

MONKEY MAGIC

written by

Hugo O'Connor

based on the novel "The Journey to the West" by Wu Cheng'en

SUPER: MONKEY MAGIC

DARKNESS...

WU (V.O.)
In the beginning there was
darkness. Primal Chaos ruled...

EXT. PRIMAL CHAOS - DAY

A volcano erupts.

Lava flows into the ocean.

WU (V.O.)
Heaven and Earth were obscure, and
all things indistinct.

Winds lash a giant wave.

WU (V.O.) (CONT'D)
It was not until the Great Pangu
broke the mess apart that the
clearing began.

EXT. SPACE - DAY

The big bang gives birth to the universe...

WU (V.O.)
It was at this point, the firmament
first acquired its foundation.

The Earth forms from stardust.

WU (V.O.) (CONT'D)
With another five thousand years
the light rose up to form the sun,
the moon, the stars, and the
Heavenly bodies.

A milky way of stars shift into focus from a gassy nebula.

EXT. THE SUN - DAY

Solar flares leap from the surface of the sun.

WU (V.O.)
Then the sky began to harden and
Earth became solidified.

EXT. THE EARTH - DAY

The Earth looks much greener now with four large continents, not the continents we know today.

EXT. WILDERNESS - DAY

A river runs through a wild forest.

Smoke drifts across, revealing a FIRE.

WU (V.O.)

Then came the five elements of
Water, Fire, Mountain, Stone and
Earth.

Further up river is a large mountain. Day fades to night.

WU (V.O.) (CONT'D)

In these five thousand years, the
aura of Heaven descended and the
aura of Earth rose up. All things
began to grow.

IMAGE: Flowers blossoming in slow motion.

WU (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Heaven and Earth were bright and
fair as the Yin mixed with the
Yang. In another five thousand
years, humans, beasts and fowls
came into being, and thus the three
forces of Heaven, Earth, and Man
were established.

CAVEMEN hunt wild boars. Chasing them.

EXT. THE FLOWER-FRUIT MOUNTAIN - DAY

A picturesque mountain top.

WU (V.O.)

It was on the mountain of Flower
and Fruit, that the seeds of Heaven
and Earth, the essences of the Sun
and the Moon all worked upon a
certain rock as old as creation.

Lightning strikes the rock.

WU (V.O.) (CONT'D)

And it became magically fertile.

The rock tumbles down the mountain.

It hatches.

WU (V.O.) (CONT'D)
From it, then came a stone Monkey.

The Stone Monkey jumps out from the rock-egg, flailing its arms.

EXT. THE JADE PALACE OF HEAVEN - DAY

THE BENEVOLENT SAGE is disturbed --

the glint cast by the stone monkey's eyes, shines brightly.

WU (V.O.)
Heaven was momentarily disturbed
when the glint in the monkey's eyes
cast a golden beam so bright it
nearly blinded the Great Benevolent
Sage.

INT. THE WATER-CURTAIN CAVE - DAY

The Stone Monkey is now the Monkey King, and is gathered at a banquet with his MONKEY FOLLOWERS.

Over the course of the meal, he becomes melancholy.

WU (V.O.)
We could say many things about this
stone monkey, who would become the
Handsome Monkey King and enjoy many
banquets, but the story really
begins with a monkey troubled at
his own impermanence...

MONKEY KING
Do I really have to die? And what
is the point of it all! If we die,
shall we not have lived in vain!

AN OLD MONKEY rises up from the crowd.

OLD MONKEY
The Great King is farsighted! It
may well indicate the sprouting of
his religious inclination. There
are, among all the living
creatures, only three species not
subject to Yama, the King of the
Underworld.

MONKEY KING
Tell me! I want to know!

OLD MONKEY

They are the Buddhas, the
immortals, and the holy sages.
These three alone can avoid the
turning of the Big Wheel, and the
process of birth and destruction.

MONKEY KING

Where do they live? I want to meet
them and learn their secrets.

OLD MONKEY

They dwell within ancient caves on
immortal mountains.

EXT. BEACH - DAY

The Monkey King sets sail on a makeshift raft. The monkeys
gather around to send him off.

WU (V.O.)

And so the Handsome Monkey King
prepared to travel to the ends of
the Earth to find these three kinds
of people in order to learn the
secrets of immortality.

EXT. SEA - NIGHT

The ocean heaves, crashing down on the Monkey King.

MONKEY KING

Is that the best you can do!

EXT. BEACH - DAY

The Monkey King finds human clothing on the beach.

WU (V.O.)

Washing ashore many miles from
home, the monkey took up the guise
of a human...

EXT. MARKETPLACE - DAY

The Monkey King walks through a bustling crowd.

WU (V.O.)

... imitating human speech and
human manners in the marketplaces.
He was bent on finding the way of
the Buddhas, immortals and holy
sages.

(MORE)

WU (V.O.) (CONT'D)
He saw however that the people of
this world were all seekers of fame
and fortune.

MONKEY KING
When will end this quest for
fortune and fame?

Monkey walks past a neighing mule.

MONKEY KING (CONT'D)
Riding on mules they long for noble
steeds. Now prime ministers, they
hope to be kings.

