

The Battle for Ragnarok Mountain

A play for Children

By David Barrett

The Third Play of the Middleearth Trilogy

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The Battle for Ragnarok Mountain - Dramatis Personae

Tom, 15
Melissa, 14
Alex, 13
Jack, 12
Amy 11

Wodek, the grand white wizard
Oswald, a white wizard
Slogg, the Magwort servant
Marog, raven of memory
Hurog, raven of knowledge

The Forest Elves of Alfheim:

Trigg
Moondag
Tostig
Wenzel
Harkrugg
Kirrig
Aramas

The Harmgots (Dark Elves of Dunkelheim)

Slagffinn
Fenris
Aslagg
Fafnir
Bogg
Frigg

The Borger-Elfir (Mountain-Elves of Mimir)

Bolderis
Magnus
Holder
Heldof
Runis
Magentis

Mortals:

King Sigmund
Queen Gudrun
Olrun
Bjorn, Ulrika – two human slaves of the Harmgots

Scene 1, The Old Library

The scene opens on the children searching for the book of myths in the library.

Kirrig has her ears covered with a large woolly hat. They are making rather a lot of noise.

MELISSA Jack, do be quiet! You'll get us thrown out of here. And do stop kicking that ball of paper around. Why do you have to kick things all the time?

ALEX Because he's a boy – that's why. That's what boys do. They're so boring!

TOM Why don't you come and help us find the big book of myths, Jack? The sooner we find it, the sooner we'll get back to Middlegarth again.

LIBRARIAN *(Off-stage)* Silence! Silence must be observed in the library!

MELISSA *(In a whisper)* I told you to be quiet, didn't I? You'll get us thrown out.

(Tom continues the search for the book. Amy snatches the hat from Kirrig's head and Kirrig squeals with delight as she chases Amy around the room dodging in and out of the other children. Jack continues to kick the paper ball around.)

MELISSA Aha! Here's the book, Tom, but where do I find the chant?

TOM It should be on a loose piece of paper. Do you remember, last time we searched for it it had been torn out by Alex to prevent us following her back to Middlegarth?

ALEX I put it back in the book afterwards though, Tom. Honest, I did.

JACK *(Pausing his game momentarily)* Oh that's great! It's probably lost for good then.

ALEX It's not my fault is it? I tucked it in the back of the book.

MELISSA Well it's not here now.
(Speaking animatedly now.)

JACK You stupid girl! This is all your fault.
(Enter the librarian. Amy quickly runs in front of Kirrig to hide her elfish ears. The librarian has already noticed them and tries to peer round behind Amy as she speaks.)

LIBRARIAN Now, children, this is your last warning. I must remind you that libraries are quiet places. People come here to read and study, and they do not wish to be disturbed by your shrill voices and boisterous games. If you wish to play games, go to the playground. Now – have I made myself clear?

CHILDREN Yes, Miss!

LIBRARIAN Now, you may stay if you intend to read quietly.

AMY Thank you, Miss.
(The librarian peers at Kirrig over her spectacles as she exits.)

MELISSA Phew, that was close. Kirrig, put your hat back on at once! I'm sure she noticed your ears.

TOM Jack, pick up that paper ball. That's enough football. You'll get us chucked out if you're not careful.
(Jack picks up the paper and begins to unravel it.)

JACK Hey, do look at this everyone. Do you recognise the print?

ALEX It's the missing page with the chant.

AMY Hooray! Kirrig will be able to go home now. I will miss her though.

MELISSA We all will, Amy.

KIRRIG Kirrig not wish to go home. She want to stay here with Amy. This Kirrig's home now.

TOM We know you want to stay here, Kirrig, but we really must return you to your own folk in the forest.

KIRRIG Kirrig frightened to go back. Too many wicked creatures in Middlegarth. None here in your world – except big dogs that bark. They frighten Kirrig.

MELISSA Don't be anxious, Kirrig. We'll go with you to see you safely home. We'll see that you don't come to any harm.

KIRRIG What about wicked Magworts? They steal Kirrig and make her slave.

JACK The Magworts are all dead, Kirrig. Don't you remember? We tricked them and turned them all to stone. That was incredible! I'd like to do it again.

TOM Oh do be quiet, Jack. You'll make her even more frightened.

ALEX Let's get on with it! I'm getting bored.

MELISSA Alright everybody, form a circle and hold hands.

JACK Not this again – holding hands with girls – Yuk!

ALEX Don't be silly, Jack, or I'll slap your face! *(Jack pouts.)*

AMY Tom, I'm frightened. It seems as though every time we go to Middlegarth we encounter a greater evil. First, the Magworts, then the Glumworts and ... what next?

TOM Be brave, Amy. We must do this for the sake of our friend, Kirrig. We cannot leave her in our world for ever. She does not belong here any more than we do in her world.

AMY I suppose you're right, Tom, but I'm still frightened all the same.

TOM Hold hands, everyone and be ready for the chant. Lets practise it now:
(Reading from the piece of paper)
þurh blāst ond regn...

ALL **þurh blāst ond regn...**

TOM **ic ġefare in drylican eorðricc.**

ALL **ic ġefare in drylican eorðricc.**

*[Through wind and rain into the magical earthly kingdom I go.
 Old English pronunciation guide:
 Thurch blast and rayn itch yefare in drewleechun airthreacher.]*

KIRRIG *(Slipping out of the ring)* No, no! Kirrig not want to go. Kirrig stay here.

MELISSA *(In a kindly voice)* Kirrig, be brave, we must go now. Now come back into the ring, here, between Tom and me.
Kirrig obeys her and Melissa and Tom hold Kirrig firmly by the wrists. As they chant she tries to slip away again but she is held too tightly to break free.

TOM Together everyone – the chant, just as we practised it.

ALL **þurh blāst ond regn ic ġefare in drylican eorðricc. (Three times)**

On the second time the stage goes dim and we hear Kirrig and Amy screaming. In this distance the sound of the librarian's voice calling for silence can be heard. On the third time there is a loud sound effect of thunder and a huge flash of light. The stage blacks out and the children disappear.

End of Scene

Scene 2, The Forest of Alfheim

It is twilight in the forest and all is eerily still. The sound of birds flying off to roost can be heard in the distance and hoot of an early owl. Enter the children. Amy appears frightened and Kirrig is sulking.

- JACK *(In a hushed voice, as if trying not to wake a sleeping child)*
Where is everyone then? I've never seen the forest so quiet and still. It's uncanny.
- ALEX
Perhaps they are all asleep.
- MELISSA
That's not very likely, Alex. The elves are always on their guard.
- TOM
Why don't you ask Kirrig to call them?
- ALEX
That's no good - she's sulking. Girls are so boring when they sulk.
- JACK
Hear, hear!
- AMY
Kirrig, please don't be in a mood with us. We had to bring you home, you know that.
- KIRRIG
Kirrig lives with you now – not here in forest.
- JACK
Yooahoo! Elves, where are you? It's me, Jack, and the others.
- MELISSA
Jack, do be quiet! You'll wake the whole forest!
- AMY
I know – the handsigns. We can call the elves silently with the handsigns. Now, let me see! If I do ebwar and asur they will know that we are calling them and that it is safe to come out.
(She makes the ebwar and asur signs and the others copy them, except Kirrig, who is still sulking. Harkrugg slips out from behind a tree.)
- HARKRUGG
Kirrig! Little elf Kirrig. Where on earth have you been all these years? We thought you had been stolen from us again. *(Other elves appear silently from various hiding places)*
- MOONDAG
Kirrig, you've come home at last – and Tom, Melissa, Alex, Amy and Jack. How good to see you again. *(One by one the elves hug Kirrig)*
- TOM
Hello, Moondag! I'm afraid it's our fault you've been missing Kirrig. She got caught up in our transportation spell but we returned with her as soon as we were able.
- MELISSA
You see, she stepped into the ring when we chanted the spell to return home and she was transported with us.
- TRIGG
We searched the whole forest. We knew you were sad because your friends went away, Kirrig. But we could not find you anywhere.

KIRRIG Kirrig not want to come back. Kirrig happy at home with children! But Kirrig missed elfir friends and glad to see you again.

TOSTIG These are not happy times in Alfheim, Kirrig. Elves live in fear.

JACK But how can this be? The Magworts and the sorcerer Lokki threatened you – and we helped destroy them.

ALEX Yes, and then it was the Glumworts. We sorted them out good and proper.

JACK Yeah!

AMY What further bad luck could possibly befall you?

WENZEL The elves have a saying that bad things happen in threes.

MOONDAG And that the third thing is always the worst of all.

TOSTIG This is certainly true for us. Our forest and our lives are threatened greatly by the most evil danger of all.

TRIGG The Dark Elves of Dunkelheim.

HARKRUGG The fallen elves – the lowest form of life in this world.

KIRRIG Kirrig knows the legend of the Dark Elves – but surely it is legend only?

WENZEL Not so, little Kirrig. These elves are real and are descendants of a band of Borger Elfir or Mountain Elves. That most evil sorcerer, Lord Lokki, bewitched them for a punishment when they would not obey him.

TRIGG His magic drew all the good out of them and replaced it with pure evil.

MOONDAG They show no mercy...

HARKRUGG No compassion...

TOSTIG No respect for others ...

WENZEL They crush any being who crosses their path.

MELISSA Oh my goodness!

HARKRUGG They are swift as the wind...

TOSTIG Silent as snow falling...

TRIGG And ruthless as a striking cobra... *(Jack mimes cobra strike with his hand)*

WENZEL Yet, more deadly.

TOM I too have heard this legend – of these vile creatures, known as Harmgots. *(Elves gasp in horror at the name, which they would never utter. The children look surprised at their reaction.)*

TRIGG Please forgive us, but we can never bear to call them by name.

MELISSA It's alright, Trigg, we understand.

TOM These creatures have immense power, given them by the dark lord. Even he was afraid that he could not control them and he banished them to the northern realm of Dunkelheim – the region of perpetual darkness. There they multiplied and bided their days until a chance came to strike out at mankind.

JACK Then, you mean, when Wodek, the great white wizard, defeated Lokki, with our help, the might of the Harmgots (*Reaction from the elves at the word*) was unleashed on the world.

TRIGG Exactly, Jack.

TOM Then we have arrived at the right moment. I believe fate has a hand in this.

ALEX What on earth do you mean, Tom?

TOM Well, this is our third visit to Middlegarth, is it not?

ALEX Well, yes.

TOM And on each of the two previous occasions there has been some imminent danger threatening our friends in Middlegarth and we have been able to help – albeit in a small way.

MELISSA I see what you mean, Tom. And you think our arrival at this very moment did not happen by chance – but was perhaps ordained by some higher authority.

TOM Exactly!

JACK Then we should hold a council of war and vow to crush the might of the Harmgots (*reaction*) – for good.

WENZEL But, but Tom, it may not be that easy.

TOM Come, Wenzel – we need the facts. Let's sit down over here.
(Tom, Alex, Jack and Melissa withdraw to one side and sit with the elves. Meanwhile Amy and Kirrig play hide and seek around some trees. During the following dialogue, two Harmgots appear while Kirrig is hiding and carry Amy silently off. They are dressed in the usual all-black costume of the Harmgots.)
 Now, how many of these Dark Elves do you think there are.

WENZEL We simply do not know, Tom, but they appear to be everywhere. Their emblem is all over Ragnarok Mountain and even on some of the trees at the edge of the forest. They seem to get closer each day.

JACK What is this emblem? How will we recognise it when we see it?

TOSTIG It is a hateful sign. It strikes fear into the hearts of elves like us.

MOONDAG Their sign is a broken ring – the broken elfin ring – (*Tracing the sign in the dust*) combined with kenaz, the rune of fire. It symbolises the importance of fire to the

fallen elves. They keep a perpetual fire burning in their kingdom of Dunkelheim as a symbol of their power and to break the permanent darkness of the place.

(Enter Kirrig in a state of alarm.)

KIRRIG Moondag, Amy is gone. Please help Kirrig find her.

ALEX Kirrig go away! You can see we're discussing important things here. We do not wish to play hide and seek with you and Amy.

KIRRIG But, Alex, Amy is gone!

JACK Clear off Kirrig. *(Kirrig exits crying)*

MELISSA Do they have a weakness that can be exploited.

HARKRUGG Not that we know of.

ALEX Is there nothing they fear, no weapon which may be used against them.

HARKRUGG Nothing at all.

TOM Hm, this is clearly not going to be easy. What powers do the Dark Elves possess?

WENZEL The worst sort of magic – bewitchment. If a Dark Elf stares at an elf or a human in the eye the victim goes into a state of trance and is enslaved. After three days, if the spell is not broken, petrification follows.

MELISSA You mean

TOM That's right Melissa – the victim turns to stone, just like the Magworts on Ragnarok Mountain.

TRIGG Worse still, the dark elf draws the life force from the victim and increases in power and wisdom.

MELISSA This is terrible!

TRIGG They have slowly been destroying the mortals in Middlegarth and any poor elves who have got in their way.

TOM Those poor people!

MELISSA There must be someone who can help us. How about Wodek?

TOSTIG Certainly, Wodek may be able to help but there are some nearer here who know more about the Dark Elves than any one alive.

TOM Who, Tostig? Do tell us!

TOSTIG The Borger Elfir.

TOM Of course, the Borger Elfir – the mountain elves.

HARKRUGG They felt very vulnerable on Ragnarok Mountain when the Dark Elves came south so they have retreated into the forest for safety.

MOON Their camp is right by the pool of Mimir. I have heard that they are planning to counter-attack. They are not so peaceful as we elves of the forest.

TOM Good, then we must go to meet them as soon as possible and draw up a plan to defeat these Harmgots (*Elves react*).

MOON Wenzel has seen them. He says they can drink the waters of the fountain without ill effects. This gives them great wisdom – but only for a day until the effects wear off.

HARK I am sure they will help you.
(*Enter Kirrig in alarm.*)

KIRRIG Help Kirrig, help her – please.

MELISSA Why, what on earth is it, Kirrig?

KIRRIG It is Amy, she has been stolen!

ALEX What on earth do you mean? Is this another of your little games, Kirrig?

MELISSA Don't be silly, Alex, you can see she's upset.

KIRRIG Elfir guards saw two Dark Elves running through forest. They carry a bundle with them.
(*Fearful reaction from elves.*)
They have Amy. They stole Amy.

MELISSA (*Leaping to her feet, horrified*) Kirrig, are you sure?

KIRRIG Kirrig very sure.

TOM Then we have no time to lose. Kirrig, you stay here. Tostig, please will you guide us to the Borger Elfir, I'm not sure I remember the way to the pool of Mimir from here.

TOSTIG Certainly!

KIRRIG Kirrig come too. Kirrig help find Amy.

TOM Oh, very well.

TRIGG May the luck of the Forest Elfir follow you on your way through the forest. We help you again soon, Tom. Come back to us.

TOM Very well, Trigg. Thank you.
(*The elves do the ebwar sign as the children and Tostig exit. Alex and Jack exit last.*)

ALEX Wait for us, Tom! Wait for us!

End of Scene

Scene 3, By the Fountain of Mimir

All is peaceful by the fountain in the bright moonlight. The sounds of water splashing can be heard faintly in the background. Borger Elfir are sitting around resting and making their plans to attack the Harmgots. Their style of dress is different from the Forest Elves but there is no hint of any black. Their only weapons are wooden staves.

RUNIS I say we must bide our time, observe the enemy and try to discover their weakness.

HELDOF And I say you're wrong, Runis! We should attack at once.

HOLDER That's your trouble isn't it, Heldof? You always rush into things without thinking them through first. That's why Runis is our leader and not you. He is a thinker and a great planner.

RUNIS Thank you, Holder. You have made your feelings plain. Now, what about the rest of you? Are you in favour of an immediate attack – or do you wish to plan what might be our only move carefully?

MAGNUS We're with you, Runis.

OTHERS Yes, we plan the attack carefully (*and other such utterances*).

HOLDER What does Bolderis think? He is very quiet on the subject.

MAGNUS Leave him alone, Holder, you know he's lovesick.

RUNIS It is one thing to be in love, Magnus, and quite another to have the object of your affections snatched from you by the evil Harmgots.

HELDOF Don't worry, Bolderis, we'll rescue your precious Magentis from the clutches of the Harmgots – **sooner or later!**

BOLDERIS Thank you Heldof. I only hope she is yet alive and not under their wicked spell. I believe we will only have the one chance to attack the Harmgots. They do not expect to be attacked. No-one has **ever** attacked them. We must use that chance wisely or we will all be destroyed.

RUNIS Wise words Bolderis. One day you will make a great leader.
(The sounds of movement in the undergrowth are heard. The elves spring to their feet as Tom, Melissa, Alex, Jack, Tostig and Kirrig enter. In panic, Heldof attacks Tom from behind, holding his stave across Tom's throat and choking him.)

HELDOF We are being attacked. Quickly, grab the others.
(Magnus and Holder move to restrain Melissa and Jack. Kirrig screams loudly.)

KIRRIG Help! It's the Dark Elves. Help us! Do not look into their eyes.

RUNIS Stop at once – all of you. Release them immediately. *(They do so, Heldof reluctantly)*

You fool, Heldof. You can see the little one is one of us – and these others – they are no Harmgots. *(Kirrig winces at the word. Heldof glares at the children)*

HOLDER Sorry, Runis, but I guess this is what happens if we fight without first thinking. *(The children relax and dust themselves off. Tom rubs hi neck.)*

RUNIS I am Runis, and I am the leader here. Fear not little elf – we are no Harmgots. On behalf of the Borger Elfir, may I please apologise for the rough welcome. Now, I wonder what it is that brings you to the pool of Mimir at this late hour.

TOSTIG I bring greetings, Runis, from your brothers, the Forest Elves. Trigg sends his felicitations.

(Runis bows deeply and the others copy him, except Heldof who scowls and turns his back)

I am Tostig and this is Kirrig *(she bows)*. Allow me to introduce my mortal friends Tom, Melissa, Alex and Jack.

TOM Without further ado, Runis, I would like to tell you that we intend to defeat the Harmgots and we would like to ask you for your help.

(Heldof laughs scornfully)

HELDOF And what sort of magic do you possess that makes you able to compete with the enormous power of the Harmgots?

TOM We possess courage, intelligence, a fighting spirit and, above all, the knowledge that good will prevail over evil.

RUNIS Very well spoken, young man. I admire your courage.

HELDOF Courage is but a start. You are a boy. You surely have no experience of the brutality of combat – especially against such an evil power as the Harmgots.

JACK Bloomin’ cheek. Who does he think he is?

MELISSA Well, how about the Magworts for a start? They were pretty evil. We sorted them out.

ALEX And what about the Glumworts? You can’t get much more wicked than them. We saw them off – for good!

HELDOF But...but...surely....

RUNIS I think the children have made their point very admirably, Heldof. Don’t you?

BOLDERIS Then...then you must be ... **the** children from the other world, the fremder whose names are written into the legends of Middlegarth and passed down from one generation to another.

JACK Wow! We're famous! Wait 'til I tell my friends at school.

ALEX Do shut up, Jack!

BOLDERIS Then there is hope. We can still defeat the Harmgots yet. And I may yet be re-united with my precious Magentis.

HOLDER *(Aside to the children)* His elfin sweetheart.

RUNIS Your arrival is surely a sign – a good omen.

HELDOF But what of the other, more powerful signs: the portents of doom. They cannot surely be dismissed.

MELISSA Please explain, Heldof. What are these signs?

MAGNUS *(In a quiet voice and with an air of mystery, as if quoting from a book.)*
Owls that fly by day; the moon's shadow blocking out the sun at midday; Branstock dropping his leaves as described in the Ode to Branstock; the spring of Mimir beginning to run dry. These, according to legend, are the portents of doom. They warn of the approach of a mighty battle: the last battle at Ragnarok.
(All is silent for a while as everyone considers the meaning of the signs.)

TOM But the meaning of the signs is open to interpretation. If there is to be a battle, that does not mean we will lose it, does it.

ALEX And these portents may spell doom for the Harmgots – not for us.

MELISSA You have to believe that you can control your own destiny. If your will is strong enough you will succeed.

RUNIS Your words are very wise, young lady. I can see we have much to learn from you. Not least of all humility, Heldof, and patience.

TOM And we too can learn from you – and this is why we have come to you for your help. Runis, our experience with the Magworts and Glumworts has shown us that evil beings always have a weakness. If we can only discover a weakness in the Harmgots and exploit it then we may be able to defeat them.

HELDOF But they seem to have no weakness.

BOLDERIS Let's just say that we have yet to discover it.

JACK That's the spirit, Bolderis.

RUNIS I have often thought that sometimes a strength can also be a weakness.

MAGNUS Runis, you speak in riddles. Explain your thoughts.

RUNIS Well, what would you say is the greatest strength of the Harmgots? What is it that we are the most fearful of?

TOSTIG The power to bewitch and petrify.

RUNIS Exactly, Tostig. And if we were able to strip the Harmgots of that power? What then?

HELDOF Impossible!

BOLDERIS Why, they would be no more powerful than the ordinary mountain elves they are descended from. But how could this be achieved?

TOSTIG We do not have enough magic to bring this about – but, just supposing.....

KIRRIG What, Tostig? What is it?

TOSTIG Supposing we were able to send the Harmgots, or lure them, to a place where their powers were useless.

BOLDERIS But is there such a place?

RUNIS I know of a place where time and magical powers are suspended and all beings are equal.

TOSTIG Of course, the Grinkengap. The endless void in which a person can become suspended for ever.

RUNIS If we could lure the Harmgots into the Grinkengap, they would remain suspended in the void for all eternity and would be powerless to cause any harm to anyone.

TOM What a brilliant idea, Runis. You must have been drinking the waters of the spring of Mimir to have thought of that. But how could it be done?

HOLDER There is but one way. Between the kingdoms of Middlegarth and Aysgarth, at the foot of Ragnarok Mountain lies a bridge – the bridge of Korangar. The bridge crosses a chasm which constitutes the only physical portal into the Grinkengap. Travellers are very wary when crossing the bridge as one slip would spell doom.

BOLDERIS A fate worse than death. If they fell, they would be condemned to float in the void of nothingness for all eternity.

JACK Wow!

ALEX *(Sarcastically)* Oh great! We'll just invite the Harmgots to cross the bridge and throw them one by one into the Grinkengap. Of course all that must be done without looking at them, or else we become bewitched.

RUNIS That will not be necessary, Alex. You see, the bridge is but an illusion created by magic. Back in the mists of time five great wizards created it as a means of crossing from Middlegarth to Aysgarth. Each one generated a powerful spell of earth, air, fire

and water and the spells were simultaneously chanted and interwoven to form a bridge.

TOM So if we could reverse the spells we could unravel the bridge and cast the Harmgots into the Grinkengap.

HELDOF You have to get them to cross the bridge first.

HOLDER That should not be so difficult. The Harmgots have long been threatened by the mighty power of the great white wizard, Wodek. While he lives they can never reign supreme. We know they would like to defeat him and are biding their time until a chance should come. They could be lured into Aysgarth by a false story of a wane in Wodek's power – a temporary weakness.

TOM But how do we find out the spells?

RUNIS The spells are concealed on five tablets of stone which the sorcerers concealed around the kingdom. No living person knows the whereabouts of the stones.

ALEX That's the end of that idea then.

RUNIS Not so! Each wizard composed a riddle which, when solved, gives the exact location of the stone containing his inscription. All five riddles are recorded in a book called the Book of Secrets.

MELISSA But who keeps the book?

RUNIS Only one of the five wizards has survived the ravages of time – and he has become the all-powerful great white wizard.

ALEX Wodek!

RUNIS That is correct, Alex.

TOM Then we must go to Castle Valaholm in the kingdom of Aysgarth and ask Wodek to show us the book.

HELDOF Beware of the powers you may be unleashing if you discover the spells!

TOSTIG Power is a useful tool in the correct hands, Heldof. It is only dangerous if it falls into the wrong hands.

TOM Then this is what we must do. In case any of us are captured we must ensure that no one person should know more than one riddle. I propose that a group of us go to Wodek's castle to find out the riddles. Each of us will learn only one of them. Then, each person will enlist others to help him solve his one fifth part of the jigsaw and go in search of the inscription.

TOSTIG Excellent idea, Tom.

TOM Finally, we will meet at the Bridge of Korangar at the appointed time for the last battle.

ALEX Hooray for Tom! He has worked out the whole plan.

RUNIS I agree with this and suggest that the group leave for Castle Valaholm without delay. If we are to save Magentis and Amy, time is of the essence. I appoint these as the group: Tostig, Holder, Tom, Bolderis, Melissa, Jack and

(Jack throughout this speech ALEX has been pointing to herself, hoping to be chosen) Heldof.

ALEX That's not fair! What about me and Magnus? Why can't we go?

RUNIS There are other important matters to attend to here, Alex.

ALEX Like what?

TOSTIG We still have to devise a plan to lure the Harmgots to the attack at the bridge.

ALEX That's easy! We let it be known that Wodek is sick and perhaps dying.

KIRRIG Oh no! Poor Wodek.

JACK Not really, Kirrig, it's just a trick.

ALEX The Harmgots won't be able to resist the temptation to cross into Aysgarth and challenge Wodek while he is weak.

JACK But how will we spread the rumour, Alex?

ALEX How do tribes communicate across vast distances in the African bush, Jack?

JACK With jungle drums, of course.

ALEX What special way do elves communicate across distances without using speech?

KIRRIG *(Chanted) We have our hand-signs...we use signs. (She makes kenaz)*

TOSTIG Careful, Kirrig, that is the fire-rune. If you use that you will surely attract the attention of the Dark Elves.

ALEX Thank you, Kirrig. That's exactly what we need.

MAGNUS But remember, elves, no sensitive information should be communicated by handsigns, in case the Dark Elves intercept it.

RUNIS And so finally, my friends, we have a master plan – our only plan. It must work!

TOM Everyone knows the part they must play in this great drama of life and death. Our friends lives depend on it. Come, friends – to Castle Valaholm at once. The rest of you – go and join the Forest Elves to plan our next move. Farewell for now.

RUNIS May the good fortune of our common Elfir ancestors go with you. EBWAR.
(Runis makes the sign and they all respond. Exit the group one way. Others mime animated discussion as they exit the other way) Blackout. End of Scene

Scene 4, The Harmgot Camp, Ragnarok Mountain

Magentis, the mountain elf, sits bound hand and foot in one corner. A group of Harmgots sits on the other side, dressed all in black. They give orders to the two Mortal slaves, Bjorn and Ulrika who obey without hesitation.

FENRIS Bjorn, fill my glass, it is empty again.
(Bjorn does so and Fenris pours the drink onto the ground.)
Bjorn, fill my glass, it is empty again.
(Others laugh in a vulgar fashion.)

BJORN Certainly, my lord.

ASLAGG Ulrika, sweep up those leaves there, they are a mess.
(She does so and Aslagg rises and kicks the pile all over the place.)
Ulrika, sweep up those leaves, I say. Do as I tell you at once.

ULRIKA At once, Master.

MAGENTIS Stop your games, you monsters. Can you not allow your slaves some dignity.

ASLAGG This is none of your business, Magentis. Besides, you too are our prisoner – and if you're not careful we will bewitch you and you will become our slave.

MAGENTIS You already tried once – and it didn't work, did it? I'm more than a match for you you pathetic creatures.

FENRIS Hold your tongue you slip of an elf. The only reason we have tolerated you until now is on account of our common ancestry. We could crush you any time we wanted to.

MAGENTIS You pathetic creature – you couldn't crush a nut.

FENRIS What did you say?

MAGENTIS Oh, nothing.

FAFNIR These human slaves are so completely in our power – they obey our orders without question. Bjorn, pretend you are a chicken and jump around!

BJORN Certainly, Master.
(He jumps around clucking like a chicken.)
(Enter Bogg. Bjorn and Ulrika retreat upstage and stand motionless.)

BOGG Cease this idle frivolity at once! We have another slave.
(Enter Frigg with Amy slung struggling over his shoulder. He puts her down, roughly.)

FAFNIR What's this another mountain elf, or perhaps a forest elf for a change?

FRIGG Neither, this is a young mortal. A human, I believe.

FAFNIR Hm! Young enough to be trained. Should make an excellent slave.

AMY I won't be your slave – you horrible monster – nor anyone else's!

BOGG Harmgot, child. We're called Harmgots.

AMY I don't care what you are, you are pure evil.

MAGENTIS That's the spirit, little girl.

AMY I'm not little.

FRIGG Quick, Bogg, put her over there with the other one and bind her.
(Bogg does so. There is no rope. The binding is done by a swift magic spell and wave of the hand.)

AMY You won't get away with this, you ugly warts. My big brother will come and rescue me.

FRIGG Let him come. We could do with more slaves.

ASLAGG Let's bewitch her now. I am tired of her chatter.
(The Dark Elves form a ring around Amy, pull her to her feet, still bound, and begin to stare at her. She looks straight ahead and tries to ignore them.)

MAGENTIS Little girl – do not look into their eyes. Think about something to concentrate your mind.

AMY Once two is two – two twos are four etc...

ASLAGG It's not working – she is resisting us! She has a counter-charm.

FRIGG Impossible – no-one has yet discovered a counter-charm to our bewitching spell.
(Slagghinn strides on with a majestic air.)

SLAGGFINN So, you have found us another slave I see - and a human this time. Well done.
(They all bow deeply and silence falls on the scene.)

FRIGG My lord Slagghinn, we thought you were in counsel deep in the mountain chamber at Hadium.

SLAGGFINN No longer, my loyal Frigg. The counsel is disbanded. Now that we are very near our goal, we have no need for drawn out discussions. We need to concentrate on the job of conquering and bewitching.

BOGG But my lord, can this possibly mean that we are ready to defeat the remnants of the powers of good in the kingdom.

SLAGGFINN That is correct, Bogg. Once we have bewitched a few more pathetic humans or elves we will have increased so much in power that we will be able to attack the final stronghold of the white powers of good – Castle Valaholm.
(Cheers from the Dark Elves at this news.)

FENRIS Then the final battle is close at hand.

SLAGGFINN The last battle – and we shall be the victors.
(More cheers)
Come, my friends, and I will reveal my plans.
(They squat round him in a circle and he holds counsel in undertones.)

MAGENTIS Tell me your name, young girl and allow me to congratulate you on your fighting spirit.

AMY I am Amy – and I'm not afraid of a few pathetic Harmgots. Well, actually I am, but I won't let them know! *(Sobbing)* I was not afraid of the Magworts and Glumworts so why should these creatures frighten me.

MAGENTIS You have had dealings with Magworts and Glumworts and yet you live? How can this be.

AMY Well, of course I was not alone. My friend Wodek was there to protect me – and Oswald.

MAGENTIS You are a friend of the great white wizard. What an intriguing girl you are. Now tell me, how did you avoid bewitchment?

AMY Oh, it was easy. I just chanted my times tables.

MAGENTIS Times tables? What powerful magic this must be. But you must never underestimate the Harmgots. They are cruel and ruthless. On the other side of the mountain they have created an avenue of stone statues, each one formerly a living, thinking creature such as you and I: elves, wizards, mortals and warrior maidens of Frostig.

AMY And, forgive me, but what sort of creature are you?

MAGENTIS I am Magentis, a Borger elfir – a mountain elf.

AMY But, surely the Harmgots are Borger elfir as well.

MAGENTIS They once were but the evil Lokki created monsters from them.

AMY But Magentis, how did you come to be a prisoner here?

MAGENTIS Same reason as you, Amy. Snatched from the forest – from the arms of my Bolderis, my true love.

AMY Wow, do elves have boyfriends just like humans?
(Magentis stiffens.)

MAGENTIS What was that? Did you sense it?

AMY What? I heard nothing.

MAGENTIS There it is again. It was ebwar. It must be an elf.

AMY You mean the sign. You can sense the signs, just like the Forest Elves?

MAGENTIS If I'm not mistaken there is a forest elf nearby making the sign.

KIRRIG *(Off-stage, in a whisper)* Amy. It's me.

AMY Who is it?

KIRRIG It's your friend, Kirrig.
(Enter Kirrig)

AMY Kirrig, oh Kirrig, I never thought I would see you again.

MAGENTIS You have a little elfin friend as well? Be cautious, elf, or you too will become a Harmgot prisoner.

KIRRIG Amy come home with Kirrig.

AMY I can't. I'm tied up.

KIRRIG Kirrig see no bonds.

AMY It's a magic spell – the bonds are invisible. I cannot escape.

KIRRIG Is Amy bewitched.

AMY No, I have found a way to undermine their magic – but I don't know if I can keep it up for long. Kirrig, this is Magentis; she too is a prisoner.

KIRRIG Kirrig know this. Bolderis will rescue Magentis. There is plan to defeat the dark ones.

MAGENTIS Silence, Kirrig. You must say no more. It is better that we know nothing of the plan ...just in case.

AMY You must go now. Tell the others that Amy and Magentis are both well and that we think we can hold out against the dark magic for a while – until we are rescued.

KIRRIG Kirrig wish to stay with Amy.

AMY No, Kirrig! You must go – for all our sakes.
(The Harmgots finish their counsel and the circle breaks up)

MAGENTIS Quick elf, before you are discovered.

KIRRIG Goodbye, Amy! Goodbye, Magentis! *(She does ebwar and the other two return it)*

BOGG And how, my lord Slaggfinn, do the prisoners fit into our plan?

SLAGGFINN Simple! They shall be hostages!

FRIGG Brilliant!

ASLAGG You mean, we will take them with us when we make battle.

SLAGGFINN Exactly! And to ensure that they come willingly – they shall be bewitched at sunrise tomorrow. No matter if they turn to stone on the third day. The battle will be won by then anyway.

FENRIS But where will the field of battle be, my lord?

SLAGGFINN That detail, Fenris, has yet to be decided. Perhaps castle Valaholm itself. The field of battle is secondary. The important fact is that we shall win. The Harmgots will prevail and will ultimately be the only living creatures in the Kingdoms of Aysgarth (*cheers after each one is mentioned*), Middlegarth, Dunkelheim and Frostig.

End of Scene

Scene 5, Castle Valaholm

It is gloomy in the castle and there is an air of mystery. Wodek and Oswald are perfecting a magic spell. Slogg, the Magwort servant looks on in awe. Spell books, potions, jars and beakers are strewn around the room.

- OSWALD Just a little more salt petre should do the trick, Wodek. *(He mixes more chemicals)*
- WODEK Take care not to add too much, Oswald, we don't want to set the castle ablaze.
- OSWALD Slogg, stand by with a bucket of water just in case.
Stella luminum, fugimus celestialis
(There is a small explosion and a cluster of small stars shoots into the air from the pot)
- WODEK That's it, Oswald! Just a little more practice and that one will be perfect. Now, please be so kind as to light a flame. We may need it to practise your extra-sensory charm.
- OSWALD Certainly.
(The following spell is accompanied by sweeping hand gestures over a cauldron of coals)
Kenaz sowelu komm kenaz!
(On these words a flame flickers and rises in the cauldron)
- SLOGG Master, your powers are truly awesome. Soon you will be as powerful as the great Wodek himself.
- OSWALD Why, thank you, Slogg. But until I can conjure the greatest spell of all – I cannot call myself a master sorcerer.
- SLOGG Which spell is this you refer to?
- OSWALD Why, the re-animation charm, of course.
- WODEK You must be patient, my boy, and it will come.
- OSWALD It is the greatest test of the power of good over evil, Slogg. Wizards have no need to petrify. Only evil beings wish to turn others to stone, therefore no wizard has ever attempted that particular spell.
- WODEK Yet to gain the power to **undo** petrification is every wizard's wish and dream.
- OSWALD And I have been practising for years. The most I have managed yet is to unfreeze the subject for a few seconds – but my antidote soon wears off leaving the poor creature solid again.

(There is the sound of an enormous bell ringing with a deafening peal)

SLOGG Masters, I do believe someone is at the front door of the castle.

OSWALD Well, don't just stand there, Slogg, go and see who it is. *(Exit Slogg)*

WODEK Wodek, would you please give me a hand with the elf – they weigh a ton when they're petrified.

WODEK Certainly, Oswald.

(They exit briefly and return carrying an elf which has been turned to stone)

OSWALD The poor little fellow. He looks so peaceful.

WODEK It was very cruel of the dark lord Lokki to do this to him.

OSWALD After all the practice I've had trying to re-animate him, I feel I've got to know the little chap quite well.

(Enter Slogg, followed by Heldof, Tostig, Holder, Bolderis, Tom, Melissa and Jack.)

SLOGG Master, you have some visitors. They are here on a very important mission.

WODEK My goodness, a party of elves. Have you come to help Oswald with his re-animation charm?

OSWALD *(Noticing the humans)* Well look at this Wodek, if it isn't Tom, Jack and Melissa.

WODEK So it is – How wonderful!

TOM It's very good to see you again Wodek – and you Oswald. I'm only sorry the circumstances of our visit are not happier.

OSWALD You only seem to appear when there is trouble in the air.

WODEK They are but instruments, Oswald. Cogs in the mill-wheel of the universal design.

MELISSA I'm afraid we need your help again, Wodek.

WODEK No matter, Melissa. Ask and it shall be granted.

MELISSA You see, we wish to defeat the Harmgots.

OSWALD Ha! Is that all? Such a small thing?

WODEK Oswald, do not scorn their intentions. If they wish to attempt to rid the world of another evil, then we shall help them and their goal shall be achieved.

OSWALD I'm sorry Wodek, but they do not understand the forces they are reckoning with.

TOM Oh, but we do, Oswald, and we have an idea how we might defeat them.

TOSTIG *(Noticing the stone elf)*

By the roots of Branstock I do believe it's Aramas.

SLOGG Who?

TOSTIG Aramas! The poor creature, the last I saw of him he went collecting firewood in the forest. He never returned!

SLOGG Captured by Magworts and turned to stone by Lokki for sport. I witnessed it myself.

HELDOF Why you nasty Magwort. How could you stand by and watch the evil one do that to a helpless elf?

SLOGG I am truly sorry, elf, but I was powerless to intervene. On several occasions I narrowly escaped the same fate myself.

OSWALD As it happens, I have been practising my re-animation charm on him – but I have not yet perfected it.

HOLDER Practising on him? Supposing it goes wrong? You might re-animate his head and shoulders on a stone body. What then?

OSWALD I feel my power is nearly developed and – I will succeed very soon. In any case, re-animation is total. You cannot restore part of a body – it applies to the whole.

WODEK Now, Melissa, you wished to ask something of me?

MELISSA Yes, please. It is said that you have in your possession a certain Book of Secrets in which are written five riddles.

WODEK Holy mists of Mudspell you are indeed correct, young lady. I had forgotten about that book these last five hundred years, but I believe it is still in my library somewhere. Slogg, go and see if you can find it – the Book of Secrets, about so big and with a black cover.

SLOGG Certainly, Master. *(Exit Slogg)*

OSWALD What is this book, Wodek, and how can it help these children in their ridiculous quest?

WODEK Oswald, you must be more optimistic if you are to be a truly great wizard. You must learn to believe in the impossible – that’s how great deeds are accomplished. If the children need the book, it must be a part of a greater plan.

JACK The Harmgots have Amy prisoner, Oswald. We have to get her back before she is bewitched. That’s great enough motivation to at least try a rescue – isn’t it.

BOLD And they have my Magentis – my bride-to-be. Life is not worth living without her.

OSWALD I am sorry for you, Jack, and for you, Bolderis. Of course, we will do what we can to assist you – but I do not understand the importance of this Book of Secrets.

WODEK Back in the mists of time, five great wizards created five powerful spells. These were woven together to create a wonderful structure – the bridge of Korangar. This created the sole link between Middlegarth and Aysgarth. The children would have had to cross the very bridge on their journey to reach our castle today. Beneath the

bridge is a chasm, the Chasm of Korangar. At the bottom of this is a portal to the Grinkengap – the eternal void. If a person falls into the chasm, they will never return.

OSWALD I see, but how can it help defeat the Harmgots.

TOM Our plan is to lure the Harmgots onto the bridge and then unravel the spells.

JACK They will all fall into the Chasm of Korangar and disappear forever – pshshoow!

OSWALD But how do you unravel the spells?
(Enter Slogg, carrying a large black book)

WODEK Ah, well done Slogg you found the book.
(He opens the book and they crowd around and gaze in awe)

MELISSA Look, its written in old-fashioned writing.

OSWALD These are the ancient runes – but they’re so different from our runic script.

JACK I can read it, I know the runes. Look this is about Branstock – the ancient oak tree.

TOSTIG And this one’s about the Fountain of Mimir.

TOM Let me see: 1,2,3 *(he thumbs through the book)* 4, 5, yes, they’re all here. The five riddles. These, Oswald, are the key to discovering the magic of the five spells. Each riddle gives the precise location of a runic inscription of a spell somewhere in Middlegarth or Aysgarth. When all five are simultaneously chanted, the bridge will disappear. It can later be reconstructed in the same way.

OSWALD I see!

MELISSA Hey look! There’s a map of the whole region: here’s Middlegarth, Aysgarth, Frostig and it even shows Dunkelheim – see how it’s marked in black and Frostig is white.

JACK You can see the chasm of Korangar here – look, it’s coloured red for danger.

HOLDER But there’s no bridge marked! Where’s the bridge.

WODEK ‘Tis an ancient map your looking at. The bridge was not there when that was drawn.

TOM *(Snapping the book shut and placing it under his arm)*
Wodek, how can we thank you enough for helping us again.

WODEK Your gratitude is evident on your face, Tom. That is thanks enough for me.

HELDOF We have wasted time enough – let’s get going and get the job done.

OSWALD No, wait just a moment, won’t you?

HELDOF What is it now, Wizard?

OSWALD Will you not wait and witness the re-animation. I feel success is very near.

HELDOF Oh, very well, but get on with it quickly.

WODEK Back, back everyone – clear a space. He needs room. Slogg – bring the stone elf forward.

TOSTIG Hey, look at Aramas's face – he's smiling.
OSWALD Always has been – that's how he was when he was petrified.
JACK But look at his hands: he was making the ebwar sign at the very moment of petrification.
BOLD That's not surprising – he was calling for help.
TOSTIG But why the smile?
HELDOF Never mind, just get on with it!

(Oswald appears to go into a trance, staring straight ahead, then begins making stylised hand movements as if rotating a large invisible globe between his hands. He crosses to the fire and repeats the gestures over the flames.)

JACK *(In a whisper)* Wodek, why does he not say the spell.
WODEK It's an extra-sensory charm, boy. There is no magic spell – you just have to find the correct telepathic thought process for it to work. It's a matter of getting the correct brain-pattern. Now hush, or he will not be able to concentrate.

(It grows darker in the castle and an eerie sound of rushing wind begins. Suddenly there is a crash of thunder and a huge flash of light, then silence! Everyone watches in disbelief, then awe as Aramas begins to twitch, then stretch. He takes a few shaky steps, turns to smile at Tostig, then freezes again. The lights slowly come up.)

JACK Wow! Oswald, that was brill! Do it again.
HELDOF What use is it re-animating him for a few seconds at a time. The spell must be completely broken.
OSWALD Yes, I'm sorry Heldof. I feel the breakthrough is so close. There is a missing element which will hold the animated state and prevent re-petrification but I cannot discover what it is.
TOM Please keep trying, Oswald. We will almost certainly need the charm very soon.
MELISSA Wodek, there is one other thing you can do to help us.
WODEK You only have to name it, young lady.
MELISSA We need you to send Marog and Hurog, the ravens, to Ragnarok Mountain to the Harmgots. They must take news that you are very sick and near death.
WODEK But I feel fine.

JACK It is a trick, Wodek. It will lure them into Aysgarth to attack you. And to reach
Aysgarth....

OSWALD They must cross over the chasm of Korangar. Excellent idea, Melissa.

TOSTIG And now, friends, we must away to the forest to break the secrets of the riddles and
begin our quest for the seven spells. There is no time to lose.

WODEK Good speed on your journey friends. And may this spell bring you good fortune:
Gebo, wunjo, algiz, uruz.

(There is an enormous flash of light followed by total darkness.)

Blackout

End of Scene

Scene 6, The Forest of Alfheim, several days later

*It is daytime in the forest and the elves are nervously preparing for the encounter.
There is much commotion and excitement.*

- TRIGG Fellow elves, if I may have your attention for a moment.
*(All goes quiet and the elves and children naturally arrange themselves in an order
for a meeting)*
As you know, we have sent five parties on the quest for the five spells to five
locations in the realm. *(Much reaction and excitement at this)*
Well, I am happy to be able to tell you that four of these intrepid groups have now
returned with their part of the puzzle. Only one group – led by Tom and Tostig has
yet to return. *(This is met with some dismay)*
Nevertheless, I propose that those who have returned should report their findings to
this meeting. They will not, of course, disclose their spell as we have vowed that no
one person should have the knowledge of the entire magical tapestry.
(Enter Kirrig)
- KIRRIG Trigg, Trigg, Kirrig saw Amy – and the Borger Elf, Magentis. Kirrig did see them.
- MELISSA Kirrig, you have seen, Amy. Where is she? Is she safe? What have they done to her?
- MOON Slow down, Melissa. She can only answer one question at a time. Now Kirrig, where
have you been?
- KIRRIG Kirrig been to the edge of the forest, by the mountain and saw the dark ones.
- MOON That was a very foolish thing to do. You might have been caught. Did they see you?
- KIRRIG Kirrig not seen by dark ones. They have meeting about a battle. Kirrig saw black
birds though. Oh, Moondag, poor Wodek is very sick. He might die!
- WENZEL It's alright, Kirrig. He is quite well. This is just a trick to lure the dark elves to the
bridge.
- MOON Have they harmed Amy?
- KIRRIG No, Amy is well – and Magentis, the mountain elf. Amy has her own magic to stop
bewitchment.
- MELISSA Did they try to bewitch her? The vile creatures!
- KIRRIG Yes, but she use 'times-table' magic and enchantment not working.
- JACK Good old Amy. I bet that showed them.

KIRRIG Kirrig say not to worry, we come to rescue them.
MELISSA Good girl, Kirrig – er, I mean good elf.
TRIGG If we might continue with the meeting?
I call on Harkrugg to tell us his tale.
HELDOF *(Standing and adopting an air of importance. He clears his throat. As each person reads their riddle, the book is passed from one to the other.)*
First Heldof shall read you his riddle:

**I sparkle in the light of midday sun, by the pale moon’s glow you see me shimmer.
Men thirst for the knowledge which is revealed in my luminescence.
By rippling shadow of midday sun you will discover a secret resting place.**

Sparkle, knowledge, luminescence – it was easy to discover the hiding place of the first spell; the pool of Mimir. Heldof remembered a spike of rock that catches the sun and casts a long shadow, like a finger. We waited until midday and the finger pointed to a submerged rock. Heldof jumped into the pool and there it was in runes, waiting for me to find it.

TRIGG Well done, Heldof. You have done a good job.
HELDOF There is but one thing to add, Trigg.
TRIGG Go on.
HELDOF I have memorised the spell but I do not understand the words. The language is an ancient one and the meaning is lost.
TRIGG Perhaps we do not need to understand the spell for it to work. Now the second riddle was solved by – Jack and Alex, I believe.
JACK Our riddle says:

**Higher than the tallest tower, older than the most ancient of hermits,
Majestically, I stand silent and alone, like pearls of wisdom my seeds dropping to earth.
No-one has seen the battles I have seen; the births and deaths in the cycle of life.**

We wondered what could be high, old and drop seeds. Obviously a tree – but there are thousands of trees in the forest.

ALEX But which tree could have seen many battles? We thought of the battles we have seen – those against the Magworts and the Glumworts

JACK And we remembered the Ode to Branstock – the ancient oak. We visited Branstock and – sure enough – there was the inscription carved into his bark.

ALEX Like you, Heldof, we understand nothing of the ancient language but have memorised the spell.

TRIGG Good work Jack and Alex. Now the third riddle – Moondag and Melissa have broken.

MOON The riddle reads so:

There's danger abroad as slowly and cautiously, you wend your way through my winding avenues.

In the dead of night you hear the cry, of nocturnal creatures winging through the sky.

For better or worse to discover my verse look for the base of the largest U.

MELISSA This riddle was very difficult to solve. We soon realised that the nocturnal cry was of the owl and the winding avenues the paths through the swamp of Mudspell. We made haste to the Owl Grove – but where to look next?

MOON We studied the shape of the groves of trees, looking in vain for the shape of a letter U. Finally, as we were about to give up the search, we realised that the U was not a letter but a tree. A YEW tree. The Owl Grove is a grove of ancient yews.

MELISSA It took several hours but eventually we found the largest yew and, sure enough, there was the carving on the base of the tree.

TRIGG And finally, Wenzel's party. Your riddle please.

WENZEL **My beginning is in summer and in winter is my end,**
Where seasons meet I stretch out to greet you like a long lost friend.
For the secret you seek just take a peek under my feet.

At first, Wenzel thought the riddle was about the passing of time. But then I realised that summer never turns directly to winter, so what could the riddle mean?

KIRRIG *(Chanted)* I know, I know, I know the answer.

ALEX Go on, Kirrig – explain.

KIRRIG Summer does meet winter – at the transformation bridge.

WENZEL You clever little elf, Kirrig. That is the right answer. So, we took a peek under the feet of the bridge – and there it was, the spell, painted in a frosty white. I hope Wenzel will remember it.

(Enter Tom and Tostig looking rather distraught)

MELISSA Tom, thank goodness, we need your spell. *(sees his face)* You **have** got the spell .. haven't you.

TOM I'm so sorry everyone, we searched high and low and we are certain there is no spell at the bridge of Korangar.

MELISSA *(In tears now)* Tom, we must have the last spell or we can't rescue Amy. She'll be bewitched! She'll turn to stone! We'll never see little Amy again.

KIRRIG *(Putting her arms around Melissa to comfort her)*
It's alright! Melissa must not worry. We will find the spell and we will rescue Amy – and Magentis. *(She leads Melissa upstage and they sit down together, Melissa sobbing)*

TRIGG Tostig, the riddle if you please – and quickly. We are running out of time.

TOSTIG **Seek me not, as you may believe, At Middlegarth's end and Aysgarth's beginning.**
I, the Korangar, stand majestically alone, ready to unlock the final mystery.
Look on my underside, but heed my reflection.

TOM I think we made a big mistake by rushing off to the bridge just because the riddle mentions Korangar. We could see no spell under the bridge. Besides, it's impossible to search right underneath without the danger of falling off into the chasm.

TRIGG Then there must be another solution. Let's take the riddle line by line. Tostig, the first line.

TOSTIG 'Seek me not, as you may believe, At Middlegarth's end and Aysgarth's beginning'.

WENZEL There you are – that seems to suggest that the bridge is not the place.

TOSTIG 'I, the Korangar, stand majestically alone, ready to unlock the final mystery'.

WENZEL And yet it speaks of the Korangar but omits the word bridge. What else could it mean?

TOSTIG Look on my underside – but heed my reflection. What can it mean? I do not understand it.

(Voice off)

OLRUN The clue is right there if only you would open your eyes and see it.

TOM Who on earth is that?

(Enter Olrun followed closely by Sigmund and Gudrun, looking very old indeed)

JACK Why, I do believe it's Olrun the Seeress ...

ALEX And King Sigmund, the dragon slayer, with his queen, Gudrun.

GUDRUN Children, oh children we are so happy to see you again.

TOM We thought all the mortals had fled the kingdom.

SIGMUND Is it like me to flee from danger, boy?

TOM Well, no, I suppose not.

MELISSA *(Blowing her nose and once more composing herself)*

But Olrun, you said the clue is there if we open our eyes. What did you mean by that?

OLRUN The riddle you are trying to understand is the key verse. The final piece of the puzzle which will make sense of all the rest. The wizards deliberately made the lines enigmatic so that it could not be solved by the wrong people. You children and I are the right people. The riddle says, 'heed my reflection'. This is the clue to unravel the enigma of the second line, 'I, the Korangar, stand majestically alone'. We, of all people should recognise the meaning of this. Jack, take that stick there and write the word Korangar in the earth. *(Jack does so)*

Now – read the word backwards as if reflected from right to left.

JACK R – a- g-, ragna – rok. Ragnarok! It spells Ragnarok.

OLRUN Exactly!

JACK The Ragna Rock stands majestically alone.

TOM 'Look on my underside', it says. So the spell must be inscribed on the bottom of the Ragna Rock.

HARK What is this Ragna Rock.

