



01 HERO

Length: 04'56" Experimental film
Position: Director, Writer and Editor
Year: 2024

My work "**HERO**" offers a critical presentation of the mythological development of the Anthropocene, revealing how the process of hero symbolism reinforces hierarchies and ideologies. Drawing on cinematic narrative techniques, I skillfully blend fiction and reality, using visual storytelling to guide the audience into a narrative space filled with tension.

The piece adopts a chaptered structure, resembling scene transitions in a film. Each segment focuses on different aspects of the power dynamics underlying hero worship: from the origins of myths to the commodification of heroes in contemporary contexts, exploring the fluidity of power and identity. I aim to create a sense of deconstruction in time and space, suggesting that power is not static but a dynamic negotiation and manipulation.

"**HERO**" is a metaphorical "visual essay" that challenges traditional hero narratives, reflecting on the hierarchical power relationships concealed within these stories. It seeks to evoke a reexamination of the complex interplay between identity and power in the minds of the audience.

Inspiration & Concept



In ancient China, the imperial examination system, which lasted over 1,300 years from the Sui and Tang dynasties, profoundly shaped the mechanisms of selection and cultural identity in Chinese society. The spirit of this system persists in the modern college entrance examination (gaokao), influencing not only the psychological well-being of students but also playing a pivotal role in the structure of society. My creative inspiration stems from this intersection of history and reality, explored through four chapters—"Imitation," "Violence," "Sex & Desire," and "Hero"—to examine individual growth and societal evolution.

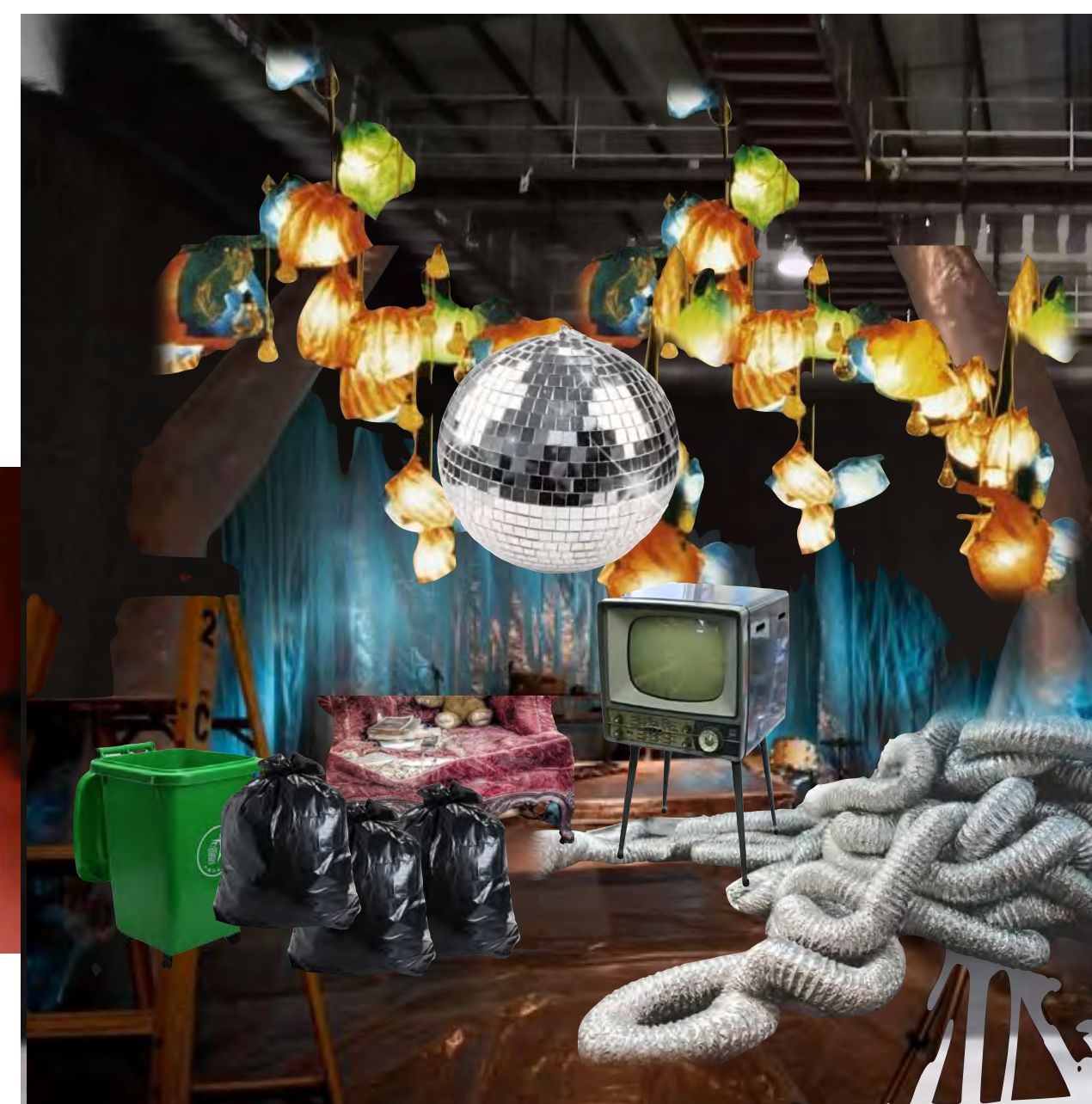
In the collectivist context of Chinese society, the figure of the hero holds particular significance. Heroes are forged by the times and can just as easily be destroyed by them. Under the gaokao system, students are molded into testing machines, forced to cross this "single-log bridge" to reach the next stage of life. However, the pressures and "nightmares" induced by the gaokao often linger for a lifetime, potentially leading to severe post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

I aim to delve deeply into the psychological impact of the gaokao on individuals and how students navigate societal and educational expectations to find self-identity and growth. These theoretical underpinnings provide a rich psychological background for my work, making it more profound and multidimensional.

Four chapters in story

- In the chapter "Imitation," I explore how humans learn fundamental skills through imitation, which marks the starting point of our evolution. As Bandura stated, "Children learn social behavior by observing the significant figures in their lives." In China, under the gaokao system, students develop behavioral patterns to cope with exams by imitating the actions of their teachers and parents.
- In the chapter "Sex & Desire," I examine how primal desires are awakened through social rituals, often accompanied by sacrifice and death. This dynamic is also reflected in the lives of students after the gaokao, as they face various challenges while attempting to release long-suppressed emotions.
- The chapter "Violence" reveals that with the emergence of independent thinking, humans begin to question and challenge authority, often leading to conflict and violence. This behavior is particularly evident under the pressure of the gaokao, where students' competition and confrontation become means to achieve success and power.
- In the chapter "Hero," I discuss how heroes are elevated to a revered status in society, yet may decline for various reasons. This reflects the tension between societal expectations and individual realities. As Nietzsche said, "In all tragedies, the destruction of the hero is inevitable."

Scene Design: This is a post-war setting, where the hanging garments suggest the fallen comrades on the battlefield.

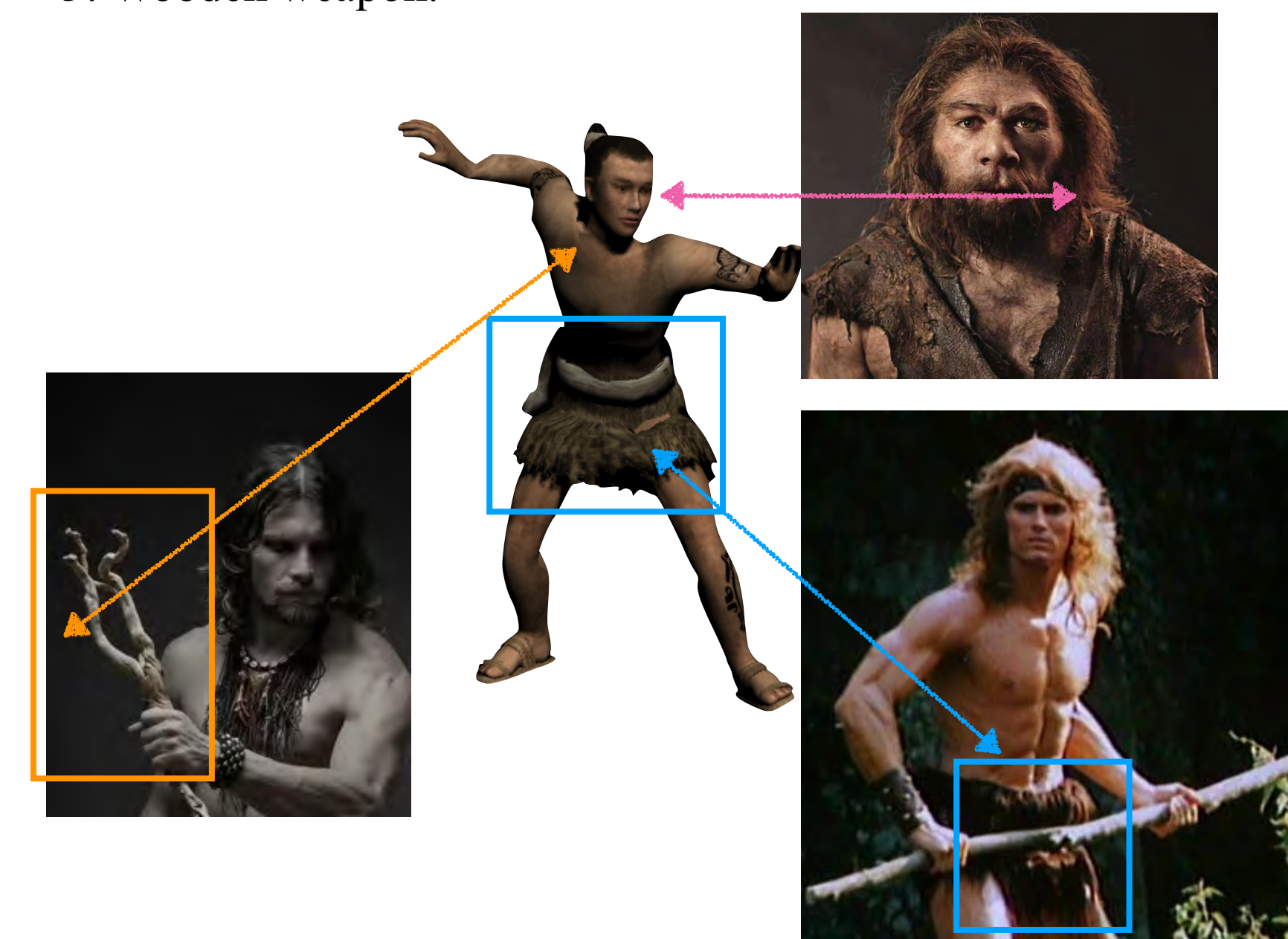


Scene Design: A desolate "junkyard" atmosphere.

Character design

Early Stage Male Character Design:

- Upper body exposed, with some hair attached to the face to simulate a primitive man.
- Lower body wearing shorts, visually wrapped with fabric strips to resemble a small skirt.
- Wooden weapon.

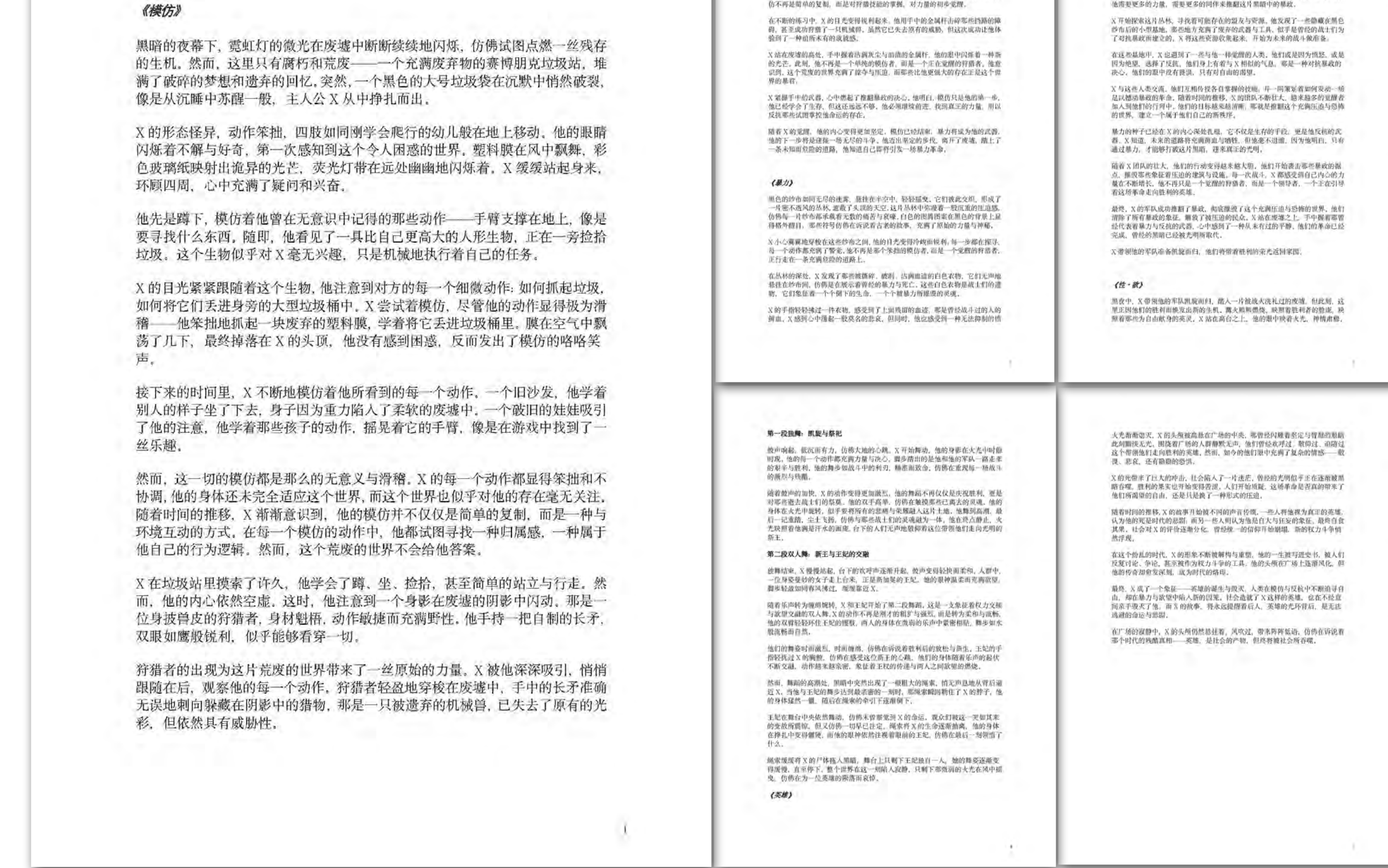


Later Stage Male Character Design:

The face is adorned with written symbols and totems, signifying the character's awakening.



Story



Development

Female Character Design:

The face and entire body are painted white, with blood-red eyes and lips, symbolizing a captivating "queen" accompanied by an underlying sense of danger.



Background Character Costume Design:

Worn-out all-black clothing conceals the figures in darkness, while the whitened faces with indistinct expressions create an eerie and unsettling atmosphere.



Video Links: https://youtu.be/yvCu_ZX5Rco

