

# Confucius (孔子 Kǒng Zǐ) (2010) Movie Script

- 2010 Chinese biographical drama film
- Written and directed by Hu Mei
- Starring Chow Yun-fat as Confucius, ancient Chinese philosopher
- Shot on location in Hebei Province and in Hengdian World Studios, Zhejiang

I've grown old.  
It's so long since I last  
dreamed of the Duke of Zhou.  
My ideals of ethics, music,  
humanity and harmony  
can be fulfilled only  
in times to come.  
Is it Master Kong Qiu,  
the mayor of Zhongdu?  
Indeed!  
Kindly follow me.  
Master Kong, you may bow inside.  
Announcing Master Kong Qiu,  
the mayor of Zhongdu.  
His Majesty arrives.  
Kong Qiu, you're here.  
Your humble servant Kong Qiu  
greet Your Majesty.  
Kong Qiu,  
you've been mayor of Zhongdu  
for about a year now.  
Many things have changed.  
Streets are safe,  
homes are secure.  
Your Majesty,  
as your humble servant has said of  
observing the rituals of Zhou,

a year shows progress,  
I'd like to see  
your policies applied  
throughout the Kingdom of Lu!  
I have no position,  
it is not for me to say.  
This could be easily rectified.  
I'll appoint you to  
the right position.  
Lord Ji Yiru has just died.  
His oldest son Ji Sunsi  
has become Prime Minister  
and Chief General of the Army.  
But the post of  
Minister of Law is vacant.  
The 3 Noble Families  
all have their own nominees.  
But I'm inclined to appoint you.  
I cannot presume to be worthy.  
I will support you!  
You and your disciples  
could civilize the Kingdom of Lu.  
You could challenge those  
you've called unworthy  
in the past.  
Do you dare?  
Run! Hurry up!  
Run! Hurry up!  
My Lord, a burial slave  
has just escaped!  
What? Who is it?  
The late lord's favorite  
young servant,  
Qi Sigong!  
That little boy.  
My father ordered that  
this boy would be buried  
with him! Get him back!  
Yes.  
This way... Stop!  
There he is. Stop...  
Stop...  
This boy! Stop!  
Over there! Poisoned-arrow...  
Master, help me...  
Teacher, in your opinion,

could the Kingdom of  
Lu grow stronger  
by emulating the Dukedom of Qi?  
Your Majesty,  
the people of Qi obey the law  
because they fear punishment.  
If we respect the law  
because we're civil, honest  
and have integrity and dignity,  
isn't that much better?  
When honorable and credible men  
are given office,  
theft and corruption  
will disappear.  
Men who care for  
their parents and children  
also care for others.  
Men should perform their duties while  
women would be given a home and family.  
Then orphans and widows,  
the old, the sick  
and the weak would  
be taken care of.  
Then the people will  
live well and work cheerfully.  
Universal peace  
and harmony will reign!  
Mother...  
Don't close it!  
Let me out! Lift the stone!  
Don't close it...  
Prepare the meal.  
Men should love their parents  
and children indiscriminately...  
Then the old would be taken care of,  
and the strong would  
apply their skills.  
Your father has returned.  
How do you know?  
I heard his voice.  
He'll be surprised  
I've brought you to see him.  
Hurry, take this to him.  
Father. You're back.  
You've been gone for half the day!  
Mother and I've been waiting.

You haven't eaten yet?  
You must be hungry.  
Don't be afraid. Who are you?  
I... I'm Qi Sigong.  
Child.  
Master.  
Yan Hui, bring a doctor, quickly.  
I will. Hurry, call for a doctor.  
What's this all about?  
Master, as I came here,  
Ji Family troops were  
chasing this boy.  
So I rescued him.  
He was a burial-slave.  
The Ji Family soldiers  
want him back.  
Master, let's avoid trouble.  
I can leave him with my brother-in-law  
in the Kingdom of Wei.  
This might be better for everyone.  
No, Zilu, he can stay here.  
Helping others is a measure of bravery.  
Then Lord Ji Sunsi  
will be furious.  
Zilu, you did the right thing.  
Stop!  
What do you think you're doing?  
Who are you?  
General Gongshan Niu of  
the city of Biyi.  
Search the house!  
General Gongshan!  
Master...  
Kong Qiu. What do you want?  
It is reported that  
the Minister's escaped slave  
is hiding here.  
If you don't turn him  
over to us now,  
it may damage your relations  
with the Minister!  
Minister Kong, a word in private.  
Minister Kong, I too despise the  
arrogance of the 3 Noble Families.  
Today I can report that  
I found nothing.

You and I should be friends  
and partners.  
Drive out the Noble Families  
and rule the kingdom ourselves.  
Tell me.  
What do you think?  
Our roads are different.  
General, it's getting late,  
you should be on your way.  
Go!  
My lords and ministers,  
everyone has come to  
observe the Winter Sacrifice.  
But before we can begin,  
a strange occurrence  
demands explanation.  
Yesterday, the officer responsible  
for the sacrifice of birds  
reported that one of  
the 10 pheasants  
prepared for the ceremony  
had pecked off its own tail!  
So today I must seek your  
exalted opinion.  
Ought we to cancel the ceremony?  
Or delay?  
I wish to speak.  
Speak, Shu Sunwu.  
In my opinion,  
since the Winter Sacrifice marks  
the most important sacrifice at year-end,  
it must not be delayed nor canceled!  
We address the gods  
through this ceremony  
the omen reflects a message  
from Heaven.  
Therefore, the pheasant should be  
spared from sacrifice.  
Otherwise we would  
disrespect heaven.  
We must obey the will of heaven  
and allow this bird to live.  
Good...  
Kong Qiu, what is your view?  
Your Majesty,  
your humble servant fully

