

The Art Of Peace: Pilot Episode

Written by

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Based on a true story

FADE IN:

1 EXT. AIKIKAI HOMBU DOJO - DAY (10 SEC)

Tokyo, 1954:

TERRY is walking towards the Hombu dojo. A big poster saying "AIKIDO Demonstration Today" is hanging in front of the entrance. He enters the building.

2 INT. AIKIKAI HOMBU DOJO - DAY (10 SEC)

MORIHEI and TADASHI are demonstrating the martial art. Both are wearing their Keikogi with black belts, looking deeply concentrated.

Spectators are sitting in the background.

Morihei and Tadeshi gain center stage. The background gets blurry and fades into black.

3 INT. DARK STAGE (45 SEC)

A spotlight is slicing the black space and illuminates Morihei and TADASHI. Their movements look like dancing. Energy in form of blue glow is flowing through their motions. They exchange their energy while moving synchronized.

4 INT. TRAIN WAGON -AFTERNOON (25 SEC)

TOKYO, 1962:

TERRY is sitting in his seat. Bored, he's flipping through a book. The brown leather bag he carries with him is laying on the floor beside him.

At one station the door opens and the quiet is shattered by a DRUNK MAN's curses. He is big and dirty. His face is not revealed yet.

DRUNK MAN
(tripping over entrance steps)
Fucking train. Always late. 1

Terry looks up, visibly concerned.

5 EXT. IWAMA DOJO - AFTERNOON (5 SEC)

One can see the Iwama Dojo and it's yard. There is a faint sound of cicadas chirping in the background.

TERRY (V.O.)
(chuckles)
Sorry, I got excited.

2

MORIHEI (V.O.)
Yes, understandable,...

3

6 INT. IWAMA DOJO - AFTERNOON (30 SEC)

Morihei and Terry are sitting on Zabutons on tatami, in the Iwama Dojo in front of the Shomen.

Both are having Tea served on a Chabudai in front of them.

MORIHEI (CONT'D)
(pours Tea in Terry's cup)
...but tell me more about the demonstration. The way you described it, it sounded magical.

4

TERRY
Of course O'Sensei. It was the first time I got in contact with Aikido. I was astounded. It was at your demonstration I experienced this extraordinary sense of harmony.

5

7 INT. DARK STAGE (30 SEC)

The Demonstration is playing out in the background. We can see Terry and Morihei in the front, talking.

TERRY (V.O.) (CONT'D)
I had always been interested in Martial Arts but had never seen such a precise and peaceful way of execution. It almost seemed as if the two of you were dancing. I wanted to be able to experience this magic myself.

6

MORIHEI (V.O.)
 I remember seeing you and the spark in
 your eyes. I was eager to see where
 that ambition would lead you.

7

8 INT. IWAMA DOJO - AFTERNOON (20 SEC)

Morihei takes a sip from his tea.

TERRY
 I hope I did not disappoint you.

8

Morihei drinking, reminds Terry of his own beverage and he takes a sip from his tea.

TERRY (CONT'D)
 (scrunching nose; smacking lips)
 Do you have some sugar?

9

MORIHEI
 (first frowning, then smiling)
 No.

10

Terry smiles embarrassed.

TERRY
 (excited)
 After years of training I wanted to use the techniques I have learned. I wanted to use my muscles...And when I saw that drunk, rude man, I... just felt like that was the perfect opportunity to do so.

11

9 INT. TRAIN WAGON - AFTERNOON (45 SEC)

Disturbed, Terry looks up and lowers his book.

DRUNK MAN
 (tripping over entrance steps)
 Fucking train. Always late.

12

The drunk man staggers into Terry's car.

A woman holding her baby is standing right next to the entrance. The drunk man jostles her away.

DRUNK MAN
(shouting at the woman with the
baby)
Hey!

13

She gasps. The blow sends her sprawling into the laps of an elderly couple (old man, old woman). They all look frightened.

DRUNK MAN (CONT'D)
(angry, stumbles towards the old
couple)
Why are you looking at me like that,
huh!? Fuck off!

14

The woman holding her baby stands up and hurries away.

Terry stands up, still holding the book in his right hand.

He turns to CAMERA:

TERRY
This is where I got excited. You need to know, I am young and in pretty good shape. I have been putting solid eight hours of Aikido training nearly every day for the past three years. As you can tell.

15

(winks)
I like to throw and grapple. You know, I'm a tough guy. My problem was, my martial skills were untested in actual combat because as a student of Aikido I was not allowed to fight.

(sighing; rolling eyes)
I know, you said it again and again,...

10 INT. IWAMA DOJO - AFTERNOON (20 SEC)

Morihei and Terry are sitting on the floor with their tea.

TERRY (CONT'D)
...Aikido is the art of reconciliation. Whoever has the mind to fight has broken his connection with the universe. If you try to dominate people, you are already

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defeated. We study how to resolve conflict, not how to start it.

MORIHEI

Yes. There are no contests in the Art of Peace. A true warrior is invincible because he or she contests with nothing. Defeat means to defeat the mind of contention that we harbor within.

17

11 INT. CLASSROOM (20 SEC)

CHIBI MORIHEI is standing next to a chalkboard. The word Aikido is written on it.

CHIBI MORIHEI

(pointing at "Ai")

As you know Terry, "Ai", the most important kanji, stands for...

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The kanji "Ai" and "= harmony, unifying" appears on the chalkboard.

CHIBI MORIHEI (CONT'D)

...harmony and the unification of the universal mind. It is through the universal mind we are all intertwined. Everything you do or think affects everyone around you.

19

Chibi Morihei bows.

12 INT. IWAMA DOJO - AFTERNOON (15 SEC)

Morihei and Terry are sitting on the floor. Moriheis tea is empty, Terrys tea is still full.

MORIHEI (CONT'D)

With the Power of Ai, which is established by merging forces, we keep the Balance which governs the Universe and keeps it in harmony.

20

TERRY

(agrees nodding)

And I listened to those words and
tried hard to follow them. My
forbearance even exalted me and I felt
both tough and superior. In my heart,
however, I wanted a legitimate
opportunity...

21

13 INT. TRAIN WAGON - AFTERNOON (2:10 MIN)

Without realizing, the drunk man is staggering towards Terry.

Terry stands up.

TERRY (CONT'D) (V.O.)
...whereby I might save the innocent
by destroying the guilty.

22

The drunk man recognizes a chance to focus his rage.

DRUNK MAN
(roaring)
Aha! A foreigner! You need a lesson in
Japanese manners!

23

Terry holds on lightly to the commuter strap overhead and gives him a slow look of disgust and dismissal. Terry waits for the drunk man to make the first move. Terry wants him mad, so he purses his lips and blows him an insolent kiss.

Terry turns to CAMERA:

TERRY
(mischievously)
This is also not what Aikido is about.

24

The drunk man clenches his fist. Terry and the drunk man both look tense.

DRUNK MAN
(hollers)
Alright! You're gonna get a lesson!

25

The drunk gathers himself for a rush at Terry. Terry squares up to prepare for the attack.

OLD MAN (O.S.)
(ear splitting)

HEY!

Terry wheels to his left; the drunk spins to his right.

Both stare down at a little OLD MAN. He is well into his seventies. A tiny gentleman, sitting there, immaculate in his kimono.

He takes no notice of Terry, but beams delightedly at the drunk man, as though he had a most important, most welcome secret to share.

OLD MAN
(beckoning drunk man over)
C'mere. C'mere and talk with me.

26

27

The drunk man follows, as if on a string. He planted his feet belligerently in front of the old man.

DRUNK MAN
(roaring)
Why the hell should I talk to you!?

28

The drunk man now has his back to Terry.

OLD MAN
(beaming at drunk man)
What'cha been drinkin'?
(eyes sparkling with interest)

29

Terry follows the event with a sceptical eye.

DRUNK MAN
(bellowing)
I've been drinking Sake and it's none
of your business!

30

Flecks of spit spatter the old man.

OLD MAN
Ok, that's wonderful, absolutely
wonderful! You see, I love sake too.
Every night, me and my wife, we warm
up a little bottle of sake and take it
out into the garden, and we sit on an
old wooden bench. We watch the sun go
down, and we look to see how our

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persimmon tree is doing. My great-grandfather planted that tree, and we worry about whether it will recover from those ice storms we had last winter.

As the drunk man struggles to follow the old man's conversation, the drunk man's face begins to soften. His fists slowly unclenches.

OLD MAN (CONT'D)

Our tree had done better than I expected, though especially when you consider the poor quality of the soil. It is gratifying to watch when we take our sake and go out to enjoy the evening - even when it rains!

32

The old man looks up at the drunk man, eyes twinkling.

DRUNK MAN

(softly)

Yeah, I love persimmons too...

33

(voice trailing off)

Terry stands in the back, looking confused.

OLD MAN

(smiling, indicates to the drunk man to sit beside him)

Yes, and I'm sure you have a wonderful wife.

34

DRUNK MAN

(crying, takes the seat next to the old man)

No, my wife died. I don't got no wife, I don't got no home, I don't got no job. I am so ashamed of myself.

35

In shame, the drunk man is covering his face with his hands. Terry feels bad for the drunk man and makes a pensive face.

TERRY (V.O.)

Standing there in my well-scrubbed youthful pride, with my make-this-

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world-safe-for-democracy
righteousness, I suddenly felt dirtier
and more ashamed than he was.

The train arrives at Terrys stop. The doors open.

OLD MAN (O.S.)
(clucking sympathetically)
My, my, that is a difficult
predicament, indeed. Go on, tell me
about it.

