

RAMENESQUE

Written by

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FADE IN

INT. RAMEN SHOP - DAY

A bar runs the length of the shop. At one end, the CHEF'S HANDS lay spread on the counter - at the other a back room entrance covered by Japanese curtain.

Across from the Chef, a low table slobbered by a recently-overturned bowl of RAMEN. JAX, the over turner, seated at the table - thumbs hooking the belt loops of his jeans.

CHOPSTICKS and SOUP SPOON neatly laid out at the ready, Jax waits, his head down low.

SHUFFLING from behind the curtain.

The Chef, all but struck by lightning, shrinks back.

Plastered with a grimace, Jax lifts his head slow-like.

HEAVY STEPS.

Wipes his mouth, tense.

The curtain RUFFLES with the slow entrance --

OF AN ELDERLY JAPANESE MAN

leaning slightly forward with elbows out and hands on his hips - gunslinger style.

The Elderly Man TOTTERS forward, his static gaze miraculously demoralizing.

Jax sneers, straightens, and reaches for his utensils.

Unfazed, the Elderly Man creeps to the end of the bar.

Jax grabs the utensils - his forearms rippling with tension.

The Elderly Man nears the turning point --

A bead of sweat dribbles from Jax's forehead --

His eyes go WIDE.

From behind the bar, a TORTOISE -

Upon which the Elderly Man sits cross-legged. Arms still cocked, he leans over a BOWL OF RAMEN balanced precipitously upon the Tortoise's back.

The Chef dips their head in a mixture of awe and fear.

With each swaggin' step, the broth and toppings slosh slightly but never escape - the perfect portion.

Jax licks his lips and GULPS. Repetitious blinking belies a failed attempt to maintain his demeanor.

The Elderly Man and tortoise duo arrive.

SILENCE.

Chef.

Jax.

The Elderly Man.

AND THE TORTOISE

The Elder Man ceremoniously lifts the bowl and offers it.

FADE OUT