agrees with Lord Shu's opinion.  
Then you ministers?  
Your humble servants also  
agree with the Ministers' opinions.  
Since all are in  
agreement, so be it!  
Let the pheasant be released  
into the mountain forests.  
Good...  
Your Majesty, your humble servant  
wishes to speak.  
Speak.  
I request  
an end to the evil ritual of  
burying living servants  
with their deceased masters.  
Kong Qiu.  
Why do you make such a request?  
Because today your humble servant  
is pleading for this slave's life!  
Which slave?  
Him!  
Uncle.  
Isn't that the slave  
who ran away from your home?  
Kong Qiu!  
He was my family's slave.  
You brazenly took him  
into your house!  
How dare you?  
Master.  
Minister, please pardon him.  
This boy should not accompany  
Lord Ji Yiru to the grave.  
Don't you always approve of  
observing our ancient traditions?  
This is just one of them!  
Minister.  
Benevolence is love towards  
our fellow men.  
A ritual murder is still murder,  
even if it complies with tradition!  
Lord Shu,  
you showed benevolence  
towards a pheasant.  
Now I ask you,

surely you must also speak up  
for this wounded boy.  
We come today  
only to discuss  
the Winter Sacrifice.  
This matter is unrelated!  
No, there is a close relationship!  
The Zhou code of ethics teaches us  
to value human life above all.  
The burial of slaves was  
practiced in barbarous times.  
It was outlawed in our dynasty  
when the Zhou reign commenced.  
Our Kingdom of Lu is the ancient  
home of the Duke of Zhou  
and known for its ethics.  
We should think afresh and  
abandon outdated traditions.  
Right...  
Your Majesty, my lords.  
On my own life,  
I ask that you spare  
this young slave.  
Spare him...  
Kong Qiu!  
It was Lord Ji Yiru's  
dying wish that  
those he loved should die with him.  
It is not cruel  
to bury this slave.  
Rather, it demonstrates  
the Minister's filial piety!  
His love for his father!  
General Gongshan! I know  
you served Lord Ji Yiru for years.  
I hear he said many times that  
he could not live without you.  
Right, that's correct.  
Given how close you were to him,  
he must still need you now that  
he has passed on to the next life.  
If you were willing to  
accompany your lord in death,  
I could not object to you taking  
this young slave with you.  
You.

What say you?  
You... you're mad!  
It seems the General is not willing  
to serve his master beyond the grave.  
He imposes on others  
what he will not impose on himself.  
Your Majesty, your humble servant  
has no more to say.  
The scholar's words seem  
to be profound!  
I suppose.  
Approved! Release him.  
Good...  
Great! You need never go back  
to the house of Ji.  
Second bow.  
Boy! Don't cry, stand up.  
Qi Sigong, what's wrong?  
Are you alright?  
I'm not crying.  
May I really stay here?  
Alright now...  
This is a special day.  
Zilu, let's drink to it.  
Good!  
Ziqian, Boniu,  
help me fetch the wine.  
Boy, come here Come here.  
This is now your home.  
They are all your brothers.  
They will take care of you.  
I know, Master, I know.  
So we're family now!  
Master, I could hardly believe it  
when Ji accepted your proposal.  
Here comes the wine.  
Come, what about you?  
I have this.  
Drink all you like.  
Very well, drink up!  
Drink up!  
It tastes horrid!  
Your Highness.  
Making Kong Qiu a minister  
with many responsibilities  
will surely strengthen

the Kingdom of Lu.  
And their strength threatens us  
in the Dukedom of Qi.  
Lu's strength is a threat to Qi.  
For almost one hundred years,  
all rulers of Qi have dreamed  
of conquering Lu.  
Clearing our way to  
the western border.  
Kong Qiu has already asserted  
his authority in the Lu court.  
Your Highness,  
perhaps we should call a meeting  
to congratulate Lu.  
We could invite the ruler of Lu  
and Kong Qiu  
to Jiagu on our border.  
Kong Qiu is a man of letters,  
unfamiliar with military affairs.  
He knows ethics, not bravery!  
During the ceremony,  
we'll take Lu's ruler hostage.  
And make him and  
the 3 Noble Families  
submit to Qi's will!  
An excellent proposal!  
Minister Li, prepare  
a formal invitation  
to the ruler of Lu.  
Invite him to Jiagu  
to discuss forming a new alliance  
between our states.  
Dispatch it immediately!  
Yes, Your Majesty.  
This meeting at Jiagu  
is my first challenge  
as a minister.  
It is a matter of honor  
or humiliation, gain or loss.  
And it will have significant  
consequences! Yan Hui.  
His Majesty agrees  
that you should  
take charge of the ceremony.  
Ensure that both parties have  
equal ground and equal respect.

I will.  
Zilu. Master.  
You and Zigong will be the only men  
to carry swords on the meeting platform.  
Guard His Majesty carefully,  
regardless of what happens.  
Understood!  
Ran Qiu. Master.  
Go in advance to Jiagu  
to inspect the area  
around the meeting platform.  
Look for any hiding places.  
What do you want me  
to do, Master?  
Master, the military commanders  
are here.  
Our respects, Minister of Law...  
Please.  
Qi specified the place  
for the alliance talks.  
It's known as a ravine.  
A dead end.  
I'd like you to bring  
chariots nearby  
in case we need them.  
Minister, we're headquartered  
in barracks.  
We have only carriages at our  
command, no war chariots.  
Minister Ji and  
General Gongshan Niu  
control them all.  
Minister,  
I hear that the Prime Minister  
and Gongshan Niu  
are holding an archery  
tournament in Biyi.  
Very well.  
Then I'll have to pay them a visit.  
Master, we're approaching Biyi.  
Master, they say that Biyi  
has more mounted soldiers  
and slaves  
than any other city in Lu.  
Be advised!  
Those who shirk labor,

within 3 days,  
will be dragged out  
and put on public display.  
Compete at what?  
Archery. Please.  
The alliance talk between Lu  
and Qi is a serious matter.  
Can Your Lordship provide army  
chariots to protect our ruler  
and show our might?  
How many? 500.  
Isn't it supposed to be  
an alliance meeting?  
Why do you need such  
a show of force?  
As Zhou Gong taught us,  
any civil servant  
should be back up words  
with weapons.  
Qi is a barbarous country  
which has long wanted  
to conquer Lu.  
So we must be prepared! Good.  
Then let us have a match.  
My teacher respectfully requests  
a match and drinks to you.  
If you win, I'll grant you  
The archery match will begin.  
Please take your places.  
You have my word.  
If you win, they're yours.  
If you lose, you'll get nothing!  
Agreed.  
A pure heart makes a pure shot.  
Right, full score!  
A new minister with high ambitions!  
Full score! Good...  
Who would have thought that the Biyi  
city walls would be more than 18 feet high?  
Built to conceal their injustices  
and their onerous taxation!  
The tyranny within these walls  
puts tigers to shame!  
Prime Minister,  
has all this escaped your notice?  
Good! Right, full score!

