

AMERICAN BUDDHA

FADE IN:

DREAM - EXT. URBAN NEIGHBORHOOD (AMERICA) - NIGHT

A Tibetan Buddhist monk is running down the middle of the street. He's wearing a red and saffron tunic and robe. This is Lama YESHIE (60), a man of tough love and kindness but little joy.

Yeshie is being chased by a Teacup Yorkie.

Yip - Yip - Yip

Running - Running - Running.

END DREAM

INT. NAMGYAL MONASTERY (INDIA) - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Yeshie opens his eyes. He's on his back, straight, arms to the side.

He takes a moment to wake, swings out of bed into waiting sandals.

The room is austere, a perfect fit.

EXT. NAMGYAL MONASTERY - SAME

Ancient Buddhist monastery, Dharamsala, India.

It's the middle of the night.

A light pops on, and then another and another. MUTTERING can be heard. Monks can be seen moving about. SOUNDS of MOVEMENT.

INT. NAMGYAL MONASTERY - DORM HALL - MOMENTS LATER

Yeshie opens his bedroom door, looks into the hall, sees that MANY MONKS are awake and wandering, conversing, poking their heads into the dorm hall.

He listens for a beat, hears the words "DREAM" and "VIVID."

He peers warily at the goings on, ducks back into his room and closes the door.

INT. NAMGYAL MONASTERY - BOARD ROOM - DAY

Yeshie is at a long table facing a dozen very resolute looking HIGH LAMA HOLY MEN.

Among them is TENPAI (70), a man of deliberate mind, body, and spirit. His face has been seared by sun and wind. His eyeglasses are unusually refractive, almost mirror-like.

All eyes are on Yeshie.

TENPAI

(heavy Chinese accent)
Your arrival to Buddhism was thought to be the first sign. There has been a feeling for many years but the dreams now guide us.

YESHIE

(slight Chinese accent)
Dreams?

TENPAI

You had a vision also?

The board looks on with anticipation. Yeshie is slow to answer.

YESHIE

No, Your Holiness.

Tenpai looks miffed. Board members sigh, settle back.

TENPAI

Nevertheless, the signs are overwhelming.

Monk TRIJANG (30) enters. He's wearing thick black glasses and has slightly longer hair than your average monk. He positions himself behind Tenpai, clutches a bulging folder.

TENPAI (CONT'D)

Young Trijang has been on the Googles all week researching. He has given the dreams form and they all point in the same direction.

Tenpai cocks his arm, hand open. Trijang pulls a photo from his folder and places it in Tenpai's hand. Tenpai lays it on the table in front of Yeshie:

Frank Lloyd Wright, wearing a vintage suit, tie, cuffs, and trademark pork pie hat.

YESHIE

An old white man. I don't understand.

TRIJANG
 (slight Chinese accent)
 Frank Lloyd Wright. American
 Architect.

TENPAI
 Lama Tseten's dream.

YESHIE
 With all due respect, Your
 Holiness, the next Buddha? Born in
 our lifetime?

Tenpai holds his hand up and again Trijang fills it, this time with a magazine. Tenpai lays it in front of Yeshie.

"Architectural Digest." The cover house is a prairie-style Frank Lloyd Wright under the caption "The Zen of Frank Lloyd Wright."

TENPAI
 This house was in Monk Chodak's
 dream. And a child lives there.

Yeshie stares at them.

Trijang enthusiastically feeds Tenpai more "evidence":

A Disneyland brochure.

TENPAI (CONT'D)
 The venerable monk Rinchen.

A crude pencil rendering of a surfer.

TRIJANG
 Monk Norbu. We believe the
 reference is to Malibu.

TENPAI
 Monk Norbu has never seen the
 ocean.

A photo of Marilyn Monroe being goosed by a sewer draft.

TENPAI (CONT'D)
 Monk Tenzin's dream.

A movie poster of a naked steel, red-eyed Terminator.

TRIJANG
 Monk Kunchen's dream. Very
 disturbing. We hope this is an
 outlier.

