

"MASTER LEE"

Written by

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Based on a story idea by Helio J. Cordiero

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FADE IN:

INT. MCDONALD'S - MORNING

JIMBO, a middle aged man, eighty pounds overweight. He is wears baggy sweats and a logo tee shirt. His hair is long and messy. It looks as if it hasn't been washed in days.

He sits alone with nothing but four bacon, egg & cheese biscuits wrapped on a brown plastic tray. A large coffee cup sits on the tray and the liner is soiled with spilled coffee and a pile of used ketchup.

Ketchup is left at the corners of his mouth as he stuffs two hash browns at a time into his mouth.

Jimbo closes his eyes as he chews and his facial expressions suggest that he is equating the hash browns with the pleasure of sex.

JIMBO

(talking to self while
chewing)

Son of a bitch this is good
shit. Mmmm mmm!

A Spanish man, JOSE MORALES (52), with silver hair appears at Jimbo's table as he chews. He is wearing the restaurant uniform and pushing a yellow mop bucket.

JOSE

Jesus Jimbo you're here every
day. Every day I see you
stuffing those greasy sandwiches
down your throat... Man if you
don't eat something healthy
you're gonna croke.

Jimbo swallows his food with a gulp. He wipes the ketchup from the corners of his mouth and turns to face Jose.

JIMBO

Hey poncho, don't you be worryin
bout me. I'm healthy as a horse.
I could eat a thousand sand...

Jimbo's eyes pop wide open and he grabs his chest. He gurgles and winces in pain then his head falls face first into the tray of food. He appears dead.

JOSE

Hey! Jimbo! Come on man wake up!

He pushes the mop bucket aside and shakes Jimbo by the arm.

JOSE

Oh god! Call 911 quick! Jimbo
looks dead.

Patrons in the restaurant swarm around the area with shocked looks on their faces.

One skinny women points at her fat husband and suggests he is next if he doesn't get into shape. The husband rolls his eyes as she points.

EXT. AMBULANCE - CONT.

A beautiful blonde nurse, RITA (32), is seen scurrying about and squeezing a jelly substance onto some rescue paddles as two ambulance drivers, TAD (24) and MARK (26) slide Jimbo into the ambulance.

They slam the rear door closed.

The lights are spinning on top of the ambulance and people are gathering on the sidewalk watching.

Both walk back toward the drivers and passengers doors on the ambulance and open the doors to get in.

TAD

This dude looks like he ate his
last egg mcdeath sandwich.

MARK

(slight laugh)
Yep. We'll bring him in so the
suits can tag em, bag em, and
drop em into forest lawn.
(beat)
The bugs are gunna love his
greasy body.

INT. AMBULANCE CAB - DAY

Mark and Tad puts pull their seatbelts tight and click them into place.

Attempting to insert the car key into the ignition Mark drops the keys on the drivers sided floor and bends to pick them up.

MARK

Shit... God damn keys.

TAD

Think the embalming will take
with all that grease in his
body?

They both laugh as Mark puts the key into the ignition and starts the ambulance.

The ambulance drives away with only the lights flashing and no siren.

Rita pokes her head through the opening between the back and front of the ambulance with a disgusted look on her face.

RITA

Hey you two morons think you might step on it. I found a pulse and I think Mr. Tub-o-goo will make it.

Tad flips a switch and the siren blares.

Mark steps down on the gas and Rita is propelled back into the rear of the ambulance as they speed down the road.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

DOCTOR WU, in his early sixties and short in stature, dressed in slacks, white button down shirt and conservative tie stands over a hospital bed holding a clip board and reading the notes.

As he reads he frowns and shakes his head indicating "no" and rolls his eyes as he looks over the clip board at Jimbo lying in the bed.

Doctor Wu hands the clip board to Jimbo.

DOCTOR WU

(Scolding tone - poking finger)

This second time in one year you come into hospital on stretcher... This second time you have heart attack in my hospital. You want to die Mr. Jimbo.

(pause)

You lucky paramedic defib you ass.

Jimbo hands the clip board back to the doctor and reaches for a glass of water then takes a drink.

Doctor Wu hangs the clip board at the foot of the bed.

JIMBO

(weak voice)

What can I say... I love fast food. It's so easy, so convenient, so good.