TOM It's a long story, Harkrugg, but there is a huge boulder on the side of Ragnarok Mountain. Only Olrun and ourselves would recognise the name Ragna Rock as this is how it's known in a legend of our world. But how could the wizards all those years ago have known that we would come along at this time to solve the riddle. It must be written in our destiny. We saw the rock at the battle of the Magworts. It has all sorts of runic inscriptions around it, including the spell which returns us to our world.

TOSTIG You know where to find this stone, Tom?
TOM I certainly do.
TOSTIG Then we must go and decipher the spell, right away. Come, Tom!
MELISSA Tom, be careful – the Harmgots! Don't let them see you.
TOM Don't worry about us. Now you must all go to the bridge of Korangar. We will meet you there as soon as we can. Hurry, please! Our time is almost up and the Harmgots will soon be swarming over the bridge. You must get there before them or the plan will not succeed. Go carefully and we will see you very soon.

End of Scene

Scene 7, The Bridge of Korangar, Ragnarok Mountain

One side of the stage is Middlegarth and the other Aysgarth. The bridge runs across the width of the stage. The lighting is luminescent with the colours of the rainbow. On the Aysgarth side are Wodek, Slogg, the Borger Elfir, the Forest Elves (in a huddle), Alex, Melissa, Jack, Sigmund and Gudrun. Tostig, Tom and Oswald are absent. They have clearly been waiting around for a long time and many are lounging or even asleep. There is no sign of the Harmgots.

ALEX This is so boring! How much longer do we have to wait?

BOLD Be patient, Alex. The Harmgots will be here all too soon.

JACK But what about Tom and Tostig? Where are they? They have been gone for ages.

TRIGG It is true, they have been rather longer than I hoped.

HELDOF It's not even that far up the mountain. I could have been there and back twice by now.

MELISSA Perhaps they can't find the correct inscription. The rock is covered with runes, you know.

RUNIS Listen! Do you hear it?
(All listen)

ALEX I can't hear a thing, Runis.

JACK Nor can I.
(SFX of owl hooting)

RUNIS There it is again – the owl that flies by day.

HOLDER It's a bad omen! One of the nine portents of doom. Danger looms, I tell you. We had better watch out.

TRIGG That's enough, Holder. You'll cause unnecessary alarm.
(A trumpet sounds)

MAGNUS Oh no! This is bad. The sound of the trumpet. It heralds the final battle at Ragnarok.

WENZEL Even, worse, Magnus. Look who's blowing it.
(Magnus turns to see the Harmgots approaching in battle formation. Everyone jumps to their feet and they form a frightened huddle. The Harmgots stop in their tracks at the end of the bridge when they see the crowd)

SLAGGFINN Well, look at this – a welcoming party. How thoughtful.

(The Harmgots form two ranks facing the bridge)

- TRIGG Greetings, Slagggfynn. Please come onto the bridge, we would like to parley.
- SLAGGFINN We go where we please, you green sprig of a forest elf.
- TRIGG I am Trigg, leader of the elves of the Forest of Alfheim.
- SLAGGFINN Pah, a child to lead a band of children. Let us pass, elf, we are bound for Valaholm to deal with that tiresome wizard.
- WODEK Then you need look no further – it is I – Wodek, whom you seek.
- SLAGGFINN But – we heard tell that you were on your sick-bed.
(Slagggfynn turns momentarily to consult the others)
No matter! We are ready for battle and battle there shall be. Bring forward the hostages.
- FENRIS Bring forward the hostages.
(Amy and Magentis are pushed to the front of the first rank)
- BOLDER Magentis – No! No! She can't be ... *(He tries to break ranks and run forward)*
- RUNIS Magnus, Heldof, seize him!
(They restrain Bolderis)
- MELISSA We're too late! They've bewitched Amy.
- JACK So much for the times-table magic. It obviously didn't work for Amy this time.
- SLAGGFINN You will allow us to pass or else...
- RUNIS Or else what, Slagggfynn?
- SLAGGFINN My, my – if it isn't Runis, the wise and the remnants of the mountain dwellers. And I suppose you are leader of what's left of the Borger Elfir now. Most of your kind have a place of honour in our avenue of statues.
- RUNIS I don't see that it's any of your business, Slagggfynn. We come in peace.
- BOGG Ha! Peace! An excuse of a word used by cowards to avoid battle.
- FENRIS We shall crush you like eggshells, you pathetic creatures.
- ASLAGG Slagggfynn, we are wasting time. Let's kill them all now.
- SLAGGFINN All in good time, Aslagg. First we deal with that troublesome wizard.
Wizard! Step forward.
- MELISSA No, Wodek, you mustn't! We must stay together.
(Wodek hesitates and Fafnir snatches Magentis and dangles her over the side of the bridge)
- BOLDER No, no! Please do not harm my Magentis. *(He struggles to be free of Magnus and Heldof)*

FAFNIR I think the wizard **will** step forward, don't you Slagffin?

SLAGGFINN Good thinking, Fafnir.

WODEK Stop this madness! If it's me you want, you shall have me.
(Wodek walks onto the bridge)

MELISSA No, Wodek! No!
(The Harmgots begin to step onto the bridge pushing Amy and Magentis ahead of them)
(Enter Oswald and a restored Aramas)

JACK Look it's Aramas! He's alive!
(Tostig rushes forward to greet Aramas with an embrace and other elves slap his back)

MELISSA Amy, run. Come to us.

TRIGG She cannot Melissa, she is bewitched.

MELISSA Then Oswald must free them.

TRIGG Can you do it Oswald.

OSWALD I, I, I think so. I have discovered the missing element – or rather Aramas showed me himself. Do you remember the smile on his face? And the sign? He had discovered the secret and was trying to tell us all along. It's ebwar.

HELDOLF Hurry, you fools they are crossing the bridge.
(All take a step back from Oswald who begins humming and makes the same gestures as before while focusing on Amy and Magentis)

OSWALD *(Breaking off momentarily)* Make ebwar – all of you. *(They hesitate)* Just **do it!**
(Oswald makes the ebwar sign and continues to hum. Amy and Magentis become free from the spell. The Harmgots freeze in their tracks as they see Amy and Magentis free and loose from their magic bonds. They begin to run to the others. Amy runs into Melissa's arms then she embraces Kirrig. Magentis runs to Bolderis)

SLAGGFINN You fools! Do you really think you can match our power? Now you must all die!

TRIGG Quickly, the unravelling chants. We must start them now.

RUNIS But we only have four of the five spells – it will never work.

MELISSA We have to play for time and hope that Tom and Tostig will arrive soon.

TRIGG Heldof, Jack, Moondag, Wenzel, begin the spells!
(Wodek is now standing between the two groups in the centre of the bridge. Heldof begins the chant and the others join in in turn building to a crescendo. The lights go dimmer and blue with flashes of light. SFX thunder)

HELDOF Wane mon hozeth of his sheve
 An falewi cumeth on grene leve,
 Ich fare hom and nime leve
 Ne recche ich nozt of winteres reve.
 *(When man is intent on his sheaf and russet comes on green leaf,
 I take leave and go home, I do not care for winter's garb.)*

JACK Ich do so thurz nizt and dai
 The more ich singe the more I mai
 An skente hi mid mine songe.
 *(I do so through night and day, the more I sing the more I may,
 And delight her with my song.)*

MOONDAG The rose also mid hire rude
 That cometh ut of the thorne wode
 Bit me that ich shulle singe
 Vor hire luv one skentige.
 *(The rose also with her ruddy colour, that comes out of the thorn wood,
 Bids me that I should sing something merry for her love.)*

WENZEL Hale, sterne superne! Hale in eterne,
 In Godis sicht to schyne!
 *(Hail supernal stars, hail for eternity,
 In God's sight to shine.)*

FRIGG Slagggfynn, what is this magic?
 SLAGGFINN I do not know but it is designed to distract us. We must grab the wizard and render
 him powerless with our superior strength.
 (Enter Tom and Tostig behind the Harmgots)

TOM Don't kid yourself you black devil! We hold the trump card – not you.
 (He adds his chant to that of the four others.)
 The lilie mid hire faire wite
 Wolcumeth me, that thu hit wite
 Bit me mid hire faire blo
 That ich shulle to hire flo.
 *(The lily with her fair form welcomes me, as thou dost know,
 Bids me with her fair countenance that I should fly to her.)*
 *(SFX as the bridge begins to buckle and warp. The Harmgots and Wodek are thrown
 from side to side as the bonds of the bridge become unstable.)*

BOGG It's a trick – we have been tricked.

FENRIS We must get off the bridge before it disintegrates.

ASLAGG The Grinkengap! No we cannot – we must not!
(Wodek raises his arms and, with a flash, an invisible barrier closes off the Middlegarth side and the Harmgots cannot escape that way. They run towards Wodek and he creates another barrier in the centre of the bridge just in front of himself)

SLAGGFINN No, wizard, spare us. You cannot cast us into the chasm of Korangar.

