed an enamelled bowl to defecate in...He disappears behind a screen...Tong Shan watches, then moves ahead in the line...

CLOSE ON -- TONG SHAN

Naked now, as he's photographed by the Immigration Officials. First, a full body image, from the waist up. Then the face, from the front.

IMMIGRATION OFFICIAL

Okay, turn around.

The Immigration Official gestures and Tong Shan complies, burning with humiliation, as his photograph is taken from the back of the head, facing left and right. Mug shots, for men who have committed no crime.

The Immigrant emerges from behind the screen, hands his bowl to a TECHNICIAN, who smears the feces on a GLASS SLIDE, prepares it with a STAIN...Tong Shan is ordered to sit, and a DOCTOR applies to his head a jointed COMPASS, one foot braced to the root of his nose and the other rotated across the back of his skull. He dictates to an IMMIGRATION OFFICIAL.

DOCTOR

Skull, large. One hundred ninety-one millimeters

Then he pulls at Tong Shan's ears as he inspects them.

DOCTOR (CONT'D)

The ear: outer border, adherent.  
Exterior contour of lobe, square.  
Profile of the antiragus,  
rectilineal. Adherence of the lobe  
to the cheek, complete.

(with nose)

Bridge of nose, convex-sinuuous.  
Base of nose, elevated.

The Immigration Official dutifully notes this down. Then Tong Shan squints as a bright light is shown in his eyes. The Doctor holds the lids open.

DOCTOR (CONT'D)

Eyes, Class Seven: aureole,  
radiant, of medium maroon, covering  
the entire iris. Two circles equal.

ANGLE ON -- TECHNICIAN

As he looks through a MICROSCOPE...POV THROUGH MICROSCOPE reveals HOOKWORM EGGS in the sample...The Technician signals to an Immigration Official, who pulls the Immigrant from the line. Tong Shan and Tong Xi watch this. Off their looks,

CUT TO:

INT. DAY. INTERROGATION ROOM

Tong Shan sits with KENNEDY, 50s, stout and officious, in the green uniform and boots of an immigration official. MISS WU, 30s, demure, the Chinese interpreter, sits near Tong Shan. A GUARD sits nearby. A STENOGRAPHER takes notes.

KENNEDY

...Where are you from?

Miss Wu interprets into Tong Shan's dialect. Tong Shan answers in his Taishan dialect. She translates.

MISS WU

I was born in Chew Kai village,  
Taishan District.

KENNEDY

How many brothers did you have?

MISS WU

Only one.

KENNEDY

How many rows of houses were there  
in your village?

Again, Miss Wu interprets for Tong Shan.

MISS WU

Three.

KENNEDY

Who lived in the second house of  
the third row of your village?

MISS WU

Lee Puey You.

KENNEDY

Where's your house?

MISS WU

It is my father's house. It is the  
third house of the first row.

KENNEDY

Which way does it face?

MISS WU

East.

KENNEDY

Where is the kitchen?

MISS WU  
In the north.

KENNEDY  
Is there a skylight in the kitchen?

MISS WU  
Yes.

KENNEDY  
Is it covered with glass?

MISS WU  
Yes.

KENNEDY  
Then how does the smoke escape from  
the stove?  
(refers to notes)  
Your brother says the skylight is  
not equipped with glass and that  
the smoke goes out through that  
skylight. What do you say to that?

Tong Shan hesitates. Then responds. Miss Wu translates.

MISS WU  
My brother must be right. He spent  
more time in the kitchen than I  
did.

Kennedy makes a note.

KENNEDY  
Did you have a dog?

MISS WU  
No.

KENNEDY  
Your brother says you had a dog.  
(Tong Shan hesitates)  
You lived with your brother and you  
don't know if you had a dog or not?

Tong Shan hesitates. Finally answers. Miss Wu translates.

MISS WU  
We had a dog. But when we left, we  
ate it.

Kennedy makes another note.

KENNEDY

In 1882, we barred all you Chinamen -- we passed a law -- that's democracy. But a Chinaman that was here already -- a U.S. citizen -- that man could bring his sons -- that's democracy, too. Which is how every time every John Fucking Chinaman fucking goes fucking home to his village, his wife gives birth to a son -- so he says -- when the truth is, he sells the papers to someone like you -- with dreams of Gold Mountain. Then we play this little game. Where you claim you grew up in a house you didn't grow up in. And I try to catch you up.

(mutters)

There's not a man in Chinatown who's not pretending to be someone he's not.

(to Miss Wu)

And you can tell him I said so.

Miss Wu translates. Tong Shan replies. Miss Wu hesitates. Kennedy looks up expectantly from his notes. A look between Tong Shan and Miss Wu.

MISS WU

You say all men are equal.

(beat)

So who is pretending?

A look between Kennedy and Tong Shan. Off Tong Shan,

CUT TO:

INT. LATER. STEERAGE

Tong Shan smokes on his cot, Tong Xi resting anxiously in an upper bunk.

TONG XI

Why did you tell him we had a dog?

TONG SHAN

You said we had a dog.

TONG XI

No, I didn't.

Tong Shan sits up on his cot.



TONG SHAN  
Are you sure?

Off their looks,

CUT TO:

EXT. DAY. PACIFIC MAIL STEAMSHIP

A SHIP'S CLERK moves through the crowd with a sheaf of ENTRY CARDS, each one bearing an identifying PHOTOGRAPH...He approaches an IMMIGRANT, compares his face to the photo and hands him the card.

SHIP'S CLERK  
 Congratulations, you're landed.

The Clerk approaches another Immigrant. The Immigrant gives his name. The Clerk riffles through his cards. Again, compares the photo. Then hands him a card.

Tong Shan smokes as he watches this. Exchanges a nervous look with Tong Xi as the Ship's Clerk makes his way through the crowd. Finally reaches them.

SHIP'S CLERK (CONT'D)  
 What's your name, John Chinaman?

TONG SHAN  
 Tong Shan.

The Ship's Clerk riffles through the cards, alphabetically arranged. Finds Tong Xi instead. Compares the photo. Hands Tong Xi his entry card.

SHIP'S CLERK  
 Congratulations, you're landed.

Without a word, he moves past Tong Shan to the next group of men. Tong Shan realizes that he has been refused entry -- the he is being deported back to China.

TONG XI  
In three weeks you'll be back in  
 the village -- eating turnip cakes  
 for New Year's. Not so bad.

TONG SHAN  
I won't go back to that village.

TONG XI  
I will talk to Fifth Uncle. We will  
 try again.

A look between them. Tong Shan watches as Tong Xi boards the tender, his sailor's bag slung over his shoulder. Then the Little Girl -- the one Tong Shan saw earlier, stealing the apple -- crosses the gangplank, following some older (adolescent) girls onto the tender...Off Tong Shan,

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT. PACIFIC MAIL TERMINAL -- BRANNAN STREET WHARF

The immigrants file off the tender. FIFTH UNCLE, 50s, in a merchant's embroidered robes, greets Tong Xi.

FIFTH UNCLE  
Where is Tong Shan?

TONG XI  
He wasn't landed.

FIFTH UNCLE  
Did he study the book?

TONG XI  
He knew the book better than I did.

ANGLE ON -- THE LITTLE GIRL

She waits with the other girls as a MERCHANT and his American LAWYER negotiates with an IMMIGRATION OFFICIAL. A look between her and Tong Xi as he and Fifth Uncle exit. Off their looks,

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT. STEAMSHIP -- STEERAGE

Tong Shan lies on his cot and smokes. Whittles his idol of the Jade Emperor, half-finished. Then he pockets the idol. Takes a last drag on the cigarette and stubs it out.

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT. STEAMSHIP -- DECK

The Ship's Clerk patrols the deck, the moon peeking intermittently from behind dense fog. He turns the corner and sees something...

SHIP'S CLERK  
Hey. Hey!

