

Young Ancient One  
Issue #1  
"The Mark of the Ancient Ones - Part 1"

by  
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# YOUNG ANCIENT ONE

Written by Rob M. Worley

## PAGE ONE

**Panel One** - Full splash. Long establishing shot of the SMALL CITY OF LANG KAH. Tall growths of TREES flank the east and west borders of the well-kept buildings that make up the village. The north end is bounded by mountains.

A ROAD leads in from the south. An archway spans the road.  
NOTE: PLEASE MAKE THIS ARCHWAY DISTINCTIVE AS IT COMES INTO PLAY LATER.

### CAPTION

(1-1)

1496 - Lang Kah, Tibet

Six riders on horseback make their way into the city from the southern road.

**Panel Two** - Inset on One. The riders, dressed in ORNATE CHINESE ARMOR, pass through the village.

**Panel Three** - Inset on One. As they ride through town, the ASIAN VILLAGERS look upon them with fear.

## PAGE TWO

**Panel One** - Past CAPTAIN CHAU, the leader of these riders, as he dismounts. The riders are met by mayor XUAN LING, a portly and genial looking Asian man. He's flanked by two of his security detail: PABU is as overweight as Ling while SOGMA is rail thin. Both men carry fighting staffs. Their attire is simple, in contrast to the attractive armor of the riders. Three young women carry beautifully crafted vases filled with water and bundles of bamboo shoots

### LING

(2-1)

Greetings, Captain Chau.

### CHAU

(2-2)

Elder Ling.

### LING

(2-3)

How may we serve you today?

**Panel Two** - Reverse angle. Past Ling on Chau, who lifts the lid on a vase.

CHAU

(2-4)

Spare me the false pleasantries.  
You **know** why we're here. Taxes are  
owed Emperor Kai Tong.

LING

(2-5)

**Please!** Accept these gifts for  
Emperor Tong.

(2-6 - separate)

A harvest of bamboo and our **finest**  
vases filled with the water of Lang  
Kah.

**Panel Three** - The captain interrupts by slashing his sword  
through all three vases, shattering them. Ling and the  
village girls recoil.

CHAU

(2-7)

You offer **water** to an **emperor**?!

LING

(2-8)

As you know our water is purest in  
all --

**Panel Four** - The captain brings down the handle of his sword  
on Ling's nose, knocking him to the ground.

CHAU

(2-9)

This village is under Emperor  
Tong's protection. You will **pay**  
your taxes in **gold**!

**Panel Five** - A dark figure crouches on a nearby rooftop, just  
above the heads of the riders.

SAA

(2-10)

It's not that I don't enjoy the  
play time --

**Panel Six** - The figure is, THE BTSAN SAA. Saa is cloaked in  
ninja-like garb, almost all black from head to toe. His face  
is covered by a black sash and hood, with a crude leopard  
face painted on it. His shins forearms are wrapped in the  
pelt of snow leopard.

Saa jumps down from the roofs, clothes-lining one rider with  
his arm while kicking a second one off of his horse.

SAA

(2-11)

-- but I told your **men** not to come back here.

(2-12 - separate)

I protect Lang Kah. We have **no** need of Emperor Tong.

### PAGE THREE

**Panel One** - One of the riders, dismounted, stabs at Saa with a Kwan Dao sword (a long, spear-handled sword). Saa simultaneously dodges and grabs the long wooden handle with both hands.

SAA

(3-1)

You keep swinging this around and somebody's going to get hurt.

**Panel Two** - Saa, now in control of the Kwan Dao, cracks the rider in the jaw with the spear handle end.

SOUND EFFECT

KRACK

SAA

(3-2)

See what I mean?

**Panel Three** - Another rider comes at Saa with a a pair of golden melon hammers. Saa blocks the striking hammer with the Kwan Dao, snapping it in two.

SAA

(3-3)

Now **didn't** you see what just happened to your friend?

**Panel Four** - Saa, holding the two broken sword pieces, snap-kicks hammer-guy in the face. From off-panel a manriki chain wraps around Saa's hand (holding the blade end of the broken weapon).

**Panel Five** - Saa turns toward the wielder of the manriki chain, pulling the chain toward him and hurling the broken sword handle at the attacker's head, hitting him square between the eyes.

SOUND EFFECT

POK

### PAGE FOUR

**Panel One** - The Saa stands before Captain Chau. He now flexes a bamboo shoot between his two hands, like a riding crop.

CHAU

(4-1)

Ahh...the fabled bTsan Saa. The so-called **Spirit** leopard.

SAA

(4-2)

You don't like our gifts? Water. Bamboo. Not good enough?

CHAU

(4-3)

Such worthless items are hardly payment for Emperor Tong's protection.

