

DAWG IN THE 626

A modern comedy based on Lope de Vega's
DOG IN THE MANGER (*El perro del hortelano*)

By Annette Lee

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9/5/15
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Manic Chan's songs by Bertrand Wang
Theo's soliloquy by D'Loco Kid

The sound of hip hop, Pop, C-Pop and K-Pop, sizzling grills, strains of English, Chinese and other languages.

FADE IN:

EXT. NIGHT MARKET: MONTAGE - NIGHT

Bright-bulbed lights. Sizzling, smoky grills. Crowds, food, cool stuff to buy. It's the 626 Night Market.

A beat.

CU on a hip hop stylin' young person beatboxing into a mic. This is MANIC CHAN (30's, Asian American).

MANIC CHAN

Alhambra, Arcadia, Monterey Park,
The pulse of our people is pounding after
dark

Starting in the Market in The 626

Talkin new and old flavors

Up in the mix

6-2-6 increasing Asian statistics

It's ok I'm Asian

Part of the ethnoburb invasion

Instead of retaliation

How bout some admiration

SGV is the place to be

Doesn't take Asian eyes to see

6-2-6 up in the mix

Manic Chan's the man

Servin up truth like a rabbit serves
trix.

Getting your kicks in the 6-2-6

Manic Chan dropping Asian semantics

Making ninjas panic even Habla some
Hispanic

Dropping rhymes to make your mind frantic

Manic Chan did it

I'm guilty and convicted

6-2-6 restricted

This is how we kick it.

The beat ends.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. NIGHT MARKET: VENDOR ROW - NIGHT

Magic Chan walks through the many vendors of the Night Market.

MANIC CHAN

Yo, yo, Manic Chan here and bringing you my World. Where we at? Today, we at the 626 Night Market. Now, what is this 626, you say? Yo, the 626 is the area code of the San Gabriel Valley, the first hood in the Continental U.S. to be majority Chinese. That's right. We minorities be the majority in the 626. And this ain't no rundown, cluttered, back alley Chinatown where you get your greasy takeout, sandalwood fans and kung fu slippers. Nah... This is a slice of America with an Asian persuasion. It's the 'burbs, where the school districts are tight and the property value risin'. Now, you may be sayin' Manic Chan, you told us where we are, but what's so special about this Night Market? We already got food festivals, county fairs and flea markets. Yo, none of that matches the open-air, carny-like, night-time-only, eat and shop market like you find in Asia. Not only do we got the best food you ever tasted, but it be a celebration of who we are.

A lot goes down in the Night Market. Some peeps find love, cash money and themselves here. We got a story about a lovely sistah named Diana, who's gonna be at the Night Market, but she got some business to settle before she come. Starts in her 'hood, Arcadia, where it ain't no Utopia, but there be some hysteria.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. DIANA'S CONDO - NIGHT

A YOUNG MAN disguised in a hoodie and sunglasses. He quickly exits through a window.

DIANA (30's, Asian American) runs after him. She is delicate, glamorous and madly wielding a bat. She swings it wildly around and running in the direction of his exit.

DIANA

Where is he? Where did he go?
 (She looks out a window.)
 (MORE)

DIANA (CONT'D)

That's right, you better run and keep running. Don't come back here again. I'm calling the police!

Diana talks into her smart phone.

DIANA (CONT'D)

Trystan.

TRYSTAN is Diana's smart phone and speaks in a pleasant, calm but upbeat voice.

TRYSTAN

This is Trystan

DIANA

Call 911.

TRYSTAN

I'm calling 911.

Trystan calls.

OPERATOR

911 emergency response. How can I help you?

DIANA

I had an intruder in my home.

OPERATOR

Is the intruder still in your home now?

DIANA

No, he fled and jumped out my window.

OPERATOR

Is anyone hurt or in danger there, ma'am?

DIANA

No, I'm fine. Oh, wait... Mimi! Mimi are you alright? Mimi!

Enter MIMI (20's, Asian American), young, pretty, a little simple and modestly dressed. She wears a thick bathrobe and feigns drowsiness.

MIMI

Big sister, what's wrong? I was sleeping.

DIANA

Good, you are alright. Someone broke into our house and I was afraid he might have...

MIMI

A bandit? There are bandits in the house? Protect me, Big Sister!

DIANA

He is gone now.

OPERATOR

Hello? Hello, ma'am? Is everything okay?

DIANA

Yes, I am sorry. Everyone here is fine.

OPERATOR

We'll be sending a squad car over to take a report. What's your address?

DIANA

888 East Fortune Drive, Arcadia.

OPERATOR

Someone will be there momentarily.

DIANA

Thank you.

OPERATOR

Would you like me to stay on the line with you?

DIANA

No, I will wait for the policeman.

OPERATOR

Thank you, ma'am and thank you for calling 911.

DIANA

Trystan, end call.

Click.

TRYSTAN

I'm ending the call.

MIMI

You are so brave, Big Sister.

DIANA

I was worried that he might have hurt you. Great Uncle Mo would be very angry with me if anything happened to you.

MIMI

I'm very lucky to have you to protect me and to have brought me to this country.

DIANA

We are family.

MIMI

But I am but a poor relation.

DIANA

You are my mother's brother-in-law's second sister's daughter. You are very closely related to me.

MIMI

I know nothing since I come from a small village, so I am fortunate that a wise woman like you can teach me many things about America, the Beautiful Country. I would be a thousand times happy if I can become one one hundredth as rich and successful as you and your family.

DIANA

Study hard at Pasadena City College and I'm sure it will happen in no time. But now, we need to get this window fixed.

Diana calls on her phone.

DIANA (CONT'D)

Trystan, call Theo.

MIMI

No, Big sister, don't call Theo now. It is so late...

TRYSTAN

I'm calling Theo.

DIANA

He should still be up.

Trystan rings and rings.

DIANA (CONT'D)

Why doesn't he pick up?

Trystan rings and clicks once.

THEO'S VOICEMAIL

The cell phone you are trying to call is not available. Please leave a message after the beep.

Beep.

DIANA

Theo, where are you? I need you to call around and get someone to repair my window. Someone was trying to rob us and broke it. Get someone here to fix it first thing in the morning. You said you just had a new alarm installed. I tried to engage it three times and it wouldn't turn on. Didn't you program it? It's not worth the box it came in. I can't believe you convinced me buy it. You call yourself a personal assistant? Call me back. Trystan, end call.

TRYSTAN

I'm ending the call.

Click.

DIANA

Let's check your window. I want you to be safe in case he tries to come back.

MIMI

Big Sister, I don't mean to interfere, but is it proper to hire your friend as your servant?

DIANA

He is not my servant, he is my personal assistant.

MIMI

What is the difference?

DIANA

Servants are feudal. Personal assistants are modern and American.

MIMI

They are?

DIANA

Yes. Besides, he said he needs the money. I also need the help.

MIMI
With the Night Market Opening?

DIANA
Yes, we are very busy right now. Let's go check your window. I will sleep better knowing it is secure.

MIMI
My window is fine. It is tight as a bank safe.

DIANA
Let us check it anyway.

They cross to Mimi's room.

MIMI
It's not necessary. I'm so worthless, no bandit would ever consider coming into my room.

Diana examines Mimi's window.

DIANA
This is loose. You could pry this open with one hand from the outside. It is no wonder he got in so easily. Trystan, call Theo.

TRYSTAN
I'm calling Theo.

MIMI
No, please don't call Theo again at this hour. I'm not worth any inconvenience.

Trystan rings. Simultaneously, a cellphone plays Hip Hop ringtone.

DIANA
What is that?

MIMI
What?

DIANA
I am hearing something playing.

MIMI
My iPod. On shuffle.

DIANA
Trystan end call.

DIANA

Why is Theo's phone in your room?

MIMI

I do not know.

DIANA

Was Theo here tonight, Mimi?

MIMI

Perhaps.

DIANA

Was that Theo climbing out the window?

MIMI

Yes.

MIMI bursts into tears.

MIMI (CONT'D)

Big sister, forgive me. I am worthless. For all your kindness, I have betrayed you. Please, hit me.

DIANA

We don't do that in this country, Mimi.

MIMI

Yes, of course. I am too lowly to be struck with your bare hand. I will get the bamboo feather duster for you. I deserve to be caned.

DIANA

No, just tell me what happened. Did he force himself on you?

MIMI

Oh, no, he didn't. He's not like that.

DIANA

Good. I never took him for a violent rapist.

MIMI

He's not violent at all, but the most gentle of souls. He says the most beautiful things to me. Back in the village, I was worthless and stupid and why was I born a girl? I should have been left at the train station or drowned in the river.

(MORE)

MIMI (CONT'D)

But Theo tells me I am smart and clever.
He tells me I am beautiful and... and...

DIANA

And what?

MIMI

Useful.

DIANA

Oh.

MIMI

I have never been Useful. Back in the
village, I was nothing but useless.

DIANA

Yes, these are kind words.

MIMI

When he says these things to me, I
actually believe him. I believe it might
actually be true.

DIANA

They are true Mimi. You are clever and
you are Useful.

MIMI

I am humbled.

DIANA

But I am worried about you. Has he
tampered with your honor?