The dim silhouette of a man standing on the railing...REVEAL that the man is Tong Shan. He looks down into the black water far below. Suddenly he JUMPS from the railing -- plummets -- splashes into the frigid water of San Francisco Bay...The Ship's Clerk runs to the railing, looks down...No sign of him...

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT. SAN FRANCISCO BAY

The inky, fogbound waters of the bay, five hundred feet from the steamship...Suddenly Tong Shan bursts to the surface and gasps for air, hyperventilating from the shock of the fifty-degree water...He listens to the distant shouts from the steamship...Suddenly, a SEARCHLIGHT comes to life and sweeps toward him...Tong Shan disappears below the surface just as the beam passes over him...Then he reappears, watches as the sailors give up the search...Off Tong Shan, starting to swim,

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT. NORTH BEACH

A Chinese FISHERMAN crabs in the shallows. Quick, with a pot belly and a ready smile, 30s, hunched from working long hours over an ironing board. This is WANG YU, known as FISH. In the dense fog and the dim light before daybreak, he can't see twenty feet. As he walks, he sees a shadowy form washed up on the beach...He moves closer...Realizes that it's a BODY, motionless, as the surf rolls it up the beach...Fish RUNS up to the body...Turns it over...REVEAL that it's Tong Shan...

Fish puts his ear next to Tong Shan's mouth, listening for a breath...NOTHING...Then he sits him up...Bends his right knee and pushes the kneecap against Tong Shan's spine -- hooks his fingers beneath the lower ribs -- and PULLS as he presses with the right knee -- releases, and Tong Shan slumps forward -- a resuscitation maneuver from judo...He does it again...This time Tong Shan coughs and vomits up sea water...As he comes back to life, off Tong Shan,

CUT TO:

INT. DAWN. LAUNDRY -- SULLIVAN'S ALLEY

The cramped middle room of a tiny, uninsulated wooden building where Fish lives with his "paper father", WANG XIU-YING, who snores on his cot.

A second cot belongs to Fish, on the other side of a curtained door that leads to the front room. Tong Shan sits at a dining table, huddled under a blanket. Fish serves him *long jing* tea.

FISH

...This tea will warm you. Long jing. Good for the lungs.

TONG SHAN

Thank you.

FISH

I have to clean the crabs before the laundry opens.

Fish joins Tong Shan at the dining table, sets to work cleaning the crabs...A deft hand with a Chinese cleaver...Rips off the apron, then pries off the shell, pulls away the lungs and removes the mouth...

TONG SHAN

You saved my life.

Fish laughs.

FISH

There are easier ways to get to Gold Mountain.

Old Man Wang wakes up. Scratching his balls, he comes to the table. Pours himself tea and lights a cigarette.

OLD MAN WANG

Who's this?

FISH

He's from Taishan. From Chew Kai village.

(to Tong Shan)

This is my father.

OLD MAN WANG

Paper father.

(beat)

What's he doing here?

FISH

He swam here.

OLD MAN WANG

He swam from Taishan?

FISH

We need help in the laundry.

(to Tong Shan)

Do you like to work?

(translates)

Work?

Tong Shan nods. He takes the cigarettes, beseeches the Old Man with a look. The Old Man nods reluctantly and Tong Shan lights a cigarette. Old Man Wang scrutinizes him.

OLD MAN WANG

We don't need trouble.

Off Tong Shan,

CUT TO:

INT. MORNING. LAUNDRY

Washing day. Inside the back room, sweating and shirtless, Tong Shan pours water from the STEAM BOILER into the wooden WASHING MACHINE, shuts the door and works the crank...

Tong Shan moves with a load of laundry toward the drying room, where the coal stove blazes, and laundry dries on a dozen iron wires strung parallel across the ceiling...From past the curtained door, he hears the BELL that announces a customer at the front door...

FISH (O.C.)

Good day, Mrs. Condene!

Tong Shan moves to peek past the curtained door...He sees ALICE CONDENE, 20s, a Gibson girl with porcelain skin and a voluminous pompadour of red hair.

ALICE

...These are Charvet shirts.

FISH

Most opulent.

ALICE

From Paris.

FISH

Most rare.

ALICE

They make shirts for the King of England.

FISH  
Don't worry.

ALICE  
The buttons alone.

FISH  
Mrs. Condene, your husband will be  
happy with his shirts.

ALICE  
My husband is never happy.

FISH  
(with a shrug)  
He has everything.

ALICE  
Are you happy, Fish?  
(off his look)  
Are you?

FISH  
(with a shrug)  
I have nothing.

As Fish computes her bill on a *suanpan*, or ABACUS, Alice notices Tong Shan past the curtained door, staring at her, transfixed by her beauty, as strange and unattainable as the moon. They hold a look. The ring of the bell on Fish's secret cash drawer rouses Tong Shan from his reverie...He disappears from the curtained door, returning to his work in the back room. Alice colors and turns away. Fish notices this. Tong Shan returns to cranking the laundry machine. Then pauses. Moves to peek past the curtain for a last look at Alice, as she exits,

CUT TO:

EXT. DAY. SULLIVAN'S ALLEY

White letters against a red ground on a wooden sign: "WANG'S HAND LAUNDRY". In the building behind is an "opium resort," and another across the alley. Tong Shan takes a lunch break, eats a bowl of rice on the stoop. Some white SCHOOL GIRLS giggle nearby, then taunt him:

## SCHOOL GIRLS

(unison)

Chinkie, Chinkie, Chinaman,  
 Sitting on a fence;/ Trying to make  
 a dollar/ Out of fifteen cents./  
 Chink, Chink, Chinaman/ Eats dead  
 rats;/ Eats them up/ Like  
 gingersnaps.

Tong Shan plays his part, claws up his hands and growls as he chases the girls into the street...Shrieking, they scatter...Tong Shan laughs as he watches them disappear. Then a CLAXON sounds. Tong Shan jumps back to the sidewalk just as a fastidious Chinese man in English tweeds drives down the alley in his 1905 BAKER ELECTRIC. This is C.W. LOO. As he watches the electric car careen around a corner onto Pacific Street, off Tong Shan, as he watches, amazed,

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT. LAUNDRY -- BACK ROOM

The morning's catch has become a crab-and-asparagus stir fry. After a sixteen hour day, the men sit down for dinner. Old Man Wang wafts the delicious steam toward his nose.

OLD MAN WANG

*Wok hei!*

With great relish, he digs into his meal...Fish smiles. They begin to eat. Fish gets up, brings a hot cauldron from the stove, serves them congee, a Cantonese rice porridge.

TONG SHAN

Eat jook so you will live a long  
 time.

Old Man Wang shoots Tong Shan a suspicious look. Then relaxes. Lights a cigarette. Reflects.

OLD MAN WANG

They say a man's life is twenty  
 thousand days. I've lived that long  
 already.

Off their looks,

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT. BROTHEL -- PARLOR

A huge man with a hands like mitts and a handlebar moustache, wearing a derby, peruses the brothel's "menu." This is GEORGE ALCOCK. Joining him in the parlor are five other men, all with handlebar moustaches, all wearing derbies, Alcock's best buddy F.J. GLUNK among them. This is the Chinatown "Flying Squad," the only police authority there is.

ALCOCK

...Finger fucking, with juice --  
fifty cents. Blowing in the asshole  
-- new style -- one dollar seventy  
cents. Sitting on prick -- shoving  
in stones and all -- two dollars  
fifty nine cents. Pinkey's Special -  
- twenty dollars.

(beat)

What's Pinkey's Special?

MADAME

Under-fucking woman on top, tits in  
your face, with extra lady to play  
with your balls while blowing wind  
up your asshole with goose quill.

He passes her the menu.

ALCOCK

Do you know what the law is?

MADAME

What law?

ALCOCK

The law -- what it is -- do you  
know?

MADAME

You the law.

Alcock stares at her. A chilling look. Then he laughs.

ALCOCK

I'm the law. We are the law -- the  
six of us -- the only law there is -  
- between thirty thousand  
degenerate Chinese and the decent  
people of San Francisco.

MADAME

You the law. I suck your cock.