DOCTOR WU

Fast food give you fast death.

JIMBO

Doc, I already told you I can't diet. I might as well be dead. All that green shit with no taste. Fruit and vegetables. No way am I gonna eat that shit. Nope. I think I'll take my chances.

He laughs then coughs.

JIMBO

You got a prescription that helps my heart and lets me eat all the bad shit I want?

Wu reaches into his pocket and pulls out a prescription pad and pen. His eyes focus on the pad while he writes.

DOCTOR WU

I keep morgue freezer cold for you ass.

(beat)

In mean time you go see Master Lee...

JIMBO

Wait a minute doc. I only want to take a pill. Don't you got a pill I can take?

DOCTOR WU

(irritated)

You go see Master Lee! He whip you fat ass into shape. You stop eating American crap food Mr. Jimbo you live longer.

Wu rips off the prescription and hands it to Jimbo.

DOCTOR WU

Now I release you ass and you go see Master Lee. He teach karate. Here Master Lee address. Exercise good for health and mind.

JIMBO

Yeah. I think I'll take your advice doc. It's a good idea cause I always wanted to learn karate anyway.

(beat)
 You think I can go today?

DOCTOR WU

Not today. You go tomorrow.
 Today you have too much fat in
 your head and your gut.

Wu walks toward the door.

Jimbo sets the prescription on the night table and pulls his
 bed sheet down to reveal two paddle burn marks on his chest.

JIMBO

Holy charred chest doc. These
 gonna go away?
 (beat)
 Hey you think karate'll kill me?

DOCTOR WU

You come back my hospital I kill
 you myself.

EXT. MASTER LEE'S STUDIO - DAY

Jimbo gets out of his CHEVY METRO carrying his prescription
 and slams the door shut.

Traffic zooms past him. He walks across the street toward the
 studio. A sign reads, MASTER LEE KARATE. In subheading it
 reads, DEVINE LESSONS FOR A PERFECT BODY.

He runs across the street through moving traffic and stops at
 the sidewalk to study the sign.

INT. STUDIO - CONT.

MASTER LEE, a well preserved sixty year old wears a white
 robe tied with a black belt. He has long stringy grayish
 white hair and a slim goatee that hangs two inches past his
 chin.

Full length mirrors wrap the walls of the studio. He stands
 facing the mirror.

Jimbo watches him perform some karate moves in slow motion.

MASTER LEE

(while practicing karate)
 You come see Master Lee?

JIMBO

Yep. You Mister Lee?

MASTER LEE

My name Master Lee. You name
Mister Tubby? You call me Master
Lee and I call you young grass
hopper.

He stops practicing and turns to face Jimbo. Jimbo walks
toward Master Lee and steps on to the DOJO with his shoes.

Master Lee pokes his index finger into Jimbo's chest and
pushes him off of the dojo.

MASTER LEE

You must honor dojo and dojo
honor you.

JIMBO

(grabbing chest in pain)
Hey watch the chest old man.

MASTER LEE

Mister Tubby you go. Go. Just
go. You not honor my dojo you
not honor Master Lee you GO NOW.

Master Lee walks to the door and opens it for Jimbo to leave.

JIMBO

Wait a minute. Master Lee I
think we got off on the wrong
foot.
(laughs)
Ok. Sorry. Doctor Wu sent me to
see you.

The door shuts and Master Lee returns to his dojo. Jimbo
hands him his prescription as proof that Doctor Wu sent him.
He takes the note without reading it and stuffs it into the
crotch area of his pants.

JIMBO

(pointing at Lee's crotch)
That ink might not mix with your
sweat. Might have a nasty
reaction.

MASTER LEE

Mister Tubby I grow tired of you
funny business. Master Lee here
to help you attain perfect body
only. Dojo not stand up comedy
stage. You understand young
grass hopper?

JIMBO

Yeah sure. Whatever floats your boat.

MASTER LEE

You answer YES SENSEI. Then you honor sensei with a bow. Now take off shoes and I give you first lesson.

He takes off his shoes to reveal two mismatched socks and a big hole in one of the socks.

Jimbo steps on to the dojo for his lesson.

Master Lee kicks him right in the gut with lightning speed. and Jimbo falls holding his stomach and flops around like a fish out of water on the dojo.