A POLITICIAN has gathered a crowd and is talking. Monkey
continues through the marketplace.

MONKEY KING (CONT'D)
For food and jewels they suffer
stress and strain. Seeking wealth
and fame and power to give to sons
of sons. Do they not fear Yama?!

EXT. ROADWAY - DAY

The Monkey King walks along the road.

WU (V.O.)
For many years he roamed the land,
searching for the way of
immortality, but he had no chance
of meeting it.

EXT. BEACH - DAY

The Monkey King looks out across the ocean. He drags a raft
into the sea.

WU (V.O.)
And then he came upon the Great
Western Ocean and thought certain
immortals would live beyond it, and
so he set out once again across the
seas.

EXT. SEA - DAY

The Monkey King valiantly paddles his raft.

EXT. THE WESTERN CONTINENT - DAY

The Monkey King lands ashore.

WU (V.O.)
 After landing on the Western
 Continent, he searched for a long
 time, until finally he came across
 a magnificent mountain of Mind and
 Heart. And at the top of the
 mountain he found the cave of
 Slanting moon and Three Stars. And
 in that cave was the great
 immortal, Subodhi.

A GONG RINGS.

EXT. CAVE OF THE SLANTING MOON AND THREE STARS - DAY

Monkey knocks on the door to the cave. A DISCIPLE opens the door.

THE DISCIPLE
 The master has been expecting you.

IMAGE: MASTER SUBHODI, a wise immortal, with long white wispy hair, beard, eyebrows, and a yak's tail. Brushes imaginary flies away.

WU (V.O.)
 Over several years the Handsome
 Monkey King learned many magical
 secrets from his Master, including
 the Art of Earthly Multitude and
 the seventy two transformations. He
 also learnt how to cloud fly. He
 was truly, Monkey Magic. He still
 lacked however, right judgement.

IMAGE: THE DISCIPLES all laugh and cry at Monkey Magic's display of magic. He transforms into a PINE TREE!

IMAGE: Master Subhodi is angered by the carry on.

WU (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 And he was banished for using his
 Magical talents so frivolously.

The door to the cave slams shut on Monkey Magic, who is now dressed in a red robe, yellow sash and black boots.

MONKEY MAGIC
 Why have magic powers if you can't
 show off a little?

Monkey summons his magic cloud, and flies off.

EXT. SKY - DAY

Monkey Magic cloud flies over the four continents.

WU (V.O.)

He had been gone some twenty years
and on finding his way back he
heard the call of cranes and the
cry of monkeys. His spirit was
moved with sadness.

EXT. FLOWER-FRUIT MOUNTAIN - DAY

Monkey Magic lands on the mountain. MONKEYS all crowd around him, crying.

YOUNG MONKEY

The Monstrous Demon King of Havoc
has bullied us all these years!

ANOTHER MONKEY

He tried to rob us of our Water-
Curtain cave!

MONKEY MAGIC

What sort of monster behaves with
such lawlessness! Let's see how he
likes the taste of Old Monkey's
fist!

Monkey Magic summons his magic cloud and flies off.

EXT. WATER-BELLY CAVE - DAY

Monkey Magic lands next to some DEMON IMPS.

MONKEY MAGIC

Monstrous Demon King of Havoc! I'm
here to settle the matter!

He shoos the imps away.

INT. WATER-BELLY CAVE - DAY

THE DEMON IMPS hurriedly run into the cave.

DEMON IMP #1

There is a monkey who calls himself
Monkey Magic, King of the Flower-
Fruit Mountain. He says you have
repeatedly bullied his young ones
and has come to settle matters with
you.

KING OF HAVOC
What kind of weapon does he have?

DEMON IMP #2
He is bare-fisted.

KING OF HAVOC
Get me my armour and my weapon.
I'll show this little monkey...

IMAGE: A SHARP SCIMITAR unsheathed. A black-gold helmet is removed from a shelf. Armour is laced up.

EXT. WATER-BELLY CAVE - DAY

Monkey Magic holds his fists out in a fighting pose. The ground shakes as the King Of Havoc arises from his cave.

KING OF HAVOC (O.S.)
Who is the Lord of the Water-
Curtain Cave?

Day turns to night.

EXT. WATER-BELLY CAVE - NIGHT

The Monstrous Demon King of Havoc stands seven times taller than Monkey Magic.

KING OF HAVOC
Ha ha ha! How dare you be so
insolent.

MONKEY MAGIC
You think I'm small! It's hardly
difficult for me to become taller!
Don't you know I can drag the moon
down from heaven with these fists!

Monkey Magic leaps into the air and strikes a punch at the monster's face.

The monster parries the blow with his hand.

KING OF HAVOC
If I were to kill you with this
scimitar, I'd be a laughing stock.
Let's see how well you can box!

The Demon King drops his weapon and holds up his fists. Monkey leaps forward, striking several quick blows to the monster's chest, then to his face.

The Demon King recoils, and picks up his weapon. He swings it down on Monkey Magic, who dodges the blow.

Monkey Magic pulls out a few of his own hairs and blows magic on them, transforming them into CLONES OF HIMSELF.

The little monkey clones overwhelm the Demon King, biting him and wrestling all his limbs.