Master Ji,  
may I ask how Lu stands today?  
It might just be that the Ji Family's  
real enemy is from within.  
Not across the border.  
Good! Right, full score!  
I hear you had no father.  
Who taught you such fine archery?  
My father was a warrior,  
but he left this world before his time.  
A diligent student needs no teacher.  
I taught myself!  
Right, full score! Excellent!  
Right wins.  
The minister has been  
most courteous.  
So you have your 500 chariots  
for the alliance talks.  
Address your request to Gongshan Niu.  
We have a kingdom because  
we have an army!  
And who raised and trained  
that army?  
Not your King of Lu!  
It was my Biyi!  
Right, it was our Biyi!  
Why should I blindly turn over  
my chariots to you?  
So that you can march my army  
into the desert and starve them?  
We will see. Let's go...  
See, what I say doesn't  
always count.  
I gave the order, but...  
Its implementation is  
your own concern.  
Master.  
Halt! Your Majesty! Master!  
Greetings, Your Majesty, Master!  
Has Gongshan's army moved or not?  
I don't know what's happening.  
Not one soldier or horse  
has moved yet.  
But that...  
that cannot be correct?  
Ji Sunsi ordered them

to deploy days ago.  
Put our second plan  
into effect, immediately!  
Yes, Master.  
Go!  
Master, Qi has brought  
so much cavalry.  
Is there anything to  
concern us about this?  
Your Majesty, rest assured  
as we're prepared.  
Since Qi is host and Lu is guest,  
we request that the Nobles of Qi  
descend to welcome.  
Your Highness, no undue courtesies.  
We invite  
the King of Lu to ascend.  
Your Majesty.  
Lu is the Guest and Qi  
is the Host.  
The Zhou Protocols mandate that  
the nobles of Qi should descend.  
Qi initiated the alliance talks.  
How could Qi dishonor its guests?  
Your Highness, Qi and Lu  
share a close relationship.  
Our ruler has come to rebuild  
our brotherly alliance.  
Please...  
Please.  
It is our desire  
to respect each other  
and forever abandon war!  
Although our states  
have different surnames,  
in reality we are like brothers.  
With this alliance,  
we will be like a single state!  
What Lord Li says is interesting.  
All the territory and peoples  
belonged to the emperor.  
All the ministers and officials  
were just his servants.  
Therefore, Your Excellencies  
both have responsibility  
for protecting the

Emperor Zhou's ancestral territory.  
Excellencies,  
your humble servant advises that  
when this alliance is formed,  
each state must commit to  
aiding the other.  
Should Qi one day find  
itself at war,  
Lu would be asked  
to provide 500 chariots  
to supplement our army.  
Excellent idea!  
Excellencies,  
your humble servant would also  
like to make a request.  
An alliance between us  
should be found on sincerity.  
And we request  
the return of  
the 3 cities of Wenshang  
won from Lu 30 years ago in war.  
I can see your point.  
Your Majesty...  
A gentleman's word is golden,  
Your Excellency.  
Good...  
I thank you for returning our  
land to us, let's drink to it.  
Kong Qiu, it seems that  
you and your Master  
have no plan to leave here today.  
Look.  
Yan Hui.  
Your excellencies, we've come here  
in peace today.  
We brought only  
But to safeguard the negotiations  
from any unforeseen threats,  
another 500 chariots  
are waiting nearby.  
Need we summon them here?  
Look!  
Your Majesty!  
The advance party is here!  
me to Jiagu.  
We await your orders.

Minister Li,  
do you want to see  
this ravine run with blood?  
If this is how you demonstrate  
the workings of an alliance,  
who will ever again  
trust the Dukedom of Qi?  
Why are you still standing here?  
Dismiss the troops!  
Your Majesty...  
Please forgive my minister's  
shameful act.  
May the alliance between  
us last forever.  
We make use of one hundred ox carts  
to scare off Qi's 500 chariots.  
Another triumph for our Master!  
As he always says,  
military strategy hinges  
on innovation.  
Come on, there  
are drinks waiting!  
Our Lady...  
Has she gone missing again?  
Our Lady! Where are you...?  
Sir, the prince has  
stormed into the palace  
and is arguing with  
His Majesty again.  
Our Lady can't be  
found anywhere.  
She hasn't passed me.  
Then what can we do?  
This is awful!  
Let's go back.  
Go.  
Father, I'm almost 40!  
I have been prince  
for almost 20 years.  
You are getting old,  
and our kingdom is stagnating.  
But you just won't let go,  
will you?  
Kong Qiu in Lu has a saying.  
Women and servants are  
hard to raise.

But you let a woman  
meddle in affairs of state!  
You let her make decisions!  
Madam, you're back.  
Your Majesty.  
What is so important that  
the prince demand a talk?  
There's a message from  
General Gongshan Niu.  
I wasn't asking you!  
This Gongshan Niu, he's  
an army general  
with the Ji family in Lu.  
He wants to know  
if we'll give him refuge  
in our kingdom.  
So Wei is to become a haven  
for cast-offs now?  
That's exactly why I didn't approve.  
Gongshan Niu is ready to serve us.  
Why can't we give him refuge?  
Giving him refuge would  
bring no benefit.  
He has served the Ji family  
for many years  
and the late Ji Yiru  
was good to him.  
Not only was he put  
in charge of Biyi,  
he was also exempted  
from taxes for years!  
And now he turns his  
back on them.  
What use do we have  
for a turncoat like that?  
I can control him.  
Learn to control yourself first!  
The kingdoms of Lu and Wei  
depend on each other  
for their survival.  
If we took in Gongshan Niu,  
wouldn't we offend Lu?  
Have you forgotten?  
The mighty Kingdom of Jin  
is to our west  
and the rough Kingdom of Chu