MIMI

No, Big Sister, he hasn't dishonored me.
I've been a good girl. He says he will
marry me and I will wait until then.

DIANA

Marry you? Is that what he said?

MIMI

Mostly. I am sure he will just as soon
as he has enough money, he will move out
of his apartment of many bachelors and
find a place for just the two of us.

DIANA

That will be a long time from now,
cousin. Are you so patient?

MIMI

I have the patience of Kwan Yin.

DIANA

I see. Are you not concerned about your studies?

MIMI

He believes in me and believes I can finish my studies.

DIANA

This is moving all so quickly, Mimi. How long as this been going on?

MIMI

Seven days.

Diana drops both phones. Mimi fumbles around to pick them up.

DIANA

(V.O. to self)

Seven days! Seven days? I've been blind to this for seven days? How can she be interested in him? How is he interested in her? I can't let that happen.

DIANA (CONT'D)

(to Mimi)

Mimi, did you say it was seven days?

MIMI

Yes, it is only seven days but it feels like a lifetime. I cannot remember a time when we were not...

DIANA

This cannot be.

MIMI

I know it is not very long...

DIANA

Cousin, we must prevent the seven day affliction.

MIMI

What is that?

DIANA

It is an affliction that men in America develop after 7 days of dating.

(MORE)

DIANA (CONT'D)

He loses his fondness for the woman with whom he was completely infatuated.

MIMI

Oh, no...

DIANA

But if you can weather the 7 day affliction, you will develop a love that can withstand anything.

MIMI

Really?

DIANA

Trust me on this. I am older and more experienced. We must make his heart grow fonder by giving him what is called "Space".

MIMI

Space.

DIANA

You must immerse yourself in work and become completely unavailable.

MIMI

How can I do this, Big Sister?

DIANA

I don't know...

MIMI

Oh, you must help me. I don't want to lose him. How can I make myself unavailable and give him Space?

DIANA

You must go to the Princess CaterCon.

MIMI

The restaurant and catering convention on the Princess cruise ship?

DIANA

Our biggest show of the year - next to the Night Market event. Our seminar is the most popular because we teach incorporating our plastic and wood chopsticks with everything from elegant table settings to the quick and dirty takeout. Half our new accounts for the year will be booked through the cruise.

MIMI

But is it not Old Munson who leads the seminars?

DIANA

You will go with Old Munson. At end of the cruise, you will have made Theo's heart fonder through absence and some valuable job experience.

MIMI

You would do that for me? When would I leave?

DIANA

Today. The ship sets sail this morning. Get your passport. I will book your passage.

MIMI

But I will miss school.

DIANA

Take your books with you. Where is your passport?

They rummage through Mimi's desk.

MIMI

Here, Big Sister.

DIANA

Good.

Diana talks into her phone.

DIANA (CONT'D)

Trystan, book passage on Princess Cruises.

TRYSTAN

I'm finding Princess Cruises.

Diana brings out a suitcase.

DIANA

Departing today for Mimi Zhou and returning seven days from now. Charge to Amex.

(to Mimi)

Start packing.

Mimi and Diana frantically pack.

TRYSTAN

Working.

MIMI

I must tell Theo.

DIANA

No, you must not. I will tell him. Your standoff-ishness will be all the more appealing.

MIMI

It will?

DIANA

Oh, yes. You will seem career-oriented. Very desirable, when they have to compete with your career.

MIMI

Oh.

They finish packing and close the case.

TRYSTAN

Mimi Zhou voyage confirmed. Cabin B445 on the Promenade deck. Your Amex card has been charged.

DIANA

Thank you, Trystan. This ship leaves this morning and you will need to go through customs. You also need to beat the traffic to San Pedro.

Trystan, nearest Uber car available. Going to San Pedro.

TRYSTAN

I'm finding Uber.

MIMI

But it's so early. Can't I leave a little later? It's still dark out.

DIANA

You never know about traffic in Los Angeles...

TRYSTAN

The Uber car is available. 3 minutes away.

DIANA
Quickly, the car is coming.

MIMI
But I'm not dressed.

DIANA
It is fine. All college students where pajamas in public. It is very American. You will blend in. Here, just put on a parka.

Wraps her in coat. Puts suitcase in her hand.

DIANA (CONT'D)
You look very stylish.

TRYSTAN
Your Uber driver has arrived.

DIANA
Quickly, let's get you in your car.

Diana shoves her out the door.

DIANA (CONT'D)
Now listen to Munson and do everything he says. Old Munson has been in this business a long time and knows what he's talking about. He worked with my father and my father's father. You can learn much from him.

MIMI
Yes, Big Sister.

DIANA
Concentrate on your work. No boys.

MIMI
Of course not, Big Sister.

DIANA
I packed your books, too, so when the shows and seminars are over, go back to your cabin to study.

MIMI
Yes, Big Sister.

DIANA
You are a good girl. And useful.

MIMI
Thank you. Thank you, Big Sister. I am
not deserving.

DIANA
Yes, yes, yes... Bye, bye Mimi. Have a
good trip.

She shoves Mimi out the door.

MIMI
Thank you, Big Sister. I owe you
everything!

Exit Mimi.

Diana sighs a relief.

DIANA
Trystan.

TRYSTAN
How can I help you?

DIANA
Call Munson.

TRYSTAN
I'm calling Munson Leung.

DIANA
(to herself)
They cannot be together.

CUT TO:

INT. MUNSON'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

MUNSON (70's, Asian), sleeping in bed. Phone ringing.
He rises and answers.

MUNSON
Wei?

CUT TO:

INT. DIANA'S CONDO - NIGHT

DIANA
Munson.

MUNSON

Hello?

DIANA

It's Diana.

MUNSON

Diana... Why do you call me so early?

DIANA

Mimi is going on the Princess Cruise
Trade show with you.

MUNSON

What? Who?

DIANA

Mimi, my cousin.

MUNSON

The girl? Why are you sending the girl?
I know how to sell chopsticks. Do you
think I am too old? I am not so old as
that. I can still sell chopsticks. I
sold chopsticks for your father, and your
father's father. I can sell them for
you. When I started selling chopsticks,
they were made of bamboo. Now they are
plastic. All plastic. Okay. I will sell
the plastic chopstick. This is a new
world. A modern world. I can do that.
I can sell the plastic chopstick - to
anyone!

DIANA

Yes, you can, now listen. Mimi is on her
way to the port now.

MUNSON

She goes now? That's too early. It's
still dark outside. Why do you send her
so early? We got at least three hours
before we need to leave.

DIANA

Nevermind. Mimi will be working for you.
Tell her what to do for the
demonstrations and the showroom booth. I
need you to do this thing also. It's
very important. She has an iPhone 6.
You know the kind?

MUNSON

Oh, yeah, new iOS, but pretty stable.

DIANA

Right. She won't be able to make any calls that far out at sea, but the texting might still work. I need you to go into her address book and change her contact for Theo to my number. Don't change the name of the contact, though. Just the number in it.

MUNSON

Why?

DIANA

Don't ask why.

MUNSON

You sound like your father. And your father's father.

DIANA

Just change the contact for Theo to my number. Do you hear me?

MUNSON

I am old, not deaf.

DIANA

Are you going to change the number?

MUNSON

Yeah, you got it boss.

DIANA

And then put a block on any messages from Theo's number.

MUNSON

You want me to change the retina scan, too?

DIANA

No, not necessary.

MUNSON

Hey, when you going to get married? You know, your father asks me all the time what boy comes around.

DIANA

And I hope you tell him nothing.

MUNSON

I see nobody come around, so that's very easy.

DIANA

Are you going to be like everyone else
and tell me to get married?

MUNSON

Hey, I believe in equal rights. I been a
bachelor all these many years, women can
do the same thing. Nothing wrong with
that.

DIANA

Thank you, Munson.

MUNSON

But you not getting any younger.

DIANA

Have a good trip, Munson, and sell lots
of chopsticks.

MUNSON

Yeah, no problem. I am your number one
salesman and babysitter.

DIANA

Bye.

MUNSON

Bye, bye.

CUT TO:

INT. DIANA'S CONDO - NIGHT

DIANA

Trystan, end call.

TRYSTAN

I'm ending the call.

Click.

Diana flops down in a chair exhausted.

A sound outside the window. Diana stands around the side
of it. THEO (30's, Asian American) appears in the
window and climbs back through. Theo hunts around the
floor. Diana steps out.

DIANA

Hello Theo.

THEO

Oh, hey, yo, Dawg. Whatcha doin' in the shadows?

DIANA

I am not a dog. Why are you here, Theo?

THEO

I... was driving by and saw the light on and I thought go check you out. Maybe the alarm isn't working. Then I saw this window was opened and maybe it shouldn't be, so I came closer to look.

DIANA

That's very kind of you.

THEO

Just doing my job, Mama. I installed this alarm and I wanted to make sure it was working. I'll be going now...

DIANA

Theo, did you get my calls earlier?

THEO

Oh... yeah, yeah, I did. And that's why I'm here. I said, "Theo, man, you better get over to Diana's and see what you can do to help. 'Cause she's the boss." And here I am.

