

OVER BLACK

A light acoustic guitar begins to pluck a gentle tune. It's the airy opening chords of "You Never Give Me Your Money" by The Beatles. The darkness slowly SHIFTS into a kaleidoscope of color.

The song continues to play as we fade into...

EXT. SAN FRANCISCO BAY - DAY - 1974

A view of the Golden Gate Bridge's colossal underbelly. It casts a dark shadow over CHENG FUH NG (late teens, hungry eyes and tan skin). He stops mopping the deck and looks up.

He's on a small Hong Kong cargo ship. Soon the ship clears the Bridge, but CHENG FUH is nowhere to be found.

The vessel nears the waterfront. We gradually pull back and witness a more modest San Francisco skyline, featuring a shining new Transamerica Pyramid.

Out of the corner of our eye, a lone figure DIVES from the ship into the bay. It's CHENG FUH, swimming towards a new beginning.

CUT TO:

INT. GREAT WALL RESTAURANT - AFTERNOON - 2004

A small Chinese restaurant. Paper peels off of an old fú charm hanging upside down on the wall. An old money tree wilts in the corner. Outside, concrete strip malls baked by the suburban sun stretch into infinity.

Through the cloudy glass of a tiny aquarium we watch an older CHENG FUH, now in his 40s. He's stretched to his limits as he tries to keep his business afloat. Cheng rings up customers, takes orders over the phone, and silently gestures at newcomers to sit in one of the faded seafoam booths.

One booth near the cashier is permanently occupied by his son JOHNNY (6) and daughter STEPHANIE (early teens). STEPHANIE diligently scribbles away at her homework while JOHNNY looks out the window -- lost in a daydream.

CUT TO:

INT. LUXURY APARTMENT - DAY - 2021

We escape the suburbs and return to a modern San Francisco skyline. Its glittering glass provide a sparkling backdrop to JOHNNY'S (23, tech bro) spartan two bedroom apartment.

JOHNNY'S sporting a clean brushed up haircut and Berkeley sweatshirt. He stops staring out the window and leans forward in his Aeron chair to examine the jungle of code and spreadsheets spilled across his three monitors.

CUT TO:

EXT. AYAHUASCA RETREAT DINNER TABLE - NIGHT - PRESENT

JOHNNY, having tacked on a few years and twenty pounds of extra muscle, sits at a candlelit communal long table. He's chowing down on a healthy spirulina bowl while excitedly exchanging ideas with his young and attractive neighbors. Everyone's wearing the same modest white linen uniform.

EXT. AYAHUASCA RETREAT CEREMONY CIRCLE - NIGHT

The song transitions into an acoustic cover by a RETREAT HEALER (early 40s, white, neatly trimmed beard), who massages the final dissonant chords into a pleasant harmony.

The dozen attendees sit around him in a circle. Their eyes are closed as they contemplate their intentions.

They're situated on a rosewood deck overlooking a magnificent view of the Caribbean Sea. A gentle tropical breeze caresses the group -- truly an experience worth every pretty penny.

The HEALER completes the song and gently places his guitar on the ground. He then stands up to serve a brown brew to the guests. Soon he arrives at JOHNNY, who opens his eyes to accept the offering.

We focus on JOHNNY eyes as the plant's influence takes effect. Soon his sharp eyes soften, before shutting altogether.

The glowing rays of the setting sun wrap JOHNNY in an amber aura...JOHNNY lets out a deep sigh...before PUKING his guts out right in front of us.

A cacophony of purging and retching from the other guests follows as the TITLE CARD emerges:

TITLE CARD:

"ALL THAT IS GOLD"

EXT. AYAHUASCA RETREAT CEREMONY CIRCLE - DAY

Morning. The gentle sea breeze kisses the guests' perfect skin as they make their way back to the circle. JOHNNY sits on a meditation cushion in full-lotus posture, joking with a couple of new friends beside him.

His shirt is off -- showing off well-defined muscles and a six pack sculpted from pure diligence and dedication.

This time, the RETREAT THERAPIST (50s) leads the conversation. She's a thin woman wearing round turtleshell glasses, greying frizzy hair, and an easy smile.

THERAPIST

Thank you everyone for coming to our final integration session. I hope this week has been as productive for all of you as it was for us. I know I witnessed a couple of wonderful breakthroughs myself. As always, these healing gatherings are a two-way conversation -- so would anyone like to share with us any key insights they've acquired throughout the week?

