

SHANGHAI TRIAD

A film by

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present

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World Sales UGC-DA

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SCENE 1 EXT/LATE AFTERNOON PORT LIGHT
RAIN

1. A horde of passengers is disembarking from a ferry-boat. Hundreds of faces. Luggage of different shapes and sizes. Multi-coloured umbrellas.
2. Shui Sheng, a youth arriving from the country, is completely lost in the throng. Carrying a small case in his hand, he is swept forward by the crowd descending from the boat.
3. As he walks down the gang-plank, Shui Sheng catches glimpses of the buildings of the Shanghai Bund of the 1930's over the drenched backs and dripping umbrellas of the passengers.
4. Shui Sheng scans the waiting crowd, looking for his uncle, his eyes nervously flitting from face to face.
5. The rain pours down on the huge buildings, which rise up over the top of the scrum of umbrellas.
6. Shui Sheng is both excited and nervous. He stands up on tiptoe, to stare at these huge building unlike anything out in the country.
7. An umbrella bursts open in front of him, completely blocking his vision.

SCENE 2 EXT/LATE AFTERNOON ROAD NEAR THE PORT
LIGHT RAIN

1. Shui Sheng pulls his jacket over his head to protect him from the rain. He looks lost and continues to scan the quayside for signs of his uncle.
2. Gradually the huge crowd drifts away. Only puddles are left, reflecting the grey sky.
3. Shui Sheng, clutching a bundle to his chest, props himself up against telegraph pole. His case is at his feet, on the wet pavement. The rickshaws scurry past. Shui Sheng looks up and stares at the electric cables spinning out from the top of the pole.
4. The camera follows his gaze.

5. Shui Sheng hears his name being called.

6. A heavily laden lorry skids to a halt in front of him. Three men in western-style suits are squeezed into the cabin. A middle-aged man opens the door and jumps down.

7. Shui Sheng recognises the man and calls to him timidly.

SHUI SHENG

Liu Shu!

(Liu Shu is Shui Sheng's uncle. He is the Triad's number six)

8. Liu Shu heads over to Shui Sheng and slaps him affectionately on the cheek.

LIU SHU

(loudly)

There you are! You've grown. How is your father?

SHUI SHENG

Very well.

LIU SHU

And your mother?

SHUI SHENG

She's well also.

LIU SHU

I'm late. I was scared you might have got lost.

SHUI SHENG

My mother told me to wait for you by a telegraph pole, if you weren't here when the boat docked. And not to move.

LIU SHU

(smiling)

Quite right. Shanghai is very different from the provinces. It can be dangerous if you get lost.

Liu Shu leans forward to pick up the case, nods towards the lorry and says to his nephew:

LIU SHU

Get in the back and hold on. I'm going to take you for a ride around Shanghai.

SCENE 3 EXT/EVENING RUE DE SHANGHAI RAIN

1. The streetlights have come on. Like magical mirrors, the puddles in the road reflect the buildings, which recede as Shui Sheng hurtles backwards down the street.

(A series of shots from the child's viewpoint. In the 1930's motor vehicles could move very quickly through the streets of Shanghai.)

2. Shui Sheng sees different colours whirling around him.

3. He is sitting on piles of sacks in the back of the lorry, looking constantly from left to right. He holds a waterproof cloth over his head to protect him from the rain, and with the other hand clings to the side-rail so as not to fall out.

4. The neon lights blur as the lorry speeds past.

5. Shui Sheng opens his eyes wide with delight. The wind whistles around his ears, his head switches from side to side like a mechanical toy, taking in the many different colours and noises of the chaotic city.

SCENE 4 EXT/EVENING WAREHOUSE RAIN

1. The lorry draws to a halt in the shadows at the river's edge. The motor cuts out taking with it the city's brouhaha.

2. The lorry has stopped in front of the large wooden door of a warehouse. The honking of the lorry's horn penetrates the silence.

3. The bloated face of a shaven-headed man appears through a small opening in the door.

4. Liu Shu leans out of the lorry and gives a strange signal to the man.

5. With a loud creaking of its hinges, the wooden door swings inwards. The steel cable holding the door uncoils noisily.

The dark entry of the warehouse appears like a gaping mouth ready to eat the lorry. Footsteps ring out hollowly giving the impression that the warehouse is very large and empty. Two groups of men dressed in black appear on both sides of the door.

6. Liu Shu moves towards the door flanked by two of his men. His expression is very serious and he is clearly on his guard, with one hand stuffed firmly in his pocket. He walks into the warehouse itself, followed by his two acolytes, each with a hand in his pocket also.

7. From the back of the lorry, Shui Sheng looks on curiously. The rain has stopped.

8. He catches sight of another group of men in the warehouse, all standing in the same way: legs apart and one hand in a trouser pocket.

In the middle of the group, Liu Shu is in whispered discussion with the shaven-headed man, who looks up and glances over at the lorry.

9. Bundles of empty sacks fall one after the other to the ground.

10. The shaven-headed man along with some of the black-clothed men are kicking these bundles hastily out of the back of the lorry.

11. They unload half of the lorry's contents in this way to reveal a large trunk.

12. They suddenly stop their activity. The shaven-headed man makes to lift the trunk.

13. Seeing that the trunk is very heavy, Shui Sheng, who has been standing next to the lorry, moves forward to help. Just then, a voice rings out:

LIU SHU
(v/o - harshly)

Shui Sheng!

14. Liu Shu, in the shadows of the warehouse, is not completely visible. The deathly silence merely amplifies the sound of his voice.

15. His shout brings Shui Sheng up short.

16. The shaven-headed man pulls the trunk out of the lorry and carries it into the warehouse. The other men form a close circle round the trunk.

A man wearing a long Chinese robe emerges from the shadows. He bangs on the trunk with his hand, before approaching Liu Shu.

They each stretch out their hand, link the ring-fingers of their right hands and shake hands in this way:

17. Intrigued, Shui Sheng watches the movements of the men in the warehouse. He looks up as he hears the sound of a car arriving.

18. A black car crosses the pool of light thrown by a streetlight at the corner of the warehouse and pulls up in front of the door.

19. The car-door opens and a young man in a suit jumps out. He walks round the front of the car and ostentatiously opens the rear door on the passenger side. A man of about thirty years old, wearing a well-cut suit and glasses, gets out. His dress makes him look like vaguely professorial, but it is clear by his manner that his importance is not merely paedogological.

Liu Shu hurries over to him.

LIU SHU
(bowing)

Song Er Ye!

20. Song Er Ye's sole reply is a nod of the head.
Together they walk towards the warehouse. As they pass in front of Shui Sheng, Song Er Ye pauses.

LIU SHU
(hastily)

His name is Shui Sheng. The Master himself told
him to come to the city.
(turning towards Shui Sheng)
Shui Sheng! Come quickly! Say hello to Song Er
Ye.

21.

SHUI SHENG

Song Er Ye!

(In Chinese. "Song Er Ye" alone is considered polite)

22. Song Er Ye looks Shui Sheng up and down, and then without a word he leads the group into the warehouse.

The door is closed on Shui Sheng, leaving him alone with the lorry in front of the warehouse.

23. Shui Sheng settles down on the sacks thrown from the lorry. Night is falling, the puddles left from the afternoon rain now reflect the moon's bright light.

24. Through a crack in the door, Shui Sheng observes what is happening inside the warehouse. Thus he sees the shaven-headed man force open the trunk and the man in traditional dress lean forward to inspect its contents.

The door has cut off one of the few sources of light in the warehouse, forcing Shui Sheng to peer in to distinguish the shadows.

In turn, Song Er Ye approaches the trunk, the other man straightens up, motions towards Song Er Ye and says something to him while gesticulating.

25. Shui Sheng is getting bored. He turns away and scans the city sky-line.

26. The lights on the huge building of the Bund form a sea of stars, both intriguing and luxurious.

As his imagination begins to take him away over this horizon, a deafening gunshot rings out in the warehouse.

27. Shui Sheng turns quickly back to the crack in the door.

The shaven-headed man appears to have fallen to one side of the trunk. He is trying to pull himself to his feet.

29. Sounds of people running, the man in traditional dress and some of his mob burst out of a side door and head off down the street.

30. Shui Sheng is unable to clearly distinguish what is happening inside the warehouse. He can only see Song Er Ye, looking still more serious, walk slowly towards the shaven-headed man.

The injured man is racked with spasms. Shui Sheng hears two more gunshots and sees his body slump to the floor motionless.

31. Shui Sheng, surprised by the rapidity and almost game-like simplicity of all he has witnessed, is left gaping.

32. Song Er Ye walks towards the door. Shui Sheng can see him taking a carefully folded white handkerchief from his pocket, which he shakes open and uses to thoroughly wipe the barrel of his gun. His expression is calm, as if nothing had happened.

SCENE 5 EXT/EVENING STREET - LORRY

1. Liu Shu, his eyes hooded over, grips the steering-wheel and stares at the road ahead.

Shui Sheng is seated at his side, thinking about the events at the warehouse. He risks a sidelong glance at his uncle.

SHUI SHENG

Liu Shu, what happened earlier?

LIU SHU

It's none of your business! Just keep what you saw to yourself.

Shui Sheng dares not speak. He watches the electric streetlights through the cabin's window.

2. The road is still wet and the lights on both sides rush by like multi-coloured ribbons.

3. Liu Shu lights a cigarette before speaking:

LIU SHU

Don't be in such a hurry to help next time!

SHUI SHENG

My mother told me that life in the city makes people lazy. They all keep their hands in their pockets. She made me swear not to become lazy like them.

Liu Shu's expression darkens even further, and he says something whose meaning escapes Shui Sheng:

LIU SHU

Being in a hurry will make you lose your head one of these days! Your mother doesn't understand these things!

Shui Sheng remains silent.

Liu Shu exhales noisily.

LIU SHU

(more kindly)

In Shanghai, knowing when to help and when not to, when to put your hand in your pocket and when to take it out, is a real art. You must listen to what I tell you. And do what I tell you to do. Get it?

Shui Sheng nods his head.

Just then, a clock begins to chime over their heads. Shui Sheng leans out of the window to look.

4. The clock-tower recedes from his view, chiming seven times in all.
5. His curiosity is awakened and he forgets the previous conversation.

SHUI SHENG

Liu Shu, what's that.

LIU SHU

It's a clock. Shanghai's iron cock.

He pulls Shui Sheng back inside the lorry's cabin.

LIU SHU

Stop it! Even with an eye in the back of your head, you couldn't see all there is to see in Shanghai. All this looking left and right, it's as if you've never seen anything.

We are both from the Tang clan, and if the master asked me to fetch you here, it's because of your name.

The Master only trusts the men of our clan. The Tangs are respected throughout Shanghai.

Don't be such a bumpkin! You understand?

SHUI SHENG

(sagely)

Yes, I understand.

SCENE 6 EXT/EVENING ENTRY TO THE TANG
PROPERTY

1. A tall, muscular man, dressed in black opens the door to them. He scrutinises the case Shui Sheng is carrying.

Liu Shu

This is Shui Sheng. He has just come up from the country.

The man gives no reply. He moves forward to take the case from the boy's grasp.

2. As he comes into the light, Shui Sheng notices a scar running from right to left across his face as if it were cut in two.

3. He has barely the time to conceal his surprise and the case is already in the man's hands.

4. The man in black adroitly sifts through the case. Its contents are made up of everyday items given to Shui Sheng by his mother just before he left.

5. Shui Sheng has hold of Liu Shu by the back of his jacket, which makes his uncle smile.

LIU SHU

This is Master Tang's house. Who are you
scared of?

SCENE 7 EXT/EVENING THE MAIN HOUSE

1. The main building of the residence is a three-storey western-style house. Flower-pots and indoor plants have been placed along each staircase. The lawn which runs round the house has been planted with plane-trees. Through their leaves, the lights of several rooms are visible and illuminate the façade of the house.

The driveway leading up to the front door is lined with black limousines, which appear to be guarded by a number of men dressed in black who pace up and down.

2. Liu Shu leads Shui Sheng towards the building, walking over the shadows of the plane-trees.

3. The man and his nephew have their identity checked by the men dressed in black who recede back into the shadows as soon as they recognise Liu Shu.

SCENE 8 INT/NIGHT THE TANG PROPERTY

1. Wall-lights and hanging lamps diffuse a peaceful orange light all the way down a marble corridor. Liu Shu leads Shui Sheng towards the stairs at the end of the corridor, receiving the greetings of the many servants on the way.

2. It is the first time that Shui Sheng has seen a room of such luxury. His eyes open wide with astonishment as he treads carefully down the marble floor, still clinging to Liu Shu's jacket. His eyes continue to flick from left to right.

3. Chinese-style lanterns have been placed against the marble walls, each one defining a coloured space before it. Above the staircase, wooden lanterns bearing Chinese characters, spell out the words "Honest and direct".

4. One of the hanging lamps resembles a glowing bush.

(suddenly)

It's truly good to have a lot of money.

LIU SHU

Have money? It's not just that. In Shanghai, if someone gives you a coin, our Master will already have touched it.

Shui Sheng passes his case from one hand to the other.

SHUI SHENG

How does one get a lot of money?

LIU SHU

Everyone who comes to Shanghai asks the same question: "How can I earn easy money?" It depends, you have to obey it's word.

SHUI SHENG

What? Money can talk? What language does it speak?

LIU SHU

At the moment, it's talking a Shanghai dialect.

SHUI SHENG

(abruptly)

I want to obey it! When I have a lot of money, I'll go back home and open a tofu shop.

LIU SHU

(bursting out laughing)

You really are a little peasant! When you have a lot of money, you can have anything you want in Shanghai. A tofu shop is nothing.

SCENE 9 INT/DAY BATHROOM

1. The water gushes down into the bath.

2. Shui Sheng's head emerges from the water, he wipes the water from his eyes and looks around.

3. The bathroom is very large, filled with whirling clouds of steam which filter the light.

Shui Sheng leans his head against the edge of the bath. His hair is plastered over his eyes making him look slightly ridiculous. His face is very close to that of Liu Shu.

4. Shui Sheng finds this funny. He smiles, and noticing that Liu Shu is in a good mood decides to ask him:

SHUI SHENG

How is my great-uncle?

5.

LIU SHU

(raising his eyebrows)

Your great-uncle? Who is your great-uncle?

6.

SHUI SHENG

My mother told me I had to call him that.

7. Liu Shu gives him a gentle slap.

LIU SHU

You're not in the provinces here! This is Shanghai! The Master rules Shanghai, even the foreigners respect him. Who do you think you are to dare call him that?

8.

SHUI SHENG

What should I call him then?

9.

LIU SHU

You must call him "Master". Do you understand?

SHUI SHENG

Yes, I understand.

10. Liu Shu gives a nod of satisfaction and gets to his feet.

LIU SHU

I was right to bring you here. Even an idiot can become intelligent if his name is Tang. Let me soap you down.

11. Liu Shu washes Shui Sheng's hair, which is a completely new experience for him, with soap suds running down his body.

LIU SHU

This soap comes from Japan. Just one wash will get rid of all the smells you have been carrying around.

Even the Tang family servants cannot be allowed to be the laughing-stock of the streets.

Shui Sheng wipes the lather from his face.

SHUI SHENG

What am I to do for the Master?

LIU SHU

(smiling)

You? You want to serve the Master? You have to train for many years before even thinking of that.

12. Shui Sheng wipes his face once more and looks up.

LIU SHU

You are going to serve a woman.

SHUI SHENG
(disappointed)

No! I don't want to!

LIU SHU
(whispering and smiling)

It's not just any woman. It's the Master's woman. He bought her ten years ago. And now she is the most famous singer in Shanghai.

SHUI SHENG
(annoyed)

I don't know how to serve a lady.

LIU SHU

Nobody's asking you to become the Master. To be a servant is just a matter of training.

SHUI SHENG

I don't want to.

