

Escape From Ragna Rock Mountain

A Play in One Act

The First Part of the Middlegarth Trilogy

By David Barrett

This play must not be performed without permission.

Licences available through www.playsandsongs.com

Copyright 2002, playsandsongs.com

Dramatis Personae

Tom, aged 13
Jack, aged 10
Alex, aged 11
Amy, aged 9
Melissa, aged 12
Librarian (voice of)
Tyr, Watchman of the Grinkengap (voice of)

At Middlegarth:

King Gunther
Sigmund
Siegfried
Osric
Henrik
Olaf
Gustav
Gudrun
Freya
Alana, Erika, Johanna (non speaking)

At Frostig (Ice Warrior Maidens)

Hilde
Ingrid
Kristin
Helge
Karen
Brigid

At Castle Valaholm, Aysgarth:

Wodec, the Great Wizard
Marog, the Raven of Memory
Hurog, the Raven of Knowledge
Oswald, the Apprentice

In the Forest of Alfheim (The Elves):

Trigg, the Elfin King
Moondag
Tostig
Trogg
Wenzel
Kirrig
Armeda, giantess

In the Underground Kingdom of Hadium, Magworts: (Trolls)

Gorm
Kraken
Gorthrop
Snorb
Snock
Droggle
Milder
Yukk
Deorc, Evil Sorcerer
Grundig, Dragon

Scene 1, The Old Library

ALEX I'm bored! Summer holidays are so boring.
AMY This is a wonderful library. Do come and look at these old books, Alex.
The pages are all crispy, yellow and dusty.
(She blows the dust off the book she is holding. It blows into Jack's face and he coughs.)

TOM Hey, come and look at this book, Jack, it's all about the history of giants.
JACK Where? Let me see.
ALEX Books are really boring!
MELISSA But giants aren't real, are they, Tom? How can you have a history book about something that's not real?
(She continues to browse through the books.)

AMY I'm jolly glad they're not real. After all, it would be pretty scary to meet a real giant.
(Jack has crept round behind Amy and he jumps out at her with a loud roar. She screams.)
Oh Jack, please don't do that. You frightened me.

JACK It doesn't take much, does it?
TOM This book is about folklore; legends of giants from different countries. Look here, for example, "In Scandinavian mythology the troll was a powerful giant that was an enemy of humans. They would rob and eat any travellers foolish enough to stray into their domain after dark".

AMY Ooh, that's really scary. I don't like trolls.
ALEX Trolls are boring. Anyway, it's half past four and we should be getting home for tea. Mother will be cross.

JACK I had a troll once - it had blue hair, big, bulging eyes and a bare b.....
TOM That's quite enough of that, thank you, Jack.
MELISSA Oh Tom, do look at this won't you. 'Myths and Legends from Around the World'. What a wonderful title, don't you think?

TOM Let me see the index. *(Tom snatches the book from her)*
Myths of Creation, Superhuman Heroes, Shape-Shifters, Unexplained Disappearances.....

MELISSA Unexplained disappearances - that sounds terribly exciting, don't you think?

ALEX It sounds terribly boring to me. *(She yawns)*
VOICE,LIB Five minutes until closing time, children. Please replace your books on the shelf unless you wish to borrow them.

JACK What does it mean by 'unexplained disappearances', Melissa?
(Melissa grabs the book back)

MELISSA Well, let's read it and find out, shall we? Here's an example: in nineteenth century Norway, a peasant girl by the name of Freya Svenson vanished without trace from a Norwegian mountainside. Some friends who were with her gave the most curious explanation for her disappearance.

(Jack creeps unnoticed by the others into the wings. Tom takes the book and continues.)

- TOM 'Whilst exploring the mountainside near their village, they discovered an enormous boulder known as the Ragna Rock. The boulder was covered with ancient runic inscriptions which the children did not understand'.
(Alex begins to show an interest in this)
Freya traced the words in the rock with her finger and, on the opposite side, she discovered a sentence in the old Norse language. She did not understand the full meaning of the words but she began to chant them aloud. After the third time there was a huge explosion and Freya disappeared into thin air.
- ALEX Wow! How is that possible.
- MELISSA It must have been magic.
- AMY That's very frightening.
- MELISSA Hey, where's Jack? *(They all look around in surprise)*
- TOM Jack! Where are you?
- ALEX He's disappeared into thin air.
- AMY That's really spooky.
- ALEX What are we going to tell mother?
Jack suddenly leaps out with a lion's roar. Everyone is startled.
- TOM Stop it, Jack! You're frightening the girls.
Tom buries his head in the book again.
- ALEX I'm not frightened.
- AMY That's because you're a tomboy. You're not dainty, like girls should be.
- ALEX Prissy, you mean. Like precious little Amy with her pretty ribbons and her frilly dresses. You're just a china doll!
(Amy looks as if she is about to cry.)
- MELISSA Stop it, you two! You'll spoil the fun. Tom, do go on with story. I want to know how it finishes.
- TOM Well that's just it. No-one knows what happened. It says that the other children were terrified, as you can imagine. Extensive searches of the mountain failed to discover poor Freya. Some people said she had been eaten by a bear, others that she had been kidnapped by trolls. But the most curious thing of all was that the huge boulder disappeared with Freya and it has never been seen since despite extensive searches of the mountain-side.
- ALL Wow! *(Melissa takes the book again)*
- MELISSA Professor Bjorn Tomson, an expert in Norse Folklore at the university of Helsinki, maintains that the inscription is an ancient Norse magical spell. He says it opens a portal into another world and that is where Freya vanished to. The legend states that before Freya could discover the reverse charm and return, she was set an impossible task by a mysterious person. Look! It even has the words of the chant printed here.
- ALEX *(Roughly grabbing the book)* Let me see the spell! I want to try it.
- AMY No, Alex you mustn't! It's dangerous.
- ALEX Oh, mustn't I, Miss Prissy. Just watch me.

(The others try to grab the book from her but she eludes them and begins chanting, faltering at first.)

- ALEX **þurh blāst ond regn ic ġefare in drýlican eorðrice.** *(spoken three times)*
[Through wind and rain into the magical earthly kingdom I go.
Old English pronunciation guide:
Thurch blast and rayn itch yefare in drewleechun airthreacher.]
- TOM Alex, stop it or you will go home at once.
(On the third time there is a loud bang and a flash as Alex disappears.
The others are flung to the floor and stunned into silence for a moment.)
- MELISSA Oh my goodness, what has she done?
AMY *(Distraught)* Alex, Alex, do please come back to us, please do.
(She starts to cry.)
- MELISSA What are we going to do, Tom? I mean, we can't just leave Alex, can we?
JACK Why not? It will be more pleasant without her.
(Amy cries harder.)
- TOM Come on, Amy, crying is not going to bring Alex back. Pull yourself together girl.
- MELISSA I'll just have to follow her, wherever it is she's gone.
- TOM What! No, Melissa, you can't. You simply can't. I'll go.
- AMY You're not leaving the rest of us behind to do the explaining. If one of us goes - we all go.
- TOM Oh very well, but we must be quick. Come on, let's hold hands. Melissa - the book.
- JACK I'm not holding hands with a girl.
- TOM Just do as you're told, Jack.
(Melissa fetches the book and thumbs through to the correct page.)
Now, on the count of three we start the chant. Everybody ready?
- AMY Oh Tom, I'm so frightened.
- MELISSA Just hold onto my hand tightly, Amy, and you'll be alright.
(Amy whimpers.)
- TOM One, two, three..
- ALL **þurh blāst ond regn ic ġefare in drýlican eorðrice.** *(three times)*
[See pronunciation guide above.]
There is a loud bang and a flash as they disappear in a brief blackout.
The lights come up again briefly onto an empty stage.)

Blackout

End of Scene 1 Copyright © playsandsongs.com 2002

Scene 2, The Grinkengap

(The scene opens as Alex is spinning and plummeting through the abyss of the Grinkengap. The stage is dim, bare and full of mist. U.V. lighting should be used if available. Upward moving gobos would create the illusion of the characters falling. In the background we see the roots of the world tree. Alex is sobbing.)

ALEX Help! Where am I? Why, oh why did I have to say that stupid spell. How will I ever get out of here? I wish I'd never been born.

TYR Patience, my child. Have patience and you will be rewarded.
(Throughout this scene the audience never see Tyr. He is but a booming voice in the void.)

ALEX Who... who are you? Have you come to help me or to add to my misery?

TYR I am Tyr - custodian of the void - watchman of the Grinkengap. If you like, I am your friend.
(Wails and crying are heard as the others spin into the Grinkengap.)

TOM Alex, oh Alex, thank goodness you're safe.

ALEX Tom, please help me - I'm so afraid.

TOM Try to reach us Alex. We are safer if we stick together.

ALEX T-T-Tom, I'm not alone! There's a voice.....

TYR Welcome children, welcome to the Grinkengap.
(Whenever Tyr speaks, Amy cowers and covers her ears.)

ALEX This is Tyr, he's the custodian of something called the void. And we're in it.
(Amy weeps loudly.)

MELISSA That sort of makes him responsible for us then, doesn't it?

TYR You are correct, Melissa. I am your guide. If you believe in me I will deliver you safely. Only I have the power to release you from the Grinkengap.

MELISSA But how does he know my name?

AMY Then..... then, there is a way out - a way home?

TYR A way out, certainly. And a way home - perhaps, but first you have a mission to complete. There is a purpose in your being here.

JACK But I thought we were here because of the spell.

TYR Your presence here is part of a larger design, young man. It is greater than you and I and perhaps we should not question it. At present you are nowhere - you do not exist. The Grinkengap is where time begins and ends. Here, the beginning of the universe meets the end. The power locked up in the Grinkengap is beyond measure!

MELISSA But there is a way out? Is there a reverse charm?

TYR Ah, I see you are an intelligent young lady. But the reverse charm is only effective once you reach the kingdom of Middlegarth - and once your task is complete.

TOM Middlegarth? *(To Melissa)* Of course - the task. According to the legend, Freya had a task to complete.
Can you not stop us falling - it rather makes one feel travel sick, you know.
(SFX of lightning and thunder and the falling slows.)

TYR There, that is the best I can do. And now you will follow my instructions.

TYR Observe the World Tree. It has roots in every corner of the universe. Use it to travel - to the kingdom of Middlegarth. According to the grand design, you will help the mortals there.

MELISSA But what do we have to do Tyr? How can we help them? We're just children.

TYR You will know, Melissa, when the time comes. Trust me... you will know...
(His voice trails off.)

AMY *(Crying)* Tyr, please don't go. Don't leave us. You're the only friend we have.

JACK I understand now. This is like a black hole in space .. and the roots of the World Tree are like wormholes connecting every part of this world. How wonderful!

TOM Come on, we're wasting time. We must do as Tyr says, it's our only hope! Let's try to reach the tree.
The children struggle over to the tree and grasp hold of the roots.

ALEX Now what? Nothing seems to be happening yet. This is getting boring!

JACK But how does the tree know where we want to go?

AMY Why don't we just tell it?

JACK Oh yes, sure - talk to a tree. Do you normally do things like that?

MELISSA Our situation is hardly normal, is it, Jack? Anything is worth a try.

AMY Er, excuse me Mr World Tree, you see we're lost and we would like to get to the kingdom of - Mudguard!
They wait expectantly but nothing happens.

JACK Well that really worked, Amy, I don't think.

TOM Wait a minute, Jack. Amy said the wrong name - it's MIDDLEGARTH!

AMY Please Tree, can you help us get to the kingdom of Middlegarth?

Violent sound and light effects (not thunder this time but a supernatural sound). We hear screams from the girls fading into the distance as the light on stage dims to blackout.

End of Scene 2

Copyright © playsandsongs.com 2002

Scene 3, The Great Hall in the Castle of King Gunther of Middlegarth

King Gunther is seated at the head of a large table. The remains of a feast are evident. This scene could start with a dance by a group of servant girls or a song performed by a minstrel.

SIGMUND Would my liege care for a little more wine?
GUNTHER Certainly not, my Lord Sigmund. Enough wine has already flowed this night. I need a clear head to ponder the future of my kingdom and the question of your marriage to my fair daughter, Gudrun.
SIGMUND Your daughter, my Liege, is more than fair. Her skin is paler than the deepest frost of winter, her hair - softer than the finest pear blossom, her wit is sharper than an executioner's sword, her temper more finely balanced than the alchemists scales, her... her...
SIEGFRIED Oh, for pity's sake do shut up Sigmund. I think the King understands your point - and we have no wish to listen to the ramblings of a lovesick suitor all night.
OSRIC Or do you think he is just after her wealth? *(Warriors cheer at this)*
SIGMUND Why, you scoundrel, I'll puncture your ribs with my blade.
OSRIC You'll have to catch me first.....
(Sigmund chases Osric around the table several times until Siegfried sticks out a foot and trips Osric. Much laughter and applause. Just then, the children materialise with the same sound effect as before. All goes silent. The Middlegarthians move in slow motion while the children speak.)
JACK Wow, we've come up in Hollywood.
ALEX This is not a film set, you idiot, this is Middlegarth. It's a real place.
AMY But why are they in fancy dress?
MELISSA It's their normal clothes - silly girl.
TOM Perhaps we should introduce ourselves.
OSRIC My Lord, did you hear that great wind.
HENRIK Oh no, Olaf, you have not been doing that again.
OLAF Not me this time.
HENRIK Then there must be a storm brewing.
SIGMUND My Lord Osric, the weather has saved your skin! I must unsaddle the shutters and close the horses. *(He exits)*
GUSTAV Surely he means shut the horses and close the saddles.
GUNTHER There you are, you see. Too much drink already. They can scarcely shape a sentence, form a phrase or even emit an utterance without shuffling their syntax and spoonerising their sibilants.
GUSTAV My Lord, what on earth is wrong with your tongue.
GUNTHER Never mind, Gustav - I wouldn't expect you to understand.
TOM Ahem! My Lord, we beg your pardon for this intrusion but we were brought here by circumstances beyond our control. However, as we are here we are more than happy to assist.....
(This is totally ignored as the children cannot be seen or heard.)

GUNTHER Go and bid the women to attend to our table. It is all a-clutter.
(Gunther brushes the mess aside with a sweep of his arm.)

MELISSA You see, Sir, we just want to get home but Tyr told us we had a task to fulfil here first. If you wouldn't mind telling us what we have to do and we'll ...just go!

GUNTHER Osric, how is that scoundrel of a father of yours? I've not drunk with him at the ale board since we defeated the Fingrians at Asabru.

OSRIC Oh, he's dead! Eaten by a snow bear from the north.

GUNTHER My goodness! But he was so skinny. Couldn't have been much of a meal for the poor old bear.

TOM Melissa, I do believe they can't see or hear us. It's incredible!

AMY But how can we help them if we can't speak to them?
(She starts to cry.)

ALEX Oh do shut up, Amy, you whimp!
(Jack approaches the nearest warrior and waves his hand in front of his face. No response. He shouts boo! No response. He blows a big raspberry. The men carry on drinking and mime talking. Jack perches on the edge of the King's table.)

JACK How're you doing then, king-face! Everything alright with you? - apart from your silly clothes that is - and your crown which is too big for you. It needs a polish.

MELISSA Jack, come here and behave.
(For once, Jack does as he is told. Enter the women to clear the table. However, as the women set about their work, Jack dances among them. The noblemen continue miming conversation.)

TOM Jack, stop it at once!
(The last woman to enter turns abruptly as TOM says this and stares at him, then looks around at the others in surprise.)

MELISSA Hey, do look! *(to the others)* I do believe she can see us.

FREYA Of course I can see you. You're not invisible are you!

TOM But you see, none of the others can see us or hear us. It's very strange.

FREYA Who are you? And why are you dressed like that?

OSRIC You know who I am. I am Osric the Vandal, son of King Thikk, and I always dress like this.

FREYA Not you - I am talking to them.
(She gestures towards the children. All gaze incredulously towards where she is pointing and see nothing.)

