

1 EXT. - SPACE - DAY/NIGHT

FADE IN...

The starry majesty of space. The camera pans down to reveal this space is just above Earth's atmosphere. From screen right, a space ship slowly drifts to center. The football field-sized ship is a large silver box with cylindrical extensions on both ends and rows of windows covering every surface. It's the hokey vision of space ships imagined in the 1960s.

We zoom in on the ship until three windows fill our view. Inside, red, blue, and green lights flash. We can just about make out some men dressed in suits moving around.

We begin to hear music, cheap Casio keyboard-esque music, with a spacey wistful feel, like a slow "Dark Side of the Moon" Floyd track.

2 INT. - SPACE SHIP - DAY/NIGHT

Inside a white featureless room, six merry Japanese businessmen congregate, drink, and chat. This is a karaoke booth. Red, blue, and green lights circle and flash. Four men talk, with their attention loosely on the other two who hold mikes, singing to the cheap Casio music. The lyrics are Japanese but subtitles translate for us...

KARAOKE GUYS

Down upon the Earth, there lived some funny
people / People who wanted to succeed. / Let's
travel with those people / See the way their
lives will go / Down upon the Earth, upon the
Earth.

We continue to hear the music and voices from the space ship as our view fades to the subjects of the lyrics.

3 EXT. - CITY OVERHEAD - DAY

KARAOKE GUYS

In a city full of hopes...

4 EXT. - TELEVISION STATION - DAY

We zoom in on a four-story red brick building fronted with a silver sign "Interesting Avenues Television".

KARAOKE GUYS

There was a TV station / Not doing so well, you
see...

5 INT - CONTROL ROOM - DAY

The camera pans across rows of monitors, showing sets, guests, audience, a middle aged Jay Leno-esque host, a show title card "WOAH! Starring The Host" and charts with slanting lines showing falling viewing figures. One monitor shows the Japanese space karaoke men singing. The TV shows look cheap. The pan ends on a tired and worried man, holding his head in his hands. He looks like a newspaper editor past his prime. His name is Wally CLIFFORD, owner of Interesting Avenues Television. Next to him are two concerned assistants, SAM and SUZIE.

KARAOKE GUYS

Not doing so well, you see / The people weren't
coming / To see what they had to say / The
accountants said "You'll have to go, have to go
away / Unless things change".

6 MONTAGE - THE HUNT FOR THE GUEST-HUNTER

Beneath the signs of various talent agencies, Clifford shakes hands with numerous candidates. It's obvious: every candidate is either too boring, stupid, or just crazy - nobody looks right.

Ads in newspapers read "Looking for person to rejuvenate TV station. Must wear socks", "WANTED: Guest-hunter. Can practice first on snakes."

KARAOKE GUYS

So the TV guys went out / Out to find their man
/ The one who would save them / From the grey
abyss of irrelevance. / They searched and
searched / And searched and searched and
searched / Until finally...

Two hands - one old, one much younger - shake.

7 INT. - TV STATION HALLWAY - DAY

Sam, carrying a thin manila file, and Suzie walk down a long hallway. Frenzied blue collar employees with ruffled hair and untucked shirts rush past in both directions, carrying papers, television sets, and cables. As the duo walk, oblivious to the chaotic surroundings, we see the following happening around them:-

A tall grim reaper, with a scythe in one hand, holds a child's hand in the other. They disappear into a room, the door closes and there is a flash of light.

Men carry a ladder that stretches across the hallway from one door to the opposite door. They keep moving and the ladder - impossibly long - keeps coming.

An opera singer silently practices in front of a bored monkey, gesticulating wildly as if she were performing. Beside her, a sign language specialist interprets.

At the side of the hallway, running lengthways down the hall, are a series of hurdles, over which jump (towards the camera) a professional athlete, a Catholic priest, a guy in a gorilla suit, and two dwarves, one of whom gives the other leg-ups over the hurdles.

SAM

Man, the fate of this whole station rests on our shoulders. From what area of Colombia did our boss get the crack that he must surely have been smoking when he handed us this cross?

SUZIE

Good crack! Not that I advocate such a thing. Ooh, this is so exciting! Yesterday I was a poor lonely camera technician, today I get to swing across ravines, dodge sniper fire, or blow up fire hydrants... anything to get the best on our station's number one production.

As Suzie says the show line, she steals a flyer for the show from a pile carried by an employee walking the opposite way.

We see a close up of the flyer: a large "WOAH! - Starring The Host" and the Host's grinning face below.

SAM

And yesterday, I was the mail guy. I don't know jack about base jumping or phone tapping. Suzie, we are screwed. My mom's gonna flip when she finds out about this. Her poor heart, her poor poor heart.

Without breaking her smile, Suzie jumps up and slaps Sam around the back of the head. He stumbles, looks dazed for a moment, then shakes his head and continues walking, undaunted.

SUZIE

(With suppressed tension)

It's going to be great, Sam.

(Merry again)

Especially now that we got this new guy heading up our guest search team. I wonder what his game is.

Sam opens the manila file.

SAM

(reading)

Mike Rockridge, ex-radio show host of Los Angeles's KCBS "CopWatch" program, where he got twenty officers fired for selling illegally imported sugar and topped the LAPD's most wanted list just because the force couldn't be quite so criminal anymore. Let's see what else... one time private investigator before his license was revoked for crashing a school bus full of ninjas into an abandoned cement factory whilst chasing some credit card fraudster. Rockridge is only known by his achievements; place of birth, family, dental records... all unknown. The reasons why he's so secretive are a closely kept secret. And nobody knows what he's been up to in the last few years.

SUZIE

Is he around here yet?

SAM

We're meant to start working together any second...

8 INT - WOAHA PRODUCTION OFFICE - DAY

Sam and Suzie turn the corner and push through a door bearing the sign "WOAHA!, Production Office" into a room, stuffed with bookshelves, piles of cables, old tape machines, and archaic televisions. They stop in front of the camera and a voice from behind our point of view speaks.

MIKE

...now.

Mike stands before them, silhouetted against the window until he walks into clear view. He wears a faded denim jacket with a large "Slow Boat to Barnet" logo on the back, similar pants, and beat up boots. There's a crazy on-the-edge look that never leaves his eyes: the world is a conspiracy, a treasure hunt, a place of intrigue.

SAM

You must be...

MIKE

Mike. I'm the guy you're going to help get this station back on top.

A tall pile of vinyl records falls over. There is a pause.

SAM

A... pleasure to meet you. I'm Sam.

SUZIE

And... I'm Suzie.

MIKE

Wonderful to meet you both. Well, we've got seven days to get the guest for the next show. Are you ready?

SUZIE

Sure...

SAM

Y-yeah.

MIKE

Well, I like coincidences. Which is coincidental because we happen to have stumbled on quite a coincidence. Some people say my radio career went down the pipe because I blew up that hospital - as if that place was in heavy use at that time anyway.

SAM

I thought it was because your ratings were...

MIKE

But the real reason is the man who's sitting in that building right now.

Mike points to the glass skyscraper dwarfing the Interesting Avenues building.

MIKE

Sly Drake. That's where Sly plots his next show, Best Guest. It's Sly who's been sapping dry this station's viewing figures. And it's Sly who's been dogging me wherever I go. My college radio show got canceled because Sly told the station that my shows were prerecorded and that I was mouthing the words in front of the mic. Ridiculous.

SAM

I thought it was because your pants were...

MIKE

Since then, I've been operating the projector at the crummiest porn theater in town. Sly even got me there: He was in one of the flicks I had to screen.

There is a pregnant pause. Mike has revealed too much. Sam and Suzie stare awkwardly at their feet. Another tall pile of vinyl records falls down.

