Playwright's Note

The roots of FOB are thoroughly American. The play began when a sketch I was writing about a limousine trip through Westwood, California, was invaded by two figures from American literature. Fa Mu Lan, the girl who takes her father's place in battle, from Maxine Hong Kingston's The Woman Warrior, and Gwan Gung, the god of fighters and writers, from Frank Chin's Gee, Pop!

This fact testifies to the existence of an Asian American literary tradition. Japanese Americans, for instance, wrote plays in American concentration camps during World War II. Earlier, with the emergence of the railroads, came regular performances of Cantonese operas, featuring Gwan Gung, the adopted god of Chinese America.
FOB was first produced by Nancy Takahashi for the Stanford Asian American Theatre Project. It was performed at Okada House on March 2, 1979, with the following cast:

DALE ......................... Loren Fong
GRACE ....................... Hope Nakamura
STEVE ........................ David Pating

Directed by the author; lights by Roger Tang; sets by George Prince; costumes by Kathy Ko; Randall Tong, assistant director.

The play was then developed at the 1979 O'Neill National Playwrights Conference in Waterford, Connecticut, with the cast of Ernest Abuba, Calvin Jung, and Ginny Yang, directed by Robert Alan Ackerman.

FOB was produced in New York by Joseph Papp at the New York Shakespeare Festival Public Theater, where it opened on June 8, 1980, with the following cast:

DALE ......................... Calvin Jung
GRACE ....................... Ginny Yang
STEVE ........................ John Lone

On-stage Stage
Managers ..................... Willy Corpus
Tzi Ma

On-stage Musician ........... Lucia Hwong

Directed by Mako; lighting by Victor En Yu Tan; sets by Akira Yoshimura and James E. Mayo; costumes by Susan Hom; choreography by John Lone; music by Lucia Hwong; David Oyama, assistant director.

CHARACTERS
(all in early twenties)

DALE, a second-generation American of Chinese descent.
GRACE, his cousin, a first-generation Chinese American
STEVE, her friend, a Chinese newcomer.

PLACE
The back room of a small Chinese restaurant in California.

TIME
The year 1980.

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES
Act one, Scene 1. Late afternoon.
Act one, Scene 2. A few minutes later.
Act two. After Dinner.

DEFINITIONS
chong you bing is a type of Chinese pancake
Chinese appetizer often made with dough with a consistency similar to that of pita bread.
Gung Gung means "grandfather."
Mei Guo means "beautiful country," a Chinese concept.
da dao and mao are two swords, the traditional weapons of Gwan Gung and Fa Mu Lan, respectively.
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The back room of a small Chinese restaurant in Torrance, California.

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Act one, Scene 1. Late afternoon.
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Act two. After Dinner.

DEFINITIONS

chong you bing is a type of Chinese pancake, a Northern Chinese appetizer often made with dough and scallions, with a consistency similar to that of pita bread.
Gung Gung means “grandfather.”
Mei Guo means “beautiful country,” a Chinese term for America.
da dao and mao are two swords, the traditional weapons of Gwan Gung and Fa Mu Lan, respectively.
PROLOGUE

LIGHTS UP on a blackboard. Enter DALE dressed preppie. The blackboard is the type which can flip around so both sides can be used. He lectures like a university professor, using the board to illustrate his points.

DALE: F-O-B. Fresh Off the Boat. FOB. What words can you think of that characterize the FOB? Clumsy, ugly, greasy FOB. Loud, stupid, four-eyed FOB. Big feet. Horny. Like Lenny in Of Mice and Men. Very good. A literary reference. High-water pants. Floods, to be exact. Someone you wouldn’t want your sister to marry. If you are a sister, someone you wouldn’t want to marry. That assumes we’re talking about boy FOBs, of course. But girl FOBs aren’t really as... FOBish. Boy FOBs are the worst, the... pits. They are the sworn enemies of all ABC—oh, that’s “American Born Chinese”—of all ABC girls. Before an ABC girl will be seen on Friday night with a boy FOB in Westwood, she would rather burn off her face.

(He flips around the board. On the other side is written: “1. Where to find FOBs. 2. How to spot a FOB”)

FOBs can be found in great numbers almost anywhere you happen to be, but there are some locations where they cluster in particularly large swarms. Colleges, Chinese club discos, Asian sororities, Oriental churches, shopping malls, Bee Gee concerts. How can you spot a FOB you can’t answer that, you might be one. (board, reviews) F-O-B. Fresh Off the Boat. Ugly, greasy FOB. Loud, stupid, four-eyed FOB. Big feet. Horny, Like Lenny in Of Mice and Men. F-O-B. Fresh FOB.

(LIGHTS FADE to black. We hear American pop in the funk—R&B—disco area)
PROLOGUE

a blackboard. Enter DALE dressed preppie. The type which can flip around so both sides can be like a university professor, using the board to:


(LIGHTS FADE to black. We hear American pop music, preferably in the funk—R&B—disco area)

cluster in particularly large swarms. Community Colleges, Chinese club discos, Asian sororities, Asian fraternities, Oriental churches, shopping malls, and, of course, Bee Gee concerts. How can you spot a FOB? Look out! If you can’t answer that, you might be one. (He flips back the board, reviews) F-O-B. Fresh Off the Boat. FOB. Clumsy, ugly, greasy FOB. Loud, stupid, four-eyed FOB. Big feet. Horny. Like Lenny in Of Mice and Men. Floods. Like Lenny in Of Mice and Men. F-O-B. Fresh Off the Boat. FOB.

(LIGHTS FADE to black. We hear American pop music, preferably in the funk—R&B—disco area)
ACT ONE

Scene 1

The back room of a small Chinese restaurant in Torrance, California. Single table, with tablecloth; various chairs, supplies. One door leads outside, a back exit, another leads to the kitchen. Lights up on GRACE, at the table. The music is coming from a small radio. On the table is a small, partially wrapped box, and a huge blob of discarded Scotch tape. As GRACE tries to wrap the box, we see what has been happening: The tape she's using is stuck; so, in order to pull it out, she must tug so hard that an unusable quantity of tape is dispensed. Enter STEVE, from the back door, unnoticed by GRACE. He stands, waiting to catch her eye, tries to speak, but his voice is drowned out by the music. He is dressed in a stylish summer outfit.

GRACE: Aaaai-ya!
STEVE: Hey!
(No response; he turns off the music)
STEVE: (In Chinese) Yeah.
STEVE: (In Chinese) Yeah. Do you serve chong you bing today?
GRACE: (Picking up box) Could've skipped the wrapping paper, just covered it with tape.
STEVE: (In Chinese) Excuse me!

GRACE: Yeah? (Pause) You wouldn't have any o ya?
STEVE: (English from now onward) Sorry? No. bing. I want to buy bing.
GRACE: Not bing! Tape. Have you got any tap STEVE: Tape? Of course I don't have tape.
GRACE: Just checking.
STEVE: Do you have any bing?
(Pause)
GRACE: Look, we're closed till five...
STEVE: Idiot girl.
GRACE: Why don't you take a menu?
STEVE: I want you to tell me!
(Pause)
GRACE: (Ignoring STEVE) Working in a Chin... you learn to deal with obnoxious customer: STEVE: Hey! You!
GRACE: If the customer's Chinese, you insult forks.
STEVE: I said I want you to tell me!
GRACE: If the customer's Anglo, you starve giving forks.
STEVE: You serve bing or not?
GRACE: But it's always easy just to dump wh: to be in your hands at the moment. (She sticks the tape blob on STEVE's face)
STEVE: I suggest you answer my question at c GRACE: And I suggest you grab a menu at things for yourself. Look, I'll get you one that?
STEVE: I want it from your mouth!
GRACE: Sorry. We don't keep 'em there.
STEVE: If I say they are there, they are there.
(He grabs her box)
ACT ONE

Scene 1

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GRACE: Yeah? (Pause) You wouldn't have any on you, would
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STEVE: (English from now onward) Sorry? No. I don't have
bing. I want to buy bing.
GRACE: Not bing! Tape. Have you got any tape?
STEVE: Tape? Of course I don't have tape.
GRACE: Just checking.
STEVE: Do you have any bing?
(Pause)
GRACE: Look, we're closed till five . . .
STEVE: Idiot girl.
GRACE: Why don't you take a menu?
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(Pause)
GRACE: (Ignoring STEVE) Working in a Chinese restaurant,
you learn to deal with obnoxious customers.
STEVE: Hey! You!
GRACE: If the customer's Chinese, you insult them by giv-
ing forks.
STEVE: I said I want you to tell me!
GRACE: If the customer's Anglo, you starve them by not
giving forks.
STEVE: You serve bing or not?
GRACE: But it's always easy just to dump whatever happens
to be in your hands at the moment.
(She sticks the tape blob on STEVE's face)
STEVE: I suggest you answer my question at once!
GRACE: And I suggest you grab a menu and start doing
things for yourself. Look, I'll get you one, even. How's
that?
STEVE: I want it from your mouth!
GRACE: Sorry. We don't keep 'em there.
STEVE: If I say they are there, they are there.
(He grabs her box)
GRACE: What— What're you doing? Give that back to me!
(They parry around the table)
STEVE: Aaah! Now it's different, isn't it? Now you're listening to me.
GRACE: 'Scuse me, but you really are an asshole, you know that? Who do you think you are?
STEVE: What are you asking me? Who I am?
GRACE: Yes. You take it easy with that, hear?
STEVE: You ask who I am?
GRACE: One more second and I'm gonna call the cops.
STEVE: Very well, I will tell you.
(She picks up the phone. He slams it down)
STEVE: I said, I'll tell you.
GRACE: If this is how you go around meeting people, I think it's pretty screwed.
STEVE: Silence! I am Gwan Gung! God of warriors, writers, and prostitutes!
(Pause)
GRACE: Bullshit!
STEVE: What?
GRACE: Bullshit! Bull-shit! You are not Gwan Gung. And gimme back my box.
STEVE: I am Gwan Gung. Perhaps we should see what you have in here.
GRACE: Don't open that! (Beat) You don't look like Gwan Gung. Gwan Gung is a warrior.
STEVE: I am a warrior!
GRACE: Yeah? Why are you so scrappy, then? You wouldn't last a day in battle.
STEVE: My credit! Many a larger man has been humiliated by the strength in one of my size.
GRACE: Tell me, then. Tell me, if you are Gwan Gung. Tell me of your battles. Of one battle. Of Gwan Gung's favorite battle.
STEVE: Very well. Here is a living memory: One day, Gwan Gung woke up and saw the ring of fire a...

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Gung woke up and saw the ring of fire around the sun and decided, “This is a good day to slay villagers.” So he got up, washed himself, and looked over a map of the Three Kingdoms to decide where first to go. For those were days of rebellion and falling empires, so opportunity to slay was abundant. But planned slaughter required an order and restraint which soon became tedious. So Gwan Gung decided a change was in order. He called for his tailor, who he asked to make a beautiful blindfold of layered silk, fine enough to be weightless, yet thick enough to blind the wearer completely. The tailor complied, and soon produced a perfect piece of red silk, exactly suited to Gwan Gung’s demands. In gratitude, Gwan Gung stayed the tailor’s execution sentence. He then put on his blindfold, pulled out his sword, and began passing over the land, swiping at whatever got in his path. You see, Gwan Gung figured there was so much revenge and so much evil in those days that he could slay at random and still stand a good chance of fulfilling justice. This worked very well until his sword, in its blind fury, hit upon an old and irritable atom bomb.
(GRACE catches STEVE, takes back the box) GRACE: Ha! Some Gwan Gung you are! Some warrior you are! You can’t even protect a tiny box from the grasp of a woman! How could you have shielded your big head in battle?
STEVE: Shield! Shield! I still go to battle!
GRACE: Only your head goes to battle, ’cause only your head is Gwan Gung.
(Pause) STEVE: You made me think of you as a quiet listener. A good trick. What is your name?
GRACE: You can call me “The Woman Who Has Defeated Gwan Gung,” if that’s really who you are.
STEVE: Very well. But that name will change before long.
GRACE: That story you told—that wasn't a Gwan Gung story.