Everyone takes a moment to settle.

The evidence continues:

"Vogue" magazine, dog-eared with a Post-it.

Yeshie flips to the Post-it page, sees a woman modeling a plain white dress.

TRIJANG (CONT'D)

The dress is from my dream. Not a white dress, but that exact dress. Vivid. Unmistakable.

Yeshie stares incredulous at Trijang.

TRIJANG (CONT'D)

The dress is a Vera Wang. Its full meaning is not entirely clear, other than the Vera Wang part.

The evidence resumes:

Three wavy brush strokes on parchment -- red, white, blue.

TENPAI

My own vision, from the sacred lake.

Board members all nod in the affirmative.

Yeshie struggles to conceal his doubt.

TENPAI (CONT'D)

You're the bridge, Yeshie.

Yeshie opens his mouth to speak. Nothing comes out.

TENPAI (CONT'D)

I understand. The honor is overwhelming.

Yeshie closes his mouth, nods.

TRIJANG

My role is to assist you.

EXT. NAMGYAL MONASTERY - LATER

Yeshie walks rapidly beneath a long arched veranda, Trijang in hot pursuit.

TRIJANG
The house is in the Hollywood
Hills.

Yeshie keeps walking, pays no attention.

TRIJANG (CONT'D)
We had a local investigate.

Still, Yeshie pays no attention.

TRIJANG (CONT'D)
The Cali child is already four.

At this, Yeshie stops and turns. Trijang runs into him.

YESHIE
Cali child?

TRIJANG
Jordan.

YESHIE
Then say Jordan.

TRIJANG
Just trying to speak the lingo.
When in Rome...

YESHIE
What does His Holiness the Dalai
Lama say of all this?

TRIJANG
He is in the Sudan.

Yeshie walks away, leaves Trijang standing there.

TRIJANG (CONT'D)
Okee dokee. No way San Jose. L.A.X.

Trijang turns around, walks monk-like for ten paces, breaks into a quick moonwalk shimmy of delight, then resumes walking properly monk-like.

INT. NAMGYAL MONASTERY - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Yeshie is praying in the dim light before a small stone Buddha. He closes his eyes, cinches his prayer hands into a double-fist and softly beats his own forehead.

EXT. LAX - DAY

A jet lands.

INT. LAX - INTERNATIONAL TERMINAL - LATER

Trijang consumes America as he and Yeshie make their way from the terminal. Yeshie has seen it all before.

YESHIE

We should be in Bangladesh or
Mumbai.

They stop at a busy intersection. Yeshie pans an array of signs and arrows.

TRIJANG

Why, because they are poor?

There is an advertising light-box in the immediate b.g. The ad is for "Passageways Addiction Treatment," a luxurious, spa-like place on the beach. The caption reads "Recovery Never Felt So Good."

YESHIE

Because there is need.

The light-box changes to a Rogaine ad, shows a glum, balding man (before) next to his happy new Chia Pet self (after).

TRIJANG

They have needs here. There are
many needs here.

Yeshie spots the sign for baggage claim and bolts off. Trijang scrambles to stay with him.

INT. TAXI-VAN (MOVING) - LATER

The 101 -- Hollywood (a formidable antagonist).

Yeshie vaguely stares at the world passing by. Trijang keys in on everything, his head swinging from sight to sight.

But now something really grabs Trijang's attention. He smirks while raising the "Architectural Digest" in juxtaposition to the background, where in the distance a titillating white-letter sign reads "Hollywood."

TRIJANG

Is it possible, Yeshie?

Yeshie looks.

YESHIE

It would be an abomination.

Then looks away.

TRIJANG
Because it is Hollywood?

YESHIE
Because Buddhas do not spring forth
like Pop-Tarts.

Yeshie shakes his head.

YESHIE (CONT'D)
Marilyn Monroe... I think Monk
Tenzin is struggling with celibacy.

EXT. ZEN CENTER - LATER

The Zen Center, a modern, rambling complex off West Sunset,
surrounded by wrought iron fence.