LIU SHU

You don't want to? Okay then, but you can't change your mind after you've seen her.

SHUI SHENG

Who is she?

13.

Liu Shu rinses his hands in the water.

LIU SHU

Who is she? I've known her for ten years, but all that I know about her is that her name is Xiao Jin Bao and that she was born in the Year of the Snake. And that's what the Master told me.

14. Liu Shu dips his head into the water, then stands up and shakes it vigorously.

LIU SHU

There are many people who want to work for the Tang family, you know. To get a job here, you spend a month on trial and only if you get through that can you really say you have been taken on. Don't you want to learn? If I've managed to get where I am today, it's because I never said "no" in this house.

A young bird doesn't realise how big the forest is. Many people in Shanghai have drowned in the Huang Bu river, and do you know why? Because they dared to utter that word.

And you, you have managed to say the word "no" whilst still a boy. If I weren't here, you wouldn't even be a servant. Work well, okay.

SHUI SHENG

Okay.

SCENE 10 EXT/NIGHT THE CITY OF PLEASURES

1. The neon lights flicker in the night all along the road and are reflected below by the wet street, which is bustling with people and cars rushing by like beetles, whose backs reflect the lights once more. The noise of the crowd and car-horns intermingle.

2. The night-club is called "The City of Pleasures". The characters of its name are made up of different coloured neon tubes, but the constantly changing colours makes the Chinese characters lose their form.

SCENE 11 INT/NIGHT THE CITY OF PLEASURES

1. The cabaret is decorated in a gaudy luxurious style. It is full of people and very noisy.

Lights and noises mix colouring the smokey atmosphere. The music is very loud. On the curved stage a group of tap-dancers are performing.

2. Shui Sheng has new clothes and his hair glistens, with a parting in the middle. He follows Liu Shu past several brightly-lit tables. The stage in front both excites and scares him.

3. Champagne. Ice. Ties. Watches....

4. Westerners. Chinese. Western suits. Chinese tunics....

5. Women who burst out laughing. Men who dance...

6. Shanghai is a word which describes very well the image of the city: a stormy ocean for those who dive into it.

(Shan means "over" and also "to enter". Hai means "sea". Thus Shanghai means both "Over the sea" and "Enter the sea".)

And in this ocean, Liu Shu is proving to be a real life-buoy for Shui Sheng. He holds onto his uncle's hand, following hesitantly as if he could be swept away with the merest false step.

7. The tap-dancers finish their show to rousing applause.

8. Liu Shu selects a table near the stage and orders a whisky for himself and an ice-cream for Shui Sheng. When the order arrives, he puts the ice-cream in front of Shui Sheng and nods to him to eat it. The boy takes a mouthful and puts his hand to his lips, surprised by the coldness of it. He shyly looks up at Liu Shu. Liu Shu leans back in his chair and smiles kindly at him.

9. The musicians come back on stage. The drummer skilfully twirls his sticks around his fingers and the trumpetists start up.

The customers become even more animated. The curtain draws back to reveal a dozen girls on stage, all wearing very short skirts. They begin a wild dance under flashing lights.

10. Shui Sheng is still eating his ice-cream but his eyes open wide at the spectacle of so many pretty and bouncy girls.

11. A woman in a scarlet dress makes her entry, provoking shouts and applause from the audience.

12. Just like everybody else, Liu Shu smiles and claps. He leans over to Shui Sheng, and whispers into his ear.

LIU SHU

And that is Xiao Jin Bao!

13. Shui Sheng gazes attentively at the stage.

14. Xiao Jin Bao walks forward to greet the audience. Then she begins to dance to the rhythm of the music, throwing seductive smiles into the crowd of admirers. Before the applause has fully abated, she approaches the microphone and starts to sing:

XIAO JIN BAO

(singing)

*"Hypocrite! Hypocrite!
What's the use of being such a hypocrite!*

*If you have something to say,
just say it!*

There's no point stammering..."

15. The audience applauds at the end of each line and some go down to the dance-floor. They dance imitating the movements of the girls on stage, making the atmosphere increasingly raunchy.

16. Liu Shu leans over to Shui Sheng while watching the stage with an admiring smile.

LIU SHU

Have you ever been bitten by a tortoise?

Shui Sheng finds it hard to understand what Liu Shu is saying amidst the noise of the music and the audience. He continues to stare at the stage.

Liu Shu puts his glass down and, in annoyance, takes Shui Sheng by the chin with his right hand and forcibly turns his head towards him.

LIU SHU

Have you ever been bitten by a tortoise?

Shui Sheng looks at him, unsure, then turns back to the stage. Once more, Liu Shu takes his head and turns it away from the stage. At this point, Liu Shu's mouth is almost touching Shui Sheng's nose.

LIU SHU

You really deserve to be bitten by a tortoise.
When it bites into you, you mustn't move. If
you move you show that you're scared, and if
you're scared, the tortoise just bites harder and
harder.

If you can stand the pain, control your fear and
simply look at it, there's a good chance the
tortoise will simply let go after a moment.

Shui Sheng nods. The audience is still shouting and clapping. Liu Shu looks
back to the stage, with a smile.

17. Xiao Jin Bao is still singing accompanying her voice with voluptuous
movements. She repeats:

XIAO JIN BAO

*"Hypocrite! Hypocrite!
What's the use of being such a hypocrite!*

*If you want to look,
just look!*

There's no point peeping..."

18. Liu Shu watches the show out of the corner of one eye, with his head
leaning slightly to the left.

LIU SHU

When she arrived in Shanghai, she was barely
your size, and she was even more of a bumpkin.
The Master bought her and turned her into a
star for his own pleasure. What matters, is the
Master's pleasure.

And because of her, the Master sent his own
wife out into the country. Who now would dare
say anything against her?

She's a real whore! She thinks that the Master
will always take her side and so she treats all of
us like her servants.

She takes herself very seriously.

LIU SHU

(cont.)

When the Master gets rid of her, all that will be left will be the whore!

But she's not stupid, she doesn't believe what anybody says, not even the Master. For her, there is no truth

Here, she makes money for the Master, and in bed she allows him to save money.

The only thing she knows how to do is to give the Master pleasure with the help of her two tofus!

19.

SHUI SHENG

So if I have my shop one day, I could give the Master tofu to make him even happier.

20. Liu Shu turns his head slowly to look at Shui Sheng, giving him an odd smile. In a slightly sadistic way, he raises the little finger of his clenched hand.

LIU SHU

You can keep your tofu for yourself. Let her look after the Master.

Incredible!!

Liu Shu scrutinises Xiao Jin Bao from head to foot.

LIU SHU

(to himself)

She's quite incredible! The Master often says that he's never met a woman like her. She'll do anything for his pleasure.

21. Xiao Jin Bao rolls her hips slowly, as her seductive eyes roam around the room, offering themselves equally to all the men present.

She wears a smile as complex as a poppy flower, both seuctive and dangerous. As she ends her song, the audience claps and whistles even louder than before. She then disappears graciously behind the curtain.

22. Liu Shu tugs at Shui Sheng's sleeve.

SCENE 12 INT/NIGHT BACKSTAGE

1. Liu Shu leads Shui Sheng down a long corridor full of dancers.
2. Their made-up faces are barely visible in the dim light.
3. Yet the faces are so close to his and so strange that Shui Sheng becomes nervous. His steps falter.
4. Liu Shu turns to speak to him.

LIU SHU

Remember, you only call her "Mistress" from now on. You are her servant, at all times.

SCENE 13 INT/NIGHT DRESSING ROOM

1. Liu Shu knocks on the wooden door with a curled index finger. Even as he does so, he unwittingly bends at the waist. Shui Sheng notices this change of attitude.

XIAO JIN BAO

Enter!

Liu Shu grasps the door handle, turns it and pushes the door open with great care.

SCENE 14 INT/NIGHT DRESSING ROOM

1. Once the door is open, Shui Sheng sees an old mirror on the wall opposite, and reflected in the mirror, he sees Xiao Jin Bao lying nonchalantly on a couch. She has her legs resting on the dressing table and, between them, a pack of cigarettes and a golden lighter. She yanks the golden combs from her hair and throws them against the mirror.
2. With a metallic chink, the combs bounce back off the mirror and fall onto the table.
3. Liu Shu nudges Shui Sheng and whispers to him:

LIU SHU

Say hello to your mistress.

SHUI SHENG

Mistress.

4. Xiao Jin Bao doesn't reply. She is staring via the mirror at a dresser standing near the door.

XIAO JIN BAO
(to the dresser)

Come closer.

The dresser, holding her crossed palms to her stomach, comes to stand in front of the singer.

5. Xiao Jin Bao turns to look at her.

XIAO JIN BAO

Turn round.

The dresser mechanically turns her back to Xiao Jin Bao. She seems very tense.

6.

XIAO JIN BAO
(lightly stroking the dresser's behind)

Mmm, not bad. I can see why all the clients
want to paw you.

The dresser turns back to face Xiao Jin Bao: she is flustered.

XIAO JIN BAO
(smiling)

At least, you didn't let them get away with it
for nothing, eh?

Xiao Jin Bao briskly thrusts her hand into the girl's cleavage and brings out a silver coin. She stares directly into the girl's eyes, which are beginning to resemble those of a cowering cat.

XIAO JIN BAO
You thought you could hide it, eh? Wherever
you stash it away, I'll always find it.

The dresser is no longer able to speak.
Xiao Jin Bao slaps her on the behind with the silver coin.

XIAO JIN BAO
Listen to what I'm going to say. Your bottom
belongs to you, but this is my house, so what
the clients give you for touching it is mine.
That's the rule.

9.

THE DRESSER
(almost in tears)
Yes, mistress!

10. Xiao Jin Bao smiles once more and slips the coin back into the girl's
cleavage.

XIAO JIN BAO
Just this once, you can keep the money.

THE DRESSER
(hastily - joyfully)
Yes, mistress!

11. Xiao Jin Bao turns and looks at herself in the mirror. As she does so, the
smile seeps from her face.

XIAO JIN BAO
... but rules are rules. I can't stretch them for
you. I'll dock it from your pay. Just so that you
remember. You may go.

12. The Dresser leaves.

13. Xiao Jin Bao serves herself a glass of wine and looks at Shui Sheng through
the mirror. It is a very icy stare.

XIAO JIN BAO
(to herself)

This time, they've sent me a young cock.

14. Liu Shu pushes Shui Sheng in the back, forcing him forward somewhat reluctantly. he comes to a halt behind Xiao Jin Bao, who is still standing in front of the mirror. Reflected in the mirror, we now see Shui Sheng's face next to that of Xiao Jin Bao.

15. Without turning round, Xiao Jin Bao stretches her hand out to Shui Sheng's neck. Her hand is cold, making Shui Sheng hunch up his shoulders. Xiao Jin Bao squeezes Shui Sheng's neck. He remains completely frozen as she places her thumb on his throat. She looks at him in the mirror.

XIAO JIN BAO
How old are you, thirteen or fourteen?

LIU SHU
(replying for Shui Sheng)
Fourteen.

Xiao Jin Bao looks intensely at Shui Sheng.

XIAO JIN BAO
(pensively)
Fourteen....
Have you ever slept with a woman?

LIU SHU
(tense)
Miss...

SHUI SHENG
(unhesitatingly)
Yes.

XIAO JIN BAO
(bringing her head level with Shui Sheng's
and whispering)
Who with?

SHUI SHENG
With my mother, when I was little.

XIAO JIN BAO
Ah, with your mother when you were little.
What's your name?

LIU SHU
(hastily)
Shui Sheng.

XIAO JIN BAO
And your surname?

She spins round to face Liu Shu.

XIAO JIN BAO
Let him answer for himself.

17.

SHUI SHENG
(swallowing hard)
Tang. My name is Tang.

XIAO JIN BAO
(deliberately)
T - a - n - g.

She holds her expression for a moment, mouth open, then quickly stands straight.

XIAO JIN BAO
I like him.

19. Slyly, Liu Shu gives a sigh of relief.

20. Xiao Jin Bao takes the packet of cigarettes and her lighter and sits down.

XIAO JIN BAO
(kindly)
Could you light me a cigarette?

21. Shui Sheng looks at her questioningly.

SHUI SHENG

Where are the matches?

Xiao Jin Bao hands him the lighter and puts a cigarette in her mouth. Shui Sheng takes hold of the gold lighter. He hears Liu Shu whispering over his shoulder.

LIU SHU

It's a lighter.

Shui Sheng looks at the lighter from every angle, but still can't work out how to spark it.

Liu Shu moves to show him but a reproving look from Xiao Jin Bao stops him dead in his tracks.

22. Xiao Jin Bao flips the lighter's top and puts Shui Sheng's thumb on the flint-wheel. A flame jumps out at the first go.

XIAO JIN BAO

(to Liu Shu)

He's smart!

23. Shui Sheng tries to work the lighter a second time. It sparks but no flame appears.

24. Liu Shu takes a box of matches from his pocket, lights one and walks over to Xiao Jin Bao, who merely looks at him, without moving. He stops.

25. Out of the corner of her eye, Xiao Jin Bao watches the match burn down until the flame reaches Liu Shu's fingers.

26. The lighter falls from Shui Sheng's dumbstruck grasp. Liu Shu jumps forward to pick it up.

LIU SHU

What are you doing? You good-for-nothing!

Shui Sheng is speechless, his eyes fill with tears.

Liu Shu cups the lighter in his hands and offers it to Xiao Jin Bao. His voice softens.

LIU SHU
Forgive him. Miss! Forgive him!

27. Xiao Jin Bao takes the cigarette from her mouth and breaks it in two. She stands up.

XIAO JIN BAO
Forget it! it's not important!
No member of the Tang family can be made to
ask forgiveness...
Let's go. the Master is waiting for me.

SCENE 15 EXT/NIGHT THE TANG PROPERTY

1. When Xiao Jin Bao's beautiful black limousine draws up, there are already many other shining, black cars in the driveway, surrounded by the usual black-clad, smoking bodyguards.

The main building is well lit and an aura of calm seems to reign over the house.

2. Liu Shu gets out of the car first. He carefully opens the side door, allowing a tired-looking Xiao Jin Bao to get out, holding her gown to one side.

LIU SHU
(loudly)
Shui Sheng! Hurry up and help the lady to her
quarters.

3. Shui Sheng jumps out of the car to receive the make-up case which Liu Shu thrusts into his hands.

4. The butler arrives to tell her of the Master's arrival.

BUTLER
Miss, the Master has returned. Song Er Ye and
Zheng San Ye have also arrived.

Xiao Jin Bao glances at the long line of cars in the driveway. Without looking at anyone in particular, she nods to show that she has understood and sets off for the house, swinging her hips generously.

SCENE 16 INT/NIGHT TANG HOUSE.

1. Shui Sheng carries the case and follows Xiao Jin Bao step by step. Liu Shu is still at his side.

LIU SHU

Remember the way. In the future, every time that she visits, you must bring her anything she requires.

2. The marble glistens under the multi-coloured lights in the luxurious corridors. Xiao Jin Bao, wearing a traditional costume, continues to swing her hips, aware that two pairs of eyes are following her every movement.

3. Shui Sheng wears a nervous look. Liu Shu also. As they reach a corner, he spits and whispers a string of insults.

LIU SHU

Look at that trollop! When she wears western clothes, she looks like a white whore, and when she wears traditional clothes, she looks like a Chinese country whore.

SCENE 17 INT/NIGHT THE MASTER'S BEDROOM

1. Liu Shu pushes open the heavy, polished door of the bedroom. Xiao Jin Bao goes through. As he watches her enter, Shui Sheng notices that there is another door inside.

Liu Shu closes the first door from the outside.

LIU SHU

Miss, should I ask the Master to come?

XIAO JIN BAO

Yes.