**Panel Two** - Same, different angle.

SAA

(4-4)

Yeah. 'Cept it's mostly **Tong** this city needs protection from.

CHAU

(4-5)

Really? I would think a **Spirit Leopard** would be **well** acquainted with the demons and ghouls that lie beyond this city's gates.

(4-6 - separate)

How can you put a **price** on protection from such things?

SAA

(4-7)

Nobody's ever actually seen your demons, so I'd say bamboo is fair.

**Panel Three** - The captain lunges with his sword but Saa sidesteps him and slashes his face with the bamboo, making a diagonal mark.

SAA

(4-8)

Besides, it **really** is quite useful.

SOUND EFFECT

WSSH!

**Panel Four** - Now angry, the captain slashes horizontally but Saa ducks underneath and gives him another cut in his face, forming a bloody X.

SAA

(4-9)

You can **cook** with it.

(4-10 - separate)

**Make** stuff with it.

SOUND EFFECT

WSSH!

CHAU

(4-11)

Augh!

**Panel Five** - The Saa slashes at the furious captain's sword hand, cutting a gash into it and sending the sword up into the air.

SAA

(4-12)

I'm kicking your **ass** with it right now!

SOUND EFFECT

WSSH!

**Panel Six** - The Captain has fallen to the ground. Saa catches the sword in one hand and holds the bamboo shoot to the Captain's neck with the other.

SAA

(4-13)

What **message** should I send back to Emperor Tong? An ear? A tongue? An eye?

CHAU

(4-14)

P-p-please.

SAA

(4-15)

I know...

**PAGE FIVE**

**Panel One** - Shot of Saa slashing at us with the bamboo.

SOUND EFFECT

Snik! Snik! Snik!

**Panel Two** - Saa stands, looking smug, bamboo and sword in hand. The kneeling captain is now reduced to his underwear, his detached armor on the ground around him.

SAA

(5-1)

**Tie** these men up and put them on their horses.

**Panel Three** - Past Ling's smiling face to Saa who springboards off a horse up to a rooftop.

SAA

(5-2 - connected)

The **beasts** know the way back.

LING

(5-3)

Once again Lang Kah is in your debt, bTsan Saa.

**Panel Four** - Close on Saa, on the rooftop, hand raised in a triumphant gesture.

SAA

(5-4)

I am the defender of Lang Kah. So long as the blood of the spirit leopard **flows** in my **veins**, this village will be **free** from harm!

## PAGE SIX

**Panel One** - Close on hands chopping vegetables with a knife.

SOUND EFFECT

CHOP.

**Panel Two** - Close on the face of a beautiful young Asian woman named LEUNG TAN. Leung has GREEN EYES.

SOUND EFFECT

CHOP.

**Panel Three** - Wider as we see Leung working in her dark kitchen by candle light. Past her we see Saa's feet dropping through an opening in the ceiling.

LEUNG

(6-1)

If that's the legendary bTsan Saa --

(6-2 - separate)

(MORE)

LEUNG(cont'd)

-- I hope he took his **filthy** boots off first.

**Panel Four** - Close on Saa as he removes his mask, revealing the smiling face of a young, twenty-ish man who we'll come to learn is the YOUNG ANCIENT ONE, destined to be Dr. Strange's mentor five hundred years from now. We'll just call him YAO.

YAO

(6-3)

How could you **hear** me? I move with the silence of the whispering breeze.

**Panel Five** - Leung faces him, cooking knife extended.

LEUNG

(6-4)

Well if something **whispers** it's not really **silent**, is it? You can't surprise me in my own home.

**Panel Six** - In silhouette, Yao moves her knife-hand away and embraces Leung. They kiss.

YAO

(6-5)

Your home? How about **our** home, Leung?

LEUNG

(6-6)

I may throw you out if you keep up this bTsan Saa foolishness.

**Panel Seven** - She turns away, and continues working. He smiles and keeps his arms wrapped around her belly.

LEUNG

(6-7)

What was it this time? Mongolians?

YAO

(6-8)

More of Tong's men. I showed them the power of legend.

**PAGE SEVEN**

**Panel One** - Same. Different angle. Yao has an arrogant grin on his face. Leung has a look of consternation.



LEUNG  
(7-1)  
Did anybody get hurt?

YAO  
(7-2)  
Nah. I tossed them back to Emperor  
Tong...  
(7-3 - separate)  
**...naked** as the day they were born!

**Panel Two** - Same. Different angle.

LEUNG  
(7-4)  
No!

YAO  
(7-5)  
Yep.

LEUNG  
(7-6)  
You didn't.

YAO  
(7-7)  
Well, they still had their  
underwear.

**Panel Three** - Same. Different angle.

LEUNG  
(7-8)  
I don't think it's a good idea to  
humiliate them.

