

The Tale of Hua Mulan

Written by

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Based on "Ballad of Mulan" by

Guo Maoqian

FADE IN:

INT. COMPETITION ARENA - MAIN FLOOR - DAY

A large banner hangs above the arena, it reads: "Longwei Championship". Spectators and Kung Fu competitors watch attentively.

HUA MULAN (20), small frame, fair skin and long, black hair, falls backwards onto the canvas. Her head snaps as it hits the ground, her eyes wide open in shock.

She wears a silk wushu uniform - white shirt and black pants like Bruce Lee in "Enter the Dragon"- and a RED SASH.

REFeree (O.S.)
(Distorted)
Point, red!

Mulan lies on the floor, looking up at the ceiling. She has tunnel vision and her ears are ringing, muffling the sounds of the spectators. She struggles to breathe, the air knocked out of her.

A voice breaks through.

JIN YONG (O.S.)
Come on Mulan! Focus!

Mulan's senses slowly return and she rolls over, pushing herself up on all fours. She takes a few deep breaths before standing all the way up.

Mulan walks to the center of the mats, still trying to regain her composure.

In front of her stands COLTON LEE (25), a large and menacing Chinese-American boy wearing a black and gold uniform. He smiles as he watches Mulan struggle, overconfident in himself.

Mulan has fear in her eyes. She looks back at her friends and family, and locks in on her brother, HUA FENG (24), athletic build and leaning on crutches. He looks worried and mouths a word.

FENG
Breathe.

Mulan nods, looks back at Colton and closes her eyes. She takes a few deep breaths. The noise around her begins to die down and her body relaxes.

She begins to hear the sounds of training: Grunting, kicks snapping, punches hitting sand bags.

QUICK FLASHES - TRAINING

-- Mulan striking the sand bag.

HUA WEI (V.O.)
No daughter of mine will practice
wushu!

-- Mulan doing hanging sit ups and push ups.

FENG (V.O.)
I can no longer carry on the Hua
name... But you can.

-- Mulan practicing wushu forms under the moonlight.

MULAN (V.O.)
I'll make you proud. I'll make you
all proud.

BACK TO SCENE.

The referee lets out a yelp and Mulan opens her eyes. In an instant, Colton strikes.

MATCH CUT TO:

INT. MULAN'S HOUSE - MULAN'S ROOM - DAY

Mulan punches the air. She is standing in the center of her room watching a Bruce Lee movie. She replicates his every move with impeccable form.

WEI (O.S.)
Mulan!

FOOTSTEPS and a WALKING CANE are heard as Mulan's father, HUA WEI (60), a Chinese man, approaches her room. Mulan quickly searches for the remote to her TV.

Wei barges in at the exact moment Mulan turns it off.

WEI
Mulan!

Mulan stands in the center of the room looking guilty and breathing heavily.

MULAN

Hey, dad.

WEI

What are you doing, I've been yelling your name! We're waiting downstairs.

MULAN

I'm sorry.

Mulan rushes around the room picking up her phone, sweater, etc.

WEI

You know how important this is for your brother. For all of us.

MULAN

I know, I know.

Mulan stops in front of Wei and forces a smile.

MULAN (cont'd)

Good to go.

Wei pays close attention to Mulan's breathing and notices sweat on her forehead. He glances at the television.

WEI

Were you watching those Kung Fu movies again?

MULAN

What? No!

WEI

I've told you many times, I don't want my daughter-

MULAN

I know, dad. No wushu, I get it. I wasn't doing anything.

(Beat)

Come on, Feng's waiting.

She walks past Wei towards the door.

WEI

Oh yeah, now you're in a hurry.

He limps out with his cane behind her.