

MONKEY MAGIC: THE JOURNEY BEGINS

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?

Buddha 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"

He 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.

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...

The fish monster dries away his tears.

Guanyin and Hui'an cloud fly away.

GUANYIN (CONT'D)

"Sandy, who awakes to Purity".

WU (V.O.)

And so Sandy washed his heart and never took life again, but waited attentively for the arrival of the scripture pilgrim.

EXT. LAND OF THE EAST - DAY

Guanyin and Hui'an cloud fly towards a mountain covered in fog.

They enter the fog.

Suddenly, the fog clears to reveal a PIG MONSTER!

The pig monster strikes down on Hui'an with his muckrake.

HUI'AN

Reckless monster! Desist at once!

Hui'an battles the pig monster. His iron rod jabs the chest. The muckrake swipes his face.

Their weapons weave and clash.

Guanyin magically casts lotus flowers, that rapidly blossom, overwhelming the monster.

PIG MONSTER

What region are you from, that you dare play this 'flower-in-the-eye' trick?

HUI'AN

I am the disciple of the Bodhisattva of the South Sea. These are lotus flowers thrown down by my mentor.

PIG MONSTER

Guanyin? The one who sweeps away
the three calamities and rescues us
from the eight disasters?

HUI'AN

Who else, if not she?

PIG MONSTER

Venerable brother! Please be so
good as to make the introduction!

EXT. MOUNTAIN OF THE BLESSED MOUND - DAY

Hui'an leads the pig monster to Guanyin, who is praying.

PIG MONSTER

Bodhisattva! Pardon my sin! Pardon
my sin!

GUANYIN

What region are you from, wild
boar, that you dare bar my way?

PIG MONSTER

I am not a pig! My spirit lost the
way for my next incarnation, and I
passed through the womb of a sow
and ended up with a shape like
this! I took over this mountain and
pass my days eating people.

GUANYIN

Where did your spirit come from?

EXT. WESTERN HEAVEN - NIGHT -- FLASHBACK

THE MARSHAL OF THE HEAVENLY REEDS, drunkenly flirts with the
GODDESS OF THE MOON.

He chases her around heaven.

PIG MONSTER (V.O.)

I was originally Marshal of the
Heavenly Reeds in the Heavenly
River. I got drunk and dallied with
the Goddess of the Moon, and so the
Jade Emperor banished me to the
world of dust.

EXT. MOUNTAIN OF THE BLESSED MOUND - DAY

The pig monster is in tears.

PIG MONSTER

I implore you! Save me!

GUANYIN

There is an old saying - 'if you want to have a future, don't act heedless of the future'.

PIG MONSTER

I would like to follow the truth, but since I have offended Heaven, even my prayers are worthless.

GUANYIN

There is a Holy Monk, a scripture pilgrim, follow him as his disciple and your merit will cancel out your sins.

PIG MONSTER

I'm willing! I'm willing!

GUANYIN

"Piggy, who awakens to Power!"

Guanyin and Hui'an cloud fly off.

WU (V.O.)

From that moment on, Piggy accepted the commandment to return to the real. He ate only vegetables, and fasted, so as to wait single-mindedly for the Holy Fool.

EXT. WILD STORM - DAY

Guanyin and Hui'an cloud fly into a thunderous storm with pouring rain.

HUI'AN

Look! Up in those clouds!

They ascend above the clouds.

A DRAGON is chained up, and weeping.

GUANYIN

What dragon are you and why are you weeping?

DRAGON

I am Aorun, son of the Dragon King
of the Western Ocean. I
accidentally burned down the
palace, and my father, the king,
charged me with grave disobedience.
I am to be sentenced to death.
Please save me!

GUANYIN

If I am to release you, then you
must wait for the Holy Fool and
carry him on his Journey West as a
white horse.

DRAGON

I'll do it! Anything! Please spare
my life!

Guanyin magically casts off his chains and the dragon falls
to Earth, crashing through the clouds.

Guanyin and Hui'an cloud fly off. Coming to;

EXT. MOUNTAIN OF THE FIVE PHASES - DAY

A bright glow radiates from the top of the mountain.