is to the south.  
We have enemies on all sides!  
If we lose our main ally,  
what then?  
Get out! Next time, don't.  
If there's a next time,  
you'll no longer be the prince.  
The prince can't even  
weigh up gains and losses.  
How can I make him the regent?  
Invite Kong Qiu here  
to teach your prince.  
Then Wei will be safe.  
Your Majesty, write  
a formal invitation  
to Master Kong.  
Do you think Master Kong  
would come?  
Master Kong's talents  
are undervalued.  
In Lu, the 3 Noble Families  
keep his talent in check.  
Our invitation will be seen as  
an appreciation of his talent.  
If he comes, that'll be best.  
If he doesn't,  
Lu will put him to better use.  
Lu will prosper,  
and will bring Qi to heel.  
That will suit us too.  
What is this?  
Letters of invitation  
from both Wei and Qi.  
We should start using  
Master Kong better  
or others will take him.  
So how should we make  
use of his talents?  
One moment.  
This Kong Qiu has no  
proper line of ancestry.  
Your Majesty gave him a role  
in court less than a year ago.  
First he was mayor of Zhongdu.  
Then he was appointed  
Minister of Law.

And now we're supposed to  
promote him even higher?  
Does Your Majesty plan to  
make him a living god?  
At the alliance meeting  
between Lu and Qi,  
Kong Qiu regained territory  
and enhanced our  
national prestige.  
The whole country praises  
him for that.  
Kong Qiu was born a commoner.  
But your father admitted  
he is descended from  
a noble Song family.  
He won back the Three Cities  
without using a single  
soldier or chariot.  
He may be a mere commoner  
but his ideal of civility  
in government works!  
When my father died,  
Kong Qiu was made Minister of Law.  
Now I could vacate  
the post of Interior  
Minister for him.  
If Your Majesty approves,  
I could serve only  
as Prime Minister.  
Very well!  
I am glad that our Prime Minister  
has such a breadth of mind.  
Good! This is wonderful.  
When a country is in turmoil,  
it has need of its talents.  
Besides Kong Qiu,  
most of his disciples are  
available to serve our country.  
Master Kong, this is  
an outdated tradition.  
The servant I dispatched to  
the palace has reported secretly.  
Minister of the Interior Kong Qiu  
is not focusing on his  
government work.  
He's been preoccupied with building

the high Wuzi Platform.  
Doesn't he claim it's part of  
a defense against flooding?  
Yes, that's what he says.  
I do not trust him.  
I think he has something  
else in mind.  
Kong Qiu is a mere commoner.  
The ruler made him Minister of Law.  
Now the ruler's made him Acting Minister  
of the Interior too!  
Uncle, I sense a conspiracy here.  
He did not... did not eat again.  
Cut off your tongue if  
you stammer again.  
Get out! Yes, Master.  
Zhongni, I've made some  
new black ink for you.  
It won't wash off easily.  
Try it!  
Very well! Teacher,  
the petition is ready.  
Please take a look. It is fine!  
It's fine!  
Gong Boliao, ready the cart.  
It's so late! Where are you going?  
It is urgent, I need to  
go to the Palace.  
Wake up! Gong Boliao.  
Leave me alone!  
Rotten wood is hard to carve!  
Leave him alone.  
Master,  
you've worked all day  
and into the night.  
It's too hard!  
If this is for the betterment of  
Lu's citizens, I don't mind.  
Master, you're ordering  
city walls to be demolished.  
Won't the 3 Noble Families rebel  
against your authority?  
It's time to curb the power  
of the Three Families.  
We must act,  
and act quickly! Master,

I think this is courting  
great danger!  
Yes, Master, this  
is very dangerous!  
Won't you reconsider?  
Reconsider what?  
Disciples,  
my late teacher Master Zichan  
had 2 fine sayings.  
Please remember them  
all your life.  
Put your country  
ahead of your life.  
And Obstacles will be many,  
so maintain your  
strength of spirit!  
What we are doing now  
is not only for the short term.  
Minister of the Interior Kong Qiu  
is here to see His Majesty.  
Tomorrow in court,  
your humble servant will call for  
Razing the Three City Walls.  
Razing? What exactly  
does that mean?  
When the Duke of Zhou ruled these  
lands, it was established  
that no fiefdom should build walls  
around its city more than  
The aim was to prevent the nobles  
from abrogating power to themselves.  
But in recent decades,  
these 3 families have made  
their cities seats of power.  
And their city walls  
have grown taller.  
I humbly propose that the walls of  
these 3 cities be razed  
to reunify the state.  
That is a serious matter.  
It will stir up discontent.  
Can you win this?  
If you fail,  
you'll unleash chaos everywhere.  
Your humble servant did  
a fortune reading.

The reading was Headless Dragons.  
That's very auspicious.  
To strengthen the throne, the power  
of the nobles must be reduced.  
We must cut off  
the dragons' heads.  
Serve my man here with  
the best wine and food.  
Thank you, Minister...  
Didn't I say this would happen?  
It is vicious.  
Razing the Three City Walls!  
To pull down our walls  
is to undermine our strength!  
Kong Qiu wants to bring down  
the fiefdoms of the Three Families.  
Our fiefdoms?  
Have we any fiefdoms?  
Maybe Meng's fiefdom  
still belongs to Meng.  
Does your fiefdom belong to you?  
Or General Hou?  
Is Biyi still mine?  
Kong Qiu calls for demolition.  
Fine, that would benefit us.  
What should we do now?  
Laozi teaches us.  
Every gain is balanced by a loss.  
Support Kong Qiu!  
Raze the 3 city walls!  
More speed!  
We must reach Biyi tonight  
to see General Gongshan.  
Come on! Fight! Peck...  
Urgent report from  
the city of Houyi!  
Urgent report from  
the city of Houyi!  
Acting Interior Minister.  
Just speak.  
Yes, sir.  
Hou Fan, rebel general of  
Shu Sunwu's territory,  
has escaped from Houyi!  
Shu and Zigao's forces  
have succeeded