STEVE: What—you think you know all of my adventures through stories? All the books in the world couldn't record the life of one man, let alone a god. Now—do you serve bing?

GRACE: I won the battle; you go look yourself. There.

STEVE: You working here?

GRACE: Part time. It's my father's place. I'm also in school.

STEVE: School? University?

GRACE: Yeah. UCLA.

STEVE: Excellent. I have also come to America for school.

GRACE: Well, what use would Gwan Gung have for school?

STEVE: Wisdom. Wisdom makes a warrior stronger.

GRACE: Pretty good. If you are Gwan Gung, you're not the dumb jock I was expecting. Got a lot to learn about school, though.

STEVE: Expecting? You were expecting me?

GRACE: (Quickly) No, no. I meant, what I expected from the stories.

STEVE: Tell me, how do people think of Gwan Gung in America? Do they shout my name while rushing into battle, or is it too sacred to be used in such ostentatious display?

GRACE: Uh—no.

STEVE: No—what? I didn't ask a “no” question.

GRACE: What I mean is, neither. They don't do either of those.

STEVE: Not good. The name of Gwan Gung has been restricted for the use of leaders only?

GRACE: Uh—no. I think you better sit down.

STEVE: This is very scandalous. How are the people to take my strength? Gwan Gung might as well not exist, for all they know.

GRACE: You got it.

STEVE: I got what? You seem to be having trouble questions fit my answers.

GRACE: No, I think you're having trouble questions fit my answers.

STEVE: What is this nonsense? Speak clearly, at all.

GRACE: Speak clearly?

STEVE: Yes. Like a warrior.

GRACE: Well, you see, Gwan Gung, god of warriors, and prostitutes, no one gives a wipe about here. You're dead.

( Pause )

STEVE: You... you make me laugh.

GRACE: You died way back... hell, no one even missed a burp.

STEVE: You lie! The name of Gwan Gung around the world—you jeopardize your honor. ( Pause ) You—you have heard of it, can you say—?

GRACE: Oh, I just study it a lot—Chinese Am

STEVE: Ah. In the schools, in the universities leaders are born, they study my ways.

GRACE: Well, fifteen of us do.

STEVE: Fifteen. Fifteen of the brightest, of the most.

GRACE: One wants to be a dental technician.

STEVE: A man studies Gwan Gung in order to

GRACE: There's also a middle-aged woman that with her kids.

STEVE: I refuse—I don't believe you—your just angry at me for treating you like a servant trying to sap my faith. The people—they know me—they know the deeds of G

GRACE: Check it out yourself.
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UCLA.
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your answers fit my questions.
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at all.
GRACE: Speak clearly?
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ers, and prostitutes, no one gives a wipe about you ’round
here. You’re dead.
(Pause)
STEVE: You . . . you make me laugh.
GRACE: You died way back . . . hell, no one even noticed
when you died—that’s how bad off your PR was. You
died and no one even missed a burp.
STEVE: You lie! The name of Gwan Gung must be feared
around the world—you jeopardize your health with such
remarks. (Pause) You—you have heard of me, I see. How
can you say—?
GRACE: Oh, I just study it a lot—Chinese American history,
I mean.
STEVE: Ah. In the schools, in the universities, where new
leaders are born, they study my ways.
GRACE: Well, fifteen of us do.
STEVE: Fifteen. Fifteen of the brightest, of the most promising?
GRACE: One wants to be a dental technician.
STEVE: A man studies Gwan Gung in order to clean teeth?
GRACE: There’s also a middle-aged woman that’s kinda bored
with her kids.
STEVE: I refuse—I don’t believe you—your stories. You’re
just angry at me for treating you like a servant. You’re
trying to sap my faith. The people—the people outside—
they know me—they know the deeds of Gwan Gung.
GRACE: Check it out yourself.
STEVE: Very well. You will learn—learn not to test the spirit of Gwan Gung.

(Steve exits. Grace picks up the box. She studies it)

GRACE: Fa Mu Lan sits and waits. She learns to be still while the emperors, the dynasties, the foreign lands flow past, unaware of her slender form, thinking it a tree in the woods, a statue to a goddess long abandoned by her people. But Fa Mu Lan, the Woman Warrior, is not ashamed. She knows that the one who can exist without movement while the ages pass is the one to whom no victory can be denied. It is training, to wait. And Fa Mu Lan, the Woman Warrior, must train, for she is no goddess, but girl—girl who takes her father's place in battle. No goddess, but woman—warrior—woman (She breaks through the wrapping, reaches in, and pulls out another box, beautifully wrapped and ribboned)—and ghost. (She puts the new box on the shelf, goes to the phone, dials)

Hi, Dale? Hi, this is Grace... Pretty good. How 'bout you?... Good, good. Hey, listen, I'm sorry to ask you at the last minute and everything, but are you doing anything tonight?... Are you sure?... Oh, good. Would you like to go out with me and some of my friends?... Just out to dinner, then maybe we were thinking of going to a movie or something... Oh, good... Are you sure?... Yeah, okay. Um, we're all going to meet at the restaurant... No, our restaurant... right—as soon as possible. Okay, good... I'm really glad that you're coming. Sorry it's such short notice. Okay. Bye, now... Huh? Frank? Oh, okay. (Pause) Hi, Frank... Pretty good... Yeah?... No, I don't think so... Yeah... No, I'm sorry, I'd still rather not... I don't want to, okay? Do I have to be any clearer than that?... You are not!... You don't even know when they come—you'd have to lie on those tracks for hours... Forget it, okay?... Look, I'll get you a schedule so you can time it properly... It's not a favor, damn it. (She hangs up) Jesus!

(Steve enters)

STEVIE: Buncha weak boys, what do they know China Man—wearing a leisure suit—green! I know Gwan Gung? He says, "Hong I "No, no. Gwan Gung." He says, "Yeah. thousand people living on four acres. W year." I say, "No, no. Gwan Gung." He : Gwan Gung?" I say, "Yes, yes, Gwan Gung never been there before."

GRACE: See? Even if you didn't die—who car STEVE: Another kid—blue jeans and a T-shirt does he know Gwan Gung? He says, he d he knows Jesus Christ. What city is this no GRACE: Los Angeles.

STEVIE: This isn't the only place where a new land, is it?

GRACE: I guess a lot go to San Francisco.

STEVIE: Good. This place got a bunch of w here.

GRACE: Yeah.

STEVIE: They could never be followers of G who follow me must be loyal and righteou GRACE: Maybe you should try some other st; STEVE: Huh? What you say?

GRACE: Never mind. You'll get used to it— us.

(Pause. Steve begins laughing)

STEVIE: You are a very clever woman.

GRACE: Just average.

STEVIE: No. You do a good job to make it so Gung has no followers here. At the unive you study?

GRACE: Journalism.
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properly . . . It’s not a favor, damn it. Now goodbye!
(She hangs up) Jesus!
(STEVE enters)

STEVE: Buncha weak boys, what do they know? One man—
ChinaMan—wearing a leisure suit—green! I ask him, “You
know Gwan Gung?” He says, “Hong Kong?” I say,
“No, no. Gwan Gung.” He says, “Yeah. They got sixty
thousand people living on four acres. Went there last
year.” I say, “No, no. Gwan Gung.” He says, “Oooh!
Gwan Gung?” I say, “Yes, yes, Gwan Gung.” He says, “I
never been there before.”

GRACE: See? Even if you didn’t die—who cares?

STEVE: Another kid—blue jeans and a T-shirt—I ask him,
does he know Gwan Gung? He says, he doesn’t need it,
he knows Jesus Christ. What city is this now?

GRACE: Los Angeles.

STEVE: This isn’t the only place where a new ChinaMan can
land, is it?

GRACE: I guess a lot go to San Francisco.

STEVE: Good. This place got a bunch of weirdos around
here.

GRACE: Yeah.

STEVE: They could never be followers of Gwan Gung. All
who follow me must be loyal and righteous.

GRACE: Maybe you should try some other state.

STEVE: Huh? What you say?

GRACE: Never mind. You’ll get used to it—like the rest of
us.

(Pause. STEVE begins laughing)

STEVE: You are a very clever woman.

GRACE: Just average.

STEVE: No. You do a good job to make it seem like Gwan
Gung has no followers here. At the university, what do
you study?

GRACE: Journalism.
STEVE: Journalism—you are a writer, then?
GRACE: Of a sort.
STEVE: Very good. You are close to Gwan Gung’s heart.
GRACE: As close as I’m gonna get.
STEVE: I would like to go out tonight with you.
GRACE: I knew it. Look, I’ve heard a lot of lines before, and
yours is very creative, but . . .
STEVE: I will take you out.
GRACE: You will, huh?
STEVE: I do so because I find you worthy to be favored.
GRACE: You’re starting to sound like any other guy now.
STEVE: I’m sorry?
GRACE: Look—if you’re going to have any kinds of relation­ships with women in this country, you better learn to
give us some respect.
STEVE: Respect? I give respect.
GRACE: The pushy, aggressive type is out, understand?
STEVE: Taking you out is among my highest tokens of
respect.
GRACE: Oh, c’mon—they don’t even say that in Hong Kong.
STEVE: You are being asked out by Gwan Gung!
GRACE: I told you, you’re too wimpy to be Gwan Gung.
And even if you were, you’d have to wait your turn in
line.
STEVE: What?
GRACE: I already have something for tonight. My cousin
and I are having dinner.
STEVE: You would turn down Gwan Gung for your cousin?
GRACE: Well, he has an X-1/9.
(Pause)
STEVE: What has happened?
GRACE: Look—I tell you what. If you take both of us out,
then it’ll be okay, all right?
STEVE: I don’t want to go out with your cousin!
GRACE: Well, sorry. It’s part of the deal.

STEVE: Deal? What deals? Why am I made
deals?
GRACE: ‘Cause you’re in the U.S. in 1980,
rest of us. Now quit complaining. Will y
not?
(Pause)
STEVE: Gwan Gung . . . bows to no one’s
own.
GRACE: Fine. Why don’t you go down the street
Dragon Restaurant and see if they have bing?
STEVE: Do you have bing?
GRACE: See for yourself.