GUDRUN Who do you mean by them?

FREYA Not you too, Gudrun. Stop playing games with me all of you.

TOM I told you - they can't see us. For some reason you are different from the others. You can see us.

FREYA No, this cannot be true. You can't be from the other world. Your clothes.....

SIEGFRIED The other world? I think you're the one who's in another world, my dear.

GUNTHER Gudrun, I think you and Alana should take Freya for a quiet lie down. She obviously has a fever.

MELISSA Freya? Did you hear that, Tom? Her name is Freya!

ALEX Freya, surely you're not the one...?
(Freya begins to cry as they escort her off. She turns and gives the children a forlorn glance as she exits.)

AMY Don't worry, Freya. We'll help you. Trust us!

TOM Oh Melissa, do you think Freya can be the girl who vanished all those years ago?

MELISSA I really don't know, Tom, but I certainly intend to find out.

ALEX But she looks so young. She vanished over a century ago.

AMY Perhaps she was longer in the Grinkengap than we were.

JACK Or perhaps we have travelled back in time.

GUSTAV My Lord, we must be getting on to business. We have peace treaties to sign and marriages to arrange.

HENRIK And a battle to plan against the Thoggs before they over-run all our lands.

OSRIC And what about the problem of the evil Lord Deorc, the wicked sorcerer. His black fingers of doom grip the throat of every man in the kingdom. His evil magic must be defeated.

GUNTHER All in good time, my lords. Do not be in such haste.
(Enter Hermod, the messenger, closely followed by Sigmund.)

HENRIK Ah, Hermod, the messenger. What news, herald? Have we driven back the Thoggs?

GUSTAV By his face I would say it's bad news.

HERMOD Bad! It's worse than bad, my lords. As bad as it can get.
(There is a murmur of anticipation.)

GUNTHER Silence! Let the man speak.

HERMOD My Liege, your brother, King Naff of the Thoggs, has bade me bring this news to you.

GUNTHER Pah, that brigand. He's not fit to be called a king. I spit on his head. *(Mimes spitting)*

NOBLES We spit on his head! *(All mime spitting)*

HERMOD King Naff says an enormous, monstrous dragon, by the name of Grundig, has arrived close by at the edge of the forest. It is stealing all our maidens and devouring the warriors.

GUNTHER Sigmund, is this true?

SIGMUND It is so, my Liege. And it has set ablaze great tracts of the forest with its fearsome breath.

GUNTHER Then we must act swiftly to defeat it. Sigmund, Osric, Gustav, Henrik go now. Gather a band of warriors and defeat this thing before it attacks our women and children in their beds.

SIGMUND My Liege, we are gone. *(He exits)*

OSRIC Swiftly as a sparrow. *(mime sparrow flying off)*

HENRIK Bravely as a bear. *(mime bear plodding off)*

GUSTAV Fleet-footed as a fox. *(Mime fox and show its ears and tail)*

GUNTHER Just go and get on with it, will you!

SIEGFRIED My Lord, if I may be so bold as to venture an opinion.

GUNTHER Certainly, my trusted servant. Your opinion is much valued in this court.

SIEGFRIED I believe we have a higher enemy to confront here. An enemy of infinitely greater power and resources than a mere dragon.

GUNTHER Do continue, Siegfried.

SIEGFRIED I am certain that the dragon is but a servant of the evil magician Deorc, conjured up by evil magic. It was sent to cause disarray among us. To weaken our ranks in preparation for a far greater and more devastating attack.

OLAF He's right, Sire. Deorc is seeking to destroy our kingdom and take us as his servants.

GUNTHER Then we shall prevent this. But we are too few in number and we need help. If the worst comes to the worst we shall ask my worthless brother Naff the Thogg for help.

I spit on his head. *(Mimes spitting)*

NOBLES We spit on his head. *(Mime spitting)*
(He beckons them towards him to receive his counsel. They mime conversation.)

TOM I think it is becoming clear why we have been brought here.

MELISSA But we are merely children. How can we help defeat a dragon and an evil sorcerer?
(We hear the booming voice of Tyr.)

TYR There is a way, Melissa. Others will gladly assist you in your task.
(Amy covers her ears again and cowers.)

TOM Then I was right. Our task is to defeat this evil Deorc and the dragon.

TYR That is correct. And if you destroy the evil one, his creatures will fall with him.

ALEX But how do we defeat Deorc?

JACK We don't even know what he looks like or where to find him.

TYR Seek wisdom. Seek knowledge from those who possess it. Go to Frostig, the ice kingdom. There you will find the warrior maidens. They have wisdom. They can help you in your task.

AMY *(Sobbing)* But how do we get there?

TYR The tree...the tree..... *(his voice trails off)*

TOM Come on everyone, there's no time to lose. It's this way. *(They exit)*

GUNTHER And so, my Lords, by means of these treaties we will raise a mighty army and defeat Deorc for ever.

OLAF And with Wodec's help and protection we cannot lose.

SIEGFRIED Praise be to Wodec, mighty wizard, protector of Middlegarth.

ALL Praise be to Wodec! Praise be to Wodec!

Blackout

End of Scene 3

Copyright © playsandsongs.com 2002

Scene 4, Frostig, The Ice Kingdom, Home of the Warrior Maidens

The warrior maidens are having a council of war. They are squatting in a circle centre stage. Their costume is heavy armour, chain-mail, helmets and swords. The lighting is bright and cool.

INGRID And so, my sisters in arms, we must prevail. If we are seen to weaken we will be destroyed. *(Crescendoing all the time)* We will be victorious through battle. Our foes will be vanquished. We will fight to secure the future of Frostig. We will be all-powerful. Through snow and hail ...

OTHERS We must prevail.

INGRID We never fail.

OTHERS We must prevail.

(Sound effect of the children arriving via the world tree. They jump in from the wings, if possible off a ladder, one at a time as if they have slid down a tree root.

The warrior maidens now perform a masculine-looking ritual of posturing, gesturing and chanting, like the NZ rugby team.)

MAIDENS *(Chanting)* Gunnar, vif, maykir, spior. *(battle, woman, sword, spear)*

JACK Hey! Just look at that will you.

ALEX What on earth are they doing?

AMY I think they must be a hockey team.

(Jack joins in the circle and mimics the maidens chant and actions.)

MELISSA Jack! Stop that!

JACK It's alright, Melissa, they can't see us, can they!

(Jack turns to face downstage and comically and exaggeratedly continues the ritual. He does not notice that the maidens (upstage of him) have stopped and are moving slowly but very aggressively towards him.)

TOM Er, Jack.....

JACK Come on, Tom, join in. Don't be such a stick in the.....

(He sees the look on the children's faces and turns, too late, just as he is surrounded and swept off his feet to the floor. We lose sight of Jack in the throng.)

MELISSA Stop! Stop it at once! He's only a boy.

(She pulls two of the maidens off Jack. They leave him and surround Melissa.)

KRISTEN He may be only a boy but he has a man-sized mouth.

MELISSA Look, I'm sorry, but he didn't think you could see or hear him. He meant no harm.

HELGE Do you realise, little girl, who you are dealing with.

MELISSA I'm not a little girl. I'm almost as big as you.

TOM We know who you are. You are the ice warrior maidens of the land of Frostig. We have come to ask for your help.

KAREN You certainly have a way of endearing yourselves to people (*aggressively*) by insulting them.

JACK But how come you can see us? They couldn't in Middlegarth.

HILDE Those at Middlegarth are mere mortals. We are supernatural warriors and far superior in the scheme of the universe.

INGRID Alright girls, let's give these little people the chance to explain themselves, and then we might, just **might**, let them escape with their lives.

AMY (*Speaking very fast and furiously with a few sharp intakes of breath. During this speech the maidens begin to laugh. Amy looks indignant and continues.*)
Oh, thank you, warrior people thingies, you see, we want to fight a dragon and it's setting fire to a forest and King Naff the Thogg (*Jack mimes spitting*) is going to help his brother kill it but we have to help them or we won't complete the task and if we don't, we won't ever get home to see our mums and dads again and ... and ... and...
(*She bursts into tears. The warrior maidens are laughing loudly by now.*)

BRIGID Ingrid, I think I'd like to help this little girl get home to her mum. Wouldn't you girls.