in tearing down their walls.  
Excellent! Well done!  
Good, we caught them by surprise.  
The Minister must be congratulated  
on his famous victory!  
Come, drink!  
Today we must celebrate.  
No, it's not over yet.  
Hou Fan will continue  
his resistance.  
Ensure that Shu and Zigao  
tear down the walls quickly  
or the rebels will  
regroup behind them!  
As I arrived in the city,  
I saw Zilu and his army  
encamped nearby.  
Your Biyi is about to have  
its walls torn down.  
You need a plan.  
Let them tear down the wall!  
They'll be leaving  
the capital undefended!  
My plan is to seize the capital  
and execute Kong Qiu  
and banish the Three Families!  
Halt...  
Inspection!  
Don't you recognize the Ji banner?  
We are delivering Biyi's  
land taxes to the palace.  
Open up!  
The Minister of Law has ordered  
that all carts be inspected.  
Seize the king of Lu! Slay Kong Qiu!  
Seize the king! Slay Kong Qiu!  
Drive out the Three Families!  
Kill them all!  
Report! General,  
the king is not in his palace.  
Where is he?  
It seems he has sought refuge  
with the Ji family.  
Find him!  
Open the gate! Open it!  
In such a key moment,

where is Minister Ji?  
He's out for a hunt, Your Majesty,  
follow me please.  
Your Majesty, be careful.  
Don't engage them, just try to  
hold them back for 2 hours.  
Then lure them to the Wuzi Platform.  
Yes, Minister.  
Ji picked a fine time to go hunting.  
Quick! Kill them all!  
Ruler! Kong Qiu!  
Three Families! Hear this.  
Today, in the name of the late  
Lord Ji Yiru, under heaven's mandate,  
I will annihilate all  
who defy the will of heaven!  
Annihilate all...  
Destroy them!  
March on!  
Kill the king, kill Kong Qiu!  
Retreat!  
Flames!  
Pull!  
Release.  
Report! Minister!  
Gongshan Niu and  
his rebel army are defeated.  
They are retreating  
from the capital.  
Uncle...  
An urgent report from the capital...  
It's just as you predicted.  
Gongshan Niu was defeated  
at the Wuzi Platform.  
Then what are you waiting for?  
Send the troops in,  
capture Gongshan alive.  
Yes, sir...  
Take Gongshan Niu alive!  
Pull...  
Release!  
Pull!  
Release!  
Nobody is demolishing my Chengyi.  
Why?  
Chengyi stands right on the border

between Qi and Lu.  
The high walls of Chengyi  
serve as a bastion  
against a Qi invasion.  
They must not be demolished.  
How can you go back  
on your own word?  
Didn't you approve  
the razing of the city walls?  
Let him finish.  
Kong Qiu reclaimed the  
The 3 cities which used to  
belong to your family.  
But were they returned to you?  
No, they were handed  
to the ruler of Lu.  
Kong Qiu forced General Hou Fan  
out of the city of Houyi.  
And who is now  
in charge of the city?  
Zigao, Kong Qiu's disciple.  
And Biyi? Has it been  
returned to your family?  
No!  
Zilu, another of Kong Qiu's disciples,  
has been put in charge!  
See?  
And if they now take  
over my Chengyi,  
it will be handed over  
to the ruler of Lu.  
Will there be any land  
or city left to us?  
You Ministers, are you really  
willing to give the Kingdom  
back to the ruler of Lu and Kong Qiu?  
Acting Interior Minister.  
By the order of the Prime Minister,  
no one is allowed in.  
Please wait here,  
I will make a request.  
Master, those carriages are  
from the Meng and Shu families.  
Master! Kong Qiu is  
requesting to see you...  
I won't see him.

They're all inside.  
Master.  
I'm sure those are Meng  
and Shu carriages.  
Master...  
Master.  
Come... Let's drink.  
All of you should drink more.  
Listen! Once all  
the walls have come down,  
we will truly become  
one big family.  
Am I right? Right...  
Father...  
How far is the Qi army  
from our border?  
Less than 30 miles.  
But the Duke of Qi has sent  
an ambassador, Li Chu  
bearing gifts.  
Gifts? What gifts?  
more than 100 horses.  
Has Li Chu made any demands?  
He demanded that Kong Qiu  
be dismissed.  
Off to the palace,  
we must see His Majesty tonight.  
The Acting Interior Minister  
is here!  
Your Majesty.  
We cannot pull back now!  
We've won back 2 of the cities,  
we cannot abandon the 3rd!  
Do you know?  
Li Chu has 30,000 Qi soldiers  
amassed on our border  
ready to invade.  
If they form an alliance  
with the city of Chengyi,  
we will be encircled.  
But you have proclaimed the razing of  
the 3 city walls, Your Majesty!  
A man of high principles must be  
willing to die by his word!  
He cannot bend his principles  
to save his life!

Who will be left to care about ethics  
if we're defeated in battle?  
Victory and defeat  
are what matter.  
Not ethics!  
Don't you remember?  
My father Prince Zhao was driven  
out of Lu by the Three Families.  
He died in exile!  
If the Three Families  
turn against me now,  
my fate will be much  
worse than his.  
Your Majesty! Say no more!  
I have supported you for  
the past one hundred days.  
And so did the Ji family.  
Last night Ji came to see me.  
His words implied more  
than they said.  
If the walls of Chengyi  
are demolished,  
it seems the Qi army will seize  
the chance to occupy the city  
with an army of 30,000.  
Everything will  
be reduced to chaos.  
Kong Qiu...  
You should follow  
my example sometimes.  
Play a little stupid.  
Didn't your revered Laozi  
teach that  
accomplish everything  
by doing nothing?  
Kong Qiu, the times  
are out of joint.  
Chaos is everywhere.  
But you still go your own way  
with your rituals, music,  
benevolence and harmony.  
I'm so ashamed.  
I've achieved nothing.  
Then stop trying.  
Men habitually long for  
fame and authority.

But such aims should  
detain no man for long.  
Then what should I,  
your pupil, do?  
I cannot hang useless on the door-beam  
like a dried-out gourd  
making no contribution  
to the world.  
Maybe no contribution  
is the true contribution.  
The weak survive,  
the mild persist.  
Nothing is softer than water.  
And yet aggression and force  
never triumph over water.  
So be like water!  
The Master's words are profound,  
but I must be loyal to my chosen path.  
The Master's way is  
magnificent and shapeless.  
It's beyond time and space,  
beyond all worldly matters.  
But my way keeps me in  
the world of men.  
Then tolerate the misunderstandings  
of those in your world.  
Unlike those who are rich,  
I have no gold to give.  
Only this simple advice.  
The sacrifices for the year's end  
ceremonies are over.  
Has the sacrificial meat been  
distributed to the nobles and officials?  
Yes, it has.  
And as you ordered,  
none went to Kong Qiu's household.  
Father.  
Have some of this.  
No point in waiting.  
I don't think we will be getting  
sacrificial meat this year.  
Good...  
My lord. What is it?  
My master wishes to see the king.  
His Majesty has no time for him.  
Well, give this to Kong Qiu.