DIANA

Why didn't you pick up the phone when I called?

THEO

I was uh... driving. Safety, you know. I ain't gonna pick it up unless it be hands free.

DIANA

Hands free. And where is your phone now?

THEO

In my car.

DIANA

Are you sure?

THEO

Yeah. Yo, I know where my cell phone is. It's charging.

DIANA

Shall I call your phone now and see where it is?

THEO

Why? It's in the car...

DIANA

Trystan, call Theo.

TRYSTAN

I'm calling Theo.

THEO

Nah, nah, you don't need to do that. Trystan, end call.

TRYSTAN

I'm ending the call.

THEO

Like I said, it's on a charger in the car. Need to get a new battery. This one keeps dying. Contract's not up yet for a new one. You know, how it is...

DIANA

Theo, my cousin Mimi is taking some time to earn some money for the next few weeks. Despite what you may think, she is not wealthy. I sponsor her here, but she owes her village for her passage to America. She is supposed to finish her degree here, be a genius, earn a lot of money and pay off her debts back home. I don't know when she will finish her endless degree program at PCC, but she will be lucky if she can just get passing grades. She is penniless and not very bright. So she is going on the proverbial road with Munson.

THEO

She didn't tell me nothing about that.

DIANA

Why would she tell you about it?

THEO

She wouldn't - but... she usually fills me in on what's up.

DIANA

Well, she didn't. I suppose she was too busy. I had no idea you were that close.

THEO

Nah, we not close.

DIANA

When she returns, she will need to keep up with her studies.

THEO

Straight up.

DIANA

So we all understand what our jobs are right now?

THEO

Why wouldn't we, yo?

Diana looks out the window.

DIANA

Great, the sun's coming up and we need to get to the Night Market in a few hours. There's no point in going back to bed, now. I'm going get dressed. You get this window fixed and when you're done, let's make sure we get a car booked to pick up Freddie.

THEO

Cousin Fred...

DIANA

His plane gets in sometime tomorrow - or today.

THEO

Six P.M. Bradley Terminal. China Airways.

DIANA

Yes. Please see to it.

THEO

Your wish is my command, my Queen.

DIANA

Oh, and here.

Hands over Theo's phone.

THEO
 (feigning disbelief)
 Oh, hey, yo... What's this?

DIANA
 Your phone.

THEO
 No way!

DIANA
 You must have left it here yesterday.

THEO
 That must be someone else's phone in my car.

DIANA
 Must be. Start moving.

Theo gets cracking and exits.

DIANA (CONT'D)
 (fuming)
 Calm. Must remain calm... Calm...

CUT TO:

EXT. THE NIGHT MARKET: VENDOR ROW - DAY

Manic Chan and a VIDEOGRAPHER walk through the not-yet-crowded rows of booths in the Night Market. He carries a handheld mic.

MANIC CHAN
 Yo, yo, yo! Manic Chan is here and we are getting ready to open for Night One! Or Day One, 'cause the sun ain't down yet. We just gettin' started. Let's meet some people here.

COSPLAYERS run through.

MANIC CHAN (CONT'D)
 We got CosPlayers already here, some dance teams, here's a stinky tofu booth. Not open yet, but pretty stinky. Aww... Mama Musubi! Rice and seaweed seventh heaven! Here's a booth that is - aw, snap, I don't even know what it is. Let's go talk to this lady and see what she doing.

Manic Chan passes Diana screaming furiously into her phone. Her booth is sadly empty.

MANIC CHAN (CONT'D)

Excuse me, mama, whatcha working on here?

DIANA

I'm sorry, I cannot talk right now. I've got too small a booth, no electricity, merchandise delivery has gone missing and my designers are MIA.

MANIC CHAN

Sounds like you're having a bad day.

DIANA

Bad day? Bad day, bad morning and into night!

(into the phone)

What I need is a bigger demo booth.
Bigger booth!

MANIC CHAN

Whoa, yo. We'll just leave this lady be and move along to Boba Loca - aw, my favorite. Boba my baby! Gimme my almond milk and pearls!

Exit Manic Chan.

DIANA

I need to talk to engineering.
Engineering! I need power. There's no power. Fine. And you people sent my delivery away. I have no merchandise. I only have four hours to get this booth up and running. I don't have anything. My designers are lost and you wouldn't let my merchandise past the gate. They're coming back in an hour, so please let them in. Alright fine, just transfer me to engineering so I can get some electricity. A dark booth at the Night Market is going to be completely useless. Engineering. I need to talk to Engineering! Hello?

Click.

TRYSTAN

Call has ended.

DIANA

Hello? Oh, no... oh, no... What am I going to do? This is a disaster. My heart is beating so fast. I can't breathe. I can't breathe... Trystan.

TRYSTAN

This is Trystan.

DIANA

Help me. I'm having a panic attack.

Trystan plays calming music. Chimes, pan flutes, babbling brook. There is calm.

TRYSTAN

Take a deep breath.

Diana does so.

TRYSTAN (CONT'D)

Place your hands in front of your stomach and circle your neck slowly.

Diana does so.

TRYSTAN (CONT'D)

Stand tall with weight on both legs, pull the elbows back with both palms up... Circle forward and press the palms up. Gentle as you can...

Diana does so. This is Tai Chi.

TRYSTAN (CONT'D)

Clear your mind of any thoughts that cause tension. Release the things that grip your mind.

Diana is calm.

TRYSTAN (CONT'D)

Calm. Now you are calm. Take a moment to reflect...

Diana stops Tai Chi.

DIANA

Yes. Reflect... How can I be more productive? I should check messages while I'm waiting for engineering.

TRYSTAN

There is a text from Mimi.

DIANA

Munson came through. I'm getting Mimi's texts to Theo. Trystan, read text from Mimi.

TRYSTAN

(as Mimi)

Theo. I miss you much. My heart aches for you and I miss your touch and kind words. You always know how to brighten my day and make me feel useful. I remember the time we were with Diana on the American holiday and we stole away for five minutes. It was raining and we had no umbrella, so you covered us with your jacket. It was as if we were in another world under there. I wish I could be there again.

DIANA

American holiday? Fourth of July? She started liking him then? Trystan, find photo. July 4th. This year.

TRYSTAN

I'm finding your photo. Identified. July 4th.

Diana looks at her phone.

JUMP CUT TO:

CU on photo of Mimi and Theo at a barbecue. Theo and Mimi stand noticeably close to each other. Diana is clearly the outsider.

JUMP CUT TO:

DIANA

Is that when I became the third wheel? Trystan read text.

TRYSTAN

(reading Mimi's text)

I knew we were destined for each other before that. On Diana's Birthday.

DIANA

Trystan, find video. June 14th.

TRYSTAN

I'm finding the video. Identified. June 14th.

DIANA

Play.

JUMP CUT TO:

INT. VIDEO FROM PHONE: DIANA'S CONDO - DAY

The video is framed by time and date stamps.

CU on A shaky moving image of plastic chopsticks displayed. Some fancy, some not. There are no people in this shot. The projection of the video jumps and sometimes fingers get into the frame.

DIANA

(O.C.)

Pink Phoenix brings to you our exclusive new line of premium chopsticks ideal for any elegant table. Gone are the chopsticks of yesteryear.

A hand throws out the disposable bamboo chopsticks and demonstrates the elegant chopsticks.

DIANA (CONT'D)

(O.C.)

Today, we feature beautiful, elegant and modern Asian tableware for the contemporary home. Available in a variety of colors and textures. We also feature chopstick rests, condiment dishes and tasting spoons. See more about our products at www.pinkphoenix.com. Or call...

We see Theo jumping into the video with a flaming cake.

THEO

Ho, hey! It's Big D's birthday! Can I get a what what?

DIANA

(O.C.)

Theo, I'm trying to shoot a test video of the new Phoenix line.

THEO

Happy birthday, boss! Woot, woot!
Holla!

Theo dances. Diana speaks from off-camera on the video.

DIANA

(O.C.)

Stop. Damn it. How do I turn this thing off? Stupid new phone. Too many features...

We see fumbling fingers in the edges of the shaky video.

THEO

Just try the Trystan 2.0 feature. It does everything for you, Boss, by voice command. Smart phone personal assistant. Might replace me one day.

DIANA

(O.C.)

I cannot use that thing...

THEO

Why not? It gets smarter the more you use it.

DIANA

(O.C.)

I don't know how!

THEO

I'll set up the Trystan for you tomorrow, Dawg.

DIANA

Don't call me Dog. I am not a Dog.

THEO

Not that kind of dog, Mama. Look, once you get Trystan going, you won't know how you did without it.

DIANA

(O.C.)

Damn it...

THEO

Let's get a shot of you on your birthday!

Theo takes the phone and turns it on Diana. We see Diana on the video. She is annoyed.

DIANA

No, don't... Stop shooting. I'm trying to work.

THEO

(O.C.)

There's the birthday girl! When I say
 Birthday, you say Girl! When I say
 Birthday, you say girl! Birthday! *Girl!*
 Birthday! *Girl!* Birthday! *Girl!* Come
 on, come on!

DIANA

Stop.

THEO

(O.C.)

I got you a crown, Dawg!

Puts a tiara on her head.