The taxi-van winds its way up a long drive, passing a sign
that reads "Beverly Hills Zen Buddhist Center."

INT. ZEN CENTER - LOBBY - LATER

The décor is decidedly Zen -- natural wood, bamboo, and
bonsai -- NEW AGE MUSIC to set the mood.

An event board lists current activities:

Recovering Hippie Catholic Zen - by Vishuanni; The Experience
of Oneness - by Raku; Weekend Sesshin retreats - hosted by
Bro. Like us on Facebook -- Follow us on Twitter.

Yeshie paces through the front door. Trijang is close behind
dragging a steamer trunk.

A female RECEPTIONIST (16) surfs an iPhone with one hand,
flicks her nails with the other. She looks up, annoyed. Her
day's attire is worth more than the sum of Yeshie's
existence.

YESHIE
I am Yeshie and this is Trijang.
We're here to see...

Yeshie turns to Trijang.

TRIJANG
Bro.

YESHIE
Bro...
(to receptionist)
Bro.

She points down the hall, goes back to her phone.

INT. LECTURE ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

The doors are open. A message board reads "Open House."

Yeshie and Trijang stand in the hall looking into the lecture room, where a sparse audience is just settling.

The man at the podium is wearing a handsome, deep blue kimono robe, matching pants, white tennis shoes. He has a ponytail.

This is BRO (40), an affable white guy with good intentions.

BRO

Welcome everyone. I am Bro,
Director of the Beverly Hills Zen
Buddhist Center.

The sparse crowd shows befuddlement, whispers...

Bro pulls his ponytail forward, starts stroking it anxiously.

BRO (CONT'D)

Names are labels. And labels are
destructive. Call me Bro. Welcome.

YESHIE

(to Trijang)

I don't understand.

TRIJANG

Just go with it. Clearly he has
issues.

YESHIE

How did you find this place?

TRIJANG

Mapquest. Bro is my liaison.

EXT. ZEN CENTER - GARDEN - LATER

Fountains and boulders, meticulously shaped shrubs and trees,
Buddha and temple-like statues, koi fish in a pond.

The monks bide time on a bench. Yeshie leans and looks right,
then leans and looks left, like he's waiting for a bus.

TRIJANG

That he has come here is bodacious.

YESHIE

The signs will soon point elsewhere. These things happen.

TRIJANG

What of the reflection seen by His Holiness on the sacred lake?

YESHIE

He saw reflections on a lake -- red, white, and blue. His Holiness should splurge for transition lenses. He would see far fewer signs on the lake. And please stop talking like a Californian.

Bro approaches with a spirited smile, holds his arms out for a monk brother hug. Yeshie stands, takes the hug like a body slam.

YESHIE (CONT'D)

Thank you for investigating the house. And for your discretion.

BRO

Hey, these are my peeps -- the domain of Bro.

YESHIE

The parents are Buddhists?

BRO

I meant celebrities. Famous...

YESHIE

I see.

BRO

Stephan Dion was an Olympic swimmer. Spree is Miss America. Well, was Miss America.

YESHIE

They are no longer celebrities?

BRO

Mmmmm, doesn't really work that way. They had a reality show, ah...

TRIJANG

"Daring To Be Dion."

BRO

Right.

YESHIE
So they are on TV?

BRO
The show was cancelled. So now they do like motivational speaking, some singing, talk show appearances. Rumor has it they're training for "Star Dance."

Yeshie rubs his head.

YESHIE
Please tell me the child is not some kind of Boo Boo Bieber.

Bro laughs uncomfortably.

BRO
Pretty sure the kid's normal.

TRIJANG
(to self)
Ha! Boo Boo Bieber. Now that would be something. A baby boober...

EXT. FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT HOUSE (HOLLYWOOD HILLS) - DAY

Trijang and Yeshie exit a minivan in the driveway and head for the front door. On the van console is the "Architectural Digest." The house is last month's cover.

Two Mercedes are parked in front of the garage. They are obviously his and hers, black and white, with respective vanity plates that read "Eureka" and "Spree."