Don't say I sent it.  
Tell him it comes from  
His Majesty himself.  
Kong Qiu is a clever man.  
When he sees this,  
he'll understand.  
Yes, Master, I'll take  
it to him now.  
And this too!  
Enough to buy yourself a piece of  
good land. Go home now.  
Understand? Yes, sir!  
Come.  
Stable the horses from Qi.  
It's going to rain soon.  
Yes, sir!  
Yes, sir. Untie the horses and  
bring them into the stables!  
Father! Gong Boliao came back.  
The King told him  
to bring this to you.  
A parted jade!  
Father, why would  
the King send this?  
Parted jade. A parting gift.  
Someone wants me to leave.  
Did this come from  
the King himself?  
That's what he said, Father.  
Gong Boliao handed this  
to me and then left.  
He said he wouldn't be coming back.  
Find a chance to return my robe  
of office and the crown to the king.  
Father.  
The crown symbolizes  
ethical behavior.  
You have always treasured it.  
It's no longer important.  
Father, please wait till  
the rain stops...  
Please at least wait  
for your disciples.  
Look after your mother!  
Master!  
Yan Hui.

How did you get here?  
The master is the body,  
the pupil is the shadow.  
I will stay with my master  
until the end.  
To be honest,  
I don't know where I'm going.  
Master.  
Yan Hui, you have talents.  
You would have no trouble finding  
a good position in court.  
But if you come with me,  
you'll have no home or family.  
You will always regret it.  
No, I won't!  
Yan Hui, look.  
There are nothing  
but hardships ahead.  
No prospects for a fortunate life.  
Only a vast wilderness.  
Aren't you afraid?  
Tell me, in what  
respect am I wrong?  
May I speak frankly?  
Of course.  
Master, you were wrong  
to put all your faith  
in the ruler of Lu.  
Master, you once told me that  
if a man cannot change the world,  
then at least he should try  
to change himself from within.  
Good. Well said.  
The humanity I sought stands before  
me, my complaints are groundless.  
Master...  
Master, Ran Qiu and I  
had some duties to finish.  
That's why we're  
late getting here.  
That's right, Master, look.  
We've brought all your scrolls.  
Master! Without me,  
who will drive your cart?  
And, with me at your side,  
nobody will dare be rude to you!

That's true. Master!  
Who would have thought  
he snores louder than I do!  
Let's go.  
I am the special representative  
of the ruler of Wei.  
I am instructed by His Majesty and  
the Royal Consort to welcome you to Wei.  
Our Kingdom greets  
Master Kong and his followers.  
Master, what is your  
impression of Wei so far?  
Compared to Lu,  
Wei has a larger population.  
Yes, a larger population  
makes it more difficult to govern.  
There is more potential  
for disorder.  
Tell me, how can my government  
remedy the devastation?  
By making sure the common people  
have their due share of prosperity.  
The vast majority of them  
are quite prosperous.  
And yet there are signs of  
social disorder everywhere.  
Then the moral climate  
is not good.  
The people need education!  
Good!  
Good!  
The master is truly a sage!  
Then I hereby invite the Master  
to teach in our country.  
We will provide land  
to build an academy.  
And 60,000 stones of  
grain every year.  
Will that suffice?  
Thank you, Your Majesty.  
And I wish to consult you  
on one other matter.  
As you can see,  
our Kingdom of Wei is  
vulnerable on all 4 sides.  
Each one of our neighbors

would conquer us if it could.  
So I'd like the Master  
help training our soldiers.  
As a mere wandering exile,  
dare I even speak of soldiering?  
But I have heard it said,  
the Master is a brilliant  
military tactician.  
If Your Majesty speaks of  
sacrificial rituals,  
I do have some small  
knowledge of them.  
But of military matters,  
I have no great knowledge at all.  
Alright...  
I won't try to force you.  
But there's one thing  
you absolutely must agree to.  
Your humble servant is a guest  
here, your wish is my command.  
My royal consort Nanzi  
is eager to see you.  
You won't say no, will you?  
Of course not.  
Better not to see her.  
Doesn't Master know?  
She has a very dubious reputation.  
This woman is a great beauty.  
But she is a succubus.  
Her very name taints the kingdom!  
Master.  
Do you know of this woman's past?  
This Nanzi was raised in the  
house of the ruler of Song.  
In Song, she had an affair with  
the ruler's son, there was a scandal.  
This kind of gossip is trivial.  
Do you know who now  
runs the Kingdom of Wei?  
The King, of course!  
I can see it isn't.  
Wei's internal politics are very  
chaotic, there are many seats of power.  
But I can see that the real power  
behind the throne  
is Nanzi.

What kind of a man is this Kong Qiu?  
In my view,  
just poor and disheveled scholar.  
His only pleasure is  
in books and rituals.  
Poor he may be,  
but we could build up friendship.  
This Kong Qiu is a worthy man.  
You must treat him well.  
I still hope  
one day, we could ask him to be  
the teacher of our young prince.  
I have already promised him  
Please be seated, Master.  
Our lady will be here soon.  
Your humble servant greets Madam.  
You are the famous scholar Kong Qiu?  
Master Kong, please be seated.  
Thank you, madam.  
I have heard one of your axioms is,  
true benevolence is the love of mankind.  
Does this 'benevolence'  
extend to a woman with  
a reputation like mine?  
I hear that you are teaching  
"The Book of Odes" here.  
Yes, I am.  
I also love poetry.  
That line...  
A beauteous lady,  
a gentleman's fine match.  
Can you tell me what that means?  
The poem means  
even while courting,  
a gentleman observes all proprieties.  
Of the 300 poems in  
"The Book of Odes",  
so many speak of love!  
All 300 have one underlying point.  
In true love, there is no evil.  
I have liked poetry since  
I was a child.  
Will you take me as your student?  
I have taken on a new student  
in Wei, his name is Bu Shang.  
Although still quite young,



