

MONKEY MAGIC

written by

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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 damned 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.