(Shel hands him a menu. He exits. Grace
box)

GRACE: Fa Mu Lan stood in the center of th
turned round and round as the bits of finge
tongues, the arms, the legs, the peeled sk
maidenheads, all whirled by. She pulled th
closer to her body, stepped over the torso
the one of her family who might still be at
the house that was once her home, crushing
haste, only to find the doorway covered wit
and dried skin of that which was once her
Finding her sister tied spread-eagle on
her mother in the basket in pieces, findin
nowhere. The Woman Warrior went to the
had stayed unbroken, and let her gown
drop to the ground.
She
graphs that had long ago been carved into t
young back . . . Carved by her mother, w
in the basket.
(Dale enters, approaches Grace)
You are a writer, then?

sort.

good. You are close to Gwan Gung's heart.
lose as I'm gonna get.
uld like to go out tonight with you.
w it. Look, I've heard a lot of lines before, and
ry creative, but . . .
take you out.
will, huh?
o because I find you worthy to be favored.
re starting to sound like any other guy now.
rry?
— if you're going to have any kinds of relation-
omen in this country, you better learn to
pect.
? I give respect.
ushy, aggressive type is out, understand?
you out is among my highest tokens of
non—they don't even say that in Hong Kong.
c being asked out by Gwan Gung!
you, you're too wimpy to be Gwan Gung.
you were, you'd have to wait your turn in

dy have something for tonight. My cousin
ing dinner.
ld turn down Gwan Gung for your cousin?
has an X-1/9.

happen?
I tell you what. If you take both of us out,
ay, all right?
nt to go out with your cousin!
ry. It's part of the deal.

STEVE: Deal? What deals? Why am I made part of these
deals?
GRACE: 'Cause you're in the U.S. in 1980, just like the
rest of us. Now quit complaining. Will you take it or
not?
(Pause)
STEVE: Gwan Gung . . . bows to no one's terms but his
own.
GRACE: Fine. Why don't you go down the street to Imperial
Dragon Restaurant and see if they have bing?
STEVE: Do you have bing?
GRACE: See for yourself.
(She hands him a menu. He exits. GRACE moves with the
box.)
GRACE: Fa Mu Lan stood in the center of the village and
turned round and round as the bits of fingers, the tips of
tongues, the arms, the legs, the peeled skulls, the torn
maidenheads, all whirled by. She pulled the loose gown
closer to her body, stepped over the torsos, in search of
the one of her family who might still be alive. Climbing
through an open window, noticing the shiny black
thousand-day-old egg still floating in the shiny black sauce.
Finding her sister tied spread-eagle on the mat, finding
her mother in the basket in pieces, finding her brother
nowhere. The Woman Warrior went to the mirror, which
had stayed unbroken, and let her gown come loose and
drop to the ground. She turned and studied the ideo-
graphs that had long ago been carved into the flesh of her
young back . . . Carved by her mother, who lay carved
in the basket.
(DALE enters, approaches GRACE)
She ran her fingers over the skin and felt the ridges where there had been pain.

(DALE is behind GRACE)

GRACE: But now they were firm and hard.

(DALE touches GRACE, who reacts by swinging around and knocking him to the ground. Only after he is down does she see his face)

GRACE: Dale! Shit! I'm sorry. I didn't . . .

DALE: (Groggy) Am I late?

GRACE: I didn't know it was you, Dale.

DALE: Yeah. Well, I didn't announce myself.

GRACE: You shouldn't just come in here like that.

DALE: You're right. Never again.

GRACE: I mean, you should've yelled from the dining room.

DALE: Dangerous neighborhood, huh?

GRACE: I'm so sorry. Really.

DALE: Yeah. Uh—where're your other friends? They on the floor around here too?

GRACE: No. Uh—this is really bad, Dale. I'm really sorry.

DALE: What?—you can't make it after all?

GRACE: No, I can make it. It's just that . . .

DALE: They can't make it? Okay, so it'll just be us. That's cool.

GRACE: Well, not quite us.

DALE: Oh.

GRACE: Sec, what happened is—You know my friend Judy?

DALE: Uh—no.

GRACE: Well, she was gonna come with us—with me and this guy I know—his name is . . . Steve.

DALE: Oh, he's with you, right?

GRACE: Well, sort of. So since she was gonna come, I thought you should come too.

DALE: To even out the couples?

GRACE: But now my friend Judy, she decided she had too much work to do, so . . . oh, it's all messed up.

DALE: Well, that's okay. I can go home—or I you, if this guy Steve doesn't mind. W anyway?

GRACE: I guess he's late. You know, he just country.

DALE: Oh yeah? How'd you meet him?

GRACE: At a Chinese dance at UCLA.

DALE: Hmmm. Some of those FOBs get m fast.

(GRACE glares)

DALE: Oh. Is he . . . nice?

GRACE: He's okay. I don't know him that well.

DALE: Hey, I said it was okay. Jesus, it's not l me or anything.

GRACE: For that, too.

DALE: Look—(He hits himself) No pain!

GRACE: What I meant was, I'm sorry tonight's g up.

DALE: Oh, it's okay. I wasn't doing anything at

GRACE: I know, but still . . .

(Silence)

DALE: Hey, that Frank is a joke, huh?

GRACE: Yeah. He's kind of a pain.

DALE: Yeah. What an asshole to call my friend.

GRACE: Did you hear him on the phone?

DALE: Yeah, all that railroad stuff?

GRACE: It was real dumb.

DALE: Dumb? He's dumb. He's doing it right n

GRACE: Huh? Are you serious?

DALE: Yeah. I'm tempted to tie him down so, fo life, he won't screw something up.

GRACE: You're kidding!

DALE: Huh? Yeah, sure I'm kidding. Who would ing with?
er try nwang

fingers over the skin and felt the ridges where
been pain.

GRACE (fingers over the skin and felt the ridges where
been pain.)

now they were firm and hard.

GRACE, who reacts by swinging around and
im to the ground. Only after he is down does she


!

Shit! I'm sorry. I didn't . . . !


Am I late?

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ould come too.

out the couples?

my friend Judy, she decided she had too
do, so . . . oh, it's all messed up.

DALE: Well, that's okay. I can go home—or I can go with

you, if this guy Steve doesn't mind. Where is he,

anyway?

GRACE: I guess he's late. You know, he just came to this

country.

DALE: Oh yeah? How'd you meet him?

GRACE: At a Chinese dance at UCLA.

DALE: Hmmmm. Some of those FOBs get moving pretty

fast.

GRACE glares)

DALE: Oh. Is he . . . nice?

GRACE: He's okay. I don't know him that well. You know,

I'm really sorry.

DALE: Hey, I said it was okay. Jesus, it's not like you hurt

me or anything.

GRACE: For that, too.

DALE: Look— (He hits himself) No pain!

GRACE: What I meant was, I'm sorry tonight's got so messed

up.

DALE: Oh, it's okay. I wasn't doing anything anyway.

GRACE: I know, but still . . .

(Silence)

DALE: Hey, that Frank is a joke, huh?

GRACE: Yeah. He's kind of a pain.

DALE: Yeah. What an asshole to call my friend.

GRACE: Did you hear him on the phone?

DALE: Yeah, all that railroad stuff?

GRACE: It was real dumb.

DALE: Dumb? He's dumb. He's doing it right now.

GRACE: Huh? Are you serious?

DALE: Yeah. I'm tempted to tie him down so, for once in his

life, he won't screw something up.

GRACE: You're kidding!

DALE: Huh? Yeah, sure I'm kidding. Who would I go bowl-
ing with?
GRACE: No, I mean about him actually going out there—is that true?
DALE: Yeah—he’s lying there. You know, right on Torrance Boulevard?
GRACE: No?
DALE: Yeah!
GRACE: But what if a train really comes?
DALE: I dunno. I guess he’ll get up.
GRACE: I don’t believe it!
DALE: Unless he’s fallen asleep by that time or something.
GRACE: He’s crazy.
DALE: Which is a real possibility for Frank, he’s such a bore anyway.
GRACE: He’s weird.
DALE: No, he just thinks he’s in love with you.
GRACE: Is he?
DALE: I dunno. We’ll see when the train comes.
GRACE: Do you think we should do something?
DALE: What?—You’re not gonna fall for the twerp, are you?
GRACE: Well, no, but . . .
DALE: He’s stupid—and ugly, to boot.
GRACE: . . . but staying on the tracks is kinda dangerous.
DALE: Let him. Teach him a lesson.
GRACE: You serious?
DALE: (Moving closer to GRACE) Not to fool with my cousin.
(He strokes her hair. They freeze in place, but his arm continues to stroke. STEVE enters, oblivious of DALE and GRACE, who do not respond to him. He speaks to the audience as if it were a panel of judges)
STEVE: No! Please! Listen to me! This is fifth time I come here. I tell you both my parents, I tell you their parents, I tell you their parents’ parents and who was adopted great-granduncle. I tell you how many beggars in home town and name of their blind dogs. I tell you number of steps from my front door to temple, to well, to governor house, to fields, to whorehouse, to fiftieth neighbor toilet—you ask only: Where in whorehouse? I tell north, south, west, east, north-northeast, south-southeast—Why will you not let me enter it come here five times—I raise lifetime fortune. Five times, I first come here, you say to me you return me on boat to fathers and uncles no treasure, no fortune, no rice. I only wan America—come to “Mountain of Gold.” And tain and I hate America and I hate you! (Pause; light shift. GRACE and DALE become more of STEVE’s presence)
GRACE: Oh! Steve, this is Dale, my cousin. Da . . .
DALE: Hey, nice to meet . . .
STEVE: (Now speaking with Chinese accent) Hello I am fine.
(Pause)
DALE: Uh, yeah. So, you just go What’cha think?
(STEVE smiles and nods, DALE smiles and nods; DALE laughs; STEVE hits DALE on the shoulder some more. They stop laughing)
DALE: Oh. Uh—good. (Pause) Well, it looks gonna be the three of us, right? (To GRACE) Wanna go?
GRACE: I think Steve’s already taken care of Steve?
STEVE: Excuse?
GRACE: You made reservations at a restaurant?
STEVE: Oh, reservations. Yes, yes.
DALE: Oh, okay. That limits the possibilities going to Chinatown or something, right?
GRACE: (To STEVE) Where is the restaurant?
I, Henry Hwang

I mean about him actually going out there—is he—his father—lying there. You know, right on Torrance Road?

s

What if a train really comes?

o. I guess he'll get up.

Don't believe it!

I have fallen asleep by that time or something. Crazy.

is a real possibility for Frank, he's such a bore.

just thinks he's in love with you.

o. We'll see when the train comes. You think we should do something?

—You're not gonna fall for the twerp, are you? My cousin.

upid—and ugly, to boot. Staying on the tracks is kinda dangerous.

Teach him a lesson.

erious?

(closer to Grace) Not to fool with my cousin.

hair. They freeze in place, but his arm contin-

Steve enters, oblivious of Dale and Grace, responds to him. He speaks to the audience as if it were the audience of a Chinese opera.

ease! Listen to me! This is fifth time I come on both my parents, I tell you their parents, their parents' parents and who was adopted uncle. I tell you how many beggars in home of their blind dogs. I tell you number of houses to temple, to well, to governor's house, to fields, to whorehouse, to fifth cousin inn, to eighth neighbor—oh, you ask only: What for am I in whorehouse? I tell north, south, northeast, southwest, west, east, north-northeast, south-southwest, east-east-south—Why will you not let me enter in America? I come here five times—I raise lifetime fortune five times. Five times, first come here, you say to me I am illegal, you return me on boat to fathers and uncles with no gold, no treasure, no fortune, no rice. I only want to come to America—come to "Mountain of Gold." And I hate Mountain and I hate America and I hate you! (Pause) But this year you call 1914—very bad for China.

(Pause; light shift. Grace and Dale become mobile and aware of Steve's presence)

Grace: Oh! Steve, this is Dale, my cousin. Dale, Steve.

Dale: Hey, nice to meet...

Steve: (Now speaking with Chinese accent) Hello. Thank you. I am fine.

(Pause)

Dale: Uh, yeah. Me too. So, you just got here, huh? What's up?