YAO  
(7-9)  
I'm just teaching them a lesson.

**Panel Four** - Same. Different angle.

LEUNG  
(7-10)  
You didn't trot out that **tired** line  
about the blood of the spirit  
leopard, did you?

YAO  
(7-11)  
Of course.

LEUNG  
 (7-12)  
 You should change it to **ghost**  
 Leopard.

**Panel Five** - Same. Different angle.

YAO  
 (7-13)  
 I can't **change** it.

LEUNG  
 (7-14)  
 Ghost is scarier. Spirit is --  
 (7-15 - separate)  
 -- foofy.

YAO  
 (7-16)  
 It's my signature!

LEUNG  
 (7-17)  
 Weak.

**Panel Six** - Close on Yao, grinning.

YAO  
 (7-18)  
 The villagers eat that up.

LEUNG  
 (7-19 - off panel)  
 And they'd be so disappointed to  
 learn you are not a spirit beast at  
 all, just Doctor Sho's lowly  
 apprentice.

**Panel Seven** - Close on Leung whose expression turns sober.

YAO  
 (7-20)  
 I'm their hero. They **need** me.

LEUNG  
 (7-21)  
 No, Mr. hero. I need you.  
 (7-22 - separate)  
 They **depend** on you.

**Panel Eight** - Same. Different angle.

YAO

(7-23)

Awww...

LEUNG

(7-24)

I'm serious. It's too dangerous.  
Let the mayor hire you to train  
some guards.

YAO

(7-25)

Hey, the day I can't take Tong's  
men by myself...

**PAGE EIGHT**

**Panel One** - SENSANG, an OLD MAN sits on the forest floor at night in a meditative pose. He wears a clean, light-colored, loose-fitting karate suit.

YAO CAPTION

(8-1)

...is the day I admit I'm a tired  
old man.

SENSANG CAPTION

(8-2)

"Time Flies." That's what people  
say.

**Panel Two** - Several pairs of sinister, glowing eyes appear all around him in the forest.

SENSANG CAPTION

(8-3)

They see problems all around. They  
rush around trying to **fix**  
everything before their time is up.

**Panel Three** - The old man smiles blissfully, still meditating as a zombie emerges from the forest and threatens to grab him from behind. The zombie looks a bit like a Clive Barker, leather freak-show with Steve Ditko flourishes. It's humanoid and it's eyes are completely white. The creature is disgusting and unkempt, like an animal. His hands are filthy, with long, sharp finger nails. In the foreground, an oriental firebellied toad leaps into the air, springing off a rock or tree branch.

SENSANG CAPTION

(8-4)

If they would just sit quietly.  
(MORE)

## SENSANG CAPTION(cont'd)

(8-5 - separate)

Listen.

(8-6 - separate)

Breath.

(8-7 - separate)

Relax.

(8-8 - separate)

Let the world happen **without** their  
frenzy.

**Panel Four** - Same, exact panel as panel three: same forest, same zombie, same leaping toad all frozen in the exact same positions...all except the old man, who is now standing, facing the zombie and tapping on its forehead.

## SOUND EFFECT

Tap. tap.

## SENSANG CAPTION

(8-9)

They would realize there is **plenty**  
of time.

**Panel Five** - Outside the evil lair: A sinister looking, multi-level pagoda hidden deep in the forest. Trees and vines hug the structure, concealing it. Two similar zombies stand guard over two large, wooden doors in the stone foundation of the building. The old man approaches with a bouquet of flowers. The zombies do not appear to notice him.

## SENSANG CAPTION

(8-10)

Time to stop...

**Panel Six** - The old man slips through the front door. The two zombie guards, unmoved, now have flowers in their hair.

## SENSANG CAPTION

(8-11)

...and pick the flowers.

## PAGE NINE

**Panel One** - Inside the evil lair, the place is lit by torches. The decor is Leatherface chic: all furniture appears to be constructed of the flesh and bones of animals and even humans.

MAHGRA sits on a bed. Like his zombie minions, Mahgra is a black leather nightmare, an image of Attila the Hun on steroids. However, his appearance is closer to that of a living human.

Several buxom and scantily-clad women, some zombies, some living, but in chains, are all around him.

Mahgra is frozen in mid kiss, his eyes shut.

The old man, completely out of place, stands right in front of the scene.

SENSANG

(9-1)

Mahgra, you **sick** bastard. If I had my way I'd cut your throat **right** now --

**Panel Two** - Sensang comes to an ornate, dome shaped container on a pedestal. Intricate carvings cover the dome.

SENSANG CAPTION

(9-2)

-- But this is what I came for.