he is some sort of prodigy.  
While studying "The Book of Odes"  
under me, he has shown much insight.  
So I humbly recommend that  
he becomes your study-companion.  
Our ministers consider  
your theories  
of civility in government  
to be impracticable.  
Do you truly believe  
they can work?  
Ruling with civility will benefit  
the state, its community, and its people.  
Why should it not be practicable?  
Without civility,  
a state will descend into chaos.  
Males are born lascivious.  
Their desires lead them  
into war and bloodshed.  
Since this is their nature,  
it will be hard to rein them in.  
The hardness of the task is  
the measure of the gentleman.  
Master, do you really believe  
that a gentleman's  
personal morality  
is the most important thing?  
My belief is that a man who wakes  
up living a life of civility  
will go to his death  
a justified man.  
Master, will you stay longer  
in our country? May we meet again?  
That would not be convenient.  
How so? Why inconvenient?  
Because I have not yet seen anyone  
who puts principles  
before licentiousness.  
Worldly people could probably come to  
understand the master's sufferings.  
But few will ever truly grasp  
the depth and breadth  
of those sufferings.  
It seems we should leave Wei now.  
Why's that?  
This land will soon

descend into chaos.  
Come on, hurry up...  
Hurry up...  
Come on!  
Worldly people could probably come to  
understand the master's sufferings.  
But few will ever truly grasp  
the depth and breadth of those sufferings.  
That's scholar Kong!  
Let's take a look at him!  
By order of Commander Huan,  
Kong Qiu and his followers must leave  
the Kingdom of Song immediately.  
By order of Commander Huan,  
Kong Qiu and his followers must leave  
the Kingdom of Song immediately.  
Master, please begin.  
Poetry, books, ethics, music...  
a gentleman must understand all these.  
So today we will begin  
a review of our practices.  
Rulers should treat  
ministers with courtesy  
as ministers should  
serve rulers with loyalty.  
Loyalty and filial piety  
are the keys to humanity  
and harmony.  
All professions may prosper.  
Close to home,  
attend your parents.  
Further afield, placate  
your neighbors.  
There is also much to learn  
including the names of birds,  
beasts, grasses and trees.  
By order of Commander Huan Kui,  
leave the Kingdom of Song!  
Stop!  
The tree is coming down!  
Watch out!  
Master, let's quickly leave.  
Master, we must go!  
Excuse me, friends.  
Where's the river crossing?  
The river crossing?

Who's that man sitting on the cart?  
That's Master Kong! Master Kong?  
The famous Kong Qiu from Lu?  
Indeed!  
Isn't he supposed  
to know everything?  
Then he should know  
where the river crossing is.  
You fellows should  
stay here and become farmers  
instead of wandering  
around with him!  
Avoid all the trouble out there!  
That's right!  
Stay here as farmers!  
Yeah, stay out of politics  
like us!  
His thought would not  
be practicable.  
Let's stay here!  
Why are you laughing?  
Let's go.  
Let's move on,  
we will ask for direction later.  
Go... Don't leave.  
Come back!  
Alright... Let's get back to work.  
Fei, is there any news of Kong Qiu?  
They say he spent some time in Wei,  
then went to Zheng and  
is now in the Kingdom of Chen.  
In time of war, we need generals.  
In time of trouble, we need thinkers.  
Back when we held  
the alliance meeting,  
Kong Qiu won back the 3 cities  
without waging war.  
But we sent him into exile.  
Now it's clear that Qi tricked us.  
With our ruler dead and  
a mere child on the throne,  
Qi seizes the chance to invade us.  
Our strength is not what it was.  
If it comes to war,  
we have no outstanding general.  
Now I have a mission for you.

Bring Kong Qiu back to Lu!  
Father, we mistreated  
Kong Qiu before.  
We forced him into exile.  
If we invite him back now,  
people will mock us.  
We could invite his disciple  
Ran Qiu back first.  
He is Kong's foremost disciple,  
he has good military skills.  
He would know how  
to counter the Qi army.  
Alright, invite Ran Qiu back first.  
Wake up...  
Wake up, Master! It's terrible!  
The Kingdom of Wu is invading!  
We have to leave at once!  
Hurry up...  
Have you seen an elderly foreigner?  
At the city's East Gate...  
The Qi army is poised to attack Lu.  
Master, Lord Ji asks you to allow  
Ran Qiu to come back to protect Lu.  
Master, please agree,  
for the sake of Lu!  
Master, we cannot let Ran Qiu go!  
They turn to us only when  
they're in trouble.  
Remember how badly  
they treated us!  
Yes...  
How did you find me?  
An old farmer told us  
he saw a foreigner near  
the East Gate.  
A forehead like King Yao's.  
Shoulders like Zichan's.  
Had the air of an important man  
but looked as scraggy  
as a stray dog.  
We guessed it was you.  
I'm not brave enough  
to be important.  
And my features don't  
resemble anyone famous.  
But that old farmer got it just about

right when he said stray dog!  
Master, you teach us to  
practice what we learnt.  
Our homeland is in peril!  
The Prime Minister  
asks Ran Qiu to return.  
Lu's very survival is at stake.  
As men of Lu,  
we cannot stand idly by.  
Well said, Yan Hui.  
Lu is in danger,  
I should allow you to return  
to save the kingdom  
from disaster.  
Ran Qiu, you should go.  
I will wait for good  
news from you.  
Master, once the battle is won,  
I'll come back for you.  
Pull!  
Greetings, Prime Minister.  
Father.  
General Ran has lived  
up to our hopes.  
He has routed the Qi army  
in the Battle of Lang.  
The Qi army has retreated back  
across the border.  
This won't go unrewarded.  
I will petition the king to put you  
in charge of the Wen Shang Cities.  
Prime Minister, this simple man does not  
want to be in charge of the Three Cities.  
I only have one simple request.  
Speak.  
My teacher, Master Kong,  
has been wandering for many years.  
He's destitute,  
but goes on teaching.  
But there has never been a moment  
when the Kingdom of Lu  
wasn't in his thoughts.  
This simple man's request  
is that you have him  
invited back to Lu.  
Well.