MASTER LEE

(holding up index finger)
First lesson young grass hopper. Listen to sensei and honor his words. You not disrespect dojo again.

JIMBO

(limited air)
Son of a bitch that hurt.

He regains his air and stands up mad. Jimbo holds up two fists to fight Master Lee.

JIMBO

Alright old man. Now I'm gonna show you how we do it in America. I'm gonna kick your old grey ass. Then you honor me.

He swings at Master Lee. Master Lee pushes his punch aside and comes straight to the groin with a lightning fast knee.

Jimbo falls to the dojo on both knees grabbing his crotch. His facial expression shows a blank look of severe pain.

Master Lee kneels down and faces Jimbo.

MASTER LEE

My name Master Lee NOT ASS. Mister Tubby why you come here?

JIMBO

(in pain)
Like your sign says, I want to be perfect. Doc Wu says I gotta lose a hundred pounds.

(pause - looking around studio)
Where are all of your students?

Master Lee helps Jimbo stand up. Both men walk toward the door.

MASTER LEE
All student graduate with honors
and now have perfect body. You
come back tomorrow we begin
making body perfect.

Jimbo gives Master Lee a simple wave with one hand while still nursing his crotch with the other as he walks across the street toward his car.

He walks slow and gingerly.

NEXT DAY

The studio door opens to expose a white of sunlight.

Jimbo walks in wearing red sweats, a grey sweatshirt, and thick white sweat socks.

He pushes his sunglasses up on his messy hair as he walks in.

Master Lee is slowly performing his karate moves in front of a full wall mirror. He spots Jimbo and looks at him through the mirror reflection.

MASTER LEE
You come back. Why?

JIMBO
Doctor Wu said so.

Master Lee stops his workout, turns and walks to the edge of the dojo.

MASTER LEE
You lotta work. And you
disrespectful. Why should I help
you?

JIMBO
(tugging up on sweats)
Teach me and I will listen. I
will learn and be respectful to
you if you teach me. Is it a
deal?

He holds out his hand to shake with Master Lee. Master Lee only looks at his outstretched hand and ignores it.

MASTER LEE
We'll see. I give you free
second lesson. Ready?

He motions for Jimbo to join him on the dojo.

Jimbo walks to the edge of the dojo and stops.

He removes his shoes and socks and steps onto the dojo. The two stand toe to toe.

Master Lee smiles.

MASTER LEE

You still not ready. You MUST
respect the dojo.

Jimbo hold out both arms and shrugs because he doesn't understand.

JIMBO

What? I took off my shoes.

MASTER LEE

Yes and for that small honor... I
only hit you once.

JIMBO

Wha...?

Master Lee delivers a quick fist right to the center of Jimbo's chest. He falls to his knees in pain.

MASTER LEE

Honor me and honor dojo like
this. Look at me I show you.

He walks off the dojo then turns and bows to dojo then returns to the mat.

Jimbo tries to swallow and catch his breath.

NEXT DAY

Jimbo wears his white karate uniform, no shoes, and a red head band. His hair is neat and combed. He stands at the dojo and bows.

Master Lee puts his hands together in a prayer position with a white belt between his hands. He bows slightly to honor Jimbo's progress.

Jimbo steps onto the dojo. Master Lee ties a white belt around his waist. Jimbo flinches away as if he is going to get hit again then accepts the belt.

MASTER LEE

Now you ready to begin.
(beat)
Why are you here?

JIMBO

(confused)

I'm here to learn... Sensei?

MASTER LEE

No young grasshopper... why you really here.

JIMBO

I want to save my life and get into shape... I want to be perfect. Lose a hundred pounds.

MASTER LEE

(claps hand together)

GOOD! Then we work on making you perfect.

Master Lee guides him into a Karate stance by moving his arms and legs into the right position.

JIMBO

Sensei you will tell me when I have attained perfection?

MASTER LEE

Oh yes. You will feel it yourself.

NEXT MONTH

Jimbo mimicks Master Lee's moves. His timing is off slightly and he keeps rubbing his chest after each karate move performed.

JIMBO

Am I perfect yet sensei?

Master Lee quickly shakes his head to indicate "no" and then smiles.