**Panel Three** - The old man rolls the top of the dome back allowing a bright glow to shine on his face.

**Panel Four** - As the old man reaches into the container, a fleshy tentacle emerges from among the engravings where it was camouflaged. The tentacle snakes out and strikes at Sensang with the long spike on it's tip, stinging into the old man's forearm.

SENSANG

(9-3)

Aaaahhh!

**Panel Five** - Close on Mahgra. He's still locked in same kiss, but his eyes have opened, suggesting he's now looking towards the old man. Unlike his Empty Ones, his eyes are not white but rather filled with evil and spite.

**Panel Six** - The old man tosses the tentacle aside and grimaces with pain.

SENSANG CAPTION

(9-4)

**Focus**, you old fool! **Focus**! Take the artifact and **leave**.

PAGE TEN

**Panel One** - Yao and Leung sit side-by-side in the lotus position, legs folded, arms at their sides. They are both dressed in standard, loose-fitting karate training gear.

YAO

(10-1)

The practice of meditation allows us to look deeply into the **true** nature of all things. Once in the meditative state, we can **empty** our minds --

LEUNG

(10-2)

-- Wow! **One** of us is already there.

YAO

(10-3)

Leung!

LEUNG

(10-4)

Sorry.

YAO

(10-5)

In this **deep** state of awareness, you may **even** experience the self leaving the body.

**Panel Two** - Same shot. The two maintain their meditative poses. Their eyes are closed and they have a look of calm on their faces.

**Panel Three** - Same shot. Leung's eyes are opened and her head is turned towards Yao.

LEUNG

(10-6)

I have to pee.

Yao has one eye open in a look of frustration.

**Panel Four** - Close on Yao's hand blocking Leung's punch.

CAPTION

(10-7)

After a short break

LEUNG

(shout - O.p.)

KEE-YAH!

**Panel Five** - Wider. Yao, barely breaking a sweat, blocks another punch from Leung.

YAO  
(10-8)  
The hand that hits also **blocks**.

LEUNG  
(10-9)  
Bite me.

**Panel Six** - Yao casually blocks another punch and Leung's frustration grows.

YAO  
(10-10)  
Nice talk. You **know** I'm taking a great risk here.

LEUNG  
(10-11)  
Hah! You **love** risk.

YAO  
(10-12)  
Beating up bad guys isn't risky. Teaching the arts to a woman is **forbidden**.

# PAGE ELEVEN

**Panel One** - Leung throws a round house kick which Yao avoids.

LEUNG  
(11-1)  
Which is **totally** stupid.

YAO  
(11-2)  
Agreed.

LEUNG  
(11-3)  
What's the matter? Afraid I might take over your **hero** job?

**Panel Two** - As Leung throws another punch, Yao grabs her wrist.

YAO  
(11-4)  
I said I agreed!

LEUNG  
(11-5)  
Kee-yah!

SOUND EFFECT

SMACK!

**Panel Three** - Yao stands behind Leung. He holds her wrist behind her back. His opposite hand is holding her other arm across the chest.

YAO

(11-6)

The mighty Spirit Leopard **wins** again.

LEUNG

(11-7)

Big deal. You beat a **girl**.

YAO

(11-8)

Aw. You did **good**.

LEUNG

(11-9)

I didn't even land a punch.

YAO

(11-10)

Neither do any of Tong's men and they're **trained killers**.

**Panel Four** - Leung flips Yao onto the mat.

LEUNG

(11-11)

Yah!

SOUND EFFECT

WHAM

**Panel Five** - With Yao flat on his back, Leung pins him.

LEUNG

(11-12)

It appears the student has become the master.

YAO

(11-13)

I guess it looks bad for me, doesn't it?



LEUNG

(11-14)

No I will become the mighty Ghost  
Leopard, **far** more feared than the  
Spirit Leopard.

YAO

(11-15)

Ha

(11-16 - separate)

Ha

**Panel Six** - Dojo wall, above previous shot. Let's give them  
their privacy.

LEUNG

(11-17 - O.P. - from  
bottom)

Now be quiet while I teach you the  
forbidden arts.

#### PAGE TWELVE

**Panel One** - Wide shot of Sensang as he flees through the  
woods, clutching a bundle wrapped in cloth. The old man is  
looking fearful.

**Panel Two** - A white-eyed Empty One from Mahgra's lair  
crouches on a path in the forest. This TRACKER ZOMBIE has  
rusted, metallic plate running under its eyes and across the  
bridge of its nose. Rivets dot the perimeter of the plate,  
holding it onto the creature's face. The zombie holds a piece  
of cloth and sniffs it.

SOUND EFFECT

Sniff

**Panel Three** - Close on Sensang's hand which clutches that  
same bundle. On the forearm, where he was stung, there's a  
strange black mark which spiders out over his skin like a  
cancer.