MIKE

Well, let's go!

9 EXT. - A BUSY STREET - DAY

Mike, with Sam and Suzie on either side, walks purposefully along a busy sidewalk. They are in the downtown financial center, with suits rushing around them. In the background, a man holds aloft a sign reading "HAS ANYBODY SEEN TONY?"

MIKE

When I look into Sly's eyes I see the dull eyes of a mannequin. But let's make no mistake: Sly is up there with the television cream. The cream of the cream. The cream of the cream of the cream.

SAM

I'm with you, man, but Sly's chat show reign over this city is tight. He only has to click his fingers and the A-list guests come a-running. Organs get sold on Ebay to appear on his show.

A scolding look flashes across Suzie's face. Sam's being pessimistic again.

SUZIE

Sam!

SAM

Sorry...

MIKE

We might not have twelve million to spend on Brad Pitt or Paris Hilton but we've got good old-fashioned detective instincts. I can't stand celebrities anyway. All makeup and nothing to say. I'd never want to be famous.

Sam and Suzie look at each other doubtfully.

Now on the edge of Chinatown, they turn off the street and enter a large mall.

10 INT. - CHINESE SHOPPING MALL - DAY

The mall is dauntingly large. The team pushes through busy shoppers, past jewelry mannequins, giant containers of obscure candy and meats, and hanging lanterns.

SAM

What are we going to find here? An expose of the new women's lacy lingerie line?

MIKE

Yeah, sort of. We're here to visit an old friend of mine. Goes by the name of Cheng Mon Ching. Word on the street is that Cheng is close to finding the keeper of the Emerald Lizard.

SUZIE

The Emerald Lizard?

They walk towards a tiny old-fashioned Chinese store, crammed with small traditional religious statues of laughing men and anthropomorphic animals. As they get close, they immediately swing to the left of the store and into...

11 INT. - LINGERIE STORE - DAY

"LADIES PRIVATE UNDERGARMENTS STORE - WE PUT THE 'MODE' IN MODEST".

A much larger store, more akin to American norms.

MIKE

Ik nooit verleden van het vijfde niveau, Cheng!

(Subtitle: "Donkey brings you happy with joy!")

A small man carefully arranging black leggings looks up in surprise. A high-spirited conversation ensues, involving obviously mismatched subtitles.

CHENG

Deze ondertitels zijn echt misleidend!

("A toilet gets down from back stone steps, and is in the inner part of a left open space.")

MIKE

Ongeacht.

("It is useful to appreciate increase and physical reconditioning. Recently, attention is attracted, even with diet.")

CHENG

Ja, en de ondertiteling niet eens match up! Wat een leuke chat is dit. Nice gewoon kick terug en laat stromen.

("Yes".)

Well, well, Mr Rockridge! So, they finally lifted the ban on your entering ladies' underwear stores.

MIKE

(nervously)

Ha, ha, funny guy. Yeah... they... finally lifted it. Still trying to beat my Tetris score, Cheng?

CHENG

So close, Mike. Your thumbs will soon play second fiddle to my sharp reactions, just you wait. How have you been? Still chasing the coat tails of Mr Sly?

Mike begins to talk, although we are now listening to Sam and Suzie.

SUZIE

Who's that guy?

SAM

Haven't you been listening? He's Mike's old buddy.

SUZIE

Not that guy. Him.

Her eyes indicate a man in a black trench coat looking shifty in the crotchless lingerie section.

SAM

Looks like some embarrassed hubby getting his wife something special to spice up a standstill marriage.

SUZIE

Then what's he doing looking this way?

SAM

I dunno. Getting inspiration from our taste in... chocolate panties?!

MIKE

...But once I switched back to testosterone, the breasts went back down in about a month.

CHENG

(laughing hard)

You'll do anything to get your guests, Mike.

MIKE

Which is why I'm here. I heard you have a lead on our old macguffin.

CHENG

This isn't the place. Follow me.

They walk across the store, passing a store employee, sifting through a pile of edible underwear.

CHENG

This is my assistant, Sun-Tang.

Sun-Tang stands up and bows to the group nervously, eager to please.

MIKE

Not the Sun-Tang who won the 1998 Tetris World Championships?

SUN-TANG

Y-yes, it is I.

MIKE

Amazing! I've always wanted to meet you. Or beat you, I should say.

CHENG

Sun-Tang is my humble underling, an exchange student here to improve his English. His laziness irks me daily. You useless boy! Follow me! We have work to do.

The group follows Cheng across the store and through a plain white door at the other end.

12 INT. - STOREROOM - DAY

The group enters a small, dimly lit room. Walls are obscured by stacks of boxes, some of which have posters of ancient China attached. Lingerie hangs out of boxes and lies in piles on the floor. Playboy magazines are piled on a table in the center of the room. Cheng walks up and sweeps them onto the floor.

MIKE

Are these yours?

CHENG

(embarrassed)

Ha ha, funny guy.

Cheng looks at Sun-Tang, furious.

CHENG

Sun-Tang, what is this filth?! So, this is why my store is in ruins. You are back here with these crude images!

SUN-TANG

But master, you met my boyfriend last...

CHENG

Back to work!

Sun-Tang leaves. Cheng pulls out a photo from a drawer behind him and places it on the table. The photo is of a Chinese antiques store. A man actually holds a golden horse as he passes over cash to a store clerk.

CHENG

So, you are here for the Emerald Lizard?

The lights dim further as we close in on Cheng's narrowing eyes.

CHENG

The Emerald Lizard, created over three thousand years ago for the fearsome Chongqing Shenyang, China's most powerful warlord. Any person wielding this relic controls all others around him. But the Lizard was stolen on its way to Shenyang and has been kept hidden ever since by my family to stop it from falling into evil hands. We have only ever used the Lizard to obtain cheap grocery items.

Cheng pulls out a large photo from a box.

CHENG

This is the most recent picture I have of the Emerald Lizard, taken one week ago.

MIKE

That doesn't look like a lizard, more like a horse.

CHENG

The Lizard is hidden inside the horse. When the Lizard's keeper, a distant relative of mine, knew that the Black Hand...

SAM

The Black Hand?

CHENG

A shadowy organization which wants the Lizard for its own devious demonic aims. The Keeper knew the Black Hand was about to find him. In desperation, the Keeper sold the Lizard to this store owner, hoping that someone would return to retrieve it. Then, the Keeper disappeared and has not been seen since.

SUZIE

I bet the Black Hand caught up with him.

MIKE

That's the guy I want on my show. He'll have three thousand years worth of exclusive stories.

SUZIE

And couldn't we help him with retrieving the Lizard?

CHENG

The Lizard will lead you to the Black Hand and the Black Hand will lead you to the keeper. That is what you must do.

SUZIE

How do we know which is the right horse? There are hundreds like this in Chinatown.

Cheng points to the crotch of the horse.

CHENG

There are two here, instead of one. You'll know when you see it. But beware, there are three other decoy models out there. Only one contains the Emerald Lizard.

MIKE

Let's go.

CHENG

Wait! Mike, you narrowly lost the 1997 Tetris Championships. Maybe you'll win it next time with this.

Cheng hands Mike a book: "Tetris For Champs".

MIKE

Thanks. This'll be useful, I'm sure.

13 EXT. - CHINATOWN STREET - DAY

Mike, Sam, and Suzie stride into Chinatown, weaving between shoppers. They pass one shop window, inside which are nine televisions, stacked 3 by 3. On all nine, the mysterious Japanese businessmen sing karaoke. Mike stops abruptly and looks at the televisions, all of which suddenly switch to an opera show.

MIKE

That is so boring. I hate opera. Why would you sit watching fat Russian women scream when you could be outside, discovering the world, kicking ass?

