

DUNGEONS AND DRAGONS

"The Treasure of Tardos"

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First Draft:
3/4/84

MARVEL PRODUCTIONS, LTD.

CAST LIST

HANK
SHEILA
ERIC
BOBBY
DIANA
PRESTO
UNI

DUNGEON MASTER

VENGER
SHADOWDEMON

QUEEN SULINARA ----- The beautiful warrior Queen of Tardos Keep. Strong and proud character.

MAJOR-DOMO ----- Sulinara's second in command. A competent bureaucrat; no hint of servility or toadyism.

GARDENER ----- A tall, kindly old man who tends the dragonbane gardens. His voice sounds slightly like Dungeon Master's, which is appropriate, since he is Dungeon Master in disguise.

ORCS ----- A number of them; some have one line each; most just hiss and growl.

DEMODRAGON ----- A gigantic monster, half-dragon, half-demon, with two heads that breathe fire and ice. He roars.

DUNGEONS AND DRAGONS

"The Treasure of Tardos"

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

EXT. REALM - ESTABLISHING PANORAMIC - DAY

PAN across the magical landscape. It is a beautiful day; strange, brightly-colored birds flit by, flowers are blooming, and the whole scene is reminiscent of the Pastoral Symphony sequence in Fantasia. PAN to the bank of a river, where we see HANK, SHEILA, DIANA, ERIC and PRESTO, all watching BOBBY trying to give UNI a bath in the shallow water. Bobby's club lies on the shore; the others hold their weapons.

CLOSER - FAVORING BOBBY AND UNI

The unicorn is not amused. She keeps trying to wriggle free, much to the amusement of everyone except Bobby.

BOBBY

C'mon, Uni -- hold still! It's
for your own good!

ERIC

(Derisively)
Yeah -- nobody likes a dirty
unicorn!

UNI

(BAWLS)

She slips free, causing Bobby to lose his balance. The little barbarian windmills for a second, then sits down with a SPLASH!

ERIC

(LAUGHING)
This is a riot! You guys should
take this act on the road!

ON BOBBY AND UNI

Bobby tosses a disgusted look O.S. at Eric.

BOBBY

Aw, grow up, Eric!

He lunges for Uni, who dodges him. Bobby lands full-length in

the shallows, SPLASHING a sheet of water O.S.

ON OTHERS

The water SPLASHES over Eric, soaking him. Eric reacts predictably to this.

ERIC

Hey! I'm all wet!

DIANA

Tell us something we don't know!

ANOTHER ANGLE - ALL

Bobby is still trying to grab Uni, who wants no part of it.

PRESTO

Maybe I can come up with something that'll help!

CLOSE ON PRESTO

He takes off his hat and makes magic passes over it.

PRESTO (CONT)

Hocus Pocus, Alla-kazeen --
here's something to make Uni nice
and clean!

The hat trembles, then spits out a string of irridescant bubbles that trail O.S.

WIDE - RIVER

The bubbles settle into the river, producing a magnificent bubble bath. Two huge bubbles surround Bobby and Uni, floating them into the air.

BOBBY

Hey! Lemme down!

ON UNI

Floating slowly upward.

UNI

(Confused WHINNY)

She pricks the bubble with her horn; it bursts, and she promptly falls O.S.

UNI (CONT)

(WAAAHH!!)

ON DIANA AND SHEILA

They stretch Sheila's cloak between them like a fireman's net, and catch Uni in it.

SHEILA
 (To Uni)
 Don't you know unicorns can't fly?

UNI
 ("Uh-huh!")

ON DIANA

She hurls her staff like a javelin up O.S.

ON BOBBY

Still floating, struggling within the bubble, which gives as he pushes against it. The staff POPS the bubble and he falls O.S.

BOBBY
 WHOOAH!

ON HANK

Looking up O.S., arms ready to catch Bobby.

HANK
 Relax, barbarian! I've got you!

He catches Bobby; the impact knocks him to the ground.

HANK (CONT)
Oof! You're getting bigger
 -- and heavier!

He and Bobby grin at each other. Uni runs INTO SHOT and snuggles up against Bobby, who hugs her.

UNI
 (Contented SIGH)

ON ERIC

Seated on the riverbank, scowling. He pulls off a boot and empties water from it.

ERIC
 Since I'm wet anyway, maybe
 I'll just go for a swim!

He stands and starts to unbutton his cloak, when suddenly a huge MOSASAUR rises out of the river in a cascade of white water. It

surges by Eric, mouth open, teeth gleaming.

MOSASAUR
(ROARS)

Eric stumbles backward in terror.

ERIC
YIIII!! Then again, maybe
not!

ON OTHERS

Ready for danger instantly; Bobby grabs his club and Hank readies an energy bolt.

WIDE - INCLUDING RIVER

The Mosasaur sounds like a whale and swims O.S. quickly. The kids look at each other in surprise.

HANK
That thing wasn't attacking --
it was running scared!

BOBBY
(Nervously)
What's big enough to scare that?

ON ERIC

Backing up, shield before him; PAN with him.

ERIC
I don't think I wanna know!

He backs into DUNGEON MASTER, who is calmly standing behind him.

ERIC (CONT)
YIPE!!

He antics in comic fright and spins around, peering cautiously over his shield -- then reacts, half-relieved, half-annoyed, as he realizes who it is.

ERIC (CONT)
Oh -- it's only you.

WIDE - ALL

As they react to the sudden appearance of their mentor.

HANK
Dungeon Master!

DUNGEON MASTER

You are wise to be cautious, my young friends. There is great danger ahead.

ERIC

(Sarcastically)

Surprise, surprise.

ANOTHER ANGLE

Dungeon Master steps onto a flat rock before them, like a teacher mounting a podium.

DUNGEON MASTER

(Ominiously)

A danger so great, in fact, that its very existence might keep you from ever finding your way home.

The others react in consternation to this. Even Eric shuts up and listens. Uni cowers behind Bobby, peering fearfully out.

DIANA

Who -- or what -- is this danger?

CLOSE ON DUNGEON MASTER

He looks appropriately grim -- this is serious stuff.

DUNGEON MASTER

Demodragon. A terrible creature, half demon, half dragon. His power could devastate the realm.

ON KIDS

SHEILA

What can we do?

DUNGEON MASTER (O.S.)

Seek out Tardos Keep.

CLOSE ON DUNGEON MASTER

DUNGEON MASTER (CONT)

This will aid you in finding it.

He pulls an ancient scroll from his robes.

WIDE - ALL

Dungeon Master hands the scroll to Hank.

HANK

But how do we stop Demodragon?

DUNGEON MASTER

By aiding he who stands against
you.

ON KIDS

Eric tosses up his hands in exasperation.

ERIC

What's that supposed to mean? Why
can't we ever get a straight answer
from --

The rest of the kids turn toward him and shout him down as one.

HANK, PRESTO, BOBBY,
DIANA, SHEILA

(Unision)

SHUT UP, ERIC!!

UNI

("Yeah!")

Eric is nonplussed by this.

ERIC

(Weakly)

Just trying to help . . .

The rest of them turn back to look O.S. at Dungeon Master.

HANK

Dungeon Master, we --

They react in surprise.

THEIR POV - FLAT ROCK

Dungeon Master is nowhere to be seen.

PRESTO (O.S.)

He's gone again!

ON KIDS - FAVORING HANK AND ERIC

Eric tries to grab the scroll from Hank.

ERIC

Let's see what this is!

Hank pulls it away from him.

HANK
Take it easy, Eric! It's
fragile!

CLOSE ON SCROLL

As Hank's hands carefully unroll its brittle length, revealing an ancient map, complete with Gothic lettering. "Tardos Keep" is marked with an X beyond "the Dustlands", which lie in turn beyond "the Wondrous Wood." "Alicorn River" flows through the wood.

PRESTO (O.S.)
Hey! It's a map!

Diana's hand ENTERS SHOT and she points to the X.

DIANA (O.S.)
There's Tardos Keep.

ON KIDS

Hank rolls up the map and stuffs it inside his tunic.

HANK
Okay -- let's go!

Eric promptly turns and heads off to the rear at a brisk walk. The others look after him in surprise. Sheila runs after him, slipping her hood over her head and vanishing as she does so.

ON ERIC

Hustling along. Suddenly he's brought up short as Sheila appears in front of him. She folds her arms and regards him with good-humored exasperation.

SHEILA
You're going the wrong way,
Eric.

Eric gives up, turns and trudges back O.S., Sheila following.

ERIC
(SIGHS)
I know I'm going to regret this.

WIPE TO:

LONG SHOT - DEVASTATION

PAN with the kids as they walk through a fire-blackened area, with charcoal tree stumps everywhere. Soot and ashes rise in dark clouds about their feet.

DIANA

According to the map, this
is supposed to be the Wondrous
Wood.

(Looks about)

Doesn't look too wondrous to me.

ERIC

What did you expect? That map's
probably older than Dungeon
Master -- if that's possible!

They come to the frozen surface of a river. Hank pulls out the
map and looks at it again.

HANK

The map says this is Alicorn
River.

Sheila looks over his shoulder at the map.

SHEILA

It doesn't say anything about
it being frozen.

CLOSER ON THEM

Hank looks about them in sudden realization.

HANK

The map isn't wrong -- the land is!
Something's burned down the wood
and frozen the river!

BOBBY

Yeah -- but what?

UNI

("Yeah, what?")

Suddenly the ground begins to shake under them. A low RUMBLING
rises. They look about apprehensively.

ERIC

Great! Just what we need --
an earthquake!

DIANA

It's worse than that! Look!

She points O.S. The others look and react in fear.

THEIR POV - STAMPEDE

A stampede of creatures, all different kinds, both herbivores and

carnivores, wrapped in black clouds of soot and ash as they THUNDER toward us.

HANK (O.S.)
Stampede!

SHEILA (O.S.)
We'll be trampled!

ON KIDS

The RUMBLING is louder now, the ground shaking more violently. Hank fires a volley of energy bolts into the air.

HANK
Maybe I can turn them with these!

ON STAMPEDE

The energy bolts EXPLODE like fireworks above and before the thundering herd, but the panicked animals do not change course.

ON PRESTO

He rummages frantically in his hat.

PRESTO
There's gotta be something in here that'll stop them!

He pulls out a lariat, already twirling; it's all he can do to hang onto it. Then it gets the better of him, wrapping him up and hogtying him.

PRESTO (CONT)
Hey!

DIANA (O.S.)
Maybe there is -- but that isn't it!

WIDE - FAVORING BOBBY

Clouds from the approaching creatures drift INTO SHOT. The kids cower back, realizing there's no place to run. Bobby runs into f.g.

BOBBY
Eric's right -- we need an earthquake!

He hefts his club over his head; it glows as he SMASHES it against the ground before him. A jagged fissure opens up, snaking toward us and O.S.

WIDE ANGLE OVERHEAD SHOT

With both the kids and the approaching stampede. The fissure widens, forming a crevasse between the kids and the creatures, forcing the stampede to split in two and pass on either side of the kids.

ON KIDS

Silhouettes in the clouds of ash and soot, as the last of the creatures races by. The RUMBLING fades and the clouds clear, showing the kids soot-blackened and COUGHING, but alive.

KIDS
(COUGHING)

SHEILA
Quick thinking, little brother!

BOBBY
(Proudly)
Thanks, Sis!

Then he looks about, concerned.

BOBBY (CONT)
Hey! Where's Uni?

ON PILE OF ASHES

Uni rises from a pile of ashes, her coat changed from white to black. She shakes herself, producing a small cloud of soot, then SNEEZES.

UNI
(SNEEZES)

Bobby ENTERS SHOT and hugs her.

ON OTHERS

Brushing the soot and ashes from their clothes. Presto is untangling himself from the lasso.

PRESTO
What do you suppose caused that?

HANK
(Grimly)
I think they were running from Demodragon.

ERIC

Boy, for dumb animals, they're
a lot smarter than we are!

The kids trudge on OUT OF SHOT.

WIPE TO:

EXT. DUSTLANDS - ESTABLISHING - DAY

The Dustlands are a barren expanse of desert, with occasional sandstone spires and outcroppings, but mostly just flat, shimmering sand. Our heroes move slowly across it in the distance. The three suns beat down on them.

CLOSER ON KIDS

They move slowly along under the relentless glare. Clouds of dust rise from their passage.

SHEILA

(SNEEZES)

I can see why they call these
the Dustlands.

DIANA

Hey, Presto -- can't you squeeze
some water out of that hat?

PRESTO

(Dubiously)

I can try.

ERIC

Don't bother. Remember what
happened the last time.

PRESTO

(Stung)

I got water, didn't I?

ERIC

Yeah -- in a goldfish bowl!
Who wants to drink that? Yech!

Hank stops suddenly. The others stop behind him. Uni bumps into Eric, who glares at her. Hank points ahead O.S.

HANK

Look!

THEIR POV - TARDOS KEEP

A huge rocky butte, with sheer walls, rises in the distance near a mountain range. Through the shimmering heat waves we can see that

towers and parapets have been carved from the top of it, as well as causeways and bastions within it. The city has been integrated into the rock formation. It looks completely impregnable.

HANK (O.S. CONT)

That's got to be Tardos Keep!
Come on!

ON ROCK FORMATION

The kids cautiously peer over a jumble of rocks and look O.S. They react to what they see.

SHEILA

Looks like we're not the only ones interested in the place.

WIDE ANGLE - GATES

A squadron of ORCS are bivouacked not far from the huge stone gates.

PRESTO (O.S.)

Orcs! Oh, terrific! That means Venger's probably not far away!

ON KIDS

HANK

We've got to get inside before he shows up!

ERIC

Wrong, Hank! What we've got to do is get out of here before he shows up!

BOBBY

Dungeon Master said go to Tardos Keep -- so that's where we're going!

The rest of them sneak cautiously O.S. Eric glares after them, exasperated.

ERIC

(Mimicking Bobby)

"Dungeon Master said go to Tardos Keep"!

(Giving up)

Why doesn't he ever send us any-
place nice?

He follows the others O.S.

ANOTHER ANGLE - ORC CAMP AND GATES

Several Orcs are snoozing in the hot sunlight. The kids sneak along a ridge of rocks toward the gates, keeping out of sight.

CLOSE ON UNI

Bringing up the rear. The dust that rises from the dried ground is getting to her. She tries to stifle a sneeze, but it's no use.

UNI
(SNEEZES)

ON TENT

SHADOWDEMON rises through the silk wall of the tent. He listens.

UNI (O.S.)
(Faint SNEEZE)

Shadowdemon looks at one of the Orc guards, dozing in the sunlight. He lifts a hand, and a ZAP of magic shocks the Orc awake.

ORC
(Surprised HISS)

He looks at Shadowdemon, who points O.S. The guard looks off.

THEIR POV - ROCK RIDGE

With a little plume of dust marking the passage of something behind it.

ON KIDS - MOVING

Creeping along, hunched over, behind the rock ridge.

PRESTO
I think we've got it!

They come up against an Orc soldier standing before them, and react appropriately.

SHEILA
I think they've got us!

ORC SOLDIER
Come with me!

ERIC
I knew I was gonna regret this!

He lunges forward; his shield glows as he rams into the Orc soldier, knocking him O.S.

ON REST OF ORCS

They react in surprise as their comrade sails over the ridge to land in their midst.

ORCS
(HISSES, GROWLS)

ON KIDS

HANK
Go for it!

They break into a run for the gates.

ON SHADOWDEMON AND ORCS

Shadowdemon makes a gesture of command to the Orcs.

SHADOWDEMON
After them! I will alert Venger!

He flies O.S.

WIDE - ALL

The kids come running through the open area before the gates, with Orcs on either side of them. The Orcs move to stop them.

ON BOBBY - MOVING

Running, swinging his club.

BOBBY
(BATTLE CRY)

An Orc grabs the business end of the club, bringing Bobby to a halt.

ORC
I've got you, little human!

BOBBY
Think so, huh?

The club glows as he whips it up, hurling the surprised Orc O.S.

BOBBY (CONT)
See you later, alligator!

ON GROUP OF ORCS

As they are bowled over by the flying Orc.

ON DIANA - RUNNING

Straight toward a wall of Orcs. At the last minute she drops the end of her staff into the ground and polevaults over them.

ORCS
(Confused HISSES)

ON SHEILA

Caught between two Orcs. She slips her cloak over her head and vanishes as they lunge for her, and instead collide with each other. They look about, perplexed.

ON PARAPET OF KEEP

QUEEN SULINARA, a beautiful warrior woman, and her MAJOR-DOMO stand looking down O.S.

MAJOR-DOMO
The young ones are brave and resourceful, Queen Sulinara.

SULINARA
(Thoughtfully)
Yes . . .
(Makes a decision)
If they win through to the gates, they may enter Tardos Keep.

The Major-Domo salutes and EXITS.

ON PRESTO - RUNNING

With several Orcs hot on his tail. He takes off his hat and makes mystic passes over it as he runs.

PRESTO
Abracadabra, and all those other magic words!

He holds the hat out behind him as he runs, peak up.

CLOSE ON HAT

A rain of marbles fall from it.

ON ORCS

They hit the marbles and lose their balance, falling over each other.

ORCS
(HISSES, GROWLS)

ON PRESTO - RUNNING

He puts his hat back on as he runs.

PRESTO
Who says losing your marbles
is bad?

ON UNI

Running full out, just barely dodging an Orc that leaps for her.

UNI
(Frightened WHINNY)

ON HANK

He stops running, turns and lets fly an energy bolt.

WIDE - ORCS

Regrouping. The energy arrow zooms around them, trailing a glowing line that gathers them up into a helpless, struggling mass.

ORCS
(HISSES, GROWLS)

CLOSE ON HANK

HANK
That'll hold them for awhile!
Let's go!

He runs O.S.

WIDE - GATES

The kids come to a stop before the gigantic double gates.

BOBBY
I guess we'd better knock!

He raises his club and POUNDS it against the gates. SFX: ECHOING, GONG-LIKE SOUND.

FAVORING ERIC

He looks nervously behind them, then reacts in fright.

ERIC
(Scared)
Uh-oh! Now we're really in
for it!

The others look and react.

THEIR POV - ORCS

Still struggling in Hank's energy lasso. Suddenly, a BURST of mystic power dissolves it. The Orcs surge forward, and as they do, VENGER, astride NIGHTMARE, soars INTO SHOT over them, taking the lead. Shadowdemon flies behind him.

HANK (O.S.)

Venger!

ON KIDS

The gates begin to open, slowly, with appropriate SFX. The kids crowd forward.

CLOSE ON VENGER - MOVING

He raises a hand glowing with destructive force.

VENGER

Not so fast, my young enemies!

He hurls a ball of mystic energy O.S.

ON KIDS

Eric is at the rear. He sees what's coming and raises his shield just in time to ward off the BLAST.

ERIC

(To others)

Get inside! Quick!

The gates are now open wide enough for them to slip through one at a time, which they do.

ON VENGER - MOVING

He throws another energy ball O.S.

ON GATES

Bobby, Uni, Presto and Diana have wedged through. Sheila slips in as Eric deflects the next BLAST with his shield. This one is strong enough to knock him backward. Hank catches him.

CLOSE ON VENGER - MOVING

He smiles as he prepares to throw another energy ball.

VENGER

Now I have you!

WIDE ANGLE

Hank shoots an energy bolt into the air just as Venger rides INTO SHOT. The bolt EXPLODES in a blinding white light.

CLOSE ON VENGER AND SHADOWDEMON

Both react, covering their eyes with their hands.

VENGER
Arrgghh! My eyes!

TWO SHOT - ERIC AND HANK

Limned in the actinic light. Eric leaps for the narrow opening, catching Hank in it and wedging them both there for a second. Then Hank pulls free, shoves Eric through and dives in after him. The gates begin to close again.

WIDE - GATES AND VENGER

Venger reins Nightmare up before the gate. The Orcs charge INTO SHOT behind him, and Shadowdemon floats to a position beside him. The gates close with a CRASH.

INT. TARDOS KEEP - KIDS

Hank and Eric join the others, who are being watched at a respectful distance by the inhabitants of the Keep.

SHEILA
Way to go, Eric! That was brave,
protecting us from Venger!

ERIC
Brave, shmave! I couldn't get
in until you guys did!

SULINARA (O.S.)
Welcome to Tardos!

ANOTHER ANGLE

As Sulinara, the Major-Domo and several guards approach to stand before them.

SULINARA (CONT)
I am Sulinara, Queen of Tardos.
And who are you that Venger
pursues so ardently?

HANK
He wants our weapons. Why, we
don't know.

ON SULINARA

SULINARA

He desires something from us as well -- the treasure of Tardos.

Her eyes narrow and her voice hardens as she continues.

SULINARA (CONT)

For years he has tried all manner of trickery to gain entrance to this Keep. Your presence here may be yet another of his schemes.

ON KIDS

The guards surround them. They react apprehensively.

SULINARA (O.S. CONT)

Speak truthfully and quickly, if you would survive! Why are you here?

The guards press closer. The kids are nervous now, and Eric is close to panicking.

ERIC

(Panicky)

Dungeon Master told us to come!

ON SULINARA

She is obviously impressed by this, but it's impossible to tell if for good or ill. She leans forward.

SULINARA

Dungeon Master? You know Dungeon Master?!

FAVORING ERIC

He's sure now that they're in for it.

ERIC

Well, we don't really know him -- I mean, not on a first-name basis or anything like that . . .

Hank claps a hand over Eric's mouth.

HANK

Quiet, Eric!

(To Sulinara)

Yes -- we know Dungeon Master. He

HANK (CONT)
sent us here.

WIDE - ALL

Sulinara smiles and gestures the guards away from the kids.

SULINARA
It is well. Dungeon Master is
our friend.

ERIC
(Relieved)
Yeah, he's a great guy, isn't he?
Him and me are just like that!

He holds up crossed fingers. The others look at him in surprise.

UNI
("Huh?")

Then, suddenly, the ground shakes slightly as we hear a muffled
MYSTIC BLAST O.S. Sulinara reacts to it.

SULINARA
Venger!
(To kids)
Come with me!

She EXITS SHOT. The kids, the Major-Domo and the guards follow. .

ON PARAPET - WIDE

Sulinara and the kids look down over the crenelated wall of the
parapet.

THEIR POV - DOWNSHOT

The tiny figures of Venger, on Nightmare, Shadowdemon and the Orcs
at the base of the wall. Venger hurls a ball of magic at the
gates. BOOM -- the walls tremble slightly, and maybe some dust is
raised, but that's all.

REVERSE ANGLE - ON VENGER

He looks up the dizzying height of the wall.

VENGER
Sulinara! Yield to me your
treasure, or face the conse-
quences!

ON SULINARA

Looking down O.S.

SULINARA

Not even you can break Tardos Keep,
Venger! These walls have been
strengthened by stone and spell
over a thousand years!

ON VENGER

SULINARA (O.S. CONT)

(Distant)

You may control the rest of the
realm, but you will never control
us!

Venger smiles a particularly evil smile.

VENGER

Foolish Queen -- let me show you
what I am capable of controlling!

He turns and makes a mystic gesture, accompanied by a FLASH of
magic.

VENGER (CONT)

(SHOUTS)

Attack -- Demodragon!

ON PARAPET - SULINARA AND KIDS

The THUNDER of a slow, ominous tread, heavy enough to shake the
scene, begins to build. The kids glance at one another, wide-
eyed. Even Sulinara looks uncertain.

WIDE ANGLE SHOT

Including the Keep, Venger, Shadowdemon and the Orcs. Then, from
behind the craggy mountains beyond Tardos, DEMODRAGON appears!
He's almost as tall as the Keep itself -- a reptilian creature,
half demon, half dragon, with two heads on long, sinuous necks.
Slowly, ponderously, he moves toward the Keep.

DEMODRAGON

(ROARS)

ON PARAPET - SULINARA AND KIDS

They react in astonished fright. Demodragon's shadow flows over
them.

SULINARA

Get off the parapet! Quickly!

ERIC

Makes sense to me!

They dash O.S. -- except Uni, who is staring up in shock. Bobby runs back INTO SHOT, grabs her, and EXITS. An instant later a huge gout of FLAME washes over the parapet where they stood.

WIDE ANGLE - KEEP

Demodragon stops before the huge gates. He exhales a BLAST of icy breath from his right head that coats the gates in blue-white ice. Then the left head breathes FLAME on them, evaporating the ice in a cloud of steam and turning the stone a glowing red. The right head coats the gates with ice again. A CRACKING SOUND begins.

INT. KEEP - SULINARA AND KIDS

The Major-Domo rushes INTO SHOT, distraught. CRACKLING continues over.

MAJOR-DOMO

My Queen! The gates are beginning to crumble!

SULINARA

(Shocked)

Impossible!

HANK

No, it's not! Look!

He points O.S.

ON GATES

The interior surfaces alternate between glowing red and icy blue-white. CRACKS begin to spread over them.

HANK (O.S. CONT)

The temperature extremes are making them brittle!

WIDER - INCLUDING KIDS, SULINARA, MAJOR-DOMO

They cower back as the gates SHATTER and collapse.

ON KIDS

Hank looks up, then signals to the rest.

HANK

Come on! We've got to stop Venger from entering Tardos!

ERIC

You're crazy! He's won! Let's not get him any madder than he

ERIC (CONT)
already is!

The rest run forward. Diana grabs Eric's hand and pulls him along.

ERIC (CONT)
Okay, okay -- I'm coming!

EXT. KEEP - WIDE

The kids and Uni rush out through the ruined gates. Venger, Shadowdemon and the Orcs stand on one side, and Demodragon on the other.

HANK
We've got one chance! Bobby
-- get ready!

ON VENGER

He hurls another energy ball O.S.

ON KIDS

Eric manages to deflect the attack with his shield again. He peers over its edge.

ERIC
(Conciliatory)
Nothing personal, Venger!
Honest!

ON HANK

He fires an energy bolt O.S.

ON DEMODRAGON

The bolt trails a line of energy around Demodragon's legs.

HANK (O.S.)
Now, Bobby!

ON BOBBY

He winds up and SMASHES the ground, causing a SHOCK WAVE that travels O.S.

WIDE ANGLE - DEMODRAGON

The ground under the huge creature's feet shakes. He can't maintain his balance with his legs bound -- he falls like a gigantic redwood, SHATTERING several rock formations and raising a cloud of dust.

ON KIDS - FAVORING HANK

Hank wheels about, aiming his bow O.S.

HANK
Now for Venger!

He shoots an energy arrow O.S.

ON VENGER AND SHADOWDEMON

Shadowdemon flees from the oncoming arrow. Venger adroitly dodges, reaches up and grabs the bolt from the air like a Ninja master.

VENGER
You think it will be so easy?
(LAUGHS)
Think again!

He CRACKS the fiery trail of the bolt like a whip O.S.

ON KIDS

They leap back as the line of energy SNAPS near them. It SNAPS again, driving them back.

ON DEMODRAGON

Lying on the ground. He BURSTS free of the energy line that binds him. His two heads dart forward, and from the mouths forked tongues flick out.

ON KIDS

Too late, they realize they've been forced within reach of Demodragon!

ON HANK, DIANA, BOBBY

Two tendrils of one tongue snatch Hank's bow, Diana's staff and Bobby's club and draw them O.S. as their owners react in shock.

ON SHEILA AND ERIC

The two tendrils of the other tongue pull Sheila's cloak from her shoulders and Eric's shield from his arm and draw them O.S., despite their efforts to prevent it.

ON UNI

She reacts in horror to this unexpected disaster.

UNI
(BLEAT of fear)

ON DEMODRAGON

He climbs to his feet again, towering over us, still holding the weapons in his tongues.

WIDE ANGLE - DEMODRAGON, KIDS, VENGER

The kids are between Venger, the Orcs and Demodragon. Shadowdemon flies back INTO SHOT to hover beside Venger.

SHEILA

Demodragon's got our weapons!

ERIC

Yeah -- and Venger's got us!

HOLD on the tableau, and then

FADE OUT

END ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

WIDE ANGLE - DUSTLANDS - ESTABLISHING - DAY

Demodragon towering over the scene, the weapons still held in his two tongues. He blocks the kids' route back to Tardos Keep. Venger, Shadowdemon and his Orcs are on the other side, preventing escape into the Dustlands.

DEMODRAGON
(ROARS)

SHEILA
Without our weapons, we don't
stand a chance!

ON VENGER

He smiles; he knows he's got them at last.

VENGER
How right you are, thief!
(To Orcs)
Take them!

ON ORCS

Weapons at the ready, they charge forward O.S.

ORCS
(GROWLS, HISSES)

ON KIDS

They look at one another in dismay. Uni leaps into Bobby's arms.

UNI
(BLEAT of fear)

ERIC
(Scared)
Y-you're the leader, Hank --
whatta we do now?

HANK
The only thing we can do --

He turns and dashes directly toward Demodragon.

HANK (CONT)
(Over his shoulder)
-- Run!!

WIDE ANGLE - DEMODRAGON AND KIDS

The kids and Uni dig out, heading directly toward the huge monster. Demodragon doesn't expect this. The kids dash between his legs, under his belly. The creature reacts in surprise, lowering both of his heads to peer after them; this action results in his tail raising.

DEMODRAGON
(Surprised ROAR)

ON VENGER AND SHADOWDEMON

They too react in surprise. Wings spread, Venger urges Nightmare into the air for a better view.

SHADOWDEMON
Use your power, Venger!

VENGER
I cannot -- Demodragon blocks
my aim!

REAR SHOT - DEMODRAGON

The kids come running out from between his legs, under his uplifted tail, which starts to lower. Diana is last -- the tail is dropping toward her.

ON BOBBY - RUNNING

He looks behind O.S. and reacts to what he sees.

BOBBY
(SHOUTS)
Diana! Look out for his tail!

ON DIANA - RUNNING

She looks up and reacts in dismay at what she sees O.S., then digs in determinedly and runs faster.

WIDE - DIANA AND TAIL

Demodragon's tail comes down in f.g. Diana, running toward us, leaps and does a tuck and roll under it with a bare inch to spare. The tail hits with a ground-shaking CRASH!

REVERSE ANGLE

Diana runs after the others, who are headed toward the smashed gates of the Keep.

ON DEMODRAGON

He swings ponderously around to pursue the kids. The tail comes sweeping about like a massive scythe.

ON ORCS

Running forward. The tail sweeps INTO SHOT and STRIKES them, bowling them over in every direction.

ORCS
(HISSES, GROWLS)

LONG SHOT - KIDS

They disappear from sight into the Keep.

ON VENGER AND SHADOWDEMON

Shadowdemon stares O.S. in concern.

SHADOWDEMON
They've escaped!

VENGER
(Unconcerned)
Nonsense. Tardos Keep has fallen.

CLOSE ON VENGER

He clenches a fist in triumph.

VENGER (CONT)
Its treasure, together with the
childrens' weapons, will defeat
my ancient enemy at last!

He urges Nightmare O.S. Shadowdemon follows.

ON DEMODRAGON

He transfers the weapons from his tongues to one hand-like talon as Venger rises INTO SHOT before him, hovering. Shadowdemon is behind his lord. Venger stretches out a hand commandingly.

VENGER
Give me the weapons, Demodragon!

INT. KEEP - ON KIDS AND SULINARA

Watching from the parapet. The kids look stricken.

DIANA
Looks like the game's over!
Venger's got our weapons!

BOBBY
Boy, is Dungeon Master gonna
be mad at us!

Hank suddenly reacts and points O.S.

HANK
Wait a minute! Look!

THEIR POV - DEMODRAGON AND VENGER

Demodragon holds the weapons away from Venger in obvious defiance.

DEMODRAGON
(Defiant ROAR)

ERIC (O.S.)
I don't get it! What's that
big lizard trying to do?

SULINARA (O.S.)
He has broken Venger's spell
of control!

ON VENGER AND DEMODRAGON

Venger is mad now. Nightmare hovers before the behemoth.
Shadowdemon floats apprehensively nearby.

VENGER
(Angrily)
The weapons, creature -- now!

Demodragon slashes his other claw at Venger; the blow misses, but
the air turbulence is enough to rock his target.

DEMODRAGON
(ROARS)

VENGER
So -- you need persuading!

He throws a sphere of magic at the monster -- to his astonishment,
it has no effect! Demodragon's left head exhales a FLAMEBURST at
Venger, who blocks it with a shield of magic force. Shadowdemon
flees.

ON DEMODRAGON

With the left head still FLAMING, the right head ducks sinuously down O.S.

ON VENGER

Holding off the fire with his force shield. Suddenly the right head rises up beneath him and exhales an ICEBLAST that envelopes Venger and Nightmare in ice.

VENGER
(Surprised)
What --?! No!!

The huge chunk of ice encasing them falls O.S.

LONG SHOT FROM PARAPET

The kids, Uni and Sulinara watch the ice block containing Venger and Nightmare fall out of sight among the spires and rock formations of the Dustlands.

ON GROUND

The ice block falls and SHATTERS against the ground, leaving Venger and Nightmare sprawled there. Venger tries to rise, then sinks back.

WIDE - ORCS AND DEMODRAGON

Demodragon turns menacingly toward the Orcs, who tremble in fear.

DEMODRAGON
(ROARS)

The Orcs flee, panicstricken.

ORCS
(Frightened HISSES)

LONG SHOT FROM PARAPET

The kids and Sulinara watch as Demodragon turns and lumbers off into the mountains beyond Tardos.

PRESTO
(With hope)
Maybe the game's not over.

ERIC
Maybe not -- but I'm sitting out
this inning! I'm getting something
to eat!

BOBBY
Good idea! I'm hungry!

UNI
(WHINNY of agreement)

Sulinara pulls a ring from her finger and hands it to Eric.

SULINARA
The gratitude of Tardos is yours.
This will open our finest inns and
markets to you.

Eric accepts it enthusiastically.

ERIC
All right! Thanks, your
majesty!
(To Bobby)
Let's go, shrimp!

BOBBY
(Belligerently, as
they exit)
Who're you calling a shrimp?

The two of them, and Uni, EXIT.

ANOTHER ANGLE - SULINARA AND REST OF KIDS

SULINARA
You have won some time for us,
my friends -- how much, I don't
know.

They also EXIT, in another direction.

ON HANK, DIANA, SHEILA, PRESTO AND SULINARA - MOVING

Descending a flight of stone stairs from the parapet.

SULINARA (CONT)
But perhaps we will yet find a way
to keep our treasure from Venger's
grasp.

SHEILA
Just what is this treasure,
Your Highness -- if I may ask?

SULINARA
Not what you would expect; we do not
value gold or precious jewels. We
guard the only known crop of dragon-
bane -- a rare herb that can render

SULINARA (CONT)
the mightiest dragon helpless.

CLOSE ON KIDS

Hank SNAPS his fingers.

HANK
So that's what Venger's after!
He wants the dragonbane to use --

PRESTO, DIANA, SHEILA
(Finishing his thought)
Against Tiamat!

INT. TARDOS - WIDE - SULINARA, HANK, SHEILA, DIANA, PRESTO

The streets are deserted, save for one or two SOLDIERS hustling THROUGH SHOT. Sulinara looks about sadly.

SULINARA
(Sadly)
My people are hiding. They
fear the worst.

HANK
I hate to say this -- but they
may be right.

WIPE TO:

INT. TARDOS MARKETPLACE - BOBBY, UNI AND ERIC

The shops and market stalls are deserted, save for one shabby open-air joint -- the medieval equivalent of a fast-food stand. The PROPRIETER, looking as unhygienic as his establishment, hands Bobby and Eric loaves of stale bread and chunks of moldy cheese. Eric looks at his in disgust. He TAPS the bread against a wall -- it's hard as a rock.

ERIC
(Disgusted)
Terrific! Our one chance
in ages to have a nice meal,
and this is the only place
open!

PAN with them as they stroll along. Bobby takes a bite of bread from one hand and a bite of cheese from the other.

BOBBY
(Mouth full)
It's not so bad!

ERIC

Sure -- not for you! But I
have delicate tastebuds!

He drops the bread and cheese distainfully. Uni, following them,
SNIFFS at them and wrinkles up her nose.

UNI

("YEECH!!")

She kicks some dirt over the food with her hind hooves.

ON BOBBY

He stops and SNIFFS the air.

BOBBY

(SNIFFS)

Hey! Something smells nice!

ON HERB GARDEN

A garden full of rows of bushes with purple leaves, and a TINKLING
fountain in the center. A kindly old GARDENER, tall, thin and
stooped, is watering the bushes. Bobby, Eric and Uni ENTER SHOT.
Bobby and Uni SNIFF the air with enjoyment. The Gardener watches
them with a smile.

BOBBY

(SNIFFS)

Mmm! Nice, huh, Eric?

ERIC

(SNIFFS; reluctantly)

It's okay.

FAVORING GARDENER

He holds out a garland of leaves to Bobby and Uni.

GARDENER

I'm glad you like my garden.
Please accept this -- it's
supposed to bring luck.

BOBBY

Gee, thanks!

The Gardener puts the garland around Uni's neck. Uni LICKS his
face in thanks.

ERIC

It's probably this world's
version of poison ivy.

BOBBY

We'd better get back to the others.

He, Uni and Eric EXIT SHOT. (NOTE: UNI WEARS THE GARLAND UNTIL OTHERWISE STATED.) The Gardener watches them go, smiling. We PUSH IN on his reflection in the fountain -- the image in the water is that of Dungeon Master.

INT. PALACE CHAMBER - KIDS, SULINARA, MAJOR-DOMO

MAJOR-DOMO

It will take weeks to rebuild the gates, my Queen. Until then, we are vulnerable to attack.

SHEILA

And so are we! We've got to get our weapons back, somehow!

ERIC

You're outta your mind! How are we gonna get them away from that two-headed Godzilla?

FAVORING DIANA

She has an idea.

DIANA

Wait! Remember what Dungeon Master said: "By aiding he who stands against you"!

BOBBY

(Incredulously)
You can't mean who I think you mean!

ON HANK

He looks grim.

HANK

(Serious)
Diana's right. I never thought I'd say it -- but Venger is our only hope now!

WIPE TO:

EXT. TARDOS KEEP - GATES - DAY

The kids and Uni head out through the ruined gates, into the Dustlands. PAN with them.

ERIC

We've done some crazy things in this crazy world, but this is the craziest! How're we gonna make friends with Venger?

PRESTO

Maybe we could buy him another horn for his helmet.

SHEILA

How're we even going to find him?

Hank points up O.S.

HANK

That's how!

THEIR POV - SKY

Shadowdemon flies THROUGH SHOT, carrying a skin of water.

HANK (O.S. CONT)

Follow Shadowdemon! He'll lead us to Venger!

WIPE TO:

EXT. DUSTLANDS - WIDE - VENGER AND COMPANY

Venger is lying propped up against a stone, with a canopy of silk stretched over him to keep the sun off. The Orcs stand guard around him. Nightmare is tethered nearby. Shadowdemon flies INTO SHOT and lands next to Venger. He offers him the waterskin.

SHADOWDEMON

Water, my lord. Drink.

CLOSER - VENGER

Venger drinks from the skin and tosses it aside.

VENGER

Any sign of Demodragon?

SHADOWDEMON

He is to the North of here.

Venger tries to rise, but slumps back down.

VENGER

My strength is returning too slowly. Demodragon is more powerful than I suspected -- he will destroy the realm unless something is done!

HANK (O.S.)

And we're the ones to do it,
Venger!

PULL BACK as Venger and Shadowdemon react in surprise. The Orcs grip their weapons as the kids and Uni ENTER SHOT. Eric is behind the rest, trying to be as inconspicuous as possible. He notices an Orc guard standing nearby, glowering at him, and grins cheesily in return.

VENGER

Have you come to gloat, striplings?
If so, it was unwise.

HANK

We came to propose a truce. You want
to defeat Demodragon, and so do we.
Let's join forces.

ON VENGER

He reacts in disbelief.

VENGER

Madness! Without your weapons, you
are nothing.

ON KIDS

Bobby, stung, steps forward.

BOBBY

(Hotly)

Oh, yeah? You've taken our weapons
before, and we've still whipped you!

ON ERIC

He reacts nervously to this, slapping a hand to his face in an
Edgar Kennedy gesture.

ERIC

(Sarcastic sotto)

That's it -- flatter him!

CLOSE ON VENGER AND SHADOWDEMON

Shadowdemon leans close to Venger.

SHADOWDEMON

My lord -- perhaps a test of their
resourcefulness is in order.

Venger smiles slightly.

VENGER

Very well. If nothing else, it will
provide amusement on a hot day.

(To Orcs)

Attack them!

ON ORCS

They charge toward us.

ORCS

(HISSES, GROWLS)

ON SHEILA

An Orc approaches her. She bends down and scoops up a handful of sand.

SHEILA

There's more than one way to
disappear!

She throws the sand at the Orc, momentarily blinding him, and runs O.S. The Orc rubs his eyes clear and runs after her.

ON DIANA

Two Orcs try in vain to catch her. She straddle-vaults one and does a handspring past the other.

ORCS

Stop! Hold still!

DIANA

Sorry, guys -- you should
never play tag with an acrobat!

ON BOBBY AND UNI

Pursued by a large Orc.

BOBBY

Nyah, nyah! Can't catch me,
Lizard Lips!

UNI

(BRONX CHEER)

They slip through a narrow crack between two rocks. The Orc, trying to follow, is stuck fast.

ORC

(Angry HISSES)

Bobby, on the other side of the rock, views the results of his ploy with satisfaction.

BOBBY

That'll teach you to mess with
Bobby the Barbarian!

Uni looks behind them O.S. and reacts in fright.

UNI

("Uh-oh!")

She nudges Bobby, who also looks and reacts. Then they run O.S. as another Orc pursues them.

ON ORC WITH NET

An Orc has captured Presto in a net, and is carrying him slung over his shoulder.

CLOSE ON PRESTO

He takes off his glasses and uses them to focus the sunlight on the net.

PRESTO

I hope they were right about
this in science class!

The focused beam burns through several fibers of the net.

ON ORC AND PRESTO

Presto slips through the net and runs O.S. The Orc turns, sees this and gives chase.

ON ERIC

An Orc with a spear comes toward him. Eric backs up, looking about frantically.

ERIC

I'm not with these other guys
-- honest!

He spies a flat piece of sandstone and grabs it up to use as a shield.

ERIC (CONT)

Okay, ugly -- now try something!

The Orc SMASHES the haft of his spear against the sandstone, crumbling it. Eric reacts in dismay.

ERIC (CONT)
(Flattering)
Actually, you're very good-looking
for a reptile!

ON HANK

In ready stance as he and an Orc circle. The Orc lunges at him. Hank falls backwards, grabbing the Orc's wrists and thrusting his legs into the Orc's belly, hurling him over his head and O.S.

ON ERIC AND ORC

Hank's Orc flies INTO SHOT and COLLIDES with Eric's Orc just as the latter is reaching for the cringing Eric. Eric reacts in astonishment at the two Orcs sprawled at his feet, then straightens quickly, dusting his hands off triumphantly.

ERIC
Poor guys -- they didn't stand
a chance!

A CHORUS of HISSING O.S. causes him to look behind him. He reacts in comic fright, antics and dashes O.S.

ERIC (CONT)
Yiiii!!!

Four or five Orcs charge THROUGH SHOT after him.

ORCS
(HISSSES)

ON VENGER AND SHADOWDEMON

Venger raises his hand imperiously.

VENGER
I have seen enough!

WIDE SHOT - KIDS AND ORCS

The kids standing back to back in a knot, facing a circle of Orcs. They all react to Venger's voice.

VENGER (O.S. CONT)
I agree to your proposal. Ranger
-- approach me.

Hank walks O.S.

ON VENGER AND SHADOWDEMON

Hank ENTERS SHOT and stands before Venger. Venger pulls a talisman on a chain from his robes, and hands it to Hank.

VENGER (CONT)

This may aid you against Demodragon. I will join you when I can. Until then --

(To Shadowdemon)

Take the Orcs and assist them in their quest.

Shadowdemon reacts in surprise.

SHADOWDEMON

But, my lord --

VENGER

Do as I say!

Shadowdemon nods, and EXITS SHOT with Hank. PUSH IN on Venger as he watches them go. He smiles slightly.

WIPE TO:

EXT. DUSTLANDS - PANNING - KIDS, ORCS, SHADOWDEMON

The kids are following Venger's minions.

ERIC

(Nervously)

I don't know who to be more afraid of -- these guys or Demodragon!

Suddenly, the ground begins to shake with the SOUND of Demodragon's tread. The Orcs begin to look about nervously.

ORCS

(Nervous HISSES)

PRESTO

Well, at least we don't have to worry about him sneaking up on us!

ON SHADOWDEMON

He looks up O.S., then points.

SHADOWDEMON

Demodragon!

DRAMATIC UPSHOT - DEMODRAGON

Rising into view from behind some cliffs. An awesome sight. He still has the weapons in one hand.

DEMODRAGON
(ROARS)

WIDE - KIDS, ORCS, SHADOWDEMON

The Orcs and Shadowdemon promptly flee O.S. in all directions, leaving the kids alone.

ERIC
Hey! Come back here, you
lily-livered lizards!

HANK
Forget it, Eric! We're on our
own!

CLOSER - HANK

He pulls the talisman from his tunic and holds it out by the chain. A DAZZLING BURST OF MULTI-COLORED LIGHT ZAPS from it O.S.

ON DEMODRAGON

The MAGICAL BLAST hits him, but has no effect.

SHEILA (O.S.)
Oh, great! Looks like Venger's
Oh-for-two!

DEMODRAGON
(ROARS)

He looses an ICEBLAST O.S.

ON KIDS

They scatter as the ground where they stood is covered with ice.

ON DEMODRAGON'S FOOT

He STAMPS it, causing the ground to SHAKE.

ON KIDS

They lose their footing as in an earthquake. Fissures open up in the ground about them.

KIDS
(AD LIB CRIES of fear)

ON HANK

He falls, dropping the talisman into a fissure.

DRAMATIC UPSHOT - DEMODRAGON

Advancing toward them.

HANK (O.S.)
Run, everybody!

Demodragon exhales a FLAMEBURST directly at us.

ANOTHER ANGLE - KIDS

They dive for cover as the FLAMEBURST strikes a large sandy plain, fusing the sand into glass.

DIANA (O.S.)
The heat's turned the sand to
glass!

WIDE - DEMODRAGON AND PLAIN

The light of the suns reflects off the glass, dazzling both sets of Demodragon's eyes -- we can see nictitating membranes close over the irises.

DEMODRAGON
(ROARS)

ON KIDS

Shielding their eyes from the glare.

HANK
The light's blinded him! Now's
our chance!

ERIC
To do what?! That thing's even
bigger than my trust fund!

ON DEMODRAGON

He turns blindly and stumbles forward, wedging himself between two huge spires of rock.

ON KIDS

Diana runs forward.

PRESTO
What're you doing?!

DIANA
I'm going for our weapons!

ON DEMODRAGON'S BACK

Diana runs lithely up the monster's back, leaping from one spinal plate to the next, like climbing a gigantic set of stairs.

CLOSER ON DEMODRAGON

Diana crawls out over the huge beast's shoulder, down the arm that holds the weapons.

ON DEMODRAGON'S HEADS

His eyes clear again; one head looks down and sees Diana. He shakes her off like a horse might shrug away a fly.

DIANA

Oohh!!

She falls O.S.

ON KIDS

They react in horror.

BOBBY

Diana!

ON DIANA - FALLING

She spreads herself out flat, slowing her descent slightly with air resistance. We FOLLOW her as, by twisting and turning, she manages to maneuver herself close to a thin horizontal spur of rock. She grabs it, flips around it, breaking her fall somewhat. She drops O.S.

ON HANK

Looking up O.S.

HANK

I've got to break her fall!

He dashes O.S.

ANGLE ON SAND DUNE

Hank runs INTO SHOT, full-out, as Diana falls toward the ground. He hurls himself in a body block against her (SFX: THUMP!), breaking her momentum just enough to send her tumbling into the soft sand of the dune. He rebounds from the impact, sprawling on the ground.

DIANA, HANK
(GRUNTS from impact)

CLOSER ON THEM

Hank staggers to Diana, holding his shoulder, as she manages to get to her feet. Both of them are badly shaken up.

HANK
(Out of breath)
Are you okay?

DIANA
(Half-stunned)
I'm alive -- thanks to you.

The SOUND OF SHATTERING ROCKS causes them to both spin and look O.S. They react in dismay to what they see.

DIANA (CONT)
Though maybe not for long!

WIDE ANGLE - DEMODRAGON

He is BREAKING FREE of the imprisoning spires of rock. Bobby, Uni, Sheila, Eric and Presto flee before him.

KIDS
Look out! He's loose! Run!
Etc.

ANOTHER ANGLE

Demodragon reaches down and snatches up Eric and Uni in his free talon, lifting them up O.S.

DOWNSHOT - KIDS

The rest of them regroup, staring up O.S. helplessly.

ON ERIC AND UNI

Gripped in Demodragon's talon. Demodragon brings them close to his two heads.

ERIC
(Terrified)
Oooh -- I only hope I give
him indigestion!

UNI
(Terrified BLEAT)

Demodragon lifts them close to his mouth -- then, abruptly, he begins to SNEEZE uncontrollably!

DEMODRAGON
(SNEEZES)

ON WEAPONS

Gripped in the other talon. Demodragon's SNEEZING causes him to drop them. They fall down O.S.

ON ERIC AND UNI

Demodragon also drops them; they fall O.S.

ERIC
Haaallp!!!

UNI
(WAAAAH!!)

ON REST OF KIDS

They catch their weapons. Hank fires two energy arrows up O.S.

ON ERIC AND UNI - FALLING

The energy bolts ENTER SHOT; one neatly slips under Uni and carries him O.S., while the other nabs Eric by the collar like a cat carrying a kitten and zooms off with him.

ON KIDS

The arrows deposit Eric and Uni on the ground beside the rest of them. Eric immediately grabs up his shield, which lies before him, and kisses it.

ERIC
(KISSES shield)
I never thought I'd be glad
to see this again!

ON DEMODRAGON

His sneezing fit is over. He turns toward us menacingly.

DEMODRAGON
(ROARS)

ON KIDS

They back up, weapons ready.

DIANA
This is it!

SHEILA
Presto -- you've got to come up
with something that'll cut him down
to size!

DOWNSHOT - PRESTO

Demodragon's shadow flows over him as he rummages around in his hat.

PRESTO

Hey -- I think I've got something!

He pulls a swirling batch of lights and sparkles from the hat, which swiftly expands into a PYROTECHNIC MAGIC SPELL.

WIDE ANGLE - DEMODRAGON

The spell swiftly engulfs Demodragon in a technicolor cyclone, shrinking him down, down, down . . .

ON KIDS

They watch in astonishment as the spell reduces Demodragon to the size of a mouse! The tiny monster SQUEAKS indignantly and scuttles under a rock.

DEMODRAGON

(Indignant SQUEAK)

PRESTO

(Proudly)

How's that for cutting him down to size?

ANOTHER ANGLE - KIDS

They are relieved, but puzzled.

BOBBY

But what made Demodragon start sneezing like that?

DIANA

Maybe he was allergic to Eric.

Eric glares at her.

ON UNI

Sheila kneels down beside the little unicorn and takes the garland of leaves about her neck.

SHEILA

Or maybe he was allergic to this!

ON KIDS

Sheila holds up the garland.

BOBBY

The old Gardener said it might
bring luck.

HANK

Those leaves must be dragonbane --
and that monster was half dragon!

PRESTO

Lucky for us it was the half with
his nose!

TWO SHOT - ERIC AND DIANA

ERIC

(Puffing up)

I knew it all along! That's why
I risked my life to get them close
enough to Demodragon!

DIANA

Eric, why don't you --

A shadow crosses over her -- she looks up and reacts in surprise.

HER POV - SHADOWDEMON

Floating above them.

SHADOWDEMON

Why don't you all surrender your
weapons -- now!

ON KIDS

Orcs step out from behind boulders all about them, spears ready.
Shadowdemon floats down before the kids as the Orcs take the kids'
weapons from them.

SHADOWDEMON

Venger will be pleased at this
turn of events!

(Menacingly)

Now, as for you --

Suddenly, a ball of mystic energy sails INTO SHOT and EXPLODES
before Shadowdemon and the Orcs, driving them back.

SHADOWDEMON

(Surprised SHOUT)

ON VENGER

Astride Nightmare, one hand still CRACKLING with Kirbyesque energy.

VENGER

Do not presume to speak for me,
Shadowdemon!

WIDE - ALL

Venger makes a mystic gesture, and the kids' weapons leap from the Orcs' hands, returning to their owners.

VENGER (CONT)

(To Shadowdemon and Orcs,
scornfully)

There is more courage in the youngest
one's pet than in all of you put to-
gether!

With another gesture, he rounds up all the Orcs in a huge ring of magic. Shadowdemon hovers nearby.

CLOSER - VENGER AND KIDS

The kids gape in disbelief. Venger looks down at them.

VENGER

The balance has been restored --
we are even now. The next time
we meet, expect no mercy.

UPSHOT - KIDS' POV - VENGER AND UNDERLINGS

Venger spurs Nightmare up and away, towing the Orcs behind him. Shadowdemon flits along behind. They all disappear into the glare of the three suns.

ON KIDS

They're blown away by this. They look at each other in astonishment.

PRESTO

Well, now I've seen every-
thing!

HANK

Imagine -- Venger, doing us a
favor!

DUNGEON MASTER (O.S.)

It is not that hard to believe,
Ranger.

They all turn and look O.S.

REVERSE ANGLE - KIDS AND DUNGEON MASTER

Dungeon Master steps out from behind a boulder.

DUNGEON MASTER (CONT)
There was good in Venger once.

ON ERIC

This is too much for him to swallow.

ERIC
(Sarcastically)
Sure -- and Ghengis Khan was a
nice guy, too!
(LAUGHS)

INCLUDING OTHERS

ERIC (CONT)
I say he's lucky to get away so easy!
Didja see the way Demodragon mopped
up the floor with him? It's nice
to know that even Venger can make a
mistake!

CLOSE ON DUNGEON MASTER

He looks very sad -- almost wistful.

DUNGEON MASTER
(Sadly)
Everybody makes mistakes, Cavalier --
(Almost a whisper)
Venger was mine.

ON KIDS AND DUNGEON MASTER

The kids face Dungeon Master, who stands before them with head bowed, almost as though he's ashamed. The kids look at each other; no one knows what to say. Even Eric is touched. HOLD the moment, and then --

FADE OUT

THE END