The therapist scans the group for volunteers. She eventually locks eyes with a fair-skinned Japanese man with chiseled facial features. This is PERCY WASHINGTON, (20s, neat and aloof)

THERAPIST (CONT'D)

Percy, how about you?

PERCY responds with a charismatic smile.

PERCY

Thank you Dawn, but I'll pass.

THERAPIST

Oh, ok. How about...Candice?

A handsome woman in her thirties shifts her braids to the side, ready to answer.

CANDICE

Yea, absolutely. As many of you know, I used to play professional soccer. Well, I still do. I think.

She pauses, still unfamiliar with her new candid self.

CANDICE (CONT'D)

I...recently suffered a serious injury. It left me feeling really anxious and frustrated. As you also know, we don't get the same amount of resources and support as the guys do. And...when a friend suggested this retreat I was pretty nervous. I had never experimented with psychedelic therapy before -- but...it's been really, really, great. I'm really thankful for this experience and everyone's support. I just...I can really see the bigger picture now -- if I don't get back on the pitch, so what? I know now that there is so much more life has to offer. I might not ever get that Serena money, but strangely, now I have the courage to give it everything I got.

Everyone nods and claps in approval, heartened by CANDICE'S progress.

THERAPIST

That's wonderful. Anyone else?

JOHNNY raises his hand.

JOHNNY

I can share.

THERAPIST

Great, take it away John.

JOHNNY

Oh, call me Johnny.

THERAPIST

Johnny, then. Any new insights on the intentions you wrote down?

JOHNNY

Yea...I really appreciated the journaling prompts by the way.

He leans back, and lets out a big breath as he gathers his thoughts.

JOHNNY (CONT'D)

...Recently, I've felt sort of...rudderless. My whole life I've been chasing one stepping stone after the next -- waiting for my chance to change the world -- and now I spend my day optimizing an algorithm so people can spend more time watching funny videos.

JOHNNY finds himself forcing through a wry smile.

JOHNNY (CONT'D)

Sure, it lets me afford a nice place and this retreat -- and don't get me wrong, I'm super grateful for what I have...but I'm kind of like -- this can't be it, can it? Am I just going to wake up one day with two kids and a mortgage? What about all those big ideas I had back in college?

A ripple of agreement courses through the gathering.

THERAPIST

And how did the plants help you answer these questions?

JOHNNY

Well, in this last ceremony, I reflected a lot on my family. My father -- he risked it all for us. He had a vision of prosperity and he took it upon himself -- with basically nothing -- to make that dream come true. Honestly, I always thought he was fucking crazy -- but maybe that's what I've been missing. And I think -- and I'm kind of just spitballing now -- I think I've finally built up a little crazy -- that bit of courage to pursue those big ideas -- and I want to start by helping people like my father. I'm going to try and make it easier for people less fortunate than us to acquire reliable, non predatory capital, so they can pursue their dreams too.

THERAPIST

Thank you Johnny. That's a wonderful idea.

Rigorous clapping comes from the supportive crowd.

Out of JOHNNY'S peripheral vision, PERCY'S inquisitive stare lingers.

[NOTE: CANTONESE DIALOGUE WILL BE ITALICIZED]

INT. JOHNNY'S SUITE - DAY - LATER

JOHNNY steps out of the bathroom, toweling himself off. He throws on a black t-shirt and opens his laptop.

Letting out a deep sigh, JOHNNY readies himself for the stressful conversation to come. The time on the screen reads: 2:00 PM.

Moments later, a Facetime notification pops up. It's a video chat invite from MOM.

JOHNNY checks behind him: great -- his family can only see his well made bed and not one angle of his tropical location.

He jumps into the group call. The attendees include his MOM (Cassandra Kang, early 60s, social butterfly at church), DAD (Cheng Fuh Ng from earlier, now in his late 60s) and OLDER SISTER (Stephanie Ng from earlier, now early 30s, corporate lawyer). DAD is already giving STEPHANIE the usual lecture.

CHENG FUH

Ga jie, how is Andy eh? Still keep in touch?

STEPHANIE

We don't talk anymore dad.

CHENG FUH

Too bad, he was handsome. Doctor too -- oh, Johnny!

Cheng Fuh waves to Johnny.

JOHNNY

Hey *ba!* Hi *ma!*

CHENG FUH

How is the bootcamp? Learning a lot?