The televisions all change to golf.

MIKE

Now I can hang with golf, as long as they let me wear sneakers on the course.

Now, the televisions all change to Sly's TV show.

MIKE

What the...? Everywhere I go. Everywhere.

SAM

So, let me give my mind something rational to chew on here. To get our guest for this week's show, we have to hunt for an Emerald Lizard which is found inside a golden horse with two shlongs?

MIKE

And we have four days to find our guest. Don't you love a challenge?

SUZIE

I have never gone into a shop asking for this before. This will be fun!

14 MULTIPLE INT. - CHINATOWN ANTIQUE STORES - DAY

A montage scene unfolds, cutting between Mike, Sam, and Suzie as they enter shops of all kinds, from saturated antiques stores of a thousand gaudy golden statues and labyrinthine bureaucratic offices to dusty bookstores and toy shops. Our heroes quiz shopkeepers, hands indicating what they are looking for, and peer closely at the undercarriage of golden horses, many of which are sold in some of the above unexpected locations. As time passes, wearied expressions indicate that the team is down on its luck.

15 EXT. - CHINATOWN PARK - DAY

The team sits on a bench in the middle of a busy park, surrounded by high rises. Around them, children play, old people stroll, and two monkeys frolic on playground equipment.

SUZIE

Maybe your source needed to do its homework better.

MIKE

In my experience, I've discovered there aren't many people you can trust. Your own nose, that's your best friend.

SUZIE

Well, at least we got to explore Chinatown.

SAM

A whole day of hunting and all I got was this lousy t-shirt.

Sam opens his jacket to reveal a t-shirt with Chinese characters on.

MIKE

What does it mean?

SAM

Lousy t-shirt.

MIKE

No, what does it mean?

SAM

That's what it means: lousy t-shirt.

The team continues to talk. As they do so, our view switches to a point of view perspective of someone hiding behind nearby bushes.

MIKE

...which explains why crabs don't vote.

The team laughs.

SUZIE

Don't turn around now but...

Mike and Sam turn around. A figure in black hiding behind a bush darts off out of view up the street.

SUZIE

You idiots! That's the guy who's been trailing us all day.

MIKE

Let's get him, come on!

SAM

Who is that guy?

MIKE

I don't know but I missed gym yesterday. This'll make up for it.

SAM

(puffing)

Man, I dropped gym in the sixth grade. I should have known I would be chasing men in black across town.

MIKE

Lack of foresight, that's your problem!

They tear after the man in black, up the street, dodging pedestrians. The man ducks down a side alley, jumping over crates. Our heroes pursue with Mike and Suzie at the front and Sam some way back. The man dives into a door and the team follow.

16 INT. - BUSY KITCHEN - DAY

Inside is a large, busy kitchen. Chefs bark orders; hissing steam fills the air; men carry armfuls of vegetables and fruit, others carry boxes of clucking chickens. The pursued and pursuers race through, knocking over boxes, spilling pots of water, flattening scurrying kitchen staff.

17 EXT. - BACK ALLEY - DAY

The team bursts from a door into another side street, all curiously burdened with kitchen stuff: Mike carrying sticks of French bread, head topped with saucepan; Sam sporting the latest line of giant spoons; Suzie holding two large red lobsters. They stop, shrug their shoulders, toss the stuff, and continue chasing.

After a few more streets, a three-wheel rickshaw overtakes the chase, the man in black jumps in, and pulls away.

SUZIE

No fair!

SAM

Dammit!

Another rickshaw overtakes the team and screeches to a halt.

MENG

Time to get even. Get in!

The team jumps in and the rickshaw wheel spins away

MIKE

And you are?

MENG

My name is Meng, son of Cheng. I've been following that man for five days. He know where the Keeper is, I hear him tell his boss.

MIKE

Well, don't let him get away. We need to catch this fish.

MENG

Don't worry, I have big rod - ha ha!

We see Meng changing gears using a manual stick-shift.

SUZIE
(To Mike)
Is this a regular day for you?

MIKE
Well, it's a little on the quiet side so far but
I'm sure it will pick up.

18 EXT. - CHINATOWN STREETS - DAY

The chase begins anew, tearing down alleys and side streets, knocking over crates and skidding around trucks. At one point, the team's rickshaw inadvertently pulls down a large cloth sheet shielding the front of a building, revealing an embarrassed naked couple behind it.

Mike grabs some rockets as the rickshaw passes a fireworks store under a large sign: "TONG'S FIREWORKS - MY BROTHER'S SHOP SUCKS". Mike lights the fireworks and they shoot at the rickshaw in front, all missing. One firework hits, and sets on fire, a sign held by a man, a sign reading "HAS ANYBODY SEEN TONY?". Another firework hits a fireworks store ahead, called "TANG'S FIREWORKS - MY BROTHER IS A LIAR". Rockets in that store are ignited and shoot off into the sky. The shop owner runs out, shouting and waving his fist as his brother emerges from the other store, doing the same back at his brother.

As the driver in front turns around and laughs evilly, the rickshaw hits a rickshaw traffic jam, knocking out the driver. In a Newton's Cradle effect, a shock wave ripples through the jam until the driver in the rickshaw at the front of the jam is propelled from his vehicle.

SUZIE
I'm no sissy but you are going to let us slow
down if this gets too hairy?

MIKE
If you give up now then they'll know they can
walk all over you next time.

SUZIE
But I love my arms; I want to hold on to them.

MIKE

And I love my reputation; I want to keep it.
Foot on the pedal, Meng, we've got a guest to
find. Man, I love a good chase!

SUZIE

What a school boy.

The man in black jumps out of the rickshaw and runs down a side alley,
pursued again by the team.

19 EXT. - DEAD-END ALLEY - DAY

MIKE

You made us work to catch up to you, mysterious
one. Suzie has damaged her left foot, Sam has
hurt his ribs, and I have sprained my groin.

MENG

Now, tell us: Who are you and where is the
Keeper? And come clean. We have ways of making
you talk.

Meng holds up a vinyl record jacket: "Beethoven does Disco".

MAN IN BLACK

The Black Hand has been searching for the
Emerald Lizard for a thousand years and now we
are one step away. At last, we will seize the
Lizard and use it to build a new empire.

MENG

The Lizard should be safe in a museum.

MIKE

One with high security and water fountains on
every floor.

MENG

Tell us where it is.

MAN IN BLACK

We are one step away from finding the Lizard.
The golden horse that houses the Lizard has
already been bought. Once we find out who the
buyer is, the game is over.

The man throws something on the ground. There is a bang and a cloud of
smoke covers him. The smoke clears and the man remains, looking bemused.
He tries again and when the smoke clears, he's gone.

MENG

So be it. For now.

MIKE

I have a feeling we'll be seeing him again.
Perhaps in climactic circumstances towards the
end of this adventure.

20 INT. - STOREROOM - NIGHT

The team, plus Meng and Sun-Tang, sits in Cheng's storeroom.

SAM

A chase for nothing! Where do we go from here.

SUZIE

Well... we do know that the Lizard's new owner
likes low fat milk.

CHENG

Low fat milk?!

SUZIE

Look at the picture again.

They review the photo of the buyer purchasing the Golden Horse.

SUZIE

He's Chinese and he's holding a carton of low
fat milk.

CHENG

Milk is like cyanide to all but a few Chinese.
And such milk is only sold at one store in
Chinatown.

MIKE

If we find someone getting milk from that store we just might be able to find who owns the golden horse.

SAM

But we could end up following the wrong guy.

MIKE

It's the only shot we've got. Time is running out. Sly won't make me look like a fool this time.

Cheng holds up a picture of a naked woman, looks at the picture, realizes he is holding the wrong piece of paper and looks at Sun-Tang, furious.