(Steve smiles and nods, Dale smiles and nods; Steve laughs, Dale laughs; Steve hits Dale on the shoulder. They laugh some more. They stop laughing)

Dale: Oh. Uh—good. (Pause) Well, it looks like it's just gonna be the three of us, right? (To Grace) Where you wanna go?

Grace: I think Steve's already taken care of that. Right, Steve?

Steve: Excuse?

Grace: You made reservations at a restaurant?

Steve: Oh, reservations. Yes, yes.

Dale: Oh, okay. That limits the possibilities. Guess we're going to Chinatown or something, right?

Grace: (To Steve) Where is the restaurant?
STEVE: Oh. The restaurant is a French restaurant. Los Angeles downtown.
DALE: Oh, we're going to a Western place? (To GRACE) Are you sure he made reservations?
GRACE: We'll see.
DALE: Well, I'll get my car.
GRACE: Okay.
STEVE: No!
DALE: Huh?
STEVE: Please-allow me to provide car.
DALE: Oh. You wanna drive.
STEVE: Yes. I have car.
DALE: Look—why don’t you let me drive? You’ve got enough to do without worrying about—you know—how to get around L.A., read the stop signs, all that.
STEVE: Please—allow me to provide car. No problem.
DALE: (To STEVE) Look—you had to pick the restaurant we’re going to, so the least I can do is drive.
STEVE: Uh, your car—how many people sit in it?
DALE: Well, it depends. Right now, none.
GRACE: (To DALE) He’s got a point. Your car only seats two.
DALE: He can sit in the back. There’s space there. I’ve fit luggage in it before.
GRACE: (To STEVE) You want to sit in back?
STEVE: I sit—where?
DALE: Really big suitcases.
GRACE: Back of his car.
STEVE: X-1/9? Aaaai-ya!
DALE: X-1/9?
STEVE: No deal!
DALE: How’d he know that? How’d he know what I drive?
STEVE: Please. Use my car. Is . . . big.
DALE: Yeah? Well, how much room you got? (To GRACE) How-big-your-car-is?
STEVE: Huh?
DALE: Your car—how is big?
GRACE: How big is your car?
STEVE: Oh! You go see.
DALE: 'Cause if it’s, like, a Pinto or something, much of a difference.
STEVE: Big and black. Outside.
GRACE: Let's hurry.
DALE: Sure, sure. (Exits)
GRACE: What you up to, anyway?
STEVE: (Dropping accent) Gwan Gung will not without equipment worthy of his position.
GRACE: Position? You came back, didn’t you that make you?
DALE: (Entering) Okay. There’s only one black c
STEVE: Black car is mine.
DALE: —and that’s a Fleetwood limo. Now gonna tell me that’s his.
STEVE: Cadillac. Cadillac is mine.
DALE: Limousine . . . Limousine is yours?
STEVE: Yes, yes. Limousine.
(Pause)
DALE: (To STEVE) You wanna ride in that. People will think we’re dead.
GRACE: It does have more room.
DALE: Well, it has to. It’s built for passeng bend.
GRACE: And the driver is expensive.
DALE: He could go home—save all that mone
GRACE: Well, I don’t know. You decide.
DALE: (To STEVE) Look, we take my car, sav
The restaurant is a French restaurant. Los Angeles.

We're going to a Western place? (To GRACE) Are you made reservations?

I'll see.

I'll get my car.

---allow me to provide car.

You wanna drive.

I have car.

Why don't you let me drive? You've got enough worry about—you know—how to get A., read the stop signs, all that.

---allow me to provide car. No problem.

Let's ask Grace, okay? (To GRACE) Grace, who should drive?

It really care. Why don't you two figure it out? Jolly, okay? We open pretty soon.

(To GRACE) Look—you had to pick the restaurant to, so the least I can do is drive.

Our car—how many people sit in it?

Depends. Right now, none.

He's got a point. Your car only seats two.

Sit in the back. There's space there. I've fit before.

(To GRACE) You want to sit in back?

Where?

Suitcases.

His car.

Aaaai-ya!

I know that? How'd he know what I drive?

STEVE: Please. Use my car. Is . . . big.

DALE: Yeah? Well, how much room you got? (Pause; slower)

How big—your car—is?

STEVE: Huh?

DALE: Your car—how is big?

GRACE: How big is your car?

STEVE: Oh! You go see.

DALE: 'Cause if it's, like, a Pinto or something, it's not that much of a difference.

STEVE: Big and black. Outside.

GRACE: Let's hurry.

DALE: Sure, sure.

(Exits)

GRACE: What you up to, anyway?

STEVE: (Dropping accent) Gwan Gung will not go into battle without equipment worthy of his position.

GRACE: Position? You came back, didn't you? What does that make you?

DALE: (Entering) Okay. There's only one black car out there—

STEVE: Black car is mine.

DALE: —and that's a Fleetwood limo. Now, you're not gonna tell me that's his.

STEVE: Cadillac. Cadillac is mine.

DALE: Limousine . . . Limousine is yours?

STEVE: Yes, yes. Limousine.

(Pause)

DALE: (To GRACE) You wanna ride in that black thing?

People will think we're dead.

GRACE: It does have more room.

DALE: Well, it has to. It's built for passengers who can't bend.

GRACE: And the driver is expensive.

DALE: He could go home—save all that money.

GRACE: Well, I don't know. You decide.

DALE: (To STEVE) Look, we take my car, savvy?
DALE: Do you have... uh—those burrito things?
GRACE: Moo-shoo?
DALE: Yeah, that.
GRACE: Yeah.
DALE: And black mushrooms.
GRACE: Sure.
DALE: And sea cucumber?
STEVE: Do you have bing?
(Pause)
GRACE: Look, Dad and Russ and some of the people from the restaurant are gonna be setting up pretty soon, so let's go out. It's ready, okay?
DALE: Okay. Need any help?
GRACE: Well, yeah. That's what I just said.
DALE: Oh, right. I thought maybe you were being polite.
GRACE: Yeah. Meet me in the kitchen.
DALE: Are you sure your dad won't mind?
GRACE: Oh, it's okay. He'll cook for anybody.
(Exits. Silence)
DALE: So, how do you like America?
STEVE: Very nice.
DALE: “Very nice.” Good, colorful Hong Kong.
STEVE: Please repeat?
DALE: English—you speak how much?
STEVE: Oh—very little.
DALE: Honest. (Pause) You feel like you're in a mock Hong Kong accent.) Your fat-dad—
DALE: Don't tell me, Lemme guess. Your fat-dad—
STEVE: Fad-dal—
DALE: Fad-dal—
GRACE: (Watching DALE) No—this place, very nice.
DALE: (Watching DALE) No—this place, very nice.
GRACE: Are you sure?
DALE: Yeah. Sure.
STEVE: (Ditto) Yeah. Sure.
DALE: Do you have . . . uh—those burrito things?
GRACE: Moo-shoo?
DALE: Yeah, that.
GRACE: Yeah.
DALE: And black mushrooms.
GRACE: Sure.
DALE: And sea cucumber?
STEVE: Do you have bing?
(Pause)
GRACE: Look, Dad and Russ and some of the others are gonna be setting up pretty soon, so let’s get our place ready, okay?
DALE: Okay. Need any help?
GRACE: Well, yeah. That’s what I just said.
DALE: Oh, right. I thought maybe you were just being polite.
GRACE: Yeah. Meet me in the kitchen.
DALE: Are you sure your dad won’t mind?
GRACE: What?
DALE: Cooking for us.
GRACE: Oh, it’s okay. He’ll cook for anybody.
(Exits. Silence)
DALE: So, how do you like America?
STEVE: Very nice.
DALE: “Very nice.” Good, colorful Hong Kong English. English—how much of it you got down, anyway?
STEVE: Please repeat?
DALE: English—you speak how much?
STEVE: Oh—very little.
DALE: Honest. (Pause) You feel like you’re an American? Don’t tell me. Lemme guess. Your father. (He switches into a mock Hong Kong accent.) Your fad-dah tink he sending you here so you get yo’ M.B.A., den go back and covuh da world wit’ trinkets and beads. Diversify. Franchise. Sell—ah—Hong Kong X-Ray glasses at tourist shop
at Buckingham Palace. You know—ah—"See da Queen"? (Switches back) He’s hoping your American education’s gonna create an empire of defective goods and breakable merchandise. Like those little cameras with the slides inside? I bought one at Disneyland once and it ended up having pictures of Hong Kong in it. You know how shitty it is to expect the Magic Kingdom and wind up with the skyline of Kowloon? Part of your dad’s plan, I’m sure. But you’re gonna double-cross him. Coming to America, you’re gonna jump the boat. You’re gonna decide you like us. Yeah—you’re gonna like having fifteen theaters in three blocks, you’re gonna like West Hollywood and Newport Beach. You’re gonna decide to become an American. Yeah, don’t deny it—it happens to the best of us. You can’t hold out—you’re no different. You won’t even know it’s coming before it has you. Before you’re trying real hard to be just like the rest of us—go dinner, go movie, go motel, bang-bang. And when your father writes you that do-it-yourself acupuncture sales are down, you’ll throw that letter in the basket and burn it in your brain. And you’ll write that you’re gonna live in Monterey Park a few years before going back home—and you’ll get your green card—and you’ll build up a nice little stockbroker’s business and have a few American kids before your dad realizes what’s happened and dies, his hopes reduced to a few chattering teeth and a pack of pornographic playing cards. Yeah—great things come to the U.S. out of Hong Kong.

STEVE: (Lights a cigarette, blows smoke, stands) Such as your parents?

(STEVE turns on the music, exits. BLACKOUT)
ngham Palace. You know—ah—"See da Queen"?

He’s hoping your American education’s reate an empire of defective goods and breakable dice. Like those little cameras with the slides bought one at Disneyland once and it ended up pictures of Hong Kong in it. You know how is to expect the Magic Kingdom and wind up skyline of Kowloon? Part of your dad’s plan, I’m t you’re gonna double-cross him. Coming to you’re gonna jump the boat. You’re gonna like us. Yeah—you’re gonna like having fitters in three blocks, you’re gonna like West od and Newport Beach. You’re gonna decide to an American. Yeah, don’t deny it—it happens to of us. You can’t hold out—you’re no different. ’t even know it’s coming before it has you. u’re trying real hard to be just like the rest of inner, go movie, go motel, bang-bang. And r father writes you that do-it-yourself acupunc- ure down, you’ll throw that letter in the basket it in your brain. And you’ll write that you’re in Monterey Park a few years before going—and you’ll get your green card—and you’ll nice little stockbroker’s business and have a can kids before your dad realizes what’s hap-pies, his hopes reduced to a few chattering pack of pornographic playing cards. Yeah—s come to the U.S. out of Hong Kong.

s a cigarette, blows smoke, stands) Such as your s on the music, exits. BLACKOUT)

Scene 2

LIGHTS UP on DALE and STEVE eating. It is a few minutes later and food is on the table. DALE eats Chinese style, vigorously shoveling food into his mouth. STEVE picks. GRACE enters carrying a jar of hot sauce. STEVE sees her.