STEPHANIE

Yes Johnny, tell us about your
"bootcamp"

JOHNNY

(nervously laughs)
Pretty intense! Sorry I haven't
been keeping in touch that much.
How's the restaurant?

CHENG FUH looks away.

CASSANDRA

It's good la, business a little
slow now but gives us some time to
rest.

JOHNNY

That's good...did you guys hire
some help like we talked about?

CHENG FUH

(scoffs)
Help is too expensive! We've
survived on our own for twenty
years!

JOHNNY

Yea but--

CASSANDRA

We'll talk more when you're back.

JOHNNY

Ok. Dad I'll sit down with you when
I'm back. I'm sure we can make it
work out. ...You guys haven't sold
that Ethereum right?

CASSANDRA

Dad is still holding until you tell
him otherwise.

CHENG FUH

Aiya, when is it going to come back
up? Uncle Lai told me to invest in
TCM last month, it's up over fifty
percent!

CASSANDRA

Don't listen to *ba ba*, we know you
will make us a lot of money Johnny.
His investment in your education is
worth it.

(MORE)

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)

Auntie Lai always asks us: "How do both of your children get into Harvard? I say I didn't do anything, too busy running the restaurant!"

Stephanie attempts to bring her little brother back to Earth.

STEPHANIE

Weird, are those tropical birds I hear in the background? I thought you said you were in London...

Johnny throws his sister a death stare.

JOHNNY

Oh, that's just the playlist I use to help me go to sleep. Anyways, it's getting late here. Love you guys!

CASSANDRA

Sai lo ah, send us your flight details. Are you planning on flying back to San Francisco or coming here to Bakersfield first?

JOHNNY

Umm... haven't decided yet. Ok, really have to go, Love you all!

EXT. RETREAT POOL - NIGHT

JOHNNY sits at the edge of the infinity pool, sipping on a nootropic mocktail and making jovial small talk with CANDICE.

We see another pair of feet approach them. A hand reaches down and taps JOHNNY on the shoulder. He looks up. It's PERCY.

PERCY

Hi Johnny. Candice. (To Candice)
Mind if I grab some alone time with our friend here?

CANDICE raises an eyebrow.

CANDICE

Um, sure.

She picks up her own mocktail and heads off. PERCY takes a seat next to his "friend".

PERCY

Hey. I'm Percy. Thought I'd introduce myself since its the last day. I really enjoyed what you shared with us today.

JOHNNY

Hey, thanks. Johnny. Good to meet you.

They exchange a firm handshake.

JOHNNY (CONT'D)

Wait -- you look familiar...were you at one of the PBE rooftop raves back in the day?...I'm Cal '19.

PERCY

Yea, could be. I was at Stanford but dated someone at Berkeley.

JOHNNY

Right on. Nice to see another non-gwailou out here haha. You know what that means? Not sure if you're canto or...

PERCY

(chuckling)

Japanese, but yes, I know. Funny we fly all the way out to Costa Rica and hardly engage with any of the locals.

JOHNNY

I know right? Kind of fucked up. What'd you think of the retreat?

PERCY

It was...intriguing. The plant merits further examination. The people...I could do mostly without. To be honest, it was hard for me to detach as I came here for work.

PERCY'S face stretches into a Cheshire Cat-like smile.

JOHNNY

Wow! I'd love to work somewhere that sends me here. Do you mind if I ask what you do?...

PERCY

Oh it's nothing that glamorous. We have a small family foundation that my grandfather set up. My father is about to hand the reins over to me and he's tasked me to look for our next big bet. You mentioned a bit about your job earlier...

JOHNNY

Ah, just this silly Web3 social startup, trying to "disrupt" society one decentralized meme at a time. As you heard, I'm really thinking about quitting but...

PERCY

Money talks right?

JOHNNY gives a sheepish nod.

PERCY (CONT'D)

I hear you. We believe the future of money is now as well. We don't get into the smaller tokens but a lot of our portfolio is held in bitcoin.

JOHNNY

That's what's up.

PERCY

(leans in)

But tell me more about this idea you shared with us today.

JOHNNY

Man...All I know is my dad had a hard time getting loans from the bank when I was a kid. They were always busting his balls. Asking for tax documents, income statements, you name it. He literally jumped off the boat, how was he supposed to know what a credit score was? There's gotta be a way to create a trust-less network so that we can skip the banks and lend safely from within the community.

PERCY furrows his brows, seriously considering the implications of JOHNNY'S idea.