CHENG

Sun-Tang, you bring dishonor upon all living creatures.

SUN-TANG

But master, I'm gay and...

CHENG

Enough! Go attend to your toilet-cleaning duties.

Cheng hands Mike another piece of paper.

CHENG

Here's where to go. Tell the shop owner that Cheng sent you. Tell him that for the next three days, his whip is on your butts.

SAM, SUZIE, MIKE

What?!

CHENG

That's right, you're employees now. Almost like family. Redheaded stepchildren, that is!

21 INT. - TV STUDIO CONTROL ROOM - NIGHT

The Interesting Avenues TV studio control room is dimly lit and empty, save for a few monitors (one of which shows our Japanese karaoke friends) in the background. Sam and Suzie tinker, repairing some of the station's many aging technological relics. Suzie tightens bolts on a sound board whilst Sam tries vainly to reassemble a studio camera.

SAM

Remember when you and me started out in this business?

SUZIE

Yeah, I was just out of high school and you were just out of cooking school.

SAM

My first job at the station was scrubbing hand scum off these cameras.

SUZIE

And mine was fixing them. Now we're co-producers. You've worked hard, you've done well.

SAM

My mom always said I'd make her proud one day... when I became a game show presenter. Not sure about that, Mom. Yeah, we've both been through a lot over the years. But things have gotten bad recently. Less people are tuning in, we're axing staff, watering down the OJ.

SUZIE

Do you think Mike can really turn all this around?

SAM

Well, I can see why he got kicked out of his other jobs. He's crazy; he'd rather blow up a door than open it. I don't know about this guy. He'll either get us the best damn guests on Earth and take a few hostages along the way or we'll walk away with an hour of dead air and a cabinet full of lawsuits.

SUZIE

Maybe a gamble is what we need to take. I agree with you, though. I don't know about him.

SAM

Agreed.

Suzie growls as a bolt refuses to tighten.

SAM

Here, let me try.

With all his might, Sam succeeds.

SUZIE

(Smiles)

Thanks.

SAM

Anytime.

22 INT. - WOAH PRODUCTION OFFICE - NIGHT

An answerphone message plays.

ANSWERPHONE

Well well, Mr Rockridge, it's your old friend Sly here. I see you're settling into your new job, living in my shadow as usual. Perhaps you can put aside igniting Chinatown in the pursuance of crazy old men to help me with my show this week. Brad Pitt or Paris Hilton? I only have twelve million to spend. Twelve million, Rockridge! Ha ha ha!

An axe splits the phone in two.

MIKE

Sooner or later, Sly. Sooner or later...

Sam enters.

SAM

I heard a noise.

MIKE

Oh nothing.

Sam sees the phone.

MIKE

Just doing some housework.

SAM

You do realize that the odds are against us here. And if we lose, that might be the end of us and our careers. You're showing one inch of worry?

MIKE

I can't afford to. What good does that do? I've seen a lot of bad times, Sam. I never gained anything by showing a weak hand of cards.

SAM

I like your super hero persona out there, but in here it's a thin act, dude. You can be honest with me.

MIKE

I'm honest, I'm honest. Come on, let's play some darts. Don't you love throwing sharp things?

23 EXT. - CITY SCAPE - SUNRISE

The sun lifts over the city as the streets of Chinatown come to life.

24 EXT. - GROCERY STORE FRONT, CHINATOWN - DAY

Sam, Suzie, and Mike work busily outside their new employer's store, which is packed with customers. Sam and Suzie frantically bring fruits, roots, boxes of nuts, and candies out to put on the store's front stalls. Mike stands still, looking dazed and confused.

SAM

(to customer)

Thank you, sir. Sorry about the dead chicken.
You have a nice day.

Sam throws a rotten fruit over his shoulder; an alarmed chicken utters a single cluck. Sam turns to Suzie, wearied by the work.

SAM

Man, I could have been selling dog crap to people for all I know about this obscure sh-

SUZIE

Look at this giant melon. Looks like my old boss's head.

MIKE

Damn bosses. Why must I walk through life enduring authority? What's a man got to do to be free?

SAM

Freelance, dude, that's where all the independence is.

MIKE

Yeah, but then everyone's your boss. Best way is to rise to the top and then change the rules. I've been planning it for years.

SAM

Ever gonna get around to it?

The team's new boss, ZHANG, emerges from the shop, looking highly irritated and wielding a broom.

ZHANG

Zhang hear talking when Zhang want work! Work!
No talk! Work! No talk!

SAM

Hey, we work in television. What do you expect?

ZHANG

You no work in television right now! You work
for Zhang now. You Zhang's whipping boy! Get to
work, or Zhang beat your ass through all colors
of rainbow.

MIKE, SAM, SUZIE

(downbeat)

Yes, sir.

Zhang re-enters the store.

MIKE

Any low fat milk addicts, Chinatown? Come on,
come buy so I can quit this dead end gig.

SAM

Next year's Chinese new year parade is gonna
waltz by before someone buys these things.

MIKE

Well, the show is three days away, so Mr Buyer
better come clean or we'll be spending an hour
talking about marinading chickens.

SAM

I'll do whatever you say if you get off of that
goddamn wall.

25 MONTAGE - LIFE AS A CHINESE FOOD STORE WORKER

As the team struggles for two days to make the shop run. They're a shoddy outfit, dropping giant squashes, bumping into one another, shaking their heads at undecipherable texts. As we watch the days past, we see the following:-

Mike carries dozens of oranges, dropping them all on a distraught child.

Sam negotiates, without result, with a shopper, pointing from a small root to a labyrinthine, unintelligible Chinese food chart.

Suzie juggles fruits for an unimpressed old lady.

Mike and Sam sweep the shop floor with tiny brushes.

Sam unsuccessfully chases a stray cat around the store.

Everybody gets hit over the head by the boss and his large broom.

In a corner of the shop, the Japanese karaoke singers appear on a small television.

Every so often, the hand of a customer drifts near the milk section, our team's eyes widen, and then the hand instead reaches for a nearby lemon.

26 EXT. - GROCERY STORE FRONT, CHINATOWN - EVENING

Motionless and dazed, Sam sits against the wall on a large upturned bucket, clothes covered in giant exploded melon stains. The camera slowly pans out to reveal Suzie placing fruits on the shop stalls with one hand and sweeping the sidewalk with the other hand. The past two days have diminished none of her spirit.

SAM

Uhhh... have you got an off switch? Where's Mike?

A slightly delirious Mike emerges from the shop.

MIKE

I'm feeling just fine.

He positions himself next to Sam and crumples to a sitting position on the floor.

A merry Zhang emerges from the shop. The team snaps to attention, all three jumping up into a line like new army recruits.

ZHANG

Ha ha ha ha! Zhang see hard work has run your soft asses into the ground. Very good! Now, just rearrange those lychees in size order and Zhang will release you from work this day.

Zhang departs and the team lets out a sigh of relief.

MIKE

Well, it looks like "Cooking with Cured Chicken"
is our show's name this week.

SAM

And all we needed was someone to buy one bottle
of...

LOW FAT MILK GUY

Low fat milk.

SAM

Exactly.

LOW FAT MILK GUY

Exactly what?

SAM

Exactly... what?

The team turns around. A very small, serious man dressed in dark chinos and a leather jacket peers up at them. They stare at the man in disbelief.

LOW FAT MILK GUY

This is the part where you give me the milk and
I give you one dollar and forty five cents.

MIKE

Oh sure.

The exchange occurs and the man leaves.

MIKE

(Whispers)

Now, Suzie, fetch!