ALCOCK  
I want a nice little baby lamb.

MADAME  
How young?

ALCOCK  
What have you got?

A look between them. The GIRLS file for the lineup. Sixteen-  
to eighteen-years old. A look between the Madame and Alcock.  
Off Alcock,

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT. BROTHEL -- ROOM

The Madame leads Alcock to a tiny room, lit by oil lamps. She  
closes the door. He sits on the edge of the bed, takes off  
his boots. Then there's a knock at the door. A CHINESE GIRL  
enters, in floral pajamas, 10 years old. She closes the door  
behind herself. Sits beside him on the edge of the bed. A  
long beat between them. Off their looks,

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT. LAUNDRY ROOM -- BACK ROOM

Fish taps a cigarette out of a pack -- "OLD JUDGE" -- lights  
it. Passes the pack to Tom. Then Fish reclines on his narrow  
wooden cot.

FISH  
...Can you speak English?

TOM  
A little.

FISH  
You've been around?

TOM  
A little.

FISH  
You seem like a guy who's been  
around.

TOM  
(shrugs)  
The Army.

FISH  
So I'm right?

TOM  
Sure. I've been around.

Tong Shan lights a cigarette. Finds the BASEBALL CARD hidden inside the pack...Fish smokes on his cot...

FISH  
The old man is cheap. He can pay  
 you out of my wages. Till you get  
 your feet on the ground.

Fish finishes his cigarette. Lies down and covers himself with a threadbare blanket...Tong Shan smokes and looks at the baseball card.

TONG SHAN  
 (reading)  
 "Honus Wagner."

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. DAY. LAUNDRY -- BACK ROOM

Tong Shan deftly irons a shirt. An eight-pound, cast-iron FLATIRON glows red hot on the coal stove. He picks it up with a strong hooked iron stick...He dips the flatiron in a pail of water, then catches it with a specially-made pad on his right hand...Moves to the front room...

Working quickly, he spreads a shirt on the ironing bed...He tests the heat of the flatiron by holding it close against his cheek...A sauce bowl with water atop a box of corn starch...Tong Shan draws water from the bowl into a brass MOUTH BLOWER -- blows into the opening of the tube -- SPITS water on the shirt -- starts to iron...

CUT TO:

INT. DAY. CORNER STORE -- MARKET STREET

Tong Shan buys two packs of OLD JUDGE CIGARETTES...Emerges from the shop. Stops on the steps to light a cigarette, then watches for a moment the pageant of daily life in turn-of-the-century Chinatown, the bustle of pedestrians, the horse-drawn carriages and cable cars...

Tong Shan turns off busy Market Street and heads back toward the laundry...He glances up at a sound above him -- a LITTLE GIRL in a RED DRESS scampers across a plank that spans the alley, from roof to roof...

Tong Shan thinks he recognizes her -- it's the Little Girl from the steamship -- he runs to the next alley...

Catches up just as the Little Girl runs across another plank, disappears onto another rooftop...

Then Tong Shan lowers his gaze and sees two HATCHET MEN guarding the foot of the alley...He notices, beyond them, a phalanx of HATCHET MEN, assembled around the entrance to the home of LI FAN, 80s, "Uncle Lee," the "King of Chinatown," frail and wizened, in embroidered robes worthy of the Emperor. Four TONG MEN carry him downstairs to a gilded SEDAN CHAIR...

The Hatchet Men gesture with a menacing nod for Tong Shan to move along...Tong Shan backs away...As he exits, he takes a last look at the sedan chair, like history itself receding across the cobblestones of Chinatown...

CUT TO:

INT. DAY. LAUNDRY

Tong Shan collects SHIRTS that have been hung to dry...He hears VOICES in the front -- a woman's voice -- in conversation with Old Man Wang...He peeks past the curtain...Discovers Alice, as she fishes in her purse for coins to pay for her laundry...

ALICE

...My husband says I can't come to Chinatown anymore -- that it's too dangerous --

OLD MAN WANG

No.

ALICE

-- with the tong wars.

OLD MAN WANG

There is always tong war.

ALICE

Well, you talk to him.

OLD MAN WANG

Tong war.

He dismisses it with wave and a grunt. Tong Shan emerges past the curtain with his bundle of shirts...A look between Tong Shan and Alice...Tong Shan looks away...He delivers the shirts to Fish at the ironing table, which runs perpendicular to the front counter...She watches him a beat...Then she looks away, too...Takes her change and snaps her purse...

ALICE

He'd be perfectly happy if I never left the house.

OLD MAN WANG

I'll bring you your laundry.

ALICE

Up that hill?

OLD MAN WANG

Tong war.

Alice gathers her packages...

ALICE

A bird in a cage. Like the song. Do you know that song?

OLD MAN WANG

Stop reading newspapers.

Alice exits. Tong Shan watches her through the plate glass of the laundry windows...Off Tong Shan,

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. ANOTHER DAY. NOB HILL

A hot Spring day. A Vietnamese-style delivery bicycle with an open crate mounted below the handlebars, filled with folded laundry, wrapped in butcher paper and twine...Tong Shan pedals hard, huffing and puffing till he finally gives out...Walks the bike uphill...

He looks up and sees the MANSIONS of the four "Nobs" -- the railroad potentates whose unimaginable wealth defines the city...

CUT TO:

EXT. LATER. CONDENE MANSION -- NOB HILL

Tong Shan parks his bicycle. Quiet enough to hear the bees in the cherry blossoms...The gardens, with their birdsong and tranquillity, seem a world away from Chinatown...He unloads Alice's parcels, carries them through the side gate, toward the kitchen porch...

CUT TO:

INT. LATER. KITCHEN PORCH

Wicker furniture and down-filled floral cushions. Tong Shan waits on the porch. HATTIE, 50s, Alice's HOUSEKEEPER, stout, African-American, emerges in her apron. Takes the parcels. Looks at the bill.

HATTIE

Let me get some change.

She exits inside. Tong Shan waits in the heat. Enjoys the view of the gardens, the city and the San Francisco Bay in the distance. He mops his brow with a handkerchief. Turns at the sound of the screen door behind him. But it's not the housekeeper. It's Alice.

ALICE

Would you like a glass of lemonade?

(beat)

Wait one second.

She returns inside. Tong Shan waits a long beat, nervous. Alice returns with a glass of lemonade.

TONG SHAN

Thank you.

ALICE

Do you speak English?

TONG SHAN

A little.

ALICE

It's such a hot day -- in April -- you don't expect it.

TONG SHAN

Thank you for my lemonade.

ALICE

What's your name?

TONG SHAN

Tong Shan.

ALICE

I'm Alice.

A look between them. The Housekeeper emerges. Hands Tong Shan some coins.

HATTIE

I could have done that, Mrs.  
Condene.

Thirsty, Tong Shan gulps down the lemonade.

ALICE

Be careful. You'll give yourself a  
stomach ache.

Tong Shan finishes. Alice takes his glass. Tong Shan bows to her. Exits. Off Hattie's look,

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT. STOCKROOM -- FIFTH UNCLE'S SHOP

Tong Xi works in the stock room, on a ladder, dusting the shelves and sorting the merchandise...He hears a KNOCK at the back door. He ignores it. The knock persists...Finally, he climbs down the ladder. Answers the knock. Steps back and gasps, as if he's seen a ghost.

TONG XI

Tong Shan?

Tong Shan breaks into a grin. The two "paper brothers" embrace. Tong Xi pulls Tong Shan inside and calls out...

TONG SHAN

Fifth Uncle! Come and see! Fifth  
Uncle!

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT. RESTAURANT

Fifth Uncle eats with Tong Shan and Tong Xi.

FIFTH UNCLE

...Each time I have been back to  
Chew Kai village I said a son was  
born.

(MORE)

FIFTH UNCLE (CONT'D)

That is why I have papers to sell.  
I am a U.S. citizen -- I can bring  
my sons from China -- that is my  
right.

(beat)

There were no sons. My wife is too  
old. Used up. Two daughters. What  
good are they?

(beat)

Nobody in Chinatown has real  
family. Paper sons. Paper father.  
Paper life, to burn like joss and  
be happy in the next life. All  
paper.

Fifth Uncle toasts them. Knocks back his whiskey.

TONG SHAN

I have been working in a laundry,  
Uncle.

FIFTH UNCLE

What do they pay you?

TONG SHAN

One dollar a day.

Fifth Uncle takes an awkward beat.

FIFTH UNCLE

This was not our arrangement.

TONG SHAN

Our arrangement was that I would  
work for for you and pay you back  
out of my wages.

FIFTH UNCLE

It was your fault you were not  
landed. You should have studied  
harder. Where is my money?

Tong Xi watches as Tong Shan looks down, abashed.

TONG SHAN

I will pay you back.

TONG XI

(lamely)

Who would think I would make it and  
you wouldn't?

## FIFTH UNCLE

I'm glad to know you are alive,  
Tong Shan. But you can't come  
around here again. If the police  
find you here, they'll deport me  
too. I'm sorry, but that's how it  
is.

Fifth Uncle moves to pour another whiskey. But it's empty...  
 He exits into the basement to find another bottle...Tong Xi  
 waits till he's out of earshot...

## TONG XI

Don't listen to him. He's a fool.  
He spends all his money on hundred-  
men's wife and loses it gambling.  
 (beat)  
Do you want to see something?

Tong Xi opens his tunic...Tucked in his belt...

A COLT BUNTLINE .45 REVOLVER

With its extra-long barrel...He pulls it out and hands it to  
 Tong Shan...Tong Shan holds it -- tests its balance -- it's  
 not the first gun he's ever handled...

## TONG SHAN

Where did you get this?

## TONG XI

That's the same gun as Wyatt Earp  
used. Cost me seventeen dollars.

## TONG SHAN

I did not come to Gold Mountain for  
more killing.

## TONG XI

What does that mean, "more  
killing"? Who did you kill?

## TONG SHAN

It means, I have had enough.

Tong Shan hands the gun back. Takes out his cigarettes.  
 Lights one. With a shrug and a smug expression, Tong Xi  
 returns his gun to his belt and hides it behind his tunic...

## TONG XI

Work in a laundry like a slave all  
year.

(MORE)



TONG XI (CONT'D)

The tongs pay a hundred dollars and  
it's no more work than pulling a  
trigger. Not any work at all.

Fifth Uncle returns with a bottle of whiskey and three glasses.

FIFTH UNCLE

You boys remind me of home.

TONG XI

Who would think that I would be  
landed and Tong Shan wouldn't?

Off Tong Shan,

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT. CHINATOWN -- BROOKLYN PLACE

Taking a shortcut, Tong Shan hops a fence, trots across a vacant lot, then climbs the fence on the other side. As he drops to the ground, a TRUNCHEON, embossed with the seal of the city, spears him in the solar plexus and he doubles over. He looks up to see Alcock, F.J., and the rest of the Flying Squad looming over him.

F.J. pulls Tong Shan up by his queue. Loops the queue through the fence and knots it.

ALCOCK

I don't remember seeing you before,  
John Chinaman. Where's your  
registration card?

TONG SHAN

In laundry.

Alcock looms over Tong Shan, his giant mitts in the pockets of his jacket.

F.J.

(mocks his accent)

"In raun-ry." "In raun-ry."

(beat)

You know you're supposed to carry  
it with you, don't you?

Tong Shan reaches up to untie his queue. One of the Cops yanks his hand away. The other Cops bait Tong Shan, prodding him with their truncheons. His head still tethered...The more he tries to defend himself, the more excited they get...

## COPS

(unison)

Chinkie, Chinkie, Chinaman,  
 Sitting on a fence;/ Trying to make  
 a dollar/ Out of fifteen cents./  
 Chink, Chink, Chinaman/ Eats dead  
 rats;/ Eats them up/ Like --

Suddenly, Tong Shan SPITS on Alcock. Alcock pulls out a police-issue SAP -- a spring-loaded, lead-headed club, covered in black leather...The CRACK! CRACK! CRACK! of bones breaking as Alcock wields the club...Tong Shan slumps, unconscious. Exultant, Alcock turns to see the others sickened by what they've witnessed.

## ALCOCK

You saw him spit on me?  
 (beat)  
 Well, then.

He pockets the sap and exit. As they exit, they take in Tong Shan's broken body. Off Tong Shan, hanging from his queue,

DISSOLVE TO:

## EXT. DAWN. NORTH BEACH

The Little Girl wades in the intertidal pools, fishing, her skirt tied up around her waist...An abundance of shellfish -- abalone, crabs, clams...Behind her, the CLIFF HOUSE, a resort hotel out of fantasy, perched uncertainly on a precipice as if placed there by giants, dreamlike in the morning fog...

CUT TO:

## INT. DAWN. THE GOLDEN BUTTERFLY -- KITCHEN

The Little Girl lights the stove...She empties her morning's catch into a huge stockpot, fills it with water and lifts it onto the stove...Turns on the stove to bring the pot to a boil...

She returns to the sink to do some scrubbing..REVEAL that what she's washing are RUBBER CONDOMS, intended for re-use...Cinderella of the brothel...As she dries the condoms on a dish rack,

CUT TO:

INT./EXT. LATER. THE GOLDEN BUTTERFLY -- HALLWAY

Taking a break, the Little Girl sits in a window, smoking a cigarette. Watches two GIRLS from the brothel, a little older than she, playing in the dust of the alley below...One girl lies down and the other lies on top of her, bouncing up and down, simulating a sex act...They get up, giggling...Learning the trade...Off the Little Girl,

CUT TO:

INT. MORNING. STAIRS -- INTO BEDROOM

The PROSTITUTES come downstairs for breakfast, scratching and rubbing the sleep out of their eyes...The Little Girl squeezes past them up the stairs...Enters a bedroom to make the beds...Pulls the covers down and discovers, on the sheets, a soaking, deep-red stain of BLOOD...But she doesn't react -- it's a day at school for her...She gathers the sheets in a bundle...

CUT TO:

EXT. DAY. DUPONT STREET -- CHINATOWN

The Little Girl crosses Chinatown, carrying over her shoulder the bundled sheets, knotted at the ends...In the streets, the "bachelor society," few women and fewer children...

She sees EVELYN BROWNE, 20s, pretty, a white teacher at the Chinese orphanage on Sacramento Street, leading her charges on their way to church, two neatly-ordered rows of children in uniform, with matching bowl-cut hair...

Girls like her -- and not at all like her...She watches them with curiosity and sees, in the eyes of these orphans, fear, and contempt, and derision...Off the Little Girl...

CUT TO:

EXT. DAY. LAUNDRY

Toting her bundle, the Little Girl approaches the laundry, but it's Sunday, and the door is closed. Standing on tiptoe, she peeks through the window, but no one's inside. She knocks on the glass. No one answers. She peeks through the glass of the door and knocks again...

CUT TO:

INT. DAY. LAUNDRY -- BACK ROOM

Tong Shan sleeps on a bunk. You could imagine that his broken body hasn't moved from this spot in months. A lurid RED SCAR on his head where the beating split his scalp. With a groan, he rises to a sitting posture. As the blanket falls away, REVEAL his pale and wasted body. He reaches for a CRUTCH beside his bunk and moves toward the front...

CUT TO:

EXT. SAME TIME. LAUNDRY

The Little Girl knocks on the glass again. She hears the latch lift on the door, looks up and sees the wraithlike figure through the glass. The door opens and she is face-to-face with Tong Shan. Off their looks,

CUT TO:

INT. CONTINUOUS. LAUNDRY

The Little Girl follows a hobbling Tong Shan inside. Smiling, he lifts her to sit on the counter. Takes her bundle and moves around to the other side of the counter.

TONG SHAN  
 ...What's your name?

LITTLE GIRL  
I don't have a name.

TONG SHAN  
Everyone has a name.

LITTLE GIRL  
 "You."  
 (beat)  
 "You do this." "You do that." "You make the lunch." "You make the beds."  
 (beat)  
 Do you speak English?

TONG SHAN  
 A little.

LITTLE GIRL  
 You should learn English. You're not in Taishan anymore.  
 (beat)

(MORE)

LITTLE GIRL (CONT'D)

I learned by reading the comics in  
the newspaper.

The Little Girl plays with the abacus. Tong Shan unbundles  
the laundry and finds the blood-soaked sheets there...He  
takes this in a beat. Takes out a pad. Licks a pencil point  
and logs in the laundry...

TONG SHAN

You come from the brothel?

LITTLE GIRL

On Com Coak Alley.

(beat)

I can use an abacus. I went to  
school in Taishan. Before my father  
lost all the money.

TONG SHAN

I remember you from the boat. I was  
on the deck with the men. I saw you  
steal an apple.

Tong Shan rolls his shoulder, still stiff from his beating...

LITTLE GIRL

What happened to your arm?

TONG SHAN

America is not my country.

LITTLE GIRL

I didn't steal anything. That apple  
was going to go bad.

Tong Shan turns the pad around to her.

TONG SHAN

Can you add this?

She works the abacus.

LITTLE GIRL

Two dollars sixty five cents.

He turns the pad around. Writes the amount. Hands her the  
receipt.

TONG SHAN

How old are you?

LITTLE GIRL

Seven.

TONG SHAN

Then I will call you Seven.

LITTLE GIRL

That's not a name.

TONG SHAN

By the magic square, a man with a  
number seven would learn a lesson  
of losing a close thing or person.

LITTLE GIRL

Did you lose someone?

TONG SHAN

It's my lucky number.

LITTLE GIRL

I think you lost someone.

Tong Shan takes a beat.

TONG SHAN

You are a smart little girl.

Fish returns to the laundry.

FISH

Who is this pretty one?

She giggles as he tickles her. Fish laughs. Then he takes a NICKEL out of his ear and gives it to her. Off Tong Shan,

CUT TO:

INT. DAY. LAUNDRY -- BACK ROOM

Tong Shan stands with his razor in front of the shaving mirror. Fish enters with a load of laundry. Carries it to the back...

Tong Shan reaches up, cuts off his QUEUE with the razor. As Fish returns, he doubletakes as he notices this. A look between them.

FISH

You cut off your queue?

Tong Shan says nothing. Then Old Man Wang enters, pours himself a cup of tea. He scowls as he notices that Tong Shan's queue is missing. He sits at the work table with his tea.

OLD MAN WANG

A Chinese man cannot cut off his queue. A Chinese man must respect the Emperor.

Moving to the sink to rinse his razor, Tong Shan mutters a reply. Old Man Wang looks to Fish.

FISH

He says the Emperor must respect himself and not let himself be dominated by others.

OLD MAN WANG

A philosopher who lies on his back and does no work. If he can lift his arms, let him iron a shirt.

Fish sits with the Old Man. Pours himself tea.

FISH

I agree with Tong Shan. If the Emperor can't protect us, what good is he?

Old Man Wang glares at Tong Shan and wags his finger.

OLD MAN WANG

America is not your country.

TONG SHAN

America is everyone's country.

Looks all around. Tong Shan exits. Off Fish, watching Tong Shan,

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT. LAUNDRY

The three men eat dinner. Old Man Wang shoots suspicious looks at Tong Shan's bald head. Tong Shan takes a beat. Sets down his chopsticks. Gets up from the table. Returns with his rucksack, already packed. He addresses both of them.

TONG SHAN

I came here with nothing but a pair of bare hands. You gave a roof and a bowl of rice to a poor sojourner who had neither. You are the only family I have in Chinatown. But now, I must live on my own.

(MORE)

TONG SHAN (CONT'D)  
 (switches to English)  
 Never will I forget your kindness.

Tong Shan bows to Old Man Wang. Bows to Fish. Then picks up his CARDBOARD SUITCASE and exits. Off their looks,

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT. ST. LOUIS ALLEY

A dark, narrow passage that runs from Jackson Street, then bends perpendicular and narrows further to empty into Dupont Street. Carrying his cardboard suitcase, Tong Shan approaches and enters a BROTHEL.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT. BROTHEL

Tong Shan waits in the entry. It is the fancier style of Chinatown brothel, known as a "parlor house," cluttered with teak and bamboo and embroidered pillows, redolent of incense, and catering to a largely white clientele. The madam enters: LO MO, mid-30s, in an embroidered robe. A fierce, dominating personality, and once the most beautiful woman in Chinatown.

LO MO  
 Looking for a girl?

TONG SHAN  
 A room.

LO MO  
 I don't let my rooms.  
 (off his look)  
 Not to people I don't know.

TONG SHAN  
 It's good to have a man around.

LO MO  
 You should've quit while you were ahead.

He catches her looking at the scar on his head. He touches it. Grins.

TONG SHAN  
 Red like Chinese eggs. A new beginning.

Lo Mo takes a beat.



LO MO  
Sign the register. Stay away from  
the girls.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT. LO MO'S BROTHEL

Tong Shan stands at the front desk. A PROSTITUTE finds a KEY and hands it to him.

PROSTITUTE  
A dollar a week for a room. A  
dollar-twenty for a room with a  
sink. Two dollars for a room with a  
window.

TONG SHAN  
I like a window.

Tong Shan takes out two Liberty-head SILVER DOLLARS. Slides them across the counter.

PROSTITUTE  
You sure you don't want a girl?  
(beat)  
Two girls? Three dollars fifty  
cents.

TONG SHAN  
Just the window.

The Prostitute turns the register to face him and opens it. Tong Shan takes a PEN out of an inkwell. Considers a beat. Then SIGNS...

INSERT -- ON THE REGISTER

As he signs his name...A new name for an new American...

"TOM SUN"

Satisfied, Tom enjoys his signature, then closes the book. As the Prostitute hands Tom a key,

CUT TO:

INT. LATER. BROTHEL

Tom climbs the stairs. Passes a JOHN -- a white man -- heading the opposite way. He finally reaches his room on the top floor. Unlocks the door...

A tiny room with a narrow bed and a dresser. Tom puts the cardboard suitcase on the bed. Opens it. Takes out his carved idol of the Jade Emperor. Places it on the dresser...

As he unpacks, he tosses a HATCHET on the bed...A dull, murderous weapon...The tang has no handle affixed...Tom lights a cigarette...Picks up the hatchet, sits in the window, expertly winds the tang with cord...Off Tom,

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. DAY. CONDENE MANSION -- KITCHEN

Alice arranges flowers in a vase -- roses and hydrangeas from the garden. Hattie enters with a package from the laundry, bundled in twine and butcher paper. She checks the receipt, finds a PURSE with petty cash in a drawer.

ALICE

I'll do that.

(off Hattie's look)

Finish the flowers. The thorns are ruining my hands.

Alice takes the purse. Hurries toward the back porch...Hoping to see Tom...

CUT TO:

EXT. CONTINUOUS. CONDENE MANSION

Alice emerges and looks up expectantly. Instead of Tom, she finds a pimply-faced DELIVERY BOY waiting beside his bicycle. She confirms the amount on the receipt. Takes out some coins.

ALICE

Here. This is for you.

She tips him with an additional fifty-cent piece. The Delivery Boy smiles. Bows.

DELIVERY BOY

Thank you.

ALICE

There was a man at the laundry -- a man with kind eyes --

(off his look)

-- Tong Shan. I think that was his name. Is he still there?

The Delivery Boy looks at her, uncomprehending. Off Alice,

CUT TO:

INT. DAY. C.W. LOO'S OFFICE -- "LOO'S SHOES"

The noise of the factory floor filters in from outside. C.W. Loo (he of the electric car), 30s, an Americanized Babbitt, a striver and a salesman, selects a cigar as he sits with Tong Xi and Tom.

C.W.

...So you two are brothers?

TONG XI

Paper brothers.

C.W.

So you have papers?

A look between Tom and Tong Xi.

TONG XI

Fifth Uncle sent papers. He wasn't landed.

C.W. clips the end of his cigar.

C.W.

So how'd you get in the country?

TOM

Swim.

C.W. looks up from his cigar. Bursts into laughter. Returns to trimming his cigar.

C.W.

In the old days, it took a skilled man ten hours to make fifty pairs of shoes. With a machine, a man with little training can make seven hundred. A nigger invented that machine.

(beat)

*That's* America.

(beat)

I own a whorehouse in the Tenderloin. The second floor is the Chinese whores. The third floor is the nigger whores. The fourth floor is the white whores. The fifth floor is the French whores.

(MORE)

C.W. (CONT'D)

And the top floor is redheads. And the ground floor is the best French restaurant in the city. You see that? It's *organized*. What I'm saying is, you made the right decision to jump off that boat. I'd rather drown than go back to China.

C.W. lights his cigar.

TONG XI

If you could give Tom a job in your factory...

C.W. turns to Tom.

C.W.

You should join the tong.  
(Tom hesitates)  
You don't want to?

C.W. gets up, pours a brandy. A look between Tom and Tong Xi.

TONG XI

If Tom had a good job, it could help Fifth Uncle pay back what he owes the tong.

C.W.

The tong will take care of Fifth Uncle. Let's not talk about that. We are all brothers in the tong. His debts --  
(to Tom)  
-- your papers --  
(beat)  
-- even after you're dead -- who digs up your bones and sends them back to China? -- so you have peace, so you don't have your ghost roaming the earth -- that comes with the membership. The tong does everything.  
(beat)

What do you think America is about?

TOM

Be.

C.W.

Be what?

TOM

Be free.

C.W. hitches up his pants and gestures with his cigar.

C.W.

America is about *belonging*. I myself belong to the Shriners -- I was their first Chinese member.

(beat)

One day you'll get in trouble and you'll wish you had the tong.

TOM

Some people like trouble.

C.W. shoots Tom a look. Looks to Tong Xi. Is this guy for real? Off Tom, lighting a cigarette,

CUT TO:

INT. DAY. SHOE FACTORY -- DUPONT STREET

C.W. Loo's large boot-and-shoe factory, nestled amidst several houses of white prostitution (also owned by Loo) on the corner of Dupont and Sacramento Streets. Several CHINESE MEN work in the crowded factory. CHILDREN work among the adults.

Wearing coveralls, Tom works at a MATZELIGER SHOE-LASTING MACHINE, attaching the sole of a shoe to its leather upper. He makes a shoe a minute, working a fourteen-hour day, six days a week, for eight dollars a week. (A living wage is twelve dollars a week.) Off Tom,

CUT TO:

EXT. DAY. CORNER STORE -- MARKET STREET

Tom emerges with cigarettes, an APPLE, and a NEWSPAPER. He sits on the steps, lights a cigarette, takes a bite of the apple, and opens the paper to the comics page. As he reads "Happy Hooligan" on the comics page, he looks up and sees Evelyn leading the orphans on their afternoon walk...Girls the same age as Seven, who glance up at him on the stoop...

ANGLE ON -- ALICE

In her chauffeured Rolls-Royce...She, too watches the orphans from her car...Off Alice,

CUT TO:

INT. DAY. 920 SACRAMENTO STREET -- PARLOR

Alice sits with ADIE CAMPBELL, 20s, handsome and athletic, bursting with life, and her boss, MARY FIELD, 60s. A subservient Chinese ORPHAN serves them coffee...

ADIE

...Hundreds of girls get smuggled into Chinatown every year -- maybe thousands

MRS. FIELD

-- certainly thousands --

ADIE

-- since I've been here at the orphanage -- Missus --

ALICE

I'd prefer not to give you my --  
(beat)  
Well, I might as well. It's Condene. Alice Condene. I'm sure you've heard of my husband. But that's not why I'm here. Do you see? Because of him.

A look between Adie and Mrs. Field.

ADIE

(resuming)

Then when we do try to rescue a girl -- the tongs are very good with their lawyers. The girls are made to sign an employment contract. The judges uphold it. We rescued a three-year-old girl who was bought for fifty cents -- to be raised and sold like a pig -- the judge sent her back. And of course we have limited resources.

MRS. FIELD

Mrs. Condene, why are you here?

ALICE

I was wondering what it's like.

ADIE

Well, it's mostly a lot of work.

MRS. FIELD

There's a limit.

ADIE  
They're still quite young.

MRS. FIELD  
Given the innate depravity of their  
race.

ADIE  
(quoting Corinthians)  
"Let no one seek his own good, but  
the good of his neighbor."

MRS. FIELD  
And with sixty in residence.

ALICE  
You must feel quite loved.

Looks all around. Off Mrs. Field, skeptical of Alice,

CUT TO:

INT. LATER. ASSEMBLY HALL

Adie enters with Alice to find Evelyn teaching a class. A 12-year-old Chinese ORPHAN GIRL recites Kipling.

ORPHAN GIRL #1  
(reciting)  
...Take up the White Man's burden,  
Ye dare not stoop to less -  
Nor call too loud on Freedom  
To cloak your weariness;  
By all ye cry or whisper,  
By all ye leave or do,  
The silent, sullen peoples  
Shall weigh your gods and you...

Across the distance, Evelyn and Adie exchange a look. Evelyn shyly looks away. Off Alice, oblivious to this,

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT. BROTHEL -- KITCHEN

Tom enters through the back door. The sounds of the brothel filter in -- a piano, laughter, the thumping of a headboard against a wall...Tom puts a kettle on for tea. Lo Mo enters.

TOM  
Would you like tea?

LO MO  
I'd like a pipe.

She sits, weary and irritable.

TOM  
Long night?

LO MO  
Do you think I'm beautiful?

Tom shakes out two cigarettes from the pack. Turns the pack toward her to offer her one.

TOM  
Do you care what I think?

She takes one.

LO MO  
There was a time when I was the  
most beautiful woman in Chinatown.

He strikes a match and lights her cigarette.

TOM  
You still are.

He lights his own cigarette from the same match. A look between them. The kettle whistles. Tom leaves his cigarette burning in the ashtray. Gets up to make tea...

LO MO  
You haven't been in Chinatown very  
long.

Tom washes the teapot and the cups with boiling water...

TOM  
They say a man's life is twenty  
thousand days. I'm half way. Half  
started. Half finished.  
(beat)  
I know what a woman is.

The *pu-erh* tea is pressed in a block...She watches as Tom breaks off a chunk, washes it, then sets it to steep...She's starting to like him...

LO MO  
You smell of leather.

TOM  
Do you mind?



LO MO  
Why don't you work for me?

TOM  
What would I do?

LO MO  
What a man does. Be a father to the girls.

Tom takes a beat.

TOM  
When a girl is sold -- seven years old -- what happens to her?

LO MO  
A pig is like a bank. You fatten it for a rainy day. A girl that age needs to be clothed and fed -- for what? Maybe she works four years? -- unless she dies first -- of typhus.  
(beat)  
Flesh disgusts me. I wish that I were made of gold.

Off Tom,

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT. FAN-TAN PARLOR -- WASHINGTON STREET

TOP SHOT of a fan-tan table, covered in green felt, as a *tan kun*, or croupier, spills buttons on the table, covers a portion of them with *tan koi*, or metal bowl.

Lively betting ensues among the GAMBLERS, all of them betting on the remainder that will be left once the beads inside the bowl are counted out by fours, with the wagers place in numbered squares -- "1," "2," "3," "4," and also on the corners...

Sweaty, drunk Tong Xi scans the table, waiting for his luck to turn...He bets his last money on "3"...The game begins...

He watches anxiously as the *tan kun* uses a bamboo stick to sweep away four buttons at a time, until the final remainder is left -- two buttons -- Tong Xi cries out in a paroxysm of desperation as the *tan kun* takes his money away...

TONG XI  
Ka-ma-kar-bei! I should have gone to bed after the auction!

(MORE)

TONG XI (CONT'D)  
Now I've lost everything!  
 (beat)  
Loan me some money.

The *tan kun* looks to the PIT BOSS, who shakes his head...

TAN KUN  
The past cannot be mended. Look to  
tomorrow.

TONG XI  
For philosophy, I'd go to a  
whorehouse.

Angry, Tong Xi gets up...As he exits,

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT. FAN TAN PARLOR -- STOUTS ALLEY

TOP SHOT as Tong Xi exits the gambling establishment and drunkenly stumbles off the curb and into the street...PULL BACK into the POV of a HATCHET MAN, spying from a plank above that spans the alley...Tong Xi short-cuts into narrow CHURCH COURT...Then the man above WHISTLES...Tong Xi stops a beat -- wonders if he imagined it -- pulls his collar up against the damp cold and continues on this way...

A dense FOG has rolled in from the Bay...Tong Xi reaches Washington Street and turns to head uphill...Breathing heavily, struggling for purchase on the slick cobblestones...Again, he senses someone following him...He thinks he hears footsteps, muffled by the fog...He stops to listen...Hears nothing...Did he imagine it?...He resumes his climb uphill...Hears footsteps again...Turns to look...Sees no one...Then a series of WHISTLES -- the HATCHET MEN signalling each other...Tong Xi takes off at a sprint...

A FOOTCHASE

...Up and down the steep hills and narrow alleys of Chinatown...Tong Xi gasps for air, his lungs burning...He hears the footsteps getting closer...

...Confused by his fatigue, the darkness, the whiskey at the fan-tan parlor, Tong Xi winds up trapped at the foot of Com Coak Alley...He fumbles for his revolver -- "Wyatt Earp's gun" -- with its unwieldy foot-long barrel...The long barrel catches, stuck in his belt...He tries to pull it loose...

Then suddenly a HATCHET MAN appears from nowhere...Grabs Tong Xi from behind and *cuts his throat*...The Buntline clatters to the cobblestones...BLOOD spills toward it...As the Hatchet Man takes the weapon and runs, PULL UP to reveal the body of Tong Xi, staring up from the cobblestones, in the spreading puddle of blood,

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. DAWN. NORTH BEACH

The fog lies heavy over the bay. Seven fishes in the intertidal pools, the levitated mass of the Cliff House looming in the distance, its towers hidden behind the mists and low clouds...Fish arrives with his fishing gear...Sets down his buckets and stands beside her.

FISH

What's biting?

SEVEN

Crabs.

FISH

You see where that kelp is? There's abalone there. Save the shells. Abalone shells have magic powers.

SEVEN

You're here a lot.

FISH

That's why they call me Fish.

SEVEN

You're from the laundry.

FISH

(beat)

What's your name?

SEVEN

Seven.

FISH

That's not a name.

SEVEN

Your friend gave me that name.

FISH

Tom? Tom left.

SEVEN

It's his lucky number.

Fish takes a shiny LIBERTY HEAD NICKEL out of his ear. Flips it. Holds his fist out.

FISH

Heads or tails?

SEVEN

Heads.

Fish turns his fist over. Opens his fingers...Heads.

FISH

*Del-ka-ma!*

SEVEN

I told you.

He gives her the nickel. She holds it tight and puts it in the pocket of her apron. Fish picks up his buckets.

FISH

Bring me crabs sometime. I'll make you soup dumplings.

Fish exits with his buckets. Seven watches Fish walk down the beach and disappear into the fog...

CUT TO:

EXT. DAY. LOOK SAN MEMORIAL CEMETERY -- COLMA, CALIFORNIA

The Chinese cemetery in the suburbs southwest of San Francisco. A chill wind blows. Tong Xi is laid out beside a pile of lumber. A CHICKEN is tethered to a peg in the ground. The wind scatters the sawdust beside a narrow, hexagonal COFFIN that Tom built himself. CLOSE ON TOM as he takes this in. Then, with a shovel, he resumes digging a shallow grave -- eighteen inches deep, to encourage decomposition. A Chinese UNDERTAKER watches him.

UNDERTAKER

...He's your brother?

TOM

Paper brother.

UNDERTAKER

What about his father?

TOM  
Paper father.

UNDERTAKER  
Can he pay?

TOM  
He lost all his money.

UNDERTAKER  
He should have gone to the tong.

Tom climbs out of the hole. Wipes his brow. Takes out a cigarette. Offers one to the Undertaker. Then slides the pack into the Undertaker's shirt pocket.

TOM  
 "Never smoke anything besides Old Judge."

UNDERTAKER  
 You speak English?

Tom drags on his cigarette, looks at the corpse of Tong Xi at his feet.

TOM  
 He joined a tong.

Tom nods to the Undertaker, and together they lift Tong Xi's body into the coffin. Tom places a SILVER DIME in Tong Xi's mouth. Then he puts a RICE BOWL and CHOPSTICKS into the coffin beside him.

UNDERTAKER  
Back in my village -- when a man died -- they would cut up a chicken -- the breasts, the legs -- they would keep those parts -- they would take the head and give it to a dog -- then they would beat the dog to make it run away. The dog was the dead man. It was a way to say, You took what you could from life. What's left belongs to us now.

Tom he writes out on a BRICK Tong Xi's name, place of birth, and year of death, and places it inside the coffin. He covers the dead man's face with a yellow cloth...

The Undertaker takes the chicken. Untethers it and holds it while he unclasps his pocket knife, planning to spill its blood on the grave.

Suddenly the chicken bursts from his arms, falls to the ground and runs away. The Undertaker runs to retrieve it. Again, the chicken runs. The Undertaker reaches for the chicken. It runs and flies over a barbed-wire fence. Runs away...

Tom can't help but laugh as he watches this...Then he drags the coffin into the grave, and with a mighty blow of the shovel splits the lid. Then he shovels dirt on top. He identifies the grave with a simple wooden marker, with Tong Xi's name, place of birth, and year of death written in Chinese calligraphy. With the coffin buried, Tom lights a large INCENSE STICK and burns joss paper, or "hell money," at the foot of the grave.

The UNDERTAKER approaches. Tom turns to him.

TOM  
I'll pay you when I can.

Off the burning joss paper, as breeze carries away the ashes,

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT. OPERA HOUSE

Tom walks home. Turns the corner and passes the OPERA HOUSE, with a crowd of CHINESE LOCALS waiting, mixed with some TOURISTS and CURIOSITY SEEKERS...A 1905 WOODS ELECTRIC parked outside...The handsome driver hops out and hurries to hold the door for his wife...This is HENRY CONDENE. He and Alice exchange a smile as he helps her out of the car...

HENRY  
Well, this is certainly different.

ALICE  
You sound bored already.

As he escorts her inside, the crowd instinctively makes way for the white people...Alice turns and notices Tom across the street, watching her. A look that burns...That she can't look away from...Henry notices this.

HENRY  
Do you know that man?

ALICE  
He's the delivery boy from the laundry.

HENRY

Poor fellow. He looks desperate.

Henry takes her by the elbow and they disappear inside...Tom watches them...Driven by a compulsion, he pushes his way through the crowd and buys a ticket at the window...Follows Alice inside...

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT. OPERA HOUSE

Tom finds a seat toward the back...Scanning the reserved seats for Alice -- the ladies' hats all look alike -- till Henry turns around to greet someone and he locates her...

Alice turns and glances, notices Tom in the back row...He turns and sees Alice...They lock eyes across the distance...Just as the lights go down, the curtains part, and the opera begins..."The Lady General"...The players emerge on stage with their elaborate costumes and makeup, their choreographed symbolic movements...Off Tom,

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT. RESTAURANT

Boisterous and flushed with alcohol, the four young Hatchet Men who chased and killed Tong Xi enjoy a banquet in the corner of a small restaurant. Late at night, and the otherwise empty restaurant fills with the sound of their laughter.

