

Kung Fu Love
by
John Lynch

John Lynch
5 Lumley Terrace
Leeds
LS4 2NW

johnlynchfilm@yahoo.co.uk

07817244854

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FADE IN: Rising sound of cafe/bar.

TITLES: White letters on black bg:

KUNG FU LOVE

FADE OUT titles/FADE IN picture (Black and White):

Int. Cafe/bar. A one-shot, fixed-camera side view on table. Jason, approximately 30 years old, is sat to the right of screen reading a book with the title: 'The Tao of Kung Fu'. Chair opposite is empty. Tables behind are half visible with people sat in them. All we can see in frame are his hands and forearms. He is wearing a dark T-shirt. We can hear the noises of the cafe/bar in the background and music playing softly on the sound system. After a short period a woman's voice off camera asks:

MIRANDA

Is it alright if I sit here?

JASON, LOWERING BOOK, POINTING TO THE
OTHER CHAIR

Err... no... I mean yes, help
yourself.

Miranda sits down. Places a glass with a tea bag on a string and a spoon on the table to her left. Fiddles with it. She is wearing a white blouse that goes down to just below her elbow and has a lace friendship bracelet tied around her right wrist and a Chinese character tattoo (love) on the inside of her left wrist which is visible to the viewer. Jason goes back to looking at book. Hands are slightly less relaxed than before. After a short period...

MIRANDA, SLOWLY STIRS TEA THAN STOPS,
PAUSING

I thought you were reading a book
on Kung Fu! Any good?

JASON, LOWERING BOOK,
Umm.... Yea it is....why? Are
you...?

MIRANDA, ENTHUSIASTICALLY
Oh yeah I'm mad about it!

JASON

Really?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MIRANDA

Oh yeah!

JASON

I didn't think anyone was still into it?

MIRANDA

You bet! It's got that... mixture of kind of graceful movement and really forceful action all at the same time.

JASON, ENTHUSIASTICALLY (HE PUTS THE BOOK DOWN TO RIGHT)

Exactly! There is something about how it is peaceful but if you know how to do it, you have a feeling of real power!

A Beat.

MIRANDA

This is great, I've never met anyone who really gets what I mean about this stuff! Most people think I'm just a bit weird about this Kung Fu thing.

JASON

Yeah, I know! I've been into it since I was a kid and watching the TV series. I always tried to be like Caine, you know - calm in the face of adversity but when the big guys kept pushing I was gonna let rip!

MIRANDA

Well... I don't know about the TV series - it all seemed a bit fake to me. All that "grasshopper" business. No, I'm into the Bruce Lee films. Now he knew how to actually kick ass!

JASON, LAUGHING

Yeah, maybe (Slowing down the conversation a bit so that it seems more intimate)... So do you...er... go to a class or anything... I'd guess you probably do?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MIRANDA

(slight pause) Yea I go along to some sessions each week. It's something that helps me ...um ... release stress.

JASON, CLEARLY COMPLIMENTING HER ON
HER PHYSIQUE

Well. I'd say it makes you fit. Plus you get a chance I'd imagine to wrestle some guys! So do you ever really hurt anyone?

MIRANDA

Maybe...sometimes...some guys need to be... reminded... that a woman isn't weak.

JASON

Woh... can't imagine that anyone would make that mistake with you!

A Beat.

By now their hands are much closer than their initial position. They have begun to break the personal space barrier although not touching yet. They are extending their fingers into the no-mans-land between them.

MIRANDA

So. What about you? You like to 'wrestle' guys on the floor?

JASON

Not really no! Tried out some classes when I was a teenager but never got into it the same way. Might have been useful at times to be honest!

MIRANDA

You should try it you'd love it I'm sure. It's always good to have some back up when you need it.

JASON

Yea. You could be right. Like you say, it would be handy some time.

MIRANDA, SMILING

I'd say come along to my Dojo but then I might have to knock you down in front of everyone.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

JASON

Hmmm... well, that would be alright. Doesn't bother me to be knocked down by err ...a woman. Or anyone else. You never know I might... surprise you ...on the mat.

MIRANDA, LAUGHING

Really!

JASON, LAUGHING

Well... I like to think I can hold my own in these things.

MIRANDA

Oh! So you like holding your own do you?

JASON

Err... well you know its an advantage to have big hands.

Jason has moved his hands into the middle of the space and is holding them open and facing downwards towards her. He is stretching the thumbs so that they unconsciously make a frame suggestive of size about 8 inches across. Miranda reaches across and gently grabs hold of Jason's finger tips and moves them into till they are about only 4 inches apart. Now they have touched hands.

MIRANDA

I'd guess probably more like that!

JASON

Oww! That's harsh.

Miranda lets go of Jason's hands but holds hers quite close to his. Their fingers are only about 1 1/2 inches apart now.

MIRANDA

Well. I prefer to set my expectations low and then not be disappointed. It's better to be pleasantly surprised.

JASON, PAUSING

True, but to be surprised you have to take a chance on buying a ticket to the game. The question is: What would Caine do?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

MIRANDA

Well I think "Bruce Lee" would go for it.

A Beat.

Jason's hands are resting on the table. He gently lifts one finger which is then pointing towards her. Miranda mirrors this and their fingers touch for the second time. They very sensitively rub against each other. Nothing too forceful. There is a period of silence.

JASON

So...

MIRANDA

Hmmm...

Their fingers move onto their hands and soon they are caressing each other's hands. We see Jason stroke the outline of her 'Love' tattoo. Not rushing but building up in intensity. Not faking sex but being sensual.

JASON

Wow. You do have strong hands.

They have both leaned in now. They don't talk as they caress each other's hands. This goes on for a little while. Miranda's hands start to tense up a bit and Jason responds. Their fingers interlock and there is a moment of mutual gripping then they slowly subside back. After a brief pause:

MIRANDA

Hmm... I think I need some more tea.

JASON

I'll go and get some.

Jason stands up and moves away off to the counter. Miranda stays sat looking at her hands and being thoughtful. Takes a tube of hand cream out of a bag and squeezes some onto her hands and rubs them. Jason soon comes back with two glasses of tea.

JASON (CONT'D)

I got us green tea I hope that's OK?

MIRANDA

Yea that's good.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

They both sip their tea. Their hands are back in the middle, acting very practical and functional.

JASON

So who do you think was better at Kung Fu, Bruce Lee or Caine?

MIRANDA

That's not even a serious question. Caine was an actor. Bruce Lee was real.

JASON

Well... true to a certain extent but Bruce Lee's stuff was also faked a lot. I mean I'm sure he was quite good at Kung Fu as well but he was a terrible actor. I know Caine was a character but as a character he was better than Bruce Lee.

MIRANDA, SMILING

How can you say that? Bruce Lee would have kicked his ass in a fight!

JASON

Well, I don't know if that's really true. The point about Caine was that as a 'monk' his training made him much more deadly.

MIRANDA

But it wasn't real! You keep talking as though he did things! He was an American actor who couldn't actually do the fighting. Bruce Lee was genuine.

JASON

Yea I get your point but from an imaginary point of view with the two of them as characters in a fight I think Caine would have eventually won.

Both pairs of hands are now in the middle rarely crossing over into each other's space. The conversation is very balanced and calm but expressive.

MIRANDA

Oh. Can you pass me that cup.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (6)

JASON

Of course.

Jason moves the first glass towards her and Miranda puts her used tea bag from the second into it. When Miranda sits back she has now moved a little away from him. There is now a bigger space between them.

MIRANDA

Caine might have been a better Buddhist but that doesn't mean he was a better fighter.

JASON

But that's the point I think: he was a Buddhist monk who studied for years and years so that it became instinct. Bruce Lee was like a martial arts guy on steroids!

MIRANDA

But at least he was part Chinese! Caine was played by an American and didn't even know any Kung Fu!

A Beat.

Both have moved back into their seats and their hand signals have become more agitated and with an aggressive tone.

JASON, SLIGHTLY RAISED VOICE

I know that! You have said that before but I keep saying this is about imaginary characters not those two people in reality.

Now there is a silence. Miranda does not reply. She picks at her finger nails.

JASON

How's your tea?

MIRANDA, SULLEN TONE

It's fine.

Silence again. A certain amount of them moving their hands but in a slightly bored way now.

JASON

What's your favorite Bruce Lee film then?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (7)

MIRANDA, DOESN'T ANSWER FOR A SECOND
Not really sure.

LONGER PAUSE. JASON, OBVIOUSLY TRYING
TO GET THE CONVERSATION GOING AGAIN
BUT FAILING
How many were there? Wasn't it
about 12?

MIRANDA, CLEARLY NOT PLAYING ANYMORE
Actually it was "8"... In English
anyway.

JASON.
Right...

A Beat.

Silence again. It seems they have exhausted the possibilities of this subject. Miranda gets her mobile phone out of her bag hanging on the side of the chair and starts to text. Puts it on the table and drinks her tea.

Jason is now at a complete loss as what to say.

After a brief time the phone beeps.

MIRANDA, PICKING UP PHONE
Err.. I need to go.

Jason stays silent. Miranda gets up, pauses then turns and leaves. We see Jason's hands twiddling for a bit. He picks up his book, holds it in his hands for a moment then gets up and leaves. Camera stays on empty table till cafe worker clears glasses, wipes table and moves away.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN, white letters on black bg:

"Let tears and joy come unplanned"
The Tao of Kung Fu

Credits.