27 EXT. - CHINATOWN STREETS - EVENING

The man walks off and Suzie, in stealth mode, follows, fifteen feet behind. She tiptoes, ducks behind crates, presses up against doorways, jumps behind lamp posts, and freezes in tiger pose. Every so often, a random sound (an explosion, a girl's scream, then a cow moo) causes the man to turn around as Suzie dives for cover. On each occasion, the source of the sound is surprising (respectively: a flat screen television shop demonstration, an over-excited girl receiving a large wooden bear ornament from her grandfather, and a cow standing ominously in the middle of the street).

The man continues weaving through the busy sidewalk (past a man holding above his head a somewhat charred sign, reading "HAS ANYBODY SEEN TONY?". A bird squawk is heard and a large bird mess lands on the sign) until he enters a posh-looking doorway. Suzie waits, then follows inside.

28 INT. - STAIRWAY - EVENING

Suzie tiptoes up the stairs. At various intervals up what turns out to be an unusually long flight of stairs, she stops to examine signs, which read, in order:

"NO STAIRWAY TO HEAVEN HERE. WE'RE CHINESE, WE DON'T BELIEVE IN HEAVEN"

"IF YOU'RE READING THIS SIGN, YOU AREN'T TIRED ENOUGH"

"THERE IS ONE STAIR HERE FOR EVERY DAY THE LEGENDARY WARRIOR TSUNG SZU LIVED. MANY SAY HE LIVED FOR THREE HUNDRED YEARS"

"...BUT WE THINK HE LIVED FOR JUST ONE HUNDRED"

Suzie breathes a sign of relief, looks away from the sign and finds herself at the top of the stairs, staring into a similarly posh door to earlier. She cautiously opens the door and peeks inside.

29 INT. - ELABORATE TEMPLE - EVENING

The temple is a sight: detail-rich in every inch. This large silent room is jammed with multitudes of red flags and tassels, large black pots, elaborately carved wooden altars, yellow lanterns, countless smiling idols. Suzie's attention swings to one wall where many golden animals sit on rows of shelves.

Looking both ways, she enters the room and tiptoes to the display. Now obvious is the fact that every golden animal has some abnormality: an elephant with two trunks, a giraffe with an overly long neck, a panda with the buttocks of a human. Suzie looks, and there it is: the golden horse with two shlongs. Looking to see that she can make a swift exit, she delicately lifts up the horse and turns around.

To Suzie's shock, her nose is now touching the end of a sharpened spear. As her eyes travel across the room, ten or more fully clad traditionally-dressed warriors are revealed, all pointing spears Suzie's way. Standing in the middle of the group is the man who her followed here.

LOW FAT MILK GUY

The woman from the badly run store! You think you can supplement your meager earnings by pawning my beautiful horse, do you?

SUZIE

No, no, I hate profits. Can't stand them.

LOW FAT MILK GUY

Then explain your presence. Why did you follow me back here? Your cheekiness is not the only sin for which you will be punished. My father punished me harshly when I was a boy. Because I was never able to have children, I will pass his exquisite punishments on to you!

SUZIE

Wait! I... heard you loaned out your wonderful disfigured animals to fans. I thought I could borrow... well, maybe just take, this one.

LOW FAT MILK GUY

You want to walk out of here with my new pretty animal, do you? Not so fast!

SUZIE

Okay...

Nervously, Suzie slowly works her way through the crowd, holding the golden horse, avoiding any physical contact. The room is dead silent.

LOW FAT MILK GUY

Stop her!

The warriors turn their spears back on Suzie. She freezes, surrounded.

LOW FAT MILK GUY

You are clever but I am armed, just like my father. Guards, seize my toy.

One of the guards, the only one masked, seizes the horse.

LOW FAT MILK GUY

For over forty years has Ang's Mutant Animal Collection grown in size and repute across the world. Many have tried to plunder it; just one succeeded. Me! That's why I'm curator now. But you won't have such luck. You won't be leaving by the stairs - try that window over there! Ha ha ha! My horse is staying right...

He looks to his right where the guard holding the horse stood ten seconds ago. The guard and horse are nowhere to be found.

LOW FAT MILK GUY

WHERE IS MY HORSE?!!

30 INT. - STAIRWAY - EVENING

Two warriors, one holding the golden horse, race down the stairs at a dangerous speed. With their masks pulled away, we now see the warriors were actually Mike and Sam in disguise.

SAM

Woo hoo!!

MIKE

Just keep going! Or they're gonna make sieves out of our asses!

Looking back up the stairs, we see the remaining warriors, loud grunts ringing through the air, give chase.

31 EXT. - CHINATOWN STREETS - NIGHT

As Mike and Sam flee the building, Meng pulls up in his rickshaw. Mike and Sam jump on and the rickshaw races off. We look back and see the warriors continue running and then slow down and stop, defeated.

MIKE, SAM

Yeeeeaaaahhh!!

SAM

Hey Mike, but what about Suzie?

MIKE

I'm sure she's looking after herself.

32 EXT. - BACK OF BUILDING - NIGHT

Back in the temple, Suzie climbs out of the back window onto a walkway on the top level of the scaffolding that covers the back of the building. She runs to a refuse chute, pauses as if she were a swimmer just about to dive into a pool, squeezes her nose, shuts her eyes, and jumps down the chute. The fall is loud and messy but Suzie emerges, in a cloud of dust, from the chute into a large refuse container. Her head pokes up from the waste and she sneezes.

33 INT. - STOREROOM - NIGHT

Cheng, Sun-Tang, Mike, Sam, and a band-aided-up Suzie stand in awe around the Emerald Lizard, situated in the middle of Cheng's storeroom, alongside the golden horse, now split in two. All lights are down, apart from one spotlight upon the Lizard, the ultimate MacGuffin.

CHENG

The Emerald Lizard. At last. The ultimate MacGuffin! Warlord Shenyang's evil legacy, the mystic relic of the east, the key to magic power beyond that any man has ever wielded. A hundred thousand died defending it and a hundred thousand devoted their lives to finding it.

MIKE

That makes two hundred thousand. Phew.

SAM

It's... the ultimate stocking present. Santa would be proud.

MIKE

Cheng, this relic is only half of what we need. Without its ultimate keeper, the secrets of the Lizard remain beyond us. We have one day before the show. Where is the Keeper?

CHENG

You must face the Black Hand and negotiate for the Keeper's release. What Kung Fu belts do you guys hold?

MIKE

Kung Fu?

SAM

Kung who?

CHENG

Then it looks like we have this evening to turn you into warriors. Come with me. Sun-Tang, go wash my new hybrid electric rickshaw. Stupid boy!

34 INT. - DOJO - NIGHT

Cheng turns the team into Kung Fu stars over the course of one montage. We see the team punching and kicking bags, often missing; shadow punching one another and accidentally knocking out each other; following Cheng's dance routine; taking a written exam; hand chopping polystyrene, newspapers, and wood; adopting animal postures when Cheng points to pictures; fighting one another with far greater skill than before; and stuffing themselves with chips and cookies.

CHENG

Now you must face... the Black Hand. The odds are against you but your careers are at stake. I wish you luck. Now go rest, you must be energized, ready for tomorrow.

35 EXT. - STREET - NIGHT

Mike walks through a rough part of town. Strange folk, the kind you'd expect to see out on the streets at this time, fade in and out of the darkness as he walks. Wind swirls the air around, blowing trash across the sidewalk. He stops outside a corner store and enters.

36 INT. - CORNER STORE - NIGHT

Mike ambles down an aisle, killing time. He stops at the magazine stand and picks up a few celebrity magazines. He dwells on a magazine with the cover headline "Why I Don't Want Fame Anymore". He smiles and puts it down. Next to the magazine section is a small stationery selection, including a plastic jar of glitter. Mike picks up the jar and pays at the counter. He walks outside.