**Panel Four** - Close on the Empty One's face. We see that its  
face plate has intricate carvings, just like the ones seen on  
the domed container earlier.

The Empty One scowls a scary expression.

**Panel Five** - Sensang rests against the archway leading into  
Lang Kah. He's hunched over and panting, clearly exhausted.

#### PAGE THIRTEEN

**Panel One** - NOTE: THE FIRST FOUR PANELS ON THIS PAGE SHOULD ALL BE DONE IN MONOCHROME PLUS GREEN SPOT COLOR WHERE NOTED. A SMALL ASIAN GIRL in a night shirt walks down a dark hallway. This is an affluent home, with Asian artwork on the walls and some fine vases on a wicker table to one side. The girl has GREEN EYES.

**Panel Two** - MONOCHROME: Past the little girl to a doorway. A strange glow pours out of the doorway, illuminating the hall around it.

**Panel Three** - MONOCHROME, GREEN EYES: The girl peers around the edge of the door frame, her face lit up by the glow.

**Panel Four** - MONOCHROME, GREEN EYE: Tight on A WOMAN's face. There is a large hand covering it, palming it like a basketball. In between fingers, the woman's eye looks directly at us. The glow seems to be coming from the owner of that hand. As with the little girl, the woman's eye is colored green.

**Panel Five** - Extreme close shot of a simply rendered eye. This should look like the eye or head of the little demonic emblem that Tony Harris put on Dr. Strange's tunic in the "Flight of Bones" mini-series and should be colored the same.

**Panel Six** - RESUME NORMAL COLOR: Leung sits bolt upright, mouth agape. She's sweating and her hair is messed. Clearly she's just awoken from a nightmare.

LEUNG

(13-1)

Ah!

#### PAGE FOURTEEN

**Panel One** - A wider shot. Leung sits among animal skins in front of a fire. Yao is passed out next to her. Past them we see a closed door.

SOUND EFFECT

(at door)

WHUMP! WHUMP!

LEUNG

(14-1)

What the--?

**Panel Two** - Leung is at the door which is secured with a bolt.

LEUNG  
(14-2)  
Who's there?

VOICE  
(14-3 - through the door)  
Please -- I seek the bTsan Saa.

**Panel Three** - Yao, now awake, joins her at the door. Leung looks troubled, a little angry.

LEUNG  
(14-4)  
There's **no** such thing as the bTsan Saa. Go away.

VOICE  
(14-5 - through the door)  
P-Please. I don't have...uhh

SOUND EFFECT  
THUD!

**Panel Four** - Outside Yao's home, Yao stands in the now-open door. Leung peers out over his shoulder. Sensang is passed out on the ground, his cloth bundle under his hand.

**Panel Five** - Yao picks up the old man. We see that the arm that got stung in Mahgra's lair is now crawling with a kind of black mold. Leung keeps her distance.

YAO  
(14-6)  
Help me get him inside.

LEUNG  
(14-7)  
Look at his arm. I think you should take him with you.

YAO  
(14-8)  
Huh?

LEUNG  
(14-9)  
Don't you assist Doctor **Sho** today?

**Panel Six** - Yao walks off with Sensang over his shoulder. Leung looks at the package he dropped.

YAO

(14-10)

Dr. Sho! I was supposed to BE there already.

(14-11 - separate)

Now I have an excuse for being late.

LEUNG

(14-12)

Brilliant.

### PAGE FIFTEEN

**Panel One** - Dr. Sho's office, the closest thing to a medical center in 15th century Tibet. Sensang is on a cot. Dr. Sho and Yao watch over him. The black mold seems to cover more of his arm than before, but it's not quite up to the elbow yet. His eyes are closed but he murmurs in his sleep.

SENSANG

(15-1)

Mahgra...Must stop...Where...Mahgra

YAO

(15-2)

He keeps ranting like that. Talking crazy talk.

(15-3 - separate)

Have you ever seen anything like this **black gunk**?

**Panel Two** - Sho lifts the old man's arm. Yao's face is in a pinch of disgust as he wraps a bandage around the old man's blackened forearm.

SHO

(15-4)

Yes. On a corpse.

(15-5 - separate)

It's like his hand is putrefying.

YAO

(15-6)

So **that's** what rotting flesh smells like.

SENSANG

(15-7 - weakly)

bTsan Saa...thank the old ones.

**Panel Three** - The doctor gives Yao a suspicious look. The old man grabs Yao's shirt with his infected hand.

Yao can barely disguise his aversion to the stinking claw. Except for the hand itself, the bandages now COVER the infected black mass on his forearm.

YAO

(15-8)

What? I'm not --

(15-9 - connected)

See? **Crazy** talk.

SENSANG

(15-10)

L-Listen to me. The carnomancer is coming.

YAO

(15-11)

OK. Gross hand. Let's go easy on the shirt.

**Panel Four** - Dr. Sho intervenes and forces the old man to lie down. Yao steps back.

SENSANG

(15-12)

I took something. He'll come **looking** for it.

YAO

(15-13)

That **thing**? Don't worry about **that**.

(15-14 - separate)

We've got it in a **safe** place.

SHO

(15-15)

You have a serious infection.

SENSANG

(15-16)

Infection?

**Panel Five** - The old man looks in shock at his hand and arm. The black mold is no longer contained by the bandage and is now heading up towards his elbow. Dr. Sho is holding a drinking cup.

SENSANG

(15-17)

No...no!

(15-18 - separate)

Ancient Ones help me. I should have **destroyed** him...

SHO  
 (15-19)  
 It's spreading.  
 (15-20 - separate)  
 We're going to give you something  
 to help you.

**Panel Six** - Yao holds the old man down while Dr. Sho forces the drink down his throat.

SHO  
 (15-21)  
 Hold him down.

SENSANG  
 No! I must focus. Stop --  
 (15-22 - separate)  
**ACK!**

SHO  
 (15-23)  
 Relax. This will help stop the  
 putrefication.

YAO  
 (15-24)  
 Isn't that the same stuff you gave  
 me for my sore knee?

**Panel Seven** - Dr. Sho and Yao look over the resting body of the Sensang.

SENSANG  
 (15-25)  
 The artifact...don't let Mahgra...  
 (15-26 - separate)  
 Zzzzzzz....

YAO  
 (15-27)  
 Is that black stuff super-  
 disgusting or what?

#### **PAGE SIXTEEN**

**Panel One** - Yao exits Dr. Sho's office and finds thin-man Sogma and portly Pabu waiting out front.

YAO  
 (16-1)  
**Well**, well. If it isn't the local  
 law-enforcement.

PABU

(16-2)

If it isn't the local apprentice doctor.

YAO

(16-3)

**Pabu**, you didn't **injure** yourself with your **bo** again, did you?

**Panel Two** - Pabu grins while Sogma looks sheepish.

PABU

(16-4)

Ask **Sogma**.

YAO

(16-5 - O.P.)

Sogma?

**Panel Three** - In a flurry of embarrassed yelling Sogma blurts out.

SOGMA

(16-6 - yelling - crowd  
the balloon)

I was just trying to learn to use the new weapons and improve myself as a fighter so I could protect the city and elder Ling and myself and everyone else is that so wrong!?!?!

**Panel Four** - Yao puts his hands up in a conciliatory gesture.

YAO

(16-7)

Easy. Easy.

(16-8 - separate)

New weapon?

Sogma produces the manriki chain that Tong's man used earlier.

SOGMA

(16-9)

This **chain**. I took it off one of Tong's **men**.

PABU

(16-10)

The **Spirit Leopard** took it off one of Tong's men.

**Panel Five** - The men talk.

SOGMA  
(16-11)  
Didja see the fight?

YAO  
(16-12)  
No, I missed it.

SOGMA  
(16-13)  
It was **awesome**!

PABU  
(16-14)  
Tong's men went after Elder Ling --

**Panel Six** - Sogma and Pabu tell their story with a nearly frightening level of enthusiasm.

SOGMA  
(16-15)  
-- and then the bTsan Saa --

PABU  
(16-16)  
-- just when we were ready to jump  
in --

SOGMA  
(16-17)  
-- yeah, just then, the Spirit  
Leopard jumps in, all kung fu --

PABU  
(16-18)  
-- he cracked this one guy with his  
own **weapon** --

SOGMA  
(16-19)  
-- kicked this other guy --

**Panel Seven** - Same.

PABU  
(16-20)  
-- took out the captain --

SOGMA  
(16-21)  
-- with just a piece of **bamboo** --



PABU  
(16-22)  
-- Bamboo!

SOGMA  
(16-23)  
It was **awesome!**

PABU  
(16-24)  
Yeah. **Awesome!**

**Panel Eight** - Yao beams at the recap.

YAO  
(16-25)  
Wow! It sounds --  
(16-26 - connected)  
-- Awesome!  
(16-27 - separate)  
Did you guys get any action?

The guards look chagrined.

PABU  
(16-28)  
We were about to jump in.

SOGMA  
(16-29)  
We can't fight like the Spirit  
Leopard though.

**Panel Nine** - Yao guides Sogma towards Dr. Sho's door.

PABU  
(16-30)  
Figured we'd just let him handle  
it.

SOGMA  
(16-31)  
He's got them leopard powers and  
whatnot.

YAO  
(16-32)  
I getcha.  
(16-33 - separate)  
Well, let's get in there and look  
at that injury.

**Panel One** - In Mahgra's lair, Mahgra stands over the empty, domed container where the artifact resided.

**Panel Two** - Mahgra knocks the container over with a swipe of his arm. It lands near the stinger-tentacle which is on the ground.

MAHGRA  
(17-1)  
Rrrrrrrgghh!

**Panel Three** - Mahgra picks up the stinger-tentacle.

MAHGRA  
(17-2)  
Who could survive -- ??

**Panel Four** - The Tracker Zombie enters and stands before Mahgra, it's head lolling to the side as if the muscles in its neck are so decayed they can barely hold it up.

MAHGRA  
(17-3)  
You've come back empty handed.  
(17-4 - separate)  
I **need** that artifact.

TRACKER ZOMBIE  
(17-5 - creepy zombie  
balloon)  
mmmaaaaahhhhhhhhhh

MAHGRA  
(17-6)  
Where did they take it?

TRACKER ZOMBIE  
(17-7 - creepy zombie  
balloon)  
mmmaaaaahhhhhhhhhh

**Panel Five** - Enraged, Mahgra grips the Empty One's head in both hands.

MAHGRA  
(17-8)  
You lost it in the woods? Do you  
have any **idea** what they can **do** with  
it?

TRACKER ZOMBIE  
 (17-9 - creepy zombie  
 balloon)  
 mmmmaaaaahhhhhhhhhh

MAHGRA  
 (17-10)  
 Who took my **artifact**?!

TRACKER ZOMBIE  
 (17-11 - creepy zombie  
 balloon)  
 mmmmaaaaahhhhhhhhhh

**Panel Six** - Close on Kaluu's face as he boils over. Off panel, poor tracker zombie suffers the fate of the messenger:

SOUND EFFECT  
 SPLURCH!

Drops of zombie ooze splash on Mahgra's face.

MAHGRA  
 (17-12)  
 Sensang!

## PAGE EIGHTEEN

**Panel One** - Leung enters Dr. Sho's office. She's got Sensang's package. Yao is there with the old man. Dr. Sho is nowhere to be seen.

LEUNG  
 (18-1)  
 How's he doing?

YAO  
 (18-2)  
 Hey! What are you doing here?

LEUNG  
 (18-3)  
 This thing.  
 (18-4 - separate)  
 The old guy dropped it.  
 (18-5 - separate)  
 Where's Dr. Sho?

YAO  
 (18-6)  
 In the back  
 (MORE)

YAO(cont'd)  
(18-7 - whispering)  
Making more **formula**.

**Panel Two** - Yao takes the package. Leung gives him a stern look of disapproval and grabs his arm.

YAO  
(18-8)  
He was really **worried** about this.  
(18-9 - separate)  
His big **artifact**.  
(18-10 - separate)  
Well, let's have a look.

LEUNG  
(18-11)  
Um, isn't that **private**?

**Panel Three** - Same. Different angle.

YAO  
(18-12)  
I think he **wants** me to look at it.

LEUNG  
(18-13)  
I think the Spirit Leopard shows a great **lack** of discipline.

YAO  
(18-14)  
Shhh!

**Panel Four** - Dr. Sho rushes into the room looking alarmed.

SHO  
(18-15)  
Quickly! **Lock** the doors.

YAO  
(18-16)  
What's wrong?

SHO  
(18-17)  
Tong's men are back.

**Panel Five** - Leung looks out a nearby window.

LEUNG  
(18-18)  
Man, they look like they're **really** angry --

**Panel Six** - Dr. Sho closes a door and bolts it. Leung turns back but Yao is already gone.

LEUNG  
(18-19)  
And it looks like they've got --  
(18-20 - separate)  
Hello?

# **PAGE NINETEEN**

**Panel One** - Once again the tax collectors have gathered in the center of town. The villagers give them a wide berth. There are some WATER BARRELS nearby.

Chau is there, with the X still visible on his face. Again, he has six guards with him with a shadowy figure standing behind.

Saa lands in front of them.

SAA  
(19-1)  
Nice armor! I've got a suit JUST  
like it at home.  
(19-2 - separate)  
Goes **great** with my new sword.

CHAU  
(19-3)  
Ah, half Spirit Leopard, half  
comedian.

**Panel Two** - Close on Chau.

SAA  
(19-4 - off panel)  
I do my best.  
(19-5 - separate)  
Here's an idea. How about we skip  
the whole **fight** thing and you just  
forget your little taxes and run  
for it.

CHAU  
(19-6)  
Never mind the taxes. We'll collect  
later.  
(19-7 - separate)  
You've **shamed** me and my men in the  
eyes of the emperor.

**Panel Three** - Close on Saa

SAA

(19-8)

Hey. I didn't come to your village  
**breaking** vases and **hitting** old men  
now, did I?