37

Terry turns his head for one last look. The drunk man is sprawled on the seat, his head in the old man's lap. The old man is softly stroking the filthy, matted hair. There is moving, glowing energy between the drunk man and the old man. It's the same kind of energy that Terry saw at the Aikido demonstration between Morihei and Nobuyoshi.

14 EXT. TRAIN STATION - AFTERNOON (15 SEC)

The train pulls away, Terry looks after it. He has a thoughtful look on his face. He walks towards a bench in front of the station building and takes a seat.

15 INT. TRAIN - AFTERNOON (15 SEC)

Flashback of the old man softly stroking the filthy, matted hair.

TERRY (V.O.)
What I had wanted to do with muscle
had been accomplished with kind words.
I had just seen Aikido tried in
combat, and the essence of it was
love. I would have to practice the art
with an entirely different spirit. It
would be a long time before I could
speak about the resolution of
conflict.

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16 EXT. IWAMA DOJO - EVENING (5 SEC)

One can see the Iwama Dojo and it's yard. The sound of the cicadas chirping in the background is now amplified.

17 INT. IWAMA DOJO - EVENING (10 SEC)

Morihei takes a sip of tea.

MORIHEI

The old man in your story seems to be
a truly wise man.

39

Shame is an internal process. It does
not really exist but in your mind.

40

18 EXT. TANABE - DAY (15 SEC)

Morihei as a young man is standing in front of his family home. He hesitates for a second.

MORIHEI (CONT'D) (V.O.)

I learned this when my father died. My father has always been an important figure in my life. So naturally, when he died, I lost a sense of connection to the universe.

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Morihei knocks on the front door and enters.

19 INT. TANABE - DAY (30 SEC)

Morihei takes off his shoes as he walks in. Morihei walks into the kitchen and sees his MOTHER at the kitchen table staring into the void. They look at each other. Morihei realizes that his fathers condition must be worse than he expected it to be.

Worried, Morihei runs towards the door to his fathers room and notices him dead in the bed. One can see the look of regret on his face. Morihei seems frightened and only slowly takes a few steps towards his father. As he sits by his side, a tear runs down his cheek.

Moriheis mother followed him. He turns around.

MOTHER

(crying)

You should have been by his side.

42

Focus on Moriheis eyes.

MORIHEI (V.O.)
 I felt lost and did not really know
 how to cope with that. It felt as if I
 had no purpose.

FADE IN:

20 INT. IWAMA DOJO - EVENING (25 SEC)

Transition from Moriheis young, sad eyes to Moriheis old, wise and contented eyes.

MORIHEI (CONT'D)
 But what I had discovered was that if
 you pay attention, you will notice,
 the universe has set a path that was
 designed for you specifically.

ZOOM OUT on Morihei.

MORIHEI (CONT'D)
 All you have to do is find your path
 and accept whatever can not be
 changed.

TERRY
 I'm sorry for your loss. But you are
 right. Some things you simply can not
 control.

MORIHEI
 It is wired into the human experience
 to suffer in this world. The art lies
 within resolving conflict.
 Everybody has their own path laid out
 by the universe. Don't be fooled and
 think that everything you want to
 achieve will be granted. You have to
 risk in order to achieve. Finding my
 way wasn't easy either.

21 EXT. BATTLE FIELD - DAY (15 SEC)

Morihei is lying at the edge of a trench. he has his finger on the trigger and is about to shoot. He hesitates, looking raddled and devastated. Morihei finally decides to pull the trigger, the screen turns red.

MORIHEI (CONT'D) (V.O.)
 When I was a young man I wanted to make my family proud, so I decided to join the army. My duty was to defend our country. I did not realize what that meant. When faced with the obligation to kill another human being, I knew that that was not the way I wanted to resolve conflict. This was when I first...

22 INT. IWAMA DOJO - NIGHT (40 SEC)

Morihei and Terry are sitting at the table with tea.

MORIHEI (CONT'D)
 ...started my journey on developing Aikido. I developed the moral principle which states that if you injure an opponent it is the same as if you were to injure yourself. To control aggression without inflicting injury is the art of peace.

TERRY
 (nodding)
 For me, this seems to be the only path I want to follow.

MORIHEI
 You will find your way.

TERRY
 Will I?

Fast montage of pictures of Moriheis life and pictures with different aesthetics, fitting to what he is saying. The last picture is of the Iwama Dojo at night.

MORIHEI (CONT'D) (V.O.)
 Each day of human life contains joy and anger, pain and pleasure, darkness and light, growth and decay. Each moment is etched with nature's grand design - do not deny or oppose the cosmic order of things. Joyfully look forward to each day and accept whatever it brings.

23 EXT. IWAMA DOJO - NIGHT (5 SEC)

One can see the Iwama Dojo with its yard in the night. One can see stars in the night sky. Cicadas are distinctively chirping in the background.

The scene fades into black. The words

"THE ART OF PEACE

The life of Morihei Ueshiba. The founder of Aikido"

appear in the center.