GUANYIN

The seal of the Buddha.

HUI'AN

This must be the mountain where
Buddha imprisoned the Great Sage,
Equal to Heaven.

They fly closer.

MONKEY MAGIC (O.S.)

Hello! You over there!

INT. MOUNTAIN OF THE FIVE PHASES - DAY

Guanyin and Hui'an land next to the imprisoned Monkey Magic.

MONKEY MAGIC

My first visitors! I've only been
here for five hundred years.

GUANYIN

Do you recognise me?

MONKEY MAGIC

How could I not! You are the Mighty Deliverer, the Great Compassionate Bodhisattva Guanyin of the South Sea. Show a little mercy and rescue Old Monkey?

GUANYIN

If I rescue you, I fear that you will again perpetrate violence and that will be bad indeed.

MONKEY MAGIC

I know the meaning of penitence. I entreat the Great Compassion to show me the proper path, for I am now willing to do the right thing.

GUANYIN

If your heart is set on the good, then wait here for a scripture pilgrim, a holy monk, who will set you free. Join him as his disciple on a Journey to the West.

MONKEY MAGIC

So, you're not letting me out? All you have to do is take down that stupid seal. I can do the rest!

GUANYIN

Patience. Wait for the Holy Monk.

Monkey Magic's face is full of disappointment.

GUANYIN (CONT'D)

"Monkey, Awakened to Emptiness"

WU (V.O)

So our Great Sage, with manifest nature and enlightened mind, returned to the path of good. But what of Tripitaka's path?

EXT. MOUNTAIN RANGE - DAY

Tripitaka is on a brown horse, accompanied by TWO MONKS.

WU (V.O.)

Having lost his way outside the city of Gongzhou, they stumbled into an ogre's pit.

IMAGE: Tripitaka and his companions fall into a pit.

WU (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 The monsters, who captured them,
 ate both followers of the scripture
 pilgrim. It was only by divine
 intervention that Tripitaka was
 saved from this bitter ordeal.

IMAGE: The Star Spirit of Venus magically defeats the OGRE
 KING and his HENCHMEN.

IMAGE: He magically revives Tripitaka.

OLD SPIRIT VENUS
 I am the Star Spirit of Venus from
 Heaven, who came to you by special
 request. Some pupils divine will
 come to your aid. Blame not the
 scriptures for the hardships that
 await you.

Tripitaka bows.

TRIPITAKA
 I thank the Gold Star for seeing me
 through this ordeal.

FADE TO:

EXT. WINTERY MOUNTAIN RIDGE - DAY

Tripitaka rides on his horse, a lonely figure in the cold.

WU (V.O.)
 Cold. Quiet. And still. Not a man
 in sight, the Holy Fool started up
 that rugged mountain, submitting
 himself to the will of Heaven. When
 he was disturbed by a piercing
 cry...

MONKEY MAGIC (O.S.)
 My master has come! My master has
 come!

EXT. MOUNTAIN OF THE FIVE PHASES - DAY

Tripitaka rides his horse to the stone box, where Monkey
 Magic is imprisoned -- with his head and hands sticking out.

MONKEY MAGIC

Master, why have you taken so long?
 Welcome! Welcome! Get me out and
 I'll protect you on your Journey
 West. You are the scripture
 pilgrim, aren't you?

TRIPITAKA

I am, why do you ask?

MONKEY MAGIC

I am the Great Sage, Equal to
 Heaven. I was imprisoned here by
 the Buddha, some five hundred years
 ago. Guanyin persuaded me not to
 engage again in violence, but to
 faithfully follow the way of truth
 and to wait for you, my Master!

TRIPITAKA

Though you have good intentions, I
 have neither ax nor drill. How can
 I free you?

MONKEY MAGIC

See that seal? That is Buddha's
 seal. All you need to do is take it
 off.

IMAGE: The red seal of Buddha -- glows.

TRIPITAKA

I will say some prayers. If you are
 indeed destined to be my disciple,
 the seal will lift.

Tripitaka closes his eyes and prays.