Then the door opens and Tom enters. He sits at the counter with his newspaper. Opens it to the comics page: "Happy Hooligan." Behind the counter, an OLD WOMAN slaughters a duck...She punctures the breast with a chopstick and then pulls out the heart with her fingers...

At the table, the Hatchet Men play a drinking game. Chanting and then more loud laughter...The Old Woman sets aside the duck. Puts out chopsticks for Tom and pours him tea.

OLD WOMAN

I never saw you before.

TOM

No?

OLD WOMAN

Where are you from?

TOM

I'm the son of the Emperor. My mother was his favorite concubine. The Empress could not have children. She was jealous of her. So I was sent away to find my fortune.

(off her look)

Don't you believe that's true?

OLD WOMAN

Everything is true in Chinatown.

The Hatchet Men erupt in more laughter...The Old Woman scowls in their direction.

TOM

They should show more respect.

OLD WOMAN

Everything is upside down. These young men run everything -- why? -- because they have guns. I came to Chinatown thirty years ago. I remember what it was like. Before the tong wars.

She moves to resume plucking the duck...Tom glances over and sees the young Hatchet Man showing off his trophy to his friends...

THE BUNTLINE

With its long barrel...Wyatt Earp's gun...Tong Xi's gun...

CLOSE ON -- TOM

He slightly opens his robe to reveal the HATCHET there...He fingers the corded handle...Considers a beat...Four of them and only one of him...Then he turns as the front door opens...

IT'S ALCOCK AND F.J.

Alcock so large that he nearly eclipses the light in the room...The Hatchet Men suddenly turn quiet...Tom averts his face, listens to Alcock's heavy tread as the two cops move to a table in the middle of the room. A look between him and the Old Woman. Then she moves around the counter to bring them menus...



ALCOCK

What should we have here, now,  
F.J.? My digestion has been poor.  
Should we have the egg foo young?

F.J.

I believe so, George.

ALCOCK

I believe so.

The Old Woman exits. Alcock sips his tea, biding his time.

F.J.

It's good tea.

ALCOCK

Did you know a dead body turned up  
in the street in Chinatown?

F.J.

I did not know.

ALCOCK

Well, that's our responsibility,  
isn't it? The tong wars flare up  
again. The gambling stops. The  
whoring stops. The money stops. And  
all the high-minded wives of the  
grandees on Nob Hill go complain to  
the Mayor about the need for  
reform. Then the Mayor chastises  
me. With my five men to police  
thirty thousand of our Mongolian  
brothers.

(reciting)

"Take up the White Man's burden, Ye  
dare not stoop to less -  
Nor call too loud on Freedom  
To cloak your weariness;  
By all ye cry or whisper,  
By all ye leave or do,  
The silent, sullen peoples  
Shall weigh your gods and you."

F.J.

That was beautiful, George.

ALCOCK

Thank you, F.J.

F.J.

You brought a tear to my eye.

Alcock finishes his tea. At the corner table, the Hatchet Men pay their bill and move to exit...Suddenly Alcock sticks out his foot and trips one of them...He springs from his chair -- surprisingly agile for his size -- ducks a punch and lands a thudding left hand into a second Hatchet Man...As F.J. disables the third Hatchet Man, Alcock picks up the fourth by the neck and slams him into the wall...Handcuffs him...Frisks him and comes up with the Buntline...Looks at it...

ALCOCK

(off gun)

Well, will you look at this? The gun that won the West.

CLOSE ON -- TOM

Looking away...Thinking...Then he turns and places his HATCHET on the counter...Alcock turns and sees this...A look between them...A SHOWDOWN...As if one of them is going to die here tonight...Looks all around...

Then Alcock laughs heartily.

ALCOCK (CONT'D)

The way to heaven is to take no action -- that's what the Chinese say -- isn't it? Put that away, John Chinaman. I'll get to you another time.

(with a nod)

Run along now, old woman. Both of you. This is no business of yours.

The Old Woman hurries to gather her things. Tom looks at the young Hatchet Men -- the TERROR in their eyes...Then he looks to the Old Woman...She urges him out with a look...He puts away his weapon and follows the Old Woman out the door...Hears the CLICK of the front door being latched...As F.J. goes in the kitchen and gets a couple of cleavers,

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT. BROTHEL -- LO MO'S ROOM

Lo Mo sprawls on her large, carved bed, silk sheets and embroidered pillows...Tom opens a wooden box...REVEAL six black balls of OPIUM, nestled in wood shavings...He takes out a ball of opium...Finds the *yen hop*, opens it to reveal the OPIUM PARAPHERNALIA there. He places a small amount of opium on a long needle called a *yen hanck*...

LO MO

...Where were you tonight?

TOM

The opera.

LO MO

Why waste money on those old stories?

TOM

It is still the same stories.

Tom holds the opium over an oil-burning lamp, the *yen dong*, rolling the needle and watching it swell and bubble ten times its original size. It turns a golden brown and gives off a creamy odor...

LO MO

The girls told me your brother was killed.

TOM

Paper brother.

LO MO

I'm sorry.

TOM

Nobody in Chinatown has real family. Paper life, to burn like *joss* and be happy in the next life. All paper.

LO MO

Don't get so gloomy.

TOM

A "hundred-men's wife" is no man's wife.

LO MO

You just figured that out?

TOM

Everyone wants a normal life.

LO MO

Everyone doesn't.

Tom twirls the opium on the bowl of the *yen tsiang* -- the pipe -- then heats the bowl in the lamp, teasing it out in strings in order to cook it more thoroughly...Tom rolls the opium into a pea-sized mass at the bottom of the bowl...

Tom hands the pipe to Lo Mo. With the *yen hanck*, Tom pokes a hole in the ball of opium.

She holds the bowl across the flame of the lamp to heat it and inhales. Then she sinks back into the pillows.

Tom sets the pipe on the table. Lights a cigarette.

TOM

Now sleep.

He moves to exit.

LO MO

Don't leave me, Tom.

He turns. A look between them. Off Tom,

CUT TO:

INT. DAWN. 920 SACRAMENTO STREET -- HALLWAY

In her nightgown, Adie fixes herself a cup of tea. Then she hears something -- the creak of a heavy footfall in the hallway. She listens a beat. Hears it again. Goes to investigate...

INTO THE HALLWAY

Adie turns a corner and is surprised to find Alcock there. He takes off his derby and bows slightly.

ADIE

Sergeant Alcock? I didn't know you were here.

ALCOCK

Good morning, Miss Campbell.

ADIE

What are you doing here?

ALCOCK

I pop my head in and watch them sleeping. I do like to watch them sleeping.

ADIE

How did you get inside?

ALCOCK

Ask Mrs. Field -- Mary knows I come by -- ask her -- to check up on the girls.

A long look between them.

ADIE  
I'll walk you out.

A look between them. Off Adie,

CUT TO:

EXT. PRE-DAWN. NORTH BEACH

The water shimmers pink before the sunrise. Seven arrives with her buckets, in her red dress. She looks out to the kelp bed that Fish pointed out -- where the abalone live. Suddenly the water lights up with phosphorescent jellyfish, washing in on the tide. Seven picks one up from the beach -- it glows in her hand.

SEVEN'S POV

She DIVES in the water and swims out to the kelp bed. Swimming through the jellyfish, as if she's far, far above Chinatown, amidst the stars...The bubbles from her nose clear, and she sees a large rock below...

ANOTHER ANGLE -- ABOVE WATER

Seven surfaces briefly, takes a deep breath, then dives and disappears with a splash...A dazzling image: the phosphorescence of the jellyfish below, the pink opalescence of the surface, and the call of the sea birds, and the distant pinkling of halyards against masts... She's down there a long time...Bubbles break the surface of the water...

Suddenly she bursts to the surface, her lungs burning...She swims to the shore...She looks at the abalone that she found, its pores like portholes, its whorls and tentacles...Then she sets it on the sand. HOLD ON the abalone, as if there's magic to be found inside the shell, as Seven returns, splashing, to dive again,

FADE TO BLACK.

THE END