(19-9 - separate)

Shipping you out of here, that's  
just me doing my job.

(19-10 - separate -  
smaller aside)

Taking the armor was a nice touch  
though, you gotta admit.

CHAU

(19-11)

Joke all you want. But I've taken  
**special** measures to ensure you will  
NOT walk away this time.

**Panel Four** - The guards part, revealing THE GHOST TIGER, a formidable fighting man. He wears classic, baggy kung fu pants and is bare chested. His chiseled arms and upper torso are covered in tattoos, the most prominent of which is a huge, Asian-style tiger painting across his chest.

On his right hand he wears a "claw" weapon, two serrated blades that run along-side his hand, with a grip in the palm and a brace over the back.

The Tiger grins, revealing a mouth full of teeth that have been sharpened to points.

CHAU

(19-12)

Spirit Leopard, meet Ghost Tiger.

**Panel Five** - Past Saa we see Leung looking out the window of Dr. Sho's office.

LEUNG

(19-13)

Hah!

SAA

(19-14)

Ghost?

(19-15 - separate, smaller  
aside)

Dammit. That **is** scarier.

**PAGE TWENTY**

**Panel One** - The Tiger bows in preparation for combat.

SAA

(20-1)

OK.

(20-2 - separate)

Great.

(20-3 - separate)

**Thank** you.

(20-4 - separate)

Can we get this **started**? Dinner's waiting.

TIGER

(20-5)

You hurt me with your flip attitude.

SAA

(20-6)

Then imagine how a **boot** to the head's gonna feel.

**Panel Two** - Saa throws a roundhouse kick, which Tiger ducks under.

SAA

(20-7)

Here. **This'll** help you picture it.

**Panel Three** - Tiger sweeps upward with his claw. Saa barely dodges.

TIGER

(20-8)

You should be **honored** Tong respects you enough to send **me**.

SAA

(20-9)

Honored? No.

(20-10 - separate)

Annoyed? Irked? Peeved? More like.

**Panel Four** - Another slash. This time Tiger tears the front of Saa's shirt open.

SOUND EFFECT

(20-11)

SHHHRRRIIP!

SAA

(20-12)

Hey! Do you know how long it takes my --

(MORE)

SAA(cont'd)  
 (20-13 - separate)  
 -- uh...**me** to sew one of these?

**Panel Five** - Saa connects with a fist to Tiger's face.

SOUND EFFECT  
 SMACK

SAA  
 (20-14)  
**That's** for the shirt!

#### PAGE TWENTY ONE

**Panel One** - Tiger counters with a blow to Saa's stomach, sending him backwards into a nearby water barrel, knocking off the CIRCULAR LID.

SOUND EFFECT  
 SPLOOSH

**Panel Two** - Saa sits on the ground with water everywhere and the LID near his hands. Tiger swings down at him with his right-hand claw.

**Panel Three** - Saa holds the lid in front of him. The two blades of the Tiger claw pass through the slats in the barrel, stopping just short of Saa's alarmed face.

SOUND EFFECT  
 KRACK

**Panel Four** - Saa spins the lid like a steering wheel, sending the Tiger spinning on the same axis and bending the blades into a corkscrew.

TIGER  
 (21-1)  
 AARRRH!

**Panel Five** - Saa clobbers Tiger over the head with the lid, twisted claw weapon is still embedded in it.

#### PAGE TWENTY TWO

**Panel One** - Saa stands triumphant over the unconscious Ghost Tiger and faces Chau.

SAA  
 (22-1)  
 So much for special measures.  
 (22-2 - separate)  
 (MORE)



SAA(cont'd)

Are we done or do we have to have a whole big **thing** now?

CHAU

(22-3)

The Tiger? He was just the warm up.

(22-4 - separate)

The Emperor also sent --

**Panel Two** - Chau produces a pistol. This is a wheel-lock gun, slightly ahead of its time. It should be drawn somewhat fanciful, with the wheel lock/flint mechanism being of ornate, obviously oriental design.

CHAU

(22-5)

-- this!

SAA

(22-6)

Impressive.

(22-7 - separate)

What the **hell** is it?

CHAU

(22-8)

Tong likes to call it the self-striking, black powder **blaster**.

SAA

(22-9)

Riiiiight. You know you'll never get near me with it.

CHAU

(22-10)

That's the beauty of it --

**Panel Three** - Large Panel. Standing only a few feet from Saa The Captain pulls the trigger, emitting a puff of smoke from the flint strike point as the bullet blasts from the barrel of the gun.

CHAU

(22-11)

-- I don't have to.

SOUND EFFECT

BLAM!

Just a millisecond away from death, poor Saa only has time to look shocked.