I'll need to discuss your request  
with His Majesty.  
I fully recognize your talents.  
Stay here as our retainer.  
No more aimless wandering  
with Kong Qiu.  
Look, a 9-tailed sparrow!  
Seeing that bird fly past  
means there must be  
a village not far ahead.  
Really? That's great!  
We can finally get some food  
in our bellies!  
Hurry, everyone!  
Quick! I'm dying of hunger!  
Nobody around.  
Looks like this is another village  
torched by the Cai army.  
We're all very tired.  
Clean this place up a bit.  
I think we can spend  
the night here.  
Master, look.  
It seems that the Cai troops  
have us trapped in this valley.  
Master, I've found a small mountain path.  
It's very narrow,  
but I think it may lead  
down the mountain.  
Why don't I see where it leads?  
I might be able to find some food  
or at least someone  
who can help us.  
You can all rest here  
and wait for me.  
Zigong, you always find a way!  
Come back soon.  
Let's go, Zigao.  
Father, doesn't heaven reward  
those who are kind?  
What wrong have we done  
to deserve this?  
How is it  
that heaven allows us  
to starve like this?  
He's right!

Master is wise.  
Maybe some cannot understand  
because their thinking  
is too backward.  
Master taught us.  
Only in winter, does the pine tree  
show its true strength.  
Master has been playing  
that instrument for days now.  
Yes, as if the music  
would fill his belly!  
Master, you haven't eaten for days.  
This soup is  
the last of the horsemeat.  
Please drink some.  
Are you alright, brother?  
Brother.  
Zilu, drink some soup.  
Master, I'm not hungry.  
You have some.  
Look, I'm having some,  
you have a little too.  
Each of us should have a little.  
I'm not hungry. You have some.  
Master, at last you're  
awake! Master!  
Are you alright? Master!  
Do you feel better?  
I'm back at last.  
You were gone for 7 days.  
If you'd come back one day later,  
you might have been too late!  
Master, you're awake.  
Zigong, tell me.  
What's happening out there?  
Master, we left the valley.  
We were hunted down,  
we almost died.  
Thanks to Yan Zhuoju,  
Zilu's brother-in-law.  
He brought others to rescue us.  
That's when we found out  
how chaotic the world has become.  
Men from Wu have conquered  
the Kingdom of Zheng.  
Men from Chu have devastated

the Kingdom of Cai.  
The people of Cai  
were forced to move south.  
Come on... help me.  
Quickly...  
Master.  
The ruler of Wei is dead, and his  
successor greatly respects Zilu.  
He wants to appoint Zilu  
governor of the city of Puyi.  
What are you men waiting for?  
I'm waiting for a roast gigot!  
Let's boil the water  
and start cooking!  
I am proud to see  
one of my students so honored.  
But enter not a dangerous state,  
dwell not in a chaotic state.  
The political situation  
in Wei is not stable.  
To be frank, I do not much  
approve of you taking this post.  
Master, just wait for me  
to show my mettle in Puyi.  
Then I'll be able to  
raise a powerful army.  
I will deal with  
the chaos inside Wei  
and appoint you  
the new Prime Minister.  
Undue haste has  
no place in politics!  
Zilu, you are headstrong  
and demanding.  
That's very dangerous  
in this chaotic world.  
Master, I know this.  
But my undue haste  
reflects my wish  
to realize your ideals  
of harmony and civility  
in government.  
An official wears his  
robes of office  
but it's his inner character and  
spirit which reflect his true mettle.

Never forget this.  
Don't look at,  
listen to, speak to,  
or do anything  
which offends propriety.  
Master's words will  
stay with me all my life.  
Qi Sigong, take care on the road.  
Master...  
Take care of yourself, Master,  
your students bid you fare well!  
Master.  
What's that sound?  
The ice is cracking!  
Hurry up! Move!  
The ice is cracking. Hurry up!  
Hurry up! The ice is cracking.  
Yan Hui...  
Hui, where are you...?  
Hui Yan Hui.  
Grab the rope!  
Yan Hui, come back up!  
Come back up!  
Master, please eat something.  
It has been 8 hours.  
He will not revive, Master.  
Let go, Master.  
Master...  
Master!  
Please eat something.  
Kong Qiu hasn't come back.  
Father, I have sent men  
to look for him.  
It's reported that  
they're approaching the border.  
He will never forgive  
what I did to him.  
Go in my place.  
When you see him,  
give him this.  
He'll come when he sees this.  
Master...  
Qi Sigong, you are back?  
Master, Qi Sigong is back...  
Master...  
Why are you back alone?

Where is Zilu?  
Brother Zilu... he's dead.  
Wei was in chaos,  
Yang Hu of the Jin Kingdom  
has taken over the capital.  
Zilu tried to protect the young heir  
to the Wei throne.  
He went out to face  
the invaders alone.  
He...  
He was killed!  
Master says.  
When a gentleman dies,  
he should maintain his dignity.  
Well said.  
Well said.  
Mighty Zilu!  
You were a true gentleman!  
My father asked me to  
present Master with this jade.  
Master Kong, my father...  
He is dying.  
Master!  
I've found you at last!  
Ran Qiu, you've found  
your way here?  
Master, I...  
For the past years, Master, Minister Ji  
has been taking off from the court  
because of his sickness.  
I'm afraid he doesn't have much time.  
Whenever he looks back,  
he deeply regrets  
having you forced into exile.  
He has sent his own son  
to invite you back.  
He hopes to apologize  
to you in person.  
Master, please come back to Lu.  
A ring of jade.  
Stand up.  
Master, for the sake of  
Lu's future, come home!  
I can return.  
But you must tell them  
that I only want to teach.

They must no longer trouble me  
with politics.  
I will stress this point to him.  
We will respect your wish.  
Master.  
Start packing up,  
we are going home.  
We're going home...  
Father, Master Kong is on his way.  
He'll be here soon.  
Go!  
Welcome him on my behalf.  
We're home, we're finally home!  
Lu! We're back.  
Lu, land of my parents.  
I have finally returned.  
Master, did you say something?  
Nothing.  
Pack up "The Spring and Autumn of Lu"  
and have it delivered.  
Yes.  
If the world will come to know me,  
it will be through this book.  
If the world will think  
ill of me,  
it will also be  
because of this book.