Magically, the seal flies off in a gust of wind.

MONKEY MAGIC

You did it! Master, you better
 stand back so that I can come out.

Tripitaka takes a few steps backwards.

MONKEY MAGIC (CONT'D)

You might want to go back a little
 bit more furtherer.

EXT. MOUNTAIN OF THE FIVE PHASES - DISTANT - DAY

Tripitaka rides his horse a few miles away from the mountain.

MONKEY MAGIC (O.S.)
Ok! That should do it!

The Earth begins to quake...

Suddenly, the mountain explodes!

MONKEY MAGIC
I'm free!

Monkey Magic cloud flies around the exploding mountain and lands next to Tripitaka.

TRIPITAKA
Disciple, what is your name?

MONKEY MAGIC
You can call me "Monkey Magic".

TRIPITAKA
Why "Monkey Magic"?

MONKEY MAGIC
Because. I can look at a person and discern his character. I can listen merely to sounds and discover truth. If I want to be big, I can fill the universe. If I want to be small, I can be smaller than a piece of hair. You see, I know a lot of magic tricks.

Tripitaka smiles, relieved to have such a powerful disciple.

WU (V.O.)
So master and disciple, the two of them, chatted as they journeyed, and soon the sun sank in the west.

EXT. THE ROAD WEST - NIGHT

Monkey carries luggage, leading Tripitaka and horse.

Suddenly, A GANG OF BANDITS leap out from the forest brandishing swords, spears and all kinds of weapons.

BANDIT #1
Stop! Leave your horse and drop your bags, and we'll let you pass on alive!

Tripitaka faints from fright, falling off his horse. Monkey lifts him up off the ground.

MONKEY MAGIC

Don't worry, Master. It's nothing really, just some people coming to give us clothes and a travel allowance.

TRIPITAKA

Monkey, you must be hard of hearing, they told us to leave our bags and our horse and you want to ask them for a travel allowance?

MONKEY MAGIC

We'll see what happens...

BANDIT #1

You! Ugly monkey man. Are you deaf?

MONKEY MAGIC

Sirs, for what reason are you blocking the path of this poor monk?

BANDIT #1

We are kings of the highway. Leave your belongings or we will chop you to pieces!

MONKEY MAGIC

You know, I was a king once.

BANDIT #1

You! A king!?

BANDIT #2

The monkey man is delusional!

The bandits surround Monkey Magic.

MONKEY MAGIC

Don't you know who I am? Now. Bring me the treasures you have stolen and I'll spare your lives.

Enraged, the largest bandit charges at Monkey with his sword. Monkey stands still as if nothing was happening.

SCHING! The sword bounces back from Monkey's hard head -- not leaving a scratch.

Another bandit charges at him with a spear SNAP! -- it breaks in two -- Monkey is completely unaffected.

MONKEY MAGIC (CONT'D)

Time for a little entertainment...

Monkey removes the toothpick sized wishing rod from his ear -- swings it around -- it grows to full size.

The largest bandit pales in terror.

MONKEY MAGIC (CONT'D)

Don't run! Let Old Monkey try his hand on you with this rod!

The bandits flee in all directions. Monkey chases after them.

Tripitaka watches on, horrified.

WU (V.O.)

And so Monkey chased down each of the bandits and beat every one of them to death. He seized their valuables and returned smiling...

Monkey Magic grins.

MONKEY MAGIC

You may proceed now, Master. Those robbers have been exterminated.

TRIPITAKA

What a terrible thing you have done! They may have been bandits, but they would not have been sentenced to death even if they had been caught and tried. You should have just chased them away. Why did you kill them all?

MONKEY MAGIC

Master! If I hadn't killed them, they would have killed you!

TRIPITAKA

I would rather die than practice violence. If I were killed, there would be only one of me, but you just slaughtered a dozen people!

MONKEY MAGIC

Do you think I would be "The Great Sage, Equal to Heaven" if I let robbers rob me! I've lost count of the number of people I've killed over the centuries.

TRIPITAKA

It is precisely because you had
neither scruples nor self-control
that you had to undergo your ordeal
under that mountain. If you insist
on practicing violence, you are not
worthy to be my disciple. You're
wicked! You're just too wicked!