2. The two men are left standing in a large lounge, decorated in rich-looking gold colours. Liu Shu turns to Shui Sheng and says:

LIU SHU

Pay attention. When the lady has gone into the bedroom, you must wait here.

Liu Shu leans against the wall, showing Shui Sheng how he should stand.

LIU SHU

And you mustn't fall asleep. You just wait, like this, and pass on messages if the Master or the Lady want to eat or drink.

3. He points to a servant, sitting motionless in front of a door on the other side of the room, which leads to a pantry stocked with all kinds of products, from the most refined to the most ordinary.

LIU SHU

He will prepare everything and, only when they for it, you bring it in. Do you understand?

SHUI SHENG

Yes, I understand.

LIU SHU

(still anxious)

Show me how you must stand.

Shui Sheng stands against the wall just like he has been shown.

LIU SHU

(satisfied)

Not bad. Now remember this, Shui Sheng. The more you like something, the less you should look at it. Even if you want to look at it, do so with your heart, not with your eyes.

For if you stare at something, you become stupid.

For the time being, you are merely the lady's servant, but in a few years, you too will be somebody in Shanghai. Once you have been accepted as part of the family, nothing will ever be the same.

Do you understand what I have said?

SHUI SHENG

Yes.

LIU SHU

Now, let's go now and ask the Master to come.

SCENE 18 INT/NIGHT BY THE DINING ROOM

1. Through the gap in the glass partition, Shui Sheng sees four men sitting around a redwood table beneath a sumptuous chandelier. There is obviously tension in the air.

2. Liu Shu and Shui Sheng are seated on a couch in a next-door room. Without taking his eyes off the four men in the dining room, Liu Shu leans over to Shui Sheng.

LIU SHU

If the Master is in conference with his Brothers, as he is now, you can't just walk in.

The Master often repeats that we must wait here until he has finished his meeting. The most banal subject of discussion between the brothers is more important than any other matter...

... Song Er Ye is the Master's most valued Brother. He's the one you saw at the warehouse. He is like Zhu Ge Liang (*a 3rd century strategist*). He is both intellectual and a man of action. If he likes you, you have nothing to fear for the rest of your life.

The bulky one is Zheng San Ye, the Master's favourite. He merely has to open his eyes for Shanghai to become quiet and docile. He is the audacious one, always the first in the front line. He is easily angered...

The old one is Tang Shi Ye (*Shi Ye means "steward"*). He is a blood relation of the Master, the one he confides in the most. He looks after all the Master's business and is the only other person of any importance among the Tangs...

LIU SHU

(cont.)

You must pay great attention to these three men. To greet them, you just look up once and then lower your eyes to the floor. Thereafter, make your eyes retreat into your ears and keep both wide open.

Do you understand?

4. The Master looks about fifty years old. He is neither tall nor very muscular. He wears a silk Chinese costume beneath his shaven head. His creased face and slightly arched back do not give the impression that he is the Master. Only his well-trimmed moustache and his well-cut dress discreetly indicate his rank as the Triad's number one.

5. Song Er Ye is as elegant as ever. He talks calmly, despite his fiddling with the frames of his glasses. Shui Sheng has difficulty comparing him now with the man he saw with the revolver in the warehouse.

6. Zheng San Ye has moved over to the window and is looking out. He has his hands on his hips and the movements of his shoulders betray his rising anger.

7. Tang Shi Ye is sitting next to a large clock. In his boney hand he holds a hookah, which, when he puffs on it, accentuates his hollow cheeks. He opens the water chamber containing an abacus, which he uses to calculate, sliding the beads up and down with one very long nail. He then hands the pipe to the Master, who silently contemplates the abacus.

8. Liu Shu continues talking.

LIU SHU

The master has the rank of Tong in the Ding Triad. Number Two and Number Three are of the next generation, thus of Wou rank.

There was a shoot-out on the Bund and the master saved their lives. Afterwards they held a religious ceremony to become Brothers.

That's why he is the Master. His temperament has allowed him to build power and authority...

9. Shui Sheng listens attentively to Liu Shu, whilst gazing fixedly at the Master, then Song Er Ye and Zhang San Ye.

Shui Sheng cannot hear what they are saying and his mind starts to wander. Just then a ringing noise brings him back to what is happening in the room.

10. Liu Shu looks up. He walks over to the telephone and picks up the receiver.

LIU SHU

Hello.

The conversation stops as soon as the other men hear this word. Later, Shui Sheng discovers that the black object his uncle is holding is known as "electric word."

Having answered very soberly, a broad smile breaks out over Liu Shu's face, as though he has heard something which makes him very happy. He subconsciously bows slightly.

LIU SHU

It's boss Yu.

11. They all come over to where Liu Shu stands with the telephone.

12

LIU SHU
(whispering)

It's fat Yu.

13.

THE MASTER
What's happened?

14. Liu Shu looks up at Song Er Ye before replying.

LIU SHU
It's about this afternoon's delivery.

15.

THE MASTER
This afternoon's delivery?

He goes over to the telephone, which makes him smile as much as Liu Shu.

THE MASTER

Ah, boss Yu, it's been a long time since we saw each other.

I'm sorry about your son's birthday. That day, at Suzhou...

The Master falls silent and listens attentively. His expression blackens.

16. Song Er Ye looks calmly at Liu Shu.

17.

THE MASTER

... Yes. Yes, boss Yu. Let me look after it. Of course, of course.

The Master utters several "well's", trying hard to keep the smile on his face, then he hangs up. He comes over to Song Er Ye.

THE MASTER

Number two. You're getting back into bad habits. Why let the small-fry annoy you? Why accord them so much importance?

18.

ZHENG SAN YE

What has number two done?

19.

SONG ER YE

(calmly)

When we delivered this afternoon, Lao Wu, one of Yu's men, insulted the Master. I couldn't help myself and I shot him.

20.

Zheng San Ye glances up at Song Er Ye.

ZHENG SAN YE

(lightly)

It's just another corpse. Does a day go by without someone dying? We'll just have to pay a little compensation. What's more, number two was defending the Master's honour.

21. The Master crosses his hands behind his back.

THE MASTER

It's easy to shit, but harder to clear up somebody else's.

(to the Intendant)

I have to go out.

The Intendant nods and goes to prepare the departure.

22.

SONG ER YE

Brother, is that really necessary? You are taking it all too seriously.

THE MASTER

I cannot be seen to lose face.

23.

SONG ER YE

Brother, I am sorry to cause you problems, it is for me to go.

The Master waves away his protestations.

SONG ER YE

(to Zheng San Ye)

Have some men accompany him.

ZHENG SAN YE

Fat Yu is not bold enough as yet.

Song Er Ye puts his arm round Zheng San Ye

SONG ER YE

It is the Master who is going in person. we must be vigilant.

24. The Master is waiting, his hands still crossed behind his back. He looks up and sees Shui Sheng, who has remained by the telephone.

25. Liu Shu comes forward hurriedly.

LIU SHU

(smiling)

Master, this is Shui Sheng. He has just arrived from the country to serve Xiao Jin Bao. He is a Tang - your cousin's third nephew.

(to Shui Sheng)

Say hello to the Master.

SHUI SHENG

Master!

26. The Master appears lost in thought and is no longer paying attention to Shui Sheng.

THE MASTER

Ah. ... yes.

The Master leaves followed by the others.

27. And it is Song Er Ye who looks meaningfully at Shui Sheng as he leaves.

SCENE 19 INT/NIGHT CORRIDOR

1. The Master stops abruptly just outside the door.

2. Xiao jin Bao is standing in the corridor, her feet together and hands clasped in front of her.

Her bearing is completely different from that she displayed earlier in the cabaret. She is beautiful and shy and looks obediently at the Master with her mouth closed and her red lips apparently impatient with desire.

XIAO JIN BAO
(in a low voice)

Master...

3. The Master scratches his head, obviously embarrassed by the situation.

THE MASTER
What are you doing here?

4. The men who had been following him out turn back into the room and close the door, leaving the couple alone in the dimly-lit corridor. The Master approaches Xiao Jin Bao and strokes her cheek.

THE MASTER
(eagerly)
You're not a woman, you're a she-devill!

Xiao Jin Bao flashes him a seductive look and lowers her eyes immediately. She takes his left hand and squeezes the index finger.

XIAO JIN BAO
Master, It's now twelve days since I last served you...

THE MASTER
(laughing)
I'll be straight back! Don't worry, my sweet.
I'll be straight back!

The Master extracts his hand from Xiao Jin Bao's grasp and knocks on the door. The others come out as if nothing had happened.

5. Xiao Jin Bao refuses to let him go so easily.

XIAO JIN BAO
(between her teeth)
Which lucky whore are you going to see?

THE MASTER
Don't worry, I'm going to see Fat Yu. I have business to discuss with him.

XIAO JIN BAO
I don't believe you.
If you go, you must give me all your rings.

THE MASTER
(smiling)
Okay then, here you are.

He takes off two rings.

Xiao Jin Bao turns to Shui Sheng, takes his hand and slips the rings onto his fingers.

XIAO JIN BAO
(to Shui Sheng)
You see, I didn't ask him for money, I just want
to look after his rings.

The rings are, of course, too big for the boy's fingers.

10.

XIAO JIN BAO
Look. How can you claim to be a Tang? You're
not really born to rule, eh!

11. The whole group bursts out laughing. Meanwhile, the Master has set off at a brisk pace.

THE MASTER
Hurry! Hurry!

SCENE 20 INT/NIGHT THE MASTER'S BEDROOM

1. Shui Sheng is carrying a tray bearing a covered bowl towards the Master's bedroom.

SCENE 21 INT/NIGHT THE MASTER'S BEDROOM

1. Shui Sheng gently pushes open the bedroom door.

2. He notices Xiao jin Bao sitting on the bed. She is whispering into the telephone and seems tense and mysterious. The noise of Shui Sheng's arrival surprises her and she hangs up hurriedly. When she sees that it is only Shui Sheng, she cries out angrily.

XIAO JIN BAO

Why didn't you knock before entering? Get out!

3. Shui Sheng goes out again. He frees a hand from under the tray and knocks. No reply. He tries again.

XIAO JIN BAO

(slowly)

What is it?

SHUI SHENG

It's me.

XIAO JIN BAO

Who's "me"?

SHUI SHENG

Shui Sheng.

XIAO JIN BAO

Start again. You have to say: "It's the little peasant, Shui Sheng."

XIAO JIN BAO

No. You must say your surname and then your name.

Shui Sheng, in the corridor, feels tears of rage and humiliation welling up in his eyes.

He knocks once more.

SHUI SHENG

It's the little peasant Tang Shui Sheng.

There is a short silence.

XIAO JIN BAO
(nastily)

Come in.

SCENE 22 INT/NIGHT THE MASTER'S BEDROOM

1. Shui Sheng enters with his tray. He keeps his eyes fixed to the floor. Suddenly, the tray crashes to the floor.

2. Shui Sheng stumbles against a large mirror which shatters. He pulls himself up and looks aghast at the remains of the mirror. Xiao Jin Bao's face appears in one of the remaining shards. Along with Shui Sheng's, her reflection is contorted.

3. Shui Sheng dare not turn round. His eyes meet Xiao Jin Bao's in the mirror. There is a knock at the door. Nobody answers.

LIU SHU

Miss, the Master has asked me to tell you that he will not be coming home this evening. He must stay and play cards with fat Yu...
Would you like to stay here or be escorted home?

XIAO JIN BAO
(angrily)

I'll go home!

She stares at Shui Sheng's reflection in the mirror.

XIAO JIN BAO
(gritting her teeth)

I'll take care of you tomorrow, little peasant.

SCENE 23 INT/EXT/NIGHT in the car

1. Xiao Jin Bao sits pressed into the passenger seat of the car as it drives through the deserted streets of Shanghai. From his seat in the back, Shui Sheng can only see one side of her face, lit by the streetlights.

2. Liu Shu leans forward to talk to her.

LIU SHU

You must not get angry with him, Miss. He is still young and needs time to learn.

XIAO JIN BAO

What can I possibly teach a member of the Tang clan? You should ask the Master that.

Liu Shu smiles an embarrassed smile and falls silent.

The car passing under intermittent streetlights allows Shui Sheng to glimpse the bright red lipstick worn by Xiao Jin Bao.

4. His face gradually transforms itself into a hostile grimace.

SCENE 24 EXT/NIGHT THE COURTYARD OF XIAO
JIN BAO'S HOUSE

1. The car draws to a halt in the courtyard of a small Western-style two-storey house.

SCENE 25 INT/NIGHT XIAO JIN BAO'S HOUSE

1. A long-faced servant opens the door to them, without uttering a word through her half-open lips. She is dressed in black from head-to-toe, making her even more gloomy.

2. She looks at Shui Sheng standing next to Liu Shu, with piercing eyes, which make shivers run down his spine. Shui Sheng turns away to avoid her unpleasant scrutiny.

3. The servant leads them into a half-moon shaped room. The refinement of its décor distinguishes it straightaway from the gaudiness of the Master's house. A small spiral staircase, of ancient design, is in the middle of the room.

4. Xiao Jin Bao starts up the stairs without turning round.

5. Expressionless, the servant waves to a room near the stairs and follows her mistress up the stairs carrying a porcelain bowl she has taken from a low table.

6.

LIU SHU

(to Shui Sheng)

She is dumb but not deaf. Her tongue has been cut out.

Shui Sheng shivers at the very idea.

SCENE 26 INT/NIGHT SHUI SHENG'S BEDROOM

1. Liu Shu turns on a lamp which casts a dim light over the few objects in the room.

2. He looks around him and points to the bed.

LIU SHU

This is where you sleep.

He then rings a small bell which hangs on the wall over the bed. It makes a cracked sound.

LIU SHU

When this bell rings, it is the mistress calling you. Whatever you are doing, even if you are peeing, you must run to her side as quickly as possible.

Your first word must always be, "Mistress". She will then tell you what she requires. You must never look up at her and always keep your eyes in your ears and both wide open.

Do you understand?

2. For the first time, Shui Sheng's reply is not that which is expected of him.

SHUI SHENG

I don't want to stay here.

3. Liu Shu is taken aback. He turns round and looks at the boy:

LIU SHU
(forcefully)

Shui Sheng!

SHUI SHENG
(stubbornly)

No. I don't want to stay here.

Liu Shu, his face twisted with anger, smacks Shui Sheng across the face, almost making him fall over.

LIU SHU
(through gritted teeth)

Don't force me to beat you! Do you think you have come here to be the Young Master? If your name was not Tang, what you have just said would be enough for me to put you in a sack and throw you in the river.

Remember, I haven't mentioned the mirror yet...

If you don't do your work well, I shall send you back to the country.

Do you understand?

5. Streams of tears flow down Shui Sheng's face as he strokes his reddened cheek.

SHUI SHENG
(barely audible)

Yes.

SCENE 27 INT/NIGHT XIAO JIN BAO'S HOUSE

1. Liu Shu comes out of Shui Sheng's bedroom and looks up the spiral staircase.

LIU SHU

(in a loud, calm voice)

Mistress, I have explained everything to Shui Sheng. Don't worry about anything. If you have no further need for me, I will go.

SCENE 28 INT/NIGHT XIAO JIN BAO'S HOUSE

1. Xiao Jin Bao slowly walks down the stairs. She is covered from head to foot in a long black cape, with just a small opening for her eyes.

SCENE 29 INT/NIGHT XIAO JIN BAO'S HOUSE

1. Once at the bottom of the steps, she stops and listens, and then walks towards her servant's door.

2. She takes a key from her pocket and locks the door from the outside. Her movements are quick and precise, suggesting that she is used to performing this operation.

3. Next, she turns to Shui Sheng's door. She puts her ear to the door and listens.

SCENE 30 INT/NIGHT SHUI SHENG'S BEDROOM

1. Shui Sheng has fallen asleep fully-clothed after his exhausting day. His face still bears the marks of his tears.

SCENE 31 INT/NIGHT XIAO JIN BAO'S HOUSE

1. Xiao Jin Bao locks Shui Sheng's door also.

SCENE 32 EXT/NIGHT COURTYARD

1. Xiao Jin Bao glides over the lawn in the silence of the night. In the house she leaves behind her, all is dark except the light from her own bedroom.

SCENE 33 EXT/NIGHT BACKSTREET

1. Xiao Jin Bao looks out of the gate into the street.

2. It is deserted.

3. She firmly closes and locks the gate.

SCENE 34 INT/NIGHT XIAO JIN BAO'S BEDROOM

1. Despite the late hour, Xiao Jin Bao starts to make herself up.

2. She applies lipstick, making her lips a dark and sensual red.

3. She varnishes her toes and fingernails.

4. She slips into a short black dress, which exposes a generous amount of cleavage.

5. Xiao Jin Bao sits down at her dressing table, massages her neck and looks at her reflection in the mirror.

6. The door behind her opens slowly. It is Song Er Ye, wearing a dark suit and carrying his shoes. He is out of breath.

7. Xiao Jin Bao does not move.

8. Song Er Ye closes the door behind him and slides the bolt across. With a smile, he crosses to where Xiao Jin Bao is sitting.

9. His reflection joins her's in the mirror, both betraying profound desire. The silence is shattered by one of Song Er Ye's shoes which drops to the floor. He turns out the lamp, but Xiao Jin Bao turns it back on immediately.

She then stands up and turns to face Song Er Ye. She slips the cord which controls the lamp-switch into his mouth.

10. Xiao Jin Bao takes one step back and offers her slightly open lips to Song Er Ye.

Song Er Ye moves forward to put his mouth to hers and in doing so, he turns out the lamp.

In the half-light, they roll entwined on the rug. Their accelerated breathing resonates in the absolute silence of the house.

SCENE 35 INT/NIGHT SHUI SHENG'S BEDROOM

1. Shui Sheng wakes from his nightmare with a start. He is soaked in sweat and scans the room trying to remember where he is.

2. The small bell hanging on the wall diffuses a yellowish glow.

3. Shui Sheng is sitting on the bed without moving. His thin silhouette seems fragile and helpless.

SCENE 36 EXT/NIGHT THE COURTYARD

1. Night has at last fallen over the house. All the lights are now off.

SCENE 37 INT-EXT/NIGHT SHUI SHENG'S BEDROOM

1. Shui Sheng is bent double on his bed, sobbing with unhappiness and homesickness.

2. Suddenly, his bedroom door opens wide. Xiao Jin Bao, wearing a shawl, stands on the threshold
The blueish light from the main room defines her silhouette but leaves her face in shadow.

3. Shui Sheng stops crying and looks up briefly before lowering his head once more.

4.

XIAO JIN BAO

(coldly)

When I arrived in Shanghai. I was a year younger than you. But I never once cried. Who has mistreated you? What are you crying for? Aren't you supposed to be a Tang? How can you be so weak!

Hurry up and prepare me a bowl of warm milk. little peasant.

Xiao Jin Bao pulls on the string which runs down the door-jamb. The harsh sound of the bell rings out in the silence of the night.

Xiao Jin Bao turns on her heel and leaves.

5. Shui Sheng looks up once more and wipes away his tears. He stares angrily at Xiao Jin Bao's back as she starts up the stairs.

SCENE 38 EXT/NIGHT THE CITY OF PLEASURES

1. The building's facade is illuminated by the same multi-coloured neon lights as before.

SCENE 39 INT/NIGHT DRESSING ROOM

1. Shui Sheng wears a hostile expression. In his hands, he holds different objects which Xiao Jin Bao needs to make herself up.

2. Xiao Jin Bao is carefully applying her lip-stick in front of the mirror. Shui Sheng's reflection in the mirror covers one half of her face.

3. Suddenly, a woman of about forty bursts in.

WOMAN

Mistress! Hurry, the Master has arrived.

4. Xiao Jin Bao stops her make-up.

XIAO JIN BAO

Why is he here already?

5.

WOMAN

The Master, Song Er Ye, Zheng San Ye. They are all here. I have heard that they have invited Fat Yu to come and hear you sing.

The Master requests you to sing. "Beautiful flower in the moonlight".

Mistress, you must get changed quickly.

6.

XIAO JIN BAO

(indifferently)

Fat Yu, that pervert

She gets wearily to her feet and lets the woman take off her tunic.

XIAO JIN BAO

Shui Sheng, give me my Chinese dress.

7. Shui Sheng quickly opens the wardrobe, but is taken aback by the number of costumes it contains. He chooses a violet coloured dress with a pattern similar to that which adorns the robes of taoist monks and hands it to Xiao Jin Bao.

8. Xiao Jin Bao throws it back at him without even looking at it, shouting angrily:

XIAO JIN BAO

A Chinese dress, I said! Don't you understand what that is? I want a Chinese dress! You really are thick. Do you think that the Master comes here to pray?

WOMAN

Mistress, don't get angry with him. I'll fetch it.

SCENE 40

INT/NIGHT

THE CITY OF PLEASURES

1. The Master, Song Er Ye and Zheng San Ye are sitting round a table in the company of a very corpulent man. They all seem very relaxed.

2. Shui Sheng carries a tray bearing a tea-pot, cups and napkins. He has taken up position behind the stage curtain.

He watches the dancers who are dressed in typical regional costumes.

3. Xiao Jin Bao hurries towards the stage, doing up the last buttons of her silver dress, followed by the woman from her dressing room, who adjusts her dress from time to time.

As she passes Shui Sheng, she takes a cup and gulps down some tea, before placing the cup back on the tray, giving the boy a very ugly look.

But the moment she steps out into the lights, her coldness is transformed into an expression of warmth and seduction, as she begins to dance.

4. The Master is the first to applaud as she appears, quickly followed by the rest of the audience.

5. Xiao Jin Bao, copying the bearing of a Southern Chinese girl, sings:

XIAO JIN BAO

The clouds disappear

The limpid moon shines bright

The joy of union between people

Drunk with joy:

The inseparable swans

cavort on the lake

The twin lotus flowers blossom...

6. Zheng San Ye's expression becomes rather tense.

7. Whereas in Song Er Ye's expression, there is something which he alone could explain.

8. Fat Yu looks lecherously at the stage, before leaning over to whisper into the Master's ear.

The Master bursts out laughing.

THE MASTER

You also, boss Yu! You also!

9. Xiao Jin Bao looks in the direction of the Master's table. Lovingly, half closing her eyes.

10. Song Er Ye exchanges barely perceptible complicitous looks with her.

11. The Master clearly thinks that Xiao Jin Bao is directing her attention at him. He is in a very good mood.

THE MASTER

What do you think, boss Yu?

FAT YU

(smiling)

It's interesting to listen to her, but it's even more interesting to watch.

THE MASTER

Of all the songs in her repertoire, this is the one I prefer.

Everybody in Shanghai knows this song. But when she sings it, it's completely different from anyone else.

Listen to her! Isn't it just like the caress of a feather on one's ear?

12. Song Er Ye has moved down to the dance floor and is dancing very elegantly with one of the dancers.

13. Zheng San Ye watches Song Er Ye, with a broad smile on his face.

14. Song Er Ye does not let his eyes drift from Xiao Jin Bao for a second.

15. And without losing step, Xiao Jin Bao pays him the same attention.

XIAO JIN BAO

Couples love each other deeply

Like the breeze caresses the flowers

Happiness reigns all over the world.

16. In a dark corner of the wings, Shui Sheng has adopted a rather contorted version of his usual position.

He looks left and then right. He produces a cup from underneath the tray, into which he has apparently just relieved himself. It is quite clear for whom the joke is intended.

17. Shui Sheng empties the cup into the tea-pot and shakes it up. Then, he fills a cup with his mixture.

18. On stage. Xiao Jin Bao's movements reveal a large slit in her dress.

19. She continues singing and dancing.

20. The applause of the audience, mixed with laughing male and female voices. The atmosphere is even more festive than usual.

21. Shui Sheng holds his tray as before. He peeps out onto the stage and into the audience, smiling to himself.

SCENE 41 INT/NIGHT XIAO JIN BAO'S BEDROOM

1. Xiao Jin Bao gets out of her bath. She is dressed in a long white robe and sits down at her dressing table. She pours herself a glass of wine and toasts her reflection in the mirror.

2. Song Er Ye gently pushes open the door, carrying his shoes as before. He is freshly shaven.

3. Xiao Jin Bao is surprised. She turns to face him.

XIAO JIN BAO

Why didn't you call me first? You frightened me.

4. Song Er Ye draws closer with the intention of undoing the belt of her gown. Xiao Jin Bao stops his hand.

XIAO JIN BAO

The servants' doors are not locked.

SONG ER YE

(smiling)

There's only a mute and a little peasant.

Xiao Jin Bao shakes off his hands.

XIAO JIN BAO

The bumpkin is also a Tang. They're all bastards!

Song Er Ye takes his hands away and sits at the edge of the table. He helps himself to her glass.

SONG ER YE

You really do hate them, dont you!

5. Xiao Jin Bao turns back to the mirror and rubs her hands over her face.

XIAO JIN BAO

And you? Don't you hate them? Be careful not to let the Master get wind of what you're doing. You've been coming too often recently.

6. Song Er Ye takes a sip of wine.

SONG ER YE

Recently, he's only had time for Fat Yu. He can't think of anything else.

He believes that Fat Yu is being honest with him. But sooner or later, he'll find out the hard way.

XIAO JIN BAO

You shot Fat Yu's man on purpose the other day, didn't you? It's not your style to get annoyed over nothing.

Song Er Ye smiles.

SONG ER YE

Everybody in Shanghai knows that I'm frugal. It's my reputation. But this time, it's me that's going to win.

Tang won't be Master for ever. There's going to be more killing in Shanghai, you'll see.

7. Xiao Jin Bao looks up and glances at Song Er Ye

8.

SONG ER YE

(casually)

Don't worry about all that. That's not why I'm here.

He takes Xiao Jin Bao in his arms and kisses her neck. She presses up against him.

XIAO JIN BAO

Do you love me?

SONG ER YE

(smiling)

What about you? Do you love me?

Xiao Jin Bao pushes him away unhappily.

XIAO JIN BAO

I know what you're thinking about, you hypocrite.

Song Er Ye frowns.

SONG ER YE

And I know better than you what you're thinking about. You only spread your legs with me, to get your own back on the Master. I'm the tool you use to humiliate him. I understand that now.

9. Xiao Jin Bao's anger has been rising as he speaks. She jumps up.

XIAO JIN BAO

And what am I to you?
The bed on which you take your revenge.
You think it's enough to sleep with his woman to become Number One, don't you?
You think that I can't read your mind!
But just who's going to be Number One in the end? Nobody knows.

She sits down again.

XIAO JIN BAO
Don't touch me! I'm an honest woman.
The Master bought me, and I belong to the
Master.

10. Song Er Ye bites his lips, looking at the woman who is now rejecting him. Her gown has slipped to reveal her thighs. He is wild with anger.

SONG ER YE
(furiously)
I'm the Master now.

He grabs Xiao Jin Bao by the hair and throws her to the floor. He tears up her gown.

SONG ER YE
(hissing)
I'm the Master! I'm the Master!

Xiao Jin Bao lashes out with her feet and they both roll over onto the floor. In total silence...

SCENE 42 INT/NIGHT XIAO JIN BAO'S HOUSE

1. The spiral staircase narrows the higher one gets.
2. Shui Sheng goes slowly up the stairs. He hesitates before moving towards Xiao Jin Bao's bedroom.

SCENE 43 INT/NIGHT XIAO JIN BAO'S BEDROOM

1. As the bedroom door gets closer, the noise of objects hitting the ground and raised voices becomes louder.
2. Shui Sheng stops in front of the door. He pauses before pushing the door.

1. Through the crack in the door, Shui Sheng sees Xiao Jin Bao in the process of breaking every object in the room. Her white gown is torn, revealing her thigh and her back. Her hair has come down and she breaks anything she can lay her hands on .

XIAO JIN BAO

Bastard! How dare you treat me like a whore? ...
Bastard! You think that you just have to fuck
me to become the Master.

2. Xiao Jin Bao's chest is heaving as the anger and effort exhaust her. She throws herself on the floor, tears pouring from her eyes. She hides her face in her hands and sobs. She is painfully aware of her loneliness and sadness. The silence of the night makes her tears even more heart-rending.

3. Shui Sheng watches Xiao Jin Bao from outside her room. He is unaware of what has taken place before, but, astonished to see such terrible sadness, his face takes on a warm expression.

1. Xiao Jin Bao is on stage.

Go away! Go quickly!
Evil man
who still has my heart.

2. Once more the atmosphere is hot. The audience whistle and clap in time with the song. The City of Pleasures is the club where the rich come to spend their money.

3. The musicians are playing their hearts out.

4. The dancers swing their hips and twirl their hands.

5. With her eyes closed, Xiao Jin Bao sings on:

XIAO JIN BAO

...mmmmmmmm

My heart is tired of you.

You have exhausted my love.

Evil man... evil man...

You can't see what you are...

Mad...

6. As usual. Shui Sheng is standing in the wings, with his tray. He watches Xiao Jin Bao as she forces her smile and is unable to compare her to the woman of the night before.

SCENE 46 INT/NIGHT DOORWAY OF THE CITY OF PLEASURES

1. The Master comes out of the cabaret accompanied by Fat Yu. They are both smiling and slapping each other on the back. They are followed by four black-clad bodyguards.

2. The Master looks at his pocket watch, waves to one of the guards who approaches him.

THE MASTER

I'm going to plat Mah Jong with boss Yu. Tell Xiao Jin Bao that I shall be back late tonight and that she should wait for me.

Fat Yu bursts out laughing.

SCENE 47 INT/NIGHT THE MASTER'S BEDROOM

1. In the dark night, the wall lights cast a dim light. Shui Sheng is standing against the wall in the position shown him by his uncle.

2. The camera moves into close-up to show that Shui Sheng is in fact asleep.

3. The silence is shattered by the screeching wheels of cars pulling up, doors banging and running feet and shouting. Shui Sheng wakes with a start.

1. Shui Sheng looks down into the courtyard as the quiet of the house is brutally disturbed.
2. A line of black cars shudder to a halt in the courtyard, their doors swing open and a number of men jump out carrying corpses out with them. Two groups of men run from the house. The first goes to help the men in the cars, the other group disperses to the edge of the property.
3. Shui Sheng, alerted by the noise of loading, notices the rifles each man is carrying.

1. The men run towards the bathroom. The guards carry a number of bodies between them.
2. Shui Sheng looks towards them.
3. The revolving door continues to spin round long the men have gone through.
4. Shui Sheng tiptoes forward.
5. The men's running creates a breeze in the corridors. Shui Sheng hears the noise of a metallic object falling to the ground, and bouncing off the marble several times with a tinny noise.
6. Shui Sheng crouches down and moves forward a few steps. As he reaches the corner, he walks on something in the half-light. The crunch on the marble makes him jump. He bends down to pick up the object and holds it to the light.
7. A knife. He feels something clammy on its hilt. He changes hands to look at the outstretched fingers of his right hand, closer to the light.
8. Shui Sheng realises that his hand is covered with blood. His mouth opens but no sound comes out. His hand lets the knife fall to the floor, making the same metallic noise as before. He looks up.

9. A trail of blood runs along the floor, with the odd footprint of the men who have run through it.

SCENE 50 INT-EXT/NIGHT BATHROOM

1. Shui Sheng advances down the mosaic corridor leading to the bathroom.
2. The light shines from under the bathroom door and through the frosted glass panes. Shui Sheng can see figures moving. There is the sound of running water and a red liquid is being rinsed from the floor.
3. Panic-stricken, Shui Sheng finally pushes the door open.
4. All eyes turn to him, surprised to see who is the new arrival and they gaze at him.
5. A morbid atmosphere fills the bathroom. The only noise is the sound of water gushing from the tap. Three corpses are lying on the floor. One of them has at least seven knives protruding from it.
6. The eyes of the corpse are half-open as if he too were looking at Shui Sheng.
7. Suddenly, Shui Sheng cries out in terror.

