

MEI LIN
"MARCO POLO"

INT. AHMAD'S PALACE - BEDCHAMBER - DAY

MEI LIN opens her eyes, sits up in bed. Her hair pulled back, color returned to her cheeks, eyes clear. She's improving. But still bound.

There is not even the hint of a stir, but she senses --

MEI LIN
Will you come out? Or just... cling
to the shadows... like a snake.

AHMAD watches her, and finally steps from the corner, a TEA SETTING on a tray. He sets it by her feet. Ritual.

AHMAD
Snakes aren't attracted to shadows.

MEI LIN
Rat then.

There's barely a crack in his visage as he approaches her.

MEI LIN (CONT'D)
Have the Khan's troops reached my
home yet?

AHMAD
They would slow their march as they
approach, let your people suffer
the horror of anticipation.

MEI LIN
Wuchang first? As you tried before.

AHMAD
I am not a war counselor. But yes.
Kaidu of the Golden Horde will lead
the assault. And will succeed where
my brother failed.

He drops "brother" without thinking, a lapse, and Mei Lin seizes on it, studies him. Ahmad makes light --

AHMAD (CONT'D)
I have a place in the royal family.

MEI LIN
Are you a whore's son? That would
explain your interest in me.

AHMAD
My interest in you is self-
interest.

MEI LIN

I have nothing to offer you now. My daughter must be dead. I will thankfully join her.

She sobers. Her eyes glisten with thoughts of Ling --

MEI LIN (CONT'D)

This should not have been her fate.

She rolls her head away from Ahmad, tries to hide her ignominy a little. He sits on the edge of the bed.

AHMAD

Why? Do you think anyone deserves one fate more than another?

MEI LIN

Some are meant to have better fortune. I was the child of a whore who became a whore. Ling was the daughter of an Emperor. And now her cruel fate is no different than her mother's.

A tear rolls down her cheek. Ahmad is surprised at the news --

AHMAD

She is Emperor Xie's daughter.

MEI LIN

And what hallowed place in life that gave her.

She finally turns her wretched eyes to Ahmad. Mei Lin shows surrender, while Ahmad now sees more promise in her --

INT. HANGCHOW - BED CHAMBER OF SILK - DAY

MEI LIN rides atop the breathless GOVERNOR OF HANGCHOW. Naked -- her hair up in a coiled bun, held by a jade ornament -- her shoulder reveals a vibrant tattoo of a dragon coiled around a rose vine.

MEI LIN

White Tiger enters the Jade Portal.
Do you know this game?

Whatever it is she is subtly doing with her ass, half-lit by candles, is pushing the politician to the verge of cardiac.

Then she stops, suddenly, like a skilled mime. With his other hand, the Governor sets down more money. She looks at the purse out of the corner of her eye as she slides like liquid silk over him... moving into "Dragon rolls the Pearl".

MEI LIN (CONT'D)

How much did you pay my brother for
this opportunity, Governor?

GOVERNOR

More porcelain than he's ever seen.

Mei Lin raises her arms, dance-like, her hands in her coiled bun. She removes the jade ornament and lets her hair cascade long and loose. He almost passes out over her legendary beauty... and then she puts the jade pin to his throat. His eyes widen in terror... an assassination?

MEI LIN

Don't fear, Governor. This is part
of the game you paid for. The
Danger Game. You are but a lowly
worm...

GOVERNOR

Yes... yes...

Mei Lin, the most dangerous fuck in China, rides the white tiger.