CALL HIM L:U KANG.

ONCE A MEMBER OF THE SUPER SECRET WHITE LOTUS SOCIETY, HE RETURNED TO THE TEMPLES OF THE ORDER OF LIGHT TO SEEK THE HIGHEST LEVELS OF INNER STRENGTH.

WHETHER OR NOT HE HAS ATTAINED IT REMAINS TO BE SEEN.

TODAY HE HAS JOINED A GROUP OF THE WORLD'S GREATEST WARRIORS ON THIS ISLAND HIDEAWAY, AND WILL DO BATTLE IN SHANG TSUNG'S ELITE CONTEST.

IT IS A TOURNAMENT LIU KANG MEANS TO WIN. THIS IS...

MORTAL KOMBAT

TEST YOUR MIGHT
THE PRIESTS OF THE ORDER OF LIGHT HAVE PINNED THEIR HOPES OF REGAINING THE TITLE ON ANOTHER FIGHTER.

YAAAAAHHH!!

BUT THAT ONLY MAKES LIU KANG TRY THAT MUCH HARDER.

NOT BAD, MY FRIEND. I DID THAT ONCE IN ONE OF MY MOVIES.

THIS IS NOT MAKE BELIEVE, JOHNNY CAGE.

YOU ARE SO CORRECT, WORM.

YOU HAVE COME HERE SEEKING HONOR AND GLORY. BUT THE ONLY THING YOU SHALL FIND IN THIS PLACE IS PAIN.
PAIN AT THE HANDS OF GORO!

KNOW WE'RE NOT AFRAID OF YOU, KING KONG.

MASTER GORO, YOUR PRESENCE IS REQUIRED AT THE ARENA.

THE TOURNAMENT HAS BEGUN.

HOLD YOUR TEMPER IN CHECK, JOHNNY.

CONSIDER YOURSELF LUCKY, WORM. YOU ARE SAFE FROM GORO'S WRATH... FOR NOW.
AFTER A NIGHT OF REST AND A DAY OF PRACTICE...

...THE GRAND CHAMPIONSHIP TOURNAMENT FINALLY BEGINS.

LISTEN, LANCE, THIS IS CRAZY.

YOU DON'T HAVE TO GO THROUGH WITH IT.

I'M DOING IT, SONIA.

WE'VE BEEN WANTING KANO FOR A LONG TIME...

"...AND NOW I'VE GOT HIM."

ON MY WORD, CONTESTANTS... BEGIN--

YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE FOLLOWED ME HERE, CHUMP.
I shouldn't have expected you to fight fair, Kano.

But I'm still taking you down.

You caught me by surprise, punk.

If you thought that was a shock...

...wait 'til you get a load of this.
GETUP, KANO. I'M NOT THROUGH WITH YOU YET.

AFTER I TAKE YOU OUT, WE'RE GOING AFTER THE REST OF THE BLACK DRAGON.

THAT'S THE TROUBLE WITH YOU SPECIAL FORCES GUYS...

...YOU'RE ALL TALK.

ALL TALK AND ALL HEART.

UNFORTUNATELY FOR YOU, KANO DOESN'T HAVE A HEART.

NO... 1-UP?

OHHH...
KANO!

YOU'VE KILLED HIM, YOU FILTHY BUTCHER!

I HOPE SO.

YOU DON'T DESERVE TO LIVE, KANO.

I'VE TRIED MY DAMNDEST TO BRING YOU IN ALIVE. BUT THAT JUST DOESN'T MATTER TO ME ANYMORE.

AAAAARRRGGGHHHHH!
I'VE NEVER LIKED YOU, KANO. BUT NOW IT'S GONE FARTHER THAN THAT.

NOW I CONSIDER YOU MY WORST ENEMY.

...WHOOOOOP...

I'VE BEEN IN THE U.S. SPECIAL FORCES MANY YEARS, KANO.

I'VE BUILT UP QUITE A LONG LIST OF ENEMIES.

MY GUESS IS THAT NONE OF THEM ENVY YOUR POSITION AT THE TOP OF THAT LIST.

WAY TO GO, SONYA BLADE.

LOOK! SHANG TSUNG'S GUARDS APPROACH.

GET BACK! DO NOT FORCE US TO HURT YOU.
IF YOU THINK YOU CAN THREATEN ME...
THEN YOU CAN JUST KISS YOUR BUTTS GOOD-BYE.

Heh heh. You are a feisty one, female. It would be a shame for me to have to break your neck.

Come--while they attend to what remains of the warrior you bested, I will show you to where we house uncooperative guests.
ON ANOTHER PART OF THE ISLAND...

...THE TOURNAMENT CONTINUES.

REPRESENTING THE OUTWORLD PROVINCE OF KALTA... THIS IS GRUM.