Trijang RINGS the front DOORBELL.

JULIAN (30) opens the door. He's handsome, fit, perfect stubble, dressed in a slim suit and sport shirt.

JULIAN
Welcome. I'm the Dions' personal assistant, Julian.

INT. FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Sleek, modern, high-end everything. An abundance of vanity but no sign of a child. Runway photos and tiaras, ribbons, medals, swim trophies.

Photos of Stephan and Spree -- a handsome pair.

There is a tall, fluid-filled, Plexiglass cylinder in the middle of the living room. Inside the cylinder, in fluid suspension, are Spree's Miss America crown and Stephan's two Olympic gold metals.

JULIAN

Stephan wasn't surprised to hear that Jordan might be a prodigy, what with the Olympic genes, Miss America... Gifted sorta comes with the territory.

Yeshie just stares.

JULIAN (CONT'D)

He wanted me to say that. Stephan.

A BUBBLE FARTS from the bottom of the vanity cylinder and rises through the fluid.

YESHIE

The parents are not home?

JULIAN

They really, really wanted to meet you. And of course they express their deepest apology. But, no. Big audition... "Star Dance"... Cross your fingers.

Julian glides to the vanity cylinder.

JULIAN (CONT'D)

The Dions' next life goal, as if they haven't done enough, is to win "Star Dance." The grand prize is a gorgeous glitter ball.

Julian articulates how the glitter ball will suspend above the cylinder (making it look like a giant "i").

JULIAN (CONT'D)

It'll go right here...

Yeshie flares incredulity.

JULIAN (CONT'D)

I know, right?

YESHIE

Are you familiar with the succession of Buddhist high Lama manifestations called Tulku?

Julian cocks his head like a dog.

Yeshie surveys the room.

YESHIE (CONT'D)
Does the child live somewhere else?

JULIAN
(head bob to west wing)
It's like a suite at the Sofitel in there.

Yeshie shares a look with Trijang. Julian sees this.

JULIAN (CONT'D)
Hey, in all fairness to Stephan and Spree, a child wasn't exactly part of the plan. He'd had a vasectomy and her tubes were tied. Way late baby bump!
(exploding head gesture)
Only one explanation for all that.

Yeshie is getting the hang of these people.

YESHIE
(deadpan)
Olympic swimmers?

JULIAN
That is the theory. I mean, what else, right?

A cluster of BUBBLES FART from the bottom of the vanity cylinder. As the bubbles rise they knock Spree's crown off kilter and it sinks to the bottom.

Julian sees this, cusses under his breath.

JULIAN (CONT'D)
Excuse me.

INT. JORDAN'S BEDROOM - LATER

The door swings open to reveal a lavish child's suite with connecting doors and hallways. Toys everywhere. The blank, retarded stare of a life-size Big Bird.

A large flat screen TV is BLARING CARTOONS.

Four-year-old JORDAN (a girl) is on the floor watching TV with a Colombian MOTHER/DAUGHTER NANNY duo.

Jordan is our prospective Buddha. Her name will soon change.

Trijang and Julian enter. Yeshie remains at the door. The Columbian Mother and Daughter nod but appear not to speak English. Jordan doesn't look over.

Everyone is momentarily captured by the cartoon.

Julian finally grabs the remote and turns off the TV.

JULIAN
Jordan, you have visitors.

Yeshie and Jordan make eye contact and lock in for a beat.

TRIJANG
(to self, re: a girl)
Well that explains the white dress.

Trijang crouches to greet Jordan. He's right in front of her but she looks past him, toward the doorway.

JORDAN
What up with Abuelo?

TRIJANG
Abuelo?

JULIAN
Grandpa?

Attention shifts to the doorway, where Yeshie has gone missing.

DEEP TIBETAN CHANTING from the living room.

Trijang steps to the door, pokes his head around the jamb.

YESHIE (O.S.)
Ohwoooooooooahieeeeeeeeeee!

JORDAN
Abuelo loco.

INT. LIVING ROOM - LATER

Yeshie sits lotus style in a chair, hands folded, thousand yard stare.