Monkey Magic picks up the scimitar and strikes a blow to the Demon King's skull.

The sunlight of day returns.

Monkey Magic summons his magic cloud.

INT. WATER-CURTAIN CAVE - DAY

Monkey Magic enjoys another banquet.

OLD MONKEY

Three cheers for Monkey Magic,
protector of the Flower-Fruit
Mountain. Hip-hip!

THE MONKEYS

Hurray!

OLD MONKEY

Hip-hip!

THE MONKEYS

Hurray!

OLD MONKEY

Hip-hip

THE MONKEYS

Hurray!

MONKEY MAGIC

No-one should bother us again.

He sips on some wine.

MONKEY MAGIC (CONT'D)

Although it would be better if I
had some great weapon.

WISE MONKEY

I know where you could get a
weapon, if only you could enter the
ocean.

MONKEY MAGIC

I am the master of seventy-two transformations. I can go up to heaven, I can even walk past the Sun and the Moon without casting a shadow. There's nowhere I can't go.

WISE MONKEY

It's a good thing that the Great King is magical for beneath us is the kingdom of Old King Dragon who rules the Eastern Ocean. He has weapons beyond measure.

Monkey Magic grins.

EXT. BEACH - DAY

Monkey Magic makes the magic sign and parts the water. He jumps into the ocean,

INT. EASTERN OCEAN - DAY

And swims past a school of fish, towards;

EXT. THE GREAT DRAGON PALACE - DAY

A jade green underwater palace.

INT. THE GREAT DRAGON PALACE - KING'S CHAMBER- DAY

A GUARD urgently runs up to the OLD DRAGON KING, an old man with a long black beard, sitting on his throne.

GUARD

Your majesty. There is a Monkey... he has entered the palace and is demanding a divine weapon!

OLD DRAGON KING

A Monkey?

A SCUFFLE can be heard down the hall. Monkey Magic wrestles FOUR GUARDS and enters the chamber.

OLD DRAGON KING (CONT'D)

What chaos is this?

MONKEY MAGIC

Dragon King, I hear you have a weapon for Old Monkey!

OLD DRAGON KING
We have a few weapons, but none
suitable for a monkey.

MONKEY MAGIC
Nonsense! You have treasures beyond
measure, why not lend one to Old
Monkey?

The DRAGON MOTHER and DRAGON PRINCESS join them in the
chamber.

DRAGON PRINCESS
Great King, this is clearly no
ordinary sage. That piece of rare
magic iron has been glowing these
past few days, perhaps as a sign...

OLD DRAGON KING
That, is the measure by which Great
Yu conquered the Flood. No-one can
lift it!

MONKEY MAGIC
No-one? We'll see about that!

INT. PALACE TREASURY - DAY

The Dragon King, Dragon Mother, and Dragon Princess lead
Monkey Magic to the centre of the palace treasury.

Before them is a large, glowing, rod, some twenty metres
high, as thick as a tree.

MONKEY MAGIC
So this is the magic iron then?

Monkey leans over and grabs it with both arms, lifting it
with all his might.

The Dragon King watches on in astonishment and terror.

DRAGON KING
No-one has lifted that since the
Great Yu himself!

MONKEY MAGIC
It would be better if it was a bit
smaller.

And with that, the iron magically shrinks down to half size.

MONKEY MAGIC (CONT'D)
That's better. A little smaller
would be better still.

The rod shrinks further to a serviceable size.

Monkey Magic mock fights, spinning the rod back and forth.

The palace shakes.

MONKEY MAGIC (CONT'D)
Now this is a great weapon!

Old Dragon King watches on in terror, pretending to smile.

OLD DRAGON KING
Very good Old Monkey, very good.

Monkey shrinks the rod to the size of a toothpick and places
it in his ear.

WU (V.O.)
And so the Handsome Monkey King
found a weapon that could shake
Heaven and Earth.

EXT. WESTERN HEAVEN - DAY

Old Dragon King enters through the gates of Western Heaven.

WU (V.O.)
And shake Heaven it did. The very
same day, Old Dragon took his
complaint to the Jade Emperor.

INT. HALL OF DIVINE MISTS - HEAVEN - DAY

Old Dragon King runs into the hall of divine mists and
prostrates himself before THE JADE EMPEROR OF HEAVEN.

OLD DRAGON KING
Your Majesty, it's a terrible
thing, a monster has stolen the
great iron that fixed the milky way
and is wreaking havoc on Earth.

JADE EMPEROR
What kind of monster is it?

OLD DRAGON KING
A stone monkey. He has learnt The
Way and mastered the seventy two
Earthly transformations.

JADE EMPEROR
A stone monkey?

OLD DRAGON KING
We humbly beg for your imperial
justice. We beseech you send the
Heavenly hosts to subdue this
monster!

OLD SPIRIT VENUS
Highest and Holiest grace!

OLD SPIRIT VENUS, rises from the court to address the Jade
Emperor.

OLD SPIRIT VENUS (CONT'D)
A stone monkey, born of the sun and
moon, with a body nurtured by
Heaven and Earth. A monkey who has
the power to subdue dragons and
tame tigers. Dare I suggest Your
Majesty, to remember the
compassionate grace of Creation and
to issue a decree of pacification?