STEVE: (To GRACE) After eating, you like to go dance?
DALE: (Face in bowl) No, thanks. I think we’d be conspicuous.
STEVE: (To GRACE) Like to go dance?
GRACE: Perhaps. We will see.
DALE: (To STEVE) Wait a minute. Hold on. How can y~u t? I’m here too you know. Don’t forget I exist just ’cuz you can’t understand me.
STEVE: Please repeat?
DALE: I get better communication from my fish. Look, we go see movie. Three here, see? One, two, three. Three can see movie. Only two can dance.
STEVE: (To GRACE) I ask you to go dance.
GRACE: True, but . . .
DALE: (To GRACE) That would really be a screw, you know? You invite me down here, you don’t have anyone for me to go out with, but you decide to go dancing.
GRACE: Dale, I understand.
DALE: Understand? That would really be a screw. (To STEVE)
Look, if you wanna dance, go find yourself some nice FOB partner.
STEVE: “FOB”? Has what meaning?
GRACE: Dale . . .
DALE: F-O-B. Fresh Off the Boat. FOB.
GRACE: Dale, I agree. 
DALE: See, we both agree. (To GRACE) He's a pretty prime example, isn't he? All those foreign students—
GRACE: I mean, I agree about going dancing.
DALE: —go swimming in their underwear and everything—
    What?
GRACE: (To STEVE) Please understand. This is not the right time for dancing.
STEVE: Okay.
DALE: “Okay.” It's okay when she says it's okay.
STEVE: (To DALE) “Fresh Off Boat” has what meaning?
    (Pause)
DALE: (To GRACE) Did you ever hear about Dad his first year in the U.S.?
GRACE: Dale, he wants to know . . .
DALE: Well, Gung Gung was pretty rich back then, so Dad must've been a pretty disgusting . . . one, too. You know, his first year here, he spent, like, thirteen thousand dollars. And that was back 'round 1950.
GRACE: Well, Mom never got anything.
STEVE: FOB means what?
DALE: That's probably 'cause women didn't get anything back then. Anyway, he bought himself a new car—all kinds of stuff, I guess. But then Gung Gung went bankrupt, so Dad had to work.
GRACE: And Mom starved.
DALE: Couldn't hold down a job. Wasn't used to taking orders from anyone.
GRACE: Mom was used to taking orders from everyone.
STEVE: Please explain this meaning.
DALE: Got fired from job after job. Something like fifteen in a year. He'd just walk in the front door and out the back, practically.
GRACE: Well, at least he had a choice of doors. At least he was educated.

STEVE: (To DALE) Excuse!
DALE: Huh?
GRACE: He was educated. Here. In America came over, she couldn't quit just 'cause she her employer. It was work or starve.
DALE: Well, Dad had some pretty lousy jobs, STEVE. (To DALE) Explain, please!
GRACE: Do you know what it's like to work a week just to feed yourself?
DALE: Do you?
STEVE: Dale!
DALE: (To STEVE) It means you. You know how to a fish store or something, they have the came in that day? Well, so have you.
STEVE: I do not understand.
DALE: Forget it. That's part of what makes ya.
    (Pause)
STEVE: (Picking up hot sauce, to DALE) Hot. Yc
    (Pause)
    (STEVE puts hot sauce on DALE's food)
DALE: Hey, isn't that kinda a lot?
GRACE: See, Steve's family comes from Shan;
DALE: Hmmmm. Well, I'll try it.
    (He takes a gulp, puts down his food)
GRACE: I think perhaps that was too much for
DALE: No.
GRACE: Want some water?
DALE: Yes.
    (GRACE exits)
DALE: You like hot sauce? You like your right—here. (He dumps the contents of the plate, stirs) Fucking savage. Don't you even your intestines falling out?
    (GRACE enters, gives water to DALE. STEVE sits
we both agree. (To grace) He's a pretty prime isn't he? All those foreign students—

swimming in their underwear and everything—

STEVE) Please understand. This is not the right lancing.

y.

y.” It's okay when she says it's okay.

DALE) “Fresh Off Boat” has what mean-

GRACE) Did you ever hear about Dad's first
e U.S.?

he wants to know . . .

Gung Gung was pretty rich back then, so Dad
een a pretty disgusting . . . one, too. You know,
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STEVE: (To DALE) Excuse!

DALE: Huh?

GRACE: He was educated. Here. In America. When Mom

came over, she couldn’t quit just 'cause she was mad at

her employer. It was work or starve.

DALE: Well, Dad had some pretty lousy jobs, too.

STEVE: (To DALE) Explain, please!

GRACE: Do you know what it's like to work eighty hours a

week just to feed yourself?

DALE: Do you?

STEVE: Dale!

DALE: (To STEVE) It means you. You know how, if you go
to a fish store or something, they have the stuff that just
came in that day? Well, so have you.

STEVE: I do not understand.

DALE: Forget it. That's part of what makes you one.

(Pause)

STEVE: (Picking up hot sauce, to DALE) Hot. You want some?

(Pause)


(STEVE puts hot sauce on DALE's food)

DALE: Hey, isn’t that kinda a lot?

GRACE: See, Steve's family comes from Shanghai.

DALE: Hmmmm. Well, I’ll try it.

(He takes a gulp, puts down his food)

GRACE: I think perhaps that was too much for him.

DALE: No.

GRACE: Want some water?

DALE: Yes.

(GRACE exits)

DALE: You like hot sauce? You like your food hot? All

right—here. (He dumps the contents of the jar on STEVE's

plate, stirs) Fucking savage. Don’t you ever worry about

your intestines falling out?

(GRACE enters, gives water to DALE. STEVE sits shocked)
DALE: Thanks. FOBS can eat anything, huh? They're specially trained. Helps maintain the characteristic greasy look.

(STEVE, cautiously, begins to eat his food)

DALE: What—? Look, Grace, he's eating that! He's amazing! A freak! What a cannibal!

GRACE: (Taking DALE's plate) Want me to throw yours out?

DALE: (Snatching it back) Huh? No. No, I can eat it.

(DALE and STEVE stare at each other across the table. In unison, they pick up as large a glob of food as possible, stuff it into their mouths. They cough and choke. They rest, repeat the face-off a second time. They continue in silent pain. GRACE, who has been watching this, speaks to us)

GRACE: Yeah. It's tough trying to live in Chinatown. But it's tough trying to live in Torrance, too. It's true. I don't like being alone. You know, when Mom could finally bring me to the U.S., I was already ten. But I never studied my English very hard in Taiwan, so I got moved back to the second grade. There were a few Chinese girls in the fourth grade, but they were American-born, so they wouldn't even talk to me. They'd just stay with themselves and compare how much clothes they all had, and make fun of the way we all talked. I figured I had a better chance of getting in with the white kids than with them, so in junior high I started bleaching my hair and hanging out at the beach—you know, Chinese hair looks pretty lousy when you bleach it. After a while, I knew what beach was gonna be good on any given day, and I could tell who was coming just by his van. But the American-born Chinese, it didn't matter to them. They just giggled and went to their own dances. Until my senior year in high school—that's how long it took for me to get over this whole thing. One night I took Dad's car and drove on Hollywood Boulevard, all the way from downtown to Beverly Hills, then back on Sunset. I was looking and listening—all the time with the just so I'd feel like I was part of the city. And it was—I guess—I said, "I'm lonely. And I don't like being alone." And that was all. I said it, I felt all of the breeze—it was real face—and I heard all of the radio—and the really good, you know? So I drove home.

(Pause. DALE bursts out coughing)

GRACE: Oh, I'm sorry. Want some more wat

DALE: It's okay. I'll get it myself.

(He exits)

STEVE: (Looks at GRACE) Good, huh?

(STEVE and GRACE stare at each other, as LI BLACK)

END OF ACT ONE
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Beverly Hills, then back on Sunset. I was

looking and listening—all the time with the window down,

just so I’d feel like I was part of the city. And that Friday,

it was—I guess—I said, “I’m lonely. And I don’t like it. I

don’t like being alone.” And that was all. As soon as I

said it, I felt all of the breeze—it was really cool on my

face—and I heard all of the radio—and the music sounded

really good, you know? So I drove home.

(Pause. DALE bursts out coughing)

GRACE: Oh, I’m sorry. Want some more water, Dale?

DALE: It’s okay. I’ll get it myself.

(He exits)

STEVE: (Looks at GRACE) Good, huh?

(STEVE and GRACE stare at each other, as LIGHTS FADE TO

BLACK)

END OF ACT ONE
ACT TWO

In BLACKOUT.

DALE: I am much better now. (Single spot on DALE) I go out now. Lots. I can, anyway. Sometimes I don’t ask anyone, so I don’t go out. But I could. (Pause) I am much better now. I have friends now. Lots. They drive Porsche Carreras. Well, one does. He has a house up in the Hollywood Hills where I can stand and look down on the lights of L.A. I guess I haven’t really been there yet. But I could easily go. I’d just have to ask. (Pause) My parents—they don’t know nothing about the world, about watching Benson at the Roxy, about ordering hors d’oeuvres at Scandia’s, downshifting onto the Ventura Freeway at midnight. They’re yellow ghosts and they’ve tried to cage me up with Chinese-ness when all the time we were in America. (Pause) So, I’ve had to work real hard—real hard—to be myself. To not be a Chinese, a yellow, a slant, a.gook. To be just a human being, like everyone else, (Pause) I’ve paid my dues. And that’s why I am much better now. I’m making it, you know? I’m making it in America.

(A napkin is thrown in front of DALE’s face from right. As it passes, the lights go up. The napkin falls on what we recognize as the dinner table from the last scene. We are in the back room. Dinner is over. STEVE has thrown the napkin from where he is sitting in his chair. DALE is standing upstage of the table and had been talking to STEVE)

DALE: So, look, will you just not be so . . . just be a little more . . .? I mean, we don’t this . . . You know what’s gonna happen to morning? (He burps) What kinda diarrhea maybe if you could just be a little more . . . normal. Here—stand up.

(STEVE does)

DALE: Don’t smile like that. Okay. You eve Night Fever?

STEVE: Oh. Saturday . . .

DALE: Yeah.

STEVE: Oh. Saturday Night Fever. Disco.

DALE: That’s it. Okay. You know . . .

STEVE: John Travolta.

DALE: Right. John Travolta. Now, maybe if a little more like him.

STEVE: Uh—Bee Gees?

DALE: Yeah, right. Bee Gees. But what I mean STEVE: You like Bee Gees?

DALE: I dunno. They’re okay. Just stand a li him, you know, his walk?

(STEVE tries to demonstrate)

STEVE: I believe Bee Gees very good.

DALE: Yeah. Listen.

STEVE: You see movie name of . . .

DALE: Will you listen for a sec?

STEVE: . . . Grease?

DALE: Hold on!

STEVE: Also Bee Gees.

DALE: I’m trying to help you!

STEVE: Also John Travolta?

DALE: I’m trying to get you normal!

STEVE: And—Oliver John-Newton.

DALE: So, look, will you just not be so . . . Couldn’t you just be a little more . . .? I mean, we don’t have to do all this . . . You know what’s gonna happen to us tomorrow morning? (He burps) What kinda diarrhea . . .? Look, maybe if you could just be a little more . . . (He gropes) normal. Here—stand up.

(Steve does)

DALE: Don’t smile like that. Okay. You ever see Saturday Night Fever?

STEVE: Oh. Saturday . . .

DALE: Yeah.

STEVE: Oh. Saturday Night Fever. Disco.

DALE: That’s it. Okay. You know . . .

STEVE: John Travolta.

DALE: Right. John Travolta. Now, maybe if you could be a little more like him.

STEVE: Uh—Bee Gees?

DALE: Yeah, right. Bee Gees. But what I mean is . . .

STEVE: You like Bee Gees?

DALE: I dunno. They’re okay. Just stand a little more like him, you know, his walk?

(Steve tries to demonstrate)

STEVE: I believe Bee Gees very good.

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DALE: Hold on!

STEVE: Also Bee Gees.

DALE: I’m trying to help you!

STEVE: Also John Travolta?

DALE: I’m trying to get you normal!

STEVE: And—Oliver John-Newton.

DALE: WILL YOU SHUT UP? I’M TRYING TO HELP YOU! I’M TRYING . . .
STEVE: Very good!

DALE: . . . TO MAKE YOU LIKE JOHN TRAVOLTA!

( DALE grabs STEVE by the arm. Pause. STEVE coldly knocks DALE's hands away. DALE picks up the last of the dirty dishes on the table and backs into the kitchen. GRACE enters from the kitchen with the box wrapped in Act I. She sits in a chair and goes over the wrapping, her back to STEVE. He gets up and begins to go for the box, almost reaching her. She turns around suddenly, though, at which point he drops to the floor and pretends to be looking for something. She then turns back front, and he resumes his attempt. Just as he reaches the kitchen door, DALE enters with a wet sponge)

DALE: (To STEVE) Oh, you finally willing to help? I already brought in all the dishes, you know. Here—wipe the table.

( DALE gives sponge to STEVE, returns to kitchen. STEVE throws the sponge on the floor, sits back at table. GRACE turns around, sees sponge on the floor, picks it up, and goes to wipe the table. She brings the box with her and holds it in one hand)

GRACE: Look—you've been wanting this for some time now. Okay. Here. I'll give it to you. (She puts it on the table) A welcome to this country. You don't have to fight for it—I'll give it to you instead.

(Pause; STEVE pushes the box off the table)

GRACE: Okay. Your choice.

( GRACE wipes the table)

DALE: (Entering from kitchen; sees GRACE) What—you doing this?

GRACE: Don't worry, Dale.

DALE: I asked him to do it.

GRACE: I'll do it.

DALE: I asked him to do it. He's useless! ( DALE takes the sponge) Look, I don't know how much English you know, but look-ee! (He uses a mock Chinese accent)

GRACE: Dale, don't do that.

DALE: (Using sponge) Look—makes table all . . .

GRACE: You have to understand . . .

DALE: Ooooh! Nice and clean!

GRACE: . . . he's not used to this.

DALE: Look! I can see myself!

GRACE: Look, I can do this. Really.

DALE: Here—now you do. ( DALE forces STEVE to take sponge) Good. Very good. Now, move it leads STEVE's hand Oh, you learn so fast. no time flat, buddy.

( DALE removes his hand; STEVE stops)

DALE: Uh-uh-uh. You must do it yourself. now doesn't that make you feel proud? (I off; STEVE stops. DALE gives up, crosses over remains at the table, still)

DALE: Jesus! I'd trade him in for a vacuum cleaner.

GRACE: You shouldn't humiliate him like that.

DALE: What humiliate? I asked him to wipe all.

GRACE: See, he's different. He probably has at home.

DALE: Big deal. He's in America, now. He's work.

GRACE: He's rich, you know.

DALE: So what? They all are. Rich FOBs.

GRACE: Does that include me?

DALE: Huh?

GRACE: Does that include me? Am I one of yo

DALE: What? Grace, c'mon, that's ridiculous rich. I mean, you're not poor, but you're—mean, you're not a FOB. FOBs are dead over here most of your life. You thaw out. You've thawed out really well you're my cousin.
HENRY HWANG

GOOD!

TO MAKE YOU LIKE JOHN TRAVOLTA!

by STEVE by the arm. Pause. STEVE coldly knocks

airs away. DALE picks up the last of the dirty dishes

and backs into the kitchen. GRACE enters from the

left. The box wrapped in Act I. She sits in a chair

and the wrapping, her back to STEVE. He gets up and

for the box, almost reaching her. She turns around

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all the dishes, you know. Here—wipe the

sponge to STEVE, returns to kitchen. STEVE throws

the floor, sits back at table. GRACE turns around,

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GRACE: You have to understand...

DALE: Ooooh! Nice and clean!

GRACE: ... he’s not used to this.

DALE: Look! I can see myself!

GRACE: Look, I can do this. Really.

DALE: Here—now you do. (DALE forces STEVE’s hand onto the

spoon) Good. Very good. Now, move it around. (DALE

leads STEVE’s hand) Oh, you learn so fast. Get green card,

no time flat, buddy.

(DALE removes his hand; STEVE stops)

DALE: Uh-uh-uh. You must do it yourself. Come. There—

now doesn’t that make you feel proud? (He takes his hand

off; STEVE stops. DALE gives up, crosses downstage. STEVE

remains at the table, still)

DALE: Jesus! I’d trade him in for a vacuum cleaner any day.

GRACE: You shouldn’t humiliate him like that.

DALE: What humiliate? I asked him to wipe the table, that’s

all.

GRACE: See, he’s different. He probably has a lot of servants

at home.

DALE: Big deal. He’s in America, now. He’d better learn to

work.

GRACE: He’s rich, you know.

DALE: So what? They all are. Rich FOBS.

GRACE: Does that include me?

DALE: Huh?

GRACE: Does that include me? Am I one of your “rich FOBS”?

DALE: What? Grace, c’mon, that’s ridiculous. You’re not

rich. I mean, you’re not poor, but you’re not rich either. I

mean, you’re not a FOB. FOBS are different. You’ve

been over here most of your life. You’ve had time to

thaw out. You’ve thawed out really well, and, besides—

you’re my cousin.
DALE: What kind of . . . we're not at your
in Hong Kong, you know. Look—look a
you see shit on the sidewalks?
STEVE: This is mine!
DALE: You see armies of rice-bowl haircut's
STEVE: She gave this to me!
DALE: People here have their flies zipped up
STEVE: You should not look in it.
DALE: So we're not in Hong Kong. And I'm
servant boys that you can knock around—
trading in a pack of pornographic playing
probably deal out to your friends. You
understand?
STEVE: Quiet! Do you know who I am?
DALE: Yeah—you're a FOB. You're a rich
But you better watch yourself. 'Cause
back.
STEVE: Shut up! Do you know who I am?
DALE: You can be sent back, you know
'Cause you're a guest here, understand?
STEVE: (To GRACE) Tell him who I am.
DALE: I know who he is—heir to a fortune
disc. Big deal. Like being heir to Captain
STEVE: Tell him!
(Silence)
GRACE: You know it's not like that.
STEVE: Tell him!
DALE: Huh?
GRACE: All the stuff about rice bowls an
you ever been there, Dale?
DALE: Well, yeah. Once. When I was ten.
GRACE: Well, it's changed a lot.
DALE: Remember getting heat rashes.
GRACE: People are dressing really well now
place has become really stylish—well, ce
rokes GRACE's hair, and they freeze as before. STEVE, le, has almost imperceptibly begun to clean with his. He speaks to the audience as if speaking with his

I will go to America. "Mei Guo." (Pause. He's working) The white ghosts came into the harbor they promised that they would bring us to America that in America we would never want for any- re white ghost told how the streets are paved bongs, how the land is so rich that pieces of gold road, and the worker-devils consider them too not even to bend down for. They told of a land are no storms, no snow, but sunshine and 1 year round, where a man could live out in the cel not even discomfort from the nature around worker's paradise. A land of gold, a mountain of and in which a man can make his fortune and out wrinkles into an old age. And the white providing free passage both ways. (Pause) All do is sign a worker's contract. (Pause) Yes, I America.

GRACE and DALE become mobile, but still fail to GRACE picks up the box)

that? (singing becomes increasingly frenzied) I am going to use of its promises. I am going to follow the because of their promises.

r me?

they promised! They promised! AND LOOK! MISED! THIS IS SHIT! IT'S NOT TRUE.

GRACE picks up the box) Let's see what's inside, is that okay?

DALE to the ground and takes the box) IT IS accent) THIS IS MINE!

it kind of shit is that?

this to me.

DALE: What kind of . . . we're not at your place. We're not in Hong Kong, you know. Look—look all around you—you see shit on the sidewalks?

STEVE: This is mine!

DALE: You see armies of rice-bowl haircuts?

STEVE: She gave this to me!

DALE: People here have their flies zipped up—see?

STEVE: You should not look in it.

DALE: So we're not in Hong Kong. And I'm not one of your servant boys that you can knock around—that you got by trading in a pack of pornographic playing cards—that you probably deal out to your friends. You're in America, understand?

STEVE: Quiet! Do you know who I am?

DALE: Yeah—you're a FOB. You're a rich FOB in the U.S. But you better watch yourself. 'Cause you can be sent back.

STEVE: Shut up! Do you know who I am?

DALE: You can be sent back, you know—just like that. 'Cause you're a guest here, understand?

STEVE: (To GRACE) Tell him who I am.

DALE: I know who he is—heir to a fortune in junk merchan- disc. Big deal. Like being heir to Captain Crunch.

STEVE: Tell him!

(Silence)

GRACE: You know it's not like that.

STEVE: Tell him!

DALE: Huh?

GRACE: All the stuff about rice bowls and—zippers—have you ever been there, Dale?

DALE: Well, yeah. Once. When I was ten.

GRACE: Well, it's changed a lot.

DALE: Remember getting heat rashes.

GRACE: People are dressing really well now—and the whole place has become really stylish—well, certainly not every-
body, but the people who are well-off enough to send their kids to American colleges—they're really kinda classy.

DALE: Yeah.
GRACE: Sort of.
DALE: You mean, like him. So what? It's easy to be classy when you're rich.
GRACE: All I'm saying is . . .
DALE: Hell, I could do that.
GRACE: Huh?
DALE: I could be classy, too, if I was rich.
GRACE: You are rich.
GRACE: Compared to us, you're rich.
DALE: No, not really. And especially not compared to him.

Besides, when I was born we were still poor.
GRACE: Well, you're rich now.
DALE: Used to get one Life Saver a day.
GRACE: That's all? One Life Saver?
DALE: Well, I mean, that's not all I lived on. We got normal food, too.
GRACE: I know, but . . .
DALE: Not like we were living in cardboard boxes or anything.
GRACE: All I'm saying is that the people who are coming in now—a lot of them are different—they're already real Westernized. They don't act like they're fresh off the boat.
DALE: Maybe. But they're still FOBs.
STEVE: Tell him who I am!
DALE: Anyway, real nice dinner, Grace. I really enjoyed it.
GRACE: Thank you.
STEVE: Okay! I will tell myself.
DALE: Go tell yourself—just don’t bother us.
GRACE: (Standing, to STEVE) What would you like to do now?

