

DUNGEONS AND DRAGONS

"Requiem"

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

EXT. PLAIN OF DREAMS - ESTABLISHING

A surreal, fog shrouded plain, stark and brooding. In b.g., dimly glimpsed through the mists, are monoliths of basalt that suggest huge Stonehenge like dolmens and menhirs. We cannot tell if it is day or night -- the gray fog itself seems luminous. SFX: FARAWAY WINDS.

DUNGEON MASTER (O.S.)

Venger?

ANOTHER ANGLE

DUNGEON MASTER stands in the midst of the desolation, looking about him. He is not afraid; on the other hand, he doesn't look overjoyed at being here.

VENGER (O.S.)

I am here, old man.

Dungeon Master turns in time to see a MAGIC BOLT SPLIT a monolith. It CRASHES to either side, revealing VENGER amidst the swirling fog. He looks down at Dungeon Master.

VENGER (CONT'D)

Dungeon Master, you are a fool.

FAVORING DUNGEON MASTER

He raises a polite eyebrow, but does not reply.

VENGER (CONT'D)

Your pupils are doomed to failure.
They are brave only because they know
you stand behind them.

DUNGEON MASTER

Not so. They can triumph over anything
in the Realm -- as you well know. They
will not fail.

CLOSE ON VENGER

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He scowls, then smiles craftily, as if an idea has just occurred to him.

VENGER

Well, then -- perhaps you would not be adverse to a test of their courage?

ON DUNGEON MASTER

He looks wary.

VENGER (O.S. CONT'D)

We shall see how brave they are when you turn away from them. If they succeed, they will find the Key.

DUNGEON MASTER

And if they fail -- what do they lose?

ON VENGER

He raises a fist CRACKLING with Kirbyesque power.

VENGER

Everything. Their weapons -- and their lives.

CLOSE ON DUNGEON MASTER

He bows his head and folds his hands together.

DUNGEON MASTER

So be it.

SHOCK CUT TO:

EXT. MOORS - DAY

As the seven heads of an enormous HYDRA lash straight at us! SFX: HISSING. PULL BACK to include BOBBY, HANK, ERIC, DIANA, SHEILA, UNI and PRESTO, all running for their lives across a moody expanse of swampy moors with the hydra in hot pursuit.

KIDS

(ad lib)

Look out! Run! Here it comes!
(Etc.)

HYDRA

(roars)

REVERSE ANGLE - OTS HYDRA

Lumbering forward, big enough to CRUSH small trees under its feet, its heads SNAPPING and HISSING at our guys.

HYDRA

(hisses)

ERIC

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Do something, Hank! You're the leader!

ON HANK - RUNNING

He stops and fires an energy arrow up O.S.

ON HYDRA

The energy arrow streaks INTO SHOT and wraps about the hydra's necks, pinning them together for an instant. But the hydra BREAKS the glowing bonds and keeps coming.

HANK (O.S.)

It's too strong!

ON ERIC - RUNNING

One of the heads swoops down, grabs Eric by the cape and lifts him up O.S.

ERIC

Haaaaallp!

ON BOBBY

He swings his club at a dead tree, KNOCKING it loose from its roots. The tree begins to topple.

BOBBY

Timberrrr!

ON HYDRA

Still holding Eric with one of its beaks. The tree falls INTO SHOT and the head dodges, releasing Eric as it does so. Eric falls O.S.

HYDRA

(hisses)

ON GROUND

Eric sprawls in the mud.

ERIC

(impact grunt)

He rolls over and scrambles out of the way of another striking head, just in time.

ERIC

This thing's got more heads than Tiamat!

ON DIANA - RUNNING

She dodges one head and leaps over another.

DIANA

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There's no place to hide! It's
gonna get us, sooner or later!

ON PRESTO, SHEILA AND UNI

Cornered against a small spur of rock by two SNAPPING, HISSING heads,
Presto has no room to use his hat.

HYDRA
(hisses)

PRESTO
It's got us cornered!

UNI
(frightened whinny)

ON BOBBY

He raises his club over his head.

BOBBY
Hang on, Sis! I'm coming!

A head swoops down INTO SHOT and seizes Bobby's club, lifting him
from the ground. He dangles helplessly.

BOBBY
Whooah!

ON ERIC

Scrabbling across the marshy ground on his hands and knees. There's nothing funny about
this -- he's crawling for his life. Then he
looks up O.S., and grins in sudden relief.

ERIC
All right! Everything's gonna be
okay now!

He points O.S.

ON HANK AND DIANA

Backing up warily before another SNAPPING head, Diana holding it off
with her staff. Hank has an arrow nocked. They risk a look up
O.S., and then grin in relief.

HANK
Dungeon Master!

THEIR POV - DUNGEON MASTER

Standing on an overhang of rock, looking down on the kids, who are arrayed
in a loose semicircle with the hydra in the middle, its heads weaving on long, snaky
necks.

KIDS
(ad lib)
Dungeon Master, help! Get us out

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of this! Take care of this thing,
willya? (Etc.)

ON DUNGEON MASTER

He is looking down O.S. at them with a grim expression on his face.

DUNGEON MASTER

You got into this by yourselves, my
young friends --

CLOSE ON HIM

His expression is more than grim now -- it's stern, unforgiving.

DUNGEON MASTER (CONT'D)

-- Now get out of it by yourselves!

He turns his back and steps down off the rock, disappearing from
view.

CLOSE ON ERIC

He stares up O.S. in disbelief.

ERIC

(despairing disbelief)

Huh?!

He reacts in fear to an O.S. ROAR.

HIS POV - HYDRA HEAD

Lunging straight for us!

HYDRA

(roars)

FAVOR ERIC

Hank dives THROUGH SHOT, knocking Eric out of the way as the beak
SNAPS on empty air.

ANOTHER ANGLE

Hank pulls Eric to his feet. Eric has a look of sick betrayal on
his face.

ERIC

I don't believe it! He deserted
us!

ON HANK

Another O.S. ROAR snaps him around.

HYDRA (O.S.)

(roars)

HANK

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We'll worry about that later -- if
there is a later!

He FIRES three energy arrows O.S. in quick succession.

ON PRESTO, SHEILA AND UNI

Still trapped by the hydra's heads. An arrow ENTERS SHOT and STRIKES the rock wall to one side of them, SPLITTING a fissure down the middle of it. They scramble through it.

UNI
(squeal of fear)

ON BOBBY

Still dangling from one of the hydra's beaks. The second arrow STRIKES the club, knocking it free of the beak's grasp. Bobby lands and runs O.S.

BOBBY
(lands, runs)

ON DIANA

Still fending off another head with her staff.

HYDRA
(roars, hisses)

DIANA
(effort)

The third arrow steaks INTO SHOT and EXPLODES like a flare before the hydra's eyes, causing it to jerk back.

HYDRA
(surprised hiss)

Diana leaps over a low spur of rock and runs O.S.

ON RIDS - DOWNSHOT

They regroup, weapons at the ready, as the hydra lurches menacingly toward them again. Uni shrinks back against Bobby.

HYDRA
(menacing hiss)

SHEILA
It just keeps coming! What're we
gonna do?

ON HANK

He looks about desperately, then spots something O.S.

HANK
This way! Move it!

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He runs O.S.

WIDE ANGLE - MARSH

The kids run THROUGH SHOT, tripping on roots and patches of mud, SPLASHING through noxious pools, getting their clothes caught on bushes. Their faces are full of fear. Uni gallops alongside them. The hydra is right on their heels as they run for their lives.

HYDRA
(roars, hisses)

ON HANK - RUNNING

His eyes fixed on something ahead O.S. From behind one of the heads GAINS INTO SHOT, almost within reach of him.

HANK
(runs)

PAN AHEAD TO INCLUDE a nasty looking bog -- a pool of green, slimy water that looks like it could kill a bubonic plague bacillus.

HANK'S POV - BOG

PUSH IN on it, HANDHELD TRUCK, as if we were running toward it.

HANK (O.S.)
(effort)
Get ready --

OVERHEAD SHOT - WIDE

The kids and Uni reach the edge of the bog.

HANK (CONT'D)
Now! Scatter!

They break off to either side, running along the edge of the bog as the hydra's momentum carries it ahead into the morass.

HYDRA
(hissing)

ON HYDRA

It blunders in the middle of the bog with a tremendous SPLASH! Mud and slime fly everywhere. The hydra sinks in the morass, floundering helplessly, its heads STRIKING and SNAPPING futilely as it ROARS and HISSES angrily.

HYDRA
(angry roars, hisses)

ANGLE INCLUDES KIDS

They regroup on the edge of the bog, out of the hydra's reach. They're exhausted, mud spattered, breathing heavily. Presto slumps to his knees. Bobby huddles in Sheila's cloak. Diana leans wearily on her staff. Uni sprawls in the mud. Hank braces himself, hands

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on knees.

HANK

(breathing hard)

We did it. We're still alive.

ON ERIC

He looks grim.

ERIC

Yeah -- no thanks to Dungeon Master.

WIPE TO:

EXT. SALT FLATS - CROSSROADS - EVENING

The two suns are low in the sky, shading the salt flats red. The kids, still looking much the worse for wear, are at the junction of two roads through the wasteland, neither of which look particularly appealing, though the east fork appears the better traveled.

CLOSER

A signpost of weathered gray wood is mounted at the crossroads. One of the signs has fallen; the other hangs from a single rusty nail, pointing at the sky. Presto looks at it.

PRESTO

According to this, the Flame
Mountains are -- that way.

He points straight up, mimicking the sign.

ANOTHER ANGLE

Bobby picks up the other sign, rubs some rime from it.

BOBBY

(reads)

"This way to the Sea of Sorrow."

WIDE ANGLE

Sheila looks at the two roads.

SHEILA

Great. Which road leads where?

ON ERIC

He looks very down.

ERIC

Who cares? It doesn't matter.

(beat)

I can't believe he would just abandon
us like that.

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He starts to trudge down the eastern fork.

FAVORING HANK

He realizes it's up to him to make a decision. He looks from one road to the other, then points to the western fork.

HANK

We go west, Eric.

Eric just looks at him. He makes no move to return.

ERIC

Why?

HANK

It's downhill. We're more likely to find water.

ANOTHER ANGLE

Eric returns to the crossroads, looking at Hank. He's frowning slightly. The other kids watch uneasily; they sense tension.

ERIC

The other way's a better road -- might lead to a town.

Hank is somewhat nettled, but trying to keep his cool.

HANK

I'm the leader, Eric. You said so before -- remember?

TWO SHOT - HANK AND ERIC

Eric steps up to Hank, locking gazes with him.

ERIC

I was under a lot of pressure then. Maybe I see things clearer now.

(beat)

Maybe it's time we had a little election. Whattaya say, Presto?

REFIELD to include the others as Eric turns to Presto for support. Presto looks at the others nervously.

PRESTO

Uh -- well, the eastern road does look better ...

WIDE ANGLE

Bobby steps over to Hank, as does Uni. Diana is already by Hank's side.

BOBBY

Yeah? Well, I think the west road looks better.

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Uni looks at Eric disdainfully.

UNI
(horse lips)

ANOTHER ANGLE - FAVOR SHEILA

Sheila looks uncertain; as always, she tries to mediate.

SHEILA
Now wait a minute, Bobby --

BOBBY
(interrupting)
Keep out of this, Sis!

Sheila, stung, takes a step backwards, which puts her closer to Eric. A full-blown ARGUMENT erupts, the kids SHOUTING and pointing fingers at each other accusingly. Hank is the only one who doesn't take part in it; he looks from one side to the other in shocked disbelief.

KIDS
(ad lib)
You don't know what you're
talking about! Aw, dry up!
You're always throwing your
weight around! (Etc.)

FAVORING HANK

He steps between the two factions and raises both hands.

HANK
(shouts)
Hold it, hold it!

The others stop and look at him.

HANK (CONT'D)
C'mon, we all know what this is
really about. We're not mad at
each other -- we're mad at Dungeon
Master.

The others know he's right; they look embarrassed, avoiding each other's gaze.

CLOSE ON HANK

He makes a helpless gesture.

HANK (CONT'D)
I don't know what to tell you --
except that it's getting dark, and
we'd better find a place to camp.
(beat; to Eric)
You want the point, Eric? You got
it. Lead the way.

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FAVOR ERIC

He looks somewhat resentfully at Hank, then turns and takes the eastern road O.S. The others follow him. Hank watches them go. Bobby and Uni are the last; Bobby turns and looks back at Hank. Hank follows, stone faced.

WIPE TO:

EXT. SEA OF SORROWS - NIGHT - CLOSE ON DRIFTWOOD

A pile of weathered wood on the sand. An energy arrow from O.S. STRIKES it, turning it into the flames of a campfire. PULL BACK to show the kids and Uni sitting on stones and logs around the fire. Hank slings his bow and sits down with them. In b.g. we can see the moons' reflections shimmering on the surface of the sea. SFX: BREAKERS.

DIANA

Maybe it wasn't really Dungeon
Master ...

FAVOR ERIC

He pokes at the flames with a stick. SPARKS scatter.

ERIC

It was him. D'you think I wouldn't
know him?
(beat; bitterly)
This whole Realm is a dungeon, y'know
that? And we're all prisoners. We
thought Dungeon Master was our friend,
but it turns out he's just another
guard.

FAVOR SHEILA

She huddles closer to the fire, shivering more from fear than cold.

SHEILA

What're we gonna do now? If Dungeon
Master's abandoned us, who's gonna
help us?

VENGER (O.S.)

I will help you.

WIDE ANGLE - ALL

They know that voice. In an instant all are on their feet, weapons ready, staring into the darkness that surrounds the fire.

DRAMATIC ANGLE - VENGER

He steps out of the darkness into the flickering light of the fire. PULL BACK to include the others. Uni hides behind Bobby. Venger holds out his hands in a gesture of peace.

VENGER

Be at ease, my young enemies.
I shall not harm you.

ON HANK

Watching suspiciously from behind a nocked energy arrow.

HANK

Move very slowly, Venger.

ON VENGER

One corner of his mouth lifts slightly at Hank's warning. He looks at the kids.

VENGER

So Dungeon Master has finally shown his true colors. Have you never wondered why his advice always led you into battle, and never back to your world?

ANGLE INCLUDES KIDS

Eric, Sheila, and Presto look somewhat uncertain. Bobby, Diana and Hank still hold their weapons at the ready. The BREAKERS counterpoint the uneasy silence.

VENGER (CONT'D)

It has been convenient for you to see Dungeon Master as good, and me as evil. But things are not that simple.

ON VENGER AND CAMPFIRE

Venger stares broodingly into its flames.

VENGER (CONT'D)

I have granted you your lives before. Aid me now, and I shall grant you your dearest wish -- I will send you back to your own world.

CLOSER

He makes a gesture at the flames. They BLAZE UP, forming a miniature portal in which can be seen the amusement park.

ON ERIC, SHEILA, PRESTO

They stare longingly at the flickering image.

VENGER (O.S. CONT'D)

Far to the south lies Realm's Edge. There you will find a cenotaph -- an empty tomb. Within it is a key, which you must cast into the Abyss.

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WIDE ANGLE - ALL

Venger makes another gesture and the image vanishes in sync with a particularly loud CRASH OF SURF.

VENGER (CONT'D)

Do this, and you will go home. You
have my word.

The flames BLAZE UP again, higher than ever. When they die down,
Venger has vanished.

ON KIDS

They look at each other, speechless. Suddenly Hank fires the
nocked arrow O.S. skyward in a gesture of defiance. It EXPLODES
above them like a flare, providing eerie light.

HANK

Forget it, Venger! No way we're
working for you!

CLOSER

Eric steps forward.

ERIC

Wait a minute, Hank. What choice
do we have? Dungeon Master's
abandoned us -- Venger may be our
only ticket home.

Presto steps INTO SHOT alongside Eric.

PRESTO

I think Eric's got a point, Hank.
Venger's ruthless, but he's got a
code. I believe him.

Sheila joins them.

SHEILA

So do I. All I want is to go home
-- and I don't care who's responsible
for sending us there.

ANGLE FAVORS HANK, BOBBY, UNI, DIANA

They look at the others incredulously.

DIANA

You guys can't be serious. You know
Venger's bad news.

Hank steps toward Eric, extends a hand toward him.

HANK

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Eric, we gotta stick together --

ANOTHER ANGLE

Eric brushes his hand aside.

ERIC

(angry)

Why, Hank? We always stick together
-- and it hasn't gotten us home.

(beat)

You guys can do what you want -- but
we're going after that key.

He turns and EXITS SHOT. Presto hesitates, then follows. Sheila turns, then looks back at Bobby.

SHEILA

Bobby -- won't you change your mind?

ON BOBBY

He looks very young and uncertain, but he shakes his head and moves closer to Hank.

BOBBY

I think you're making a mistake,
Sheila.

ANOTHER ANGLE

Sheila turns and runs into the darkness after the others. Hank, Bobby, Diana and Uni watch her go. SFX: BREAKERS.

WIPE TO:

EXT. SEASHORE - NIGHT

The breakers, foamy with salt in solution, CRASH on the rime-crusted shore. An ancient galleon is wrecked there, sails hanging in tatters, salt stains glittering in the moonlight. Eric, Presto and Sheila ENTER SHOT and climb onto the canted deck.

ERIC

Think you can make this thing
fly, Presto?

ON PRESTO

He takes off his hat and makes magic passes over it, frowning in concentration.

PRESTO

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Magic in the hat be free; let us
use the sky as the sea.

WIDE ANGLE

A shimmering arc of magic light ERUPTS from the hat, engulfing the galleon and lifting it, with much CREAKING and SNAPPING of aged wood, free of the sand.

CLOSER ON THEM

The ship rises, the remnants of sails FLAPPING uselessly. Eric faces the bow, looking grimly ahead. Sheila stands behind him.

SHEILA

Are we doing the right thing,
Eric?

Eric doesn't look at her.

ERIC

I don't know. But we're not
turning back.

CUT TO:

EXT. CAMPFIRE - ON HANK, DIANA, BOBBY, UNI

Standing by the dying embers of the fire, watching the silhouette of the galleon sail across the three moons.

HANK

We've got to get to Realm's Edge
first, somehow --

An O.S. ROAR interrupts him; they all look O.S. and react.

BRONZE DRAGON (O.S.)

(roars)

THEIR POV - SEASHORE

A huge BRONZE DRAGON lands at the water's edge, its wings spraying foam and sand.

ON KIDS

Bobby steps back warily, raising his club.

BOBBY

Just what we need -- more problems!

UNI

(horse lips)

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Diana steps forward.

DIANA

Wait, Bobby. That's a bronze dragon
-- it might help us.

ON BRONZE DRAGON

It watches Diana as she steps forward, her staff raised. She TAPS it gently on its horns with her staff, like a mahout gentling an elephant. With a SNORT, the dragon lowers its head.

BRONZE DRAGON

(snorts)

Diana looks at the others triumphantly.

DIANA

All aboard!

ANOTHER ANGLE

Bobby, Uni and Hank join Diana on the bronze dragon's broad back. There is room enough for Uni to huddle between two of the dragon's huge dorsal plates. Diana sits behind the beast's horns.

HANK

I hope you know what you're
doing, Diana.

DIANA

So do I.

WIDE ANGLE

She TAPS the dragon's horns again. With a THUNDERCLAP of wings the great creature lifts into the night sky.

AERIAL LONG SHOT - BRONZE DRAGON AND FLYING GALLEON

The bronze dragon flies after the shrinking form of the galleon, as we --

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. REALM - AERIAL SHOT - DAWN

Much the same shot as before, with the bronze dragon still pursuing the flying ship. They are flying south over a rocky, barren land which rises to mountains in the distance. To the west the two suns are rising.

ON BRONZE DRAGON'S BACK - PANNING

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Diana, Bobby and Uni are asleep, curled up in the hollows between the plates, well ahead of the STROKING wings. Hank stands in another hollow, looking grimly ahead, the WIND ruffling his hair. PUSH IN on him as he stares O.S. after the galleon. Suddenly Diana's hand ENTERS SHOT and touches his shoulder. He turns to see her behind him, rubbing her eyes sleepily.

DIANA
(sleepily)
You should get some sleep.

ANOTHER ANGLE

Hank looks off into the distance, frowning.

HANK
Why do you think we're here,
Diana?

DIANA
In the Realm?
(beat)
I always thought it was to defeat
Venger.

Hank looks ahead again.

HANK
So did I -- but I'm beginning to
wonder. Maybe Venger's right about
one thing -- maybe things aren't
that simple.

BOBBY (O.S.)
Hey, look!

ANGLE INCLUDES BOBBY

Be and Uni are now awake. He stands atop one of the plates, pointing ahead excitedly.

THEIR POV - FLAME MOUNTAINS

They are approaching the range of mountains now, and we can see they consist of active volcanoes. Curtains of smoke and ash hang over bubbling cauldrons of lava. Incandescent fountains shoot up. None of the peaks are in the throes of a major eruption, but all together they present a dangerous gauntlet to run. SFX: RUMBLING, BUBBLING LAVA.

ON GALLEON - PANNING

It weaves its way through the deadly peaks. Eric looks over the

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side and GULPS as they pass very close to a lake of fire.

ERIC

(gulps)

Hey, we're slowing down, Presto!

ON PRESTO

He takes off his hat and shakes it as though trying to dump more magic out of it. Nothing happens.

PRESTO

I think my spell's running out of gas!

WIDE ANGLE - ALL

Sheila looks back O.S.

SHEILA

They're gaining on us!

THEIR POV - BRONZE DRAGON

Flying through the clouds of ash. We can see Hank leaning around one of the plates, looking down.

HANK

Stop, you guys! Please!

REVERSE ANGLE

Eric looks up defiantly.

ERIC

No way! This is our last chance to go home!

ON HANK - PANNING

He looks angry. He pulls back an arrow.

HANK

Have it your way --!

Diana grabs his arm.

DIANA

Hank! What're you doing?

HANK

I'm gonna force them down!

He pulls free of Diana's arm and FIRES the arrow down O.S.

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ON ERIC

He raises his shield; the arrow RICOCHETS from it O.S.

DOWNSHOT - VOLCANIC CRATER

The arrow plunges straight down into the the seething molten rock, setting off a tremendous ERUPTION that hurtles straight up at us!

ON GALLEON - MOVING

A rain of fiery fragments SHOWERS down on its deck, setting the bits of sailcloth afire. Glowing clouds surround the ship. Sheila and Presto crowd under Eric's shield as chunks of brimstone bounce off it. Smoke obscures the scene.

ERIC, SHEILA, PRESTO
(fearful walla)

ON BRONZE DRAGON - MOVING

Bank, Bobby, Uni and Diana stare in horror O.S.

BOBBY
Hank! What've you done?!

ON VOLCANO

Red-hot boulders are hurled from its crater into other nearby ones. The entire side of a neighboring peak BLOWS OUT, sending a searing STONE WIND -- a deadly cloud of incandescent gas and powdered stone -- O.S.

ANGLE INCLUDES HANK, BOBBY, DIANA, UNI

Reacting in fear as the STONE WIND BOILS toward them.

HANK, DIANA, BOBBY, UNI
(fearful walla)

ON BRONZE DRAGON - MOVING

It turns in an attempt to escape the wall of superheated stone mist swiftly overtaking it as we

FADE OUT

END ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

EXT. FLAME MOUNTAINS - DAY

ERUPTIONS proceeding in full force, and the STONE WIND hurtling toward the bronze dragon, who is attempting to outrun it.

ON BRONZE DRAGON'S BACK - PANNING

Hank, Diana, Bobby and Uni hold on for dear life. Hank looks back at the approaching WIND, coming like a roiling black wave.

HANK

It's too fast for us!

UNI

(frightened whinny)

FAVORING DIANA

She reaches forward with her staff and TAPS the dragon under the jaw.

DIANA

Go up! Up!

WIDE ANGLE - BRONZE DRAGON AND STONE WIND

The bronze dragon swoops up O.S. PAN TO FOLLOW as the boiling crest of vaporized rock just misses it.

EXT. LAVA PLAINS - DAY

With the Flame Mountains in the distance painting the sky a baleful red. Rivers of lava glow along the horizon. The exhausted bronze dragon lands in f.g.

CLOSER ON BRONZE DRAGON

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Hank, Diana, Bobby and Uni disembark, and the bronze dragon flies O.S. The four of them, grim faced, turn to look back at the range offire in the distance. Bobby is crying.

BOBBY

(sniffling)

They didn't make it, did they?

DIANA

(false cheer)

Sure they did! They've come through tougher spots than this!

Bobby ignores her, looking at Hank.

BOBBY

Hank?

TWO SHOT - HANK AND BOBBY

Hank stares O.S. at his friends' funeral pyre. His shoulders drop; he bows his head.

HANK

I'm sorry, Bobby. It was my fault.

Bobby turns away. Diana ENTERS SHOT and puts her hand on Hank's shoulder.

DIANA

What do we do now, Hank ?

Hank straightens; life must go on.

HANK

The volcanoes won't let us go back. We'll have to go on -- to Realm's Edge.

Hank turns and looks in the other direction O.S., as does Diana.

THEIR POV

The plain rises for a considerable distance, and ends at the edge of a cliff which stretches in either direction as far as they can ee. At the edge, barely visible, is the cenotaph -- a lonely, crumbling tower on the edge of the world.

WIPE

TO:

EXT. ANOTHER PART OF PLAIN - DAY

Eric, Sheila and Presto are picking their way over the cracked Black lava plain. The wrecked and smoldering galleon is visible in

b.g. Sheila scrambles to the top of an angled slab and looks O.S. this way and that.

SHEILA

Bobby? Bobby?!

ON ERIC

He looks up O.S. at her.

ERIC

Any sign of them?

HIS POV - UPSHOT - SHEILA

The WIND plucking at her cloak. She looks around a final time, then lowers her head.

SHEILA

Nothing. They must've been --

She hides her face in her hands and sinks to her knees on the slab.

RESUME ERIC

He looks down at the ground also. Presto ENTERS SHOT, looking at him sympathetically.

PRESTO

It's not your fault, Eric.

ERIC

Yeah, right. Somebody else used my shield to bounce a flame arrow into a volcano.

(beat)

If you hadn't gotten your magic hat to bail us out, our geoses would be charcoal now.

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WIDE ANGLE

Sheila climbs down to join them.

ERIC (CONT'D)

Come on. The least I can do is
find Venger's key and get you two
home.

He turns and trudges O.S. Presto, looking concerned over his
friend, follows. After a beat, Sheila brings up the rear. There
are tears on her face.

WIPE TO:

EXT. REALM'S EDGE - ESTABLISHING - DAY

The cenotaph rises, skyscraper high, on the edge of the cliff.
PUSH IN on a moucharaby near the top, where two figures stand:
Venger and Dungeon Master. They look down O.S.

VENGER

You will lose, old man. Their
desire to return to their home is
stronger than anything else.
Without your support they will
crumble.

ON DUNGEON MASTER

He looks concerned, but is determined not to let Venger get to
him.

DUNGEON MASTER

Their courage will not fail them.
They will do what has to be done.

THEIR POV - DOWNSHOT - LAVA PLAINS

We can see the two groups of kids making their way slowly toward
the tower from opposite sides. The rough terrain hides each group
from the other.

VENGER (O.S.)

We shall see. That which is in
the cenotaph will test their
courage.

WIPE TO:

EXT. CENOTAPH ENTRANCE - ESTABLISHING - DAY

A huge door in the shape of a stylized dragon's head, the open jaws framing the entrance. Hank, Diana, Bobby and Uni ENTER SHOT and stand before it.

DIANA

We're here. Now what do we do?

Hank leans wearily against the door.

HANK

I don't know, Diana. I think we've gone as far as we can go.

(beat)

I guess I've lead us straight to disaster.

INCLUDING DIANA, BOBBY, UNI

They look at each other; they don't know what to say. Uni nuzzles Hank, who rests his head on his arm in an attitude of despair.

then:

ERIC (O.S.)

Hey, look on the bright side -- you beat us here.

They all snap around and stare O.S., then react in joy.

HANK

(disbelieving joy)

Eric!

THEIR POV - ERIC

Standing atop a small rise, his cape flowing behind him, looking cocky. Sheila and Presto scramble up into view behind him.

SHEILA

(ecstatic)

Bobby!

She runs down O.S.

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SHEILA AND BOBBY

They run toward each other and embrace. PULL BACK to include the others as they take turns hugging each other. Uni capers about them all, BLEATING in joy.

UNI

(happy unicorn bleats)

KIDS

(ad lib)

Boy, am I glad to see you! We thought you were goners! How'd you get out of that? Let's never split up again! (Etc.)

FAVORING HANK AND ERIC

With their arms around each other's shoulders.

ERIC

I'm sure glad you guys are okay. Now all we have to do is get that key and we can go home.

Hank steps back from Eric. He looks surprised.

HANK

You're not still planning on that, are you?

ANGLE INCLUDES ALL

We see that, consciously or not, they've divided into two groups again.

ERIC

You bet we are! I want to sleep in my own bed tonight!

DIANA

Eric, you're already sleeping -- and dreaming -- if you think Venger's gonna follow through on his promise.

SHEILA

If there's even the slightest chance, we've gotta take it.

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FAVORING HANK

He stands before the door.

HANK

Forget it, Eric! Nobody opens this door!

ON ERIC AND PRESTO

Eric stares defiantly O.S.

ERIC

That's what you think! Presto, show him!

PRESTO

(doubtfully)

Well -- okay ...

Presto takes off his hat and aims it O.S. A bolt of magic force ERUPTS from the hat O.S., surprising the young magician as much as anybody.

PRESTO

(surprised grunt)

ON HANK

He tries to dodge as the the bolt streams INTO SHOT, but a tendril of it lifts him and gently sets him aside, while the main force of the bolt BATTERS through the cenotaph's door, SPLINTERING it.

ANOTHER ANGLE

Eric, Presto and Sheila run forward, into the cenotaph.

ERIC

That's three, Presto. You're on a roll.

ON HANK, DIANA, BOBBY, UNI

Trapped by the dissipating coils of Presto's spell.

KIDS

(struggle)

By the time they free themselves, the others are out of sight.

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HANK

We've got to stop them -- they're playing right into Venger's hands.

TRACK WITH THEM as they run into the cenotaph.

INT. CENOTAPH - ESTABLISHING

A huge empty chamber, with a side door leading to a stairwell. Eric, Presto and Sheila have already started up it when an energy arrow BURSTS in the air ahead of them, bringing them to a halt.

ON ERIC

He looks back O.S. REFIELD to include Hank, Bobby, Uni and Diana standing in the doorway. Hank has another arrow drawn.

HANK

Don't do it, Eric!

ERIC

(quietly)

How you gonna stop me, Hank?

ON HANK

He has an arrow drawn, but not raised. Now he raises it. Diana and Bobby look at him anxiously.

HANK

I don't know -- but neither of us wants to find out.

ANOTHER ANGLE

Emphasizing the standoff for a moment; then the floor suddenly shakes, accompanied by a deep RUMBLING. Everyone looks about apprehensively.

SHEILA

What was that?

ON FLOOR

The RUMBLING comes again, much louder now. Huge flagstones CRACK. The cracks web out from the center, becoming fissures. From the fissures flow viscous, jelly like streams of translucent protoplasm.

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ON DIANA, HANK AND OTHERS

The streams flow toward them, pseudopodia rising and questing blindly for them. Hank pushes Diana and Bobby toward the stairs.

HANK

Get off the floor -- quick!

WIDE ANGLE

They run quickly up the stairs. The floor is now covered with the semi-solid mass, which begins flowing after them. It rises and forms into a huge, amoeba-like creature. SFX: GURGLING, SLURPING.

REVERSE ANGLE

Hank, Diana, Bobby and Uni join the others, and they all back up the stairwell. The amoeboid surges after them, almost flowing over Uni's front hooves. She dances back wildly to avoid it.

UNI

("yuck!")

ANOTHER ANGLE

the kids back up the stairs, weapons ready. The amoeboid flows glutinously after them.

DIANA

What is it?

PRESTO

Whatever it is, it knows what we are: lunch!

FAVOR HANK

He aims the arrow he nocked earlier down O.S.

HANK

Yeah? Let's see if it likes its food spicy.

He FIRES the arrow.

ON AMOEBOID

Almost filing the stairwell below them. The arrow streaks toward it. A pseudopod rises and engulfs it without visible effect, save

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for a luminous rippling that spreads down the pseudopod. Then the entire mass surges forward again.

ERIC (O.S.)

(gulps)

Looks like it liked it just fine!

ON KIDS

Presto steps forward, one hand stirring the air over his hat.

PRESTO

Lemme try!

His hand dips into the hat and pulls out a glowing sphere of magic,
which he hurls O.S.

ON AMOEBOID

It absorbs the magic ball much as it did the arrow, and with much be same result. It flows toward us faster than ever.

AS BEFORE - PRESTO

He looks crestfallen. The group continues backing up the stairs. The amoeboid is gaining on them.

PRESTO

Where's Steve McQueen when you need him?

DIANA

We'd better think of something.
This bowl of jelly means business.

FAVOR BOBBY

He hefts his club determinedly.

BOBBY

Yeah? Well, so do I!

ANOTHER ANGLE

Bobby runs forward O.S. Sheila grabs for him but misses.

SHEILA

Bobby! Be careful!

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ON AMOEBOID

THE Lovecraftian horror rises above Bobby threateningly as he steps

INTO SHOT. Bobby SMASHES his club against one wall of the stairwell, then the opposite wall. The walls CRACK and CRUMBLE, BURYING the amoeboid beneath tons of debris as Bobby dashes back O.S.

ON KIDS

They retreat from the dust and flying fragments of rock.

SHEILA

Bobby? Are you all right?

A beat; then Bobby runs out from the thick cloud of dust.

BOBBY

Good news and bad news -- that thing's been buried --

ANGLE ON DUST CLOUD

It clears, revealing that the stairwell is blocked.

BOBBY (O. S. CONT'D)

But we can't go back down.

FAVORING HANK AND ERIC

Eric looks at Hank in satisfaction.

ERIC

Which means we have to go up.

Hank looks at him and nods slowly.

HANK

You win -- for now.

WIDE ANGLE - ALL

They turn away from the cave-in and continue up O.S.

WIPE TO:

INT. SANCTUM - ESTABLISHING - DAY

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The topmost part of the cenotaph is the sanctum -- a huge, cathedral-like chamber with a gigantic vault on one wall and an ornate sarcophagus in the middle of the floor, the lid carved in the shape of a figure in repose. The wall opposite the vault has collapsed, revealing the abyss beyond the Realm. The stairwell opens off another wall. Venger and Dungeon Master stand beside the sarcophagus.

DUNGEON MASTER

They are coming, Venger -- doubtful and suspicious of each other and their quest, but still coming.

VENGER

Bah! They can yet fail -- and they will.

ANGLE ON VENGER

He looks down at the carved figure on the sarcophagus lid with an unreadable expression, then turns away. We cannot see the features on the figure from this angle.

VENGER (CONT'D)

Do not celebrate your victory yet, old one.

ON DUNGEON MASTER

He approaches the sarcophagus lid and looks at it. We still can't see what's on it clearly.

DUNGEON MASTER

(cryptically)

It is not I who will be the winner, Venger -- it is you.

A FOOTFALL O.S. causes him to turn.

DUNGEON MASTER (CONT'D)

They are here.

ON STAIRWELL

Eric, leading the rest, comes into view. He stops and looks around him O.S.

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ERIC

So this is it. Doesn't look like
much.

ANGLE INCLUDES SANCTUM

Which is now empty, save for the sarcophagus and the kids. Diana
points toward the broken wall and the abyss beyond.

DIANA

(awed)

Look ...

ON BROKEN WALL

The kids approach cautiously and look out over the ultimate gulf.

BOBBY

(awed)

It goes on forever ...!

THEIR POV - REALM'S EDGE

An endless cliff dropping into the mists of night thousands of
miles below. Stars twinkle in the depths. Barely visible is the
suggestion of titanic, continent sized pillars that support the
Realm.

ON VAULT

Sheila approaches the vault. Almost hidden among the ornate
intaglio of its surface is a keyhole.

SHEILA

There's a keyhole here. This is
a door.

ON SARCOPHAGUS

Presto steps up to the sarcophagus and looks at the face of the
figure carved on it. He reacts in astonishment.

PRESTO

Look -- on the lid! It's --

CLOSE ON LID

At last we see clearly the carved figure. It is a man in

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warrior's

garb, arms crossed on his chest. His face, though noble and serene

and lacking the fangs, horn, wings, and other accouterments of evil, nevertheless is unquestionably that of Venger.

PRESTO (O.S. CONT'D)

Venger!

ANOTHER ANGLE

The others gather around, staring at the figure.

BOBBY

I don't get it. Who'd want to make old hornhead look good?

FAVORING ERIC

Looking down at the figure.

ERIC

Only one way to find out.

(beat)

Open it.

WIDE ANGLE

The kids all line up on one side of the sarcophagus and push at the heavy stone lid. With a GRATING of stone on stone, it slides over.

CLOSE ON SARCOPHAGUS

As the lid moves slowly to one side, revealing the interior of the sarcophagus. It is empty, save for an ordinary brass key lying at the bottom. PUSH IN on it.

ON ERIC

He reaches in and grabs the key.

ERIC

We've got the key! Now all we've got to do is throw it in the abyss and we're home free.

He turns toward the abyss. Hank ENTERS SHOT, blocking his path.

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HANK

Don't you get it yet? We'll never
get home by trusting Venger.

ANGLE INCLUDES OTHERS

As Hank and Eric face off.

ERIC

Outta my way, Hank.

Hank shakes his head.

HANK

No! I'm right about this -- I
know it!

ANOTHER ANGLE

Eric raises his shield -- and then, suddenly, all of them are
thrown off their feet by the SHATTERING of the floor next to the
sarcophagus.

KIDS

(surprised walla)

ON FLOOR

The amoeboid rises from the floor, pseudopods lashing out in all
directions. The kids scatter to avoid it.

KIDS

(ad lib)

Look out! That thing's back
again! Watch out for those
tentacles! (Etc.)

ON ERIC

Bolding the key. A pseudopod surges THROUGH SHOT, STRIKING his
shield and sending him sprawling O. S.

ERIC

(impact grunt)

ON EDGE OF FLOOR

Eric lands near the edge of the abyss. He looks at the key, then
raises his hand to throw it in.

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CLOSE ON HIS HAND

Bank's hand ENTERS SHOT and grabs his wrist.

HANK

No!

ANOTHER ANGLE

Eric tries to pull his hand from Hank's grasp.

ERIC

Let me go!

ON DIANA

Backing up before a surging wave of the amoeboid, her staff held out before her. A pseudopod extrudes from the main mass and wraps about her staff, pulling Diana toward it. Diana braces her feet, but the thing is too strong for her.

DIANA

(struggles)

ON PRESTO

Holding his hat out before him as he backs away from the oncoming horror.

CLOSE ON HAT

It glows, but before anything can emerge a pseudopod wraps about it, closing it and seizing Presto's arms.

ANOTHER ANGLE

Presto is lifted off his feet. He dangles helplessly in the pseudopod's grasp.

PRESTO

Hey!

ON ERIC AND HANK

They are on their feet now, both holding onto the key. Hank's back is to the abyss.

ERIC

Let me do it! Do you want to be

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a prisoner here forever?

CLOSE ON HANK

His eyes widen in sudden realization.

HANK

Eric! Remember what you said about
this whole Realm being a dungeon?

ON ERIC

Still holding onto the key as Hank speaks.

HANK (O.S. CONT'D)

I think you were right! We're all
prisoners here -- including Venger!
And this is the key!

ON UNI

Backed into a corner. A pseudopod wraps about her and lifts her
O.S.

UNI

(bleat of fear)

ON SHEILA

She flips her hood up over her head as another pseudopod reaches
for her. She becomes invisible, but the amoeboid evidently uses
other senses than sight to track its prey. It wraps about Sheila's
invisible form.

SHEILA (V.O.)

(screams)

The hood falls away and she becomes visible again as she is
lifted,
kicking, off the floor.

ON BOBBY

Backed into another corner, swinging his club to keep a pseudopod
at bay. He sees what's happening O.S.

BOBBY

Sheila! Uni!

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He raises the club over his head and SLAMS it down on the floor.

WIDE ANGLE - AMOEBOID

The SHOCK WAVE ripples through its protoplasmic form, causing it to drop Sheila, Uni, Diana and Presto.

SHEILA, UNI, DIANA, PRESTO
(impact grunts)

ON HANK AND ERIC

The SHOCK WAVE rocks them both; Hank lets go of the key, drops his bow and staggers backward. He hovers for a second, arms windmilling, on the edge of infinity -- then falls.

HANK
(trailing cry)

ANOTHER ANGLE

Eric lunges for him, but it's too late -- he's gone.

ERIC
Hank!

ON AMOEBOID

It's recovered from the effects of Bobby's blow. The kids are grouped together now. The amoeboid flows toward them like a sentient wave, surrounding them.

ANOTHER ANGLE

They try to free themselves, but it's like trying to run through heavy oil. The protoplasm flows up around them -- another moment and it will encase them completely.

KIDS
(struggle)

ON ERIC

He looks back toward his O.S. friends, then at the abyss. He looks at the key in his hand.

WIDER ANGLE

Venger suddenly MATERIALIZES before him. He points toward the

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abyss.

VENGER

The key, Cavalier! Throw it into
the abyss -- or you will never see
your home again!

ON ERIC

He looks at the abyss, then O.S. in the opposite direction.

HIS POV - VAULT

PUSH IN on it, emphasizing the keyhole.

RESUME ERIC

He makes his decision -- he turns and runs for the vault!

ON VENGER

He spreads his wings in wrath.

VENGER

(roars)

Stop!

He hurls a MAGIC BOLT O.S.

ON ERIC - RUNNING

The bolt SPLASHES against his shield, staggering him, but he keeps
going.

ON VENGER

He raises his hand to hurl another blast, but just then a
pseudopod
ENTERS SHOT, wrapping about him, pinning his arms. He struggles.

VENGER

(struggles)

ON VAULT

Eric comes to a halt before the vault.

ERIC

Hank, you'd better be right --!

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He thrusts the key into the lock and turns it.

ON VENGER

He frees himself of the pseudopod with a BURST of magic. His eyes grow wide as he realizes he's too late.

VENGER

No!

ON VAULT

The massive door swings open. A cascade of coruscating light bursts forth, momentarily silhouetting Eric, who staggers backward.

The pyrotechnic forces sweep outward O.S. APPROPRIATE SFX.

ON KIDS

The amoeboid's mass has nearly risen over their heads when the EFX wash over it. The amoeboid shimmers and VANISHES in a burst of brilliance. The kids fall to the floor.

ON VENGER

He steps backward, holding his hands out in a futile attempt to warn off the magic, which engulfs him.

VENGER

(cry of fear)

CUT TO:

EXT. CENOTAPH - LONG SHOT

Streams of magic BURST from the tower, spreading away from Realm's Edge and O.S.

EXT. FIELDS - DAY

Several SERFS toiling among crops. A magic bolt from the vault IMPACTS near them like an incandescent meteorite, and a portal opens there, showing the single sun of Earth shining over a medieval town. The serfs drop their mattocks and rush toward the portal.

SERFS

(happy cries)

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EXT. PLAIN - NIGHT

Another magic bolt ZAPS a portal near a group of LIZARD MEN. The world opened for them is that of a tropical jungle, with three red suns shining above it. The lizard men rush into the portal.

LIZARD MEN
(hisses)

WIDE ANGLE - REALM - PANNING

A SLOW PAN that shows bolts from the cenotaph descending in all parts of the Realm, creating portals wherever they STRIKE.

EXT. VENGER'S CITADEL - DAY

ORCS, BULLIWOGS and other servants of Venger flee in terror as a bolt arcs toward the citadel.

ORCS, BULLIWOGS
(panicked cries)

CLOSER

SHADOWDEMON emerges, reacts to the approaching destruction, then hightails it O.S. A moment later the citadel is STRUCK AND DESTROYED by the bolt.

CUT TO:

INT. CENOTAPH - VAULT

As the last of the magic streams out and O.S., leaving Eric sitting, dazed, before a huge, empty vault. Diana, Sheila, Presto, Bobby and Uni run INTO SHOT. Presto helps Eric up.

ERIC
(awed whisper)
Did you see that?

PRESTO
You kidding? We were all ringside.

DIANA
Looks like Hank was right ...

ON ERIC

He reacts to this in shock.

ERIC

Hank!!

He rushes O.S. The others follow.

ON EDGE OF ABYSS - UPSHOT

The kids gather around the edge of the abyss and look down, fearing the worst. Then they smile in relief.

HANK (O.S.)

Well, don't just stand there --

REVERSE ANGLE - DOWNSHOT - HANK

Hanging from a rocky outcropping over the abyss.

HANK (CONT'D)

Get me outta here!

ANOTHER ANGLE

Diana extends her staff to Hank. It glows as he pulls himself up hand over hand to stand beside them. He picks up his bow and looks O.S.

HANK

Hey! What's happening to Venger?

They all look O.S. and react as shimmering light begins to bleed INTO SHOT.

THEIR POV - VENGER

Still wrapped in the luminous spell. It TRANSMOGRIFIES him, changing him into the noble, majestic figure whose likeness is carved on the sarcophagus. He looks down at himself in disbelief. When he speaks, his voice is that of Venger, but without the sinister reverb.

ON KIDS

Watching in awe. Hank raises his bow in a gesture of triumph.

HANK

I was right! Our mission in the Realm was not to defeat Venger -- it was to redeem him!

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WIDE ANGLE - KIDS AND VENGER

As the new Venger approaches the kids. Then, before them all, a burst of prismatic light appears and forms into Dungeon Master. He looks at Venger, and smiles. Venger kneels before him.

VENGER

Father -- I have returned.

CLOSER - KIDS, DUNGEON MASTER, VENGER

Uni nuzzles Venger's hand as Dungeon Master, tears in his eyes, turns toward the kids.

DUNGEON MASTER

(emotionally)

Thank you, my young pupils. You have done the one thing it was not in my power to do -- you have returned my son to me.

The kids look at each other in confusion.

ERIC

(to Dungeon Master)

You're Venger's father?

PRESTO

There's not a big family resemblance ...

ON VENGER

He smiles.

VENGER

Thousands of years ago, I chose to follow another Master -- one of evil.

HANK

(understanding)

The Nameless One.

VENGER

I imprisoned in this cenotaph all that which Dungeon Master had given me. And now you have set me free.

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ANGLE INCLUDES VAULT

Dungeon Master raises his hands, and a final bolt streaks from the vault, IMPACTING near the kids and forming a portal. Within it they can see the amusement park.

KIDS

(gasps)

DUNGEON MASTER

And you have given those trapped in this Realm their freedom. I can do no less for you. You are free to return to your world now, if you wish.

ANGLE ON KIDS

They look at each other in disbelieving joy as Dungeon Master continues.

DUNGEON MASTER (O.S. CONT'D)

Or you may stay here, in the Realm. There is still much evil to be dealt with, and many adventures yet to be had.

WIDE ANGLE

The kids and Uni stand in front of the portal, with Dungeon Master on one side and Venger on the other.

DUNGEON MASTER (CONT'D)

The choice, my children, is yours.

The kids look at each other, grinning, ready to make their greatest decision of all, as we PULL BACK, through the broken wall of the cenotaph, BACK, rising over Realm's Edge, BACK STILL FURTHER, craning up above mountains, through clouds, until at last we encompass an incredible vista: the Realm itself, with its myriad lands and lifeforms, its dangers and its joys; a new Realm now, but still, and always: the Realm of Dungeons and Dragons.

FADE OUT

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THE END