AND BATTING FOR THE LIN KUEI CLAN... SUB-ZERO.

GREETINGS, PUNY ONE. I AM GRUM. RULER OF KALTA.

GAZE UPON ME AND FEAR.
YOU MAY SAVE YOUR HOLLOW THREATS...

FOR WHOMEVER GREETS YOU IN YOUR AFTER-LIFE.

Oh no! THIS SHALL BE...

I HAVE LOOKED INTO THE EYES OF DEMONS, BEAST.

I HAVE SEEN NIGHTMARES COME TO LIFE IN HUMAN FORM.

THERE ARE THINGS IN THIS WORLD THAT MAKE EVEN LIN KUEI KNOW FEAR.

BUT YOU ARE NOT ONE OF THEM.
NOW I SUGGEST THAT YOU STAY DOWN...

...OR YOU SHALL BE RETURNING TO KATALA IN A CASKET.

THE WINNER IS... SUB-ZERO!

A FINE PERFORMANCE, BUT I WOULD EXPECT SUCH FROM ONE OF THE LIN KUEI.

GRUM IS A GOOD FRIEND OF MINE, NINJA.

I HAD HOPES OF BREAKING HIS NECK IN BATTLE, BUT I SUPPOSE I SHALL HAVE TO SETTLE FOR YOURS, INSTEAD.

WHERE ARE YOU TAKING ME?

WE'RE GOING TO ESCORT YOU TO SPECIAL "QUARTERS" TO AWAIT YOUR NEXT MATCH.

DO NOT BE SO JUMPY, MY FRIEND. THERE IS NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT.
A SHORT TIME LATER...

LOOK! I WANT TO KNOW WHAT'S GOING ON HERE!

I DEMAND TO SPEAK TO SHANG TSUNG!

IS IT NOT OBVIOUS, WOMAN?

THERE IS NO END TO TSUNG'S TREACHERY.

IT IS FEAR THAT HAS CAUSED THEM TO RESORT TO SUCH MEASURES.

FEAR OF THE ORDER OF LIGHT'S GREATEST FIGHTING MONKS, SING AND SANG.

OR AS WE ARE CALLED... WHEN WE JOIN TOGETHER...

FOR NOW, AT LEAST, THE CHAINS HOLD, AND SIANG--LIKE THE OTHERS DOWN HERE--REMAINS A PRISONER.
IN SHANG TSUNG’S PRIVATE QUARTERS...

Ah... my old and worthy adversary. I was expecting you to make an appearance before much longer.

Mortal, kombat would not be complete without the god of thunder.

It is a powerful spell that the order of light wove to protect the Tao Te Ch’an...

...but I shall find a way to undo it.

Is that not so, storm warrior?

You know that I am not allowed to participate, Shang Tsung.

...but one thing is for certain...

Rayden will play a part in this tournament.
BUT THAT IS ASSUMING THAT THERE WILL BE A CONTEST.

THERE IS A RUMOR THAT THE TOURNAMENT MAY BE HALTED.

SOONER OR LATER, DEAR RAIDEN, WE WILL HAVE MORTAL KOMBAT HERE.

HOWEVER, THERE ARE OTHER MATTERS OF GRAVE IMPORTANCE SHANG TSUNG MUST DEAL WITH.

I SUPPOSE YOU HAVE HEARD OF THE TAO TE ZHAN?

IT HAS NOT BEEN ON EARTH FOR HUNDREDS OF YEARS...

BUT IT IS AN OBJECT OF INSURMOUNTABLE POWER.

YES, POWER THAT SHALL BELONG TO SHANG TSUNG.

POWER THAT WILL ENSURE OUR VICTORY IN MORTAL KOMBAT.

"AND WHEN MY TENTH AND FINAL VICTORY IS ASSURED, THE PORTAL BETWEEN OUTWORLD AND EARTH SHALL BE BREACHED..."

"...AND THE REIGN OF MY MASTER--SHAO KAHN--WILL BEGIN."

"... BUT IT IS AN OBJECT OF INSURMOUNTABLE POWER."

"YES, POWER THAT SHALL BELONG TO SHANG TSUNG."

"POWER THAT WILL ENSURE OUR VICTORY IN MORTAL KOMBAT."

"AND WHEN MY TENTH AND FINAL VICTORY IS ASSURED, THE PORTAL BETWEEN OUTWORLD AND EARTH SHALL BE BREACHED..."

"...AND THE REIGN OF MY MASTER--SHAO KAHN--WILL BEGIN."
As you are well aware, Rayden, the wise and benevolent Shao Kahn has a nearly insatiable appetite for conquest.

He grows weary with the ruined wastelands of Outworld.

He hungers for new worlds to rule.