NEXT MONTH

Jimbo concentrates hard on the board that Master Lee holds out toward him.

He lunges forward with his right foot and breaks the board in two on the first attempt.

The force of the kick pushes Master Lee back against the wall.

Jimbo rubs his chest and winces then bows to Master Lee.

JIMBO

Am I perfect yet sensei?

Master Lee strokes his goatee in thought then smiles and shakes his head to indicate "no".

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE - DAY

Jimbo sits on a doctors table with his shirt off. He leans forward toward Doctor Wu.

Wu sits on a stool with arms crossed facing Jimbo.

Jimbo leans on the stirrups with both hands.

DOCTOR WU

(points at stirrups)

Many dirty feet in those stirrups... Dirty ladies feet.

JIMBO

Thought they smelled good... Anyway doc I'm not here to talk about the ladies today. It seems to be working out well with Master Lee.

(thinking back)

Althought I gotta say it was a rough start.

DOCTOR WU

Now you look better.

JIMBO

Thanks doc. I feel better... usually... but sometimes I still get a sharp pain right in the center of my chest. Is that something to be concerned about?

DOCTOR WU

You still big sack of fat. Take time to lose fat and make body perfect... Master Lee know what best. Pain only temporary. You ignore it... it go away.

Doctor Wu stands moves closer to Jimbo.

DOCTOR WU

Close your eyes.

JIMBO

(with reservation)

Ok.

Wu takes his index fingers and rubs Jimbo's temples in slow clockwise circles.

JIMBO

Feels good doc.

DOCTOR WU

Repeat after me... My mind more powerful than body.

JIMBO

My mind is more powerful than my body.

DOCTOR WU

Again Jimbo.

JIMBO

My mind IS more Powerful than MY body.

DOCTOR WU

(with religious conviction)
Again. Really see it and believe it.

He lets go of the stirrups and sits up straight. His eye brows squint and his eyes roll behind his lids as he visualizes the statement.

JIMBO

MY MIND IS MORE POWERFUL than my body.

DOCTOR WU

Very good. Open eyes... How you feel now? You just do like Master Lee tell you. Ignore you pain.

JIMBO

You are a miracle worker doc. Yes you are.

DOCTOR WU

Follow you mind and ignore body. Ignore pain. Pain only temporary. State of mind forever.

Jimbo stands and puts his shirt back on and walks out the door with Doctor Wu.

INT. STUDIO - NIGHT

(SUPER IMPOSED ON SCREEN)

SIX MONTHS LATER...

Jimbo wears a black belt and performs karate moves with precision. His moves are in time with Master Lee.

His white karate uniform is baggie and is a clear indication he has lost some weight.

The workout ends and Jimbo bows to Master Lee.

JIMBO

Now sensei?

MASTER LEE

You almost there. One more week.

Jimbo bows and turns to leave the dojo. He stops and grabs his chest with a balled up fist.

He drops to the floor in sever pain and gurgles.

MASTER LEE

(standing over Jimbo)

I was wrong grasshopper, now you ready. Now you perfect.

Master Lee walks to the windows and pulls the shades down then walks over to his desk and dials a number.

MASTER LEE

(into phone)

He ready now... Come quick.

He hangs up the phone and kneels to see Jimbo.

MASTER LEE

(stroking Jimbo's hair)

It ok young grasshopper help is on the way. Close your eyes.

Jimbo foams from his mouth and tries to catch is breath. His eyes are wide open and portray a high level of pain and fear.

He does as Master Lee says and closes his eyes.

INT. STUDIO BASEMENT - NIGHT

The basement is strewn with caskets. The lids are closed except for one.

Master Lee walks down the stairs into the basement followed by Doctor Wu.

They walk over to the casket with the open lid and stare at the body inside.

MASTER LEE

(looking at body)

Now young grasshopper perfect.

DOCTOR WU

(looking at body)

Yes bother just like all your students.

Doctor Wu reaches up and starts to close the lid. A glimpse of Jimbo's face is seen inside the casket.

The two walk toward the stairs. A sign can be seen as they climb the stairs that reads: WU LEE FUNERAL HOME written in Japanese.

MASTER LEE

You have my next student Wu?

DOCTOR WU

Yes... Four hundred pound Cindi Lou will be coming next week.

FADE OUT: