

Kabu Fates, Chapter 2: There's Always Another Neverland

SCENE 1

N: Once again, it's time to...

Pic 1: Big "the more you know" style graphic that says "Say Important Stuff".

Yuriy: Hello to all you guys, and also to the four women who read this visual novel as well.

Baihan: We'd be right barmy to forget about those birds, aye?

Yuriy: Indeed we would be, Baihan. Today we've got something important to discuss with all of you, especially you bloodthirsty women.

Barlow: Now, we know this is supposed to be a "humor-style" story.

Willy: Full of plenty of comedic things, like softcore porn.

Yuriy: But there's one thing that's never funny, and that is: violence.

Pic 2: Pic of Yuriy slipping on a banana peel (or something equally humorous).

Baihan: Listen here chaps: there's nothing witty, droll, or jocose about brutality.

Barlow: Anyone who finds such graphic, disturbing images hilarious is surely a predator-in-the-making, and we do not stand among them.

Yuriy: So even though this episode is filled with a lot of frank depictions of violence, we want to make sure it's clear:

Pic 3: Close-up of Willy seeing stars with a huge Looney Tunes-style head bump on his head and a mallet sitting atop it.

Barlow: Not funny.

Yuriy: Nor do we endorse it in any non-comedic contexts either. Ever.

Willy: Despite consensual blood sports being kind of a grey area.

Yuriy: There was also that time in elementary school where I was being picked on and Baihan beat the bullies up--even if I don't endorse it, it was pretty helpful.

Baihan: Hahah, I forgot about that one mate, just rememberin' it has me chuffed to bits! Left those gits right knackered, didn't we?

Barlow: So remember: not funny, not endorsed.

Yuriy: But you know, sometimes? Eh.

Willy: Tyrants oftentimes leave their subjects no other choice.

Barlow: Remember, if you have a dispute with your neighbor, grocer, racquetball instructor, etcetera, why not work things out the civilized way?

Yuriy: With Kabu!

Willy: It's the best way there is.

Baihan: Ain't no kerfuffle that can't be sorted out with a proper good game of Kabu.

Barlow: So thanks for listening, and remember to always-

Yuriy: Say!

Willy: Important!

Baihan: Tosh!

Barlow: Oof!

Pic 4: Barlow face down with a coconut near his head, the rest of the cast laughing and pointing.

Title Card

SCENE 2

Player: Costa Rica, here we come!

Yuriy: Um, partner? We arrived in San Jose three hours ago.

Baihan: Wait, that's where we are?

Player: Costa Rica, here we are!

Yuriy: Exactly right, o fearless leader. San Jose, Kabu capital of Central America, home to some of the savviest and sauciest players around. At just about every bar, boardwalk, and beach you can find a game in progress, and if you're a Kabu connoisseur yourself, prepare to get your fill and then some. Whether you're eager to climb the ranking ladder, or simply interested in taking in a vibrant, celebratory culture that just happens to love Kabu, San Jose is the place to be.

Player: Are you going to memorize every single travel brochure we come across?

Yuriy: Yeah! If you're going to become the highest ranked Kabu player in the world, you're gonna need someone who's on top of this kind of stuff, boss. Don't you agree?

Player: Uhh-

Baihan: Wait, that's why we're here?

Yuriy: What do you mean?

Baihan: This globetrotting adventure we're on--it's all so our buddy here can ascend to the highest ranks of Kabu greatness?

Player: Uh, yes?

Baihan: ...Huh. Well, if you're sure.

Player: "If you're sure?"

Yuriy: Baihan, why did you think you were asked to come along?

Baihan: You know, I was starting to wonder that myself.

Player: ...Well it's a little late now, but did you have any other questions? Just, floating around in there?

Baihan: Yeah, actually. Like first of all, why San Jose?

Player: Oh boy.

Yuriy: Baihan, have you been paying attention at all?

Baihan: Paying attention to what?

Player: Moving on... Yuriy, do you know where I could find a Kabu match around here?

Yuriy: Well, Costa Rica was one of the first countries to embrace the game, so there's plenty of venues around that are well-known for hosting Kabu events. I looked up a few clubs last night that we should check out.

Player: Sounds like a good start.

Yuriy: Though, I'm a bit surprised it's already taken us this long to find a Kabu player. That brochure made it sound like we'd be knee deep in competitors.

Player: Well I guess you can't believe everything you read in a pamphlet, no matter how professional it looks.

Yuriy: But the blocking on those front page elements was just so good!

Baihan: And I don't think I've ever seen such thoughtful font choices before.

Player: Indeed my friends--it was truly the work of a design prodigy, and I'll spend every night for the rest of my life thanking the cosmos that I was able to see such a masterpiece in my lifetime.

Yuriy: We all will, leader.

Player: But even so, I doubt we're going to find a match while walking down the street.

Yuriy: Yeah, I guess you're right.

N: The three of you take a step down the street, but you're unable to take a second because your path is suddenly blocked by a frown-y looking raccoon.

Pic 4: Sebastian looking imposing

Random Passerby: Hey, are you a trio of Kabu players?

Player: Oh yeah. Well, Baihan and me at least. No offense, Yuriy.

Yuriy: No, you're right; I'm more of the helpful egghead, jungian damsel archetype.

Player: And how!

Random Passerby: I see... And despite the fact that you're all speaking perfect Spanish, I assume you are tourists, correct?

Baihan: Yup.

Yuriy: That's the pill for you.

Player: Wow.

Yuriy: What's up?

Player: I just realized how difficult traveling would be without the pill.