37 EXT. - STREET - NIGHT

Mike stands outside the shop, hair blown about by the wind. He smiles, unscrews the lid of the glitter jar, and shakes it, unleashing all the glitter into the air, swirling and catching the light of the street lamp in an impressive display. He stands for a few moments gazing into the sparkling cloud and then continues walking.

Fade to...

38 INT. - STUDIO CONTROL ROOM - NIGHT

Amidst piles of electronic junk, circuit boards, and wires, Suzie stands, frustrated, trying to fix an old studio camera with twists of screws, pulling of wires, and frowns. She looks up and sighs; worry upon her face.

Fade to...

39 INT. - SAM'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Wearing a flowery apron, Sam brushes the surfaces of his living room with a colorful feather duster. As he attends to a brown wooden cabinet, he passes various framed pictures of him grinning, standing next to individuals, such as OJ Simpson, Che Guevara, a guy looking like Jesus, and himself (with a "CLONEWORLD" sign in the background). The last picture is in a "MOM" frame; Sam stops to look nostalgically at this picture of a younger him and his mother.

Fade out...

40 EXT. - CHINATOWN STREET - MORNING

The streets of Chinatown are already bustling. Shoppers pack sidewalks, flock to shop stalls, and gather to chat. Amongst the ordinary, we observe the following: Two school children desperately trying to wrest from the other a large sheet of bubble wrap (with the subtitles "Give me that bubble wrap", "You cannot have this bubble wrap, it is mine!"); four Irish dancers, dressed in traditional garb, dancing a merry jig to jolly Irish music; and a man holding above his head a charred and bird-messed sign, reading "HAS ANYBODY SEEN TONY?". It begins to rain and the ink on the sign starts to run, to its holder's dismay.

Moving slowly through the downpour and street chaos is a rickshaw: Mike driving, with Sam and Suzie holding on.

SAM

How does Cheng think we're gonna find the Black
Hand just by driving around Chinatown with this?

He holds up a loudspeaker.

SUZIE

Sam!

SAM

Okay, okay, I'll be optimistic this time, I
swear.

Suzie holds in front of Sam, for him to read, a book entitled "SO, YOU
THINK YOU CAN SPEAK CHINESE?" An anxious Sam sighs and then starts to
read awkward sounding Mandarin from the book into the loudspeaker.

Subtitles:

"YOU CHOP CARROTS LOVELY"

"WE HAS BURGER DONE ON WALLS TO ENJOY MARRIAGE"

"OCCASIONAL TWINKY SUPPORT REQUIRED FOR SHORT TERM VACANCY"

"HAND BLACK US CHALLENGE DUEL NOW"

"EMERALD LIZARD VERY NICE NOW ON OUR BREASTS"

Suddenly, a loud wheel spin screech and tinny motors are heard and four
rickshaws appear behind our heroes. Sam speaks once more:

"DUEL QUITE NICE NOW. US JOIN AT PLACE OF FISTICUFFS"

The five rickshaws speed off down the street.

41 EXT. - STONE-COBbled PLATEAU HIGH ABOVE SEA LEVEL - EVENING

The five rickshaws drive onto a plateau (whose entrance is a large neon
sign, reading "PLACE OF FISTICUFFS"), a place that obviously couldn't be
anywhere near Chinatown. The sun sets over a vast green landscape beyond.
As our heroes slow down in the center, surrounded by the other four
vehicles, the rickshaw's gas runs out and they splutter to a halt.

Mike, Sam, and Suzie emerge and stand together in melodramatic warrior stances, ready for action. Before them, eight ninja goons with traditional black warrior garb adopt similarly ridiculous poses.

VOICE

Well, well, well. This will be interesting.
Finally the truth is out.

A hooded figure steps forward and reveals himself...

MIKE, SAM, SUZIE

Sun-Tang!

SUN-TANG

At last, we face one another, fair and/or square. I have waited almost a whole week for this moment.

MIKE

How could you betray your master and turn to the Black Hand?

SAM

Yeah, you suck. Cheng would whup your ass if he was here now.

SUN-TANG

Cheng? Ha ha ha! That cocky old man's time has also come. After I dispense with you, I will take some rusty scissors to his balls. Maybe then we won't find Playboys around his store anymore. But first... (re his accomplices) come my friends!

MIKE

Where is the keeper of the Emerald Lizard?

A goon walks in from off-camera, holding a handcuffed man, elderly with a long wispy white goatee and traditional Chinese clothing.

SUN-TANG

You will never have the Keeper. He is mine and when he dies so will the last of those who have protected the Emerald Lizard for a thousand years. Now it is time to fight. Come, my accomplices!

The second accomplice steps forward and reveals himself to be...

MIKE, SAM, SUZIE

The man in black!

MAN IN BLACK

Haa haa haaa...

The third accomplice steps forward and, one by one, so do the other five goons. Each time one steps forward and reveals himself, the team gasps at his identity, and a flashback from earlier in the episode reminds us of when the team last saw that individual. The accomplices are revealed to be, in order:

MIKE

The chef who was boiling that lobster in the restaurant we ran through!

SAM

The owner of that fireworks shop!

SUZIE

Our boss from the grocery store!

MIKE

The low fat milk guy!

SAM

That young lover! [Uncovered with his partner during the rickshaw chase with the Man in Black]

SUZIE

David Hasselhoff's stunt double!

Cue flashback to Bay Watch episode.

The introductions are over and the fighters ready themselves. Over on the enemy side, ninjas stretch legs, do star jumps and twists, and perform other warming up routines reminiscent of a workout video. On the heroes' side, teeth are brushed, final postcards are written, and magazine subscriptions are canceled by cellphone.

SUN-TANG

Now it is time! Prepare yourselves!

Wide-eyed and open-mouthed, the enemies begin a roar that continues to rise in pitch and tone. The camera cuts to the heroes who roar similarly. We then cut between the two sides as the roars continue to rise and rise to impossibly high-pitched levels. Finally, both teams rush for the center and the battle begins.

MONTAGE:

Mike and Sun-Tang trade blows. Mike seems impossibly out-paced with his simplistic maneuvers, but when the camera cuts to a view that obscures his face (thus facilitating a stunt double with an exposed six-pack stomach far too muscular to be Mike's), his skills are suddenly those of an advanced Kung Fu legend, performing high jumps, advanced blocks, and spins through the air.

Suzie and the chef (still wearing his chef's hat) take turns ducking as the other punches at head height and jumping as the other performs a low kick. This repetitious routine, reminiscent of a choreographed routine you'd see in a Karate school, continues for ten or more revolutions.

Sam runs around, unwittingly avoiding baseballs thrown from numerous fighters that keep hitting other enemies in the balls. As the camera moves, fallen fighters off screen somehow are instantly on their feet to be hit again in the balls by more baseballs.

Two ninjas fight one another before realizing that they have become over excited and have forgotten their real enemies.

With all haste and no speed, Mike hot-steps around as ninjas surrounding him perform elaborate moves such as impossibly high jumps and flips, none of which actually connect with our hero.

A ninja holds an old-fashioned circle-dial telephone as Sam uses the handset to beat another enemy.

Suzie and an enemy stand on top of adjacent rickshaws, jumping from one rickshaw to the other. As their flight paths cross, they take it in turn to slap each other hard in the face.

Mike and another ninja slap one another repeatedly in the face.

Sam and another ninja also slap one another repeatedly in the face.

Finally, all three heroes are bunched together, back to back, Kung Fu chopping for their lives.

SUZIE

This doesn't look good!

SAM

The word you're looking for is "bad"!

MIKE

If we die, and we probably will, then we'll die screaming like unwilling children before an egg and spoon race!

