

LEEWARD

AN IMMERSIVE MARTIAL-ARTS SHORT

Ancient secrets. Modern dangers. One promise: choose peace.

LOGLINE A formidable Wing Chun master opens her secluded forest kwoon to reveal secrets passed on from a former student of Kung Fu lest they be forgotten—provided students use them only in self-defense or the defense of others.

THE STORY

For generations, the most dangerous secrets of Wing Chun Kung Fu were passed quietly from master to trusted student, protected from outsiders and preserved through discipline. Now RANIA VERNELLE—a charismatic, fiercely capable Wing Chun master—has decided the time has come to share them.

Inside a breathtaking Cantonese kwoon hidden in a living forest, Rania welcomes the audience as her newest fellow student. But before the first secret is revealed, she requires a solemn pledge: choose peace. What follows is not a lesson in aggression, but a thrilling initiation into survival—ancient knowledge capable of stopping stronger, faster, and even armed attackers.

With warmth, dry humor, and explosive physical precision, Rania brings the old teachings to life. A battered crash-test dummy named Gaa Yun endures a blistering seven-strikes-per-second assault and a takedown designed to neutralize a much larger opponent. Her trusted Toudai—three years into a five-year vow of silence—then helps demonstrate how deceptively simple movements can defeat punches, spinning kicks, knives, and firearms.

As sunlight gives way to golden hour and lantern light, the revelations grow more dangerous. Rania teaches the audience to move against an incoming strike, invade the space of a spinning attacker, and remain counterintuitively close to an armed assailant. Finally, she entrusts us with her favorite secret: when every defense has failed, the attacker’s intended target can itself become a weapon.

ACCOLADES

Leeward is *currently* a Finalist in the Independent Shorts Awards International Film Festival and the Mei International Film Festival, and *was* a Finalist in the Cannes World Film Festival and the Wiki: The World's Fastest Screenplay Contest.

WHY IT STANDS OUT

- A magnetic female lead with strength, humor, authority, and soul.
- A fresh fusion of martial-arts cinema, immersive instruction, and philosophical storytelling.
- A visually evolving single location—from sunlit serenity to lantern-lit mystery.
- One speaking role gives a skilled lead performer a memorable showcase.
- While dropping a few hints, the source of the secrets is never revealed, making the mystery speculative, and leaving the audience wanting more.

PRODUCTION APPEAL

Contained, efficient, and highly producible, Leeward unfolds in one atmospheric location with only one speaking actor, one silent supporting performer, and a crash-test dummy. The compact cast and single setting simplify scheduling, sound recording, coverage, company moves, and production logistics—making the screenplay unusually easy to produce, direct, and film. Its action is performance-driven rather than effects-heavy, while changing daylight, a natural forest soundscape, and practical lantern light create a rich cinematic identity without demanding a sprawling budget.

THE FINAL IMPACT

The greatest secret is not how to destroy an opponent—it is possessing the power to do so and choosing restraint. As combat gives way to fireflies, frogs, and tea shared between master and student, Leeward leaves us with something more enduring than technique: the responsibility that comes with knowledge.