Baihan: I know right?

Random Passerby: Well, let me formally welcome you to San Jose. My name is Sebastian.

Player: Oh, how nice of you. My name is-

Sebastian: But more importantly, draw!

Player: Ahbuwahhhhhh?

Sebastian: Defend your honor as a Kabu player, here and now!

Player: What are y-

Sebastian: Draw, stranger!

N: You turn your head towards your friends and whisper out the side of your mouth, and also spit a little.

Player: What's with this guy?

Yuriy: I don't know, but it doesn't look like he's going to take no for an answer. Quite the impasse.

Player: Indeed. Any ideas?

Baihan: Wait a second... Partner, do you still have that deck of Kabu cards from the last episode?

Player: Yes, but I don't see what that has to do with-

Baihan: What if *you* play this Sebastian guy?

Player: That's... just crazy enough to work.

N: You step forward, pulling the deck of cards out of your pocket.

Player: Fine then, Sebastian. I... uhhh, accept your... challenge?

N: You turn back and see Yuriy and Baihan nodding enthusiastically.

Player: Right. Sebastian, I accept your challenge to a game of Hearts... Shit, I mean Kabu.

KABU W/ SEBASTIAN SCENE 2

N: "Sebastian's clothes fly off!" That's what I would say if this information was surprising to you, but it's not, so I won't. Instead I'll go with "The totally expected outcome of a Kabu match occurs." Anyway, you help him up and all that, which he allows, albeit with obvious reluctance.

Sebastian: Hmmm, not bad, tourists.

Baihan: Hey, we have names you know!

Sebastian: I'm sure you do, and I'm also sure that before the day is over I'll be saying two of them while dancing around saying the third.

Player (thinking): Here's hoping he isn't talking about me.

Sebastian: But for now... just know that I have my eyes on you. If I find out you're involved in any of the recent incidents--

Yuriy: Incidents? **(dramatic piano chord/arpeggio/whatever accompanies this line)**

N: Sebastian leans in, dramatically. His tail twitches behind him, also dramatically.

Sebastian: Yes. Incidents.

Player: I see...

Yuriy: ...

Baihan: ...

Sebastian: ...

Yuriy: *cough*

Sebastian: ...

Baihan: ...

Player: ...So, uh, what do you mean by, "incidents"?

Sebastian: ...

Yuriy: ...

Sebastian: ...Hm?

Player: I *said*, "What do you mean by, 'incidents'?"

Sebastian: Ah, forgive me, I didn't hear you. Plus I am a bit distracted, because of the incidents and all.

Player: Uh huh.

N: He does not notice the extremely pained tone in your voice and leans back in, again, dramatically.

Sebastian: Apparently a group of out-of-towner Kabu players have been stirring up trouble.

Yuriy: How so?

Sebastian: Cheating at Kabu, for one thing.

Yuriy: *Gasp!*

Sebastian: For another, I heard they've been bullying and threatening players who try to call them out on their bullshit.

Yuriy: *Double gasp!*

Sebastian: Oh, and I guess they beat someone up too.

Yuriy: Dare I say it? *Trouple gasp!*

Player: Cheating at Kabu? But who would dare sully the name of the world's greatest sport? What kind of sick, depraved freak, devoid of all joy or empathy, someone who has surely never felt the touch of a lover, or heard the sincere tones of a friend expressing affection, would do this? Unbelievable! ...And I guess assault is bad too.

Sebastian: Oh, it's worse than bad, my new possibly-enemies-but-equally-possibly-new-*best*-friends.

N: Sebastian leans in, his muzzle a mixture of sorrow and indignation.

Sebastian: Apparently they gave my friend... A *wedgie*.

PIC 5: Yuriy, Baihan, and player gasping

N: A collective and completely warranted gasp overtakes you all. You catch Yuriy, who has fainted.

Player: Someone is carving a path of wanton destruction through this beautiful city, my friends. We must-

N: You stop, because you've noticed that Baihan is silently shaking behind you. He's biting his lip, and his fists are clenched so hard it sounds like leather snapping.

Player: Baihan?

SCENE 3

(Sepia Tone Kabu is back, to make it clear we're looking at the past. Definitely imagining music like [this](#), if there's any)

Baihan: Okay, so all I gotta do is sneak in through the front door, and-

Aunt Slay: Baihan, is that you?

Uncle Dead: We need to talk to you, my boy; we're in the kitchen.

Baihan: Aw maaaaaaaaaaaaaan. So they do already know. Siiiiiiiiigh.

N: Dropping his backpack at the front door, Baihan trudged towards the kitchen, shoulders slumped.

Baihan: Heeeey guys. Uh, how was your day? Anything cool happen at work Uncle?

Uncle Dead: We're not here to talk about another uneventful day at Loose Girder and Open Vat Warehouse, Baihan.

Aunt Slay: We heard what happened at school, dear.

Baihan: ...Alright. I'm sorry Aunt and Uncle. I should have studied for the math test.

Uncle Dead: What? Math? We're not talking about math here, Baihan.

Aunt Slay: Nobody here gives a shit about math, sweetheart. You know what we mean.

N: Baihan gulped, turning his head away. One of the parental figures sighed, though it's hard to tell which one since we can't see them and never will, just a heads up.

Uncle Dead: You can't keep getting into fights at school, Baihan.

Aunt Slay: Especially since you suddenly grew into the size and shape of a twenty-something-year-old man last year.

Uncle Dead: Yeah, those other twelve-year-olds don't have a chance, Baihan.

Baihan: But he was being a jerk!

Uncle Dead: Be that as it may, violence is not the answer, son.

Baihan: Pfffft, fine. I won't beat anybody up anymore or whatever.

N: Another sigh, from either or perhaps both of these faceless authority figures.

Aunt Slay: Baihan... enough is enough.

Uncle Dead: We want to believe you, but we can't let you keep getting away with this destructive behavior.

Aunt Slay: As they say, fool us forty-seven times, shame on you. Fool us forty-eight times, shame on *us*.

Baihan: W-what do you mean?

Uncle Dead: We mean... it's time for a punishment.

Baihan: What the fuck? Punishment?

Aunt Slay: Yes, the principal suggested it.

Uncle Dead: I don't know where he gets these ideas, but we figured we'd give it a shot.

Aunt Slay: You know, as opposed to doing nothing like we usually do.

Baihan: So what's the punishment?

N: A soft choke of lament, from a parent who knows what they must do, even if they know they won't like it.

Aunt Slay: No dessert after dinner.

Uncle Dead: For one night... tonight, in case that wasn't clear.

Aunt Slay: Hm, we probably should have just said "No dessert tonight."

Uncle Dead: A lot more succinct, yeah.

N: Baihan's tone was that of a betrayed, wounded animal.

Baihan: I can't believe you guys would do this to me! And on pudding night!

Uncle Dead: Believe me son, we didn't want to.

Aunt Slay: You've left us no choice, sweetheart.

Baihan: Ughhghh, blah! Bah! Pffooey, fuck off!

N: Tears streaming down his face, Baihan turned and ran out the front door from whence he came. Slamming it shut as hard as he could, he did not hear the soft cry from his beloved aunt.

Aunt Slay: Baihan, wait!

PIC 6: Baihan running and crying

N: He ran. For how long he did not know, but he ran as far as his legs could carry him--then he walked around for a while, because he was out of breath. After that he ran some more, and then some more walking. Then more running, but after that he was pretty darn tired, so he stuck with a leisurely stroll. This run-walk-run-walk-run-stroll cycle dragged on late into the evening, when the sun started to set.

Baihan: I've been gone for a while... I wonder if I should go back?

N: Baihan had little time to ponder; his friend Jimmy, who *definitely* isn't getting drawn if Baihan's parental figures aren't, came running up to him.

Jimmy (not drawn): Baihan, Baihan! There you are dude.

Baihan: Jimmy, my best friend and one of the most important recurring characters in my life--what are you doing here, just offscreen?

Jimmy (not drawn): I was looking for you!

Baihan: Pour moi?

Jimmy (not drawn): Oui!

Baihan: Enough joking around with this dead language; what's up?

Jimmy (not drawn): I just wanted to know, is your uncle okay? **(good time for music change)**

N: Baihan's stomach sank like a stone, or maybe a small rock. No, definitely a stone.

Baihan: What are you talking about?

Jimmy (not drawn): What, you haven't heard?

N: Baihan grabs Jimmy by the collar, which would have made for a great inset picture.

Baihan: Tell me what happened, dude!

Jimmy (not drawn): Dude, you're gonna rip my third-favorite shirt!

Baihan: Dude, answer me!

Jimmy (not drawn): Alright dude, there was an accident!

N: Baihan let go, his eyes wide.

Baihan: An... accident?

Jimmy (not drawn): Yeah, a bike accident.

N: Baihan went silent, his arms hanging limply at his sides.

Jimmy (not drawn): He was biking through town, looking for you I guess? Flying down the street, shouting your name, saying that he loves you and hopes you two can get past this so you can have decades of joyful company together, that kind of thing. Apparently he was so distracted from worry that he didn't see the car in time...

Baihan: Car?!

Jimmy (not drawn): Yeah.

Baihan: Oh my god...

Jimmy (not drawn): Wait, did I say car? I meant cart--a cart full of marshmallows, pillows, and thumbtacks.

Baihan: Uncle, noooo!

N: Baihan took off towards the hospital, running as fast as he could. When he finally reached his uncle's room, he couldn't believe the sight that awaited him. With a voice full of tears he gently placed his hand on his uncle's bed, shaking all the while.

Baihan: Uncle Dead... I'm so sorry... This is all my fault. I promise, here and now, that I will only use my passion for good. To create, not destroy! Uuuunclelllllllee! **(sound of ekg flatlining)**

(Back to present day)

Baihan: About a year later, I'd finally found my calling in Kabu, and the rest is history...

N: Baihan turns from the group, a single tear running down his cheek as he sniffs.

Player: Dang... no warning for that tragic backstory, huh?

Yuriy: Baihan, I'm so sorry about your uncle. Was he okay?

Baihan: Was he okay? Was he *okay*? Yes.

Yuriy: Oh! That's good.

Player: Really? So what happened to him?

Baihan: A couple of bruises, and a thumbtack poked his widdle bottom.

Player: That's it?

Baihan: Yeah, but it was really scary.

N: Baihan sighs and looks down. The air around him starts to shimmer with heat, and it feels like you can see his Kabu deck throb from inside his pocket.

Baihan: Just thinking about that life-changing event gets me all fired up, so you can imagine how I feel relating it out loud. There's only one way to vent this build up of passion inside me... with a Kabu match! Sebastian, I challenge you-

N: Baihan turns back around, clenching his fist and looking excited, right up until the point that he notices the raccoon has left.

Baihan: Wait, where'd he go?

Yuriy: Oh, he left a long time ago.

Player: Yeah, right after you started your story. Your long, unexpected story.

Baihan: Huh... Well alright, then I'll just challenge you instead, partner.

Player: Wait, what?

Baihan: Draw!

KABU W/ BAIHAN SCENE 3

N: With the match over, you help Baihan to his feet, give him a quick slap on the ass, and then the both of you shake hands.

Baihan: Not bad, champ.

Player: Same to you, my man.

Baihan: This is why we're friends.

Player: Best friends.

Baihan: Exactly.

Player: ...

Baihan: ...

N: You stop shaking hands.

Player: So... let's get some lunch.

SCENE 4

N: The sun is starting to set, and the three of you still haven't managed to scare up another Kabu match--probably because you've been fucking around all afternoon. Luckily for you, as night arrives it brings new opportunities with it; one by one the nightclubs peppered throughout the city begin to wake up, and according to Yuriy, they're full of Kabu players.

Yuriy: Here it is: Castro's! One of the most happening nightclubs in all of San Jose.

Player: And there'll be Kabu players here?

Yuriy: Will there ever! This place used to be one of San Jose's sauciest bars and discoteque, but after Kabu reached international popularity everyone who owns *and* frequents the bar agreed they'd rather play card games instead of hook-up and have anonymous, consequence-free sex.

Player: Makes total sense to me!

Yuriy: So don't worry leader, I'm sure we'll find someone to play while we're here.

Baihan: As long as they've got a nice bathroom, I'll be happy.

Yuriy: We were just at the hotel dude, why didn't you go then?

Baihan: Oh, I don't need to piss or anything.

Yuriy: Then why do you need to see the bathroom?

N: Baihan shrugs.

Baihan: I like a good bathroom.

Yuriy: What?

Player: Let's continue this riveting conversation inside everybody.

PIC 7: Shot of club

N: The inside of the nightclub is a bit claustrophobic, despite its large size and second floor--there's just so many people playing Kabu, drinking, discussing the Hellenistic period, using the in-house looms, etc. There's also a couple of people dancing for some unknown reason, which is really bringing down the club's otherwise fantastic atmosphere. Thankfully your group somehow manages to persevere in the face of such silliness, and the three of you weave your way through the throng. The beats are loud, the drinks flow freely from the second floor, and Kabu matches can be seen no matter where you look.

Baihan: I think we came to the right place.

Yuriy: I think so too--are you feeling that, boss?

Player: These other players, you mean?

Yuriy: Yeah! I'm getting pings from Card Sense all over the place.

Player: Same. We should be careful, there's some serious players around.

N: All three of you scan the club, looking for someone as hungry for a match as you. You think you see a suitable opponent, but before you can say anything, Yuriy pipes up.

Yuriy: Do you two hear that?

Baihan: Hear what?

Yuriy: The yelling!

N: It takes you a moment to pinpoint it amongst the din, but Yuriy is absolutely right. Muffled by the ceiling above is the sound of a heated argument, and it sounds like it's getting hotter.

Player: Let's go see what's up.

Yuriy: Really?

Player: Yeah! Someone might need some help.

Yuriy: Oh leader, you're such a paragon of virtue-

Player: Plus, that's where the bar is, and I'm betting it's a lot easier to win at Kabu matches when your opponent is plastered.

Yuriy: And crafty too!

Baihan: Hell yeah, let's get stinko!

Player: No Baihan, we don't get drunk, we play against the *other people* who are drunk.

Baihan: No, I got you, I just don't care--*I'm* not trying to become the world's best Kabu player over here.

Player: Oh. Well, fair enough.

Baihan: Woo!

N: Yuriy, Baihan, and yourself shimmy, slide, and shake your way up the stairs respectively. Things are a bit less frenetic on the second floor, which is why it's so easy for the three of you to instantly locate the source of the yelling. In a corner of the room that's obscured by suspense-assisting shadows, you see what looks like a small group of people advancing on someone. You can't make out any sentences, but you could swear you heard the word "cheating" being thrown around. You exchange a silent nod with your cohorts and slowly make your way towards the commotion; once you're only a few tables away, their words become clear over the background noise.

Indignant Voice: You're mad, you?

Stupid and Yet Oddly Familiar Voice: Are you kidding me numbnuts? Of course I'm mad! I can't believe you'd accuse *us* of cheating just because you suck, and lost!

N: Though it's still hard to make out any distinguishing features, you can see that there's six of them altogether--five folks advancing on one. Also there's a Castro's employee on a stepladder affixing a poster to the wall nearby, a detail that foreshadows nothing.

Baihan: Woah, this is getting intense.

Yuriy: I-I-I don't know about this you two.

Player: Shh!

Indignant Voice: I didn't lose, you cheated! I saw it, you can't silence me!

N: The leader of the group takes a step forward, and grabs the indignant individual by the collar.

Stupid and Yet Oddly Familiar Voice: We'll see about that, tiny toes.

N: You and Baihan surge forward, but it's already too late. Effortlessly, the grabber pushes the grabee backwards, causing him to careen directly into the employee on the stepladder, just as said employee was affixing the very last thumbtack.

Formerly Indignant Voice: Oof! Ahh! Yeowch! Owie! Oh no! Ack! Blargh! Yowza! Eek! Oy! Yikes! Whoa! Waah! Mommy!

N: By now, you're not the only ones who've come to investigate the disturbance; the comically drawn-out commotion has caused a small crowd to gather. The five shadowy bullies take notice, and it's not long before the leader shouts:

Stupid and Yet Oddly Familiar Voice: Let's get out of here, boys!

N: They stampede past you and everyone else that's gathered around the scene, overturning several tables and chairs in their path. They're gone in a flash, and soon everyone present is wearing the same dumbfounded expression, instead of doing something actually useful like running after them. Thankfully a new, blustering voice saves you all from the guilt of feeling unhelpful.

Sebastian: What's going on here?

N: Before any of you three musketeers can speak, a local ejaculates. Quite loudly, too.

Ronaldo, Local Ejaculator: Sebastian, sexiest of San Jose's Top-Ranked Kabu cardsmen, thank goodness you're here! Some out-of-towners challenged us to Kabu games, and then started causing trouble when-

N: Sebastian's furious gaze stops scanning the room and focuses directly on you. A kind of heat, sweltering in its intensity, seems to be radiating off of him.

Sebastian: I knew it! You three!

Player: Here we go again... **(Laugh track sound effect)**

Sebastian: Not another word from your wicked lips. Draw!

KABU W/ SEBASTIAN SCENE 4

N: Sebastian picks himself up off the floor, growling in your direction. Despite his loss, he seems to have lost none of his fire, and points accusingly in your direction.

Sebastian: You think I'm going to let you get away with your crimes just because you beat me? Never!

Ronaldo, Local Ejaculator: Sebastian-

Sebastian: Monsters like you know nothing of civility, nothing of sportsmanship, nothing of love! I'll do whatever it takes to keep you from hurting anyone else!

Ronaldo, Local Ejaculator: Sebastian, helloooo.

Sebastian: I'll wrestle you to the ground if I have to, I'll noogie you until you say sorry, I'll tickle your ass and then-

Ronaldo, Local Ejaculator: Sebastian!

Sebastian: Ronaldo, please. Can't you see I'm justifying my anger and all its eventual consequences over here?

Ronaldo, Local Ejaculator: I know, but-

Sebastian: What? What were you about to say? That I'm making a huge mistake? That these three aren't who I'm looking for? That they may, in fact, be exactly who we need to bring the real culprits to justice and restore the honor of Costa Rican Kabu?

Ronaldo, Local Ejaculator: Okay, well, I'm not so sure about that last one, but the first two, yes.

Sebastian: Wait, seriously?

Ronaldo, Local Ejaculator: Yeah, dude.

Sebastian: Oh.

N: Someone coughs, but otherwise it's nothing but awkward silence. Yes, the entire club. Both floors. It's hard to tell if that's more *or* less embarrassing for Sebastian.

You're betting "more." Suddenly, a moan from nearby breaks the silence; it's that guy who got hurt, the one that everyone present forgot about.

Sebastian: AJ!

N: Sebastian rushes over, cradling his fallen friend against his front. The injured skunk coughs, his eyes struggling to stay open.

Sebastian: My friend, what have they done to you?

Fallen Skunk, AJ: W-wha?

Sebastian: Where does it hurt? What's wrong?

Fallen Skunk, AJ: My... my...

N: The skunk coughs again, a dreadfully uncomfortable sound. Tears glisten in Sebastian's eyes.

Fallen Skunk, AJ: My...

Sebastian: Yes?

Fallen Skunk, AJ: My soft... widdle bottom...

Sebastian: No... No!

PIC 8: shot of thumbtack pressed against detailless mound

N: The skunk shifts, and the whole room gasps at the sight: stuck in AJ's left buttcheek is a thumbtack--a thumbtack that almost certainly hurts, at least a little bit. I mean, if nothing else he definitely feels it back there. Definitely a fifty percent chance. When Baihan sees it, his cry of anguish rivals Sebastian's.

Baihan: No, not again! Not again!!!

N: Noticing Baihan's similarly emphatic freak out, Sebastian stands up, a curious look on his face. He drops AJ to the floor.

Sebastian: Again? What do you mean?

Baihan: Well, something like this happened before, when I was younger...

Player: Wait, you're not seriously about to-

Baihan: I was a teenager... young, hotheaded, and full of passion.

Sebastian: Hmm... tell me more.

Player: No, really, we can tell you some other-

Baihan: You see, I was only fifteen-years-old at the time...

SCENE 5

(Sepia Tone Kabu time again. Also Baihan's model is to be shrunk down significantly in this flashback, even though he was his normal size in the last one)

Baihan: It was only a few weeks after my birthday; a new school year, along with a newly pubescent body, had brought its fair share of challenges. Wistful days bled into what felt like an endless night, my only light along the way being the unfeeling stars above, in what could only be exhaustingly described as a-

Player: Baihan?

Baihan: What?

Player: Could we at least get an abridged version? This really isn't the best time.

Baihan: What do you mean?

Player: I mean, we kind of *just* watched a fight unfold in front of us. Also, nobody's even called an ambulance for that guy yet.

Fallen Skunk, AJ: My poor ass! Woe is my beautiful ass!

Baihan: Oh fine. But only because it's you, bud.

Player: Uh, thanks?

Baihan: So yada yada yada, summer of discontent, rebirth in fall, peak in winter, poetic juxtaposition etcetera etcetera.

(Show shrunk down Baihan here for the first time)

Baihan: Being a part of the school's wrestling team had changed my life.

Younger Baihan: Being on the school's wrestling team has changed my life!

Player: Wait, why are you so much smaller?

Baihan: Didn't you see the name? I was younger.

Player: But you're *older* than you were last time, how the hell does that work?

Baihan: Who's telling the story here, you or me?

Player: Sorry.

Baihan: So anyway, I was doing great. I finally found a way to focus all that pent-up aggression in a positive way, and my Aunt Herring and Uncle MacGuffin couldn't have been prouder.

Uncle MacGuffin: Baihan, you've really turned your life around; you've made so much progress in such a short amount of time, and are growing into a fine young man. Why, things are looking so good for you, that if some sudden accident or twist of fate were to occur and completely disrupt this streak of good behavior, it'd be even more poignant than usual!

Aunt Herring: Not that such a thing *would* ever happen of course. After all, things are looking up, and we have no reason to believe that'll ever stop, ever. I look forward to a long, suffering-free life, shared between the three of us.

Uncle MacGuffin: Same, because we all know that's the most likely scenario.

Aunt Herring: But I do want you to know that no matter what happens sweetie, however unlikely, we'll always be watching over you.

Younger Baihan: Heheh, oh Auntie, Uncle, why do you always say that?

Uncle MacGuffin: Because it's great to be alive, my boy.

Aunt Herring: Alive, and suffering-free.

Younger Baihan: Yeah, I think I get what you're saying.

Baihan: Old me, which is to say, younger me, got up from the table and let out a huge burp. I remember it smelling really bad.

Younger Baihan: See you guys after school! I can't wait to show you how much butt I can kick.

Uncle MacGuffin: We wouldn't miss it for the world, my boy.

Aunt Herring: I'm sure tonight's match will be to die for, sweetheart.

Baihan: That school day was pretty normal, hardly worth mentioning outside of the ninja attack... But after *that* was the most important wrestling meet of my illustrious, two-month long career. Williamsburg, Cape Bottom Sail's greatest high school wrestling rivals, were out for blood--they'd beaten us four years in a row, and were eager to secure that fifth.

Coach: They traveled all the way here to humiliate us on our own turf, but we're not gonna let that happen, are we?

Bright-Eyed, Innocent Wrestling Team: No!

Coach: They think we're wimps, are we?

Bright-Eyed, Innocent Wrestling Team: No!

Coach: That's right, we're not! That's because we're...

Bright-Eyed, Innocent Wrestling Team: Sissies!

Coach: Damn straight! We're the Sissies, and we're not about to lose to these Villains.

Bright-Eyed, Innocent Wrestling Team: Yeah!

Coach: So who are we?

Bright-Eyed, Innocent Wrestling Team: The Sissies!

Coach: And who are we gonna beat?

Bright-Eyed, Innocent Wrestling Team: The Villains!

Coach: Let's do this.

Baihan: Back and forth, back and forth, that's the direction a metronome moves... and also an accurate description of how the two team's matches were going. We were neck and neck, until the last match: me versus Strongo Philips, rising star of the intramural wrestling world.

Young Baihan: You're going down, Strongo!

Strongo Philips: We both are, since this is wrestling.

Baihan: The match was long and hard fought, but in the end, I started to wear him down. I had him on the ropes, but just as I was about to put him in the hold that would have secured victory...

Referee: Foul! That's a foul!

Baihan: It was the wrong call, and everyone knew it. Both sides of the audience were shaking their heads, and my coach was already on his way over to dispute it, so it probably would have been overturned... but I didn't care. As soon as I heard him shout "foul," it felt like my well-earned victory was already out of reach, and when I looked at the man who snatched it away from me, all I could see was red.

Younger Baihan: What the hell ref, are you blind?

Referee: Hey, the call's a call kid, get over it.

Younger Baihan: Me get over it? Why don't you get over *this*!

Baihan: I'm not proud of what I did next, even if it felt pretty awesome at the time--I pushed the referee, causing him to step back once before catching himself. The crowd was appalled, and had every right to be.

Horried Wrestling Match Enjoyer: My god, that child just assaulted a man twice his size and age!

Monocle-Less Audience Member: He almost made that ref lose his footing, he's a wild animal!

Baihan: Their outcry hurt, but it was nothing compared to his.

Uncle MacGuffin: Heavens, no! I thought my teenager managed to completely overcome his aggression issues in the space of a few months, but nay! Baihan has given himself over to darkness!

Baihan: He exited the bleachers as quickly, but also as carefully as possible, which meant not very quickly at all. He kept wailing the whole time, too. After seven minutes of not-very-quick and kind of careful maneuvering, my uncle was off the bleachers, and immediately broke into a run. He was so loud the entire time that no one even noticed the delivery man who had just arrived.

Delivery Man: Helloooo, special delivery! Every entrance except the gym one was closed for some reason! Got that box of extra-sharp thumbtacks you ordered!

Baihan: Neither of them stood a chance...

Delivery Man: Hey, who's that unclish-looking man running right at me? Should I try to side step, or will that cause the very collision I'm trying to avoid? Oh no, time's running out, and, yet-!

Uncle MacGuffin: Blergh!

Baihan: A crowd formed fast around the scene.

Younger Baihan: Out of the way, move, that's my uncle over there!

Baihan: Nothing could have prepared me for what I saw once I reached him...

Younger Baihan: Uncle?

Uncle MacGuffin: Owie!

Younger Baihan: Uncle, nooooooooo!

Baihan: Sticking in his soft, soft widdle bottom... was the pen the delivery man had brought.

PIC 8: shot of pen pressed against detailless mound

Younger Baihan: Uncle... Uncle, no... I'm sorry. I'm so sorry!

Baihan: I spent his entire recovery thinking about what I did--it was the longest two hours of my life. While doing so, I realized the passion and strength I was so proud of had hurt the person closest to me, and without even meaning to. I finally realized the meaning of the phrase that my uncle was always, constantly telling me: with big ability comes tremendous duty.

(Back to present)

N: Sebastian is crying, while you're finishing checking tomorrow's weather forecast on your phone.

Player: So, like, what, do you have more than one uncle that got his butt injured?

Baihan: Huh?

Player: Do you actually have multiple uncle ass injury stories?

Baihan: No, just the one.

Player: Then why was this telling so different?

Baihan: What do you mean?

Player: What do I mean? Pretty much every detail was different than last time!

N: Baihan rears back, gasping.

Baihan: Partner... I can't believe you'd say that.

Player: What?

N: Recovering, Baihan takes a big step forward and flexes, a familiar heat starting to radiate off of him...

Baihan: And I'm gonna make you take it back, on the Kabu court!

Player: I have no idea what is going on anymore, but sure.

Baihan: Draw!

KABU W/ BAIHAN SCENE 5

N: Upon defeat, Baihan's Passion Level Ten diminishes to a much more manageable Level Three, and you help him to his feet. Yuriy is back now as well.

Yuriy: Have you guys seen the wallpaper in the bathroom yet? Gorgeous. I can totally see why you're always checking them out, Baihan.

Player: When did you leave?

Yuriy: When Baihan started telling that story again. Seemed like the perfect opportunity for a poop.

Player: Damn, why didn't I think of that...

N: Sebastian, who'd been quietly blubbing since the story's end, let out a sudden loud cry and then somehow managed to pull all three of you into a very tight hug.

Sebastian: My friends... I am so sorry I ever doubted you! Please, forgive me!

Player: Just... Let us go... hnngh.

Sebastian: Anything for my new brothers (And perhaps one sister, question mark?) in blood.

N: Your feet hit the ground and the three of you sigh as you try to catch your breath.

Sebastian: I promise you that from here on out, you will be treated like royalty to make up for my earlier transgressions.

Yuriy: Well hey, that sounds pretty g-

Sebastian: Which is why it is so hard for me to ask you this favor.

Yuriy: Hm.

N: Falling to his knees, the raccoon clasps his hands, and puts his head to the ground.

Sebastian: Please, please help me deal with these troublemakers!

Player: Oh, alright.

Sebastian: Really?

Player: I mean, we were kind of already doing that.

Yuriy: Plus, this should provide the perfect segue we need to get us to the last scene.

Player: That too.

Baihan: If only we knew where to start looking...

Yuriy: Yeah...

Player: Wait, what?

N: Yuriy, Baihan, and Sebastian turn in your direction, looking confused.

Yuriy: Uhhh, what's up leader?

Baihan: Yeah partner, what's wrong?

Sebastian: What is it jefe?

Player: Well, first of all I have a name, which I will be saying the moment I'm done saying the second thing, and not a moment earlier.

Yuriy: Completely logical, go on.

Player: And secondly: Did you guys seriously not notice that that was Barlow?

Yuriy: Holy smokes, you're right; it was him!

Baihan: Wow, what a crazy coincidence.

Sebastian: Forgive me, but who is this Barlow?

Player: Nobody important.

Yuriy: But what *is* important is that we know it's him.

Baihan: Which means, we know precisely how to lure him out.

Player: Exactly.

N: Everyone nods.

Player: Now, as I was saying, if you're going to refer to me you might as well do it by my name, which is-

N: The club's belltower tolls, signalling that it was closing time. **(bell tower sound from sauna in first game)**

Baihan: Welp, looks like we better go.

Sebastian: Let's continue this conversation tomorrow.

Yuriy: Agreed.

Player: But wait, my name, stop!

SCENE 6

N: A few days later, and your plan is well underway--rumors of a mysterious "Kabu Legend" have spread like wildfire, and one cannot even walk down the street without hearing whispers of their return to San Jose. As time goes on the gossip gets more and more specific, and by Thursday a small crowd has gathered outside Enchiladas Juan, supposedly the favorite eatery of this star player. Hiding behind the counter is your trio, as well as Sebastian, waiting on bated breath.

Yuriy: Was this really the best place to set up our trap?

Player: Everyone knows that Kabu players can't resist a good enchilada, Yuriy.

Yuriy: Well yeah, but I still think we could have found a better restaurant.

Sebastian: Yuriy, please! Juan's is the best.

Yuriy: Yeah, well, I think it's uninspired. Mediocre, even!

Sebastian: Gasp!

Baihan: What's with you today, Yuriy?

Player: Yeah, you've been lashing out all day.

PIC 8: sad-looking Yuriy

Yuriy: You're right, I'm sorry guys. I just feel like no one's been listening to me lately, and-

Baihan: Shh! Yuriy, shut the fuck up.

Player: Yeah, can it for a second man.

N: The bell attached to the front door rings, and in walks five dudes. Five extremely recognizable dudes, in fact. You only know one of their names, admittedly, but you still recognize them--it's Barlow and his posse, looking as surly and arrogant as ever.

Sebastian: ...Is that?

Yuriy: It is.

Player: Barlow.

N: You and Sebastian waste no time, and shoot up from behind the counter.

Player: Barlow!

Sebastian: Troublemaker!

Barlow: What the-

N: You and the raccoon start to stride confidently towards the bear, but trip over the other two, and the server, and a trashcan, and over a stack of boxes, and also knock a table over on the way.

Player: *huff huff* Barlow!

Sebastian: *wheeze* Ahh, my leg, that's gonna bruise... I mean, troublemaker!

N: Barlow rolls his eyes and sighs.

Barlow: You know, if you're that desperate for an autograph, you can sign my asscheeks after you kiss 'em.

Player: What? That's not how autographs work.

Barlow: "That's not how autographs work!" Can you shitbabies do anything but whine? What the hell do you want from us, anyway?

Player: We know you've been causing trouble around here--cheating, getting into fights.

Sebastian: And we're here to put a stop to it.

N: Both your hands dive into your pockets, grabbing your decks. Barlow growls, flexing his own fingers in response.

Player: So, here and now, I cha-

Baihan: I challenge you, Barlow, here and now!

N: Pushing his way past you and Sebastian, Baihan gets right in front of Barlow, both of them wearing similarly toothy expressions. That is, until Barlow leans back, and starts to laugh.

Barlow: And why should I face a loser like you? I've got better things to do than waste my time handing you your ass.

N: Baihan does not look disarmed for even a second, and turns to point to Yuriy, who is currently cowering behind the counter.

Baihan: Because if you don't, we've got a little video that'll make sure nobody wastes their time on *your* ass after *we're* done spreading it. The video, I mean.

Yuriy: Oh! Right, yeah, I do still have that.

Barlow: Grrrr...

Yuriy: Yipe!

Baihan: So, Barlow... D-

Barlow: Draw! Hah, beatcha clown shoes!

N: Baihan pulls out his deck, Barlow does the same, and the air between them crackles with power. What follows is the most incredible Kabu match you've ever seen--the cards that are drawn... it defies all logic! Questions are answered, while answers are questioned, and it's all against the backdrop of two of the buffest, sweatiest men you've ever seen. And yet it is uniquely, undeniably Kabu. The match ends with one last gambit from Baihan, everyone on the edge of their feet as he moves to draw his last card... it's a sword!

Barlow: W-wha? Nnnnooooo!

N: Barlow is blasted backwards onto his big butt, while his posse scrambles behind him. They move in to help, but Baihan is already there, looming over him, fist raised. Barlow, fearing a well-deserved beating, cowers.

Barlow: H-heh man, come on, you wouldn't, you can't... eep!

N: When Barlow finally opens his eyes, he sees not a fist, but an open hand--behind it is Baihan, smirking.

Baihan: Do you want my help getting up, or not?

N: Reluctantly, Barlow takes Baihan's hand, and the tiger yanks him to his feet with ease. The bear begins to move away, but before he can Baihan yanks him close, his voice soft, and tinged with a smile.

Baihan: Leave this town, now... if I ever hear about you showing your face around here again, I'll beat you bloody, got me?

N: Baihan finally lets go, and Barlow gulps. Grabbing his clothes from a nearby croney, the bear makes for a hasty exit, while the rest follow. Once he's gone, the cheers commence.

Sebastian: He did it, he did it! Let's have a trouple cheer for Baihan!

Enthusiastic Crowd: Hip hip, hooray! Hip hip, hooray! Hip hip, hooray!

Player: Hey man, you did great! You made Barlow look like shit.

Yuriy: I don't know what you said to him, but I think he peed a little while he was running out.

Baihan: Ugh, really? Gross.

Yuriy: Yeah!

Sebastian: You have done so much for us, my new friends. Is there any way we can repay you?

Baihan: Restoring the good reputation of Kabu is thanks enough, Sebastian.

Player: Just a heads up, I was also going to say that.

Sebastian: Well, I do know at least one thing we can do for you...

Yuriy: Oh?

Sebastian: Party!

N: The crowd inside and outside of Enchiladas Juan cheers, and what follows is the most incredible celebration you've ever been a part of. I'd describe it, but why should I? You're there, you know what it's like.

Player: This! Party! Rules!

N: See? You, Baihan, and Yuriy party all day and night with Sebastian's crowd, only heading back to your hotel rooms when you cannot keep yourselves standing under your own power anymore. Morning comes all too soon, and with it the boat your group needs to catch for the next leg of your trip. Sebastian sees you off, and the hugs are plentiful.

Sebastian: San Jose is always open to you, my friends.

Baihan: As is Cape Bottom Sail to you.

Player: And same, for wherever I come from.

Yuriy: So, I'd say this trip to San Jose was a complete success... Wouldn't you, dear leader?

Player: Definitely! Except for the part where I never ranked up, which is kind of the whole reason why we're on this multiple-continent-spanning trip.

Yuriy: Oh, yeah...

Sebastian: That's why you're here?

Player: Yup.

Sebastian: Well, let's just play right now then.

Player: Well, our boat leaves in five minutes... but why the hell not.

Sebastian: Perfect.

N: The heat, the sudden rush of heat radiating off of the raccoon is immense! It knocks Yuriy off his feet, but you stand firm, and reach for your deck.

Sebastian: Draw!

KABU W/ SEBASTIAN SCENE 6

N: It's a long, hard battle, but in the end you emerge victorious. When you finish helping Sebastian to his feet, a soft wind picks up around you, and you let out a gentle sigh. You know this feeling--every Kabu player knows this feeling. You just ranked up.

Sebastian: Damn, I thought I had you! But if anyone could beat me, I knew it would be you.

Player: It was an honor facing you, Sebastian.

Sebastian: And same to you, my friend.

Yuriy: It was an exciting match!

Player: Yeah.

Sebastian: Indeed.

Baihan: I'll say.

Player: ...

Yuriy: ...

Sebastian: ...

Player: ...

Baihan: ...

Sebastian: ...Ahem.

Yuriy: ...

Player: So... should we go?

END