SUN-TANG

The battle is almost won. Surrender now and save what little honor you have left.

CHENG (O.S.)

Not so fast!

Everybody continues fighting, but at half the speed.

CHENG (O.S.)

Now stop!

The fighting stops. Cheng and four other fighters step forward into the arena. Everybody pauses.

CHENG

You haven't won yet, my traitorous underling.

SUN-TANG

Cheng! How did you know?!

CHENG

I knew that exchange program they brought you here on was phony. There is no Lacy Underwear Workers' Union. I smelled something fishy - and it wasn't the underwear.

SUN-TANG

Never mind. Soon the Emerald Lizard will be in the hands of the... Black Hand, and we will have all the power. And you: none!

CHENG

Not if my friends have anything to do with proving you wrong.

As before with the revealing of the enemy fighters, the four new good guys step forward, with Mike, Sam, and Suzie excitedly announcing their identities. They are, in order:

MIKE

The guy who was frying the shrimp next to the cook who boiled the lobster!

SAM

The other fireworks store owner!

SUZIE

Some guy!

It is the "Where is Tony" guy that nobody recognizes. He steps forward and tosses his sign off screen.

WHERE IS TONY GUY

(desperate)

Where... is... Tony?

MIKE

Meng!

SAM

At last, a guest who isn't a surprise. Nice to have you, Meng.

CHENG

Now the cards are evenly stacked.

GUY WHO WAS FRYING THE SHRIMP NEXT TO THE COOK WHO
BOILED THE LOBSTER

And it's time to deal.

MAN

We're keeping our cards close to our chest.

MENG

And trust me, we're not all hearts.

WHERE IS TONY GUY

Where is Tony?

CHENG

Now fight!

We instantly cut back to the busy battle but now with the five new entrants. As before, shots of Kung Fu fighting are interspersed with...

MONTAGE:

The chef who boiled the lobster and the cook who fried the shrimp take alternate moves. Every time, the chef swings a large wok and misses, and the cook slaps him around the face with a very small pan.

The young lover hops along chalk-drawn hopscotch squares. On the final square, he leaps up and delivers a high kick to Meng, who is sent reeling.

The two fireworks store owners vie for dominance, sword-fighting with sparklers. They then jump back and take pot shots with poorly aimed firework rockets.

Cheng and Sun-Tang stand opposite one another, frozen in ninja stances and locked in a roar. We occasionally cut back to this pair and see this spectacular build-up not actually going anywhere.

Suddenly, a whistle blows. The fighters are now sitting around Parisian-style cafe tables, with classical music in the air, identifying bird species, debating Mozart symphonies, and analyzing economic trends. A whistle blows and we are suddenly back in the action.

At one point, Mike and Sam fight back to back. Sam sees a large bloody gash on Mike's arm.

SAM

Man, you're cut up pretty bad.

MIKE

No, I'm not.

SAM

No use trying to hide the pain, Mike. That thing
is ten inches long.

MIKE

Seven inches. And it doesn't hurt.
(Whispers)
Never let them see your pain.

Finally, all combatants, except Mike, Cheng, Sun-Tang, and the Man in Black, line up on their respective sides. They charge, leap into the air, feet first, ready for the decisive kick. Both sides strike the other and everybody falls to the floor, winded and groaning, forming a path through the middle. Mike and Cheng at one end, and Sun-Tang and the Man in Black at the other, walk to face each other in the middle.

CHENG

Kudos to you, Sun-Tang, your accomplices have
perfectly matched our own.

SUN-TANG

I can see you have trained your team hard,
Cheng. Their skills have advanced considerably.

CHENG

And the manner of your fighters' attacks had all
the grace of a matinée performance of Swan Lake.

SUN-TANG

Your men wore fine garments, worthy of guests
attending a charity gala in aid of abused
kittens.

MIKE

Yeah, y-you guys... kicked ass!

Cheng and Sun-Tang give nonplussed looks.

CHENG

It is obvious that the fate of the Emerald Lizard cannot be decided by fisticuffs. Instead, we must resort to the last straw, the choice all warriors must make in a stalemate situation.

SUN-TANG

Yes! It is time to begin the ultimate contest, one that will separate the wheat from the chaff. This is the true diviner of winner and loser. Who do you nominate as your block-dropper?

CHENG

Hmmm...

For a few moments, Cheng strokes his chin in careful contemplation.

CHENG

(To Mike)

It is time to admit the truth. He's the true expert.

(To Sun-Tang)

I choose... Mike.

MIKE

Choose me for what?

SUN-TANG

Very well. I choose... Me!

MIKE

Choose you for what?

SUN-TANG

To the helicopters!

MIKE

To go where?!

42 EXT. - THE SKY ABOVE SAN FRANCISCO - NIGHT

High above the city lights of San Francisco, two helicopters, both with their side doors open, sail side by side across the night sky. In one, sitting with their legs dangling out, are Mike, Sam, and Suzie. Cheng sits behind them and the "Where is Tony" guy pilots. In the other, sitting similarly, are Sun-Tang, the Man in Black, and the Low Fat Milk guy. The chef pilots.

43 INT. - GOOD GUYS' HELICOPTER - NIGHT

MIKE

I'm usually good under pressure but there's something about this time that gives me the jumps.

SAM

Is it because your legs are dangling out of a helicopter and you're not wearing a harness?

MIKE

Well, it's not like I haven't done plenty of things like this in the past. You haven't known life until you've been chased naked through the streets of Rome by five bulls and a gun-toting Catholic bishop.

SUZIE

That really happened?

SAM

Do you always settle important disputes by Tetris?

CHENG

Only the really important ones.

MIKE

I appreciate your confidence in me, Cheng, but Sun-Tang was the Tetris World Champion for ten years.

SUZIE

Why did he stop?

MIKE

Nobody knows. But he's a legend. There's no point in trying to defeat him.

CHENG

Think, Mike. You tracked down the Man in Black, you found the Emerald Lizard, after one night of training you matched Sun-Tang's finest warriors. This victory can be within your reach too, if you believe it can be so. Do you believe?

MIKE

I believe.

CHENG

Do you believe?!

MIKE

I believe.

CHENG

DO YOU BELIEVE?!

MIKE

I BELIEVE! Oh, I don't know. It's so futile.

A Eureka moment hits Mike.

MIKE

Wait a minute.

Mike pulls out a book from his back pocket: "Tetris for Champs".

MIKE

I knew this would come in handy sooner or later. Turned out to be sooner. Now there's a chance.

CHENG

You have ten minutes to study before we reach our destination.

44 INT. - BAD GUYS' HELICOPTER - NIGHT

LOW FAT MILK GUY

Do you always settle your fights by Tetris?

MAN IN BLACK

Only the really dumb ones.

Sun-Tang is hidden behind a familiar book: Tetris for Champs.

SUN-TANG

Maybe I'm the best, maybe I'm still the best of the best, but I'm rusty. I haven't played for over fifteen years.

LOW FAT MILK GUY

Why did you stop?

SUN-TANG

Ten years ago, my father was killed when a pile of bricks fell on his head, just like in the game I had devoted my life to. I never played Tetris again.

MAN IN BLACK

Now you must play as if that were yesterday.

(To pilot)

Activate the game!

45 EXT. - THE SKY ABOVE SAN FRANCISCO - NIGHT

A bright beam of light pours down from the front of the bad guys' helicopter, projecting a huge Tetris grid (to be used by their team) onto a tall building nearby. The good guys' helicopter projects their own Tetris board onto the adjoining building.

MAN IN BLACK

(Into a megaphone, to Mike)

Now the game begins. Classic Tetris rules. The first team's grid to fill up with falling bricks loses. Are you ready?