Julian is on a ladder trying to hook Spree's crown from the bottom of the vanity cylinder with a wire. The top is off and he's armpit deep into protoplasmic suspension goo.

JULIAN
He gonna be alright?

Trijang squints at Yeshie, puckers grimly.

JULIAN (CONT'D)
Weren't expecting a girl?

TRIJANG
That information slipped through
the cracks.

JULIAN
So, she's probably not the next
lama-Buddha person?

Trijang shrugs.

TRIJANG
Tradition doesn't forbid it. It
would be a first but it's not
impossible.

JULIAN
Then what's his deal?

TRIJANG
Jet lag, culture shock... P.T.S.D.?
Take your pick.

Julian finally hooks the crown and brings it up, but in doing so sends Stephan's gold metals to the bottom. Fluid suspension is tricky business.

JULIAN
Goddamn it!

INT. MINIVAN - WALMART PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Yeshie is alone in the minivan waiting for Trijang to exit the store. He doesn't look well.

A GRUNGY GIRL (18) exits the store, walks past the minivan while removing stolen canned goods from her daypack.

She heads for a dumpy car on the edge of the lot.

Yeshie thinks little of it until she enters the back of her car and closes the door. Sheets and blankets soon pop up to screen the windows. A flashlight moves around inside as the girl settles. It's now obvious that this is her home.

Yeshie looks for Trijang but doesn't see him. So he exits the minivan and slowly approaches the girl's car.

But now Trijang exits the store and sees Yeshie, makes a quick summary of the situation and speeds over.

TRIJANG
Whoa, Nelly. I know what you're
thinking.

Yeshie stops but doesn't turn.

TRIJANG (CONT'D)
We don't have enough on our plate?
This isn't Darfur. America has a
social safety net.

Yeshie gives the car a longing look before abandoning his
scheme. He turns around.

Trijang hands him a Walmart bag.

TRIJANG (CONT'D)
Plain, bitter, generic aspirin,
just the way you like it.

INT. FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Yeshie rummages through a large man purse. Trijang has taken
to the Dions' treadmill.

YESHIE
Let's get this over with.

TRIJANG
Ahhh...

YESHIE
The child is no Buddha.

TRIJANG
We should postpone.

Yeshie stands, his man purse ready.

YESHIE
No Buddha would manifest in this
horrible place. The signs will
point elsewhere.

Trijang turns off the treadmill, cockily rides off the back.

TRIJANG
Houston we have problems. F.Y.I.
You can't handle the truth.

INT. GUEST BEDROOM - LATER

Yeshie is alone, meticulously arranging meaningless objects on the floor: flip phone, pill bottle, bead necklace, sandals, reading glasses.

Now from his man purse comes a silk bag, and from the silk bag comes an old, wooden thread spool. He holds it like a baby bird, gazes fondly at it.

He looks through the spool like it's a spyglass, scans the room and muses.

He places the spool with the other objects and stands back to survey his handiwork.

30 MINUTES LATER

Jordan is on the floor in front of Yeshie's arrangement. Everyone waits with bated breath.

Jordan picks up the pill bottle, shakes it (empty), throws it at Julian.

JULIAN
(ducking)
Jesus!

The BOTTLE PINGS off a wall.

She grabs the bead necklace, quickly breaks it, swings it like a lasso. This scatters beads around the room and everyone takes cover as BEADS RAT-A-TAT-TAT across the walls.

Jordan wastes no time, grabs the sandals, smells them, makes a face and tosses them aside.

She pulls in the reading glasses and crushes them.

She opens the flip phone, holds it to her ear (nothing), chucks it to the side.

Only the spool remains.

She draws in the dirty spool, rolls it back and forth. She places it on her head, tries to balance it there. She then peeks through the hole and scans the room like it's a spyglass, eventually fixing on Yeshie.

Yeshie and Jordan interact as if they are alone.

JORDAN
(reverent)
El regalo. Lama Pema.

Yeshie shakes his head in disbelief.