MONKEY MAGIC

Fine! If that's what you think, you
needn't bother me further with your
nagging! I'll leave!

Monkey Magic summons his cloud and flies off.

Tripitaka watches as he disappears over the horizon, breaking
through the sound barrier.

TRIPITAKA

That fellow! He's so unwilling to
be taught!

Tripitaka gathers his belongings and mounts his horse,
setting off Westward.

FADE TO:

EXT. THE ROAD WEST - DAY

Tripitaka rides through desolate lands on the journey west.

FADE TO:

EXT. WATERFALL - DAY

Tripitaka dismounts and ties his horse to a tree.

He drinks from the pool beneath the waterfall.

AN OLD LADY covered in sores, approaches.

OLD LADY

Elder, where do you come from and
why are you walking here all by
yourself?

TRIPITAKA

Your child was sent by the Great
King to seek the true scriptures
from the Temple of the Thunderclap.

OLD LADY

The journey there is one hundred and eight thousand miles. You are all by yourself with neither companion nor disciple. How can you possibly think of going there?

TRIPITAKA

I had a disciple until a few days ago. I scolded him a little, but he refused to be taught and then he disappeared.

OLD LADY

I have just finished mourning the loss of my son. He was a monk like you. I was given this by his master, to be kept in his memory.

She pulls a Golden Headband out from her bag. It glistens.

OLD LADY (CONT'D)

I want you to have it.

TRIPITAKA

I dare not take it.

The old lady chuckles.

OLD LADY

This is no ordinary headband. I have a spell called "True Words for Controlling the Mind". Take this headband and when he returns, give it to him. If he refuses to obey you, recite the spell silently. He will not leave you again.

Tripitaka takes the headband and holds it.

When he looks up the old lady has vanished.

TRIPITAKA

Guanyin!

Tripitaka sits, practicing the spell.

WU (V.O.)

And so Tripitaka practiced the spell, until he knew the words by heart. Old Monkey, having left his master, headed straight to the Water Crystal Palace of the Eastern Ocean.

INT. WATER CRYSTAL PALACE - DAY

Monkey sits having tea with the DRAGON KING OF THE EASTERN OCEAN.

WU (V.O.)

Wherein he met with Old King
Dragon...

MONKEY MAGIC

That Holy Fool knows nothing of
human nature. There were a few
ruffians who wanted to rob us, and
so I slew them all. But Tripitaka
wouldn't stop nagging me and
telling me how wrong I was. Can you
imagine Old Monkey putting up with
that sort of tedium?

DRAGON KING

Great Sage, if you do not accompany
the Holy Monk, if you are unwilling
to exercise diligence or to accept
instruction, you will remain a
bogus immortal after all.

Monkey Magic sips his tea, heeding these words of wisdom.

WU (V.O.)

Old Dragon regaled Monkey with
stories of legendary immortal
Master Red Pine. And so Monkey took
heed of his wisdom.

MONKEY MAGIC

Fine then! I'll go back!

Monkey summons his magic cloud and flies off.

EXT. THE ROAD WEST - DAY

Tripitaka is sitting dejectedly at the side of the road.
Monkey Magic lands next to him.

MONKEY MAGIC

Master, why are you not on the
road? What are you doing here?

TRIPITAKA

Your absence has forced me to sit
here and wait for you.

MONKEY MAGIC

I was just gone for a little tea
with Old King Dragon of the Eastern
Ocean.

TRIPITAKA

Disciple, don't lie! It was less
than an hour since you left me, how
could you claim to have visited the
Eastern Ocean?

MONKEY MAGIC

I can fly one hundred and eight
thousand miles in single
somersault! That's why I can go and
return in no time at all.

TRIPITAKA

So while you're off having tea I
have to sit here and endure hunger.
Do you feel good about that?

MONKEY MAGIC

I can go beg some food for you?

TRIPITAKA

There's no need, fetch the dried
fruits from my bag.

Monkey goes to the luggage and discovers the Golden Headband.