Holding a joystick, Mike raises a thumbs-up.

MAN IN BLACK

Let the game begin!

The final battle begins. As both nemeses waggle their joysticks furiously, giant blocks fall down, exploding when either contestant clears a line. Both take turns in almost letting their grids fill before bouncing back and unleashing a torrent of blocks upon their opponent. Eventually, Mike, whose grid is almost full, unleashes a comeback and repeatedly hammers Sun-Tang until victory arrives. The good guys cheer.

SUZIE

You did it!

46 EXT. - BUILDING TOP - NIGHT

The two helicopters sit on top of a building. The two sides face off.

SUN-TANG

You win, Cheng. The Emerald Lizard and the Keeper are yours.

The Keeper is released and crosses over to the good guys.

CHENG

If nothing else, you are a man of honor, Sun-Tang. I am glad you will keep your word.

SUN-TANG

You play a good game, Mr Rockridge. You might want to enter a tournament one day.

MIKE

Thanks, but I'm sticking around here for the meantime. I'm a big frog in a little pond. I like that.

CHENG

And what is your wish, oh Keeper? Will you appear on Mike's show and will you release yourself and your clan from the curse of the Emerald Lizard and let the Museum with its highly functional drinking water fountains keep the Lizard safe from this day on?

KEEPER

I devoted my whole life to keeping the Emerald Lizard hidden from evil hands, and from everybody else too. Perhaps it is time that the public looks after this priceless jewel. I would welcome the peace. Therefore, I will hand over the Lizard to the Museum and its wonderful drinking fountains. And yes, I will tell all on...

47 INT. - VISION TELEVISION STUDIOS - DAY

The studio is all set, the audience applauds, the music plays, and the lights twirl as the show is ready to begin.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

Welcome to WOAH!, starring me, The Host. The show that burrows beneath the surface and extracts the richest veins of truth from the mines that the other shows fail to find. And tonight, your host is... The Host!

The applause gets louder and we look out towards the audience from the stage as The Host walks out.

THE HOST

Thank you! Thank you! Yeah! Great! Over the top! Too much!

The applause dies down.

THE HOST

What an audience we have tonight. Have you all been drinking? Well, you have five seconds to sober up because tonight, behold...

Dry ice shoot up on the left side of the stage. Dramatic music plays and a four-foot column rises from the smoke. On top of the column sits the Emerald Lizard. As the host continues, we cut to still images that illustrate the story.

THE HOST

(Gravely)

...The Emerald Lizard, an ancient weapon of control, created by a Chinese warlord. For three thousand years, the ancestors of our special guest today have protected this ancient relic from falling into sinister hands. But now that secret battle is over as the Emerald Lizard has been brought into the open by our guest. Ladies and gentlemen, please welcome... The Keeper!

The audience cheers. The red guest curtains part, dry ice billows out and The Keeper emerges, looking peaceful, revitalized and fresh in a long white gown. The Keeper and the Host shake hands.

THE HOST

Welcome, o Keeper. We are honored to share your presence.

With a warm smile of a man finally without his burden, the Keeper bows.

We cut to a montage revealing snippets of the interview, both guest and host sitting in Jay Leno-esque interview set up.

THE HOST

Well, o Keeper, you've had quite a ride.

THE KEEPER

(Cheerily)

Yes, I have. A bumpier ride than on an angry camel with a tax debt. Ha ha ha!

THE HOST

Take us back to the beginning of this stunning story.

THE KEEPER

(Suddenly most grave, looking into the slow
zoom-in camera)

Three thousand years ago, there lived a fearsome
warlord, Chongqing Shenyang, a powerful ruler
who kept most of China in the grip of his evil
tyranny with brutal armies and harsh decrees.
His generals would hang unbelievers in village
squares, chase dissenters into rivers, harass
families of troublemakers...

CUT TO (so as to imply a long tiresome list):

THE KEEPER

...prevent water access to critics...

CUT TO:

THE KEEPER

...poison the animals of secularists...

CUT TO:

THE KEEPER

...confiscate the beds of academics...

CUT TO:

THE KEEPER

Fearing a peasant uprising, Chongqing assembled
the greatest magician of the land to create a
mysterious tool, the Emerald Lizard, with which
he could control the minds of the people. But my
family, a brave warrior clan, saw the Lizard's
dangerous power and hid it away in secret places
for three thousand years. My family had
descended from Mei Tsung, who was the son of
Maya Lin, who was the son of Xu Wei, who was the
son of...

CUT TO:

THE KEEPER
...who was the nephew of Yip Man...

CUT TO:

THE KEEPER
...who had played cards with the wife of Zhang
Zhong...

CUT TO:

THE KEEPER
...taken some livestock from Moy Lin-Shin...

CUT TO:

THE HOST
Does this precious relic really have magic
powers?

THE KEEPER
Yes, it does. The Emerald Lizard is surrounded
by a field of energy that encircles the holder
of the Lizard and does his will. Even the
strongest who wield this power for but a second
will fall into a lust for more. They will become
terrible. Terrible!

THE HOST
And now, o Keeper, the game's finally over?

THE KEEPER
Yes, it is time. I hereby bestow the Emerald
Lizard unto the Museum, in the trust that the
Museum's high security standards and adequate
drinking fountains will keep the Lizard safe
from harm.

THE HOST
Are you concerned about the recent theft from
the Museum of two priceless silk wall hangings?

THE KEEPER

Wall hangings? What do I care about wall hangings? Ha ha ha ha!

The Host, Keeper, and audience laughs as we fade out.

FADE TO:

THE HOST

Well, that was one hell of a show. Thank you to the Keeper and see you all next time!

The audience applauds as we fade out.

48 EXT. - A BUSY STREET - DAY

Mike, flanked by Sam and Suzie, walks down San Francisco's Market Street, content at a job well done. The sidewalk is packed with suits, bums, and... amidst the scene, two men hug passionately, weeping for joy. One holds a sign: "HAS ANYBODY SEEN TONY?"

SAM

That was a great show, man. I mean, he did go on a bit but it was all good from where I was sitting.

SUZIE

And what about the ratings?

MIKE

Oh, people loved the show. 'A' pluses all round.

SUZIE

I meant the viewing ratings. How many people saw the show?

MIKE

(Sighs)

You really want to know? Sly trounced us. Double our figures.

Jaws drop.

SAM

Double? Oh man! After everything we went through.

MIKE

Wait up. So Sly doubled our scores but the best we ever did before was a quarter of what he gets. We doubled our own previous best. This is a great day. But I hear our budget is mighty low and it shows with that flimsy set.

SUZIE

You should celebrate what you've got!

MIKE

You know, maybe you're right. I've enjoyed working with you kids. You're not so stiff like I thought you were. Nothing like a couple of near death encounters to bond the team. I reckon things are going to get even more dangerous and our guests even more interesting.

SAM

And you're not such a bad boss. Thing is, can you pull it off again for next week's show?

SUZIE

We're on the way up.

MIKE

That's right. Up up up...

As Mike repeats the word, the camera tilts to the sky and we fade to...

49 EXT. - SPACE - DAY/NIGHT

A familiar space ship drifts just above Earth's outer atmosphere. We zoom in and see the Japanese businessmen are still singing.

50 INT. - SPACE SHIP - DAY/NIGHT

We return inside the space ship.

KARAOKE GUYS

"At last they got their man / And everything was
fine for now / Down there in the city of lost
dreams / When hope never sleeps. / But they were
only just beginning / You see there was a...

The singing is interrupted by an explosion, blowing a hole in one of the walls. Smoke and light pours through the hole and three silhouettes form: tall humanoid characters. Their shadows grow, covering the businessmen, who are cowering on the floor.

FADE OUT.