"When the portal is finally opened, the armies of Shao Kahn will march..."

"...and there is no force in heaven or Earth that can possibly stop them."

"...in the end, you will join the champions of Earth to fight the legions of Kahn..."

"...but you will lose, Rayden, it is your destiny."

Hear the words of Rayden, treacherous one:

Whatever your mad schemes and plans, there is one who will always stand in your path.

Our destinies are bound together.
MEANWHILE, IN ANOTHER PART OF SHANG TSUNG'S PALACE...

THEY TOOK SING AND SANG THIS WAY—I'M SURE OF IT.

I BELIEVE THERE MAY BE TREACHERY AT WORK.

FOOLS! I AM SEARCHING FOR MY COMPANION.

YOU'RE STARTING TO SOUND LIKE...HEY, WHO'S THAT?

AND ANYONE WHO DETAINS ME MUST DEAL WITH...

HYDRO!

Fwoosh

HEY, BUDDY. I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOUR BIG PROBLEM IS.

BUT NOW... NOW YOUR BIG PROBLEM IS JOHNNY CAGE.
STOP! ALL OF YOU! STOP IN THE NAME OF SHANG TSUNG!

Uh oh, LOOKS LIKE SOMEBODY CALLED THE COPS.

Perhaps now we'll GET SOME ANSWERS CONCERNING OUR MISSING COMPANIONS.

Bah, were it not FOR YOUR INTERFERENCE, I WOULD HAVE ESCAPED.

How about it, LIU KANG? WE CAN PROBABLY TAKE THESE Jokers.

We could, my friend, BUT I SAY WE SHOULD NOT.

After all, we are THE GUESTS OF SHANG TSUNG.

Even though we are NOT BEING TREATED AS SUCH.
NEARBY, KANO HAS REGAINED CONSCIOUSNESS.

HEARD RUMORS THAT TSUNG'S PALACE WAS FILLED WITH RARE TREASURES.

I'M SURE NOBODY WOULD MIND IF I LIFTED A FEW.

BETTER PLAY IT COOL. I HEAR A VOICE JUST AHEAD.

FINALLY... I'VE MANAGED TO OPEN THE TAO TE ZHAN.

NOW ALL THAT STANDS BETWEEN ME AND THE MOST AWESOME POWER IMAGINABLE...

...IS SEVEN ANSWERS TO SEVEN RIDDLES.

I MUST FIND GORO. THE TOURNAMENT MUST BE TEMPORARILY HALTED...

...SO THAT I MAY CONCENTRATE ON MORE IMPORTANT MATTERS.

HMMNN... IF ANYONE IS GOING TO BECOME THE MOST POWERFUL WARRIOR ON EARTH...

KRUNNN!
THAT WAS ALMOST TOO EASY.

NOW I JUST NEED TO FIND A SAFE PLACE TO EXAMINE MY PRIZE.

SOMEWHERE AWAY FROM TSUNG'S PESKY GUARDS.

MUST BE SOME BIG GENERATOR TO MAKE SO MUCH NOISE.

MAYBE I'LL HIDE OUT DOWN HERE WITH ALL THE MACHINERY.

Uh Oh...
WHO DISTURBS THE REST OF GORO?
I WAS HAVING THE MOST DELIGHTFUL DREAM...
...THAT I WAS SNAPPING SOME POOR FOOL'S SPINE.

IT WAS ONLY A DREAM, MONSTER.

AYE, BUT SOMETIMES DREAMS CAN COME TRUE.

FORTUNATELY FOR YOU, WORM, GORO'S SHARP EARS HEAR HIS MASTER'S VOICE CALLING.

I'LL HAVE TO STRING YOU UP AND FINISH MY BUSINESS WITH YOU LATER.
A SHORT TIME LATER...

Goro! I have searched everywhere for you!

I had business elsewhere, Master.

What is it you have there?

I have finally opened the Tao Te Zhan, Goro.

I left it in this box, and now it has been spirited away.

Whoever did this deed shall be gravely punished.

I want that book back, Goro.

By what ever means necessary.

Consider it already back in your hands, Master Tsling.

Goro shall not fail you.
I'D SAY WE HAVE A MOST INHOSPITABLE HOST.

HE IS AFRAID OF US - THERE CAN BE NO OTHER ANSWER.

MAYBE IF WE WORK TOGETHER WE CAN.

GO PRO Dane. KEEP IT DOWN, BUD. I'M TRYING TO REST.

CAN YOU FEEL IT? SOMETHING'S HAPPENING.

WHAT IS IT, SUB-ZERO?

WHAT IS IT?

HE IS HERE!
YOU ARE ALL AT MY MERCY.

AND BELIEVE ME...

SCORPION HAS NO MERCY.

NEXT ISSUE: THE ART OF WAR