MONKEY MAGIC

Wow! What's this?

TRIPITAKA

Oh that? That's nothing. Just
something I wore in my childhood.

MONKEY MAGIC

Master, can I try it on?

TRIPITAKA

It might not fit properly...

Monkey Magic puts on the Golden Headband.

MONKEY MAGIC

How does it look?

TRIPITAKA

Sorry Monkey...

Tripitaka starts to recite the spell.

MONKEY MAGIC

Ow! My head! It hurts! It hurts!

Monkey rolls around on the ground, trying to pry off the headband. Tripitaka stops saying the spell.

Monkey gets up and tries to take off the headband. It's stuck. He shoves his rod in to try and wedge it out. Tripitaka says the spell again.

MONKEY MAGIC (CONT'D)

Ow! That really hurts! Stop it!

Tripitaka stops the spell.

MONKEY MAGIC (CONT'D)

Master has put a spell on it!

TRIPITAKA

I was just saying a little prayer.

MONKEY MAGIC

Yeah well say it again and see what happens!

Tripitaka silently recites the spell again.

MONKEY MAGIC (CONT'D)

Ow! Stop! Stop! It hurts!

TRIPITAKA

Now will you listen to my instructions?

MONKEY MAGIC

Yes, I will.

TRIPITAKA

And never be unruly?

MONKEY MAGIC

I dare not.

Tripitaka stops the spell.

In a flash of rage, Monkey swings his wishing staff at Tripitaka -- who engages the spell -- causing him to fall to the ground in pain.

MONKEY MAGIC (CONT'D)

Master! Please I've learned my lesson! Stop! Please stop!

Tripitaka stops the spell.

TRIPITAKA
Will you follow my instruction?

MONKEY MAGIC
I will! But don't go saying that
spell for no reason.

TRIPITAKA
Help me onto the horse and let's
get going.

FADE TO:

EXT. EAGLE GRIEF STREAM - DAY

Tripitaka and Monkey arrive at the bank of the stream.

MONKEY MAGIC
This is the Serpent Coil Mountain.

Tripitaka and Monkey look into the stream, when suddenly --

A WHITE DRAGON splashes up from the depths, darting straight
for Tripitaka. Monkey pulls him out of harm's way.

The Dragon dives back into the stream.

The horse has vanished.

MONKEY MAGIC (CONT'D)
Master, that dragon has swallowed
our horse!

TRIPITAKA
If it has been eaten, how can I
walk through those thousand hills
and ten thousand waters?

Monkey takes out his magic rod and walks over to the bank of
the stream.

MONKEY MAGIC
Lawless Lizard! Return my horse!

TRIPITAKA
Monkey! What are you doing?

MONKEY MAGIC
I'm going to get my horse back.
Return my horse you ugly snake!

The Dragon splashes back above the stream.

WHITE DRAGON

Who dares insult me with his big
mouth?

MONKEY MAGIC

Just a cheeky Monkey. But you can
call me "The Great Sage, Equal to
Heaven!"

Monkey runs across the surface of the water, lunging at the
dragon with his rod.

The dragon breathes fire!

They fight!

Monkey wedges his rod in the dragon's open jaw.

The dragon spews more fire! Monkey jumps out of the way.

The dragon retreats back into the depths.

Monkey returns to Tripitaka.

TRIPITAKA

You said you could tame dragons and
subdue tigers. Why can't you subdue
this one?

Monkey Magic takes a deep breath to calm his anger.

MONKEY MAGIC

Fine. I'll go show him who is
master!

Monkey leaps into the stream. Tripitaka goes over to look
into the depths.

Some bubbles come to the surface.

Suddenly, Monkey emerges from the water atop a WHITE HORSE.

He rides over to Tripitaka, triumphant.

TRIPITAKA

What happened down there?

MONKEY MAGIC

It turns out this Dragon was freed
by Guanyin in order to help you on
your journey. So I changed him into
a horse.

TRIPITAKA

How?

MONKEY MAGIC

Monkey Magic.

FADE TO:

EXT. THE ROAD WEST - DAY

A YOUNG MAN, walks towards Tripitaka and Monkey Magic.