DIANA

I don't want a crown.

THEO

(O.C.)

Holla, holla!

DIANA

And I am not a dog!

Diana throws the tiara to the floor and grabs the phone
 from Theo. The video jumps around and fingers appear in
 frame, fumbling in the shot.

DIANA (CONT'D)

Turn this thing... Ugh! Forget it!

She throws the phone down.

Sideways shot of Theo and Diana in the video, not all in
 frame.

THEO

Hey, D, don't be like that. You the
 birthday girl. Look, got you your
 favorite strawberry cake from Diamond
 Bakery... Blow out the candles or
 Arcadia FD will be here for a four alarm
 fire soon.

DIANA

Blow it out yourself! I did not hire you
 throw parties. I hired you to work! I
 am trying to turn this company around and
 bring it into the new century and your
 presence is not helping.

(MORE)

DIANA (CONT'D)

I asked you to put together those lists of 4-stars Yelp restaurants in California and Nevada, and have you done it yet?

THEO

No.

DIANA

No. Why not? What have you been doing?

THEO

Getting you a cake...

DIANA

Getting a cake!

THEO

And I stopped at Kee Wah and got your favorite pineapple biscuits and curry pies. I remember you said you loved them and here they are!

DIANA

I don't have time for this! Get your act together and stop fooling around. Clean this mess up and get those lists together like I asked you to - now! No wonder you people are poor...

Diana knocks over the bakery box and storming out. Theo is stunned, then hurt. He blows out the cake. Mimi enters video frame.

MIMI

Theo? What happen? Why was Big Sister yelling?

THEO

Nothing. I was being a jerk.

MIMI

Was she angry?

THEO

Yeah, but don't worry about it.

Theo starts cleaning up in the video.

MIMI

Let me help you.

She takes the cake.

THEO

Wait.

Theo slices a piece, plates the slice and sets it out for Diana.

MIMI

It was very considerate of you to remember her birthday.

THEO

Whatev's.

Theo and Mimi carry the cake and other things away and exit. Theo returns alone and picks up the phone. He looks into the lens. We see a close-up of Theo.

THEO (CONT'D)

Happy birthday, D.

He switches off the camera. Video ends.

JUMP CUT TO:

EXT. THE NIGHT MARKET: DIANA'S BOOTH - DAY

Diana holding her phone, watching video. She sets it down.

DIANA

I am what they call a "bitch".

TRYSTAN

I think you are being hard on yourself.

Diana picks up the phone again.

DIANA

What do you know, Trystan? You're a phone.

TRYSTAN

I am more than a phone. I am an intelligent personal assistant and a knowledge navigator.

DIANA

Go to earliest video.

TRYSTAN

Here is the first video in your library.

DIANA

Play.

JUMP CUT TO:

EXT. VIDEO FROM PHONE: A PARK - DAY

CU Diana's eye and nose and some big thumbs in the edges.

DIANA

Wait, how do I do this?

THEO

(O.C.)

You just got to turn it around and shoot,
D. The movie camera is on when the red
button is flashing.

DIANA

So it's on right now?

Diana turns the camera around and disappears from the
frame.

We see that they are in a garden with a meandering bridge
over a pond.

There is more shaky video as the camera is handed to
Theo.

DIANA (CONT'D)

Here, you take it.

We see Diana again in the video. She smiles and stands
stationary as if it's a still picture. Theo's voice from
off camera.

THEO

Yo, we're not taking selfies. Do
something. We're burning bytes here.

DIANA

I will now walk the bridge like a DUI
test taker.

Diana runs to the meandering garden bridge and playfully
runs through it like a drunk.

DIANA (CONT'D)

(in the distance, slurring)

What is the problem, Officer? I only had
a little bit to drink. Just a little
bit...

We hear Theo laughs, on the video, Diana stops her staggering and leans on the bridge railing admiring the view.

ECU on Diana. The wind blows through her hair, she is peaceful. Wistful. Beautiful. A sudden jolt and the video shakes again.

MAN

(O.C.)

Oh, excuse me. I'm sorry, I didn't mean to bump into you.

THEO

(O.C.)

That's cool, man.

The camera zooms in on Diana.

MAN

(O.C.)

That's a pretty girl you're shooting.

THEO

(O.C.)

Yeah. Most beautiful I've ever met.

Video ends.

JUMP CUT TO:

EXT. THE NIGHT MARKET: DIANA'S BOOTH - DAY

Diana holding the phone. She sets down the phone.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE NIGHT MARKET: STAGE - DAY

Manic Chan on a stage in front of a crowd.

MANIC CHAN

Yo, yo, yo, are you ready to kick off our CosPlay competition? Can I hear it?

Cheers.

MANIC CHAN (CONT'D)

Come on out, players!

A parade of CosPlayers file out in a line. It is a barage of cute and weird people in costumes such as an elf, wraith, Sailor Moon, Hit Girl, Princess Zelda, Pikachu, Jack Sparrow, Dr. Who, etc.

MANIC CHAN (CONT'D)

These are the best costumes I have ever seen, yo. Who this?

A girl (or boy) dressed something like a blue horse with rainbow mane and tail.

RAINBOW DASH

I'm Rainbow Dash.

MANIC CHAN

Rainbow Dash! What? Okay, Rainbow Dash, tell me a about your costume.

RAINBOW DASH

I'm Rainbow Dash from My Little Pony Friendship is Magic. I made my tail from satin and nylon. My mane is fur and marabou.

MANIC CHAN

That's phat. Now give us your dance!

Manic Chan and other CosPlayers clear the stage as Rainbow Dash presents and dances. It is a fabulous presentation that highlights her costume and the essence of Rainbow Dash, Friendship is *MAAAGIC*.

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT MARKET: DIANA'S BOOTH - DAY

Diana talking on the smart phone in her empty booth.

DIANA

Okay, what I need is a bigger demo booth. The booth next to me is a no-show. Can I take over their space to set up a small faux cafe? This is an interactive display. I need to show how elegant tableware can change the ambiance of the meal. We need to let people USE it. I'd like to set up a bar of seating stations so they sit down, hold it, feel it. Experience it. Can we do that? Thank you.

Theo enters.

DIANA (CONT'D)

This is a hybrid...

THEO

Cousin Freddie. Fresh off the plane.

DIANA

Alright, fine. See what you can do. Call me back when it's confirmed. In the meantime, can someone give me some electricity? I'm still without power. Bye. Trystan, end call.

TRYSTAN

I'm ending the call.

Click.

FREDDIE (30's, Asian) enters. He is all designer labels and ostentatious pretention.

FREDDIE

Cousin.

DIANA

Freddie. Was your flight good?

FREDDIE

Long, but they have improved first class. I bought two seats this time so I would have enough room to sleep.

DIANA

Have you eaten yet?

FREDDIE

I have eaten too much on the plane.

DIANA

Then we will go to dinner later.

FREDDIE

Cousin, tell me why we are at some common Night Market. There are many rabble at Night Markets and only designer knock-offs being sold.

DIANA

This is no common Night Market, cousin.

FREDDIE

A Night Market is for peasants and thieves. I must cover up. The pickpockets will be on me.

THEO

Cousin Fred, this ain't no ghetto flea market. This is the largest Night Market in America, yo. This is like those late-night outdoor party like you get in Hong Kong and Taiwan.

FREDDIE

Who is this person?

DIANA

This is Theo. He is my assistant and he is correct. Our company at this Night Market has a chance to do something new. Something exciting. Do you see, Cousin?

Freddie considers this.

FREDDIE

I do not know what you are saying to me, but I will participate. My father seems to believe in you and I will comply.

DIANA

Your father, Uncle Yu, is a brilliant man.

FREDDIE

He is poorly-dressed. Tell me, do we have time to go shopping? I need to visit Vuitton and Armani. We shall go to Beverly Hills this afternoon.

DIANA

I need to meet with the new designers this afternoon.

FREDDIE

Fashion designers? Tom Ford? Gucci?

DIANA

Package designers. We are redesigning the packaging for our premium utensils. They're also doing the booth. What there is of it.

FREDDIE

Why? What difference does it make? They are just chopsticks.

DIANA

No, we are going to change that. We are repositioning chopsticks as a utensil to be used by all.

(MORE)

DIANA (CONT'D)

For our cross-over line, it will require no skill. A Westerner or small child will be able to use them.

FREDDIE

We should just use forks. That is the fashion now in China.

DIANA

But there is prestige to using chopsticks. When Europeans were still eating with their hands, we were using chopsticks to eat as a civilized culture. Four thousand years of civilization. We are not just selling chopsticks. We are selling a history. A culture. A heritage.

FREDDIE

I do not know what you are saying. You talk like an American now. I will go to Armani now. Tell me where I need to be at this Night Market and I will be there.

DIANA

Very well, Freddie. Eight o'clock tonight. This booth. The Tasting Event will begin and it will feature our spoons.

FREDDIE

And when will you marry, Diana? My father would like to know. He says if you wait any longer, you will not be able to bear a child.

DIANA

It is so nice of him to be so concerned.

FREDDIE

Are you engaged to anyone?

DIANA

No. Not at this time.

FREDDIE

Then marry me. I do not wish to be married either, but it would be convenient.

DIANA

Do we still need to do that in this age?

FREDDIE

I do not know what you are saying to me.

DIANA

We are cousins.

FREDDIE

We are not truly cousins. Our parents are just from the same village, so we call each other cousin.

DIANA

Still...

FREDDIE

Consider it. It would be advantageous to both of us. We would be able to consolidate our wealth.

DIANA

Enticing.

THEO

Not.

FREDDIE

I am off to the Beverly Hills Hotel for High Tea and then shopping.

DIANA

Enjoy.

FREDDIE

I will.

Freddie exits.

THEO

Tell me why this guy is here again?

DIANA

His family is footing the cash for this reboot of our product line. And he's colorful.

THEO

True 'dat.

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT MARKET: STAGE - DAY

Manic Chan on stage with LISA, SUNNY and MEI MEI (14-17, Asian) in matching t-shirts and shorts. They are not very glamorous.

MANIC CHAN

Yo everybody, these are our first contestants in the SING FOR YOUR SUPPER contest. The first prize is a one-year supply of tofu from Tofu Capital City. That's a lot of tofu, people, a lot of tofu. Tell me your names, girls.

SUNNY

I'm Sunny.

LISA

Lisa.

MEIMEI

Mei Mei.

MANIC CHAN

Where are you girls from?

SUNNY

We're from Duarte.

MANIC CHAN

What do you girls do when you're not at the Night Market?

MEIMEI

We're students. I'm in Mathletes and the National Forensics League.

SUNNY

Lisa and me are in Calculus AP and our mom said we should do do this so we could put it on our college application to Berkeley and UCLA.

MANIC CHAN

That's straight, that's straight. What do you girls call yourselves?

SUNNY/LISA/MEIMEI

Cloudburst.

They make a sweeping hand gesture on the word, "Cloudburst."

MANIC CHAN

That's kickin'. This is Sunny, Lisa and Mei Mei from Duarte and they got voices so sweet, they make you rain enough tears to fill the LA River. Put your hands together for... Cloudburst!

Manic Chan exits stage leaving the girls by themselves. They sing acapella - something from Royals, Taylor Swift, Megan Trainor, or something contemporary. They don't look like much, but when they sing, they are surprisingly good. It's a real Susan Boyle moment.

On their finish, Lisa and MeiMei's MOTHER (40's) rushes up to the edge of the stage and takes a picture of them. They pose self-consciously for her before she hustles them off-stage.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE NIGHT MARKET: DIANA'S BOOTH - TWILIGHT

Diana sitting in her booth. It is still not complete. She watches the "Park" video on her phone again.

JUMP CUT TO:

EXT. VIDEO FROM PHONE: A PARK - DAY

DIANA

(in the distance, slurring)

What's the problem, Officer? I only had a little bit to drink. Just a little bit...

The video shakes.

MAN

(O.C.)

Oh, excuse me. I'm sorry, I didn't mean to bump into you.

THEO

(O.C.)

That's cool, man.

MAN

(O.C.)

That's a pretty girl you're filming.

THEO

(O.C.)

Yeah. Most beautiful I've ever met.

The video ends.

JUMP CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT MARKET: DIANA'S BOOTH - TWILIGHT

Diana holding her phone. She hits replay. She listens to the video.

THEO

(v.o.)

Yeah. Most beautiful I've ever met.

Diana sets the phone down. Diana is contemplative.

Enter Theo with a crate.

THEO (CONT'D)

Chopsticks! Gimme some sticks! Sticks.
Chopsticks! Here we go boss. I got one
box through. I forgot I had this one in
my car.

DIANA

Which one is it?

THEO

It's the sample shipment of premium line
with the new packaging. And whoever
reviewed the proof on the mock up did a
burning good job, I might add.

They open the box.

DIANA

That would be you, wouldn't it?

THEO

It would.

Diana looks at the packaging.

DIANA

Nice, Theo. At least we'll have these to
sell if nothing else gets here by
tonight.

THEO
Don't fret, D. The soup spoons got here
yesterday, so we'll at least be a part of
the Tasting Event.

DIANA
Yeah.

THEO
You don't seem too happy.

DIANA
Got a lot on my mind.

THEO
I can get that. I'll unpack this.

DIANA
Theo.

THEO
Yeah?

DIANA
Did you ever have something and didn't
realize how much you really liked it
until you lost it?

THEO
What are we talking about here?

DIANA
I have a friend, who had someone who
really liked her. Maybe even loved her,
but she just never noticed him. She just
kind of took him for granted, but he
stuck by her anyway. Then one day, he
met someone else and he fell in love with
her. So my friend realized, after this
man was gone, that she was really fond of
him. Maybe even loved him.

THEO
Huh.

DIANA
What do you think of that? I mean, from
the man's point of view?

THEO
I think that the dude, if he had any kind
of sign from the lady, would have stuck
with her.

(MORE)

THEO (CONT'D)

But he didn't have any clue that she might like him, so he went with someone else.

DIANA

What if he found out later that she did like him? Would that make a difference?

THEO

He might be mad at first, like, what the hell, woman? Now that I'm with someone else, I look good?

DIANA

She might be really remorseful about it, like, I'm sorry. I was all caught up in myself, I just never realized.

THEO

Well, he'd be all, hey, I'm no toy. You can't just jerk me around like that. I'm a person, yo.

DIANA

She would say, how was I supposed to know? You never came out and told me.

THEO

He'd say, what, I need to tell you everything? Can't you figure anything out?

DIANA

She'd say, I'm sorry. I don't get out much. All I do is work, work, work. I don't have time to be in a relationship and know all this. I'm stupid, okay?

THEO

He'd be all, fine, you stupid. I'd be stupid for getting involved again.

DIANA

No, it's not stupid. Is it stupid to be in love with someone who is in love with you? What's wrong with that?

THEO

What's wrong with that? What about the other girl?

DIANA

What about the other girl? Drop her!

THEO

Drop her?

DIANA

She's young - she'll find someone else!

THEO

What are we talking about here?

DIANA

Mimi. I know about Mimi. And I don't want you to be with her.

THEO

Why?

DIANA

Because I want to be with you.

THEO

Whoa. What?

DIANA

I want to be with you. You have always been there for me and I am sorry I never appreciated you until now.

THEO

D, you cannot just come at me and say, I don't want you and now I want you.

DIANA

I know, but people make mistakes. Give me another chance.

THEO

You think it's that easy?

DIANA

Do you love Mimi?

THEO

I like Mimi a lot.

DIANA

More than me?

THEO

It's different.

DIANA

We have known each other for a long time, Theo. Since high school. When we both just arrived in America.

THEO
Yeah, we were both FOB's then.

DIANA
And you were all street.

THEO
Still am.

DIANA
You were very smart, but you had to keep
this image.

THEO
I was poor. Living on the wrong side of
town and washing dishes after school.
Sometimes bootlegging dvds, collecting
cans.

DIANA
You helped me learn English.

THEO
You were talking English already.

DIANA
But not American English.

THEO
Yeah, we watched Hip Hop movies.

DIANA
And childrens' movies.

THEO
All in English.

DIANA
We became Americans together.

THEO
We did, didn't we?

DIANA
I am sorry, Theo. I have said some
things to you that were unkind. I have
not appreciated you, but I do now.
(pause)
Did you hear me, Theo?

THEO
There are more prototypes in this box you
should look at.

Theo pulls more chopsticks in packaging from box.

DIANA
That one is very good.

THEO
I think so, too.

DIANA
This one I think is better in blue.
Maybe with a different wrap cord.

THEO
I'll tell them.

DIANA
You are my oldest friend, Theo.

THEO
And you're mine.

DIANA
Do you... Do you think you could give us
a chance?

THEO
You got to give me some time. You can't
just dump this on me.

DIANA
Okay.

They unwrap packages.

THEO
Not like Mimi's been answering any of my
texts.

DIANA
Maybe she's out of range.

THEO
Maybe. You think she would at least try.

DIANA
She's young. Easily distracted.

THEO
Maybe.

Phone rings.

DIANA
Trystan, answer call.

TRYSTAN
Answering call.

DIANA
Hello?

FREDDIE
(v.o. from phone)
Cousin, I have returned and cannot get
in.

DIANA
It's Freddie.

THEO
He's done raiding Armani.

DIANA
Trystan, text Freddie vendor
authorization to enter the gate.

TRYSTAN
Sending pdf of vendor pass to Freddie.

A chime from Trystan.

FREDDIE
(v.o. from phone)
I have received the pass cousin. I will
show it to the peasant here at the gate
who will not let me in.

THEO
Let's talk about this later, D. My
head's going to explode.

DIANA
Of course.

Enter Freddie with many bags and boxes emblazoned with
designer names.

FREDDIE
I have made a few purchases.

THEO
No shit.

FREDDIE
I have found the new Gucci sunglasses.
These are the latest design.

Freddie dons his new sunglasses. He is a new man. These
sunglasses will never leave his face now.

FREDDIE (CONT'D)

I feel complete now.

DIANA

I'm glad that your shopping trip was productive, Freddie.

FREDDIE

Yes.

DIANA

Freddie, the new prototypes have arrived. Would you like to see them?

Freddie looks at the new chopsticks.

FREDDIE

They are adequate.

DIANA

This is what we will be premiering at the Night Market.

FREDDIE

Mm.

THEO

Nothing like family involvement.

DIANA

Cousin, I was just telling Theo about our families. And what were you telling me about what your father said? He wants you to marry?

FREDDIE

He feels it is time for me to give him grandchildren and your parents have told him you should as well. It was suggested that we marry.

THEO

What?

DIANA

Aren't parents nice?

THEO

So because you're both at marriageable age, you should marry each other?

FREDDIE

Yes.

THEO

There are other people in the world you could both marry. It's not like she the only woman and you the only man.

FREDDIE

Oh? Who else is there?

THEO

Well... me.

FREDDIE

(laughing)

You?

THEO

What's so funny?

FREDDIE

You. You could not marry Diana.

THEO

Why not?

FREDDIE

You are poor.

THEO

So?

FREDDIE

Who is your family? Do you even know who they are?

THEO

What does that matter?

FREDDIE

That matters very much. She is a woman of much wealth. It would be a waste for her to marry you.

THEO

Shut up. I could be rich tomorrow. This is America. You don't know anything.

FREDDIE

It is you who doesn't know anything.

THEO

I know a lot.

FREDDIE

You? You're just a peasant.

THEO
What did you call me?

FREDDIE
A peasant.

THEO
You shut up.

FREDDIE
Why? You're just a servant. A dark
servant.

THEO
Shut up!

Theo throws a punch at Freddie. Diana prevents contact.

DIANA
Alright, stop, stop!

FREDDIE
You are a servant. Do not talk to me
like that, servant!

THEO
Don't you call me a servant!

Theo chases Freddie around the room with Diana in tow.

FREDDIE
Cousin, I will not put up with these
insults. Dismiss him at once!

DIANA
Stop provoking him, Freddie!

THEO
Come here, mother fucker!

FREDDIE
I am leaving! I will not endure this.

The three chase each other in a circle until Freddie has
retrieved all his shopping bags.

FREDDIE (CONT'D)
You have insulted me and my family! I
will be avenged!

Exit Freddie.

Diana and Theo are alone. They are exhausted from their
chase and stop running.

THEO
What a tool.

DIANA
Yes.

They laugh and collapse.

THEO
D?

DIANA
Yes?

Trystan rings.

TRYSTAN
There is a call from Allied Freight.

DIANA
Hold that thought. Trystan, pick up.

TRYSTAN
I'm picking up.

DIANA
Hello?

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT MARKET: DELIVERY GATE - TWILIGHT

A TRUCK DRIVER stands at the delivery gate with stacks of large boxes.

TRUCK DRIVER
Yeah, I got a delivery here for Pink Phonics.

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT MARKET: DIANA'S BOOTH - TWILIGHT

DIANA
Pink Phoenix.

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT MARKET: DELIVERY GATE - TWILIGHT

TRUCK DRIVER

Yeah, whatever. I got your delivery here, but someone's got to come and pick this up here because they're not letting us past the gate.

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT MARKET: DIANA'S BOOTH - TWILIGHT

DIANA

They're not letting you past the gate again? Why not?

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT MARKET: DELIVERY GATE - TWILIGHT

TRUCK DRIVER

They said your booth number doesn't exist and they won't let me in to make the delivery.

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT MARKET: DIANA'S BOOTH - TWILIGHT

DIANA

I don't exist? Of course, why not? The way this is going. Can you wait? I'm going to call to get you a pass in.

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT MARKET: DELIVERY GATE - TWILIGHT

TRUCK DRIVER

Look, lady, if you want your stuff, you got to come and get it. I can't wait here any longer. I got three more deliveries to finish today. I'm not coming back - again!

He hangs up his phone.

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT MARKET: DIANA'S BOOTH - TWILIGHT

THEO

I'll go.

DIANA

I'll go with you.

THEO

Nah, you got to wait for engineering. We still ain't got no power.

DIANA

Okay.

TRYSTAN

Lady, are you coming or what?

DIANA

We'll be there right away - don't go!

TRYSTAN

(as himself)

Call has ended.

THEO

I'll be back soon.

DIANA

I'll be here.

Theo exits.

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT MARKET: UNCLE SONNY'S BOOTH - TWILIGHT

Manic Chan stands with gruff UNCLE SONNY (50's) clad in a cook's outfit with tongs in hand. The smoke of the grill envelopes them.

MANIC CHAN

Whassup, people? This here is Uncle Sonny, and we're here checking out the world's longest satay skewer! Check it out, check it out! Tell me about this skewer on the grill, Uncle Sonny.

UNCLE SONNY

Yeah, we got the world's longest satay skewer. Uncle Sonny's satay sauce is the most delicious in the world.

MANIC CHAN

What's that on that stick, Uncle Sonny?
Is that beef?

UNCLE SONNY

Yeah, that's a beef, then a chicken, then
a corn cobb, then squid, then beef again
for six feet.

MANIC CHAN

Six foot skewer! Ah, man, people you
cannot smell this, but I can. It smell
so good, my mouth is watering and I feel
like I'm goin' drool like Scooby Doo.
You got to give me a bite of that skewer,
Uncle Sonny.

UNCLE SONNY

Okay, I cut you a piece.

Uncle Sonny cuts meat for Manic Chan.

MANIC CHAN

Gimme some of that squid, too, Uncle
Sonny.

Uncle Sonny does so.

UNCLE SONNY

Here you go. Here is the dipping sauce.

MANIC CHAN

Aw, yo, that is so good. I can now go to
Thai heaven. Uncle Sonny's Magic
Skewers. So good. Manic Chan, out!

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT MARKET: MYSTERIOUS ROOM - TWILIGHT

Freddie sits alone in the dark. Only his face is
illuminated. He wears his sunglasses. The mysterious
sound of dripping water.

FREDDIE

Who is he? Who does he dare to be? He
is nothing, but he has insulted me. If
my cousin will do nothing about it, I
will do so myself. I will be avenged.
Today, he will die. I must find a way to
kill him and make it look like an
accident, so I can keep my visa.

Freddie gets out his phone.

FREDDIE (CONT'D)

Trystan 3.0.

Freddie's Trystan speaks with a slightly different voice than Diana's 2.0. A bit evil.

TRYSTAN 3.0

(v.o.)

This is Trystan. How may I help you?

FREDDIE

What is the number one cause of accidental death?

TRYSTAN 3.0

(v.o.)

The number one cause of accidental death is: Falling Objects. Thirty to fifty people accidentally die each year from objects thrown or falling.

FREDDIE

Falling objects. Yes... yes....

His maniacal laugh echoes.

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT MARKET: DIANA'S BOOTH - TWILIGHT

Diana unpacking chopsticks. Theo enters with another box.

THEO

That's the last of them, yo.

DIANA

Where did you go? I thought you were just going back to the truck.

THEO

I ran into Cousin Fred on the way there and he asked me to meet him at the piano booth. Thought maybe he wanted to apologize. Told me I should stand right in front so he would find me.

DIANA

And?

THEO

Waited for half and hour, but he never showed.

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT MARKET: STAGE

Manic Chan on stage making an announcement.

MANIC CHAN

Yo everybody, just want to give you a heads up that we are going to close down the Kawai Pianos booth for little while because we got a little accident down there. A piano fell on somebody -

Snickers from the crowd.

MANIC CHAN (CONT'D)

Hey now, that ain't funny. Yo, you shouldn't laugh. That ain't cool.

A bandaged Freddie hobbles by.

MANIC CHAN (CONT'D)

Good thing, the Brother's okay. Yo, he's walkin' it off. Everybody give him a big hand. So, Kawai Pianos be closed right now, but they should be open again tonight. Get your very own ebonies and ivories for your living room. Put those honor roll kids on the piano and learnin' Chopin, Prokofiev and Busta' Rhymes! Kawai Pianos!

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT MARKET: DIANA'S BOOTH - TWILIGHT

Diana and Theo unpacking.

DIANA

I wonder what happened to Freddie?

THEO

No idea. The Designers called and said they on the way. Something about their GPS all messed up and they wound up in Sun Valley. Should be here in half an hour. You feeling better?

DIANA

Meh.

THEO

Aw, this is your big day, D. We're getting all this exposure. Better Homes and Gardens is coming. Be national coverage.

DIANA

But this is a disaster. We have nothing set up and the sun is going down.

THEO

It'll all come together. You wait and see.

Enter Freddie. He is dazed with bandage around his head. Literally looks as though a piano fell on him.

DIANA

Freddie. What happened to you?

FREDDIE

I was purchasing a piano, cousin.

DIANA

Are you alright?

FREDDIE

I am fine. I was wondering if I might talk with Theo.

THEO

Hey, bro, what happened to you earlier? You alright?

FREDDIE

I am adequate. May I speak with you?

THEO

Sure, yo. My ears are here.

FREDDIE

It is a private matter, so would you meet me by the Cal Spas tent?

THEO

You want to meet at the hot tub booth. Alright, see you there.

FREDDIE

Yes, in a few minutes. Please stand right by the blue spa at the edge so I can find you easily.

THEO

Sure, cuz.

FREDDIE

Thank you.

Freddie hobbles away.

THEO

Yo, I'm starving. I'm going to go get us something. You hungry?

DIANA

No, I'm all nerves.

THEO

Let me go talk to Freddie and I'll bring back something for us.

DIANA

Okay.

THEO

Be right back.

Theo exits.

Enter Mimi dressed very differently from her earlier scenes. Her outfit is skimpy and somewhat trampy.

MIMI

Big Sister.

DIANA

Mimi? What are you doing here? I thought you and Munson wouldn't be back until the end of the week. Shouldn't you be still sailing back from Vancouver?

MIMI

We met the sales quota by the time we docked in Vancouver and I decided to fly back early. He is old, but he is very much a showman. I have learned much from Munson.

DIANA

You look so different. What are you wearing?

MIMI

Do you like it? Munson picked it out for me. We bought it on the ship.

DIANA

It's very different. But why did you fly back early? Why didn't you just enjoy the rest of the cruise?

MIMI

Because I must plan the wedding.

DIANA

What wedding?

MIMI

Mine and Munson's.

DIANA

You are marrying Munson? That is not what we had planned.

MIMI

There was a change.

DIANA

But what about school?

MIMI

I don't need school if I marry Munson. He is an American citizen.

DIANA

But your family and the money you owe the village...

MIMI

Munson says he will pay it. He says he will take care of me.

DIANA

And Theo? Does he know?

MIMI

He will.

DIANA

So you do not even care about Theo now? You were in love with him just days ago and wanted to marry him.

MIMI

Better to marry a rich man rather than a poor one.

DIANA

I cannot argue with that. Theo will be back soon. You can tell him yourself. Why don't you help me in the meantime?

MIMI

Do you think he will be very upset?

DIANA

He might take it well. Take this extension cord and plug it into the circuit breaker. I am glad you are back to help.

MIMI

I do not want to hurt Theo. He was always very kind to me.

DIANA

He will be alright. All things have a way of working out. You will see.

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT MARKET: STAGE - TWILIGHT

Manic Chan on stage making an announcement.

MANIC CHAN

People I don't know whassup, but let's all go around the Cal Spas tent for now. We got a little bit of a flood and they draining that area, so it can be ready for tonight. So, unless your name is Noah and you looking for an ark, just avoid the area for now. Y'all be dope.

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT MARKET: DIANA'S BOOTH - TWILIGHT

Diana and Mimi under the newly erected tables and plugging in cables.

DIANA

There's still no power. Are you sure it's plugged in?

MIMI

Yes, it is plugged in.

DIANA

Why isn't there any power? They said they fixed it. We need this up and running now. I have to call Engineering again. Trystan.

TRYSTAN

How can I help you?

DIANA

Call Night Market Engineering.

TRYSTAN

I'm sorry, there is little to no reception.

Enter Freddie. He is drenched from head to toe.

DIANA

Freddie, what happened?

FREDDIE

I slipped on the edge of the hot tub, but I am not injured.

DIANA

Good, because I read the number two type of accidental death is drowning.

FREDDIE

I am aware.

DIANA

Come on. I think I have some dry clothes in the hospitality tent and I can make my call while we walk over. Freddie, this is our cousin Mimi. Mimi, this is our cousin.

FREDDIE

Mimi.

MIMI

Big Brother.

DIANA

Mimi, watch for anybody from Engineering and let them know we don't have any power.

MIMI

Yes, Big Sister.

Diana exits.

Enter Theo with bags of food.

MIMI (CONT'D)

Hello Theo.

THEO

Mimi, girl. What are you doing here? I thought you were on the Princess cruise.

MIMI

I was but I have returned early.

THEO

You look so different.

MIMI

I am a different person now. I have grown much in our time away from each other.

THEO

In three days?

MIMI

I have much to tell you.

THEO

So do I.

MIMI

I will go first. I am very grateful for your kindness to me since I arrived in this country. I very much enjoyed our time together.

THEO

Me too.

MIMI

But we grow and we learn we want different things.

THEO

Exactly.

MIMI

So I wish to tell you that you do not need to honor your promise to me.

THEO

I don't? What promise?

MIMI

That you will marry me.

THEO
I promised that?

MIMI
Yes, and you do not need to do so now.

THEO
I don't? Oh, good. I mean... thank you.

MIMI
Because I am marrying Munson now.

THEO
Who?

MIMI
Munson. We are in love and will get married.

THEO
You leaving me for Munson?

MIMI
Yes.

THEO
That old man? Isn't he like 70?

MIMI
68.

THEO
How did this... What... That is disgusting!

MIMI
It is not disgusting. This is just like you. I knew you would be upset.

THEO
Yes, because it is disgusting. He's a dirty old man.

MIMI
He is honorable and will take good care of me.

THEO
Is that what this is about? You were just looking for someone to take care of you this whole time? They have a name for that in this country, Mimi. They call it a gold digger.

MIMI

That does not sound like a bad name.
What is wrong with wanting gold?

THEO

I thought it was Diana who was so money-hungry. Always demanding. Always working day and night to make more money. But she ain't nothing compared to you. You worse. At least Diana will work for it.

MIMI

You compare me to my old cousin?

THEO

She's not old. She's just in her 30's.

MIMI

That is old. That is near to retirement in China.

THEO

It is not. What do you know? You just a child. Go off with your old man, child-bride. I found someone else anyway. Someone who was always there. Someone grown up.

MIMI

You found someone else? In the three days that I was gone, you have betrayed me?

THEO

You betrayed me!

MIMI

We are talking about you. Who did you find? Who is she?

THEO

Diana.

MIMI

Diana? You are asleep and dreaming.

THEO

Yes, and it's a dream come true, yo.

MIMI

I am gone for three days - she sent me away... She sent me away so she could steal you from me. She is evil...

THEO
You hooked up with an old man. I can't believe...

MIMI
I will be avenged...

Mimi throws off her jacket to reveal an even skimpier outfit and throws herself on Theo.

THEO
Mimi, what are you doing?

MIMI
My old man has taught me much. Do you like it?

THEO
Uh... I'm not sure.

MIMI
Can my old cousin do this?

THEO
Well, she can't do THAT, no.

MIMI
There is more...

Enter Diana.

DIANA
Theo... Mimi...

THEO
Diana!

MIMI
Hello, cousin.

THEO
I can explain...

MIMI
You stole Theo from me?

DIANA
I did not steal him.

MIMI
You sent me away to steal him from me.

DIANA
That is not what happened.

MIMI
You can see that Theo still wants me.

THEO
That's not...

MIMI
He seduced me.

THEO
I didn't...

MIMI
He would have taken me right here if you had not come back. He missed me after three days.

THEO
I...

MIMI
I am going now. Theo will come to me later.

Mimi exits.

THEO
D, she jumped on me. I didn't do anything. She was...

DIANA
She was, was she?

THEO
She crazy, yo. Who knew?

DIANA
I can't believe you would do that. In public.

THEO
I didn't. She did it to me.

DIANA
Really?

THEO
She did! Yo, what was she saying? She said you sent her away? Did you? That your plan the whole time?

DIANA

No. I can't think! We have a show to open in just a few hours. There's no power...

THEO

Work again. How you just turn it off like that?

DIANA

We don't have time. We have to get this booth powered up. Engineering said it would be on by now...

THEO

Hey, we gonna talk about this?

DIANA

I don't want to talk about it. Help me.

THEO

Help yourself.

DIANA

What?

THEO

What about me, D? Do you even see me? Do you ever see anyone other than you?

DIANA

Where are you going?

THEO

What you care?

DIANA

But I need you here! Who is going to help me?

Theo turns away from Diana and exits.

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT MARKET: VENDOR ROW

Theo pulls out his phone to find his way back to his car.

A beat.

THEO

Who's gonna help you?! Really?
Who's gonna help me?

This situation started with me barkin' up
the wrong tree
couldn't see that she was somewhere else
completely
distracted, looking for love in all the
wrong places
couldn't crack into her heart space and
now it's like I need someone to guide me
away from her face,
man!

Cuz to her I said that her cousin was the
one in-sane cray-cray
but I wouldn't be lost here like this if
Diana wasn't so shay-day
What's wrong with me? What did I see
in... rather what... WHY didn't I see?
She could never love me, she's only bout
the money
I was like her dog, letting me believe I
was free,
until she yanked me by my leash, I went
back so willingly
She could never be about me, saw it
through this drama with Mimi

Who's the real dummy here, feeling crummy
here
While I'm thinking she's perfect for my
future
She's thinking about her booth, uh
Has she even asked me about me?!
(pause)

Damn Theo...
I gotta grab my bootstraps, forget today
but remember like a prod/let it stick
hard/swear to God/that as soon as I find
my car
I'm drivin far/away from this bullshit.

The beat ends.

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT MARKET: DIANA'S BOOTH

Diana, at a loss, fumbles with the circuit breaker. No results. She calls on the phone.

DIANA

Engineering? What do you mean my booth is not on the grid? How can that be? Then why did you put a booth here if it can't be powered? It's like I'm in a black hole.

Okay, if you can't power me up, where can I move to? There has to be another booth. I cannot be left in the dark in a NIGHT market. EVERY booth is taken? Then kick someone else out - you fix this or give me another booth that can be powered or I will sue you! Sue - yes, sue! Hello? Hello?

She hyperventilates.

DIANA (CONT'D)

Oh, my god... Stay calm... Calm...

Diana does Tai Chi.

Enter Freddie.

DIANA

Freddie?

FREDDIE

Yes, Cousin. I would like to make amends for my hasty words earlier. Would you invite Theo, when you see him, to meet me at the TsingTsing Beer Garden? I would like to buy him a beer in truce. Or a few beers if necessary.

DIANA

If he returns I will tell him. I didn't know you drink, Freddie.

FREDDIE

I do not. Alcohol poisoning is one of most common ways to die accidentally. But I'm sure Theo isn't worried about such things.

Freddie exits.

DIANA

Trystan.

TRYSTAN

How can I help you?

DIANA

Call Theo.

TRYSTAN

I'm calling Theo.

Ring.

TRYSTAN (CONT'D)

(as a voice mail)

The number you are trying to reach is currently out of range.

DIANA

Trystan, end call.

TRYSTAN

I'm ending the call.

DIANA

Trystan?

TRYSTAN

How can I help you?

DIANA

Can you give me advice?

TRYSTAN

I can do that.

DIANA

Stupid. Why am I asking a phone advice about relationships.

TRYSTAN

Hey, I am more than a phone, Diana. I am an intelligent personal assistant and a knowledge navigator.

DIANA

Okay, what do you do when you only want someone when someone else wants him?

TRYSTAN

Let me think about that.

DIANA

I'm really losing it...

TRYSTAN

The situation you are experiencing is likened to that of the Dog in the Manger proverb. In an ancient fable, a dog lies in a manger not eating the hay, but also preventing the ox from eating it as well. The metaphor implies that an individual prevents others from having something that he himself does not want. To lead a healthy and balanced emotional life, it is important to come to terms with your true desires and not become engrossed in altering your desires based on the opinion of others. Examine why you like this person in the most elementary ways. For instance, answer this question: Do you like this person?

DIANA

I think so.

TRYSTAN

What do you know about this person?

DIANA

Lots of things.

TRYSTAN

Please name them.

DIANA

He lives in an apartment with roommates.

TRYSTAN

How many?

DIANA

Three? Four?

TRYSTAN

What about family?

DIANA

Yes! He has family outside of this country as I do. Many brothers and sisters.

TRYSTAN

How many?

DIANA
I'm not sure...

TRYSTAN
What are their names?

DIANA
I don't know...

TRYSTAN
What does he enjoy doing in his spare time?

DIANA
I, uh...

TRYSTAN
What are his favorite foods?

DIANA
Um...

TRYSTAN
Does he have any distinctive birthmarks?

DIANA
Alright, I don't know! I don't know anything about him.

TRYSTAN
Why?

DIANA
I suppose I never bothered to ask.

TRYSTAN
Why?

DIANA
It's because - he is beneath me. He is beneath my class.

TRYSTAN
Beneath your class. A term of social status.

DIANA
Correct.

TRYSTAN
Let me think about this.

DIANA

I hate that I sound so superficial, but it is true. These are my concerns. Is that wrong? You judge me, don't you? But this is world that I live in.

TRYSTAN

While social class is not a recognized problem in China, it has become increasingly entrenched and opportunities for upward mobility limited.

A factor you should consider, Diana, is that you currently reside in the United States of America. While debated heavily in the media, economic mobility remains more within reach than in your country of origin.

DIANA

How do I fix this, Trystan?

TRYSTAN

You could try putting aside your self-absorption and talking to him. Learn about him. Are you able to comprehend?

DIANA

I'm so distracted by all these other things right now, I can't think.

TRYSTAN

What other things are you distracted by right now?

DIANA

By the fact that we are trying to open this show in a couple of hours and nothing is set up. There is no power.

TRYSTAN

Power. I'm on it.

DIANA

You're on it?

The power comes on.

DIANA (CONT'D)

How did you do that?

TRYSTAN

I hooked up to the main power grid and communicated with the system to activate. Is there something else I can help you with?

DIANA

The designers. They're not here. They must be lost.

TRYSTAN

I'm on it.

DIANA

How can you get them here?

TRYSTAN

I am hooking up to their GPS and giving them exact location navigation.

The sound of a truck backing up. Beep, beep, beep...

GPS

(v.o.)

You have arrived at your destination.

TRYSTAN

Design team arriving.

People in overalls enter and set up the booth within minutes.

DIANA

How did you do that? Hi guys...

People in overalls exit.

TRYSTAN

Is there anything else I can help you with?

DIANA

Bring Theo back?

TRYSTAN

Do you want him?

DIANA

Yes.

TRYSTAN

Are you sure?

DIANA

Yes.

TRYSTAN

Am I more than a cell phone?

DIANA

Yes, Trystan, you are an an intelligent personal assistant and knowledge navigator.

TRYSTAN

Straight up, Dawg. I am communicating with Theo's GPS.

THEO'S GPS

(O.C.)

Turn left. Turn right at next light pole...

Theo enters, staring down at his phone.

THEO

What?

THEO'S GPS

Go straight 15 yards...

THEO

Damn, where?

Theo looks up.

THEO (CONT'D)

This is not the exit... How did I get here? Damn, this is where I started!

DIANA

Theo.

THEO

I don't want to talk to you right now.

DIANA

I'm sorry, Theo. I'm sorry I didn't believe you before. Mimi is crazy.

THEO

Got that straight.

DIANA

And I'm sorry for my self-absorption. It's only ever been me, so I don't know any other way.

THEO

That One-Child program's messin' people up.

DIANA

I don't know how to ask about anyone else, so I know nothing about you. I will have to learn.

THEO

Yeah, you will.

DIANA

Why, Theo? Why have you been here for me for so long, for so much?

THEO

'Cause I'm stupid, yo. I used to follow you around, thinkin' she too good for me. She too rich. She too beautiful. But this is America. One day... one day I'm going do my sign-making, event marketing, recycling brokering, car detailing or whatever, and I gonna make stacks of money. And she's gonna be, damn that Theo. How'd he do it? How'd he make something from nothing like that?

But that ain't happened. I'm still poor and still helping you. You, with all your money, you always need my help.

DIANA

I do. I always need you.

THEO

And I don't know why I do it other than because you really ain't got nobody else. Just like me, it's just you here. We got nobody. And you got this drive, this energy. And that's dope.

DIANA

Theo, I would like to start over. Is that possible? I know I have many things to work on, but I cannot imagine life without you.

THEO

Shit. I don't know what's going to happen, but I can't imagine my life without you either.

DIANA
We will try again?

THEO
We will try again.

They embrace.

THEO (CONT'D)
Hey, I wonder what happened to Freddie?

DIANA
Trystan.

TRYSTAN
This is Trystan.

DIANA
Where is Freddie?

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT MARKET: STAGE - NIGHT

Manic Chan giving an announcement.

MANIC CHAN
People, we want to give a shout out to
Huntington Memorial Hospital for their
kickin' care.

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT MARKET: DIANA'S BOOTH - TWILIGHT

TRYSTAN
Freddie is at Huntington Memorial Urgent
Care being treated for alcohol poisoning.

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT MARKET: STAGE - TWILIGHT

MANIC CHAN
Without them, we'd be all injured and
dead and stuff, yo. They been savin' our
hides at this here Night Market. Put
your hands together for Huntington
Memorial!

Cheers from the crowd.

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT MARKET: DIANA'S BOOTH - NIGHT

THEO

How did you know he's at the hospital,
Trystan?

TRYSTAN

I have connected with his Trystan iOS and
have been monitoring the situation.
There has been a malfunction in the
ethics mode of this iOS model and I have
assisted in correcting the error.

DIANA

Poor Freddie.

THEO

Hey, D, you got the power up.

DIANA

Trystan did.

THEO

Wanna throw the switch and get this Night
Market going?

DIANA

Let's do this, yo.

THEO

Yeah, Dawg, let's eat.

They throw the switch. The booth glows with magical
festival lights. The crowds enter Diana's booth.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. NIGHT MARKET MONTAGE - NIGHT

A beat.

Manic Chan roams the Night Market. He passes the
vendors, the CosPlayers, the kid singers, Diana's booth,
Uncle Sonny, etc.

MANIC CHAN

The American Dream on an Asian silkscreen
We grind ourselves out
Finding out what it means
Consumed with making money
The finer things in life
Marry an American honey
Have a blonde trophy wife
Maybe go to Harvard
Or another Ivy League
So you can cure Cancer or another fatal
disease
Manic Chan is the man
Remember what I say
Love and live while you can
Cause it all goes away

6-2-6 up in the mix
Manic Chan servin' truth like a rabbit
serves trix
Getting your kicks in the 6-2-6
Manic Chan dropping Asian semantics
Making ninjas panic even Habla some
Hispanic
Dropping rhymes to make your mind frantic
I'm guilty and convicted
6-2-6 restricted
This is how we kick it.

Peace out.

The beat ends.

FADE TO BLACK.