SHUI SHENG

Liu Shu! Liu Shu! ...

His cry is stifled by a blood-covered hand over his mouth.
A man's deep voice barks out an order.

MAN

Get him out of here!

8. Another man enters. It is the Master leaning on one of his men's shoulder. All the pride of being the Godfather of Shanghai has gone out of his eyes. His waist is bandaged, with a blood stain gradually expanding over his left hip.

9. He walks forward unsteadily and kneels beside Liu Shu's corpse. He looks at the still body for a long moment.

BODYGUARD

His eyes are still open.

10. Grief shoots across the Master's face. Shui Sheng sees blood ooze from his dressing.

11

THE MASTER

The members of our clan always keep their eyes open even when they are buried.

He gets to his feet, and goes to the door assisted by his henchman.

For the first time, he notices Shui Sheng standing by the door, his mouth still covered by the bloody hand.

THE MASTER

(harshly)

Let him go!

12. Shui Sheng's mouth is ringed by a bloody handprint

13.

THE MASTER

(to Shui Sheng)

This was Fat Yu's doing.

Your uncle stopped the knives from reaching me.

Remember that your uncle has not closed his eyes.

(In China, dying with one's eyes open means that one has regrets or unfulfilled desires.)

Tang Shi Ye arrives, breathless.

TANG SHI YE

Master, the doctor is waiting for you. I'll call Song Er Ye and Zheng San Ye.

15.

THE MASTER

Why have you called a doctor? I'm hardly scratched. Don't summon Song Er Ye and Zheng San Ye just yet. All the others must stay here.

16. Tang Shi Ye and the Master disappear off down the hall.

17. Shui Sheng is left alone in the corridor, ignored by those who are left. The bathroom door closes leaving just the sound of the running water.

18. Shui Sheng slumps against the wall, half his face covered in blood. He senses a presence in the corridor and looks up.

19. Xiao Jin Bao is standing in front of him. She looks toward the bathroom. After a while, she sighs.

XIAO JIN BAO

Why did you come to Shanghai?

20

SHUI SHENG

(troubled and stuttering)

... to earn money ... my mother wants too open a shop selling tofu... I'll earn ... I'll go ...

Xiao Jin Bao slowly reaches forward to take one of his hands. With the index finger of her other hand, she wipes away the traces of blood from his face. Shui Sheng is unable to contain himself in the face of such unexpected tenderness. He holds Xiao Jin Bao by the waist and sobs into her chest.

SCENE 51 INT/NIGHT SHUI SHENG'S BEDROOM

1. Shui Sheng is sleeping.

2. His bedroom door opens letting the lights from the main room filter into his room.

3. A thin silhouette enters the room and comes over to the bed. The movement has woken Shui Sheng, who sits hunched up and looks nervously around him.

4. It is the Master's steward, who motions to him to keep quiet.

TANG SHI YE

Get dressed! Quickly.

SCENE 52 EXT/NIGHT STREETS

1. Xiao Jin Bao's black car is parked at the gate.
2. Tang Shi Ye opens the rear door and nods at Shui Sheng to get in.
3. Xiao Jin Bao is already in the car. She too looks as though she has just been woken up.

XIAO JIN BAO

(unhappily)

Where are we going? I haven't brought anything with me.

4. Tang Shi Ye closes the door, without saying a word, and gets in the front with the driver.

TANG SHI YE

Drive!

5. The car drives through deserted streets.

SCENE 53 EXT/MORNING COUNTRY ROAD

1. They drive along a narrow track along the river, threading between small lakes and villages. In the early morning sunlight, the wooden shacks along the river are quiet except for the odd person washing on the stone steps leading down to the river.

Two river junks cross beneath a stone hump-backed bridge, disturbing the shimmering water.

SCENE 54 INT/MORNING BOAT'S CABIN

1. Shui Sheng leans out of the porthole to look outside.

TANG SHI YE

Get your head in! What's so interesting outside?

Shui Sheng withdraws his head and lowers the blind. He turns round and sits down.

The cabin darkens once more, with just the odd ray of morning light filtering through the slats in the blind.

2. Shui Sheng is apathetic. He sits in one corner of the cabin without talking.

3. The Master is in a half-lying position on the bed, bolstered by many pillows behind his back.

Tang Shi Ye holds a bowl of water in one hand.

Xiao Jin Bao gives the Master his tablets, which he swallows without flinching.

THE MASTER

(to Tang Shi Ye)

They must just be starting to fight now in Shanghai.

TANG SHI YE

I should think they're even more worried to know that you have left the city, than to think that you are still there.

THE MASTER

(with a slight smile)

Let them all kill each other.

When the gods go to war, humans undergo terrible suffering, when humans go to war, the gods go home.

I'll just let them have their fun first.

Xiao Jin Bao puts down the bowl she has been holding.

XIAO JIN BAO

The gods? We sneaked away like thieves. The others are more likely to think that you're scared of them.

Xiao Jin Bao puts her arms around the Master's neck, with her mouth brushing against his chin.

XIAO JIN BAO

Master, I don't want to go anywhere. I wish to serve you in Shanghai...

The Master smiles and shrugs.

THE MASTER

I have no other course of action. In Shanghai, they are all jealous of my throne...
(stroking Xiao Jin Bao's hair)
... and they want to steal my bed as well.

4. Xiao Jin Bao is quietly surprised, but her face does not betray her.

XIAO JIN BAO

Who would dare take your throne or your bed?

5. The Master slowly closes his eyes.

THE MASTER

For him to steal my throne and my bed, he must be behind me already.
That's why I am leaving Shanghai, to let the fox come out of his hole.
And in a month, I'll rub him out. I shall withdraw to prepare my attack.

6. Xiao Jin Bao leans her head on the Master's, her eyes half-open.

XIAO JIN BAO

A whole month?! My body will have rusted up.

The Master is obviously very happy by what he hears. He caresses Xiao Jin Bao's cheek.

THE MASTER

No, no, my little lovely. I have found you a beautiful hiding-place with lovely views.

You can use the month to fill out and then when I am better, we will go back to Shanghai together.

My throne will remain my throne, and my bed will remain my bed.

I am still Godfather Tang of Shanghai, and you are the Queen of the City of Pleasures.

SCENE 55 EXT/DAY BOAT

1. The boat pulls further away from the shore and out into open water.
2. The boat is propelled by a man in the stern pushing on the lake bottom with a long pole. The water's surface shimmers like silk.

SCENE 56 INT/DAY BOAT

1. The Master is sleeping.
2. Xiao Jin Bao looks bored, sitting next to him. She glances over at the Master and turns back to Tang Shi Ye.

XIAO JIN BAO

How much longer? Where are we going? It's suffocating on this boat.

TANG SHI YE

(smiling)

We'll soon be there. We're going to an island inhabited only by a widow and her young daughter. It's exceedingly quiet there.

Seeing Xiao Jin Bao pull a face, Tang Shi Ye draws closer and continues in a whisper.

TANG SHI YE

Mistress, you won't be able to wander where you like.

Whoever tries to get on or off the island will be executed. We do not have many men with us, so we must be very strict and vigilant. We must ensure the Master's safety.

You will have to respect these orders also.

SCENE 57 INT-EXT/SUNSET ISLAND

1 The cabin's blind is raised and the setting sun's golden light pours in. Shui Sheng wakes.

SAILOR

(v/o)

We're coming in to land! We've arrived!

2. The boat is gradually approaching and island surrounded by reeds, yellow ones mixed in with green ones, waving in the breeze.
As far as the eye can see, the setting sun enflames the lake.

SCENE 58 EXT/SUNSET ISLAND

1. Two boats are pulling into landing stage.

SCENE 59 EXT/SUNSET ISLAND

1. From the landing stage, a wooden walkway leads up to a large house. A first group is heading towards the house, others are unloading the boats. The Master walks with the aid of both Xiao Jin Bao and Shui Sheng.

SCENE 60 INT/EVENING HOUSE

1. The house is divided down the middle by a corridor with two rooms on each side. Men are hurrying from one room to another carrying boxes and trunks.

2. The Master reclines slowly onto the bed. Tang Shi Ye helps him to take off his jacket while Xiao Jin Bao tries to make the bed as comfortable as possible.

THE MASTER

As you get older, it becomes harder to withstand pain.

Tang Shi Ye turns round.

TANG SHI YE

(to Shui Sheng)

Go and fetch the little red box which is in the white bag. Hurry, but take care, it contains the Master's medicine.

SCENE 61 EXT/NIGHT LANDING STAGE

1. The two boats pull away, haloed by the setting sun. The island is now cut off from the rest of the world.

2. Shui Sheng, carrying the little red box requested by Tang Shi Ye, stops to watch the boats' departure.

SCENE 62 INT/EVENING HOUSE

1. As Shui Sheng enters the Master's bedroom with the medicine box, he hears Xiao Jin Bao complaining.

2. She is standing with one hand on her hip, directing her remarks alternately to both the Master and Tang Shi Ye.

XIAO JIN BAO

This bed is far too small. How do you expect me to be able to sleep on something that size?

TANG SHI YE

(wilfully misunderstanding her)

It is quite sufficient for one person, I think.

Tang Shi Ye talks in a calm and deliberate voice.

Xiao Jin Bao stares at him. His apparent incomprehension cuts her short . After a few seconds' hesitation, she replies:

XIAO JIN BAO'

So where do I sleep?

Tang Shi Ye takes the small box from Shui Sheng and places it on the Master's bedside table.

TANG SHI YE

You? You will sleep in the next room. The Master needs to rest. What's more, it will allow us to discuss business more easily. If you have nothing in particular to ask him, there is no point you disturbing the Master.

3. The Master does not move, his eyes firmly closed.
4. Xiao Jin Bao stalks out.
5. Tang Shi Ye opens the box and looks inside.

TANG SHI YE

Shui Sheng, throw away the used bandages.

6. Shui Sheng picks up the blood-stained strips and moves off towards the door.

THE MASTER

Shui Sheng! Do not throw them in the water!
You musy bury them.

7. The Master half opens his eyes.

THE MASTER

Those which cannot be used again must be buried. It's the Tang custom.

SHUI SHENG

(looking down at his feet)

Yes, Master.

THE MASTER

Shui Sheng, you are a man now. When I speak to you, you must look me in the eyes. Do you understand?

SCENE 63 INT/EVENING BEDROOM

1. Xiao Jin Bao lifts the quilt from the bed and holds it to her nose, and creases up her beautiful face. She throws the quilt back down and cries out.

XIAO JIN BAO

How am I supposed to sleep under such a thing.
It's got all sorts on it.

Nobody replies. There is a heavy silence hanging over the island.

Xiao Jin Bao stands still for a moment and then sits down on the bed, which is made of bamboo. As she does so, the bed creaks loudly. She tries to sit perfectly still.

Slowly at first, then faster and faster, she rocks from side to side.

2. The noise of the creaking bed becomes her sole company. She continues accelerating, going further to each side each time. She finally establishes a rhythm resembling the music of the City of Pleasures.

Somebody knocks against the wooden wall. It is the Master. His knocking is not particularly loud but is very explicit. Xiao Jin Bao stops suddenly and remains still once more. After a few minutes, she gets up and goes over to extinguish the small lamp on the table.

3. Xiao Jin Bao turns to try to find a comfortable position on the bed. Her agitation makes the bed creak again.

There is another knock on the wall. This time, it is Tang Shi Ye.

TANG SHI YE

(hissing through the wall)

Mistress! Settle down quickly, you are disturbing the Master.

Xiao Jin Bao turns over one last time on the bed.

XIAO JIN BAO

(angrily)

You will have to change my bed then. It's more of a radio than a bed.

TANG SHI YE

We shall do so tomorrow, Mistress. The Master is tired after so much travelling.

If you carry on like that, the Master will get angry with you.

SCENE 64 EXT/NIGHT HOUSE

1. Xiao Jin Bao opens the main door of the house and walks out onto the terrace.

2. In the night, the limit between the sky and the lake is blurred, except for where the moonbeams shimmer across the water's surface. Guards criss-cross on the paths outside the house.

3. Xiao Jin Bao walks along the terrace. When she reaches one corner of the house, she stops.

4. She has noticed the tiny silhouette of Shui Sheng caught in the moonlight.

5. Xiao Jin Bao watches him from the corner of the house. For the first time, she feels a similarity between them and this feeling encourages her to go towards him.

6. Shui Sheng hears her footsteps approaching and looks up. When he recognises who it is, he stands up and scuttles off with his eyes fixed to the floor.

As he goes past, Xiao Jin Bao speaks to him:

XIAO JIN BAO

Stop!

Shui Sheng stops.

7.

XIAO JIN BAO

Why do you walk away when you see me? Do I frighten you?

Shui Sheng does not reply, nor does he look up.

XIAO JIN BAO

Why aren't you in bed?

After a moment's silence, Shui Sheng replies:

SHUI SHENG

(softly)

I can't sleep.

Xiao Jin Bao looks at him.

XIAO JIN BAO

(soothing)

Do you have any other relations in Shanghai, besides Liu Shu?

9. Shui Sheng remains silent.

10.

XIAO JIN BAO

Stay here a while, if you can't get to sleep.

Xiao Jin Bao sits on the terrace and looks out at the lake. Shui Sheng sits down at her side.

11. The shimmering water is a dark blue colour. The moon seems like a huge ice cream in the sky.

12. Shui Sheng glances at Xiao Jin Bao. She is sitting with her back towards him.

The autumn moon defines her silhouette. Suddenly, without turning round, Xiao Jin Bao asks:

XIAO JIN BAO

Can you climb trees?

14.

SHUI SHENG

Yes.

15. Xiao Jin Bao looks up, her face pointing towards the moon.

XIAO JIN BAO

When I was a little girl, at home, we had two big mulberry trees in the garden.

For the people in our village, the two trees meant that somebody of great value would be born under our roof.

Each summer, the trees would be covered in mulberries and all the neighbours would come round to eat them.

We children would climb into the trees and only come down when we couldn't eat any more.

Xiao Jin Bao turns round to look at Shui Sheng.

XIAO JIN BAO

You see? I'm a peasant too. Xiao Jin Bao, the bumpkin.

This makes her smile.

16. Shui Sheng smiles too. For the first time, he detects a note of tenderness in Xiao Jin Bao's laugh.

He cannot help himself from talking.

SHUI SHENG

I have an older sister in the country. She likes mulberries too.

17. Xiao Jin Bao smiles gently at him, without saying a word. She turns back to look at the moon shining over the lake. After a moment, she speaks.

XIAO JIN BAO

As soon as you've got enough money for your tofu shop, go back home. What's the point in staying in Shanghai?

18.

SHUI SHENG

I want to avenge Liu Shu. The Master told me that Liu Shu's eyes are still open.

19. Xiao Jin Bao turns to face Shui Sheng once more. It is now the Xiao Jin Bao that Shui Sheng is used to seeing.

XIAO JIN BAO

If the Master likes pigs, you want to become a pig. If he likes dogs, you want to become a dog. If that's what you think, go and die in Shanghai. Go to bed!

20 Shui Sheng does not know what to do. He jumps up and enters the house.

21. As he reaches his bedroom door, he turns round.

22. Xiao Jin Bao remains sitting in the moonlight, motionless.

23. The tears welling up in her eyes reflect the light of the moon, just like the water on the lake.

SCENE 65 EXT/MORNING HOUSE

1. Carrying a basket in one hand, the widow Cui Hua approaches the house accompanied by her daughter, A Jiao. She is wearing a blue tunic with a white trimming. It is traditional mourning wear. A Jiao skips along, in the orangey glow of the morning sun.

2. Shui Sheng is hanging out the Master's bandages which have just been washed. The white strips dance in the wind.

3. The young girl and her mother walk by him. A Jiao throws him a happy smile.

4. Shui Sheng smiles back to say hello.

5. Cui Hua glances at the bandages. She says nothing and starts up the wooden stairs of the house.

6. A guard appears round the corner of the house and waves at her to stop.

7. Cui Hua holds up her basket.

CUI HUA

We have brought you food.

8. Tang Shi Ye comes out onto the terrace and looks down at Cui Hua and her daughter with a smile. He reaches down and whips away the white cloth which covers the basket's contents.

9. There is enough food for a whole family, and has clearly been prepared with great care.

Tang Shi Ye pats A Jiao gently on the cheek.

TANG SHI YE

You're a beautiful little thing, aren't you?

So saying he extracts a pair of chopsticks from the basket and offers the girl a mouthful of rice.

11.

CUI HUA

She has already eaten.

12. Tang Shi Ye pretends not to have heard. His face creases up as he forces his smile even wider.

TANG SHI YE

What's your name?

13.

A JIAO

A Jiao.

Tang Shi Ye gives her some fried vegetables.

TANG SHI YE

And your mother's name?

A JIAO

Cui Hua.

14. Tang Shi Ye tears a pancake into small pieces and gives one to A Jiao, popping it directly into her mouth.

TANG SHI YE

How old are you?

15. A Jiao, her mouth full of all that Tang Shi Ye has just given her, looks up at her mother before answering.

A JIAO

Nine.

16. Seeing that she swallows quite normally, Tang Shi Ye has no further doubts about the food.

TANG SHI YE

Nine, that's good.

He takes the basket and says to Cui Hua.

TANG SHI YE

Cui Hua Sao ("*Sao*" is always appended to a married woman's name), wait here a moment.

With this, he heads back inside the house.

17. The noise of a wooden door opening.

Xiao Jin Bao leans against the door jamb, one hand on her hip, the other holding onto the door. Her hair is tousled and she looks very tired.

18. A Jiao looks up and stares at Xiao Jin Bao.

19. Xiao Jin Bao returns her stare before addressing the girl's mother.

XIAO JIN BAO

Who is she?

CUI HUA

My daughter. Her name is A Jiao.

Xiao Jin Bao crosses her arms over her chest.

XIAO JIN BAO

Look at her! Her nose, her eyes ... She doesn't look anything like you. She could almost be my daughter.

CUI HUA

It doesn't matter if she looks like you, she will never be lucky enough to achieve your position in life.

20. A Jiao moves forward and scrutinises Xiao Jin Bao from head to foot. She is overwhelmed by the long wavy hair, gold earrings, bracelets, high heels and long dress.

21. Xiao Jin Bao returns her attention.

XIAO JIN BAO

Could you lend me your daughter for a few days? When I am no longer bored, I'll send her back.

22.

CUI HUA

(forcing herself to laugh)

My daughter has never been off the island. She knows nothing of your amusements. Her presence will annoy you more than anything else.

23. Xiao Jin Bao offers no reply. She walks towards A Jiao and squats down before her.

XIAO JIN BAO

A Jiao? Tell me, who is nicer between your mother and I?

24. A Jiao smiles. Her eyes flit from her mother to the woman in front of her. She is at a loss.

XIAO JIN BAO

A Jiao, what do you want to do when you grow up?

A Jiao blinks shyly.

A JIAO

I want to go to Shanghai and be like you.

25. Xiao Jin Bao turns back to the girl's mother.

XIAO JIN BAO

I like your daughter. If your husband were not dead, you could have had others like her.

26. Cui Hua looks down at the ground silently. Xiao Jin Bao comes over to her and sits down.

XIAO JIN BAO

How long have you been living here?

CUI HUA

Many years.

Xiao Jin Bao looks around her.

XIAO JIN BAO

How can you stand it? Don't you get bored? If I were you, I would die of boredom.

CUI HUA

I am used to it.

XIAO JIN BAO

(whispering)

There is one advantage of this place, you can have as many lovers as you wish.

CUI HUA

(blushing)

Mistress...

27.

XIAO JIN BAO
(smiling)

If I were you, that's what I'd do. In any case, there is nobody here to see. You can do what you want, as often as you want. You should take a lover tomorrow.

28. Cui Hua is so embarrassed that her head sinks even lower.

CUI HUA
Mistress, how can you make such jokes?

XIAO JIN BAO
I'm not joking. I am very serious. If you daren't look for one, I'll send you some. In any case, what difference does it make, you're no longer a virgin.

Cui Hua's cheeks turn an even deeper shade of red. She looks away.

29. A Jiao is listening attentively.

30.

CUI HUA
(to A Jiao)
Go along. Go and play elsewhere.

31. A Jiao smiles and runs off towards Shui Sheng.

32. Tang Shi Ye arrives with a broad smile. He returns the basket to Cui Hua and gives her some money in notes.

TANG SHI YE
The Master greatly appreciated the meal. At midday, you will bring him some fish soup ...

33. A Jiao is playing with Shui Sheng in the long grass. Cui Hua walks towards them, carrying her now empty basket. The island is completely silent. The rising sun bathes it in its golden light. It is a morning like any other, but for Xiao Jin Bao, it seems very familiar and completely unknown at the same time.

34. In fact, the quite banal morning seems to touch her deeply.

SCENE 66 INT/NIGHT XIAO JIN BAO'S BEDROOM

1. Xiao Jin Bao is sitting perfectly still on the edge of her bed. It is yet another quiet and empty night. The noise of the reeds swaying in the wind only serves to reinforce her feelings of solitude. Xiao Jin Bao gets up and heads over to the door.

SCENE 67 INT/NIGHT KITCHEN

1. Shui Sheng's bed is next to the oven. When Xiao Jin Bao enters the kitchen, Shui Sheng is in the process of massaging his foot. When he sees her, he jumps to his feet.

2.

XIAO JIN BAO

Come with me. We're going to look for someone to talk to.

SCENE 68 EXT/NIGHT HOUSE

1. Xiao Jin Bao leaves the house with Shui Sheng.

2. A guard walks up to them.

GUARD

Mistress, what do you intend to do so late at night?

Xiao Jin Bao continues walking as though she were deaf. After a moment's hesitation, the guard decides to follow them.

Xiao Jin Bao turns round and looks at the guard. All of a sudden she appears to remember something and speaks to him in a very serious tone.

XIAO JIN BAO

I'm looking for somewhere clean to do my business. According to the rules of the Tang household, everything which is no longer useful must be buried. Would you mind fetching me a shovel?

The guard stops dead in his tracks.

GUARD

(embarrassed)

No. It really isn't worth it. Watch where you step, mistress.

SCENE 69 EXT/NIGHT ISLAND

1. Xiao Jin Bao and Shui Sheng head off in the direction of Cui Hua's house.
2. Night has fallen over the island, yet there is light showing through the window of Cui Hua's bedroom.
3. Just as they approach the house, Xiao Jin Bao and Shui Sheng hear someone knock at its door.
Xiao Jin Bao seems to be encouraged by the sound of the knocking. She grabs Shui Sheng by the sleeve and pulls him down to the ground.
4. Cui Hua's door opens slightly and what seems to be the figure of a man slips into the house.
5. Xiao Jin Bao's curiosity is aroused by this discovery and she advances quickly on tiptoe.

XIAO JIN BAO

(whispering)

Stay there and don't move.

6. Shui Sheng stays where he is. Slightly confused by what is happening, he watches Xiao Jin Bao approach the house.

7. Shui Sheng sees Xiao Jin Bao closing in on the window like a thief in the night. With a bamboo shoot, she pulls back the paper covering the corner of the window and puts her eye to the gap she has created.

SCENE 70 INT/NIGHT CUI HUA'S HOUSE

1. Through her peephole, Xiao Jin Bao sees a man's back. He is taking off his jacket. Cui Hua rests her head against his chest. Xiao Jin Bao can see Cui Hua's face clearly, and her eyes which burn with desire.

The Man squeezes her tightly against his naked chest and begins to unbutton her tunic.

SCENE 71 INT/NIGHT CUI HUA'S HOUSE

1. Xiao Jin Bao dare not look any more. She stands straight and appears to be thinking. A strange malicious smile comes over her face. She turns round and walks up to the door.

2. From his position further away, Shui Sheng hears a knock on the door of the house.

3. He sees that it is Xiao Jin Bao who is knocking.

CUI HUA
(worried)

Who is it?

XIAO JIN BAO
It's me. I have something to tell you.

CUI HUA
What's wrong, mistress? If it's not urgent, you can tell me tomorrow.

XIAO JIN BAO
(deliberately talking very loudly)
Are you counting your money? Don't worry, I don't want any of it.

4. Shui Sheng has no idea of what Xiao Jin Bao is trying to do.

5. The night is completely silent except for Xiao Jin Bao's voice which carries over to the main house, which arouses the attention of two guards, who turn and peer into the darkness to see where the noise is coming from.

SCENE 72 INT/NIGHT CUI HUA'S HOUSE

1. The door opens fractionally and Cui Hua appears, framed in the gap, a lamp in one hand, the other holding the door firmly. Her message is clear: nobody is coming in.

Her tunic is slightly creased.

CUI HUA
(blushing)

What can I do for you, Madam?

XIAO JIN BAO
(smiling)

Oh, you're not in bed yet, then?

CUI HUA

I was about to go...

Cui Hua maintains her position, but in the face of Xiao Jin Bao's insistence, she is forced to take her hand from the door.

3. Xiao Jin Bao enters the room, sits down and looks around.

XIAO JIN BAO

Sister, I am unable to sleep, I should like to talk with you.

4. Cui Hua remains where she is, very taut, but trying to remain calm.

CUI HUA

With me? What have we to talk about?

5. Xiao Jin Bao looks smilingly at Cui Hua.

XIAO JIN BAO

(dragging out the tone of her voice)

Sister, you have muddled up your buttons.

6. Cui Hua is flustered. Speechless, she does her buttons up properly and swiftly.

7. Xiao Jin Bao gets slowly to her feet.

XIAO JIN BAO

It's my bad luck if you don't want to talk with me.

She heads over to the door.

8. Cui Hua lets out a faint sigh of relief.

9. But Xiao Jin Bao stops just as she gets to the door. She turns round and takes the small oil lamp from Cui Hua's hand.

XIAO JIN BAO

Oh yes. I forgot to ask you, could you lend me some clothes?

CUI HUA

But how could you wear peasant clothes, Madam?

XIAO JIN BAO

That's not the problem. What I brought with me is drying and I have nothing left to put on.

Without asking, Xiao Jin Bao walks towards Cui Hua's bedroom with the oil lamp.

Cui Hua hurries after her.

10. The man's grey jacket is lying over a stool near the bedroom door.

11. Xiao Jin Bao glances at the jacket and stops short.

XIAO JIN BAO

What am I doing? I'm too used to city life. I'd forgotten that you can't just walk into a room like that.

(It is the custom in the Chinese countryside not to enter a house or a room without being invited to do so.)

CUI HUA

(embarrassed)

It doesn't matter, go ahead.

While she says this, Cui Hua nevertheless keeps one hand on the door;

13.

XIAO JIN BAO

No! You will choose an outfit for me.

14. Cui Hua enters the room and from the main room, Xiao Jin Bao can hear her moving around.

15. She sits down once more, barely able to contain her laughter.

16.

CUI HUA

I've found one! I've found one!

Cui Hua is red-faced as she emerges from the room. She hands some clothes to Xiao Jin Bao. A green suit, with a flowery pattern, neatly folded, with embroidery down the seams.

XIAO JIN BAO

Look at this vest. It's beautifully made, you really are very talented.

CUI HUA

You are mocking me. That's very easy to do.

XIAO JIN BAO

(projecting her voice)

If I were a man, I would want you to be my wife.

Cui Hua gives an embarrassed smile.

SCENE 73 EXT/NIGHT ISLAND

1. When Xiao Jin Bao comes out of the house, she waves the jacket over her head gaily, but she clamps her free hand over her mouth to contain her laughter.
2. Shui Sheng watches her, unable to grasp the reason for her good mood.

SCENE 74 EXT/NIGHT THE HOUSE

1. The guards continue to peer suspiciously in the direction of Cui Hua's house.

SCENE 75 EXT/SUNSET THE EDGE OF THE LAKE

1. The sun's last rays shine over the autumn reeds. The sky is clear without any trace of a cloud. The lake reflects the glow of the sun.
2. A Jiao and Shui Sheng are washing clothes at the edge of the lake.

A JIAO

Shui Sheng Ge, what is the most interesting thing you have seen in Shanghai?
(*"Ge" means brother.*)

SHUI SHENG

The iron cock. It sits on top of a building and rings once for each hour.

A Jiao's eyes gleam as she listens to him.

A JIAO

And what else?

SHUI SHENG

The electric lamps. You pull on a string and the glass bulb becomes bright. There is lots of electricity inside.

The telephone, also. No matter how far you are from someone, you just sit there and say "hello" and you can hear everything he says.

4.

A JIAO
What's electricity?

Shui Sheng thinks for a moment, then shakes his head.

SHUI SHENG
I don't know, I've never actually seen it.

5.

A JIAO
Shui Sheng Ge, the next time you come, bring me a little bit of electricity. I will swap you a fish for it.

SHUI SHENG
(very sure of himself)
No. I don't think I can bring you any.

8.

A JIAO
Shanghai must be a really good place to be.

9. Shui Sheng does not reply at first.
Then:

SHUI SHENG
It's good in the daytime, but not so much at night...

10. Xiao Jin Bao is approaching, wearing the suit Cui Hua gave her the night before as if she were modelling it in a fashion show.
Her bearing shows that she is very happy with her new costume.

She reaches the two children and gives them her biggest smile.

11. A Jiao looks at her and smiles back.

A JIAO
Yinang, why are you wearing my mother's clothes?

("Yinang" means aunt, and is customary for a young girl addressing a woman of her mother's generation.)

12. Shui Sheng smiles at Xiao Jin Bao also.

13.

XIAO JIN BAO
Do I look good?

14.

A JIAO
Yes.

15.

XIAO JIN BAO
Do I look like your mother?

A JIAO
Yes.

16. Xiao Jin Bao draws even closer to A Jiao.

XIAO JIN BAO
(immediately)
In that case, in the future, you must call me "Mummy", and you will call your mother, "Aunt".

17. A Jiao laughs.

A JIAO
Can you teach me to sing? Shui Sheng told me you sing very well.

18. Xiao Jin Bao throws Shui Sheng a look.

19. He averts his eyes.

20. Xiao Jin Bao sits down.

XIAO JIN BAO
Shui Sheng lied to you. I don't know how to sing.

21. A Jiao doesn't believe her.

22.

XIAO JIN BAO
When one sings, one must sing what one wants to say. Sing only good songs.

23.

A JIAO
And what are those songs?

24. Xiao Jin Bao keeps quiet. She seems lost in thought.

XIAO JIN BAO
Do you like singing?

A JIAO
Yes.

XIAO JIN BAO
Well, you must first sing me a song then.
Afterwards, I'll teach you other songs.

27. A Jiao is a little embarrassed. She casts a quick glance at Shui Sheng before starting to sing.

A JIAO

*Sway on, sway on, palanquin
All the way to grandmother's door
Grandmother is calling me
My little treasure, I cry and I laugh
Two dogs carry the palanquin*

28. Xiao Jin Bao is very pleased.

XIAO JIN BAO
I know your song, A Jiao. My grandmother
taught me it when I was little.

She starts singing with A Jiao.

XIAO JIN BAO and A JIAO
*Sway on, sway on, palanquin
All the way to grandmother's door
Magpies are singing on the roof
There's a pair of red trousers
and a flowery jacket
Grandmother's coming with me
in the Bride's palanquin
Sway on, sway on, palanquin
All the way to grandmother's door*

29. Shui Sheng laughs happily. Watching Xiao Jin Bao, he realises that he has never seen her like this.
30. Xiao Jin Bao beats out the rythm, laughing unreservedly. She is radiant.
31. The plants glow in the soft autumn light. the reeds sway in the wind. The lake's water glitters ...
32. Xiao Jin Bao looks out over the lake and her smile freezes on her face.
33. The legs of a corpse emerge from the water and float slowly towards them.
34. A cloud passes across Xiao Jin Bao's face and she turns away.
35. A Jiao and Shui Sheng have already stood up and are walking away, chattering and laughing.
36. Terrified, Xiao Jin Bao leans forward to have a better look at the corpse.
37. The corpse floats closer and closer. It is a man's body, and he is wearing the same grey jacket as the one Xiao Jin Bao saw in Cui Hua's house the night before.
38. Xioa Jin Bao's mouth falls open, her face marked with complete astonishment;

1. Shui Sheng, much tenser than just before, looks towards the Master's bedroom. Tang Shi Ye and his bodyguards are near him, looking in the same direction.

Tang Shi Ye keeps at a respectful distance from the door. Nobody knows what is happening inside the room.

2. The Master's door is closed, but raised voices can be heard from time to time. It is hard to understand exactly what Xiao Jin Bao and The Master are saying to each other.

THE MASTER

(v/o)

Yes, I gave the order! So what? No-one knew who he was. I have to be vigilant.

And then silence.

After a moment, the Master's voice makes itself heard again.

THE MASTER

... Shanghai follows me wherever I go. Don't get involved in my business. Those who have tried to do so, have all ended up regretting it.

3. The Master's voice rings out clearly, with each word spoken very precisely.

Shui Sheng thinks that Xiao Jin Bao would be better not to say anything. Tang Shi Ye wears a satisfied smile.

4. Suddenly, the noise of a porcelain object breaking comes through the door. The Master cries out angrily.

THE MASTER

He runs away from the shit that he has stirred up.

...

Who dare say such a thing?!!

The door is suddenly pulled open.

Xiao Jin Bao emerges, looking very strained. She walks determinedly and angrily. Nobody has ever seen her in such a fury. Her face is pale and the blood has drained from her lips. She looks straight in front of her. She kicks open her bedroom door and disappears.

SCENE 77 INT/NIGHT KITCHEN

1. Xiao Jin Bao pushes open the door.

SHUI SHENG

You are up?

SCENE 78 EXT/NIGHT

1. Xiao Jin Bao and Shui Sheng walk out of the house, with a guard following them.

GUARD

Mistress, where are you going?

Xiao Jin Bao stops and glares nastily at the guard without saying a word. The guard takes a few steps back.

GUARD

Take care, mistress.

SCENE 79 INT/NIGHT CUI HUA'S HOUSE

1. Xiao Jin Bao opens the door and smiles at Cui Hua.

XIAO JIN BAO

Saozi, this evening you will have the time to talk with me.

2. It is not very late and both Cui Hua and A Jiao are making baskets. Cui Hua puts down her work and hurries over to Xiao Jin Bao.

A JIAO

Yinang!

Shui Sheng sits down next to A Jiao to help her.
Xiao Jin Bao sits down also. Cui Hua doesn't know what to say to her. She goes back to her work.

4.

XIAO JIN BAO
Saozi, how old are you?

5.

CUI HUA
I was born in the year of the horse.

6.

XIAO JIN BAO
You could be my younger sister! Why have you let yourself age like that?

7.

CUI HUA
A weathered skin attracts less flies

8.

XIAO JIN BAO
(spontaneously)
Why don't you marry again?

9.

CUI HUA
You are joking with me again, Madam. I live in the country, not in the city.

10.

XIAO JIN BAO
That doesn't stop you loving a man.

11. Cui Hua looks across at her daughter.

CUI HUA
Please stop mocking me.

12.

XIAO JIN BAO

I can't believe that a woman like you does not attract men's attention.

...

If you want, I can introduce you to some.

13.

A JIAO

(interrupting)

Yinang, my uncle adores my mother.

14.

CUI HUA

A Jiao! It's time you were in bed!

15. A Jiao does not move, smiling.

16.

XIAO JIN BAO

(slowly)

Ah... I see... Saozi.

17. Cui Hua is disconcerted to know that her secret has been revealed.

CUI HUA

(to A Jiao)

Go to bed! Now!

18. Xiao Jin Bao continues probing.

XIAO JIN BAO

When are you going to be married?

19. Cui Hua looks at the floor.

CUI HUA

A Jiao says the first thing that comes into her head.

I don't know yet.

20. Xiao Jin Bao looks straight at Cui Hua with a serious expression on her face.

will come specially with two red silk quilts and a set of red pillows. I want your bedroom to be filled with red candles and red Shuang Xi. (*Shuang Xi means "double happiness" and is often written on pieces of red paper at weddings.*)

Xiao Jin Bao's eyes seem to have become entranced by the smoking flame of the oil lamp.

XIAO JIN BAO

Or I could give you a white wedding dress made of lace imported from France. Two small boys will follow you holding the train.

21. Cui Hua is taken aback.

CUI HUA

Madam, stop mocking us, we are only poor.

22. But Xiao Jin Bao is unable to restrain herself. She takes Cui Hua in her arms.

XIAO JIN BAO

(to herself)

The woman who doesn't want to get married does not exist. However often you must do it, it's always better to be married.

23

CUI HUA

(sighing)

But the gods only allow a woman to marry once. If she gets married twice, she will have her heart broken a second time. It's her fate.

XIAO JIN BAO

You are very lucky to have a peaceful life on this island and to have someone who loves you.

CUI HUA

If you were asked to spend your life here, you wouldn't say the same thing. Why do all the peasants go to Shanghai otherwise? Things must be better there.

24.

XIAO JIN BAO

If I get married one day, I want to do it here. You will be my witness.

25.

CUI HUA

What? You are not married already?

26. In the dim light of the oil lamp, Xiao Jin Bao simply shakes her head.

27.

CUI HUA

(concerned)

Why aren't you married? You shouldn't be too demanding.

XIAO JIN BAO

Yes...

28. Xiao Jin Bao smiles. All of a sudden, tears well up in her eyes.

XIAO JIN BAO

You're right. I should get married. But I'm afraid that I'm never going to see him by my side again.

29. Cui Hua tries to console her.

CUI HUA

You must be patient, Madam.

30. Xiao Jin Bao nods her head. The light catches her tears as they begin to roll down her cheeks.

31. Cui Hua puts down her half-finished basket and takes Xiao Jin Bao's hands.

CUI HUA

You just have to be honest and wait for him patiently. He'll come to you one day. Men are all the same.

32.

XIAO JIN BAO

Yes...

But the tears continue to roll down her face.

33.

CUI HUA

The first time I saw you, I knew that your life was not easy... You didn't need to tell me... Wait patiently. Patience is all that a woman has.

34. Xiao Jin Bao throws herself into Cui Hua's arms. She holds onto her neck and sobs uncontrollably.

XIAO JIN BAO

Saozi, I should never have come to your house, nor to this island. I feel guilty about what is happening to you...

Cui Hua does not really understand what Xiao Jin Bao is saying, but she holds her in her arms and consoles her as she would a younger sister.

35. Shui Sheng and A Jiao are afraid but can only look at each other.

SCENE 80 EXT/MORNING THE HOUSE

1. The Master comes out of his bedroom for the first time since his arrival on the island. He seems fully recovered, completely different from the day he arrived. All the men turn to greet him.

2. Cui Hua is in the middle of setting the table. She is slightly tense as it is her first encounter with the Master.

CUI HUA
Good Morning, Master!

3. The Master is in a good mood.

THE MASTER
Oh, so you are Cui Hua Sao.

CUI HUA
(surprised)
Sorry? You know my name?

THE MASTER
I eat your fish soup every day. How could I
forget your name?

The bodyguards burst out laughing, as if the Master has said something extremely amusing.

4. The Master sits down. He spots A Jiao.

THE MASTER
And you must be A Jiao.

A JIAO
Good morning, Grandfather!
*(In China, all children refer to older men as
Grandfather - "ye Ye")*

The Master takes hold of A Jiao's hand and draws her towards him. He looks her up and down.

THE MASTER
She's beautiful, just like Xiao Jin Bao at the
same age.
Where is Xiao Jin Bao? Shui Sheng, go and find
her.

5. But before he can move, Xiao Jin Bao emerges from her bedroom, looking very tired. Her arms droop the length of her body, giving the impression that she has not slept all night.

6.

THE MASTER

Xiao Jin Bao, look at this little girl. Don't you think she looks like you when you were her age?

7. Xiao Jin Bao gives no reply.

8. The Master remains calm and turns his attention to Cui Hua.

THE MASTER

Cui Hua Sao, please prepare two chickens at midday, I am expecting guests.

(to Xiao Jin Bao)

Number Two and Number Three are coming.

9. Xiao Jin Bao is quite clearly surprised.

SCENE 81 EXT/DAY THE LANDING STAGE

1. Zheng San Ye comes out of the boat's cabin shouting.

ZHENG SAN YE

Shit, it's too hot in there! I thought I was going to suffocate.

2. The Master, Tang Shi Ye, Xiao Jin Bao, Shui Sheng and a few others are there to welcome them.

Song Er Ye and Zheng San Ye come towards the Master to pay their respects.

The Master seems very happy to see them.

SONG ER YE

How are you feeling?

The master pats his side to show that his wound has healed and that he is back to full health.

SONG ER YE

(relieved)

Excellent.

Zheng San Ye takes a cigar from his pocket, lights it and takes a long puff with unconcealed pleasure.

3. Song Er Ye walks forward, looking at Xiao Jin Bao's feet.

SONG ER YE
(to Xiao Jin Bao)

Madam.

4.

XIAO JIN BAO
(smiling)

Er Ye.

5.

ZHENG SAN YE
(loudly, to both Song Er Ye and Xiao Jin Bao)

What's happened to you both? In the space of a few days, it's as if you didn't know each other.

6.

THE MASTER
(softly, to Song Er Ye)

How are things down there?

Song Er Ye takes a number of newspaper cuttings from his pocket and hands them to the Master.

The Master reads them immediately, nodding his head with satisfaction.

Zheng San Ye draws closer.

Their three heads seem to resemble each other.

7. Song Er Ye steals a glance at Xiao Jin Bao.

8. She moves off towards the house.

9. Song Er Ye turns away, disappointed.

The Master folds the cuttings and holds them out to Zheng San Ye who flicks his lighter and burns them.

10. The Master watches the bundle as it is gradually reduced to ash.

THE MASTER

At least, the knife has served a purpose.

ZHENG SAN YE

Very true. Very true.

SONG ER YE

But you must still be careful.

THE MASTER

(patting Song Er Ye on the shoulder)

I am lucky to have you as my brothers.

SONG ER YE

We merely did what you asked of us. It's mostly Number Three's doing.

THE MASTER

I understand.

SCENE 82 EXT/NIGHT THE HOUSE

1. The night is dark and the island is quiet.
2. Somebody slides down one of the posts of the terrace, noiselessly.
3. It is Xiao Jin Bao. She crouches down and looks around her.
4. At one end of the terrace, the tip of a guard's cigarette glows in the night.
5. Xiao Jin Bao leans forward and scuttles off towards the rushes.

SCENE 83 EXT/NIGHT RUSHES

The Autumn breeze continues to blow through the reeds. All is dark.
Two forms are entwined.

2. Song Er Ye holds Xiao Jin Bao close. He is sitting slightly behind her, kissing her neck.

Xiao Jin Bao has her eyes half-closed. Her reactions are much more muted than before. Perhaps because they are no longer in Shanghai, perhaps because recent events have changed things for her. They both seem tense and worried.

Song Er Ye's eyes flit constantly between Xiao Jin Bao and the reeds surrounding them. He leans forward.

SONG ER YE

Has he begun to suspect me?

Xiao Jin Bao does not reply. Her eyes have closed, and her head rests on his chest. She seems to be thinking about something else entirely. Song Er Ye cups her chin in his hands and continues giving her tender pecks on the neck.

SONG ER YE

(sollicitously)

Tell me. Does he have any doubts?

Xiao Jin Bao leans her head still further back and reaches up to stroke the side of his head.

XIAO JIN BAO

Do you really love me?

Song Er Ye continues to kiss her neck.

SONG ER YE

Yes. Haven't you already noticed? Haven't I always been faithful to you?

3. Xiao Jin Bao turns round abruptly. She takes Song Er Ye's hands in her own.

XIAO JIN BAO

(animatedly)

Take me away. Let's leave Shanghai and go far away.

SONG ER YE

Where?

XIAO JIN BAO

Anywhere. I want to marry you. Let me be a young bride and lead a normal life. I will love you as long as I have breath.

4. Song Er Ye smiles.

SONG ER YE

What's happened to you? After a few days on this island, you've started hallucinating.

Xiao Jin Bao takes her hands away and her expression hardens.

XIAO JIN BAO

Will you take me away or not?

Song Er Ye pulls her back towards him.

SONG ER YE

(softly)

I want you to be a young bride, my bride, but it's impossible just now. When I take over in Shanghai, I want you to be the most beautiful young bride ever.

You must have patience and listen to what I tell you...

Why did the Old Man call me to this island?

Xiao Jin Bao's enthusiasm is waning. She tries desperately to recapture it. She has one last try but she is no longer sure of herself even.

XIAO JIN BAO

Who cares about Shanghai! Forget it all and let's go.

5. Song Er Ye is no longer listening to her. He is deep in his own thoughts.

SONG ER YE

(frowning)

... He hasn't made me come all this way for nothing. There must be something important...

Song Er Ye turns back to Xiao Jin Bao and says jokily:

SONG ER YE

You haven't given me away I hope?

Xiao Jin Bao looks at Song Er Ye with deep disappointment in her eyes. She suddenly transforms herself into her Shanghai personage.

XIAO JIN BAO

Other than that, do you have anything interesting to say?

Me? Given you away? I was the one who was given away in Shanghai? How could I ever give someone else away after that?

7. Song Er Ye rediscovers his expression of tenderness and gently strokes her cheek.

SONG ER YE

You know, I'm doing all this for you. Think about it. Where could we go together? Even if I took you underground, he would find us.

If he hasn't found out this time, I'll have another chance to get him.

(gritting his teeth)

Fat Yu is totally useless. We could have had it all over with the other night.

8. Xiao Jin Bao does not want to listen any more. She shrugs off her lover's hands.

XIAO JIN BAO

If I came here this evening, it wasn't to listen to you talk about your dealings with Fat Yu.

I'm going in.

Song Er Ye holds her back.

SONG ER YE

Try to get the Old Man to tell you why he called for us. Tomorrow night... at two o'clock... here.

Xiao Jin Bao walks away in complete silence.

9. Song Er Ye's face takes on a nasty aspect.

SONG ER YE
(brutally)

Stop!

10. Xiao Jin Bao stops.

11.

SONG ER YE
(hissing)

If the Old Man knows about us, neither you, nor I will survive, do you understand?
Thanks to your considerable charms, the Old Man can't resist you. You must try to find out what he knows. Here, tomorrow, at two... okay?

12.

XIAO JIN BAO

Ah! Are you getting angry now? Okay, tomorrow morning, I'll go and see the Master and tell him: "Do you realise that your brother is trying to take your place, and he has already taken your woman?"

So saying, she turns on her heel.

13. Song Er Ye stays hidden in the rushes and watches Xiao Jin Bao disappear into the night. Behind his glasses, his eyes are shot through with menace.

SCENE 84 EXT/ DAY

1. Shui Sheng comes running along the walkway, clutching his hands to his stomach and looking very ill.

2.

GUARD 1

Shui Sheng, what have you eaten? How many times have you been to shit today?

SHUI SHENG

Six times.

GUARD 2

And how many more times before tonight?
Look behind the house and count how many
piles you have made already? Can't you smell
it? If you keep on shitting close to the house,
I'll belt you.

SCENE 85 EXT/EVENING

1. Clouds are gathering in the sky and the wind is blowing up. In the distance, there are rolls of thunder. The storm is approaching. -

SCENE 86 EXT/NIGHT THE HOUSE

1. The front door opens suddenly and Shui Sheng comes running out like a Jack from a Box. He runs down the steps, pressing his hands against his stomach as if trying to keep something in.

2.

GUARD 2

You again? Go further away. Haven't you noticed, the wind's changed direction. Go round the other side... Go on.

3. Shui Sheng turns round and runs off in the opposite direction.

SCENE 87 EXT/NIGHT RUSHES

1. Shui Sheng squats down in the reeds. Suddenly, he hears two voices whispering.

MAN 1

Shit, it's going to rain.

MAN 2

Good, it'll make thing easier for us.

Shui Sheng is taken aback. He dare not breathe, but turns round slowly to see where the voices are coming from.

2. Where he is, the reeds are very thick. Shui Sheng cannot make anything out, but the voice is very close to his position.

FIRST MAN

What's come over Song Er Ye? Why does he want to eliminate Xiao Jin Bao?

SECOND MAN

Don't ask too many questions. Just remember, when she comes by, you grab her from behind and strangle her with the rope.

FIRST MAN

But Song Er Ye told us to stab her.

SECOND MAN

Listen. If we kill her with the knife, her lovely skin will be spoilt and she'll bleed and then we won't be able to have any fun with her.

FIRST MAN

But if it starts raining, where are we going to hide?

SECOND MAN

In the lake. There's hardly anybody on the island. Don't worry.

3. Shui Sheng wriggles through the reeds, trying not to make any noise.

4. When he is far enough away, he gets up off his belly.

5. But instead of running normally, he decides to crouch down and scuttles along on all fours.

1. Shui Sheng bursts into the room.

2. Song Er Ye, Zheng San Ye and Xiao Jin Bao are gathered round a table playing Mah Jong with the master.

Tang Shi Ye is sitting next to the Master. When they hear the door open, the whole group turns round to face the intruder.

Without hesitating, a guard steps forward and grabs Shui Sheng.

3. Shui Sheng had not imagined that there would be so many people in the Master's bedroom. He breathes heavily, unable to open his mouth, staring at Song Er Ye and Xiao Jin Bao.

4. Xiao Jin Bao is the first to ask a question.

XIAO JIN BAO

Shui Sheng, what is going on?

5. Shui Sheng still has difficulty getting his breath. His eyes move from Song Er Ye to the Master.

6.

SONG ER YE

(harshly)

Shui Sheng! How dare you infringe the rules?
Get out if you have nothing to say. Can't you see
that the Master is in the room!?

7. The Master's experience prompts him to interrupt Song Er Ye's rebuke of the young boy. He observes Shui Sheng and smiles at him:

THE MASTER

(weighing his words)

Shui Sheng, what have you seen?

8. Shui Sheng's hesitations are washed away. He speaks directly to Xiao Jin Bao.

SHUI SHENG

Mistress, you must not go out later! Don't go!

9. Xiao Jin Bao's expression changes completely.

10. Nobody understands what Shui Sheng is talking about except Song Er Ye, who freezes in his seat.

11. The Master continues to coax Shui Sheng to reveal what he has seen.

THE MASTER

Shui Sheng, speak slowly. What have you heard? Have you heard something or have you seen someone?

12.

SHUI SHENG

I heard two people talking in the rushes. they work for Song Er Ye.

I heard them say that they were going to kill the mistress tonight.

13. The room falls completely silent except for the noise of a Mah Jong piece bouncing off the floor. Dropped by whom?

Nobody moves.

Xiao Jin Bao stares at Song Er Ye who has broken into a sweat. His face has lost all its colour.

Zheng San Ye takes his hand from the table and puts it in his pocket.

With a deathly stare, Tang Shi Ye looks at the Master, who stands up and walks slowly over to where the guard is holding Shui Sheng. His face is still smiling but his eyes bore into Shui Sheng's.

THE MASTER

Shui Sheng, look at me and repeat what you have just said.

14.

SHUI SHENG

(stammering)

...I... I wasn't feeling well... When I squatted down, I heard voices, over there in the rushes... they were saying:

- *it's going to rain.*

- *the rain will make our job easier.*

SHUI SHENG

(cont.)

- what's come over Song Er Ye? Why does he want to eliminate Xiao Jin Bao?

- when she gets here at two o'clock, you grab her and strangle her with the rope. If she loses a lot of blood, it's no fun.

That's what I heard...and I came running back on all fours.

16. The Master is still smiling at Shui Sheng. He asks no further questions, simply maintains his piercing expression.

17. It seems as if even the air in the room has stopped moving.

18. Xiao Jin Bao stares at Song Er Ye, freezing him to the spot.

19. Song Er Ye's expression has twisted into a grimace. He is deathly pale with one or two beads of sweat breaking out on his forehead. He tries to avoid Xiao Jin Bao's eyes.

20. Zheng San Ye is particularly alert with his eyes moving from one person to another.

21. The Master nods his head and pats Shui Sheng on the cheek. He turns back to the table without looking at anyone in particular. He stretches out his hand and calmly picks up one of his pieces as if it were the most important thing to do at the present time.

22. Shui Sheng watches the scene without moving.

23. The Master keeps the piece in his fingers, turning it round and round without actually playing.

24. The noise of the piece grating on the table resonates around the room. Nobody moves and nobody speaks. The tension increases with every second.

The Master lets out a sigh and looks up from the table.

THE MASTER

Lao Er, how many men did you bring with you?

25. Song Er Ye's face is drained of any colour. With a great effort, he finally manages to open his mouth.

SONG ER YE

Two.

26. Xiao Jin Bao breaks into a laugh. Her cold stare has been replaced by a vacant look, as if her whole world had disappeared. Her eyes are fixed on Song Er Ye. Gradually, her laughter subsides as the tears well up in her eyes.

27. The Master turns back to Shui Sheng.

THE MASTER .

Go to bed now, Shui Sheng. It's over.

Tang Shi Ye comes over and leads him to the door.

28. The Master's door is firmly closed after him, with everybody and all its secrets locked inside;

SCENE 89 EXT/NIGHT THE HOUSE

1. Shui Sheng is sitting on the terrace staring at the closed door.
2. There is so little sound coming from the bedroom that it is as if the whole house were asleep. A thin ray of light emerges from underneath the door, cutting the corridor into two distinct sections.
3. A few armed guards are dispatched to search the rushes.
4. Shui Sheng knows that they are going to kill the two men he saw earlier and thus that Xiao Jin bao will not be strangled or stabbed. He has the vague impression that what he has done will, however, cause Xiao Jin Bao a certain amount of trouble and pain. He is very worried about what is going to happen.
5. The door is still closed. The thunderclaps are becoming increasingly frequent. The rain is about to arrive.

SCENE 90 EXT/NIGHT THE HOUSE RAIN

1. The stormclouds cover the whole sky. Thunder and lightning succeed each other in an increasing rythm, illuminating the island for a brief moment before plunging it back into darkness.
2. Hurrying footsteps outside wake Shui Sheng. There must be a great deal of water on the ground because the footsteps splash along.
3. Shui Sheng opens the door. There is no light in the corridor. He goes to look in the Master's bedroom.
4. Its door is wide open and the room is empty. Shui Sheng realises that the house is empty also. As he turns to go outside the wind blows the Master's bedroom door shut with a terrible bang.
5. Shui Sheng runs out onto the terrace.
6. There, a single oil lamp, suspended from a post, gives off a flickering light as the lamp is blown first one way then the other by the storm. A few people have gathered around the lamp, looking out silently.
7. Shui Sheng joins them and follows their eyes into the night.

SCENE 91 EXT/NIGHT ISLAND RAIN

1. The rain is pouring down. Groups of men are huddled round different lights beyond the terrace. Shui Sheng has difficulty understanding how all these people have come to be on the island.
He catches a glimpse of half-a-dozen guards dragging two male corpses along the ground.
The guards throw the bodies into a newly-dug pit. Standing around the pit are more guards carrying shovels. Their black trousers are covered with a yellowish mud from their digging.
2. Not far from the pit, a group of lights throw up the silhouette of another huddle of people sheltering under umbrellas.
3. The Master is among them, with Zheng San Ye and Tang Shi Ye behind him. They are covered by umbrellas held over them by three other men. They are all silent. The terrace lamp lights up the falling rain.

4. Song Er Ye is led forward by two men. He is pushed to the floor just in front of the Master. he has lost his elegant bearing as the rain soaks his hair and washes it forward over his eyes.

5. As he is thrown to the floor, his face grinds into the sodden ground. Despite his hands being tied behind his back, he manages to pull himself up to kneel in front of the Master.

SONG ER YE

Forgive me Da Ge! Spare my life.

6. The Master looks at him without replying.

7. Song Er Ye shuffles forward on his knees, close enough to bang his head repetitively against the Master's legs. His glasses fall from his face as he does so.

SONG ER YE

Give me a chance, just one chance!

8. The Master does not even look at him now. Instead, he stares into the distance as if he were expecting someone.

9.

SONG ER YE

San Di ("*third brother*"), help me! Save me!

10. Zheng San Ye remains silent also.

The Master brings his eyes back to focus on the traitor before him. He crosses his hands behind his back.

THE MASTER

A little courage, number two. Tell yourself that you are dying a hero's death.

When I return to Shanghai, I shall let it be known that you died protecting me from Fat Yu. I shall mourn you. I want the whole of Shanghai to know that I am still the Master.

And then with number three we will go and avenge your death against Fat Yu.

THE MASTER

(cont.)

That way, I will repay my debt to him for the knife which wounded me. I am still the Master of Shanghai. Do you understand now?

11. Song Er Ye remains motionless for a moment. His face is unrecognisable as he stares blindly upwards.

SONG ER YE

Da Ge, give me a chance! I was tricked by Fat Yu.

12.

THE MASTER

I cannot forgive your betrayal. I called you here on purpose, to punish you.

The Master waves to the guards.

THE MASTER

Bury him!

13. Two men drag Song Er Ye towards the pit, covering his mouth with a cloth to stifle his screams.

Through the rain, it is difficult to distinguish anything other than his scuffling legs, which leave a trail through the mud.

14. The Master picks up Song Er Ye's glasses and looks at them.

THE MASTER

(sighing)

It's a shame, we won't be able to finish our game of Mah Jong.

SCENE 92 EXT/NIGHT RAIN

1. Shui Sheng looks on wide-eyed. He attempts to approach the pit but is restrained by a guard.

1. The Master takes a lamp from one of his guards. He shines it in the face of Xiao Jin Bao.

2. She has not been tied up but is left without shelter from the rain. Her hair is wet and sticks to her face. her eyes bear no expression, either of hatred or fear, she is in fact very calm.

3. The Master leans forward and half-whispers to her.

THE MASTER

I shall cover the City of Pleasures with fifty thousand fresh flowers as a sign of my sadness. I will throw even more flowers into the river. I know how much you like flowers, it's just a pity you won't be there to see them. No-one will know of what you have done to me. I do not like losing face. That way, you can die as if you had done nothing wrong.

Xiao Jin Bao does not look as though she has taken in a word of what the Master has said. Her eyes remain completely impassive.

4. The Master pulls away from her.

THE MASTER

Do you have anything to say to me?

5. Xiao Jin Bao gives no answer. She turns her face away and looks into the distance...

6. ... towards the flickering lights of Cui Hua's house.

7.

XIAO JIN BAO

I have a last request.

8.

THE MASTER

Say it.

9.

XIAO JIN BAO

Don't harm Cui Hua or A Jiao. They had nothing to do with any of this.

10. The Master stretches out his hand and wipes her hair from her face.

THE MASTER

(smiling)

I didn't spoil you for nothing. You are the only one who understands me. I'm going to keep A Jiao and take her to Shanghai to bring her up. In a few years, she will be the new Xiao Jin Bao

...
As for Cui Hua Sao, it wasn't my fault and you can't hold it against me. She heard a noise, came out of her house and saw everything. It was bad luck. You see, I can't afford to leave living witnesses behind.

No-one who is not a part of the clan must know about what happened this evening.

11. Xiao Jin Bao looks back towards the lights in the distance. Her tears mix with the rain pouring down her face.

XIAO JIN BAO

(to herself)

Saozi, I am the guilty one. I should never have come here...

12. The Master has missed what she said and draws closer once more.

THE MASTER

What are you saying?

13; Without warning, Xiao Jin Bao throws herself on him in rage. She hits, scratches and slaps him in an explosion of accumulated hatred. The Master was not expecting such violence and he is knocked off his feet. Together they roll over in the mud. The others were taken by surprise also: Zheng San Ye is the first to rush forward to separate them. However, Xiao Jin Bao clings to the Master as though she were rooted to him. The lights start to waver and everything becomes chaotic...

Moreover, Xiao jin Bao starts screaming insults at the Master, letting out ten years of suppressed anger.

XIAO JIN BAO

Tang Lao Da ("*Number One*"), I want to kill you, you old cretin. I have always hated you. I wish I could kill you. I'll be watching you every day from my grave. I want to eat your flesh and drink your blood. Bastard! You'll get yours in the end!

SCENE 94 EXT/NIGHT RAIN

1. Shui Sheng suddenly cries out.

SHUI SHENG

Mistress...

He runs forward ...

2. ... but somebody holds him back.

GUARD

Do you want to die too?

3. Shui Sheng shouts and tries to wrestle his way free but the guard holds him tighter and slaps a muscular hand over his mouth to stifle his screams. Shui Sheng lashes out at fresh air and finally calms down. He looks sadly at the spectacle before him.

SCENE 95 EXT/NIGHT RAIN

1. The lights barely illuminate a group of people huddled together. Coming from the middle of the huddle is the dull sound of shovels at work.

SCENE 96 EXT/MORNING BOAT

1. The boat is ready to depart. After the rain of the night before the morning seems cleaner and fresher.

2. The guards resemble a line of ants loading up the boat, in the bow of which the Master is sitting with A Jiao. A Jiao is overjoyed and proves it by giving everyone a big smile.

The Master looks at her fondly like an old man taking his granddaughter out on a trip.

A JIAO

Grandfather, where are my mother and Yinang?

THE MASTER

(with a smile)

They have already left for Shanghai. We will meet up with them when we arrive.

A JIAO

When I get to Shanghai, will I have lots of lovely clothes?

THE MASTER

Yes.

A JIAO

And gold bracelets?

THE MASTER

Yes.

A JIAO

And rings?

THE MASTER

Yes, yes. You will have all you desire.

A JIAO

(proudly)

I want to be like Yinang.

The Master pats her on the cheek.

THE MASTER

Yes, of course, just like Yinang.

3. Shui Sheng is sitting next to them, looking at the lake ahead.

4. They gradually draw away from the island, which, in the morning light, seems peaceful and magnificent.

Shui Sheng has the impression that he can hear Xiao Jin Bao and A Jiao singing their song.

*XIAO JIN BAO and A JIAO
Sway on, sway on, palanquin
All the way to grandmother's door
Grandmother is calling me
My little treasure, I cry and I laugh
Two dogs carry the palanquin*

5. Tears begin to fill his eyes and he turns away.

6. The Master is playing with A Jiao with his back to Shui Sheng.

7. Shui Sheng stares at this back and an expression of anger and hatred sweeps over his face. Finally, Shui Sheng gets up and throws himself on the Master...

His face, twisted with hatred enters the frame and freezes in close-up.

THE END

Number of shots:

Shanghai	353
Island	310
Boat	12
Total	675