YOUNG MAN

Are you Holy Priests?

MONKEY MAGIC

Yes, what is it to you?

YOUNG MAN

I was hoping you would say a prayer for my sister. She needs some help, you see. Where are you headed?

TRIPITAKA

We are scripture pilgrims on a Journey to India.

YOUNG MAN

My village is five miles West of here. I can offer you some food and lodgings. Father can explain.

EXT. GAO VILLAGE - DAY

Tripitaka and Monkey Magic enter the village.

VILLAGERS look on at them, expectantly.

INT. GAO VILLAGE - COTTAGE - DAY

The young man introduces Tripitaka and Monkey to his FATHER.

FATHER

Are these the exorcists?

MONKEY MAGIC

I am the Great Sage, and this is my Master, Tripitaka.

YOUNG MAN

They are Holy Monks, who have travelled a great distance.

FATHER

It's about my son-in-law. We never had a son you see. We were hoping to find an heir. He married my youngest daughter. Things were going well. He worked the fields without even using a buffalo. And had an appetite to match. Then, he started to change...

TRIPITAKA

What do you mean?

FATHER

His appearance...

MONKEY MAGIC

Don't be shy, what did he look like?

FATHER

This whole affair has brought shame on our family. We haven't seen our daughter for more than a year. We don't know if she is alive or dead.

MONKEY MAGIC

So he's some kind of monster?

FATHER

A pig monster!

TRIPITAKA

A pig monster?

MONKEY MAGIC

You're in luck. Because we are, in fact, most experienced at capturing monsters.

WU (V.O.)

And so Monkey obtained the full details of the affair, including the known whereabouts of the pig monster.

Monkey summons his magic cloud, and flies off.

EXT. PIG MONSTER'S DEN - DAY

Monkey lands outside the entrance to the den. He calls out into the darkness.

MONKEY MAGIC
Hello?

GREEN ORCHID (O.S.)
Hello?!

MONKEY MAGIC
I am the Great Sage, Equal to
Heaven and I've come to rescue you
from the pig monster!

An awkward pause.

GREEN ORCHID (O.S.)
He's not here!

MONKEY MAGIC
Don't be silly, I can smell him!
Come out here you pig monster! Let
Old Monkey fry your bacon!

The Pig Monster emerges from the den, putting his shirt on.

GREEN ORCHID
Don't hurt him!

PIG MONSTER
I'm not afraid of you Great Sage.
You see this muckrake. This
muckrake was forged in heaven by
the finest steel. Mars himself
added the charcoals piece by piece.

MONKEY MAGIC
Don't brag too much, idiot! Old
Monkey will stretch out his head
right here and you can give it a
blow!

The Pig Monster looks at him uncertain.

PIG MONSTER
Are you sure? I might just knock
your head off completely.

MONKEY MAGIC
Hit me you stupid hog!

The Pig Monster strikes down on Monkey with all his might --
sparks fly -- it bounces back. Monkey is unharmed.

Piggy cowers. Green Orchid runs over to protect him.

PIG MONSTER

Don't hurt me! We're just young and
in love! Is that so wrong?

Monkey holds up his rod and is about to strike --

GREEN ORCHID

The Monkey has come to steal all
your gold and treasures!

MONKEY MAGIC

Me? I'm a holy monk, not a thief.
Besides, this pig has no treasures.

She recoils from him with utter disgust.

GREEN ORCHID

You ugly lying swine! Where are my
treasures!

PIG MONSTER

Sweetheart! I was just talking
figuratively...

She slaps him and runs away.

PIG MONSTER (CONT'D)

Great Sage, have you simply come
here to terrorise me? What is your
reason for being here?

MONKEY MAGIC

If you must know, I am accompanying
a scripture pilgrim.

Piggy's eyes light up.

PIG MONSTER

Please! I submit! Take me to meet
this Holy Monk!

EXT. GAO VILLAGE - DAY

Monkey leads Piggy, who is tied up, through the village.

VILLAGERS glare at him.

MONKEY MAGIC

Master, this pig monster has
requested an audience. Speak,
idiot!

PIG MONSTER

I am the Marshall of the Heavenly Reeds, I got drunk and dallied with the Goddess of the Moon and was banished to Earth. Guanyin, the compassionate, promised to free me from this incarnation, should I accompany you on your scripture pilgrimage.

TRIPITAKA

If you are to be my disciple, will you follow the practice of austerities?

Pigsy reluctantly nods.

PIG MONSTER

A little drink here or there wouldn't hurt, would it?

The Father watches on.

FATHER

I cannot thank you enough. What gifts can I give you?

TRIPITAKA

We are Holy Monks, we cannot accept any gratuity.

PIG MONSTER

Master, some new shoes would be nice. Or at least some food for the journey.

MONKEY MAGIC

Shut-up! Didn't you hear what the Master said? You're a Holy Monk now!

Green Orchid glares venomously at Pigsy as they depart.

WU (V.O.)

And so Pigsy entered their fold, leaving behind worldly pleasures for the many trials and tribulations that would await them.

EXT. THE ROAD WEST - DAY

Tripitaka, Monkey and Pigsy travel west.

WU (V.O.)
The three of them proceeded toward
the West, and for about a month it
was an uneventful journey.

EXT. PAGODA MOUNTAIN - DAY

Pigsy stops, looks up at a tree.

PIGSY
I know this place.

TRIPITAKA
Where are we?

PIGSY
The crow lives here.

Above them, a murder of crows.

The murder dives down on them!

And materialise into the CHAN MASTER, who stands before them.

CHAN MASTER
Hello Pigsy, how do you have the
good fortune to journey with the
Holy Monk?

MONKEY
Who is this person? And why does he
recognise you, and not me?

PIGSY
He is a Holy Man, like Master.

CHAN MASTER
I haven't yet had the pleasure of
meeting you.

TRIPITAKA
This is my disciple, Monkey Magic.

CHAN MASTER
On your journey West?

TRIPITAKA
How did you know?

PIGSY
He has knowledge of past and future
events.

TRIPITAKA
Will we make it to India?

The Chan Master smiles.

CHAN MASTER
Though it may be very far, you will
arrive there one day.

TRIPITAKA
Teacher, how did you become so
accomplished in the way?

CHAN MASTER
In emptiness, there are no forms
and no sensations, perceptions,
volition, or consciousness. Because
there is nothing to be attained,
the mind of the Bodhisattva has no
hindrances, no terror or fear. He
is far removed from error and
delusion. Thus I impart these words
to help you on your journey.

Tripitaka bows to express his gratitude.

The Chan Master smiles, disintegrates into a murder of crows,
and flies away.

FADE TO:

EXT. DUE-TO-FALL MOUNTAIN - DAY

The three walk into a gully. A WILD WIND sweeps up.

TRIPITAKA
The wind is rising!

MONKEY MAGIC
Why fear the wind? Nothing to be
afraid of.

PIGSY
The wind is too strong! Let's find
shelter until it dies down.

MONKEY MAGIC
What would happen if you were to
meet a monster face to face?
Although there is something strange
about this wind...

Monkey sniffs the wind.

MONKEY MAGIC (CONT'D)
Smells like a tiger. Or some other
sort of monster.

Suddenly, A TIGER appears, roars at Monkey.

PIGSY
Cursed beast!

Pigsy charges at the tiger with his muckrake.

The tiger morphs into A VANGUARD SOLDIER, wearing tiger skin.

TIGER SOLDIER
I am the vanguard of the army of
Great King Yellow Wind and you look
like the perfect hors d'oeuvres!

PIGSY
We're not food, we're holy monks!

Pigsy and the soldier fight!

The tiger soldier parries the muckrake, morphs into the wind.

TIGER SOLDIER
Ha ha ha ha!

Tripitaka has vanished!

MONKEY MAGIC
He took the master!

EXT. CAVE OF THE YELLOW WIND KING - DAY

TWO GUARDS stand in front of the door to the cave.

The tiger soldier carries Tripitaka over his shoulder.