KAREN I don't know about her but I would like to do a favour for big boy here.
(*She moves towards Tom and puts her arm around him. Melissa pushes her off him briskly and Karen glares at her.*)

HELGE Let's help them, Ingrid. I quite like them and it wouldn't feel right to kill them for no good reason.

HILDE Why not? We kill people all the time - it's our job.

INGRID Well we **not** going to kill these people. Alright! You - big boy, are you the leader?

TOM Why, yes, I suppose so.

KRISTIN Well, you don't sound very confident, do you!

INGRID Tell us what you want from us.

TOM We were told to come to Frostig by Tyr, the watchman of the Grinkengap.

AMY He said you had something called wisdom, whatever that is.

INGRID Ah, so Tyr sent you did he? And you need wisdom?

TOM We need to know how to defeat the dragon, Grundig, and his master, Deorc the magician.

KRISTIN (*Sarcastically*) Well, what a good thing you are only asking for a small favour.
(*During these next lines the children look from one maiden to the other becoming more dejected.*)

KAREN Have you any idea what you ask? Deorc is the most evil and powerful wizard in the universe, apart from Wodec, the great white wizard.

BRIGID To even reach Deorc you have to find your way through a maze of tunnels into his underground kingdom of Hadium.

HELGE And few people escape from Hadium with their lives.

HILDE Even if you could reach Hadium, you might never escape.

KRISTEN And then there are the wicked and evil Magworts.

HELGE That's a type of troll .. and they're shape shifters. They love to take on the shape of a person you trust.

HILDE Then they kill you and eat you. *(Amy starts to sob again)*

KRISTEN The Magworts are Deorc's servants. They will die to protect him.

INGRID So you see that it is no small thing you ask. You wanted wisdom and you have received knowledge of your enemy. We want to help you but all our combined powers are not enough to defeat Deorc. We can defeat an army of Thoggs or wrestle with giant bears from the north but Deorc's powers are awesome. People have tried for centuries to rid the world of him and his Magworts.

TOM You mentioned a great white wizard. Can he help us.

INGRID Only he can answer that. Wodec is the most powerful being in the universe. He was once Deorc's teacher, before Deorc betrayed his art by joining the evil forces of the underworld.

MELISSA Where can we find Wodec? We must speak to him.

INGRID Wodec lives in Castle Valaholm high in the mountains of Aysgarth. It is possible that he could help you defeat Deorc. If Wodec will help you, we will add our strength to your army.

TOM Thank you, Ingrid.

INGRID Now go swiftly, and may good fortune go with you.

Blackout

End of scene 4

Copyright © playsandsongs.com 2002

Scene 5, Castle Valaholm, The Mountains of Aysgarth

The scene is the dungeon of Wodec's castle. The lighting is dim. Wodec is conjuring spirits and uttering spells. Oswald, the apprentice, is busy fetching ingredients and receptacles. Marog and Hurog watch from a distance in awe.

- WODEC *(Muttered but audible)*
**Draca, beorn ond calla dēor, yfel nihtgenga, fultumian ūs on þissum nihte,
Wyrcean drȳcræft mid rēc ond fȳr, bringan ġesundfulnes tō þām cyning
Naff fram Thogg.**
*(Guide to old English pronunciation:
Dracka beyorn and ailer deyor, oovel nichtgenger fulltoomian oos on
thissum nichter.
Wiercian droocraft mid reytch and fear. Bringan yesoondfullness toe tham
cooning Naff fram Thogg)*
*Translation:
Dragon, bear and all beasts, evil creatures of the night, help us this night.
Make magic with smoke and fire, Help that king Naff the Thogg.
(Wodec throws a handful of powder and there is a bright flash. The ravens
flap around in fear. Their voices are constricted and raven-like.)*
- MAROG You should warn us, master, when you're going to make that loud magic.
We get frightened, you know. Don't we, Hurog?
- HUROG We don't like sudden loud noises do we, Marog.
- WODEC I am truly sorry my faithful servants. I quite forgot you were there. You
must remind me, Marog. You are my memory, after all.
- MAROG I cannot remind you what I don't know. How was I to know you had
forgotten we were here?
- OSWALD What was that spell, master? It seemed very powerful.
- WODEC Oh, that was a mere trifle, Oswald. I am perfecting that particular charm.
- OSWALD Does it have something to do with King Naff? I heard you chant his name.
- WODEC You are very observant, Oswald. I have indeed trained you well. It was
merely a healing charm. Quite ordinary really.
- OSWALD Why, is King Naff sick?
- WODEC Only in the mind, Oswald. Only in the mind. Now, where was I?
- MAROG You were about to practise the obscuration charm, great wizard.
- WODEC Oh, thank you, Marog, my memory. Where would I be without you. Now,
let me see.
*(The following charm is accompanied by sweeping hand gestures and
intoned).*
**Hideous blankimus shroudionum obscurum,
Conciliatum luminae negrus imperceptum!**
(All the lights go out.)
- HUROG Oh, master, you've overdone it again.
- OSWALD I can see why you need to practise the charm.

WODEC Just one moment while I remember the reverse charm and I'll put it right.
Now, if I can just remember....

MAROG Luminous ruminous.
WODEC Of course, Marog, thank you. Luminous ruminous....er...what's the last bit?

MAROG Cancrizanus retrogradus!
WODEC Of course, here we go then;
luminous ruminous cancrizanus retrogradus!
(The lights come on again.)

WODEC Dear me, I am getting forgetful in my old age.
OSWALD You're not doing badly, master, for 753 years old.
WODEC Goodness, am I as old as that? How on earth did you know?
OSWALD Hurog told me yesterday. He is your raven of wisdom after all.
(There is a sound effect of the World Tree.)

HUROG Master, someone is coming down the world tree. It must be the children.
WODEC What, the children home from school, already?
MAROG Don't be foolish, you have no children, remember?
HUROG These are the children I told you would come, Wodec. They seek help in defeating Lord Deorc.

WODEC Do not dare to call him lord. He has not earned the title. He has earned eternal disgrace and damnation.
The children jump in one at a time.
Goodness, what a lot of children. *(looking into the wings)* Are there any more?

TOM No, your highness, this is all of us. I'm Tom and this is Melissa, Alex, Jack and Amy.

WODEC Pleased to meet you, er...
MAROG Tom.
WODEC Tom.
JACK Where's your hat?
WODEC I don't know. I must have put it down somewhere. I forget where.
MELISSA Jack, remember your manners.
JACK I'm sorry, but he's supposed to be the Great White Wizard. All wizards have a hat, don't they?

WODEC Yes, quite so. Now, on with the business. I believe you would like my assistance in your task. You intend to defeat the evil Deorc and rob him of his powers.

ALEX How did you know that.
HUROG That's simple. I told him. I am Hurog, the raven of knowledge. I fly around the world gathering knowledge and wisdom which I pass on to Wodec.

AMY Wow, that's fantastic. You must be a really fast flyer.
HUROG Magic has something to do with it, Amy.
AMY He even knows my name.
OSWALD We must warn you of the danger involved in a journey to Hadium. Few have ever escaped alive.

TOM But can you not give us some protection? With all your magical powers you must be able to do something.

WODEC I'm afraid I cannot go with you as my power is not effective in Hadium. It is essential that you lure Deorc to a meeting with me on safe ground. He has been causing mischief all over Middlegarth, causing tribes to wage war on one-another. His aim is to provoke one final battle of enormous proportions where the present order will come to an end. Chaos will reign and Deorc will pronounce himself Ruler and Grand Wizard of the whole world. He must not be allowed to win. This battle must take place on Ragnarok Mountain, on the roof of the world, if we are to have any chance of defeating Deorc. It is neutral ground, where neither of us has the advantage and our powers can be tested to the limit.
(Reaction from the children at the name Ragnarok Mountain.)

MELISSA *(To Tom)* Ragna Rock. Isn't that the name of the boulder in the legend; on the mountainside where Freya disappeared?

TOM I can't help thinking that this is all connected in some way with the legend, Melissa. We'll just have to wait and see.

ALEX Stop whispering. It's rude.

WODEC Concerning the question of help. Although I cannot go myself, I am able to give you some guardians to protect you and give you moral support. Living deep in the Forest of Alfheim, they are magical creatures but their power is limited.

OSWALD The elves, master. That's brilliant. The elves can go with them.

ALEX Don't be silly. There's no such thing as elves.
(All stare at Alex.)

ALRIGHT then, there are such things but I've never seen one.

JACK Well, you'd never seen a wizard until five minutes ago, had you?

ALEX No, I suppose not.

WODEC The elves will be your guides and conduct you safely to Hadium. If all goes well they will see that you get back safely.

MELISSA If we succeed, will be able to return home by chanting the reverse spell?

OSWALD Wodec will see that you return safely to your homes.

TOM And will we see you again, Wodec?

WODEC Yes, my boy, you certainly will. And one last thing; beware of the Magworts. They are the worst sort of trolls; very ugly, flesh-eaters and shape-shifters. You never know where you are with them. Be on your guard. Here, Tom, take this talisman. It's a dragon's tooth. Brought me luck all my 753 years. You can give it back to me when you return. Farewell! We will meet again on Ragnarok Mountain.
(He crosses upstage and continues with his chants and spells.)

ALEX Come on! It's this way to the World Tree.

HUROG You won't need the World Tree to get to the Forest of Alfheim - it is but a half day's walk from here.

MAROG When you leave the castle, go straight down the mountain until you meet the brook, then turn left and follow the stream all the way into the forest.

OSWALD Goodbye children. May the power of the great Wodec go with you.
ALL Goodbye, Oswald. Goodbye.

Blackout

End of scene 5

Copyright © playsandsongs.com 2002

Scene 6, The Forest of Alfheim

It is dusk. In the distance we hear the elves singing a strange magical song. Upstage is the shadowy figure of a giant with its back to the audience. The children enter, speaking in hushed tones.

MELISSA This must be the place, surely. The trees have been getting thicker ever since we left the stream.

ALEX Listen! Can you hear that sound. It sounds like someone singing a strange mournful song.

JACK It's magic. What language are they singing in, Tom?

TOM I don't know. It's like nothing I've ever heard before.

AMY I'm frightened. I want to go home.

TOM I know, Amy. We all do. Just as soon as we have completed our task we'll be able to go back home and we'll look back on this as a wonderful adventure.

AMY *(Sniffing)* Yes, Tom, I suppose we will.

JACK Just think, Alex has not once said she's bored since we've been here!

(Alex takes a swipe at Jack, misses, overbalances and lands flat on her back. Melissa goes to help her up just as Amy notices the shadowy figure of the giant.)

AMY *(Screaming)* Help, Melissa, Tom, what is it? Help?
(She hides behind Tom and the others gather in a huddle for security.)

TOM Oh my Lord, it's, it's a giant!
(The giant turns round to face them.)

ALEX Oh help, it's hideous. Let's run.

TOM No, Alex you must not show it you are afraid. Besides, where could we run to? A thing that big would catch us up in no time.

ARMEDA Hello children! And what brings you here into our little forest of Alfheim.

AMY *(Screams)* Aaahr, it talks!

JACK That's a funny voice for a giant! I thought giants had deep booming voices, like this: HELLO CHILDREN! WHAT BRINGS YOU HERE?

MELISSA Oh do be quiet, Jack! Can't you see? It's a lady giant - a giantess.

ARMEDA That is correct, Middlegarthian. I am Armeda, Watch-Giant of the Forest of Alfheim.

TOM Pleased to meet you, Armeda. Actually, we're not Middlegarthians. We come from a far-away place called England.

ARMEDA Not **the** England - home of the tribes of Saxony and Anglia?

TOM Well, yes, I suppose it is.

ARMEDA Well it's a pleasure to have you here. I hope you enjoy your holiday.

AMY Well, it's not exactly a holiday.....

MELISSA Actually we were looking for some elves. Well, any elves really.

(Enter Trigg, Moondag and the other elves.)

TRIGG Then you've come to the right place. Trigg, the elf king, at your service.
(He bows)

AMY You can see us! You must be supernatural.

MOONDAG That's right little girl. Elfir have many other talents, also.

TROGG Elfir can sing - and juggle - and dance.

ALEX Was that your singing we heard just now? It was beautiful.

TOM But what language did you sing in? It was enchanting.

TOSTIG That's just it, boy. A magical language. That's what we've got.

WENZEL It's called elfir and only elves understand it. It's our own talk. Just for
elves. Asur! *(He does the asur sign and giggles)*

TRIGG We have our own signs, you see. Look! Like this one *(does ebwar)*.

WENZEL It's called ebwar. Ebwar for elfir. Do you understand? It's our language.

MELISSA Well yes, I think so. It's like e for elf.

TOSTIG That's right - she got it. What a clever girl.
(All the elves make a polite round of applause.)

MOONDAG When you're in trouble - make the sign and get elf-help. It's magic you see.

WENZEL And if you alright, you do asur *(Does the sign)* Asur for o.k.

TOM *(Aside)* Well I never did! They communicate with hand-runes. How
fascinating.

TRIGG When you go away and leave elfir you make gebu. *(gebu sign)*
You need not say words. Elves can hear only sign.

AMY Wow! They can hear a hand signal?

MELISSA *(Does the sign)* Gebu. That must mean goodbye in elfir.

TROGG Do you wish to be an elf, Miss? You already understand the elfir language.

MELISSA Why, that's very kind of you but no thank you. I am too tall.

TOM I don't wish to be rude but we don't have a great deal of time. We haven't
told you why we have come here.

TRIGG No need to. Big black bird tell Trigg already.

ALEX You mean Hurog? He's been here?

TOSTIG Hurog drink at pool of Mimir under the fountain.

TOM Of course, Mimir - the fountain of wisdom. It must be where Hurog gains
his knowledge.

MELISSA Can you take us to the pool. It may help us.

TRIGG No need to, Miss. The pool right here behind you.
(They all turn and look.)

JACK Fantastic. Just look at the way the water sparkles and bubbles as if it's
alive. It - sort of - glows.

WENZEL Water tell story, boy. You listen. Water tell of great battle. Good and evil -
darkness and light.

JACK Who wins, elf? Do tell us. Please do.

MOONDAG No one win in battle, boy. People get hurt. Elves not like hurt. We mend
hurt.

TROGG Boy drink water - see for yourself.

JACK Really? Can I drink some?

TROGG You try.

TOM Not too much, Jack. It may be dangerous.

JACK *(Tasting the water)* Wow, it's fantastic. I can see really clearly. My goodness - so that's how you solve simultaneous equations. I never knew it was so easy.

ALEX Let me try. Oh no! I can see the battle. The Magworts are coming.
(The elves begin wailing and Amy covers her ears, as usual)
Elves are falling and Wodec - the mighty Wodec - falls to the ground. I see a tall black figure with a wand bending over him....

TRIGG That's Deorc, the evil one!

ALEX And, no! No, it's too horrible - I simply can't look any longer.
(The howling subsides)

TRIGG So you see, Miss, the fountain of wisdom is at once both a good thing - and a bad thing.

AMY *(Tearfully)* But, surely Wodec can't die, can he?

TRIGG It is impossible to say. You stopped looking into the pool. Who is to say what happens next. Trigg take quick gulp. *(He drinks the water)*
I see gold - fashioned into a necklet by an ancient alchemist. Gold from Mimir's pool. I see wicked sorcerer steal gold necklet. This has great power - the wearer is a powerful seer and can make big magic. Necklet shines in the sun. Ah, the sun. Sun is elfirs' friend - She turn wicked Magworts into stones.

TOM That's it! Now we know now what we must do. The source of Deorc's enormous power is the necklet from the fountain of Mimir. Without it he can be defeated - with Wodec's help. And the Magworts - we must trick them into the sunlight and they will be turned to stone.

MELISSA Tom, are you thinking what I'm thinking? Middlegarth is a northern land, isn't it? Trigg, how many hours of darkness are there at this time of the year?

TRIGG Only about three, Miss. Three hours without sunshine.

JACK And I have a torch in my pocket. It could make a useful weapon against Magworts.

ALEX Where would Jack be without his torch?

TRIGG Then our journey must begin. We take food with us for the journey and go by feet to the mountains. Tunnels begin there and elfir know the way to Hadium. We guide children all the way. We might even find little stolen elfir Kirrig.

TOM Thank you, Trigg. We could not do this without you. But what do you mean by 'stolen'?

TROGG Kirrig stolen by Magworts. She taken as servant to Hadium.

WENZEL We want her back now.

MELISSA Why the poor little elf. She must be so frightened. We'll help you find her.

TOSTIG We go on in front now to collect food. You follow soon.

TOM Alright Tostig but be careful. We wouldn't want you coming to any harm.

TOSTIG No harm, Tom boy. No harm. Gebu (*he does the sign*) and you remember -
you need us, you do ebwar for elfir. (*He does the sign. Exit elves*)
TOM Gebu, Tostig, Gebu. (*Others also do sign and exit*)

End of scene 6

Copyright © playsandsongs.com 2002

Scene 7, The Underground Kingdom of Hadium

The scene is very dimly lit with a red wash. There are several fires flickering on stage and the atmosphere is smoky. The Magworts are sitting around in groups. One group is bullying a smaller troll, pushing him around. Others are practising shape-shifting - we see an ice maiden, an angel and a warrior. Deorc is upstage, larger than life (standing on a rock) mistreating Magworts by casting spells on them and conjuring winds and thunder-claps. A little group of Magworts looks on and cheers approvingly.

- DEORC **Dweorg oþþe ent, ne ġiefan milde,
Macian esol of Magwort cilde.**
(Pronunciation: Dweyorg othe ent nay yeevan milder, Muckian ayzol ov Magwort childer)
(Translation: Dwarf or giant show no mercy, make a donkey of the Magwort child.)
- (He waves his hand and, with a flash, a young Magwort has a donkey's head. Magworts cheer and jeer.)*
- Broþor mōna ond nihtes steorran,
Sendan hira lēoht on ealdor Deorc.**
(Pronunciation: Browthor moaner and nichters stay-or-run, sendun hearer layocht on ayldor Deorc.)
(Translation: Brother moon and stars of night, send down your light on prince Deorc.)
- (There is a thunderclap and a shaft of moonlight descends onto Deorc's head.)*
- GORM Your powers are truly amazing, great wizard. There is no-one in the universe who could match them.
- GORTHROP Before long, the whole world will bow down before you and tremble at the name of DEORC, the Black Sorcerer of Hadium.
- SNORB And Middlegarth ..and Frostig...
- SNOCK And the white frozen lands of the north.
- MILDER Master, how your necklet shines - it seems to create a light of its own. It sparkles like the light of the sun.
- YUKK How would you know what the light of the sun looks like? None of us know.
- MILDER Well, I have heard it said.

DEORC This is no ordinary necklet. This was fashioned by an alchemist - from gold nuggets taken from the pool of Mimir.
(Gasps of surprise from the Magworts.)

SNOCK But master, the fountain of Mimir holds immense power of wisdom and knowledge.

DEORC Indeed and some of that power is draining into my very being through the necklet.
(More gasps of surprise.)

KRAKEN We are fortunate to have you as our friend, Mighty Deorc.

DEORC FRIEND? How dare you call me a friend you snivelling, crawling toad.
(All is hushed and the Magworts shrink back in fear of Deorc's temper.)
You are not my friends - you are my servants - all of you - and never forget it. You are in my power. I decide whether you should live or die, whether you should suffer pain or pleasure. If any drivelling Magwort so much as raises a hand towards me - I will see that you all burn slowly, like candles. They will hear your cries of pain the other side of Middlegarth.

(He points a finger aggressively at a nearby Magwort. There is a loud pop and his head flies off into the wings. The Magwort rushes off in pursuit of his head. The others creep back to their places in fear and trembling. Deorc's mood changes abruptly back to one of calm and he speaks quietly again.)

DEORC And now, my servants, for some more amusement. Bring in the elf!
(They bring in the tiny elf, Kirrig, captured in the forest of Alfheim. She is cowering and trembling with fear.)
Ah, there you - our little elfin friend.

KIRRIG Kirrig not your friend. She your enemy - and she not frightened of ugly Magworts, they stupid!
(Magworts laugh at this. Some of them surround Kirrig and start prodding her.)

DROGGLE Not afraid of us, eh? Then why are you trembling?

KIRRIG Kirrig is cold - that's why.

SNORB Then perhaps she needs to be nearer the fire...much nearer the fire. *(He laughs wickedly).* Come on, Gorthrop, help me with her.
(They drag her, struggling, towards the fire. She whimpers pathetically.)

GORTHROP Are you warmer now, little imp? Is that better?
(They hold her in front of the flames.)

DROGGLE Perhaps we should put her on the fire and roast her. What do you think, Gorm?
(Unseen, children and elves have crept into the corners of the stage.)

TRIGG I think that would be very unwise - you wicked Magwort.

The Magworts leap to their feet. Some surround Deorc to protect him and the others would attack the elves. Kirrig escapes into the wings. However,

the elves have the advantage of the element of surprise and they have split into two groups, each of which has grabbed a small Magwort. Knives are held to their throats. The other Magworts freeze in their tracks at this. Deorc laughs very loudly.

- DEORC I was not expecting visitors. Had I known, I would have prepared a better welcome for you.
- TOSTIG We're glad you didn't bother, you horrible creature. We know what that welcome would be, don't we elves?
(The elves murmur agreement)
- DEORC Now, now, little elf, that's no way to speak to your host.
- TRIGG You're not our host - you didn't invite elves - we choose to come - and we come for meeting - to make a demand.
- DEORC You - make a demand - of me! That's very funny little man. I like it.
- TRIGG I not little man, I King. King of Alfheim Elfir.
(He makes the ebwar sign. Other elves copy him.)
- DEORC Hear this Magworts - we have a king amongst us. All bow! Bow and greet the little king.
(Magworts bow mockingly and call greetings and salutations)
- TOM Enough! I say, enough!
(All goes quiet as Magworts strain to see the source of the voice in the shadows.)
- GORM Who are you? Come out and identify yourself.
(Tom comes out of the shadows)
- DEORC Well, well, well! This gets even better. A mortal from Middlegarth.
- TOM You don't know much, do you? If you are so clever, why do you not recognise my dress and realise that I am not from Middlegarth?
- MELISSA Tom, be careful! You must not anger him. *(Magworts become uneasy)*
- KRAKEN How many of you are there? Come into the light.
(The other children come out)
- JACK Oh my, Wodec was right - Magworts really are ugly.
- YUKK Wodec - he said that name - Wodec, Wodec!
- DROGGLE You are servants of that Wodec! We might have guessed.
- MILDER You have come to destroy us.
- AMY You certainly seem to be afraid of Wodec. Why, even his name makes you tremble.
(The Magworts turn to scowl at Amy. Suddenly she is not so brave and begins to cry.)
- TRIGG You will listen to our demands and obey them or Wodec will be very angry.
- DEORC And who will remind him to be angry? That puny Madog, his memory bird. I could crush those ravens any time I wanted to and where would Wodec be without them?
- WENZEL Do you value these servants of yours? We have knives at their throats.

DEORC *(Angering)* You foolish elves. Do you really think you can beat me with knives?
(He casts a spell, there is a thunderclap and the knives fly up into the air. They are caught by Magworts and the roles are reversed.)
You see. None of you can match by power. No one can.

ALEX Wodec can .. and he will ... at Ragnarok Mountain.

DEORC Ragnarok .. the final battle!

TOM We have come as Wodec's messengers. He would challenge you to a mighty battle ...

DEORC At Ragnarok! Yes, yes of course. I should have guessed. And will you be in Wodec's army? He will need all the help he can get.

TOM We will do anything Wodec asks of us. We are his obedient servants.

DEORC Ha! And when will this battle take place? We must have time to prepare.

TRIGG In three days time - at midnight.

MOONDAG And you must bring all your Magworts. If they have the courage to fight a battle.
(Many protests, shouts of indignation from the Magworts.)

GORM We will come, master. We will fight for the furtherance of evil.

DEORC Midnight, you say. Then it will be dark. Yes, the Magworts will be there.

TRIGG Now before we go - you must release Kirrig. Elfir wish to take her home.

DEORC Very well. Release the elf.

ALEX *(Aside)* That seemed too easy. He must want something in return.
(Two Magworts enter, apparently with Kirrig. She runs to the elves.)

MAGWORT *(Adopting the shape and voice of little Kirrig)*
Oh Trigg, why have you been so long. I have waited each day for you to rescue me!

TOSTIG Look out, Trigg, she has a knife.

TROGG This not Kirrig - this Magwort. Look out!
(This is not Kirrig but a Magwort who has adopted her shape. She tries to stab Trigg and before she can be dragged off by Tostig and Moondag he is slightly wounded in the shoulder.)

TRIGG Ah, Trigg is hurt. Elfir is cut by knife.

AMY Gracious - his blood is blue!

JACK Get the knife from her, quickly.
(The elves struggle with the Magwort - in and out of the wings until Kirrig shifts shape again into a Magwort and he is thrown onto the floor. Just then, the real Kirrig enters.)

KIRRIG Elfir. You come for Kirrig. Kirrig is very happy.
(They look suspiciously at Kirrig, fearing another trick. Finally, they realise this is the real Kirrig and greet her with hugs.)

DEORC Enough time-wasting. You go back to your Wodec and tell him that I look forward to destroying him in three days time - and becoming the ruler of a new order.

YUKK We want to start the fight now, Wizard. We can't wait three days.

DEORC No! It is written in the runes: the final battle must be on Ragnarok Mountain.

GORTHROP But we just want to give the elves a taste of what is to come, don't we Magworts?
(The elves are afraid and back off. The children try to protect them.)

SNORB Let's start with this one.
(They throw a small elf around. Other elves come to her aid.)

SNOCK That's it, show a bit of pluck, little people.
(Fisticuffs break out. Amy starts to cry.)

MELISSA Tom, do something. They'll all be killed.
(Tom starts to pull the Magworts off the elves but he is thrown to the floor and trampled by Magworts.)

ALEX Jack, your torch. Use it, quick.

JACK Take that, you horrible ugly wart, and that.
(Immediately, the Magworts wince with pain and cover their eyes.)

MILDER Look out! The boy has a weapon - a pocket sunbeam machine.
(Jack shines the torch at a Magworts legs.)

MAGWORT Ah, my legs. He has got my legs. They have become stone. Help me.
(Jack works his way upwards to finish the job.)

MAGWORT Ah, my arms! Help me! I am turning to.....

JACK Stone? *(Magworts disappear towards the wings)*

TOM Quickly children and elves, this is our chance to escape. Down this tunnel - quick!

DEORC *(In a booming voice)* Three days. You have three days to prepare. Ragnarok Mountain...at midnight.

KIRRIG *(Somehow left behind)* Wait for me...wait for me..... *(She exits)*
(Amy wanders across the stage looking lost and not knowing which way to turn. She is sobbing. She does the ebwar sign. Kirrig reappears and makes the ebwar sign.)
No tiwar, Amy. No need for tiwar. *(making the tiwar sign)*
Everything asur. *(Makes the asur sign)*
(Kirrig takes Amy by the hand and leads her off.)

End of scene 7

Copyright © playsandsongs.com 2002

Scene 8, On Ragnarok Mountain

It is midnight and the mountainside is desolate and deserted. There are rocks and boulders strewn around and there is a pale pink glow in the sky. Foreboding music plays in the background. Wodec is standing on one side. After a pause he raises his hands and brings them together in a grand ebwar gesture. An animal horn sounds in the distance, the elves and children appear and form a semi-circle behind him. The ice warrior maidens march on and form a second rank behind the elves. After a brief pause, Deorc appears on the opposite side (to gasps of fear from the elves) and his Magworts form up behind him. There is a long pause before Wodec speaks. The music becomes softer.

WODEC And so we meet again, my former pupil.
DEORC Greetings and salutations, my challenger for supremacy.
WODEC You were a good pupil Deorc, but always too headstrong - and lacking in moral judgement.
DEORC I'm surprised you remember my name without your raven to remind you.
WODEC I may be old, and a little short on memory, but I'm not ready to perish just yet, Deorc. I have a responsibility to protect the universe from wrong-doers and wicked men who have gone astray and abuse the power that they hold, rather than use it for the good of mankind. You are a disgrace to the name of wizardry.
DEORC Don't lecture me, high and mighty Wodec. Who is to say that you are right and I wrong. Good and evil only exist relative to one-another and it is a matter of opinion which path should best be taken.
WODEC There is but one thing I failed to teach you when you were my apprentice. It is all very well to learn powerful spells, charms and chants but you must also learn when to use them. There is a universal law which demands that good will always prevail in the end. It is only a matter of time.
DEORC Wodec, prepare to give up your crown. In the chaos of disorder which must follow, darkness will rule and I, Deorc, will reign supreme. There is no place for you in the new order. It is time! Let the battle commence.
(The horn sounds again. The Magworts step forward menacingly and start to jostle the elves. Several elves are carried off. Tom picks a large Magwort and grapples with him, throwing him to the ground. Meanwhile, Wodec is chanting.)
WODEC **Hideous blankimus shroudionum obscurum,**
 Conciliatum luminae negrus inperceptum.
(A mist appears and partially obscures the Magworts.)
 Stop this fighting! Stop it, I say!
(They continue. Wodec raises his hand and, with an almighty crash of thunder, everyone except himself, Deorc and the children freeze on his words:)
 IN EXTREMIS PETRIFICAMUS!

JACK Wow! Look at them! They are all frozen.
 MELISSA Yes, but it didn't work on us, did it?
 DEORC If you wish to make this a personal battle between the two of us, then so be it!
 WODEC Children. Withdraw at once!
 ALEX But, Wodec....
 WODEC Do as I say at once! *(The children draw back)*
 DEORC Wodec, you leave me no choice.

Ligræsc ond ðonorrad.

*(Liy-rash and thonnor-rad. (Lightning-flash and thunder)
 (He levels his wand at Wodec and there is a huge flash. Amy covers her ears and cowers. Wodec is knocked off balance but recovers and creates an even bigger flash, aimed at Deorc. Deorc is thrown onto his back, stunned. As he lies there, Tom cuts the necklet loose from Deorc's neck and throws it to Wodec. As Deorc recovers he utters the reverse petrification spell:)*

TOTALIS ANIMATUM

(All the frozen characters on stage come to life. Just then the pale pink glow increases as the rising sun appears on the far horizon. The Magworts cry out in horror.)

GORM No, no, it cannot be! The sun is rising so early. We have been tricked!
(At first the Magworts are frozen by terror, then they start to run off but their legs are already heavy and they move in slow motion.)
 JACK Look! It's working. The Magworts are turning to stone...
 KRAKEN Help! Deorc, help us ...the sun...
 GORTHROP My legs...I can't move my legs. Help me!
(The Magworts are still struggling to find some shelter from the dawn twilight. Some are now crawling off and dragging themselves into the wings.)
 MILDER Deorc, don't allow us to die. Do something.
(Deorc, still on the ground, attempts a re-animating charm but his words are faltering and the chant is feeble.)
 DEORC T..t... totalis...a..ani..matum...
(Nothing happens.)
 SNORB Help! Deorc, help us! *(The Magworts all expire or crawl off)*
(Deorc draws himself up and gathers all his strength to utter a final spell.)
 KIRRIG Look out, Wodec! He is going to attack you.
 WODEC Have no fear, little one, his powers are on the wane. It just needs an evaporation charm from me and my work is done.
 Diabolis vaporisium dissipatum.
(Deorc disappears in a flash and cloud of smoke.)
 ALEX Hooray! Wodec, you did it, you did it. He's gone .. for ever.
(The elves cheer wildly. Jack is inspecting what is left of the Magworts.)

JACK Hey, Melissa! Do you think Mum would like one of these next to our garden pond?
(He half lifts a stiff Magwort and lets it drop again.)

AMY No way! I don't want to look at that every morning when I open my curtains.
(Enter the warriors of Middlegarth, led by King Gunther.)

GUNTHER Stand back everybody we'll take care of this. Bloody battles are our speciality.
(The warriors notice Wodec and bow deeply.)
 My Lord, forgive me, I did not know you were present.

WODEC Think nothing of it young man.

TOM King Gunther! I'm afraid you're too late. Deorc and his servants have been defeated.

SIEGFRIED *(Searching around)* Where is he? Where is the Black Lord?

WODEC Tom, you're forgetting that they can't see or hear you.

SIEGFRIED My name's Siegfried, not Tom. And who can't see or hear us?

TRIGG The children, of course. Without them we could never have defeated Deorc.

GUNTHER Deorc defeated? What on earth do you mean?

HENRIK And which children? Have you all gone mad?

WODEC *(With a wave of the hand)* Humanis Temporarum Visibilium.
(In a flash the children become visible to the warriors.)

GUNTHER What the devil? Where did you come from.

AMY We were here all the time. You just couldn't see us.
(Enter Freya and Gudrun.)

MELISSA *(Rushing to greet Freya)* Oh Freya, I'm so sorry we were not able to help you before, but perhaps now we can. *(Freya looks confused)*

ALEX It's alright, Freya. They can all see us now.

SIEGFRIED What's this? You know one-another? Have I been missing something here?

INGRID *(Stepping forward)* Fear not Siegfried. Some matters are just beyond the understanding of mere mortals. *(Wodec laughs loudly at this)*
(There is a trumpet blast. Enter Hermod, the messenger.)

HERMOD My Lords *(looking around)*, ladies, elves and children, forgive the intrusion but I have news of the dragon. *(Gasps from the crowd)*

ALEX With all the excitement, we had quite forgotten about Grundig.

INGRID About whom?

ALEX The dragon. That's his name, Grundig.

HERMOD *(To Gunther)* My Liege, the dragon has been captured - by Sigmund.
(Great cheers and rejoicing from the crowd.)

HERMOD A short while ago a warrior band, led by Sigmund, set out to kill the dragon. From the edge of the wood they observed a curious sight. The dragon was shrinking!

GUNTHER Shrinking?

HERMOD Yes, my lord, shrinking.

GUDRUN Have you ever heard of a shrinking dragon?

WODEC This is only to be expected. The dragon drew its power from Deorc. Since the demise of Deorc its magical power will be diminishing.

GUSTAV Look - it's Sigmund - and he has the dragon with him.
(All rush to get a glimpse of the dragon. Enter Sigmund with the dragon. Elves react.)

ELVES *(Fearfully)* Draca! Draca!

ALEX What a cute little dragon. Hello Grundig! Can I stroke him, Sigmund?
(She puts out her hand and the dragon snaps at it. All laugh at this.)

SIGMUND I'm afraid I have not had time to train him yet. Now, if I might be so bold, my liege.
Now I have defeated the dragon, I have come to claim your daughter's hand in marriage.

JACK Just her hand? What about the rest of her? *(laughter at this)*

GUNTHER Son, you shall have a wedding ... and it shall be today. *(Wild cheers)*
Everyone is invited to the wedding. You children as well. And if my Lord Wodec would be gracious enough to bless us with his presence. We would be most honoured.

WODEC Why, that's most generous of you young man but I'm afraid I have some business to attend to. I have a duty to defeat the powers of darkness.

MAROG You've just done that, Wodec. Deorc's dead, remember?

WODEC Oh, of course, how foolish of me. Then I shall be delighted to attend.

TOM *Ahem!* I'm truly sorry folks but, now our task is accomplished, we really must be getting home to tea.

JACK Tom, don't be a spoilsport!

MELISSA Tom's right, Jack. By now we will have been missed and there will be search parties out looking for us.

AMY Hey, look everyone! This boulder - it has the inscription on it that we found in the book. You know - the magic spell.

ALEX Wow! It must be the Ragna Rock! No wonder they couldn't find it in Norway!

TOM Wodec we need to know how to return home. The reverse charm.

WODEC That's easy. It's simply the same spell in reverse. I'll do it for you, if I can remember it. *(He starts the chant)* **Fram drýlican eorðrice**

MELISSA No wait! First we would like to say goodbye to all our friends.

CHILDREN Goodbye everyone.
(They shake hands with as many people as they can)

AMY Gebu elves *(She makes the sign and the other children join in)*

ELVES Gebu, gebu! *(Doing the sign as they speak)*

JACK What about Freya?

TOM Freya, I must warn you that the world has changed in the century since you vanished. If you come back with us, you would not recognise your old village - and, of course, your family are long dead.

FREYA *(Freya sniffs back tears)* Wodec, can I please stay? This is my home now.

WODEC Of course you may. Gunther and Gudrun can be your family now as I'm sure the newly wedded couple will have need of a house-maid.

FREYA Thank you, Wodec. *(She curtseys)*

TOM Wodec, we're ready now. The chant!
(All step back except the children. Kirrig runs forward and hugs Amy. Amy cries.)

KIRRIG Kirrig say gebu Amy. *(She makes the sign and Amy copies, sobbing. Secretly, Kirrig slips Deorc's gold necklet into Amy's hand as a farewell gift)*

WODEC **Fram drýlican corðriçe ic gefare þurh blæst ond regn.** *(spoken three times)*
(There is an enormous explosion and the children are back in the library.)

MELISSA It worked! Hooray! It worked! We're home at last.
(They all collapse in a heap, exhausted, except Alex who goes to fetch the book.)

TOM Don't even think about it, Alex. You can't go back.

ALEX Why not. At least it's not boring in Middlegarth like it is here.

JACK I'm starving! What's the time, Tom?

TOM I don't believe it! This can't be right. The library clock says it's half past four.

AMY So does my watch, and it's never wrong.

TOM This means that we never lost any real time even though we were in Middlegarth for days.

JACK I don't understand. It doesn't make sense.

VOICE, LIB Your five minutes are over now, children. Run along now, please.

JACK Then it's true! I could almost believe we imagined the whole adventure.

MELISSA Amy, what have you got behind your back?

AMY *(Turning away)* Nothing, Melissa. Nothing at all.
(Jack snatches the necklet from her.)

JACK Oh well, if it's nothing you won't mind me having it, will you?

AMY No, Jack! That's not fair!

TOM Amy, that's Deorc's necklet from the fountain of Mimir. Surely you didn't steal it?

AMY Course not! Kirrig gave it to me before we left.

TOM But, it was not hers to give, Amy.

MELISSA It can't do any harm now, can it, Tom. And it will serve as a souvenir of our adventure in Middlegarth. Give it back to her, Jack.
(He does as he is told)

AMY Listen!

ALEX What? I can't hear anything except that silly librarian hurrying us along.

AMY I can hear the elves song - in the distance.
(SFX of singing)

TOM You're right, Amy. It must be the power of the necklet. It can work magic even here in England.

MELISSA How simply wonderful. It must be unlocking our memories of Middlegarth.

VOICE, LIB Time children! Library's closed now.

ALEX Tom! You are still wearing Wodec's dragon-tooth talisman around your neck!

TOM My goodness! And he said it had brought him good luck for seven hundred and fifty-three years.

AMY It certainly brought us luck, too.

JACK And he asked you to return it when you got back from Hadium.

TOM Then return it I shall...someday.
(Exit children. Amy leaves last, clutching the amulet. She makes the gebu sign to the audience as she exits.)

AMY *(Off-stage)* Can we, Tom? Can we really go back?

SFX Elves singing.

The End

Copyright © playsandsongs.com 2002