STEVE: Huh?
GRACE: You wanted to go out after dinner?
STEVE: Yes, yes. We go out.
DALE: I'll drive. You sent the hearse home.
STEVE: I tell driver—return car after dinner.
DALE: How could you . . . ? What time did yo . . .

   did you tell him to return? What time?
STEVE: (Looks at his watch) Seven-five.
DALE: No—not what time is it. What time ya return?
STEVE: Seven-five. Go see.
   (DALE exits through kitchen)
STEVE: (No accent) Why wouldn't you tell him
GRACE: Can Gwan Gung die?
   (Pause)
STEVE: No warrior can defeat Gwan Gung.
GRACE: Does Gwan Gung fear ghosts?
STEVE: Gwan Gung fears no ghosts.
GRACE: Ghosts of warriors?
STEVE: No warrior ghosts.
GRACE: Ghosts that avenge?
STEVE: No avenging ghosts.
GRACE: Ghosts forced into exile?
STEVE: No exiled ghosts.
GRACE: Ghosts that wait?
   (Pause)
STEVE: (Quietly) May I . . . take you out to not tonight, but some other time? Another
   strokes her hair) What has happened?
DALE: (Entering) I cannot believe it . . . (He sits
do you think you're doing? (He grabs STEVE)
STEVE) What . . . I step out for one second
go and—hell, you FOBs are sneaky. No
check you so close at Immigration.
GRACE: Dale, I can really take care of myself.
FOB 39

STEVE: Huh?
GRACE: You wanted to go out after dinner?
STEVE: Yes, yes. We go out.
DALE: I’ll drive. You sent the hearse home.
STEVE: I tell driver—return car after dinner.
DALE: How could you . . . ? What time did you . . . ? When did you tell him to return? What time?
STEVE: (Looks at his watch) Seven-five.
DALE: No—not what time is it. What time you tell him to return?
STEVE: Seven-five. Go see.
(DALE exits through kitchen)
STEVE: (No accent) Why wouldn’t you tell him who I am?
GRACE: Can Gwan Gung die?
(Pause)
STEVE: No warrior can defeat Gwan Gung.
GRACE: Does Gwan Gung fear ghosts?
STEVE: Gwan Gung fears no ghosts.
GRACE: Ghosts of warriors?
STEVE: No warrior ghosts.
GRACE: Ghosts that avenge?
STEVE: No avenging ghosts.
GRACE: Ghosts forced into exile?
STEVE: No exiled ghosts.
GRACE: Ghosts that wait?
(Pause)
STEVE: (Quietly) May I . . . take you out tonight? Maybe not tonight, but some other time? (He strokes her hair) What has happened?
DALE: (Entering) I cannot believe it . . . (He sees them) What do you think you’re doing? (He grabs STEVE’s hand. To STEVE) What . . . I step out for one second and you just go and—hell, you FOBs are sneaky. No wonder they check you so close at Immigration.
GRACE: Dale, I can really take care of myself.
DALE: Really.
STEVE: Live band.
DALE: Cousin.
STEVE: We go.

(He takes GRACE's hand)

DALE: He's just out to snake you, you know.

(He takes the other hand. From this point on, dim: the lights begin to dim)
GRADE: Okay! That's enough! (She pulls away) T

I have to make all the decisions around here. When I leave it up to you two, the only plausible circles.
DALE: Well...

STEVE: No, I am suggesting place to go.
GRADE: Look, Dale, when I asked you here, we were going to do?
DALE: Uh—dinner and a movie—or something different "we," then.
GRADE: It doesn't matter. That's what we're going to do.
DALE: I'll drive.
STEVE: My car can take us to movie.
GRADE: I think we better not drive at all. We'll walk. (She removes STEVE's tie) Do you remember?
DALE: What—you think I borrow clothes off Hell, I don't even wear ties.

(GRACE takes the tie, wraps it around DALE's blindfold)
DALE: Grace, what are you...?
GRADE: (To STEVE) Do you remember this? I already told you. I don't need a clue.
STEVE: Yes.
GRADE: (Ties the blindfold, releases it) Let's sit down.
DALE: Wait.
STEVE: You want me to sit here?
H? What was his hand doing, then?
ocking my hair.
, yeah. I could see that. I mean, what was it
ocking your hair? (Pause) Uh, never mind. All
ng is . . . (He gropes) Jesus! If you want to be
hy don’t you just say so, huh? If that’s what you
nt, just say it, okay?

. Time’s up.
: the car out there?
Yeah. Yeah, it was. I could not believe it. I go
nd—thank God—there’s no limousine. Just as
to come back, I hear this sound like the roar of
his big black shadow scrapes up beside me. I
believe it!
eturn—seven-five.
hen I asked him—I asked the driver, what time
told to return. And he just looks at me and
.”
out?
go going on here? What is this?
to go.
ill you explain what’s going on.
ACE) You now want to dance?
ACE) Do you understand this? Was this
I am told good things of American discos.
You and him just wanna go off by yourselves?
of Dillon’s.
?
 of Dillon’s?
, you know.
wood.
ind.
-four stories.

DALE: Really.
STEVE: Live band.
DALE: Cousin.
STEVE: We go.
(He takes GRACE’s hand)
DALE: He’s just out to snake you, you know.
(He takes the other hand. From this point on, almost unnoticeably,
the LIGHTS BEGIN TO DIM)
GRACE: Okay! That’s enough! (She pulls away) That’s enough!
I have to make all the decisions around here, don’t I?
When I leave it up to you two, the only place we go is in
circles.
DALE: Well . . .
STEVE: No, I am suggesting place to go.
GRACE: Look, Dale, when I asked you here, what did I say
we were going to do?
DALE: Uh—dinner and a movie—or something. But it was a
different “we,” then.
GRACE: It doesn’t matter. That’s what we’re going to do.
DALE: I’ll drive.
STEVE: My car can take us to movie.
GRACE: I think we better not drive at all. We’ll stay right
here. (She removes STEVE’s tie) Do you remember this?
DALE: What—you think I borrow clothes or something?
Hell, I don’t even wear ties.
(GrACE takes the tie, wraps it around DALE’s face like a
blindfold)
DALE: Grace, what are you . . . ?
GRACE: (To STEVE) Do you remember this?
DALE: I already told you. I don’t need a closer look or
nothing.
STEVE: Yes.
GRACE: (Ties the blindfold, releases it) Let’s sit down.
DALE: Wait.
STEVE: You want me to sit here?
DALE: Grace, is he understanding you?
GRACE: Have you ever played Group Story?
STEVE: Yes, I have played that.
DALE: There—there he goes again! Grace, I'm gonna take . . .
(He starts to remove the blindfold)
GRACE: (Stopping him) Dale, listen or you won't understand.
DALE: But how come he's understanding?
GRACE: Because he's listening.
DALE: But . . .
GRACE: Now, let's play Group Story.
DALE: Not again. Grace, that's only good when you're stoned.
GRACE: Who wants to start? Steve, you know the rules?
STEVE: Yes—I understand.
DALE: See, we're talking normal speed—and he still understood.
GRACE: Dale, would you like to start?
(Pause)
DALE: All right.
(By this time, the lights have dimmed, throwing shadows on the stage. Grace will strike two pots together to indicate each speaker change and the ritual will gradually take on elements of Chinese opera)
Uh, once upon a time . . . there were . . . three bears—Grace, this is ridiculous!
GRACE: Tell a story.
DALE: . . . three bears and they each had . . . cancer of the lymph nodes. Uh—and they were very sad. So the baby bear said, "I'll go to the new Cedar Sinai Hospital, where they may have a cure for this fatal illness."
GRACE: But the new Cedar Sinai Hospital happened to be two thousand miles away—across the ocean.
STEVE: (Gradually losing his accent) That is very far.
DALE: How did—? So, the bear tried to swim over, but his leg got chewed off by alligators—are there alligators in the Pacific Ocean?—Oh, well. So he ended up having to go for a leg and a cure for malignant cancer nodes.
GRACE: When he arrived there, he came face to face with Gwan Gung, god of warriors, prostitutes.
DALE: And Gwan Gung looked at the bear and
GRACE: . . . strongly and with spirit . . .
STEVE: "One-legged bear, what are you doing
You are from America, are you not?"
DALE: And the bear said, "Yes. Yes."
GRACE: And Gwan Gung replied . . .
STEVE: (Getting up) By stepping forward, sv
ready to wound, not kill, not end it so soon
out, play it, taunt it, make it feel like a dog.
DALE: Which is probably rather closely relat
bear.
GRACE: Gwan Gung said—
STEVE: "When I came to America, did you lick
When I came to America, did you cure my s
DALE: And just as Gwan Gung was about to st
GRACE: There arrived Fa Mu Lan, the Woman V
stands, faces STEVE. From here on in, striking p
not needed) "Gwan Gung."
STEVE: "What do you want? Don't interfere! D
have gone before you into battle many times
DALE: But Fa Mu Lan seemed not to hear G
warning. She stood between him and the b
out her own sword.
GRACE: "You will learn I cannot forget. I G
Gwan Gung. Spare the bear and I will presen
STEVE: "Very well. He is hardly worth killing.
DALE: And the bear hopped off. Fa Mu Lan pt
from beneath her gown.
(She removes DALE's blindfold)
DALE: She pulled out two items.
GRACE: When he arrived there, he came face to face with—

STEVE: With Gwan Gung, god of warriors, writers, and prostitutes.

DALE: And Gwan Gung looked at the bear and said . . .

GRACE: . . . strongly and with spirit . . .

STEVE: “One-legged bear, what are you doing on my land?

You are from America, are you not?”

DALE: And the bear said, “Yes. Yes.”

GRACE: And Gwan Gung replied . . .

STEVE: (Getting up) By stepping forward, sword drawn,

ready to wound, not kill, not end it so soon. To draw it out, play it, taunt it, make it feel like a dog.

DALE: Which is probably rather closely related to the bear.

GRACE: Gwan Gung said—

STEVE: “When I came to America, did you lick my wounds?

When I came to America, did you cure my sickness?”

DALE: And just as Gwan Gung was about to strike—

GRACE: There arrived Fa Mu Lan, the Woman Warrior. (She stands, faces STEVE. From here on in, striking pots together is not needed) “Gwan Gung.”

STEVE: “What do you want? Don’t interfere! Don’t forget, I have gone before you into battle many times.”

DALE: But Fa Mu Lan seemed not to hear Gwan Gung’s warning. She stood between him and the bear, drawing out her own sword.

GRACE: “You will learn I cannot forget. I don’t forget, Gwan Gung. Spare the bear and I will present gifts.”

STEVE: “Very well. He is hardly worth killing.”

DALE: And the bear hopped off. Fa Mu Lan pulled a parcel from beneath her gown.

(She removes DALE’s blindfold)

DALE: She pulled out two items.
GRACE: "This is for you."

(She hands blindfold to STEVE)

STEVE: "What is that?"

DALE: She showed him a beautiful piece of red silk, thick enough to be opaque, yet so light he barely felt it in his hands.

GRACE: "Do you remember this?"

STEVE: "Why, yes. I used this silk for sport one day. How did you get hold of it?"

DALE: Then she presented him with a second item. It was a fabric—thick and dried and brittle.

GRACE: "Do you remember this?"

STEVE: (Turning away) "No, no. I’ve never seen this before in my life. This has nothing to do with me. What is it—a dragon skin?"

DALE: Fa Mu Lan handed it to Gwan Gung.

GRACE: "Never mind. Use it—as a tablecloth. As a favor to me."

STEVE: "It’s much too hard and brittle. But, to show you my graciousness in receiving—I will use it tonight!"

DALE: That night, Gwan Gung had a large banquet, at which there was plenty, even for the slaves. But Fa Mu Lan ate nothing. She waited until midnight, till Gwan Gung and the gods were full of wine and empty of sense. Sneaking behind him, she pulled out the tablecloth, waving it above her head.

GRACE: (Ripping the tablecloth from the table) "Gwan Gung, you foolish boy. This thing you have used tonight as a tablecloth—it is the stretched and dried skins of my fathers. My fathers, whom you slew—for sport! And you have been eating the sins—you ate them!"

STEVE: "No. I was blindfolded. I did not know."

DALE: Fa Mu Lan waved the skin before Gwan Gung’s face. It smelled suddenly of death.

GRACE: "Remember the day you played? Remember? Well, eat that day, Gwan Gung."

STEVE: "I am not responsible. No. No."