Jordan seems almost human, then:

JORDAN (CONT'D)
(irreverent)
El juguete es ahora mio.

JULIAN
Now, Jordan, the toy is not yours.
(to Yeshie)
Is it?

She baits Yeshie to take the spool.

YESHIE
You are no Buddha.

JORDAN
Buda. Buda. Buuuuddha.

YESHIE
Impossible.

JORDAN
Impossiblay?

Yeshie grabs the spool. Jordan hangs on. They tussle.

He pries it from her hand. She simmers, looks crossly, then:

JORDAN (CONT'D)
(wailing)
Whaaa! Whaaa! Whaaa!

EXT. FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT HOUSE - DRIVEWAY - LATER

JORDAN'S CRYING SCREECHES from the house. Yeshie and Trijang are in the van, seat belts on, vehicle idling.

TRIJANG
She didn't just recognize that spool, she knew it was a gift. Lama Pema. She knew his name.

YESHIE
If she is the next Buddha, and that remains to be seen, she should not have come here.

TRIJANG
Why do you hate it here?

YESHIE

There is a certain megalomania to this place, Trijang. Their sense of self is out of whack.

TRIJANG

They're just people. Spoiled maybe, but still people.

JORDAN'S CRYING continues.

TRIJANG (CONT'D)

So, now what? Does she teach us? Do we teach her? Is she enlightened?

YESHIE

Does she seem enlightened to you?

JORDAN'S CRYING intensifies.

TRIJANG

Yeah, okay, not really.

Yeshie stares intently at Trijang, almost through him. And then, out of the blue:

YESHIE

It doesn't matter.

He unbuckles, exits the van, heads for the house.

Trijang sighs, remains seated for a moment.

TRIJANG

No "I" in team. Butch and Sundance. Bogie and Bacall. Arm and Hammer.

INT. FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT HOUSE - JORDAN'S ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Yeshie marches into the room.

The Mother Nanny is watching Telemundo. Julian and the Daughter Nanny are trying to pacify Jordan's fit with toys and baby talk but she is inconsolable.

Yeshie swoops in, picks Jordan up and exits with authority.

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Yeshie circles the room with Jordan in his arms. She soon stops crying but now seems despondent. He swipes his hand in front of her face but she doesn't blink.

YESHIE

What have they done to you?

Jordan finally blinks, looks at Yeshie.

JORDAN

Conseguir mi fuera de aqui.

Yeshie shrugs. Jordan rolls her eyes.

JORDAN (CONT'D)

El escapo?

YESHIE

I am working on it.

30 MINUTES LATER

Yeshie is parading around the room with Jordan still in his arms. Julian anxiously follows, sporadically reaching for Jordan. Yeshie ignores him, keeps moving. Trijang watches.

Yeshie circles to Trijang, uses him as a pick against Julian.

YESHIE

(to Julian)

Please speak to the Dions. Trijang will make the necessary arrangements.

JULIAN

Arrangements?

Yeshie gestures for Trijang to explain. But Trijang doesn't know what Yeshie is talking about.

TRIJANG

Ah...?

Julian fights around the Trijang pick and lunges for Jordan but Yeshie spins to foil him.

YESHIE

She cannot stay in America. No good can come of it. Her place is at the monastery in India.

Now Julian is alarmed. He grabs a vase filled with daisies and brandishes it.

JULIAN

That is not going to happen. This gig has benefits and I am not moving back in with Alfonzo.

Trijang steps in and gestures time-out. He looks at Yeshie, shakes his head.

INT. LAW OFFICE (L.A.) - CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Six professionally bound LEGAL CONTRACTS labeled "Jordan Dion" SLAP one by one onto a mahogany table.

Yeshie and Trijang sit opposite Julian and SOL (65). Sol is the Dion family lawyer, an old school Jew with furry brows. Everyone has a binder but two of the binders are in front of empty chairs.

What's about to happen is not a secret and there is universal resignation.

But first everyone waits. The two surplus binders sit idle but loom large.

Finally, a TEXT ALERT on Julian's phone. Julian reads the message, gestures "no go" to Sol. Julian scoops up the two spare binders and shuffles them under his own.

Sol evaluates the monks, groans at their authenticity.

SOL

She couldn't have chosen a cute hippie couple from Topanga?

TRIJANG

(to self)

Topanga. I have read about Topanga.

Sol looks miffed.

SOL

You know the Jews would never let this happen. Doesn't Buddhism have controls for this sort of thing?

YESHIE

The house was easy to find. The parents are of no consequence.

SOL

Alright, well, I don't know how anything beautiful could ever come from two such vile...

(self check)

If Jordan is some kind of spiritual whatever, then I'm pretty sure she's the best thing Stephan and Spree will ever do. So God bless.

Sol puts readers on, opens his binder, gestures "shall we?"
 Yeshie picks up his binder and follows along.

SOL (CONT'D)
 India -- absolutely not. Hsi Lai
 Temple in Hacienda Heights -- no.
 The City of Ten Thousand Buddhas in
 Ukiah -- no.

Sol looks at Yeshie out over his readers.

SOL (CONT'D)
 I take it you're familiar with this
 place on Sunset?
 (back to the binder)
 The Beverly Hills Zen Buddhist
 Center?

YESHIE
 We are not even Zen Buddhists.

SOL
 Ouch...

Yeshie looks out the window.

Sol gives him a minute, then raps on the table.

SOL (CONT'D)
 Mr. Yeshie, you strike me as a man
 of great will, like a man who could
 make this work.

YESHIE
 This place is not conducive to a
 spiritual life.

Yeshie stares down the room, pleading for anyone to argue a
 different case.

But everyone shrugs. Sol regrettably dives back into the
 binder, quickly pages through it.

SOL
 Yadda, yadda, first class
 education, can't leave the city,
 yadda, yadda, any monetization of
 Jordan or the Dion name...

Yeshie has gone back to the window so Sol nods for Trijang to
 get him back. Trijang gives him a cautious nudge and Yeshie
 swings hopelessly around.

SOL (CONT'D)

She's four. When she's eighteen she can go wherever she wants.

YESHIE

I will scrawl hash marks on my headboard in anticipation of the day. Are we done here?

Sol and Julian exchange a contrite glance.

SOL

There is one last, small problem. This name change, to Maitreya?

YESHIE

Maitreya means "loving kindness." That is her name. It is prophecy.

SOL

We get that. And the Dions have no issue with the name Maitreya, per se. But, legally...

YESHIE

Legally...?

SOL

You're in America now. This stuff matters. Law, taxes, inheritance, royalties.

YESHIE

She is Maitreya.

Sol spins his copy of the contract toward Yeshie for a signature.

SOL

Jordan Chiffon Maitreya Dion. Just in case this whole thing doesn't work out.

INT. ZEN CENTER - OFFICE - DAY

Modest office tweaked with Zen.

Yeshie sits defeated at Bro's desk.

YESHIE

I am a guardian only and the Dions have instructed that she reside here, in Beverly Hills.

Bro casually nods, a little too casual.

YESHIE (CONT'D)

You knew?

BRO

Yeshie-brah, I suggested it.
Beverly Hills Zen Buddhist Center
at your service. Totally stoked and
ready to go.

Yeshie seethes for a beat, then smirks.

YESHIE

If she cannot go to the monastery,
we must bring the monastery to her.

Bro nods.

YESHIE (CONT'D)

We will need a new wing.

BRO

A new whatnow?

YESHIE

For her quarters. For teachers,
Trijang, and myself. A prayer room,
library, classroom, meditation...

BRO

Got it, got it. Ah, wow, a swami
tsunami. Okay.

YESHIE

Okay?

Bro jumps on his desk phone and dials.

BRO

Hey, no one does vain glory better
than celebrities.

Bro settles the phone to his ear.

BRO (CONT'D)

(into phone)

Richard please. Bro. No, just Bro.
Labels are destructive. You should
try it. It's quite liberating. Is
Richard there?

DISSOLVE TO: