

Sagwa the Chinese Siamese Cat

ALL GROWN UP

EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVE: Sometimes acting differently than our true nature can lead us to trouble.

Second Draft, March 21st, 2001

FADE IN:

INT. MAGISTRATE'S STUDY - DAY

BABA and MAMA are writing. SHEEGWA comes in, carrying a scroll in her mouth, followed by SAGWA and DONGWA.

1. **DONGWA**
We're older, so it should go to us!

Sheegwa puts the scroll down and lies flat on top of it.

2. **SHEEGWA**
Well I'm the one who found it and I'm not letting either one of you have it!

3. **BABA**
What's the fuss about?

4. **SHEEGWA**
I found a treasure map in the attic, Baba! A real one!

Baba unrolls the parchment. It's a crudely drawn treasure map with an "X" next to a large tree and a waterfall.

5. **BABA**
Oh my, this takes me back. I drew this map a long time ago, when I was Sheegwa's age.

The kittens are in awe.

6. **SAGWA**
Really? I had no idea it was so old!

7. **BABA**
Old?!

8. **SHEEGWA**
Can we go find the treasure, Baba? Please?

9. **BABA**
There's too many chores to do Besides, whatever I put there is probably long gone.

10. **DONGWA**
You're too little to go on a treasure hunt, anyway. You might fall in a mouse hole!

11. **SHEEGWA**

No I wouldn't!

Dongwa playfully bounces away with the map as Sheegwa chases him. Sagwa tilts her head this way and that as she stares at Baba.

12. **SAGWA**

I can't imagine you being young.

Sagwa runs after her siblings. Baba looks at his reflection in a mirror.

13. **BABA**

Do I seem that old? My coat might not be as shiny, but at least I don't have grey hair. Or do I?

Baba peers in closer to examine his hair.

14. **MAMA**

Of course not. You just have more... character, that's all.

INT. CLUBHOUSE - DAY

Dongwa and Sagwa are putting the finishing touches on a kite. Sheegwa comes in with the treasure map rolled up and tucked under her collar.

15. **SHEEGWA**

Who wants to go on a treasure hunt? I still have Baba's map.

16. **SAGWA**

Not now, we made a new kite. Do you want to watch us fly it?

17. **SHEEGWA**

I always have to watch. Why can't I hold the string?

18. **DONGWA**

Don't be silly, you're too little. You'd fly away.

Sagwa and Dongwa carry off the kite. Sheegwa scampers after them.

19. **SHEEGWA**

That's not true. I'm not a baby anymore.

20. **MAMA (O.S.)**

Sheegwa, it's time for your warm milk and afternoon nap.

Sheegwa sulks away.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

COOK places a saucer of milk before Sheegwa.

21. **COOK**
Here you go, warm milk for little Sheegwa.

22. **SHEEGWA**
Why do people always call me little? I'm almost grown up.

Sheegwa watches her reflection in the milk. She tries to puff herself up. She looks up to see the tail of a shrimp next to a bowl on the table.

23. **SHEEGWA**
I'm even big enough to get a shrimp by myself!

She jumps to catch the shrimp but comes short. She tries a second time. On the third time she hooks a dishcloth and pulls it on top of her. She becomes tangled in the cloth. Mama comes in and helps her out.

24. **MAMA**
Sheegwa, you haven't even touched your milk. Now come for your nap.

25. **SHEEGWA**
Naps are for little babies. Why can't I do what grown ups do?

Mama and Sheegwa leave. Baba comes in and sees the saucer of milk.

26. **BABA**
Look at that, milk just lying there like it's waiting for me. Don't mind if I do.

Baba begins to SFX:LAP UP the milk. Cook takes away the saucer.

27. **COOK**
Here Baba Miao, have some of my rice milk instead. It helps digestion for old stomachs like ours.

28. **BABA**
Old stomach?

Baba sniffs the milky liquid and grimaces. He looks into a shiny copper pot. For a second, his reflection is replaced by that of an old, grey version of himself. He shakes his head and runs out.

INT. CLUBHOUSE - DAY

Baba is sitting before a broken mirror with pots of paint.

29.

BABA

All I need is to cover up the grey a little. After all, you're only as old as you look. Or feel! Just a touch here and there...

As he speaks, he dips the tip of his tail in the paint and touches up his dark spots.

INT. CAT'S HOUSE - DAY

Mama Miao is working on a scroll. In the cat house, Sheegwa tosses and turns, very much awake.

30.

SHEEGWA

Mama, will I still have to take naps when I'm Sagwa's age?

Mama answers without looking up from her work.

31.

MAMA

Of course not, dear. You'll grow up soon enough. Everything in good time.

32.

SHEEGWA

But I want to be grown up NOW!

Sheegwa plops down, disappointed.

33.

BABA (O.S.)

Ahem.

Mama looks up to see Baba strutting. His dark spots are completely painted black, forming an improbable contrast (like a bad dye job).

34.

BABA

Notice anything different?

35.

MAMA

(dumbfounded)

Why I... er... you've done something to your hair. It looks... great!

36.

BABA

Doesn't it? I feel four years younger, at least! I can't wait to show off at the village.

Mama becomes alarmed.

37. **MAMA**
The village? Looking like this?
But... there's the thing you have
to do, the... kite! That's it!
Sagwa's kite is caught in the tree!

38. **BABA**
Oh right. I should do that first.

39. **SHEEGWA**
I can get the kite!

Mama and Baba take no notice of Sheegwa.

40. **BABA**
Come to think of it, there's also
the writing to be done, and the
louver in the clubhouse to set
right.

41. **SHEEGWA**
I'm big enough to get the kite, I
promise!

Sheegwa runs off. Baba slouches, his spirits dampened. He shuffles
off.

42. **BABA**
I guess I forgot all about the
chores. I sure feel tired all of a
sudden. Maybe I'll take a nap
instead of going to the village.

43. **MAMA**
You just need to freshen up a bit,
dear. Maybe take some of the paint
off. Just a tad.

EXT. BACK ALLEY - DAY

A boisterous game of shuttlecock is going on between Dongwa, Sagwa and
two alley cats. ALLEY CAT #1 throws it to Dongwa, who kicks it several
times, skipping and somersaulting.

44. **SAGWA**
Kick it over, you show-off!

Dongwa kicks the shuttlecock, which flies over Sagwa's head and lands
at Baba's feet, near the kitchen entrance. Dongwa looks in disbelief
at Baba's hair colour.

45. **DONGWA**
Baba! What happened to your hair?

46.

BABA

Do you like it? You know, I used to be pretty good at this when I was young.

Baba throws the shuttlecock in the air and bounces it over to the alley cats, who catch it and bounce it from one to the other.

47.

ALLEY CAT #2

You played shuttlecock, sir?

48.

BABA

Oh sure. But you don't have to call me "sir". I'm not that old.

49.

ALLEY CAT #1

How about a game, then?

Baba looks over his shoulder.

50.

BABA

Well, I don't know. I really should go back to my chores. I still know a few moves, though.

51.

SAGWA

I don't know, Baba. We play it pretty hard.

Baba snatches the shuttlecock in mid-air and kicks it around.

52.

BABA

You don't think I can keep up in a game of shuttlecock, is that it?

Baba throws the shuttlecock over Sagwa's head, jumps over her, and catches it on the other side.

53.

ALLEY CAT #2

Over here!

The two alley cats join in.

EXT. MAGISTRATE'S GARDEN - DAY

Sagwa and Dongwa's kite is lodged high in a tree. Sheegwa bats at the string hanging down to the ground. FU-FU flies in.

54.

FU-FU

Hi Sheegwa. What are you doing?

55.

SHEEGWA

Mama and Baba are letting me get Sagwa's kite out of the tree.

56. **FU-FU**
Let me fly up and knock it loose
for you.

Fu-fu crouches to take off.

57. **SHEEGWA**
No, I have to do it by myself. It's
a grown up job, you know. That's
why I'm in charge of doing it.

Sheegwa beams with pride. She jumps up and catches the string. She begins to spin in the wind.

58. **SHEEGWA**
I think it's coming loose. Whoa!

The wind SFX: BLOWS. The kite dislodges and flies away with Sheegwa still hanging on to the string.

59. **FU-FU**
Wait, I've gotcha! Whoops!

Fu-fu catches the trailing string and is also carried off.

EXT. BACK ALLEY - DAY

Baba is lying on the ground, groggy. The shuttlecock is next to him.

60. **ALLEY CAT #1**
I've seen lotsa back flip kicks
before, but never followed by a
landing on your head!

Sagwa covers her face with one paw.

61. **SAGWA**
I'm so embarrassed.

Baba rises groggily.

62. **BABA**
I think I'll just watch you kids
play, maybe give you a few
pointers.

63. **DONGWA**
But what about your chores, Baba?

64. **BABA**
Who wants to spend the entire day
doing boring old chores when we can
spend it together! Ow.

Baba does a little two-step, winces, holds his head and sits down again. He appears discouraged.

65. **BABA**
(sigh) Your mother was right: I have "character". Maybe I am getting old after all.

66. **FU-FU (O.S.)**
Heads up!

Sheegwa and Fu-fu come tumbling down from above on top of Baba.

67. **SHEEGWA**
Look Baba, I got Sagwa's kite down from the tree all by myself!

Sheegwa triumphantly holds up the kite. Baba sees the map still tucked under Sheegwa's collar. He takes it and unrolls it. His spirits lift.

68. **BABA**
My good old treasure map, how we meet again. Maybe this is a sign.

69. **SHEEGWA**
It's a sign that we should go on a treasure hunt!

70. **BABA**
Hmm. Maybe the treasure is still there after all. I wonder what I put there?

71. **SAGWA**
But we wanted to go play with our friends, Baba.

Baba puts one his paws around Dongwa and Sagwa. He squeezes them close.

72. **BABA**
I can be your friend too. From now on, no more old geezer. Think of all the fun we'll have.

73. **SHEEGWA**
I'm the one who found the map, so I get to be the expedition leader!

EXT. FIELD - DAY

A field of grass. Nearby is a rock shaped like a frog. ANGLE ON the map bearing a frog along the dotted-line path to the treasure.

74. **BABA**
You see, there's Frog rock. That means we're on the right path to the waterfall and the treasure.

75.

FU-FU

I'll fly ahead and survey the area!

Fu-fu takes off. Baba rolls up the map and takes it in his mouth.

76.

SHEEGWA

I want to carry the map!

Baba slips the map under Sheegwa's collar. They continue on their path. The cats leap over a log. Sheegwa struggles to climb over it. Sagwa pushes her up with her nose.

77.

SHEEGWA

Quit it! I'm not a baby, I can manage!

Sheegwa stands on top of the log defiantly. She looks around from her vantage point, the wind blowing on the grass and her hair. She notices the other cats moving away.

78.

SHEEGWA

Hey, wait for me! I'm the leader, remember?

She gingerly climbs down and tumbles in the tall grass. She runs up to the head of the line.

79.

SAGWA

I'm tired. Are we there yet?

80.

DONGWA

How should I know? It wasn't my idea to go on this wild goose chase.

81.

BABA

I don't know about geese, but I bet that I can find you a duck!

82.

DONGWA

There's no ducks here. Just grass and rocks!

Baba takes a blade of grass in his mouth and SFX:QUACKS several times.

83.

DONGWA

Very funny. I meant a REAL duck, not just sounding like one...

A duck emerges from between the reeds behind Dongwa and SFX:QUACKS, causing him to jump several feet. It waddles across the path SFX:QUACKING.

84.

SHEEGWA

I want to try!

Sheegwa takes a blade of grass in her mouth and SFX:SQUEEKS. Fu-fu lands next to them.

85. **FU-FU**
We're almost there!

86. **DONGWA**
Finally! I can still get home in time to go to the wharf with my friends.

87. **BABA**
The wharf? Oh, we decided to go to the village instead.

Dongwa slouches.

88. **DONGWA**
"We"? But they're MY friends!

89. **BABA**
You can come along if you want. You too, Sagwa. Fu-fu and I are going to the cave tomorrow.

Baba and Sheegwa march onward. Sagwa glares at Fu-fu, who grins sheepishly.

90. **SAGWA**
You told him about the cave? That's our secret place!

91. **FU-FU**
Sorry. I let it slip out. I didn't have the heart to say no.

92. **DONGWA**
I think I liked Baba better when he was feeling old.

EXT. OVERLOOKING HILL - DAY

Baba and the kittens stop at the top of a hill. Below is a valley with trees and a waterfall. Sheegwa unrolls the map.

93. **SHEEGWA**
Since I'm the expedition leader, I'll organize the search.

94. **DONGWA**
Well I'm taking over.

Dongwa tries to take the map, but Sheegwa dodges him. The wind catches the map and whisks it away.

95. **DONGWA**
How can you lead the expedition if
you can't even hang on to the map?
We should have left you at home.

EXT. WATERFALL VALLEY - DAY

Large trees line the pond at the foot of a short waterfall. A small stream runs off and away. Sheegwa comes out from under a root, dirty, carrying a pebble in her mouth. She shows it to Baba.

96. **SHEEGWA**
Is this it, Baba?

97. **BABA**
Not quite. But it's a very nice
pebble, Sheegwa.

Dongwa, Sagwa and Fu-fu rush back, out of breath.

98. **SAGWA**
We couldn't find anything either.
Except for a squirrel, and it
wasn't very friendly.

She looks over her shoulder with apprehension. Baba is disappointed, and suddenly seems tired.

99. **BABA**
Well, it's been so many years, and
without the map...

100. **DONGWA**
Baba, look! There's a plum tree
over in that field!

Dongwa bounds lightly over a tree branch spanning the stream.

101. **SAGWA**
Can we go, Baba? I'm hungry!

102. **BABA**
I don't know, that branch looks
pretty shaky, and we should start
back towards home...

Baba looks from Sagwa and Dongwa, who look to him with expectation.

103. **BABA**
Hey, that's the old Baba talking.
We don't want him around, do we?

Sagwa bounces across the branch. Sheegwa follows.

104. **SHEEGWA**
Yay! Plums!

105.

BABA

No Sheegwa, you better stay here
with Fu-fu. We'll be right back.
Here I go... oh my... whoops!

Baba gingerly crosses the branch, almost falling. Sagwa and Dongwa are already far off.

106.

SHEEGWA

They're treating me like a baby
again, just because I lost the map.

A SFX:FLUTTERING sound makes her look up. Above, in a small bush overhanging the waterfall, is the map.

107.

SHEEGWA

The map! If I get it back, I'll
prove to them that I'm grown up!

Sheegwa begins to climb the waterfall. Fu-fu flies after her.

108.

FU-FU

Maybe we should wait for them?

EXT. WATERFALL SUMMIT - DAY

Sheegwa scrambles up to the top, followed by Fu-fu who lands next to her. She bats at the map, which falls in the pool of water and floats towards the middle. Sheegwa steps onto a stone near the edge.

109.

FU-FU

Be careful!

110.

SHEEGWA

I can almost reach it.

While Sheegwa bats at the map, the stone (in fact a turtle) begins to move. Its head emerges from the water, and it SFX:SNAPS at her.

111.

SHEEGWA

Whoa!

Sheegwa SFX:SPLASHES into the water. The current carries her towards the waterfall, but she climbs onto a rock jutting over the edge, dripping wet and SFX:SNEEZING. She's managed to grab the map.

112.

FU-FU

Don't move, I'll get help!

Fu-fu flies off.

EXT. PLUM TREE - DAY

Sagwa and Dongwa are at the foot of the plum tree while Baba is perched precariously at the very top on a drooping branch, reaching for a juicy plum.

113. **SAGWA**
You see Dongwa, I told you Baba
could climb all the way to the top!

114. **BABA**
(*shakily*)
Success belongs to the daring.

115. **FU-FU**
Baba! Baba!

Fu-fu SFX:CRASHES in the tree, causing Baba and himself to fall to the ground (SFX:THUD).

116. **FU-FU**
It's Sheegwa! She's in trouble!

Fu-fu flies off and the cats follow.

EXT. WATERFALL SUMMIT - DAY

Fu-fu lands as Baba, Sagwa and Dongwa climb over the edge. They see Sheegwa on her perch. Dongwa crouches to leap.

117. **DONGWA**
I can reach her, Baba! I can be
daring too, just like you!

Dongwa crouches to jump. Baba stops him.

118. **BABA**
No Dongwa! We are not playing games
anymore. It would be foolish to
leap blindly. Help me.

With Dongwa and Sagwa's help, Baba pushes a dead tree branch into the water. It is carried by the current and blocks against the rock and the shore, forming a bridge. Baba carefully crosses it over to Sheegwa. As he steps off the branch, it goes over the waterfall's edge and SFX:SPLASHES into the shallow pool below.

119. **SHEEGWA**
We lost our bridge!

120. **BABA**
That's okay, we'll still manage to
get down.

Baba looks down over the waterfall's edge at the trees rooted below. One of them extends its branches to within a few feet of them.

121. **BABA**
Hang on tight to me, Sheegwa.

Sheegwa climbs on Baba's back. He leaps towards the nearest branch (SFX:RUSTLE).

122.

BABA

See, I told you it would be easy...

The branch SFX:CRACKS and they both SFX:SPLASH into the pool a few feet below.

EXT. WATERFALL POOL - DAY

Baba and Sheegwa come out of the water and rest at the foot of the tree. Sheegwa drops the treasure map. the paint has washed out of Baba's hair. Sheegwa looks dejected.

123.

SHEEGWA

I'm sorry I got us in trouble,
Baba. I wanted to act grown up by
getting the map back.

Baba begins to groom Sheegwa to comfort her.

124.

BABA

And I thought that carrying on like
a kitten would make me younger.

125.

SHEEGWA

What's this?

At the foot of a tree is a hole. Sheegwa pokes her head in and comes out with a collar in her mouth.

126.

BABA

You found my old secret hiding
place! I thought this collar made
me look like a baby, so I hid it
here.

127.

SHEEGWA

I know what that feels like.

128.

BABA

Tell you what: this can become YOUR
secret place! When you're big, you
can come back and remember how you
once thought you'd never grow up.

Baba takes the ribbon from Sheegwa's head and places it inside. He dips his tail in some of the paint that washed away and traces a fresh "X" on the treasure map. Fu-fu, Sagwa and Dongwa join them.

129.

SAGWA

That was amazing! How did you know
to make a bridge with the branch?

130.

BABA

I guess that's the benefit of
having grey hair. Not a bad thing
after all, uh?