JADE EMPEROR
Even a Monkey could become an
immortal, I guess...

OLD SPIRIT VENUS
Let him be summoned to Heaven and
given some official duties. If he
is disobedient to your command, we
shall arrest him forthwith.

The Jade Emperor considers his proposal.

EXT. FLOWER-FRUIT MOUNTAIN - DAY

Old Spirit Venus descends from the sky on his cloud. He lands
next to a group of YOUNG MONKEYS who are playing.

OLD SPIRIT VENUS
Monkeys! I am a heaven-sent
messenger with an invitation for
your king.

INT. WATER-CURTAIN CAVE - DAY

Monkey Magic is feasting at the banquet table.

LITTLE MONKEY
Great King, there's an old man
outside. He says he is a messenger
from Heaven with an invitation.

MONKEY MAGIC
I was just thinking of making a
little trip to Heaven, and now
they've come to invite me!

EXT. WATER-CURTAIN CAVE - DAY

Monkey Magic meets Old Spirit Venus at the exit of the cave.

OLD SPIRIT VENUS
I am the Gold Star of Venus, from
Western Heaven. I come bearing an
imperial decree of pacification
from the Jade Emperor.

MONKEY MAGIC
Pacification?

OLD SPIRIT VENUS
It's more of an invitation you
see... an invitation to Heaven
where you will receive an *immortal*
appointment.

Monkey Magic grins.

MONKEY MAGIC
Well? What took you so long?

He somersaults onto his magic cloud and flies off.

The Old Spirit Venus follows behind on his cloud.

EXT. SOUTH HEAVEN GATE - DAY

Monkey Magic arrives at South Heaven Gate, followed by the
Old Spirit Venus.

The tall jade gate rises up from the clouds and is cast in
shafts of golden light.

They enter.

Monkey Magic walks through mist filled streets, through;

EXT. THE GARDEN OF UNFADING FLOWERS - DAY

A garden full of flowers, with a pool of white lotus and
bushes of pink jasmine.

MONKEY MAGIC
Oh, it's very nice up here!

Old Spirit Venus smiles.

TWO GIANT DRAGONS with red-whiskers and golden scales wrap around the street, sleeping.

THE HEAVENLY BELL RINGER rings the bell.

THE IMMORTALS OF HEAVEN gather to the Hall of Divine Mists.

INT. HALL OF DIVINE MISTS - HEAVEN

The immortals prostrate themselves before the Jade Emperor, who takes up his throne.

Old Spirit Venus comes to the front of the court and prostrates himself.

Monkey Magic joins him and looks around the room, arms folded.

A DIVINE OFFICIAL shakes his head in outrage.

OLD SPIRIT VENUS
Your humble servant has delivered
the bogus immortal.

JADE EMPEROR
Which one is the bogus immortal?

MONKEY MAGIC
Old Monkey Magic, King of the
Flower-Fruit Mountain.

DIVINE OFFICIAL
That wild ape! Does he have no
manners?

JADE EMPEROR
Monkey Magic is a bogus immortal
from the region below. We shall
pardon him for his ignorance of
court etiquette.

DIVINE OFFICIAL
Thank you, Your Majesty.

JADE EMPEROR
What vacant appointment may he
receive?

THE STAR SPIRIT OF WUQU enters with a long list of official appointments.

STAR SPIRIT WUQU

There is no lack of ministers in the Palace of Heaven. But we could do, um, with a supervisor in the imperial stables...

JADE EMPEROR

Let him be made 'Keeper of the Heavenly Stables'.

MONKEY MAGIC

'Keeper of the Heavenly Stables'. What about 'Divine Keeper of the Heavenly Stables?'

The Jade Emperor nods.

JADE EMPEROR

'Divine Keeper of the Heavenly Stables'.

Monkey Magic grins.

EXT. THE HEAVENLY STABLES - DAY

Monkey Magic feeds the THOUSAND HEAVENLY HORSES, one by one.

WU (V.O)

The Monkey King diligently attended to his duties for several months.

Monkey Magic oversees STEWARDS, who groom and wash the horses.

WU (V.O) (CONT'D)

Then one day, various heavenly ministers came to congratulate him on a job well done.

EXT. HEAVENLY BANQUET - DAY

VARIOUS HEAVENLY MINISTERS sit at a banquet with Monkey Magic.

DIVINE OFFICIAL

A toast to the Divine Keeper of the Heavenly stables! If you keep up this good work, in five hundred years, you will earn yourself a Gold Star.

MONKEY MAGIC
A gold star?

DIVINE OFFICIAL
It would be in recognition of a
"fairly good effort".

Monkey sips his wine.

MONKEY MAGIC
What sort of rank am I?

THE HEAVENLY MINISTERS nervously exchange glances.

DIVINE OFFICIAL
You do not really have a rank...

MONKEY MAGIC
So I must be the highest then?

DIVINE OFFICIAL
Not at all. Your rank is really
'unclassified'.

MONKEY MAGIC
What does that mean?

HEAVENLY OFFICER #2
It means you are the lowest of the
lowly.

MONKEY MAGIC
Huh. The lowest. They thought they
could trick Old Monkey. The lowest!
Don't you know who I am!

Monkey Magic takes out his magic staff from his ear and kicks
over the table.

GUARDS run in to arrest him, he fights them off --
and summons his magic cloud.

EXT. FLOWER-FRUIT MOUNTAIN - DAY

WU (V.O)
And so Old Monkey rebelled against
heaven, returning to his Flower-
Fruit mountain wherein he declared
himself "The Great Sage, Equal to
Heaven"

IMAGE: A BANNER - "THE GREAT SAGE, EQUAL TO HEAVEN"

MONKEY MAGIC

That stupid Jade Emperor. Who does
he think he is!

INT. HALL OF DIVINE MISTS - HEAVEN - DAY

CELESTIAL MASTER ZHANG prostrates himself before the Jade
Emperor, then runs forward to the court.

MASTER ZHANG

Your Majesty! The Ape Monster has
rebelled! He has declared himself
"The Great Sage, Equal to Heaven".

JADE EMPEROR

That impetuous ape! Send forth the
celestial soldiers to capture this
monster.

EXT. WESTERN HEAVEN'S GATE - DAY

HUNDREDS OF CELESTIAL SOLDIERS march out from the gates of
Heaven, diving down to Earth.

INT. WATER-CURTAIN CAVE - DAY

Monkey Magic stumbles to the banquet table, drunk.

MONKEY MAGIC

I am the Great Sage! Equal to
Heaven! And I want more wine!

OLD MONKEY

Great Sage, the armies of heaven
have descended to capture you.

MONKEY MAGIC

So they want to fight me, do they?

Monkey Magic drinks up his wine.

EXT. WATER-CURTAIN CAVE - DAY

The Celestial Soldiers have surrounded the cave. Monkey Magic
stumbles drunk out to the centre of the enclave.

THE CELESTIAL GENERAL OF MIGHTY-SPIRIT, lands in front of
him.

CELESTIAL GENERAL

Lawless ape! We have come to arrest
you. Yield at once, to avoid
execution.

MONKEY MAGIC

You go back to Heaven and tell that Jade Emperor that he has no regard for talent.

CELESTIAL GENERAL

You fraudulent monkey! How dare you call yourself "The Great Sage, Equal to Heaven"!

MONKEY MAGIC

You're quite right, I'm at least twice as good as Heaven! But! If am promoted according to this title, I will lay down my arms, and there will be peace on Earth. If not, I shall fight my way up to the Jade Emperor himself!

CELESTIAL GENERAL

So you want to be the "Great Sage, Equal to Heaven"? Take a bit of my axe first!

The General lunges at Monkey with his axe.

Monkey parries the blow.

The combat of the heavenly general is graceful. Monkey stumbles, but is a drunken master.

Several celestial soldiers rush in.

Monkey enlarges his wishing staff -- spins it around -- whacking them.

He grins.

INT. WESTERN HEAVEN - DAY

The celestial soldiers of heaven are wounded, each in their own way. They groan and cry.

INT. HALL OF DIVINE MISTS - HEAVEN - DAY

The Celestial General prostrates himself before the Jade Emperor.

CELESTIAL GENERAL

I beg your merciful pardon... he is a very magic monkey. Your unworthy warrior could not prevail against him.

JADE EMPEROR

How powerful can one monkey be?

CELESTIAL GENERAL

He has set up a banner bearing the words "The Great Sage, Equal to Heaven". He said that he would declare his allegiance should he be granted this title.

JADE EMPEROR

What sort of compensation was he requesting?

CELESTIAL GENERAL

Your majesty, he did not mention any form of compensation.

JADE EMPEROR

And what duties did he ask for?

CELESTIAL GENERAL

Your Holy Grace, he did not ask for any official duty.

JADE EMPEROR

How dare this baneful monkey be so insolent!

The Gold Star of Venus steps forward.

OLD SPIRIT VENUS

Your Grace, might I suggest we indeed let him be made "The Great Sage, Equal to Heaven"; it will be an empty title. Rank without compensation. He will not be given any duty or office, but we shall keep him here in Heaven so that his perverse mind might be put at rest. Then, he shall desist from his madness, and the universe will be calm and the oceans tranquil once again.

The Jade Emperor nods.

JADE EMPEROR

We shall heed the counsel of our minister.

The Jade Emperor puts his head in his hands.

WU (V.O)
And so the Handsome Monkey King
earned his title "The Great Sage,
Equal to Heaven"

EXT. SOUTH HEAVEN GATE - DAY

Monkey Magic cloud flies to the gate. Old Spirit Venus flies beside him.

At the gate -- THE GUARDS OF HEAVEN hold their stance, austere. Monkey gets up close to them.

MONKEY MAGIC
Do they know who I am?

OLD SPIRIT VENUS
Of course, you are "The Great Sage,
Equal to Heaven".

Monkey grins.

INT. HEAVENLY MANSION - DAY

Old Spirit Venus shows Monkey Magic his new home, a palatial mansion gilded in precious gems -- as one would expect in Heaven.

MONKEY MAGIC
So this is the house of the Great Sage!

Monkey lies down on the couch, he holds out his hands expectantly and ATTENDANTS bring him food and wine.

MONKEY MAGIC (CONT'D)
I could get used to this.

Old Spirit Venus bows.

EXT. HEAVENLY STREETS - DAY

Monkey Magic roams the streets of Heaven, joking with immortals, making faces, laughing, and mucking about.

WU (V.O)
Idleness and mischief are close companions. The Jade Emperor, fearing that idleness might lead to roguery, summoned the Great Sage for a special task.

INT. HALL OF DIVINE MISTS - HEAVEN

Monkey Magic stands leaning on his wishing staff before the throne of the Jade Emperor.

JADE EMPEROR

Great Sage, we perceive that you have nothing to do and have decided, therefore, to appoint you with a special assignment as "Protector of the Immortal Peach Garden."

Monkey's eyes light up.

EXT. IMMORTAL PEACH GARDEN - HEAVEN - DAY

STEWARDS tend to the garden, hoeing, watering, cleaning, and sweeping.

Trees hold head-sized peaches from their branches.

Monkey Magic enters.

MONKEY MAGIC

The Jade Emperor has authorised me to look after this Garden. I've come for an inspection.

THE ATTENDANT salutes him.

MONKEY MAGIC (CONT'D)

How many of these trees are there, anyway?

ATTENDANT

Great Sage, there are three thousand six hundred. These twelve hundred on the outside have peaches that ripen every three thousand years. One taste and you'll become enlightened in the way and live forever. The middle twelve hundred trees ripen once every six thousand years. Eat one of their peaches, and you'll be able to fly! And at the centre, are twelve hundred trees with peaches that ripen only once every nine thousand years. If eaten, your age will rival Heaven and Earth, the sun and the moon.

Monkey gets an idea (to eat the peaches).

MONKEY MAGIC

You're all working too hard. As
Protector of this garden, I think
it wise for everyone to take a good
well earned break and I'll keep a
guard for you. How does that sound?

ATTENDANT

Thank you Great Sage.

The attendant indicates for the stewards to lay down their
rakes and shovels. They leave.

Monkey Magic climbs up one of the trees and sits there.

He looks at one of the peaches.

He plucks it and eats it.

He plucks another one. And another.

FADE TO:

EXT. IMMORTAL PEACH GARDEN - HEAVEN - LATER

The peach trees have been completely stripped of their
fruits.

SEVEN IMMORTAL MAIDENS carrying baskets walk around to the
tree where Monkey Magic is asleep on a branch, having
transformed himself to the size of a thumb.

BLUE MAIDEN

This is not good...

Monkey Magic falls out of the tree, transforming to his
regular size. Startled, he whips out his magic staff.

MONKEY MAGIC

Thieves! Who has the gall to steal
my peaches!

The maidens jump back.

RED MAIDEN

Great Sage, we mean no harm, we
have simply come to harvest peaches
for the heavenly peach banquet.

BLUE MAIDEN

We have been sent by the Lady Queen
Mother.

They bow.

MONKEY MAGIC

Please arise divine maidens. Who is invited to this banquet?

YELLOW MAIDEN

Buddha, the Bodhisattvas, the holy monks, and the arhats of Western Heaven. Kuanyin from the South Pole. The Holy Emperor of Great Mercy of the East...

MONKEY MAGIC

And what about "The Great Sage, Equal to Heaven"?

The Maidens exchange nervous glances.

MONKEY MAGIC (CONT'D)

Am I invited?

BLUE MAIDEN

We did not hear your name on the list.

YELLOW MAIDEN

That doesn't mean you aren't? Or, not that we know...

MONKEY MAGIC

And tell me, where in Heaven is this banquet?

The blue maiden looks to the yellow maiden -- should she say?

EXT. HEAVENLY PEACH BANQUET - DAY

A large banquet is laid out, awaiting the arrival of guests. Monkey Magic jumps off his cloud and inspects the banquet.

MONKEY MAGIC

So they didn't think to invite Old Monkey? Well this looks very nice.

Monkey starts helping himself to the banquet, stuffing his face with handfuls of divine delicacies.

INT. HALL OF DIVINE MISTS - DAY

LADY QUEEN MOTHER OF HEAVEN rushes into the Jade Emperor's chamber.

QUEEN MOTHER

That awful monkey has ruined the festival!

The Jade Emperor puts his head in his hands.

EXT. FLOWER-FRUIT MOUNTAIN - DAY

Monkey Magic cloud flies to the bottom of the mountain.

An Old Monkey looks up to Monkey Magic in astonishment.

OLD MONKEY

The Great Sage has returned.

MONKEY MAGIC

They're all stuck up in Heaven.
Anyway, very overrated.

OLD MONKEY

For the first time in one hundred
years, the Great Sage has returned!

Monkeys rush out to greet him.

EXT. HEAVENLY PEACH BANQUET - DAY

The banquet is in disarray.

BUDDHA, IN FEMALE FORM looks over the damage. She is with the Jade Emperor and the Lady Queen Mother of Heaven.

BUDDHA

And where did this monkey come
from?

JADE EMPEROR

He was born of a rock on a
mountaintop. Please, help us subdue
this troublesome monster.

BUDDHA

Gentleness is needed in this case.
I shall make him a wager.

EXT. FLOWER-FRUIT MOUNTAIN - NIGHT

Buddha appears on the horizon, a giant.

BUDDHA

Monkey awakened to Emptiness!

MONKEY MAGIC

The Buddha.

BUDDHA

Why are you so violent and unruly?

MONKEY MAGIC

I'm too special for Earth. Then,
when I went up to Heaven they
didn't recognise my talent, so I
had to show them.

BUDDHA

What makes you think you are worthy
of the Throne of the Jade Palace?
Don't you know that the Jade
Emperor has gone through the bitter
experience of seven hundred and
fifty ordeals, with each ordeal
lasting a hundred and twenty-nine
thousand six hundred years?

MONKEY MAGIC

Tell him to move out at once and
hand the Celestial Palace to me. Or
else I'll continue to cause ordeals
and there'll never be peace!

BUDDHA

What powers do you have that you
dare usurp this hallowed region of
Heaven?

MONKEY MAGIC

I know the seventy-two
transformations. I have a life that
will never grow old and I also know
how to cloud fly.

BUDDHA

Let me make you a wager. If you can
somersault clear of this right palm
of mine, I shall consider you the
winner. I will ask the Jade Emperor
to go live with me in the West, and
you can have the Celestial Palace.
If you lose, you shall go back to
the Region Below and be a monster.

MONKEY MAGIC

Ha! The buddha is a fool! Don't you
know who I am?

Guanyin holds out her palm, which is a metre or so wide,
Monkey Magic hops onto it. He summons his magic cloud, and
flies off at full speed.

MONKEY MAGIC (CONT'D)

See you, Buddha!

IMAGE: Monkey Magic a tiny streak of light and cloud, breaks through the sound barrier, hurtling towards;

EXT. THE FIVE PILLARS AT THE END OF THE UNIVERSE - DAY

Five flesh-coloured pillars rise up from a cloud.

MONKEY MAGIC

The five pillars! This must be the end of the road. I better leave a little memento.

Monkey plucks a hair from his body, breathing magic on it, transforming it into a writing brush soaked in ink.

On the middle pillar, he writes;

"The Great Sage, Equal to Heaven, was here"

Monkey urinates on the first pillar.

He summons his magic cloud, and flies off.

EXT. FLOWER-FRUIT MOUNTAIN - NIGHT

Buddha smiles as Monkey lands back on her palm.

MONKEY MAGIC

Tell the Jade Emperor to give me the Celestial Palace!

BUDDHA

You silly ape. Since when did you ever leave the palm of my hand?

MONKEY MAGIC

I found the five pillars at the end of the universe and left a little memento there to prove it.

Buddha holds up her right hand to reveal that her fingers are the five pillars that Monkey defaced.

Monkey is astonished.

MONKEY MAGIC (CONT'D)

I don't believe it! Could this really happen? Could it be? Let me go back there to check.

Before he can summon his magic cloud, Buddha grabs him. Her left hand transforms into rock, folding into a giant mountain. Trapping him.

EXT. HEAVENLY CLOUDS - DAY

THE THUNDER GODS, KASYAPA AND ANANDA watch on in delight.

KASYAPA

Buddha has subdued the monstrous
Monkey!

ANANDA

Praise be to virtue!

A bolt of lightning materialises in Ananda's hand and he
throw it down to Earth;

EXT. MOUNTAIN OF THE FIVE PHASES - NIGHT

LIGHTNING strikes the mountain top.

Monkey is stuck beneath the mountain, with just his face
popping out through a crack.

MONKEY MAGIC

Buddha! You cheated! Let me out of
this mountain! Buddha!

WU (V.O.)

And so the Buddha instructed Monkey
in the ways of patience. For some
five hundred years he remained
trapped in that mountain. But that
is not the last we shall hear of
Old Monkey. Our story now turns to
a Holy Monk, of origins most
mysterious.

EXT. RIVER-SIDE - DAY

A BABY floats down river on a basket.

The basket comes to rest in some reeds.

AN OLD MONK, discovers the baby.

He lifts him out of the river.

WU (V.O.)

He was discovered floating down
river. A baby, having been
abandoned to the mercy of Heaven,
with a letter written in blood tied
to his chest.

The old monk takes the letter.

WU (V.O.) (CONT'D)
But we shall say not more of that.

EXT. MONASTERY - DAY

A YOUNG BOY carries water to the temple.

WU (V.O.)
Time passed by like an arrow and
the boy who they called "River
Float" soon reached his eighteenth
year.

LATER:

The Old Monk shaves the young boy's hair.

WU (V.O.)
He shaved his hair, joining the
practice of austerities, and earned
his religious name "Xuanzang",
meaning "Teacher".

LATER:

XUANZANG prays to a statue of the Buddha.

WU (V.O.)
Xuanzang pursued the Way with great
determination. We could say many
things about this Holy Monk, but
his story really begins with a
divine vision...

EXT. MONASTERY - NIGHT

Xuanzang prays in the courtyard.

A sudden wind sweeps up the leaves. Bright lights flash.

GUANYIN, THE COMPASSIONATE, appears as a glowing apparition.

GUANYIN
Hey Monk! You only know about the
teachings of the Little Vehicle.
Don't you know anything about the
Great Vehicle?

XUANZANG
Guanyin, the most compassionate!

He bows his head in reverence.

GUANYIN

I have in my possession Tripitaka,
three collections of the Great
Vehicle Laws of Buddha, which are
able to send the lost to Heaven, to
deliver the afflicted from
suffering and to break the cycle of
birth and death.

XUANZANG

Really?

GUANYIN

These scriptures are so powerful
that they can redeem dammed spirits
from Hell.

XUANZANG

Please Guanyin, tell me where I can
find these scriptures!

GUANYIN

Go West. Go to the mountain. Go to
the Great Temple of Thunderclap.
These scriptures can untie the knot
of a hundred enmities, and can
dispel unexpected misfortunes...

XUANZANG

Can you read me some of it?

GUANYIN

If I were just to read it to you,
you probably wouldn't appreciate
it!

XUANZANG

Please Guanyin!

GUANYIN

You must make The Journey to the
West. The way: a hundred and eight
thousand miles.

Guanyin vanishes in a cloud of smoke.

EXT. COURT OF THE EMPEROR - DAY

THE EMPEROR OF CHINA, TANG TAIZONG, sits on his throne.

WU (V.O.)
 Wishing to cultivate the fruits of
 virtue, the Emperor received the
 news of the vision with great
 interest.

TANG TAIZONG
 The Tripitaka you said?

XUANZANG
 Yes your majesty, it was a vision
 as clear as day.

TANG TAIZONG
 And who should seek for the
 Tripitaka?

XUANZANG
 Though your poor monk has no
 talents, he is ready to perform the
 service of a dog and a horse. I
 shall seek these true scriptures on
 behalf of Your Majesty, that the
 empire of our king may be firm and
 everlasting.

TANG TAIZONG
 If the Master is willing to express
 his loyalty this way, undaunted by
 the great journey, we are willing
 to become bond brothers.

Xuanzang bows his head to the ground.

TANG TAIZONG (CONT'D)
 Arise, our brother and holy monk,
 "Tripitaka".

The emperor smiles.

TANG TAIZONG (CONT'D)
 The years are long and the journey
 is great.

EXT. MONASTERY - DAY

Xuanzang, now TRIPITAKA, is farewelled by A GROUP OF MONKS.
 He rides his horse out of the gates of monastery.

WU (V.O.)
 The way West is filled with tigers,
 leopards and all kinds of monsters.
 And so Guanyin sought out a band of
 suitable protectors to be disciples
 of this most Holy Fool...

EXT. FLOWING SAND RIVER - DAY

Guanyin cloud flies to the river, with her disciple HUI'AN.

GUANYIN
 This place is difficult to cross.

HUI'AN
 Teacher, how wide do you suppose
 this river is?

She looks around in the water, when --

A FISH MONSTER leaps out from the depths, grabbing Guanyin.

Hui'an jumps into the conflict, wielding his rod -- battling
 with the monster, who stirs up waves.

They fight.

Hui'an blows wind, knocking the monster down.

HUI'AN (CONT'D)
 Monster! What quarrel have you with
 the Bodhisattva?

FISH MONSTER
 The Bodhisattva?

The monster drops his weapon and bows before Guanyin.

FISH MONSTER (CONT'D)
 Please forgive me, Bodhisattva. I
 am no monster. Rather, I am the
 Curtain-Raising General who waits
 upon the phoenix chariot of the
 Jade Emperor of Heaven.

EXT. WESTERN HEAVEN - PEACH BANQUET - FLASHBACK

THE CURTAIN-RAISING GENERAL, tries to put a broken jade cup
 back together.

FISH MONSTER (V.O.)
 I carelessly broke his favourite
 cup at the Festival of Immortal
 Peaches and was banished and
 changed into my present shape.

The Jade Emperor magically casts out the Curtain-Raising
 General. He falls to Earth.

EXT. FLOWING SAND RIVER - DAY

The fish monster is in tears.

FISH MONSTER
 I am cold and hungry and every few
 days I must find a traveler for
 food. I did not mean to offend the
 great, merciful Bodhisattva.

Guanyin takes pity on him.

GUANYIN
 You were banished for your sin in
 Heaven, but now you add sin to sin
 by taking life in your present
 manner.

FISH MONSTER
 I know, I know. I'm so miserable.

GUANYIN
 There is a Holy Monk, a scripture
 pilgrim, join him on his journey to
 the west and seek refuge in right
 action.

FISH MONSTER
 I must tell you a terrible thing.
 There have been a number of
 scripture pilgrims through here and
 I ate all of them. Their skulls
 floated on the water and would not
 sink so I chained them together
 with a rope...

Hui'an shakes his head in disgust.

FISH MONSTER (CONT'D)
 I fear no other scripture pilgrim
 will want to come this way...

GUANYIN

Not come this way? How absurd! Take
the skulls and hang them round your
neck. There will be a use for them
when the scripture pilgrim arrives.
Do the right thing and I shall
restore your post in Heaven,
"Sandy, who awakes to Purity".

The fish monster dries away his tears.

Guanyin and Hui'an cloud fly away.