(GRACE throws one end of the tablecloth to DALE. Together, they become like STEVE’s parents. About the stage, waving the tablecloth like a net)

DALE: Yes!

GRACE: Yes!

STEVE: No!

DALE: You must!

GRACE: Go!

STEVE: Where?

DALE: To America!

GRACE: To work!

STEVE: Why?

DALE: Because!

GRACE: We need!

STEVE: No!

DALE: Why?

GRACE: Go.

STEVE: Hard!

DALE: So?

GRACE: Need.

STEVE: Far!

DALE: So?

GRACE: Need!

STEVE: Sure!

DALE: Here?

GRACE: No!

STEVE: Why?

DALE: Them.

(Points)

GRACE: Them.

(Points)

STEVE: Won’t!

DALE: Must!

GRACE: Must!
his is for you."
Is blindfold to STEVE)
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I was blindfolded. I did not know."
Lan waved the skin before Gwan Gung’s face. 
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ember the day you played? Remember? Well,
, Gwan Gung.”

STEVE: "I am not responsible. No. No."
(Grace throws one end of the tablecloth to DALE, who catches
it. Together, they become like STEVE’s parents. They chase him
about the stage, waving the tablecloth like a net)

DALE: Yes!
GRACE: Yes!
STEVE: No!
DALE: You must!
GRACE: Go!
STEVE: Where?
DALE: To America!
GRACE: To work!
STEVE: Why?
DALE: Because!
GRACE: We need!
STEVE: No!
DALE: Why?
GRACE: Go.
STEVE: Hard!
DALE: So?
GRACE: Need.
STEVE: Far!
DALE: So?
GRACE: Need!
STEVE: Safe!
DALE: Here?
GRACE: No!
STEVE: Why?
DALE: Them.
(Points)
GRACE: Them.
(Points)
STEVE: Won’t!
DALE: Must!
GRACE: Must!
STEVE: Who's speaking?
GRACE: (Enters with a da dao and mao, two swords, Lan. You are in a new land, Gwan Gung.
STEVE: Not new—I have been here before, n
This time, I said I will have it easy. I will
ChinaMan before—on a plane, with money at
GRACE: And?
STEVE: And—there is no change. I am still treat
This land . . . has no right. I AM GWAN GI
GRACE: And I am Fa Mu Lan.
DALE: I'll be Chiang Kai-shek, how's that?
STEVE: (To DALE) You! How can you—? I cam
your parents.
GRACE: (Turning to STEVE) We are in America. A
a battle to fight.
(She tosses the da dao to STEVE. They square off,
STEVE: I don't want to fight you.
GRACE: You killed my family.
STEVE: You were revenged—I ate your father's ;
GRACE: That's not revenge!
(Swords strike)
GRACE: That was only the tease.
(Strike)
GRACE: What's the point in dying if you don't
cause of your death?
(Series of strikes. STEVE falls)
DALE: Okay! That's it!
(GRACE stands over STEVE, her sword pointed
DALE snatches the sword from her hands. She does
DALE: Jesus! Enough is enough!
(DALE takes STEVE's sword; he also does not react
DALE: What the hell kind of movie was that?
(DALE turns his back on the couple, heads for the
storage room. GRACE uses her now-invisible sword
out of STEVE's heart once)

DALE: Fare!
GRACE: Well!
(DALE and GRACE drop the tablecloth over STEVE, who sinks to
the floor. GRACE then moves offstage, into the bathroom—storage
room, while DALE goes upstage and stands with his back to
the audience. Silence)
STEVE: (Begins pounding the ground) Noooo! (He throws off the
tablecloth, standing up full. LIGHTS UP FULL, blindingly) I am
GWAN GUNG!
DALE: (Turning downstage suddenly) What . . . ?
STEVE: I HAVE COME TO THIS LAND TO STUDY!
DALE: Grace . . .
STEVE: TO STUDY THE ARTS OF WAR, OF LITERA-
TURE, OF RIGHTEOUSNESS!
DALE: A movie's fine.
STEVE: I FOUGHT THE WARS OF THE THREE
KINGDOMS!
DALE: An ordinary movie, let's go.
STEVE: I FOUGHT WITH THE FIRST PIONEERS, THE
FIRST WARRIORS THAT CHOSE TO FOLLOW THE
WHITE GHOSTS TO THIS LAND!
DALE: You can pick, okay?
STEVE: I WAS THEIR HERO, THEIR LEADER, THEIR
FIRE!
DALE: I'll even let him drive, how's that?
STEVE: AND THIS LAND IS MINE! IT HAS NO RIGHT
TO TREAT ME THIS WAY!
GRACE: No. Gwan Gung, you have no rights.
STEVE: Who's speaking?
GRACE: (Enters with a da dao and mao, two swords) It is Fa Mu Lan. You are in a new land, Gwan Gung.
STEVE: Not new—I have been here before, many times. This time, I said I will have it easy. I will come as no Chinese Man before—on a plane, with money and rank.
GRACE: And?
STEVE: And—there is no change. I am still treated like this! This land . . . has no right. I AM GWAN GUNG!
GRACE: And I am Fa Mu Lan.
DALE: I'll be Chiang Kai-shek, how's that?
STEVE: (To DALE) You! How can you—? I came over with your parents.
GRACE: (Turning to STEVE) We are in America. And we have a battle to fight.
   (She tosses the da dao to STEVE. They square off)
STEVE: I don't want to fight you.
GRACE: You killed my family,
STEVE: You were revenged—I ate your father's sins.
GRACE: That's not revenge!
   (Swords strike)
GRACE: That was only the tease.
   (Strike)
GRACE: What's the point in dying if you don't know the cause of your death?
   (Series of strikes. STEVE falls)
DALE: Okay! That's it!
   (GRACE stands over STEVE, her sword pointed at his heart.
DALE snatches the sword from her hands. She does not move)
DALE: Jesus! Enough is enough!
   (DALE takes STEVE's sword; he also does not react)
DALE: What the hell kind of movie was that?
   (DALE turns his back on the couple, heads for the bathroom—storage room. GRACE uses her now-invisible sword to thrust in and out of STEVE's heart once)
DALE: That’s it. Game’s over. Now just sit down here.
(DALE strokes GRACE’s hair. They freeze. STEVE rises slowly to his knees and delivers a monologue to the audience)

STEVE: Ssssh! Please, miss! Please—quiet! I will not hurt you, I promise. All I want is . . . food . . . anything. You look full of plenty. I have not eaten almost one week now, but four days past when I found one egg and I ate every piece of it—including shell. Every piece, I ate. Please. Don’t you have anything extra? (Pause) I want to. Now. This land does not want us any more than China. But I cannot. All work was done, then the bosses said they could not send us back. And I am running, running from Eureka, running from San Francisco, running from Los Angeles. And I been eating very little. One egg, only. (Pause) All America wants ChinaMen go home, but no one want it bad enough to pay our way. Now, please, can’t you give even little? (Pause) I ask you, what you hate most? What work most awful for white woman? (Pause) Good. I will do that thing for you—you can give me food. (Pause) Think—you relax, you are given those things, clean, dry, press. No scrub, no dry. It is wonderful thing I offer you. (Pause) Good. Give me those and please bring food, or I be done before these things.

(Grace steps away from Dale with box)
GRACE: Here—I’ve brought you something. (She hands him the box) Open it.
(He hesitates, then does, and takes out a small chong you bing)

GRACE: Eat it.
(He does, slowly at first, then ravenously)

GRACE: Good. Eat it all down. It’s just food. Really. Feel better now? Good. Eat the bing. Hold it in your hands. Your hands . . . are beautiful. Lift it to your mouth. Your teeth . . . are beautiful. Crush it with your tongue . . . is beautiful. Slide it down your throat . . . is beautiful.

STEVE: Our hands are beautiful.

(She holds hers next to his)

GRACE: What do you see?

STEVE: I see . . . I see the hands of warriors.

GRACE: Warriors? What of gods, then?

STEVE: There are no gods that travel. Only war 
(Silence) Would you like go dance?


(They start to leave. Dale speaks softly)

DALE: Well, if you want to be alone . . .

GRACE: I think we would, Dale. Is that okay? (Pause) for coming over. I’m sorry things got so sere

DALE: Oh—uh—that’s okay. The evening was referent, anyway.

GRACE: Yeah. Maybe you can take Frank off now?

DALE: (Laughing softly) Yeah. Maybe I will.

STEVE: (To Dale) Very nice meeting you. (Exten

dale: (Does not take it) Yeah. Same here.

(Steve and grace start to leave)

DALE: You know . . . I think you picked up Er than anyone I’ve ever met.

(Pause)

STEVE: Thank you.

GRACE: See you.

STEVE: Good-bye.

DALE: Bye.

(Grace and Steve exit)

END OF ACT TWO
Henry Huang

; it. Game's over. Now just sit down here.
One. Two. One. Two. Air. Good stuff. Glad
it. Right, cousin?

[Grace's hair. They freeze. Steve rises slowly
and delivers a monologue to the audience]

Please, miss! Please—quiet! I will not hurt
nise. All I want is . . . food . . . anything. You
plenty. I have not eaten almost one week
our days past when I found one egg and I ate
of it—including shell. Every piece. I ate.
't you have anything extra? (Pause) I want to.
land does not want us any more than China.

And all work was done, then the bosses said
not send us back. And I am running, running
ning from San Francisco, running from
and I been eating very little. One egg,
All America wants ChinaMen go home, but
it bad enough to pay our way. Now, please,
ive even little? (Pause) I ask you, what you
What work most awful for white woman?
I will do that thing for you—you can give
Think—you relax, you are given those
, dry, press. No scrub, no dry. It is wonder-
off you. (Pause) Good. Give me those and
food, or I be done before these things.
away from Dale with box]

I've brought you something. (She hands him
in it.)

then does, and takes out a small chong you

[Mountain . . . is beautiful. Bite it with your teeth. Your
teeth . . . are beautiful. Crush it with your tongue.
Your tongue . . . is beautiful. Slide it down your throat.
Your throat . . . is beautiful.
Steve: Our hands are beautiful.
(She holds hers next to his)

Grace: What do you see?
Steve: I see . . . I see the hands of warriors.

Grace: Warriors? What of gods, then?
Steve: There are no gods that travel. Only warriors travel.
(Silence) Would you like to dance?
(They start to leave. Dale speaks softly)

Dale: Well, if you want to be alone . . .

Grace: I think we would, Dale. Is that okay? (Pause) Thanks
for coming over. I'm sorry things got so screwed up.
Dale: Oh—uh—that's okay. The evening was real . . . dif-
ferent, anyway.

Grace: Yeah. Maybe you can take Frank off the tracks
now?

Dale: (Laughing softly) Yeah. Maybe I will.

Steve: (To Dale) Very nice meeting you. (Extends his hand)

Dale: (Does not take it) Yeah. Same here.

(Steve and Grace start to leave)

Dale: You know . . . I think you picked up English faster
than anyone I've ever met.
(Pause)

Steve: Thank you.
Grace: See you.
Steve: Good-bye.
Dale: Bye.
(Grace and Steve exit)

END OF ACT TWO
CODA

DALE alone in the back room. He examines the swords, the tablecloth, the box. He sits down.

DALE: F-O-B. Fresh Off the Boat, FOB. Clumsy, ugly, greasy FOB. Loud, stupid, four-eyed FOB. Big feet. Horny. Like Lenny in Of Mice and Men. F-O-B. Fresh Off the Boat. FOB.

(SLOW FADE TO BLACK)

CURTAIN