TIGER SOLDIER
Go report to the Great King and say
that the Tiger Vanguard has
captured a monk.

INT. CAVE OF THE YELLOW WIND KING - DAY

The tiger soldier kneels before the GREAT KING YELLOW WIND,
with Tripitaka, who is tied up.

TIGER SOLDIER
Great King! I have captured a monk
for your culinary pleasure. How
would you like him? Steamed or
Fried?

KING YELLOW WIND

I have heard some rumours, that
this is Tripitaka, the divine monk
in search of scriptures by imperial
decree of the Great Tang. Was he
alone?

TIGER SOLDIER

He has, in fact, two disciples. I
changed my form and escaped them.

KING YELLOW WIND

Rumours are that he has under him a
disciple whose name is Monkey
Magic, and who possesses tremendous
magical power...

TIGER SOLDIER

There was a Pig and a Monkey, but
they did not seem very impressive.

KING YELLOW WIND

Tie him up. We'll wait three or
four days. Then, if we are
undisturbed, we can eat him!

SEVEN DEMONS rush up from the sides, grabbing Tripitaka,
dragging him away.

EXT. DUE-TO-FALL MOUNTAIN - DAY

Pigsy and Monkey look around for their master.

PIGSY

Heavens! Heavens! They've taken
Master away!

Pigsy cries.

MONKEY MAGIC

Don't cry! The moment you cry, you
already feel defeated. They have to
be somewhere in this mountain.
Let's search for them!

Monkey leads Pigsy on the search.

WU (V.O.)

They searched for a long time,
until finally they found the
entrance to the cave...

EXT. CAVE OF THE YELLOW WIND KING - DISTANT - DAY

Monkey and Pigsy crouch behind a rock, watching the guards in the distance.

MONKEY MAGIC
You wait here. Old Monkey will go
rescue Master.

PIGSY
Go quickly!

Monkey marches over to the guards.

MONKEY MAGIC
Monster! Send out my master at
once, lest I level your dwelling!

INT. CAVE OF THE YELLOW WIND KING - DAY

A LITTLE DEMON runs over to the Yellow Wind King.

LITTLE DEMON
Disaster!

KING YELLOW WIND
What's the matter?

LITTLE DEMON
Outside the cave door is a Monk,
who calls himself Monkey Magic. He
is demanding the return of his
master.

The Yellow Wind King turns to the Tiger Soldier.

KING YELLOW WIND
I asked you to patrol the mountain,
catch a few buffalo, wild boar or
goat. Instead, you've caught a Holy
Monk and upset the Great Sage,
Equal to Heaven!

TIGER SOLDIER
Put your worries to rest, I will
capture this Magic Monkey and serve
him as a condiment for your meal.

IMAGE: The tiger soldier grabs two bronze scimitars.

EXT. CAVE OF THE YELLOW WIND KING - DAY

The tiger soldier marches out the door of the cave.

TIGER SOLDIER

Where did you come from monkey,
that you dare make such a racket!

MONKEY MAGIC

You tricky tiger. You better send
my master out immediately or I
won't spare your life.

TIGER SOLDIER

I took your master so he could be
served to my Great King as meat for
his rice. Now I'll catch you too
and you'll be eaten along with him.

MONKEY MAGIC

You've got a big mouth, but can you
fight?

Monkey lunges at him with his rod.

They fight!

The tiger soldier is quick, transforming into wind and back
again, circling Monkey.

Monkey has the upper hand. The tiger soldier retreats,
heading towards Pigsy -- who strikes with his muckrake.

The tiger soldier explodes into a ball of flames.

INT. CAVE OF THE YELLOW WIND KING - DAY

ANOTHER LITTLE DEMON runs in.

LITTLE DEMON

Great King! The Tiger Soldier was
beaten to death by the ugly monk.

KING YELLOW WIND

This fellow does not know when to
stop! I have not eaten his master,
but he has killed my best soldier!
Bring me my armor!

A GROUP OF DEMONS quickly bring out the golden armour, which
is buckled and laced. He grabs a steel trident.

EXT. CAVE OF THE YELLOW WIND KING - DAY