

The Dragon

by
Andrew Geha

Current Revisions 6/14/2015

Andrew Geha

Andrewgeha.com
Andrewgeha@gmail.com

Cast of Characters

EVERIL A young queen
NAREN A squire in training
TAISYA A village girl

WEN NAREN's older brother
DAME SHAM Aunt to EVERIL, SEDGLEY, and WINIFRED
SEDGLEY The prince, EVERIL's younger brother
WINIFRED The princess, EVERIL's younger sister
JOHANNE A newly minted knight, suitor to EVERIL

The Royal Guard

LORIMER
PELLIN
ETHAM
THE HERALD
KELLIG An elderly, retired guard

The Knights Council

LORD CHAIRMAN
SIR EMONY
SIR CASTIC
SIR CRETORY
SIR KEND
SIR LEE
SIR MON
SIR TON
SIR VIVAL

The Squires

PROZ
BASK
CORRIL
GAILEN
SAN
TERIK

MASTER EIJEL - An aging knight, and master swordsman and teacher*

Ladies of the Court

LADY CAUSTIC
LADY NATTER
LADY PRODDING
LADY TICKLING

The Townspeople

ANNETTE Childhood friend of Princess WINIFRED
CLARICE Childhood friend of Princess WINIFRED
BAIDDIN Victim of a dragon attack
LADAIR Victim of a dragon attack
RAYLA Victim of a dragon attack
BESSETH An elderly woman

JORINE BESSETH's granddaughter

AUNT EDITH One of TAISYA's elderly aunts
AUNT ETHEL One of TAISYA's elderly aunts

Townspeople in the flashback

YOUNG EDITH
YOUNG ETHEL
MESSENGER SMITHE
LORD GILFORD
DARMOND
SILVIO
SIR COSTALOT (Can be doubled with LORD GILFORD)
SIR VIVORE (Can be doubled with DARMOND)
SIR TERSE (Can be doubled with SILVIO)

KING OTHARIO A vision of EVERIL's deceased father*
EINARA A vision of a long dead hero*

THE DRAGON

Notes:

The Dragon has a sprawling cast. While it would be possible to streamline the amount of characters, the original intention was to create a script with enough roles so that everyone involved had something viable to do in the production.

The original cast contained fifty students and three adults (and one dragon). The starred characters were played by the adults. While those characters can easily be played by students, the maturity (and height) of the adults gave the roles a theatrical weight. It was also fun for students to act alongside their teachers and principal. If you have willing and interested adults, consider making them a part of your cast. You may also consider an adult for the role of KELLIG.

The Dragon was created by building a large paper and cloth Mache head on a wooden frame. The body was made of two parts. The center mass of the body was a series of pieces of long billowing fabric (think sails). The wings were numerous batons with fabric attached (like flags) held by the cast members voicing the Dragon.

The Dragon was voiced by all of the ensemble members whose characters were not a part of the quest that begins in Scene 15. The students spoke in unison, creating the booming voice of the Dragon.

Several roles (especially those in the flashback in Scene 3) can be double cast.

Synopsis

Everil is a young queen, crowned when her father died a year ago. It's the royal masquerade. Though Everil and her siblings, Sedgley and Winifred, debated cancelling it, they go through with the formal affair full of people with all sorts of hidden agendas ("Masks").

Everil's aunt, Dame Sham, introduces her to Sir Johanne. Then a messenger runs in reporting a dragon attack, the first in nearly a hundred years. Sedgley goes to speak to survivors of the attack ("A Shadow in the Sky"). One woman, Rayla, saw the Dragon, and it told her that it has arrived in the kingdom for a purpose.

Taisya, a young village girl, witnesses the destruction, and goes home to get her sword. Her elderly aunts admonish her.

Naren, his brother, Wen, and the other squires talk of the Dragon. A fight breaks out between one of the boys and Naren. Naren surprises everyone with his mastery of the sword. But he chokes and loses the fight. Naren, along with Taisya and Everil, expresses his self-doubt ("Another Chance").

Everil meets with the Knights Council, but finds their bureaucracy and obsession with formality to be unhelpful.

Another Dragon attack leads to an encounter between Taisya and Rayla, who gives Taisya a map. The map leads Taisya to the home of a hero - a woman named Binara - who defeated the last dragon. But the story of the hero, and of her reflective sword, surprises Taisya ("Her Reflection").

Everil raises a banner asking for volunteers to help fight the Dragon. She bans her siblings from joining her as a precaution in the event she does not survive.

Taisya meets an elderly man who gives her a sword, and she goes to join the Queens army. Naren decides to join as well, but has to convince Wen to let him go.

Dame Sham gives Everil her blessing, and the volunteer army sets off. But the Dragon attacks, and the army runs ("Shadow in the Sky Reprise").

Everil, Naren, and Taisya confront the Dragon, but end up confronting their deepest fears ("The Promise"). Still they fight. And they win.

Everil, Naren, and Taisya return as heroes - both to the kingdom as heroes and, most importantly, to themselves ("The Mountain").

SCENE 1: THE MASQUERADE

The Royal Masquerade.

The Royal Siblings, Queen EVERIL, Prince SEDGLEY and Princess WINIFRED, stand right outside the main entrance, waiting to be introduced.

Inside, there is some dancing, lots of talking and excitement.

Music underscores

Song 01: Masks

Are you ready? WINIFRED

No. EVERIL

You could always cancel. SEDGLEY

(To the gathering crowd)
Ladies and Gentlemen! THE HERALD

She can't cancel! WINIFRED

We cancelled last year. SEDGLEY

That's not funny. WINIFRED

It's kind of funny. EVERIL

Welcome, one and all, to the Royal Masquerade! THE HERALD

You'd just taken the throne. We were in mourning. It wasn't appropriate to have a party. WINIFRED

And I'm sure, if we thought about it, we could find an excuse for this year. I'll go tell them the Queen is ill. SEDGLEY

WINIFRED

Everil's fine.

EVERIL

Actually, I do feel a little funny.

THE HERALD

It is now, with a great honor, I would like to introduce the royal family.

WINIFRED

You're just nervous.

SEDGLEY

Or it's food poisoning. Seriously, it's not too late to cancel.

THE HERALD

Second child to our dearly departed King Othario, the great Prince Sedgley.

SEDGLEY

Okay, now it's too late.

SEDGLEY enters the ball room as the crowd applauds.

EVERIL

That's what he thinks. We could just leave him out there. Go get a cup of tea.

WINIFRED

You're terrible. The people want to see you.

EVERIL

No. They want to see Father. Their hoping beyond hope that their great king will rise from the grave so they don't have to be ruled by his teenage daughter.

WINIFRED

That's not true. Once they see you - really see you for who you are, they'll love you, too.

EVERIL

Yeah, well, in the meantime...
(EVERIL raises her mask to cover her face.)

WINIFRED

Oh, honestly, Everil!

THE HERALD

And now, youngest child to our departed King, the lovely Princess Winifred.

WINIFRED

Enter at your cue, or I'm coming after you.

*WINIFRED enters, and the crowd
applauds.*

EVERIL

You'd have to catch me first.

(EVERIL sighs.)

How did it come to this?

THE HERALD

And now, oldest daughter of the Great King Othario...

EVERIL

I really have no idea what I'm doing...

THE HERALD

Her Majesty, Queen Everil.

EVERIL enters, thunderous applause.

EVERIL

(Singing to the audience)

THERE'S AN EXPECTATION WHEN YOU FIRST WALK IN THE ROOM
OVERT ADORATION, BUT YOU SHOULD NOT ASSUME
THAT IT'S DEDICATION, CAUSE THEY'RE ALL QUICK TO RESUME
THE PERPETUATION OF WHO'S IMPRESSING WHOM

*The crowd surrounds the Siblings,
greeting and offering pleasantries.*

LORD CHAIRMAN

(Bowing)

Your majesty!

EVERIL

Lord Chairman of the Knight's Council, welcome! It's
lovely to see you.

LADY TICKLING

Queen Everil, we are so honored to be here.

EVERIL

The honor is mine.

ANNETTE

(Approaching Winifred)

Princess?

WINIFRED

Annette? Clarice? Oh, it's so wonderful to see you!!

CLARICE

It's been so long.

WINIFRED

How are you both?

CLARICE

Well, I'm apprenticing to a seamstress, it's wonderful.

ANNETTE

And I'm going to be married in the fall.

WINIFRED

Oh, how exciting! For both of you!

ANNETTE

It really is. And you must come to my wedding.

WINIFRED

I would love to.

ANNETTE

It would mean a lot to me.

WINIFRED

I'll try.

CLARICE

It would also impress his family to no end.

WINIFRED

Oh. Um... yes, I'm sure it would.

CLARICE

Tell me, where did you get your dress made?

WINIFRED

Contessa, of course.

ANNETTE

She still works in the castle?

WINIFRED

Well, yes. Is something wrong with the dress?

CLARICE

No. No, it's lovely.

ANNETTE

It's a little out of style.

CLARICE

Only a little. I'd imagine Madame Contessa doesn't get out much.

ANNETTE

You really need to travel if you're going to be up on the latest fashions.

CLARICE

If you want, I could connect you with some of my friends. You know, to hire in the future.

WINIFRED

That would be... lovely.

ENSEMBLE MEMBER

THERE'S A PREMEDITATION IN EVERY WORD AND EVERY GLARE AND SLY USURPATION, THOUGH YOU'RE NEVER SURE FROM WHERE BUT THE CAUTERIZATION HAS MADE YOU QUITE PREPARED TO FAKE TOLERATION OF THIS PAINED, UNFAIR AFFAIR

DAME SHAM

(To EVERIL)

Darling, you look radiant.

EVERIL

Auntie. It's lovely to see you.

DAME SHAM

You had such an authority when you entered.

EVERIL

Thank you. I... appreciate that.

DAME SHAM

No one would realize how ill prepared you really are to be Queen.

EVERIL

Did I mentioned how much I'd missed you?

DAME SHAM

Don't be sarcastic, Everil. It's not lady like.

EVERIL

Well, I'm not a lady, I'm a queen.

DAME SHAM

A queen who has been on the throne for over a year, without marrying.

EVERIL

I've been a little busy, you know.

DAME SHAM

Yes, you have been. But luckily, tonight, there are several eligible men that I simply must to introduce you too.

EVERIL

Is that really necessary?

DAME SHAM

Darling, it's downright imperative.

ENSEMBLE

GET RUN OVER IF YOU SIT ON THE ROAD
SO YOU JUST KEEP MOVING, TRY TO DO LIKE YOUR TOLD
BUT THE MORE YOU HOLD ON, THE MORE YOU START TO IMplode
AND YOU FEEL YOUR SOUL ABOUT TO BE SOLD

LADY NATTER

Your highness.

LADY PRODDING

Your highness.

SEDGLEY

Lady Natter! Lady Prodding! Thank you both for coming.

LADY NATTER

Let me just be the first to say that I think you are very brave.

SEDGLEY

Brave?

LADY NATTER

Standing by your big sister's side as she takes the throne, it's very courageous of you.

SEDGLEY

Courageous?

LADY NATTER

To support her.

SEDGLEY

She's my sister.

LADY PRODDING

Not everybody would be... as public about their support. After all, people miss your father so much.

SEDGLEY

What?

LADY NATTER

Still, you must be very proud of her.

SEDGLEY

Proud? She's my sister.

LADY PRODDING

Are you saying you're embarrassed by her?

SEDGLEY

No! I'm saying, I love her. Why would I be embarrassed by her?

LADY PRODDING

Oh, no reason.

LADY NATTER

She's very young.

LADY PRODDING

(To OVERTOP)

He's even younger.

LADY NATTER

Well, yes.

SEDGLEY

(leaving)

It's been lovely talking to you both. Please excuse me.

LADY NATTER

Was he being rude?

LADY PRODDING

Probably. You know how young people are these days.

LADY NATTER

It really is a lovely party.

LADY PRODDING

Clearly, you haven't tried the food.

LADY NATTER

It reminds me of my debut, all those years ago. The gigantic crowd. People lined up at the door.

LADY PRODDING

Really? I don't remember that.

LADY NATTER

Oh yes. Hundreds of people.

LADY PRODDING

To meet you? Really? Funny.

LADY NATTER

The hall we held it in was gigantic.

LADY PRODDING
(overlapping)
Smaller than this.

LADY NATTER
It was an epic night.

LADY PRODDING
Epic? Really? I thought it seemed like a charming, story
book affair.

LADY NATTER
Well! I don't remember anything about your debut.

LADY PRODDING
I don't believe you were invited.

ENSEMBLE
THERE'S A CONSTANT TEMPTATION TO SAY WHAT'S ON YOUR MIND
AND EXASPERATION WITH PRETENDING TO BE KIND
BUT YOU'VE HAD EDUCATION, AND IN FAKING YOU'RE REFINED
YOUR REAL MOTIVATION HAS BEEN ALL BUT LEFT BEHIND

GET RUN OVER IF YOU SIT ON THE ROAD
SO YOU JUST KEEP MOVING, TRY TO DO LIKE YOU'RE TOLD
BUT THE MORE YOU HOLD ON, THE MORE YOU START TO IMplode
AND YOU FEEL YOUR SOUL ABOUT TO BE SOLD

AND SO WE WEAR OUR MASKS

OUR MASKS ARE THE THINGS THAT WE WEAR WHEN WE'RE SCARED
THAT THE WORLD'S GONNA GET TOO CLOSE
AND SO WE'RE CLOSING OFF OUR HEART TO THE HURT THAT WE'D SUFFER FROM
ANOTHER
AND THE UNDERMINING BLATHER WE'RE PRETENDING REALLY MATTERS

THE MASK KEEPS US SAFE AND SECURE CAUSE WE'RE SURE
THAT NOBODY'S GONNA DIG TOO DEEP
AND THOUGH WE WANNA BE BOLD AND UPEND THE OFFENDING OLD TRADITION,
JUST THE RISK WE'D BE TAKING FEELS LIKE FAILURE IN THE MAKING

SO WE DO LIKE WE'RE TOLD
AND NO ONE TRIES TO BE BOLD
WE JUST STAY ON THE ROAD
PRAY THAT NOTHING EXPLODES

EVERIL
THERE'S AN EXPECTATION, BUT WE'RE ALL TOO SCARED TO ASK
SO FOR FORTIFICATION I JUST HIDE BEHIND MY MASK

*A small crowd around EVERIL bursts
into polite laughter, responding to
something she's just said.*

LORD CHAIRMAN

I must say, your majesty, your sense of humor is terrific.

EVERIL

Thank you.

SIR CRETORY

It's just as sharp and keen as your intelligence.

EVERIL

Well, thank you.

SIR EMONY

All of which pale in comparison to your beauty.

EVERIL

That's very kind of you to say.

LORD CHAIRMAN

Your father would be quite proud of you tonight.

EVERIL

Thank you.

(Seeing SEDGLEY)

Oh, Prince Sedgley! Gentlemen, if you'd excuse us for a moment, there is a matter of great urgency to discuss.

LORD CHAIRMAN

Of course, your highness.

SIR EMONY

Until later, your highness.

SIR CRETORY

It's been a pleasure.

The men leave SEDGLEY and EVERIL.

SEDGLEY

What is it?

EVERIL

Rescue me.

SEDGLEY

What?

EVERIL

Rescue me from them! Please.

SEDGLEY

I'm not a knight. You're not a damsel.

EVERIL

I'm distressed.

SEDGLEY

You're the Queen. You don't need to be rescued. Order them executed. Or something.

EVERIL

Can you imagine?

DAME SHAM approaches.

DAME SHAM

Everil! I have someone for you to meet.

EVERIL

Someone else, you mean?

DAME SHAM

Well, I've been trying to catch you alone all night.

SEDGLEY

She's not alone.

DAME SHAM

Please.

EVERIL

Sedgley and I were discussing matters of great importance.

DAME SHAM

Really?

SEDGLEY

Yes, Auntie, there's structural damage in the castle foundation.

DAME SHAM

(Giving him a withering look.)

Really?

SEDGLEY

But we can discuss it tomorrow.

DAME SHAM

Thank you. Go mingle.

SEDGLEY

Yes, Auntie.

SEDGLEY leaves as DAME SHAM beckons to JOHANNE.

DAME SHAM

Sir Johanne! Your majesty, may I present to you Sir Johanne, eldest son of Lord Dinary of the north country. He was the last person your dear father knighted.

JOHANNE

Thank you, Dame Sham. Your Majesty, it is an honor to meet you.

EVERIL

Thank you. ... It's an honor for me as well.

JOHANNE

I'm sure it is.

DAME SHAM

Sir Johanne rode all the way down here just for your masquerade.

EVERIL

That seems like an awful lot of trouble.

JOHANNE

Worth every gallop, your majesty.

DAME SHAM

I'll leave you two for a moment.
(Under her breath to EVERIL)
Be charming.

EVERIL

So... you're a knight.

JOHANNE

I must say, it is a tremendous honor to be the last man knighted by your father.

EVERIL

Of course.

JOHANNE

Both for me, and for the kingdom.

EVERIL

For the kingdom?

JOHANNE

I think you'll find I'm quite impressive.

EVERIL

Will I?

JOHANNE

Oh, I'm sure.

EVERIL

You're very confident.

JOHANNE

Confidence is crucial for a knight. You never know when you may be called upon.

EVERIL

You mean, to do battle?

JOHANNE

No, just simply called upon. If someone were to shout, "Sir Johanne!" What would I do? Jump like a frightened kitten? Heavens no. I need to turn. Slowly. Like I have many important things going on, and I'm uncertain I can give you my time. It takes practice.

EVERIL

You've practiced what you'll do if someone calls your name?

JOHANNE

Not just if someone calls my name. If someone shouts it, cries it or even whispers it.

EVERIL

Fascinating.

JOHANNE

I know. It's putting thought into details like that which truly makes one stand out as a knight.

EVERIL

Well, I know I'll remember this knight.

JOHANNE

I'm sure.

EVERIL

Tell me, do you have any practice with a sword.

JOHANNE

Naturally.

EVERIL

You're an accomplished soldier, then?

JOHANNE

I... am a knight, not a soldier.

EVERIL

So you know how to wage a battle?

JOHANNE

I know the principles, of course. But there really are so few battles these days.

EVERIL

Still, one should be prepared.

JOHANNE

Believe me, if I were to be called upon to do battle, I would know exactly how to respond.

EVERIL

Oh?

JOHANNE

Yes. Like this.

(Strikes a pose of confidence and strength)

And then people would know I'm ready.

EVERIL

Very impressive. You know, I believe my sister needs me.

JOHANNE

(Kneeling)

My lady. It is truly an honor for us to meet. Not only for you. But for me. And for everyone in this room.

EVERIL

Yes, thank you. Oh, look. I think someone's calling you.

JOHANNE

Where?!?

EVERIL

You'll find them, I'm sure.

JOHANNE dashes off. EVERIL goes to WINIFRED.

WINIFRED

He was cute.

EVERIL

He's ridiculous. All of them are ridiculous. Can I leave now?

WINIFRED

It's your party. You can't leave.

EVERIL

I could order everyone else to leave.

WINIFRED

You're not going to do that either.

EVERIL

Maybe I should wish for an earthquake or something.

There's a small commotion from the other side of the room.

WINIFRED

That's really classy, Everil. Wish for some great disaster to disrupt your--

The commotion has grown louder. Suddenly, ETHAM bursts forth.

ETHAM

Your majesty! Forgive the intrusion.

EVERIL

No, that's all right. What is it?

ETHAM

There's been an attack.

Commotion from the listening crowd.

WINIFRED

What?

EVERIL

Where? Who's been attacked?

ETHAM

In the southern village of Canjeen. Several houses were burned down and six people are missing.

EVERIL

I don't understand. Are we being invaded?

ETHAM

No, your majesty. They say it's a dragon.

Lots of commotion.

SEDGLEY

A dragon?

DAME SHAM

That's nonsense. There hasn't been a dragon in our kingdom for almost a hundred years!

ETHAM

There are several witnesses, M'lady. They all saw the same thing. They said it was a dragon.

WINIFRED

What... what do we do?

EVERIL

Sedgley, take the royal guard and ride down to Canjeen. Find out what happened.

SEDGLEY

Yes, your highness.

EVERIL

And Sedgley! Be careful.

SEDGLEY

(Smiling)

I'm always careful.

DAME SHAM

You should also summon the Knights Council, my dear. Your father brought them in on all matters of security to the kingdom.

EVERIL

Let's wait for Sedgley to return. But yes, I'll summon the Council.

WINIFRED

A dragon. Well... looks like the party's over.

SCENE 2: CANJEEN, AFTER THE FIRST ATTACK

Canjeen. The remains of several houses, all smoldering from the dragon attack.

Song 02: A Shadow in the Sky

SEDGLEY, LORIMER, PELLIN and soldiers enter.

ENSEMBLE

THERE'S A SHADOW IN THE SKY

SEDGLEY

Attend the horses!

LORIMER

It's being done, my lord.

ENSEMBLE

THERE'S A SHADOW IN THE SKY

SEDGLEY

Dear heaven! The village is still on fire.

LORIMER

The attack is recent, my lord. What did you expect?

SEDGLEY

What did I...? Help them. Do something to...

LORIMER

Yes, my lord.

(To the others)

You heard his majesty. You three, join the water brigade.

You, get medical provisions. You, see to the survivors.

LADAIR approaches the group.

LADAIR

Are you from the castle?

LORIMER

Yes, ma'am.

LADAIR

You're the prince! You've come to help?

LORIMER

He has, ma'am, but you need to keep your distance -

SEDGLEY

No, let her be.

(To LADAIR)

Tell me what happened.

LADAIR

I WAS SITTING ALL ALONE IN THE QUIET OF MY HOME
WHEN I HEARD A PIERCING SCREAM WHICH ECHOED THROUGH MY CHEST
THEN MY HOUSE WENT UP IN FLAMES, AND A NEIGHBOR CALLED MY NAME
THEY PULLED ME OUT AND WHEN I LOOKED BACK, I SAW NOTHING LEFT

ENSEMBLE

THERE'S A SHADOW IN THE SKY

THERE'S A SHADOW IN THE SKY

AND I CAN HARDLY TAKE A BREATH BEFORE I CHOKE

FROM THE FEAR THAT'S IN THE AIR

AND THE SAFETY THAT I DARED TO TAKE FOR GRANTED

HAS NOW VANISHED IN THE SMOKE

SEDGLEY

We'll find you a place to live. We'll find you--

LADAIR

But my home! My home is gone. Everything I've ever known...

SEDGLEY

We'll do what we can. I... I'm so sorry.

BAIDDIN approaches, injured.

BAIDDIN

I saw it! I saw the attack.

SEDGLEY

You're injured.

BAIDDIN

I'll survive.

SEDGLEY

What did you see?

BAIDDIN

I WAS WALKING BEFORE BED WHEN A SHAPE PASSED OVERHEAD
AND THE UNDERCURRENT KNOCKED ME SQUARELY OFF MY FEET
THEN A SOUND I CAN'T FORGET ERUPTED FROM THE SILHOUETTE
A FLASH OF FIRE QUICKLY COVERED THE ENTIRE STREET

ENSEMBLE

THERE'S A SHADOW IN THE SKY
THERE'S A SHADOW IN THE SKY
AND I CAN HARDLY TAKE A BREATH BEFORE I CHOKE
FROM THE FEAR THAT'S IN THE AIR
AND THE SAFETY THAT I DARED TO TAKE FOR GRANTED
HAS NOW VANISHED IN THE SMOKE

SO TELL US HOW CAN WE MOVE ON NOW THAT OUR NEIGHBORHOOD IS GONE
YOUR REASSURANCE CANNOT COVER UP OUR BURNS.
THIS THREAT IS TOO MUCH TO IGNORE, WE ALWAYS THOUGHT WE WERE SECURE
NOW OUR ILLUSIONS HAVE BEEN SHATTERED AND WE DON'T KNOW WHERE TO
TURN

PELLIN approaches with RAYLA.

PELLIN

Your majesty! This woman... she says she... she spoke to it.

SEDGLEY

What?

PELLIN

She spoke to the dragon.

RAYLA

No, we didn't speak. There were no words, just...

IT PAUSED FROM ITS ATTACK, TURNED AND LOOKED ME IN THE EYE
I HEARD ITS THOUGHTS AS THOUGH THEY WERE MY OWN
THIS WASN'T DONE AT RANDOM. THE DRAGON HAS A PLAN
AND IT ATTACKED US JUST TO MAKE ITS PRESENCE KNOWN

ENSEMBLE

THERE'S A SHADOW IN THE SKY
THERE'S A SHADOW IN THE SKY
AND I CAN HARDLY TAKE A BREATH BEFORE I CHOKED
FROM THE FEAR THAT'S IN THE AIR
AND THE SAFETY THAT I DARED TO TAKE FOR GRANTED
HAS NOW VANISHED IN THE SMOKE

LADAIR

What will we do? Where do we go now?

SEDGLEY

We'll help you.

BAIDDIN

But our town has been destroyed!

SEDGLEY

We'll rebuild. I promise.

(Turning)

Master Pellin, get these people food and shelter.

LORIMER

And you, sir?

SEDGLEY

I need to return to the castle.

LORIMER

Very good, sir.

SEDGLEY (AND OTHERS)

(exiting)

THERE'S A SHADOW IN THE SKY
THERE'S A SHADOW IN THE SKY

PELLIN

(Seeing TAISYA)

Are you injured, young lady?

TAISYA

What? No.

PELLIN
Was your house caught in the attack?

TAISYA
No.

PELLIN
Then why are you standing out here?

TAISYA
I came to see... I thought I could help.

PELLIN
You came to help?

TAISYA
Yes.

PELLIN
Go home. This is no place for you.

TAISYA
But I--

PELLIN
It's late. Go home. And be safe.

SCENE 3: ETHEL AND EDITH

TAISYA enters her house. She goes to an old trunk, opens it, and pulls out a sword.

AUNT EDITH enters and sees her.

AUNT EDITH
Taisia! What are you doing?

TAISYA
I was just --

AUNT EDITH
Put that away right now!

AUNT ETHEL
(Entering)
What's going on?

AUNT EDITH
She's taking out that sword again.

AUNT ETHEL
I told you to get rid of it.

AUNT EDITH
And that's my job how?

TAISYA
What's the big deal?

AUNT ETHEL
Swords are dangerous, darling. Very un-lady like.

TAISYA
But I've studied.

AUNT EDITH
You did.

AUNT ETHEL
Past tense.

AUNT EDITH
You don't anymore.

AUNT ETHEL
Too dangerous. One must be careful these days.
(Taking the sword)
Now, let's just put this away.

AUNT EDITH
Or bury it.

TAISYA
But there's a dragon! It attacked a nearby village.

AUNT ETHEL
Oh yes, we heard.

AUNT EDITH
Such a shame.

AUNT ETHEL
Darling, are you worried about the dragon?

TAISYA
Yes. Of course. Shouldn't I be?

AUNT ETHEL
Oh, pssh.

AUNT EDITH
There's nothing to be worried about.

AUNT ETHEL
Nothing at all. It's only a dragon.

TAISYA
But aren't dragons dangerous?

AUNT ETHEL
Well... Yes.

AUNT EDITH
Incredibly.

AUNT ETHEL
They can be downright deadly.

AUNT EDITH
Vicious things, dragons.

TAISYA
So then, there *is* something to be worried about!

AUNT ETHEL
Now, Taisya, my sister and I both lived through the last dragon. And we're still here to talk about it.

AUNT EDITH
Not many others are, of course.

AUNT ETHEL
No, not many. Not many at all.

AUNT EDITH
But we're here.

AUNT ETHEL
We're right here.

TAISYA
What happened to the others?

AUNT EDITH
Oh, there were so many.

AUNT ETHEL
Do you remember Lord Gilford?

LORD GILFORD enters.

AUNT EDITH
Oh, Lord Gilford! What a fine fellow.

YOUNG EDITH and YOUNG ETHEL enter.

LORD GILFORD
Good morning, ladies!

YOUNG ETHEL
Good morning, Lord Gilford.

YOUNG EDITH
You look lovely today, Lord Gilford.

LORD GILFORD
Thank you!

AUNT EDITH
He was so charming.

LORD GILFORD
Will I see both of you at the upcoming festival?

YOUNG ETHEL
Of course!

LORD GILFORD
Well, be sure to save a dance for me.

YOUNG EDITH
Absolutely.

YOUNG ETHEL
(Under her breath to EDITH)
He's mine.

YOUNG EDITH
No, he's mine.

YOUNG ETHEL
I saw him first.

YOUNG EDITH
I'm older.

YOUNG ETHEL
By two minutes.

LORD GILFORD
What was that?

GIRLS
Nothing.

YOUNG EDITH
Looking forward to seeing you at the festival.
(To ETHEL)
Harpy.

YOUNG ETHEL
Midget.

MESSENGER SMITHE
(Running on)
Dragon!!!

ALL
What?

MESSENGER SMITHE
There's a...
*(panting, trying to catch her
breath)*
A dragon. Over the... just flew over the town square.

LORD GILFORD
A dragon?? Smithe, gather my sword. I will fight this
dragon. To the death.

LORD GILFORD and SMITH exit.

AUNT ETHEL
He was such a brave man.

AUNT EDITH
And an amazing fighter.

TAISYA
What happened to him?

Slight pause.

AUNT EDITH
He died.

AUNT ETHEL
The dragon ate him.

AUNT EDITH
In one swallow.

AUNT ETHEL
It was very impressive.

AUNT EDITH
Of the dragon.

AUNT ETHEL
Yes, of the dragon. Lord Gilford did not impress.

TAISYA
What happened next?

AUNT ETHEL

Next? Well... the brothers.

DARMOND enters.

DARMOND

Hello ladies.

GIRLS

Hello!

DARMOND

My name's Darmond.

(Pronunciation note: dar-MOND)

TAISYA

I meant with the dragon.

AUNT EDITH

We're getting to that.

GIRLS

Hello, Darmond.

YOUNG EDITH

Let me show you around the town, Darmond.

YOUNG ETHEL

Let me show you my favorite restaurants, Darmond.

(To EDITH)

Out of the way, snot-breath.

YOUNG EDITH

(To ETHEL)

Watch it, I'm a biter!

DARMOND

Ladies? Can I introduce my brother?

SILVIO enters.

GIRLS

Brother?

DARMOND

Yes, this is Silvio.

YOUNG ETHEL

Hello, Silvio.

SILVIO

Hello, ladies.

YOUNG ETHEL
I'm Ethel.

YOUNG EDITH
I'm Edith.

YOUNG ETHEL
We're sisters.

SILVIO
And we're brothers. What an amazing coincidence!

GIRLS
Amazing.

YOUNG EDITH
(To Ethel)
I want the one on the left.

YOUNG ETHEL
I want the one on the left!

YOUNG EDITH
Fine, but I keep the dog.

YOUNG ETHEL
Freckles??

MESSENGER SMITHE
(Running on, out of breath)
Dragon!!

ALL
What??

MESSENGER SMITHE
The... the dragon... It's burning down the old farm.

TAISYA
Was this the same dragon as before?

AUNT EDITH
What?

TAISYA
Was this the same dragon that ate Lord Gilford?

AUNT ETHEL
I don't remember.

AUNT EDITH
Oh, I imagine.

AUNT ETHEL

Unless it wasn't. I mean, it might have been.

AUNT EDITH

Who can say, really. Anyways, back to Silvio and Darmond.

SILVIO

We must confront the dragon.

DARMOND

And convince it to leave.

YOUNG ETHEL

How do you convince a dragon?

SILVIO

We have a way with words.

GIRLS

Oh!

DARMOND

Smithe, prepare our armor!

SILVIO

And saddle our horses.

SMITHE, DARMOND, and SILVIO exit.

AUNT EDITH

Such amazing young men.

AUNT ETHEL

Quite handsome.

TAISYA

And they...?

BOTH AUNTS

Died.

AUNT EDITH

The dragon burnt them to a crisp.

AUNT ETHEL

The town smelled of barbecue for days.

AUNT EDITH

And then there were the knights! Sir Vivore!

SIR VIVORE

(Entering)

I am a master tracker. And a master archer.

I will attack the dragon in its home, when its guard is down. It won't stand a chance.

AUNT EDITH

And Sir Costalot!

SIR COSTALOT

(Entering)

My armor is made of the finest steel in all the land. My sword by the king's blacksmith. The dragon will fall to my hand.

AUNT ETHEL

And Sir Terse.

SIR TERSE

(Entering)

I kill dragon. Easy.

TAISYA

They killed the dragon?

AUNT EDITH

Oh, no, no. They died.

The three knights hang their heads in shame and exit.

AUNT ETHEL

Quickly.

AUNT EDITH

It was brutal.

AUNT ETHEL

Such a pity, really.

TAISYA

So what happened to the dragon?

AUNT ETHEL

What do you mean?

TAISYA

What happened - where's the dragon now?

AUNT EDITH

Oh, well someone eventually chased it off.

TAISYA

Who?

AUNT EDITH

What was her name?

AUNT ETHEL

Oh, I don't remember.

TAISYA

Her name? A woman fought the dragon?

AUNT ETHEL

Oh yes. But for the life of me, I just can't recall...

AUNT EDITH

Was her name Lydia?

AUNT ETHEL

No, that's the one who married the baker.

AUNT EDITH

Oh, right. Witch.

AUNT ETHEL

Was her name Jordana?

AUNT EDITH

No, no. Jordana was the one who ran off with the preacher's son.

AUNT ETHEL

Oh, right, I remember her. Harlot.

TAISYA

Wait. You can remember every man that the dragon killed. And every woman who married a man you liked. But you can't remember the name of the woman who fought the dragon?

AUNT EDITH

Well... you remember what's interesting.

TAISYA

That woman saved your lives!!

AUNT ETHEL

I'm sure she did, Taisya. But she wasn't marrying material.

TAISYA

So what?

AUNT ETHEL

So if someone doesn't live up to expectations, why waste time remembering them?

TAISYA

But... but you both didn't "live up to expectations."
You're both still single.

What?
AUNT ETHEL

Uh! I never!
AUNT EDITH

How rude. You're single too, missy!
AUNT ETHEL

I'm fourteen!
TAISYA

Age is just a number.
AUNT EDITH

I'm going out.
TAISYA

Fine. Don't get eaten by the dragon on your way.
AUNT ETHEL

If I do, at least you'll remember me.
TAISYA
(Exiting)

What a dreadful girl.
AUNT ETHEL

She gets it from her mother. Our brother should never have married that woman. He was much too good for her.
AUNT EDITH

Quite right.
AUNT ETHEL

SCENE 4: MASTER EIJIL AND THE SQUIRES

Outside, the advanced sword fighting class.

The Squires - TERIK, GAILEN, BASK, PROZ, CORRIL and SAN - are talking.

You saw it?
TERIK

Just the shadow. And the houses as they burned down.
GAILEN

How close were you?
BASK

GAILEN

A few blocks away. But we all heard it scream.

PROZ

What did it sound like?

GAILEN

Like... awful. It sounded just awful.

WEN and NAREN enter.

WEN

What are you talking about?

SAN

Gailen was down in Canjeen when the dragon attacked.

NAREN

Did you see it?

GAILEN

No, but I was close. And the houses were just destroyed.

CORRIL

Were you there when the prince visited?

GAILEN

Yeah. Him and the royal guard.

PROZ

What's he like?

GAILEN

What d'ya mean?

PROZ

I mean... Is he all regal? Did he dress funny?

SAN

Did he dress funny? What kind of a question is that?

PROZ

I dunno. I never seen the prince.

GAILEN

I didn't talk to him or anything. Not many did.

NAREN

He spoke to the witnesses. And the families of the victims.

GAILEN

I'm sorry, were you there?

NAREN
No, but I--

GAILEN
Well, I was. And no one asked you.

NAREN
Sorry, I was only...

GAILEN
You was only what?

WEN
Gailen, cut it out.

SAN
Yeah, just ignore him, Gailen.

BASK
It's not hard.

GAILEN
Why should he get to interrupt?

CORRIL
There were victims?

BASK
(Pushing CORRIL)
Yeah, idiot! Six people.

CORRIL
(Pushing BASK back)
Don't call me an idiot!

TERIK
Cut it out!

TERIK and others start to get between BASK and CORRIL, trying to stop an all out fight.

MASTER EIJIL enters, seeing this.

MASTER EIJIL
What is this?!

(All the students freeze)
What kind of behavior is this? Call yourselves the advanced class, do you? I've known Pages that behave better than you lot.

CORRIL
Bask started it.

BASK

Did not--

MASTER EIJIL

And I'm ending it. Consider that your warm-up. Get in line, ready positions!

SQUIRES

Yes, Master Eijil!

All the squires line up and draw swords.

MASTER EIJIL

Fighting amongst yourselves! Especially now, with a dragon in the Kingdom. Give me form six, half speed.

The class performs a series of cuts and parries in perfect synchronization.

Adequate. Barely. Form four, three quarters speed.

A new series of moves is performed, this time faster.

Better. Somewhat. Find a partner. Bask and Corril, I believe you've already chosen each other.

CORRIL

That's a bad idea, sir.

MASTER EIJIL

Really?

CORRIL

She's already angry at me, sir.

MASTER EIJIL

And what are you afraid of? That she might accidentally lop off an ear?

CORRIL

Something like that, sir.

MASTER EIJIL

Then I guess you better move quickly.

BASK

*(Laughing at CORRIL, not realizing
MASTER EIJIL is still near)*

Course if I lop off an ear, your lopsided head might start looking normal.

MASTER EIJIL

(To BASK)

Just remember that whatever you take from Corril, I take double from you.

BASK

Yes, sir.

SAN

(To NAREN)

I'm with you?

NAREN

I guess.

SAN

Great. Try to keep up.

The squires pair off: NAREN and SAN, WEN and TERIK, GAILLEN and PROZ, BASK and CORRIL.

MASTER EIJIL

All right. Attacks two, four and five with accompanying parries. Then switch. Begin.

The partners begin. One attacks with three moves while the other parries. Then they switch and the other attacks. They repeat this as MASTER EIJIL lectures and gives feedback.

MASTER EIJIL

Have any of you ever faced a dragon? No, of course not. -- Proz, move that left foot! -- Facing a dragon isn't about strength or height. -- Bask, elbows in! -- It's about speed and skill. And focus. Terik!! What's with the arm?

TERIK

Sorry, Master. I'm sore from the other day.

MASTER EIJIL

Sore? Or lazy?

TERIK

My father's farm--

MASTER EIJIL

I don't want to hear it.

MASTER EIJIL instructs TERIK silently, as focus shifts to NAREN and SAN.

SAN

Be careful!

NAREN

I'm being careful. You told me to keep up.

SAN

You're getting too close with the blade.

NAREN

Then you should parry sooner.

SAN

I'm parrying just fine, creep! You don't know how to partner.

(Another pass)

You did it again!

NAREN

Parry sooner.

SAN

You parry sooner!

SAN breaks the formation and attacks NAREN. The others stop fighting as they see what is happening

NAREN

What are you---?

NAREN stops talking as SAN presses the attack. NAREN defends himself skillfully.

SAN

Try to make a fool of me?!

MASTER EIJIL

San, stop that at once! San!!

SAN attacks wildly and NAREN parries, making SAN drop his guard and nearly fall.

As SAN recovers, NAREN puts his sword on the ground and raises his hands in the air, signaling "peace."

SAN raises his sword to NAREN's throat.

MASTER EIJIL bats SAN's sword away from NAREN.

MASTER EIJIL
What do you think you're doing?? How dare you! In my class!!

SAN
He was... he asked for it. He was pushing me--

MASTER EIJIL
Give me your weapon.
(SAN does so.)
Sit over there. You and I will be having a long conversation after this.

SAN
Yes, Master Eijil.

SAN goes and sits, defeated.

MASTER EIJIL
(Turning on NAREN)
And you! What was that?

NAREN
He attacked me.

MASTER EIJIL
You had him, dead to rights. Why did you drop your weapon?

NAREN
I thought... It was the only way I could...

MASTER EIJIL
What? Become a martyr? You showed more skill in that fight than I've ever seen from you before. And then you give up?

NAREN
Wen and I've been practising.

MASTER EIJIL
(Turning to WEN)
Is that so?

WEN
Yeah. At home. If we have the time.

MASTER EIJIL
Does he give up at home?

WEN
I... I don't know, sir.

MASTER EIJIL
You don't know?

BASK
He gives up all the time, sir

MASTER EIJIL
Who asked you??

BASK
Sorry.

MASTER EIJIL
All right, you two. Let's see it.

NAREN
What?

MASTER EIJIL
You've been practising at home. Show me. Spar.

WEN
Now?

MASTER EIJIL
Are you both deaf?

WEN
No sir.

NAREN
No sir.

PROZ
Ooh. Wen and Naren, face off!

BASK
Battle of the brothers.

WEN
Shut up.

GAILEN
Anyone care for a wager?

CORRIL
You think it's gonna be a fair fight?

GAILEN
I think Wen's gonna impale him.

MASTER EIJIL
Can it! All of you. Wen, Naren? Take your positions.

WEN and NAREN look at each other, both clearly wishing they didn't have to spar.

MASTER EIJIL

Begin!

They take their en guard positions, and warily move around each other

PROZ

Get on with it!

TERIK

They're too chicken.

NAREN and WEN attack and parry. It's clear both are very good.

CORRIL

(Impressed with NAREN)

Maybe I will take you up on that wager.

GAILEN

(Unsure he'd win)

Maybe I'll take it back.

MASTER EIJIL

Come on, boys. Show us something.

A flourish of a fight. They are evenly matched, but NAREN has the upper hand.

The fight escalates.

NAREN gains a clear advantage, and WEN is about to loose.

NAREN hesitates. WEN sees his chance and attacks. He disarms NAREN, knocking him to the ground.

The students erupt with cheers.

In the process of falling, NAREN's ankle is injured.

MASTER EIJIL

Impressive. You have been practising.

WEN

Thank you, sir.

MASTER EIJIL

Get up, Naren.

NAREN

I... my ankle. I'm... I think I'm hurt.

MASTER EIJIL

Well if you'd pressed your advantage, you wouldn't be on the ground at all. Maybe the pain will teach you a lesson. Proz, get him a bandage.

MASTER EIJIL kneels, evaluating NAREN's ankle. The others gather around WEN.

BASK

That was awesome, Wen.

TERIK

Yeah, that was incredible.

WEN

Thanks.

CORRIL

I'm sparring with you next time!

GAILEN

Are you kidding? You'd end up on the ground, too.

PROZ

(returning with the bandage.)

Sir.

NAREN

(Taking the bandage)

Thanks. I've got it.

MASTER EIJIL

Feel better. San! With me. Now.

SAN and MASTER EIJIL exit together.

PROZ

You could've beat him.

NAREN

Yeah. I don't know.

PROZ

Why you always such a loser, Naren?

NAREN

What?

PROZ

Never mind.

(To the other students)

Let's get some food.

BASK

Yeah! I'm starved.

The rest start to move off. WEN hesitates.

TERIK

Wen, come on!

WEN

You all go ahead. I'll be along.

The other students exit, leaving WEN and NAREN alone.

NAREN wraps his ankle. WEN watches NAREN for a moment.

WEN

Sorry.

NAREN looks at WEN, goes back to his ankle.

NAREN

It's fine.

WEN

I didn't mean to hurt you.

NAREN

Yeah you did.

WEN

No! I meant to... win.

NAREN

I know.

WEN

Don't sulk.

NAREN

I'm not.

WEN

Fine. If you want to be grumpy, I'll leave you alone.

NAREN

You made me look like an idiot in front of everybody.

WEN

You are an idiot. You let your guard down.

NAREN

The fight was over! I had you. I'd beat you.

WEN

You almost had me. And you gave up.

NAREN

So you embarrassed me?

WEN

No. I won.

NAREN

Fine. Whatever you want to call it.

WEN

You're a sore loser.

NAREN

And you're a lousy brother.

WEN

(Physically challenging NAREN)

You want to fight again?

NAREN is startled, and clearly at a physical disadvantage if WEN were to attack.

NAREN

No.

WEN

San could've killed you. Why'd you drop your sword?

NAREN

San's an idiot. He wasn't going to kill me. He was just mad.

WEN

At what?

NAREN

I was... I was moving a little too quickly for him. As we sparred.

WEN

Too quickly?

NAREN

Yeah. He thinks his skills are so impressive. I wanted to see what he could do.

WEN

So you made him angry and he attacked you?

NAREN

Yeah, well...

WEN

You always do this.

NAREN

What?

WEN

Every time. You push and you nudge. But the moment someone pushes back, you hide.

NAREN

What do you mean?

WEN

I mean you drop your sword. You wimp out. Like you're afraid.

NAREN

Don't say that.

WEN

It's true. If you're always gonna back down, why show up in the first place?

NAREN turns away from WEN. Silence for a moment. WEN realizes he's gone too far.

Sorry. I didn't mean...

NAREN

It doesn't matter.

WEN

Yeah, it does.

NAREN

I'm just... not like you.

WEN

You could be.

NAREN

It's not that easy.

WEN

Why not?

NAREN

It's... have you ever been scared that... like, you want to go for something, and you don't know if you can do it. But you're scared that if you do, and you fail... maybe that's worse than not knowing at all?

WEN

I don't ... I have no idea what you're talking about.

NAREN

Yeah. Maybe I'm just a failure.

WEN

That's not--

TERIK enters.

TERIK

Wen! Naren! There's been another attack!

WEN

What?

TERIK

Yeah! Right here in Beilarin. Down at the town square.

NAREN

Go.

WEN

Naren, come on.

NAREN

I'll just slow you down. Go.

WEN

You sure?

(NAREN nods)

All right. I'll find you later.

TERIK and WEN leave.

Song 03: Another Chance

NAREN

NO MATTER HOW I TRY
IT'S LIKE MY HANDS ARE TIED
THE CIRCLE CLOSES IN AND ONCE AGAIN I'M LEFT OUTSIDE

THEY TELL ME I'M NOT TOUGH
AND NEVER GOOD ENOUGH

I FAKE THAT I'M OKAY AND PRAY THAT NO ONE CALLS MY BLUFF

ENSEMBLE

THEY'RE ONLY WORDS INSIDE YOUR HEAD
SO LISTEN TO YOUR HEART INSTEAD

TAISYA

WHEN I WAS VERY SMALL
MY FAMILY INSTALLED
A FEAR THAT IF I TRIED TO FLY, I WOULD BE SURE TO FALL

MY HEART BEGAN TO ACHE
I THOUGHT THAT I WOULD BREAK
BUT STILL, I DIDN'T DREAM CAUSE THEY SAID DREAMS WERE A MISTAKE

ENSEMBLE

THEY'RE ONLY WORDS INSIDE YOUR HEAD
THAT TAINT AND TAUNT YOUR CONFIDENCE
SO LISTEN TO YOUR HEART INSTEAD
AND GIVE YOURSELF ANOTHER CHANCE

EVERIL

I HAVE HEARD THEIR EXPECTATIONS
AND I FEEL A NATION'S WEIGHT UPON MY SHOULDERS
AND I HAVE BEEN TOLD I SHOULD ACT JUST LIKE MY FATHER
WHICH IS JUST TO COVER THEIR UNCERTAINTY OF ME

ENSEMBLE

THE PATH THEY'RE SETTING IS DEFINED
AND FAR TOO NARROW TO GET THROUGH
THE WORDS THEY SAY ARE SO UNKIND
AND MAKE ME DOUBT WHAT I CAN DO

I'LL SEEK ANOTHER ROAD INSTEAD
AND TRY TO FIND MY CONFIDENCE
THEIR WORDS HOLD POWER IN MY HEAD
BUT STILL I'LL TAKE --

TAISYA

-- ANOTHER CHANCE

After the song, TAISYA is on stage.

NAREN tries to walk, but his ankle gives out, and he stumbles.

TAISYA

Naren?

NAREN

Who-- Taisya! Hi.

TAISYA

Are you okay?

NAREN

Yeah, I... just hurt my ankle. What are you doing here?

TAISYA

I heard there was another dragon attack.

NAREN

Yeah. Nearby. Is that why you're here?

TAISYA

I... I don't know.

NAREN

I miss you in class.

TAISYA

Yeah.

NAREN

Why'd you leave?

TAISYA

My aunts. They thought I might...
(*indicating NAREN's ankle*)
... get hurt.

NAREN

This? It's nothing.

TAISYA

Yeah.

NAREN

I'm fine.

TAISYA

Someone push you around again?

NAREN

No! We were sparring. I fell.

TAISYA

Right.

NAREN

It's true. At least I'm here. Not locked up at home hoping to get married.

TAISYA

That's not what I'm doing!

NAREN

Then why'd you quit class?

TAISYA
I didn't have a choice.

NAREN
Right.

A brief pause.

TAISYA
I forgot just how welcoming everyone was at Master Eijil's.

NAREN
Yeah, well... I didn't.

TAISYA
Are you okay?

NAREN
I'm fine. Go see the dragon attack.

TAISYA
Where are you going?

NAREN
Home.

NAREN limps off.

TAISYA
Bye, Naren.

SCENE 5: THE KNIGHTS COUNCIL

LORD CHAIRMAN
I hereby bring this meeting of the Knights Council to order!

SIR CRETORY
Let the record reflect that the Knights Council Meeting has been brought to order.

LORD CHAIRMAN
First piece of business, The Dragon.

SIR EMONY
Permission to speak?

LORD CHAIRMAN
Granted.

SIR CRETORY

Let the record reflect that Sir Emony has been given permission to speak.

SIR EMONY

Thank you, Sir Cretory, Lord Chairman. I would like to motion that our first order of business be to welcome Queen Everil, who is observing her first Knights Council Meeting.

SIR KEND

Seconded.

EVERIL

Oh, thank you. There's really so much to discuss--

LORD CHAIRMAN

All in favor?

ALL

Aye.

EVERIL

You really don't have to--

LORD CHAIRMAN

The Council has moved to welcome Queen Everil to her first Knights Council meeting.

EVERIL

Well, that's very kind of you, but--

LORD CHAIRMAN

(With great fanfare)
Your Majesty!!

EVERIL

Yes?

LORD CHAIRMAN

(With greater fanfare, bowing:)
Welcome.

EVERIL

... uh... thank you.

SIR CRETORY

Let the record reflect that we have welcomed the Queen to the Knights Council meeting.

SIR LEE

Permission to speak?

LORD CHAIRMAN

Granted, Sir Lee.

SIR LEE

I motion we continue with our original first order of business.

SIR KEND

Seconded.

SIR CRETORY

Let the record reflect that the motion to continue with the first order of business has been seconded.

LORD CHAIRMAN

All in favor?

ALL

Aye.

LORD CHAIRMAN

Then to the business of the dragon.

SIR TON

Permission to speak?

LORD CHAIRMAN

Granted, Sir Ton.

SIR TON

In light of the two attacks that our great kingdom has suffered, I wish to motion that we officially fight this dragon.

SIR KEND

Seconded!

There is lots of agreement to this proposal.

SIR CASTIC

Petition!

LORD CHAIRMAN

There's a petition to the motion!

SIR CRETORY

Let the record reflect a petition.

LORD CHAIRMAN

Is there a second?

Slight pause.

SIR KEND

Seconded.

LORD CHAIRMAN

Then we'll hear the petition.

(To SIR CASTIC)

Sir Castic, You have the floor.

SIR CRETORY

Let the record reflect that Sir Castic, son of Sir Perfluous, has taken the floor.

SIR CASTIC

It's all well and good to say we're going to fight this dragon. But do any of us know anything about the dragon?

SIR LEE

It breathes fire.

SIR CASTIC

Well, yes, obviously. Most dragons do these days.

SIR MON

Not true, my lad! There is a long history of water dragons and frost dragons. Neither can breath fire. In fact, in the southern regions, the great Wyvern Dragons, though rumored to breath fire, actually would attack their pray through an elaborate series of--

SIR CASTIC

Sir Mon! This is my petition.

SIR EMONY

(Whispering to SIR MON)

It is impolite to interrupt a petition.

SIR MON

Right. Sorry.

SIR CASTIC

Do we know for a fact that this dragon breathes fire?

SIR TON

We do, Sir Castic. We have a report from both attacks.

SIR CASTIC

Well, thank you, Sir Ton. Then it isn't a frost, water OR Wyvern Dragon.

SIR LEE

See? Now we know something.

SIR CASTIC

Do we know anything else, Sir Lee?

SIR LEE

It flies.

SIR CASTIC

Well, yes. Obviously the dragon flies.

SIR MON

No, not obvious. There are many land-based dragons that have been documented over the millennia. Why the Marsupial Dragon and the great Lindworm Dragon --

SIR CASTIC

Do we know for a fact that it flies? Sir Ton?

SIR TON

Yes. We have witness reports saying that it flies.

SIR VIVAL

We also know that it wants something.

SIR CASTIC

Yes, obviously.

SIR MON

No, not obvious at all. In fact, wanting something could mean it's a Forager Dragon, collecting jewels from around the kingdom. Or it could be a Progenitor Dragon, come to fulfill the wishes of a lost loved one. Or, perhaps it's simply looking for a mate.

All the Knights look horrified at this prospect of this possibility.

SIR TON

The records don't say what it wants. Just that it wants something.

SIR CASTIC

So it flies, it breathes fire and it wants something. Which is to say, it's a dragon. Sir Ton, your motion to fight the dragon is all well and good, but how can we possibly defeat it?

SIR TON

No idea. But that's a different motion. I only motioned that we fight it. Which I do again.

(Officially)

I motion that we fight this dragon.

SIR KEND

Seconded.

LORD CHAIRMAN

All in favor.

ALL
(but SIR CASTIC)

Aye.

Everyone looks at SIR CASTIC.

LORD CHAIRMAN

Sir Castic?

SIR CASTIC

Oh, yes, fine. Aye.

SIR LEE

This is a formal committee, boy. Don't roll your aye.

SIR CASTIC

My apologies, Sir Lee.

SIR CRETORY

Let the record reflect that we are going to fight the dragon.

SIR VIVAL

I would like to motion a question.

LORD CHAIRMAN

Motion for a question.

SIR KEND

Seconded.

LORD CHAIRMAN

Approved. Let the question be motioned.

SIR VIVAL

I would like to open the question in response to the petition of how we fight the dragon, as decided upon in the previous motion.

SIR CRETORY

Let the record reflect that Sir Vival, son of Sir Vivor, is putting forward a question as an addendum to the previous motion to address the petition.

SIR KEND

Seconded.

A pause, as all are confused.

SIR EMONY

Umm... that wasn't a motion, Sir Kend.

SIR KEND

Oh. Sorry, Sir Emony. Lost track.

LORD CHAIRMAN

The question is open.

SIR VIVAL

So? ... How do we fight it?

Slight pause as all the Knights think.

SIR LEE

We could fight fire with fire.

SIR TON

Do you mean get another fire dragon?

SIR VIVAL

That sounds dangerous.

SIR MON

There was a scientist, years ago, who designed an amazing fire cannon. We could perhaps unearth his designs and do further research on a--

SIR LEE

(Cutting off Sir Mon)

Sounds like a plan.

SIR CASTIC

Wait. Don't you fight fire with water?

SIR LEE

Are you challenging me?

SIR CASTIC

No, I was just saying. Fire. Water.

SIR LEE

Okay, fine. Water.

SIR VIVAL

How would we get enough water to put out the dragon's fire?

SIR LEE

Buckets?

SIR EMONY

Are you suggesting we throw buckets of water at the dragon?

SIR TON

That's a lot of buckets.

SIR CRETORY

Could you perhaps drown the dragon in a bucket?

SIR VIVAL
We'd need a very big bucket.

SIR LEE
Maybe a pool.

SIR MON
Are we talking about an in ground pool or above ground?

SIR TON
An above ground pool might make more sense. It would be mobile.

SIR EMONY
I hereby motion that we begin building an above ground pool.

SIR KEND
Second!

SIR MON
Wait a second!

SIR KEND
Why should I?

SIR MON
We can't approve the building of an above ground pool until we have the plans that tell us how to actually build that pool.

SIR CASTIC
Isn't a pool just a very large bucket?

SIR MON
Why, no! There are structural issues to consider. The outward pressure of the water. Whether the pool should have a patio surrounding it.

SIR EMONY
A sun deck would be preferable to a patio.

SIR VIVAL
Oh, I quite agree.

SIR CRETORY
A patio? For an above ground pool? Wouldn't you want a terrace?

LORD CHAIRMAN
Or a balcony.

SIR CASTIC
Balconies are only for buildings.

LORD CHAIRMAN
Very well, I find a terrace acceptable.

SIR MON
Not without plans.

SIR TON
I hereby motion that we make plans to build a pool!

SIR KEND
Second!

LORD CHAIRMAN
All approved?

SIR MON
Wait! We don't know what kind of pool we wish to make plans to build.

SIR CASTIC
Well, how do we decide?

All think for a moment.

SIR EMONY
We should form a committee.

SIR KEND
Seconded!!

LORD CHAIRMAN
All in favor?

ALL
Aye.

SIR CRETORY
Let the record reflect that the Council has motioned the formation of a new committee in order to answer the questions raised by the addendum of the question to the petition of the original motion.

SIR EMONY
Here here.

SIR VIVAL
But who will be on this new committee?

A pause.

LORD CHAIRMAN
We can put that on the agenda for the next meeting.

SIR KEND

Second.

SIR CRETORY

Let the record reflect that the question of membership to the new committee will be the first agenda item at our next council meeting.

LORD CHAIRMAN

Excellent. Then without any further questions, I motion to close our meeting.

EVERIL

I have a question.

All of the knights jump.

SIR LEE

Your highness! Sorry. We sort of... forgot you were here.

EVERIL

May I ask my question?

No one is sure how to respond, or what the protocol is.

SIR EMONY

I move she be allowed to speak?

SIR KEND

Second?

LORD CHAIRMAN

You have the floor.

All the knights are nervous.

EVERIL

Thank you. Um... I don't mean to be... difficult... but how does planning to build an above ground pool... fight a dragon?

More confusion.

SIR CRETORY

Your Highness. If you look in the record, it's all explained. The reasoning. Behind our decisions.

EVERIL

Well, I was here. I've been here the whole time. I heard your reasoning. And, frankly, I'm still a little confused.

SIR EMONY

Our conversations move quite quickly. As your father knew. He was used to it, of course. If you're confused, we really recommend reading through the record. The records are quite good, and very well kept.

SIR CRETORY

Yes, they are.

SIR TON

It's all in the record, Your Highness. You'll see.

All nod and speak in agreement.

EVERIL

Okay... well, can I see the record?

An awkward, uncertain pause.

LORD CHAIRMAN

The record isn't made available until after every committee member has had a chance to read through the minutes and give them final approval.

EVERIL

How long does that take?

More uncertainty and confusion.

SIR CRETORY

A month. Often less.

LORD CHAIRMAN

Three weeks.

SIR CRETORY

Or so!

LORD CHAIRMAN

Or so.

SIR CRETORY

Yes.

A Pause.

EVERIL

I see.

Another, more awkward pause.

SIR LEE

Was there anything you'll be needing, Your Highness?

EVERIL

No. No, I think I have everything I need.

SIR LEE

(Quickly)

Motion to close the meeting.

SIR KEND

(Very Quickly)

Second!

LORD CHAIRMAN

(Very Quickly)

All in favor?

ALL

Aye!

LORD CHAIRMAN

Then the Knights Council meeting is officially closed.

SIR CRETORY

As the record already reflects.

SIR TON

Well, I don't mean to be rude, but I have an appointment I'm a little late for.

SIR KEND

I'm right behind you.

SIR EMONY

Good day, Your Highness. Thank you for joining us today.

SIR VIVAL

(Bowing and exiting)

My Queen.

LORD CHAIRMAN

We appreciate your presence.

All eventually say their goodbye's to EVERIL, who is left alone on stage.

EVERIL

Father, how did you do this?

ETHAM runs in.

ETHAM

Your Highness!

EVERIL

Yes, what is it?

ETHAM

There's been another attack. In the village of Tharne.

EVERIL

Oh, no. No!

ETHAM

Shall we--

EVERIL

Send the guard. Get them help immediately.

SCENE 6: THARNE, AFTER THE THIRD DRAGON ATTACK

The town of Tharne, after the attack. WINIFRED and her advisor, LORIMER, watch as the royal guard sorts through the wreckage.

TAISYA enters.

LORIMER

Princess Winifred, stay back. It's still dangerous.

WINIFRED

Dear heaven... it's worse than last time. How many...

LORIMER

There were twelve homes destroyed, my lady. You really should be back at the castle.

WINIFRED

No, I had to... I need to see. I should visit the families.

LORIMER

You must be escorted.

(To MASICK)

Pellin! Take the princess over to the shelter.

PELLIN

Yes, sir!

WINIFRED

Do they need medicine or...?

PELLIN

We're bringing in supplies, your highness. The families will be taken care of.