FAFNIR If we fall, you'll fall with us wizard!

WODEK Then I will not have perished in vain, Harmgot!

SLAGGFINN *(Appealing to the mountain elves.)*
 Brothers - Borger Elfir. We are of the same kind. Do not abandon us to this fate. We ourselves were bewitched by the Lord Lokki. We were once innocent mountain elves ourselves.

HELDOF He's right. We are of the same blood. Not so these green elves. Let us join our brothers and slay the wizard.

RUNIS No Heldof, this is not the way. You are being bewitched. Can you not see it.

TRIGG The spells – Continue the magic. Finish the task.

HELDOF No! I join my brother elves.

BOLDER *(Pushing Magentis to one side)* Heldof, you saw what they did to Magentis. How can you wish to join them?

HELDOF They have the same blood in their veins as I.

BOLDER Their blood is no longer red – it is black! I will not allow you to go.
(As the spells are chanted ever louder, Heldof tries to cross the bridge. Bolderis runs after him, struggles with him, and, in the ensuing tussle, Heldof falls into the chasm. Momentarily there is silence)

TRIGG Oh no! We have lost his part of the spell.
(Amy runs forward and begins to chant Heldof's spell which she has memorised. The others join in and the chanting is now very loud. SFX. There are some enormous flashes and bangs and the bridge starts to break up. One by one the Harmgots are thrown into the chasm.)

MELISSA Wodek come back to this side. Quickly, run for your life.
(Wodek turns and begins to walk slowly back to the Aysgarth side. Suddenly the bridge dissolves into nothing and Wodek and the remaining Harmgots disappear from view amid Harmgots' screams of terror. There is now total silence and the

lighting returns slowly to normal. Kirrig is sitting downstage, hiding her head in her hands. The elves begin to wail)

No! No, this cannot be happening! Not Wodek – not Wodek.

ALEX *(Sobbing)* Poor Wodek! He was such a good person.

JACK *(Crossly)* I thought good was supposed to triumph over evil.

RUNIS Perhaps in his own way, Wodek would say that he did prevail. After all, it was he who enabled us to defeat those wicked creatures.

TOM We must rebuild the bridge. It's what Wodek would have commanded had he been here.

OSWALD You could never rebuild that bridge. It was created by the five greatest wizards of all time.

TRIGG If they did not wish us to rebuild the bridge, they would never have allowed us to discover the magic to destroy it in the first place!

RUNIS Oswald is wrong - Trigg is right. Begin the chants.

(The chants begin and, slowly, the bridge is restored. As the last section is completed Wodek appears on the bridge partially obscured in a cloud. All gasp in awe)

WODEK My friends – evil will never prosper - good will always prevail. You had faith in the power of good and you were rewarded. Oswald! You still have much to learn from these elves. You should feel humbled.

OSWALD Yes, Master. I'm sorry, Master. But, I don't understand...

WODEK It is quite simple. I am the last of the five great wizards who created the bridge. Part of my mystical being is mirrored in the structure. The bridge is one place where I, Wodek, cannot die. My being was restored along with the bridge.

TOM Then, you knew all along this would happen!

JACK But Wodek, you allowed yourself to be destroyed. How could you do that? How could you know that we would rebuild the bridge?

WODEK Everything that has happen has been pre-ordained – and some of us are privileged to be able to glimpse our destiny.

MELISSA Wodek, you knew that Tom, Alex, Jack, Amy and I would return to Middlegarth didn't you – and you knew we would re-build the bridge.

WODEK Your words are true, Melissa, and I also know that this is your last visit. You can never return.

JACK Oh, why Wodek?

WODEK The door you used to access this kingdom will soon close - for ever. It is written in the very book of secrets where you found the riddles.

JACK What other secrets are there, Wodek. Can we have a look.
(All laugh)

WODEK It is not advisable, Jack, to learn too much. Knowledge in the wrong hands can be very dangerous.

RUNIS It is time to rebuild our lives here. We shall go back to the mountains and leave our brothers in peace.

SIGMUND And my subjects in exile can return to their own kingdom once again.

TOM Oswald, you have a lot of work to do on the mountain.

OSWALD I do?

TOM Certainly – there is a whole avenue of statues to re-animate. Should take you about – fifty years, I reckon.
(Laughter)

OSWALD Come on then, Amaras, my friend, you can be my apprentice. Goodbye everyone.
(They exit)

AMY I don't want to go home. Now those horrible Harmgots have gone - I want to stay here!

JACK Don't start that again, Amy!

WODEK I decree that from henceforth the fire rune, kenaz, is banned in this realm. It is the rune of the dark elves and should be forgotten by every living creature. And every tree or rock bearing the dark elves' emblem should be transported to the dark kingdom of Dunkelheim, which land should no longer be inhabited but kept empty as a museum of evil.
(All cheer)

MELISSA Goodbye, everyone. We shall all miss you when we are safely back in our own world.
(They say they farewells to everyone amid embraces)

WODEK I do not like speeches, but, on behalf of all the elves and mortals may I thank you for helping to free us from the clutches of evil.

TRIGG We will never forget you. Your names will be written into our folklore for eternity.

JACK Wow, we're famous. I can't wait to get home and tell the gang at school.

TOM Right then, let's get on with it. Form a circle – and make sure there are only five of us in it this time – No extra elves.

OTHERS

Now on the count of three say the chant, three times.

Goodbye children. *(and all sorts of other farewell phrases)*

(The children say the chant three times and, after the third time, there is an enormous flash and a blackout)

Fram drylican corðriče ic ġefare þurh blæst ond regn.

End of Play

If you wish, the following scene with an ambiguous ending may be added at the end

Scene 8, The Library (Optional)

Seconds later the children materialise in the library. However they appear to have gone back in time.

LIBRARIAN Now, children. This is your last warning. I must remind you that libraries are quiet places. People come here to read and study, and they do not wish to be disturbed by your raised voices and boisterous games. If you wish to play games, go to the playground. Now – have I made myself clear?

CHILDREN Yes, Miss.

LIBRARIAN Now, you may stay if you intend to read quietly.

AMY Thank you, Miss.

The librarian peers at Kirrig as she exits.

MELISSA Phew, that was close. Kirrig, put your hat back on at once! I'm sure she noticed your ears.

TOM Jack, pick up that paper ball. That's enough football. You'll get us chucked out if you're not careful.

Jack picks up the paper and begins to unravel it.

JACK Hey, do look at this everyone. Do you recognise the print?

ALEX It's the missing page with the chant.

AMY Hooray, Kirrig will be able to go home now. I will miss her though.

MELISSA We all will, Amy.

KIRRIG Kirrig not want to go home. She want to stay here with Amy. This Kirrig's home now.

TOM We know you want to stay here, Kirrig, but we really must return you to your own folk in the forest.

KIRRIG Kirrig frightened to go back. Too many wicked creatures in Middlegarth. None here in your world – except big dogs. They frighten Kirrig.

MELISSA Don't be anxious, Kirrig. We'll go with you to see you safely home. We'll see that you don't come to any harm.

KIRRIG What about wicked Magworts? They steal Kirrig and make her slave.

JACK The Magworts are all dead, Kirrig. Don't you remember? We beat them and turned them all to stone. That was incredible. I'd like to do it again.

TOM Oh do be quiet, Jack. You'll make her even more frightened.

ALEX Let's get on with it! I'm getting bored.

MELISSA Alright everybody, form a circle and hold hands.

JACK Not this again – holding hands with girls – Yuk!

ALEX Don't be silly, Jack, or I'll slap your face! *(Jack pouts)*

AMY Tom, I'm frightened. It seems as though every time we go back to Middlegarth we encounter a greater evil. First, the Magworts, then the Glumworts and ... what next?

TOM Be brave, Amy. We must do this for the sake of our friend, Kirrig. We cannot leave her in our world for ever. She does not belong there any more than we do in her world.

AMY I suppose your right, Tom, but I'm still frightened all the same.

TOM Hold hands, everyone and be ready for the chant. Lets practise it now:
Fram drylican eorðrice

ALL **Fram drylican eorðrice**

TOM **iç gefare þurh blæst ond regn.**

ALL **iç gefare þurh blæst ond regn.**

KIRRIG *(slipping out of the ring)* No, no! Kirrig not want to go. Kirrig stay here.

MELISSA *(In a kindly voice)* Kirrig, be brave, we must go now. Now come back into the ring, here, between Tom and me.
Kirrig obeys her and Melissa and Tom hold Kirrig firmly by the wrists. As they chant she tries to slip away again but she is held too tightly to break free.

TOM Together everyone – the chant, just as we practised it.

ALL **Fram drylican eorðrice iç gefare þurh blæst ond regn. (Three times)**
On the second time the stage goes dim and we hear Kirrig and Amy screaming. In this distance the sound of the librarian's voice calling for silence can be heard. On the third time there is a loud sound effect of thunder and a huge flash of light. The stage blacks out and the children disappear.

End of Play